

INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS — 2013 DOCUMENTS

Introduced & Edited by
AVTAR SINGH BHASIN

PUBLISHED IN COOPERATION WITH
XPD DIVISION
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

GEETIKA PUBLISHERS

AVTAR SINGH BHASIN



Avtar Singh Bhasin (b.1935) B.A. (Hons) and M.A in History. He had a short stint of service with the National Archives of India and the Joint Intelligence Organisation of the Ministry of Defence before joining the Ministry of External Affairs in 1963, where he served for three decades retiring in June 1993 as Director (Historical Division). He was posted in the Indian Missions in Kathmandu, Bonn, Vienna and Lagos. He travelled extensively within and

outside the country in the discharge of his duties in the Ministry. He particularly served for several years in the NORTHERN DIVISION of the ministry. He was a member of several official and ministerial delegations for holding bilateral discussions with the countries covered by the Division. In 1974-75 he handled the sensitive issue of merger of Sikkim in India as a new State. Besides this he worked in the Coordination, External Publicity and the Administrative Divisions of the Ministry.

He took to academic studies after retirement in 1993. He was **Senior Fellow at the Indian Council of Historical Research** from 1994 to 1996, an **Honorary Fellow at the Institute of Contemporary Studies of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library** from 1996 to 2000. He attended several seminars and contributed papers at these dialogues. He has also published several articles on South Asian affairs in newspapers and journals.

His main focus has been documenting India's foreign relations, a task that had not been attempted in the past more than sixty years and he felt it was badly needed, since non-availability of the Indian side of the documents presented a lop sided picture of Indian position in the study of India's foreign relations. His first work was a two-volume study of **India-Nepal-China Relations: 1947-92**, later expanded and updated to Five Volumes covering the period up to 2005. His second contribution was the documentary study of **India-Bangladesh Relations**, also first published in two volumes covering the period 1971 to 1994, and then updating and expanding into Five Volumes covering the period up to 2002 (published in 2003). The success of these two studies encouraged him to undertake a third one, study on Sri Lanka, also in Five Volumes

which was published under the title “**India-Sri Lanka Relations and Sri Lanka’s Ethnic Conflict—1947-2000.**”

In the golden jubilee year of the Indian independence, 1997, he wrote 75 pieces for the *Asian Age* which were published consecutively from June 1 to August 14, 1997 every day as a throwback to the tumultuous days of 1947, to refresh the memories of the older generation and inform the younger generation of the sacrifices, trials and tribulations and travails through which the people had to pass, before independence. Subsequently, these articles were published in the book-form under the title “**Some Called it Partition, Some Freedom**”.

Returning to the subject of Sri Lanka, he published an analytical narrative of events leading to the ethnic conflict in that country and India’s role. It was published by two independent publishers in India and Sri Lanka in 2005 under the title: “**India in Sri Lanka: Between Lion and the Tigers**”. In 2012 he published a **Ten Volume Documentary Study on INDIA - PAKISTAN RELATIONS** covering the period 1947 to 2007.

In December 2012, he published a study of **India- ASEAN relations for the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit held in New Delhi, to mark the 20th anniversary of the India-ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partnership and 10th anniversary of the Summit partnership**. It was sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs and was distributed among the delegations to the Summit and to foreign and Indian media, congregated for the Conference.

He separately edits and publishes for the Ministry of External Affairs an annual series under the title “**INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS**” which showcases comprehensively the documents bearing on India’s foreign relations. Starting with 2002, so far twelve volumes, covering the period up to 2013 have been published in cooperation with the External Publicity/ Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry of External Affairs.

INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2013
Documents

Other Books of Avtar Singh Bhasin

1. Some called it Partition Some Freedom: (the Last 75 Days of the Raj)
2. India – Sri Lanka Relations and Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict: Documents: 1947-2000-Five Volumes
3. India in Sri Lanka –Between Lion and the Tigers
4. India-Bangladesh Relations: Documents-1971-2000= Five Volumes
5. Nepal – India and Nepal-China Relations: 1947-2005 Documents—Five Volumes
6. India-Pakistan Relations: Documents; 1947- 2007 Ten Volumes
7. ASEAN - INDIA: Progress & Prosperity: Documents
8. India's Foreign Relations—Documents: Volumes for the Years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009. 2010, 2011, 2012

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**GEETIKA PUBLISHERS
NEW DELHI - 110028**

E-Book
Published by



GEETIKA PUBLISHERS

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(The deployment above is as on December 31, 2013)

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PREFACE

This is the 12th volume in the series INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS, published annually in cooperation with the Public Diplomacy/External Publicity Division of the Ministry of External Affairs. It is the storehouse of documents bearing on India's foreign relations during the course of a given year.

The volumes for the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 were produced in the print format only. From 2005 until 2011, the printed book in addition had a CD. In course of time it was found that the printed version was a handicap in its expeditious despatch to the Indian missions located all over the world. Apart from the time, the cost of printing and air freighting had become prohibitive. The e-book format has helped in eliminating the paper and printing costs altogether. The electronic format is easily the most expeditious to despatch, with little cost on freight, besides being a greener option. Taking all the factors into consideration, since 2012 it is now being produced in the electronic format only. This is also easier for scholars to consult and is in keeping with the latest trends in book production.

Instant communications have injected new dimensions to the very nature of foreign relations. It is not that only the world has become globalised, its problems too have become globalised needing cooperation on a wider scale to find solutions to them. There is a paradigm shift in formulation of foreign policy and its bandwidth. Foreign relations and specific issues of policy are now subjected to greater debate and discussion both at the executive and academic levels. The academia and Think Tanks play an equally important role in policy formulations. The information explosion with the extensive use of information technology and consequent dissemination of foreign policy related information through the electronic media and the proliferation of newspapers and other sources of information have made the *aam adami* aware of what goes on in the world and how his life is impacted by events in the global village. He wants to be informed how the foreign policy initiatives of the government would make his life better. He wants to be heard too. The government today cannot take decisions behind closed doors and expect the people to back them too. This is an onerous task that the diplomatic community and the democratic and responsive governments have to contend with.

India with a population of over 1.2 billion and an emerging economy has been recognised as one of the few countries whose views are heard in the councils of the world. The subjects which until some years ago were not part of the foreign policy discourse, like, nuclear and thermal energy, climate change, terrorism, financial and monetary matters, trade and investment, science and technology, water resources etc., are in the recent years routinely discussed both at the bilateral level and at the inter and intra regional gatherings and multilateral conferences. India today is a member of a large number of such organisations, like, G-20, BRICS, IBSA, EU, ASEM, IOR, ASEAN and EAS, CICA, SAARC, NAM, and many more. No international gathering today is complete without the Indian presence. In finding solutions to international problems, India's input is valued. Hence the study of Indian policies and the manner of their implementation become relevant to both the diplomatic community and the think tanks within India and abroad. The availability of its documents in a comprehensive and easily accessible format, as in the present series has become, critical in this respect.

The arrangement of documents in the electronic book follows the same pattern set earlier in the printed volumes. The documents have been arranged thematically and region-wise and arranged chronologically. Those documents which do not fall in any particular category or deal with multiple subjects or more than two countries have been placed in the General list. It may be added in parenthesis that documents presented here are not exclusively those of the Ministry of External Affairs but of all the ministries and departments of the Government of India which contribute in the conduct of its foreign relations.

In selecting the documents that have gone into the making of this compendium or in adding footnotes or for the introduction, I have been guided by the experience gained during the three-decade of my service with the Ministry of External Affairs in various capacities. The experience gained in the production of the earlier volumes in this series too has been of great help. If, however, still some deficiencies or shortcomings are noted in the book, I hold myself entirely responsible.

Avtar Singh Bhasin

New Delhi,

December 31st, 2014.

INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2013

INTRODUCTION

India in 2013 remained engaged with the international community at several levels to promote its political, security and economic interests. Security has, in fact, become the dominant concern not only for India but for the whole world. It is one issue that no single country can tackle by itself whatever means of defence and extent of resources it may possess. It is an intra-regional and intra-continental concern. With means of communication and travel becoming faster and availability of internet and mobile telephony, security has become multi-dimensional. It is not only physical security that is important, but cyber security assumes much greater importance in the technological driven world of today. It is a single point enterprise where technology and communications converge and need cutting edge knowledge, training and leadership to meet its challenge. The breakdown of the established post-world war order and the conflicting interests of the permanent members of the UNSC, the apex body, responsible for world peace under the UN Charter, has become victim of contradictory pulls of its members. It finds itself unable to effectively address the problems of peace and security. The inability of small and medium states to manage their own security makes them vulnerable to intervention by the powerful, and at another level, it is a challenge of securing national sovereignty for the vulnerable states. The UNSC's refusal to reform itself to reflect the changed world order of the 21st century is in itself a matter of great concern to the nations at large. In this scenario, India has managed to ensure for itself some modicum of security from the non-state actors, both by strengthening its physical security and through interaction with the states of the region and beyond. It is in this milieu, the Indian interaction with the international community both at the regional and bilateral levels has to be studied. India understands the need to strengthen its economic and social institutions as well as those of the developing countries to provide for security. In interacting with them it lays special emphasis on institutional security.

I SOUTH ASIA

South Asia, which is geographically a cohesive region, is also the least integrated region of the world. The litmus test of integration is whether the region is a viable area for interaction at political, economic and social levels like the ASEAN or the EU. Despite that the SAARC has been in existence since the eighties of the last century. It has yet to gather enough mass to make it viable for trade and investments to expand to enable free flow of intra-regional trade and investments to take place. There is an urgent need to adopt forward looking steps at policy level collectively and separately so that the connective tissues of a South Asian economic community begin to be created. This would help the region to put aside its differences, which had been its bane, within a construct aimed at collaboration on issues of general interest or towards achievement of a common vision of general interest. ASEAN suggests itself as a good example of the search for stability through architecture of regional cooperation. The South Asian region unfortunately suffers from lack of stability in many ways. There is social instability, economic backwardness, trade bumps, investment impediments, and many other negative factors, which make it difficult for the region to achieve the aspired results ASEAN has succeeded in achieving.

Bilaterally, India ploughed on to craft goodwill and understanding within the countries of South Asia, a region with which India's destinies are entwined. In Nepal it is the lack of consensus among the political parties that has delayed inordinately the constitution making and deprived its people a stable political system. This indeed has slowed down the economic growth and retarded meaningful economic and political interaction with other neighbours.

The security scenario both in Pakistan and Afghanistan is a worrying factor, particularly in the projected withdrawal of the US defence forces from Afghanistan in 2014. Pakistan's internal security problem spilling into Afghanistan creates political instability for the entire South Asian region. Bangladesh

successfully met its challenge to stability posed by the opposition which boycotted the elections to Parliament. But government's steadfastness paid dividends and it was possible to conduct elections peacefully and give stability to the political institutions. The Sheikh Hasina government also successfully met the challenge of the Islamist fundamentalists who were treacherous to the cause of Bangladesh liberation in 1971 and had all these years successfully evaded justice.

India underlined its friendship with Bangladesh when President Pranab Mukherjee chose to make Bangladesh the first country for his foreign visits in September 2013. Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh too visited Dhaka shortly after taking over the charge. A major step towards economic cooperation and integration was taken when Prime Minister of India inaugurated the India-Bangladesh Grid Interconnection to feed 500 MW of power into Bangladesh system, and laid the foundation of 1320 MW thermal power project to be executed in Bangladesh as a joint venture.

Bhutan has succeeded in its transition from a monarchical polity to a stable popular democracy under the leadership of the His Majesty the King. Its successful completion of its elections to the National Assembly in July, 2013 harbingered the maturity of its nascent political institutions. Bhutanese Prime Minister's visit in September and Foreign Secretary's visit to Thimpu earlier in February were highlights of a cordial and friendly year of relationship between India and Bhutan.

The visit of Maldivian Minister of Defence and Security in April provided an opportunity for sharing common security concerns. Defence Minister Antony conveyed to him that "India stands committed to enhance the ongoing defence and security partnership with Maldives." Ongoing exchanges between the Armed Forces of both sides in areas of training, exercises and strengthening of infrastructure and capabilities were reviewed by both the Ministers. It was decided to further enhance these exchanges. Both sides agreed that there was a need to continue to work together to tackle security concerns, in the interests of peace and stability in the region. India was happy

to lend a helping hand by way of advice in the successful conduct of Presidential election in the island country.

India welcomed the elections in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka, held for the first time after the end of the prolonged ethnic war. The elections resulted in the victory of the Tamil National Alliance. The External Affairs Minister paid a bilateral visit to the island country in October and inaugurated the Housing Project being promoted in the North with Indian assistance for the internally displaced persons. He went to Colombo again in November to represent the Prime Minister at the CHOGM. The question of fishermen continued to agitate the people on both sides of the Palk Strait. However the two governments successfully negotiated the release and return of fishermen whenever they were arrested for being on the wrong side of the International maritime border. Unfortunately it has become a perennial problem between the two countries, but it involves the livelihood issues on both the sides.

The general elections in Pakistan which for the first time in the history of Pakistan led to a change in the government through a vote of the people, saw Nawaz Sharif leader of the Muslim League (Nawaz) to the high office of prime minister for the record third time. He promised to work with New Delhi for better relations. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in his message of felicitations conveyed India's desire to work with the new government of Pakistan in charting a new course for the relationship between the two countries and invited Mr. Sharif to visit India at a mutually convenient time.

In July Nawaz Sharif sent his Special Envoy Shahryar Khan to New Delhi where he had meetings with the Prime Minister, NSA Shivshankar Menon and Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh and Satinder Lambah, Prime Minister's Special Envoy. Lambah had himself visited Pakistan in May. Media described the visit as only a 'reinforced signal" consonant with the imperative of better relations.

In August the relations between the two countries had a setback due to a number of incidents along the LOC, in which

there were casualties on the Indian side. On top of it the Pakistan National Assembly and the Punjab (Pak) Assembly passed resolutions blaming and condemning the Indian army for the LOC violations. The Indian Parliament took a strong exception at the resolutions and rejecting them, adopted a resolution against the Pakistani violations thereby causing casualties on the Indian side. The Resolution said: "Our restraint should not be taken for granted nor should the capacity of our armed forces to ensure the territorial integrity of our nation."

The meeting between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in New York in September on the margins of the UNGA, helped to restore some semblance of normalcy in the relations. The two Prime Ministers tasked the Directors General Military Operations (DGMOs) of both the sides "to suggest effective means to restore the ceasefire and a way forward". Various other aspects of the relationship too came up for discussion at this meeting. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh mentioned terrorism and the need for effective action on bringing the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks to book. The ASEM Ministerial meeting in Delhi in November, which was attended by Pakistan Foreign Affairs and National Security Adviser Sartaj Aziz provided another opportunity to review the relations between the two countries. December of 2013 offered yet another opportunity for review of relations when the brother of Pakistan Prime Minister and Chief Minister of the Punjab Province Shahbaz Sharif came to New Delhi and held meetings with the Indian leaders including the Prime Minister.

II EAST ASIA

Relations with China remained on even keel despite some problems. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met the new Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit on March 28, 2013 in Durban, within days of his taking over the high office. Significantly in May 2013 the Li Keqiang, the new Premier of China made his first over-sea visit to India indicating China's goodwill toward New Delhi. The positive signs, were somewhat impacted by the unfortunate incident which

for a while created some misunderstanding between the two countries. The Chinese frontier guards' violation of the boundary in Ladakh led to a faceoff with an Indian army detachment. It however ended amicably by the intervention of higher political leadership, indicating Beijing's anxiety not to upset the equilibrium in bilateral relations.

Despite persistent media reports of Chinese violations of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) now and then, the Ministry of External Affairs remained steadfast in its stand that in the absence of delineation of the boundary on the ground there were differences in the perception of the LAC of both the countries which often created the impression of intrusion. That these situations were amicably and peacefully settled by the use of the existing mechanisms between the two countries for the resolution of such situations was significant. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh made his visit to Beijing in October. The External Affairs Minister and the Chinese Foreign Minister met in July in Brunei on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit. These meetings at the highest level kept the dialogue between the two countries going thereby creating a fund of goodwill. On the question of growing trade deficit between the two countries, the Chinese were quite accommodative, and signed a MOU to take care of this, when Premier Li came to New Delhi in May. It is hoped it would address the widening trade deficit between the two countries.

The visit of Defence Minister to Beijing in July and the Third Defence Dialogue earlier in the year in January were positive signs of developing closer relations between the Defence establishments of the two countries. To enhance defence cooperation, a draft of a Border Defence Cooperation Agreement has been received from the Chinese side, which when signed would formalize the mechanisms and procedures to enhance mutual trust and confidence between the border troops and facilitate the maintenance of peace and tranquillity along the India-China border.

An India - China Media Forum was set up during the year to enable the journalists of the two countries to interact with

each other independently and create fund of goodwill and understanding between the two media organisations. The first meeting of this forum took place in New Delhi in September 2013.

The week-long and rare visit to India by the Japanese Royal couple underlined the deepening ties between the two countries. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who took office in December 2012, made clear his intention to boost economic ties and investments in India. He also expanded the strategic relationship. The 7th India-Japan Energy Dialogue took place on September 12, 2013 in New Delhi. In May the annual summit saw the two prime ministers meeting in Tokyo. Their talks strengthened the mechanism of political and strategic consultations and held out a promise of progressively strengthening defence relations, including joint naval exercises and collaboration in defence technology. Cooperation in high technology, space, energy, security and rare earth minerals would provide rich contents to the strategic partnership. The two currency swaps offered by Japan in September and December 2013, to the extent of US \$ 50 billion, would boost financial cooperation.

The growing closer relations between the two countries were seen to be causing unnecessary concern to Beijing, notwithstanding the growing relations between India and China. Accusing Japan of attempting to forge alliances with India and other neighbours to "encircle China" the Communist Party-run *Global Times* on May 31, 2013 warned in an article written by a Chinese scholar from an official think-tank-- the Centre for Strategic and International Affairs, Shanghai-- that India could get "close to Japan at its own peril". The article with aggressive overtones outlined China's concerns over the close developing relations between India and Japan. After the visit of the Japanese Royal couple China said "We hope that development of bilateral relations by the relevant countries will be conducive to regional peace, stability and development." China's comments are to be seen in the context of growing tension between Japan and China on the Senkaku/ Diaoyu

islands in East China Sea, where Beijing had declared an Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ). However, the Japanese Officials accompanying Emperor Akihito said the visit "should not be interpreted as an attempt by Japan to counter the big neighbour China".

During the course of the year India made particular efforts to enhance Security and defence cooperation with the countries of Southeast Asia. Defence Minister visited Myanmar in January 2013 and met his Myanmar counterpart Lt. Gen. Wai Lwin when matters of defence cooperation were discussed with reference to enhanced exchanges. In September Security Dialogue with Korean Republic was initiated and the Korean Air Chief was welcomed in New Delhi in November. In June India and Singapore signed a Defence Cooperation Agreement.

III WEST & CENTRAL ASIA

For over two decades of the independence of Central Asian countries, India remained focused on this region to evolve ways and means of reinforcing the centuries old bonds. India's "Connect Central Asia" policy marked a more pro-active approach to engaging with Central Asia. It is in fact an attempt to re-connect in newer ways with the region.

In West Asia, India forged good working relationship with Saudi Arabia, the largest and the richest country in the region. It provides employment to a large number of Indian workers. Recently when that country decided to implement its Nitaqat policy, there was some misunderstanding but it did not take too long for India to appreciate its rationale for the Kingdom. It was the just implementation of its domestic law which the country was perhaps holding in abeyance for some time that enabled a large number of foreign workers to get into the Kingdom and take up jobs. Now that it was under pressure from within its own labour force, the implementation of Nitaqat created a difficult situation for foreign workers. India appreciated the need for Saudi Arabia to enforce this policy and facilitated the repatriation of its citizens back to India. On

May 27 the External Affairs Minister during his visit to Riyadh told the Arab News Agency in an interview that India considers Saudi Arabia a centre of stability in the region, adding that the security and stability of the Gulf region and that of the Indian subcontinent are interlinked and that bilateral security cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia can contribute to regional stability."

The visit of the Secretary General of the Arab League to New Delhi in December 2013 was an important event which enabled the External Affairs Minister to interact with him as representative of the Arab people. The Indo-Arab Investment summits, has become an important forum for attracting Arab investments to India. Three such summits have so far been held.

India believes that there is a shared and deep historical and civilisational ties between India and the Arab world and these have evolved collectively in our South-South cooperation. External Affairs Minister told a Press conference in New Delhi on December 17 that "both sides have a great deal to learn from each other, and build firm partnerships that would have a positive effect for our common and extended neighbourhood."

Minister Khurshid spoke of shared interests of the India and the Arab countries. He said that "the Arab countries that lie in our immediate extended neighbourhood and we are closely linked in many many ways both with history, commerce and of course community ties". He conveyed India's "steadfast support to the Palestinian cause and expressed our support for the role played by the League in partnering the Middle East Peace Process towards establishment of State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital."

The de-escalation of tension between the United States and Syria on the threatened US action on the question of use of chemical weapons in Syria was welcomed by New Delhi. On September 16, the Ministry of External Affairs described it "an important step in the process". India also welcomed the 'recent steps taken by Syria to accede to the Chemical Weapon

Convention" which was in alignment "with India's consistent stance of supporting the complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapons world wide". India believes that this development would "invigorate the peace efforts towards a political solution to the Syrian conflict".

Even otherwise India remained engaged with the West Asian countries. Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamed Al-Sabah visited in India in October, External Affairs Minister visited Egypt and Bahrain in December, and the Minister of State visited Libya in April.

IV AFRICA

In the recent past, Africa has witnessed momentous changes in terms of peace and stability, democracy, economic growth and improvement in social indicators. It is very encouraging to note that out of 38 countries which met one of Millennium Development Goals on eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, included several African countries--Algeria, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Djibouti, Ghana, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe and Togo. It is significant that during the 2011-2015 period seven of the 10 fastest-growing economies will be in Africa. Economically, thus the African continent is marching ahead with several of its countries posting a high growth rate and emerging as a pole in the world economy.

At the UN, during India's recent membership of the UN Security Council in 2011-12, gave New Delhi an opportunity to project African point of view as this body dealt with a number of issues of African concern. The issues relating to Libya, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo are some the issues that can be recalled. Even otherwise India took up issues of direct interest to Africa in various fora - issues of economic growth and sustainable development, food and energy security and climate change, public health, and so on - such cross-cutting issues were constantly part of India's vision in G-20, BRICS, IBSA and such forums. New Delhi continues to believe that the African societies, like other societies cannot

be re-ordered from outside through military intervention and must decide their own future.

India was privileged to be invited to the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the African Union in May, 2013. Vice President of India while attending the celebrations reiterated New Delhi's commitment to work with Africa to leverage India's strength. The vibrant India-Africa cooperation extended beyond trade and investment to technology transfer, knowledge sharing and skills development. The two India-Africa Forum Summits have taken this cooperation to new heights. The next edition of this Summit, which was slated for 2014, now stands postponed to 2015.

The ITEC programme providing for cooperation in skill development and its up-gradation has in it a positive manifestation of the South-South Cooperation.

Over 22,000 new scholarships for African Students in various academic courses and training programmes including special agriculture scholarships and C.V. Raman fellowships are being utilised by African students and scholars. India has offered more than 700 CV Raman Scientific Fellowships till 2014. India is also working towards establishment of Virtual University to cater to the educational needs of the African students.

The Pan African e-Network Project, set up by India giving connectivity to the countries of Africa among themselves and with India is a unique project to use Indian expertise in information technology to bring benefits of healthcare and higher education to all the countries of the continent. In trade India is the third largest export destination for Africa. There is a bilateral trade target of 100 bn US Dollars with Africa by 2015 going up from over 67 bn US Dollars at present. The footprints of Indian private and public sector enterprises are clearly visible in many African countries. The CII-EXIM Bank, India-Africa Project Partnership Conclaves are now regular feature. The last one had over 500 projects with investment of 70 bn US Dollars under discussion. The future areas of cooperation in the energy sector are renewable energy, wind

and solar power projects. Since 2002-03 to boost industrial development of African countries, India approved 123 Lines of Credit, aggregating 5.9 billion US Dollars. In May 2011, Prime Minister of India had announced a Line of Credits of 5 billion US Dollars over the next three years to Africa.

The opportunities for India-Africa cooperation in diverse sectors are immense and vast. The unique youth outreach programme - "INDIAAFRICA-A shared Future" invites creative exchanges between young Africans and Indians through a multidisciplinary contest series and a Young Visionaries Fellowship Program. Under this concept, campus outreach programmes have been organised in institutions across 17 African countries.

It is fervently hoped that Africa and India cooperation would be mutually beneficial and its success augurs well both for Africa and India in the coming years.

V THE UNITED STATES

India's strategic partnership with the US was strengthened during the year as a result of developing partnership with the US on several issues. The relations were best described by the Prime Minister during his visit to New York and Washington in September when he said that the "United States is one of our most important strategic partner and during President Obama's regime, we have taken several steps to widen and deepen this partnership in diverse fields". He went on to describe the US "as one of the most important partner providing investment and technology support for India's development." In September 2013 the Prime Minister had his third summit meeting with President Obama. Prime Minister was effusive after his meeting with President Obama and said he always believed "that India and America are indispensable partners". During the recent years India-US cooperation expanded the frontiers of trade and investment in technology. The bilateral trade now stands at US\$ 100 billion. American investments in India are US\$ 80 billion and they are growing despite the slowdown in the global economy. There are contacts in various

sectors--high technology trade, terrorism, trade and commerce, education, health, climate change and environment, science and technology, Defence etc. India is looking anxiously how the situation in Afghanistan would work out once the US troops withdraw from Afghanistan. The Pakistani factor remains uncertain since Pakistan continues to be the epicentre of terrorism, despite expectations that Nawaz Sharif would like it to tone down. The role of ISI and Jihadis remain critical.

VI EUROPE

Europe had two high level visits from New Delhi. The President Pranab Mukherjee visited Belgium and Turkey in October. The Prime Minister made a bilateral visit to Germany in April and in October to Moscow for the annual summit. In Berlin Prime Minister attended the concluding functions of the "Days of India in Germany" a cultural festival which lasted for two years having been inaugurated by Chancellor Angela Merkel in May 2011. The defining feature of India-Germany relationship is economic partnership and source of investment in both manufacturing and infrastructure. The investment in infrastructure sector in the next five years was estimated to be about a trillion dollars and Germany's role becomes critical and Prime Minister was keen on German investments with its high level of technology. One of the most important outcomes of the visit was the formation of the India-Germany High Technology Group, which held its first meeting in September, where Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh led the Indian side. The meeting exchanged views on strengthening trade in high technology and on issues related to export control and non-proliferation and preparations for the expanded second round in 2014.

The relations with Russia remained robust and there was interaction at all the levels as in the past including the annual Summit meeting this time in Moscow. In April the two countries signed a Regulation defining the functions and procedure of the Joint Commission, which had been established by an

agreement signed in December 2010 for cooperation in the field of Emergency Management which would take care of Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disaster etc.

The Summit in October testified to the depth, diversity and dynamism of India-Russia cooperation. It also marked the high degree of convergence of global developments and the collaboration of the two countries in international forums. The prime minister described the discussions with President Putin as "characterised by the warmth, goodwill and trust that permeates all aspects of our partnership." Both leaders expressed their "satisfaction with the progress in ... bilateral cooperation including in defence, energy, high technology trade, investments, space, science, education, culture and tourism" It was noted with satisfaction that the bilateral trade had grown by 25% to reach \$11 billion. Noting the importance of Kudakulam Nuclear Power Project in Tamilnadu, satisfaction was expressed that it would be completed early (It has since been completed and is now critical). There is now a proposal to launch negotiations on a free trade agreement with the Customs Union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus. Dr. Singh was hopeful that Russia would continue to be a strong and key partner in defence cooperation as this has moved to the stage of joint design development and production of key defence equipment. These were the key areas of bilateral partnership which had the pride of place in their discussions, beside the subjects of security, terrorism, regional and international peace etc.

New Delhi remained connected with other European countries too. Annual Foreign Office consultations were held with United Kingdom and Belarus. External Affairs Minister visited Hungary and Norway. Hungarian Prime Minister visited New Delhi. Introduction of Cash Bonds by the UK for Visa created some unpleasant feeling but it was resolved soon as Britain withdrew the proposal. Avoidance of Double Taxation agreements were signed with Macedonia and Malta.

VII REGIONAL & MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

The world is today afflicted by diverse problems of trade and commerce, financial slowdown, terrorism and security, environment and climate change, and the like which cannot be solved by any one country individually. These problems need collective solutions and efforts on regional or intra-regional basis. Action at that level needs consultations and discussions at multilateral level. Hence the need for multilateral forums where such discussions could take place. To fulfil this need several groupings at various levels have been formed. Some of these groupings are the European Union, ASEAN, East Asia Summit, BIMSTEC, ASEM, SAARC, CICA, SCO, SICA, CELAC, SADC, ECOWAS, G.20, Conference of Parties (CoP), WTO, SCO, Pacific Islands Forum, and GCC. These groupings meet periodically to discuss their common problems and find solutions which could be applied universally or selectively across the board. Considering India's size and resources and reach, it is now member of most of these groupings. The frequency of their meetings in distant parts of the world, of course puts some strains on the human resources in meeting attendance obligations. Given the nature of the problems involved, these obligations have to be met. Important as these meetings are, they are no substitute for bilateral diplomacy, which has its own obligations and are to be met. Both the multilateral as well as bilateral diplomacy calls for personal interaction and therefore pressure on time of the people occupying high offices.

The annual ASEAN - India Summit was held in Bandar Sri Begawan (Brunei) in October and their foreign ministers' meeting in November. ASEAN-India mechanisms today include the ASEAN-India Summit and seven Meetings at the level of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Trade, Agriculture, Tourism, Telecommunications, Environment and New and Renewable Energy. There is the possibility of more dialogue mechanisms to open up in future. ASEAN-India trade today is at USD 76 billion and there is a target of USD 100 billion by 2015 and USD 200 billion by 2022.

The Foreign Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Countries met in Perth in November to exchange views on their common problems and on cooperation in keeping the area free from piracy.

ASEM Foreign Ministers met in India in November for their 11th meeting which was inaugurated by the Vice President. The conference attended by 34 foreign ministers from Asia and Europe and representatives of the EU had its theme: "ASEM: Bridge to Partnership for Growth and Development" provided opportunity for the ministers to exchange views on a number of economic and financial issues and sustainable development as also non-traditional security challenges".

The leaders of the G-20 countries met in St. Petersburg in September to discuss the financial issues facing the international community. The Prime Minister described the meeting of G-20 "on the international plane an essay in persuasion" and termed it 'a very successful' one. The Leaders' Declaration and the St. Petersburg Action Plan are in line with the position India had advocated at the meeting, the prime minister Dr. Singh said.

The BRICS comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa has emerged a new yet important inter-continental grouping to tackle the social and economic problems of their member countries. The Leaders of the BRICS attending the G-20 Summit in St. Petersburg held a special meeting among themselves to consider the "continued slow pace of the recovery, high unemployment in some of the countries and on-going challenges and vulnerabilities in the global economy." The foreign ministers of the BRICS too met in New York in the same month on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session. The BRICS' leaders took a momentous decision to launch a BRICS Bank at their next meeting. The meeting confirmed that agreement reached earlier on the 100 billion dollar currency arrangement.

The Foreign Ministers of the IBSA, which represents three of the five BRICS countries met at the same time and at the

same venue. They agreed to formally launch the IBSA at its 10th anniversary and exchanged their views on the contemporary global and regional issues of mutual interest as well as to review progress made by IBSA cooperation since its formalisation through the Brasilia Declaration in 2003. The ministers noted with satisfaction the consolidation of the IBSA Dialogue Forum. It was underscored that that IBSA has succeeded in laying strong foundation for multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral cooperation in a wide range of areas.

In November the Foreign Ministers of RIC (Russia, India, China) the forerunner of the BRICS met in New Delhi and reiterated the importance attached to the Russia-India-China Trilateral format as a platform to foster closer dialogue and practical cooperation in identified areas among the three countries. They expressed their resolve to strengthen the trilateral dialogue for consultation and coordination on regional and global issues of mutual interest in the spirit of openness, solidarity, mutual understanding and trust.

The External Affairs Minister represented India at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) held in Bishkek in September. India is an Observer at this Organisation.

In the first decade of the 21st century, Indian economy saw phenomenal growth touching almost double digit. Along with India other countries of Asia too enjoyed similar robust growth. It came to be known as the Asian Century. It is believed that after centuries of stagnation and deprivation, Asia was once again regaining its primacy in the global economy. While there has been some slowdown in the economies of the world, particularly of the developed countries since the meltdown of 2008, the Asian economies too had set back in its wake and the GDP growth slipped but less than that of the developed economies. The Asian economies kept their momentum as compared to the western world, thus keeping the Asian flag flying. In 2013 the IMF expected the advanced developed economies to grow at only 1.2% while developing Asia grew faster at 7.1%. The Asian region played a crucial role in driving and stabilizing the global recovery process. In that process, India made its own contribution.

The Government of India remained wedded to the concept that while high economic growth was essential, it cannot be an end in itself. The benefits of rapid growth must necessarily lead to betterment in the lives of the common people. Equitable distribution of the fruits of development requires the pursuit of development through empowerment of people. This is the key to inclusive growth, was the government *mantra*. Creation of new productive job opportunities for the growing labour force is the most powerful means of empowering the people. For this purpose, skill development becomes the most potent instrument. India being a firm believer in the benefits of regional integration and its concomitant benefits for the all round development of the country. To achieve those objectives though the instrumentality of foreign policy India remained committed to promoting deep engagement with the countries of East and Southeast Asia and beyond. In the recent past, Government of India has in an orientation of its foreign policy given economic development primacy of position, making it an enabling instrument for symbiotic relations with the partner countries.

The 2013 was the penultimate year before the general elections which became due in 2014. The government while on the guards went ahead with its commitments and engaged the partner countries. The annual summit level meetings with Chinese, Russian and Japanese leaders were gone through. The prime minister did not fight shy of keeping his appointment with the US President for summit level talks to engage the United States to India's development. The result has been visible towards the end when the economy showed signs of revival. But the lost time was too much to make up at the end.

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INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-I

GENERAL

**001. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson.
New Delhi, January 8, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Belated Happy New Year to all of you and thank you very much for coming over for this first briefing in this year. I have a couple of announcements to make and then will take your questions if you have any.

The first announcement I have to make is about the visit of the External Affairs Minister to France. External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid will be traveling to Paris on 10th and 11th of this month. He will have bilateral discussions with his counterpart Mr. Laurent Fabius, and will also call on the President of France, Mr. Francois Hollande.

As you are aware, the last visit of a Foreign Minister from France was in 2011 when Mr. Alain Juppe had met his then counterpart Mr. S.M. Krishna. Subsequently in July 2012, on the sidelines of the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, Mr. Krishna had met his then counterpart Mr Laurent Fabius. This is of course Mr. Salman Khurshid's first meeting and his first visit to Paris as External Affairs Minister.

In addition, I have another announcement and this pertains to the visit of the Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam. Mr. Vu Van Ninh who will be arriving in New Delhi shortly. We have separately sent you an advisory for his meetings in New Delhi. Tomorrow the External Affairs Minister will be meeting him. We will also have a media interaction subsequent to that meeting.

Finally, the third announcement that I have is about the meeting of the BRICS High Representatives for National Security. This is on the 10th of this month. We will send you a separate media advisory. It is expected that the High Representatives from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa will meet at the Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan. Subsequent to that meeting we will also have a media interaction by Mr. Shivshankar Menon, the Indian National Security Advisor.

Thank you very much. I have no further announcements to make. In case you have any questions, I will answer them.

Q: Would you please elaborate more about the visit of Mr. Khurshid to France? What will he discuss with his counterpart?

Official Spokesperson: If I may say, there has been a long gap between the visit of an Indian External Affairs Minister to France the last time and now. It is almost a decade. So, there is a lot to catch up in terms of a visit to Paris. As you know, France is a member of the Security Council and is involved in a variety of international matters. It is expected that Mr. Khurshid will use the benefit of the visit to discuss with him global issues.

In addition, India and France have a very robust bilateral relationship. For example, our trade in 2011-12 was approximately US\$ 8.9 billion. For your information, about 800 or so French companies have their representative offices or other forms of representation in India. More than a 100 Indian companies have their representative offices or subsidiary offices in France.

France by my understanding is the ninth largest investor in India over a period of a decade or so, say from 2000 to 2012. On the other hand, India is fast emerging as a major investor in France. It is the thirteenth largest investor in France over the last five or seven year period. So, there are a lot of issues to discuss. In addition, as you are aware, we have a very elaborate relationship on nuclear matters. Finally, there are defence cooperation agreements which are in the pipeline. All these issues will be on the table for discussion when the two leaders meet.

Q: What is the status of Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant?

Official Spokesperson: The Ministry of External Affairs is not the right Ministry to answer questions about the status of the establishment of a nuclear power plant. Therefore, I think it would not be fair on my part to respond to what is the status. But my understanding in terms of the bilateral relationship is that the negotiations on that are continuing between France and India; and we hope to have an update on that when we go to Paris. Question: Has France allayed any fears that India might have on nuclear power after Fukushima?

Official Spokesperson: We have a very very sound atomic energy establishment. So, the concerns, if any, relate to articulating to the public the safety of our nuclear power plants rather than within our nuclear establishment itself. India and France along with other countries are involved in nuclear safety through the IAEA. There is a safety convention where all countries interested in nuclear power do meet. And there have

been extensive discussions on Fukushima and its aftermath. So, the issues are not that our scientists have concerns, but how to convey and allay concerns of the general public, which are there and which are genuine, through perhaps a public outreach programme by our nuclear establishment.

Q: What are the precise reasons for our deepening our engagement with Vietnam?

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and take you back in time. After 1954, after Dien Bien Phu, Pandit Nehru was amongst the first leaders to visit Vietnam. Similarly, Ho Chi Minh visited India way back in 1958. Therefore, our relationship is something which goes back several decades. As far as the current phase is concerned, the Vice Premier of Vietnam is coming in connection with the India-Vietnamese Year of Friendship which is at its closure. He is coming for the closure event. For those of you who followed this previously, the Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. E. Ahamed had visited Vietnam last year in January for the start of these festivities. During this time there have been extensive activities by our Mission in Vietnam and this is the closure of that event.

In terms of our trade with Vietnam, my understanding is that in 2011 it was approximately US\$ 4 billion with the balance of trade in favour of India. We expect that in 2012 also it would be in the same vicinity or a little higher. Our major exports to Vietnam are in terms of pharmaceuticals, also machinery and auto parts. From Vietnam interestingly mobile telephones and accessories are emerging as a major area, and there are others for example, coffee, bit of coal, etc. We also have a very robust technical assistance programme with Vietnam where approximately 150 Vietnamese students avail of ITEC scholarships. There has been an increase from about 75 which was there previously.

We have regular exchange of visits. The last President of India had visited Vietnam in 2008. Subsequently, their President has also visited here in 2011. So, high-level visits and interactions are integral and intrinsic to our relationship with Vietnam. It is neither new nor has it deepened suddenly. It is an established relationship, and we actually are celebrating forty years of our bilateral relations.

Q: Could you just give the current status of Indo-French nuclear deal? Why no nuclear business has accrued from France? Is it a fact that the

French also, like the Americans and Russians, are rather intimidated by the Indian nuclear liability laws? And if I may ask another question, what is the agenda of the BRICS NSAs' meeting?

Official Spokesperson: I think I will only answer the first question because we need to be very understanding of each other; we have several others in this room to ask questions. So, let us go on No.1 issue.

I think some of the terms you used are certainly way beyond what I would ever use. Anybody who has worked with nuclear issues should be aware that from the time you begin discussion on a nuclear power project to the time it reaches its culmination, it is normal to be at least six years or more. This is normal in nuclear because it is a very sophisticated technology; it has a lot of issues that you need to tie up. It is not only in terms of legal infrastructure but also technical issues, regulatory issues, etc. Having myself worked in a nuclear establishment for some time, I am aware that there is no country in the world where nuclear power plants are established immediately after announcements are made. And this is normal.

As regards the nuclear liability issues, these are issues which have been raised from time to time by several of our partners and I think we are very transparent in saying that our Parliament has passed a law; we can work within the four corners of that law and try and work out solutions within that pattern. It is now for our partners to understand this. We are certain that they understand where we are coming from. It is within those broad parameters that we can work out solutions. Let me assure you that we are working them out.

Q:...(Inaudible)... when it comes to Kudankulam 3 and 4, India has expressed its willingness, rather conveyed its willingness to the Russians to in fact double up the prices. Now the nuclear reactors will be almost double the price. Have we come up with a similar kind of a proposal for the French?

Official Spokesperson: When techno-commercial negotiations are under way, I think it is not quite appropriate that we start speculating on how much the price will go up. That the price will go up is a known factor because if you have new requirements, it is likely to happen that each requirement entails a cost. But that said, I think what you talked about, double up is I think not what the facts would warrant in that case or in

any other case. But sure these are ongoing negotiations. So, let us not sit here and decide how much it will go up. I think it is in the public domain that these techno-commercial negotiations will lead to perhaps an increase in price.

Q: Is it possible to talk a bit about supply of ENR technology from France? In fact there was some sort of verbal assurance from the previous French President Mr. Sarkozy. Now that he is no longer there, has this been impacted in any way?

Official Spokesperson: I do not know. We have not had senior level discussions on this at this stage. Maybe when we come back from Paris! And let me tell you ENR is a sophisticated issue which has implications of a variety of things. It is not that we are going in for that now. Again if any of you followed these, these will take more than a decade should this come about. So, let us not discuss this in a very casual manner at this stage. These are issues which are fairly complicated and complex and will take time to work out.

Q: Iran has made a demand for life saving drugs. Please tell us something about this.

Official Spokesperson: Mujhe koi jaankaari nahin hai iske baare mein.

Q: On Vietnam I wanted to ask (1) about defence cooperation and (2) about deals on oil exploration. Are we going to get new blocks, or have we found any gas or oil, or what has happened? And are we going to stick on? How much longer?

Official Spokesperson: Let me lay the facts on the table and then you can take it from there. We already have gas which is coming out from Vietnamese wells and it started almost a decade ago. I think your reference is to the blocks where there was this debate in last summer when the oil lease for those blocks - 128 and 127 if I am not mistaken - were to expire in last June. At that stage, our technical assessment was that it was not a commercially viable proposition at that stage given that you need to get equipment which is pretty costly to hire etc; and at that stage it was difficult and it was not a viable process to go ahead with. The Vietnamese Government and the Vietnamese oil organization had then provided us the two more years option to consider this and decide on it in June 2014. So, we are at this stage in the process of the ONGC evaluating whether it would be techno-commercially viable.

Q: Chinese had some reservations about our getting involved in oil exploration in what they consider to be part of their territory. Did we have any bilateral or trilateral discussions involving China and Vietnam on this matter?

Official Spokesperson: No, we have not had any discussions on this matter.

Q: There is a case of some Yemen Embassy diplomats involved in molestation in Delhi. I understand some of them were questioned and perhaps two are released. Has the Government of India taken it up with them? Could we demand recall of at least those diplomats who were involved in it?

Official Spokesperson: My understanding is that none of them are serving diplomats in the sense that they are not diplomats, but they hold diplomatic passports because they are related to diplomats. They are of three countries. I do not want to name a single country. None of them are now in custody. We have asked our police authorities to provide us details of what are the infringements caused by these people. Once we receive them, we will take it up with the concerned Missions. At this stage I cannot answer further than that. But the facts are as I have indicated to you.

Q: The Vedic Culture Centre in Moscow is to be demolished on the 15th of January. What we have learnt is that no alternative arrangement has been made as yet. Your comments on this!

Official Spokesperson: This is an issue which has been simmering for some time. The ISKCON's Vedic Culture Centre has been served a notice I understand by local authorities for some infringement of local regulations. Our Embassy has been following this up with the local authorities in Moscow. It is our endeavour to try and work out an amicable solution. I do not know the exact dates on this, but let me assure you this has been followed fairly regularly by our Embassy there. I do not have today an update on the dates and what the situation is right now. I will try and find out and pass it on to you. But my understanding is that our Ambassador has been carefully and regularly in touch with ISKCON authorities as well as the Moscow city authorities on this matter.

Q: Influential Iranian official Mr. Jalili was here last week. Do you have any update on the way forward on our economic relations in the wake of

sanctions especially oil payments? Were all those issues on the table? Were they discussed?

Official Spokesperson: We are likely to have a Joint Commission between India and Iran in the first quarter of this year and all these issues are to be discussed fairly candidly and in a fairly detailed manner in that format. Mr. Jalili came for discussions with his counterpart Mr. Menon. This is a separate issue where they have bilateral discussions between their National Security Council and ours. As regards specifics of our economic relations etc., these are on the table when the Joint Commission meets.

Q: Yesterday, Deputy High Commissioner of India was called to Foreign Office in Islamabad over the incident of LOC in Kashmir. What have been the actions taken by Indian side on this?

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and put the facts before you. The fact is that in the early hours of January 6, Pakistani troops in the sector commenced unprovoked firing on Indian troops. The roof of a civilian house in Churunda village was damaged in the Pakistani mortar fire. Indian troops, therefore, undertook controlled retaliation in response. Therefore, we deny that Indian troops had crossed the Line of Control in the Rampur Sector or had violated the ceasefire.

Let me also say that India is committed to the sanctity of the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, which is one of the most important confidence building measures between our two countries. The ceasefire along the Line of Control has largely held since 2003 and is an important element in the confidence building process between India and Pakistan. I would also like to inform you that the DGMOs of the two countries have been in touch over this incident. And we call upon the Pakistani authorities to ensure that the sanctity of the Line of Control is upheld at all times and to ensure that such incidents of unprovoked firing across the LOC do not recur.

**Thank you very much.
(Concluded)**



**002. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of External Affairs Minister to Paris and other issues .
New Delhi, January 8, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Belated Happy New Year to all of you and thank you very much for coming over for this first briefing in this year. I have a couple of announcements to make and then will take your questions if you have any.

The first announcement I have to make is about the visit of the External Affairs Minister to France. External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid will be traveling to Paris on 10th and 11th of this month. He will have bilateral discussions with his counterpart Mr. Laurent Fabius, and will also call on the President of France, Mr. Francois Hollande.

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Q: Iran ki taraf se India se demand ki gayi hai life-saving davayion ki. Iske baare mein agar kuchh jaankaari hai to bata dein, Sir.

Official Spokesperson: Mujhe koi jaankaari nahin hai iske baare mein.

Q: On Vietnam I wanted to ask (1) about defence cooperation and (2) about deals on oil exploration. Are we going to get new blocks, or have we found any gas or oil, or what has happened? And are we going to stick on? How much longer?

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Official Spokesperson: We are likely to have a Joint Commission between India and Iran in the first quarter of this year and all these issues are to be discussed fairly candidly and in a fairly detailed manner in that format. Mr. Jalili came for discussions with his counterpart Mr. Menon. This is a separate issue where they have bilateral discussions between their National Security Council and ours. As regards specifics of our economic relations etc., these are on the table when the Joint Commission meets.

Q: Yesterday, Deputy High Commissioner of India was called to Foreign Office in Islamabad over the incident of LOC in Kashmir. What have been the actions taken by Indian side on this?

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and put the facts before you. The fact is that in the early hours of January 6, Pakistani troops in the sector commenced unprovoked firing on Indian troops. The roof of a civilian house in Churunda village was damaged in the Pakistani mortar fire. Indian troops, therefore, undertook controlled retaliation in response. Therefore, we deny that Indian troops had crossed the Line of Control in the Rampur Sector or had violated the ceasefire.

Let me also say that India is committed to the sanctity of the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, which is one of the most important confidence building measures between our two countries. The ceasefire along the Line of Control has largely held since 2003 and is an important element in the confidence building process between India and Pakistan. I would also like to inform you that the DGMOs of the two countries have been in touch over this incident. And we call upon the Pakistani authorities to ensure that the sanctity of the Line of Control is upheld at all times and to ensure that such incidents of unprovoked firing across the LOC do not recur.

**Thank you very much.
(Concluded)**



**003. Keynote address by Minister of State for External Affairs
Smt. Preneet Kaur at Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.**

Kochi, January 9, 2013.

Dr. M.K. Muneer, Hon'ble Minister for Panchayats & Social Welfare,
Government of Kerala,

Shri Anto Antony, Hon'ble Member of Parliament,

Shri Mahen Utchanah, Chairman, Global Organization of People of Indian
Origin (GOPIO) International East,

Distinguished Guests,

It is indeed a matter of great pleasure for me to participate in today's discussion on safe environment for overseas Indians. As Minister of State for External Affairs, I have always interacted with the Indian diaspora in all my visits abroad. I have found this to be an extremely important exercise because it gives me the opportunity to understand the issues concerning the Indian diaspora, which is, without any doubt, contributing immensely in the growth of their host countries all over the world. Today, the Indian diaspora, which is the second largest in the world, has a diversified global presence and is working tirelessly for the betterment of the economy of many countries which they call their home today. I am told that the diaspora is now estimated at over 20 million spread across 110 countries of the world. However, the high concentration is seen in some regions which include the Middle East, United States of America, Malaysia, South Africa and Europe.

With their enormous skill, grit and hard work, the members of Indian diaspora have very succeeded in their chosen profession. Government of India also recognises the importance of Indian diaspora as it has brought economic, political and strategic benefits to India as well. We can say that the Indian diaspora really constitutes a diverse global community representing different regions, languages, cultures and faiths. They are indeed a bridge between India and the host country.

Depending on the geo-economic opportunities available, the profile of the diaspora communities varies from region to region. On one hand, there are skilled and semi-skilled workforce like the contract workers in

the Gulf region, and on the other hand, USA and Europe sustains a high presence of educated professionals of Indian origin including increasing number of technocrats. Members of the Indian diaspora have continuously played an important role in mobilising support for issues of vital concern to Indians in their host countries.

While the Indian diaspora contributes to our economy and spread our culture abroad, we should always remain conscious of their needs and concerns. There are several problems and challenges which have been brought to the notice of Government of India. I want to assure this august gathering that we had responded to them in the most effective manner. There are several problems faced by our community, for example, non-payment or under-payment of salary, false promises made by unscrupulous recruiting agents in India, low salary and substandard living conditions, refusal of their medical treatment by their employer, arbitrary changes in the terms of employment, problems of housemaids, etc.

The Government of India from time to time has taken several initiatives to create a safe environment for Indian community abroad. Some of the initiatives taken by the Government include establishment of a dedicated Community Welfare Wing, compulsory attestation of Service Agreements of all household workers, Open House sessions, free legal counselling assistance, provision of shelter to Indian women workers in distress, Labour Welfare Fund for needy workers, setting up of 24x7 helpline, Labour Welfare Fund to financially assist poor Indian workers, a new e-governance project for 'e-migrate' linking the passport system, immigration system and emigration clearance; Pension and Life Insurance Scheme for Indian workers abroad.

Here I would like to mention that it is not rare to come across Indians facing atrocity abroad. The Indian diaspora in the Middle East and Gulf region are mainly from the working class and the major issue faced by them pertains to contractual disputes with the recruiters. This is apparently because of lack of trade unions to protect the right of the immigrants. There are several cases in which these unskilled workers are subjected to difficult situation by employer in the form of holding back of passports, non-payment of salaries, etc Therefore, for the protection and welfare of the Indian workers abroad, the Government of India has signed MoUs on manpower with UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Jordan and

Malaysia. The Government has also created the Indian Community Welfare Fund which enables the Heads of the Missions to provide on site relief measure for the distressed Indian workers.

Another step in this direction by Government of India is pursuing a proactive policy to transform the emigration system and empower the emigrants through systemic interventions at the highest level. The Government has notified the Emigration (Amendment) Rules, 2009 revising the eligibility criteria of Recruiting Agents enhancing the recruiting capacity and increasing the security amount and service charges.

In addition, the Government has undertaken steps to deepen the engagement with the non-resident Indians and the persons of Indian origin. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs is implementing the 'e-migrate' project that will provide end-to-end computerised solutions for all processes emigration system. This system will link all the given stakeholders on a common platform which will be used by the workers, offices of Protector of Emigrants, recruitment agencies, immigration officials, employers and Indian Missions abroad. Another initiative of the Government of India is the Pension and Life Insurance Scheme for Indian workers. I believe that this is being implemented on a pilot basis and soon it will be taken up in all the ECR (Emigration Clearance Required) countries and all over India. I am sure this scheme would be extremely beneficial to the workers.

An Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC), with a 24X7 helpline supported by eight regional languages assists emigrants/emigrants intending to go abroad for employment to 17 notified ECR countries.

It is imperative to highlight that 'bilateral cooperation initiative' taken by the Government of India, with an objective to diversify the overseas destination base for the Indian workers (under which the government would be signing labour mobility partnership agreements with countries where employment opportunities are likely to emerge). Government of India has signed bilateral Social Security Agreements (SSA) with Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Denmark, South Korea, Hungary, The Czech Republic, Norway, Finland, Canada, Japan, and Sweden. These agreements are being pursued with the developed countries to protect the social security interests of Indian professionals residing there.

It goes without saying that the various diaspora organisations play a critical role in maintaining a harmonious relation between several diverse groups in their home away from home. These organisations have filled the vacuum which would otherwise be difficult to fill. I am certain that the role played by such organisations will increase in the years to come as the diaspora population will increase and they would be involved in several new initiatives hitherto unknown to them.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the synergies created due to the efficient implementation of various schemes have definitely created an environment which is in the best interest of our diaspora. All our Missions play a very active role in interacting and resolving issues pertaining to the diaspora. I am certain that today's deliberations would go a long way in providing useful inputs in making the working environment safer for the diaspora. I am looking forward to hear the view points of the distinguished panelists and thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to share some thoughts on this very important issue.



004. Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister.

New Delhi, January 25, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming today.

With all our Ministers traveling, I have no specific major news announcement to make to you, nor do I have an announcement to make in terms of anything that we would be undertaking during the next couple of days. Beyond that we have a hectic diplomatic schedule that is being worked out. I will make those announcements once all the arrangements are made. So I would like to inform you that I have no specific announcement to make, but I am open to responding to any questions that you may like to ask.

Q: I just wanted to know what the Government's reaction is to what Hillary Clinton said in her Global Town Hall the other day, first on David

Headley where she said she believes he has got the best possible sentence and that he will continue to cooperate in future as well, basically in a sense ruling out extradition because that was the question put to her. Is India going to pursue his extradition? If so, how, given that he did have a plea bargain with the United States?

Official Spokesperson: We have always held that bringing to justice the perpetrators of 26/11 is a work in progress which we intend to take to its logical conclusion. Let me take some time and try and explain our position on this.

Our objective has been that the processes initiated with the filing of the charge-sheet against nine individuals by the NIA Special Court regarding the conspiracy surrounding the Mumbai terror attack is taken forward; and that is our goal. Two of these charge-sheets are against David Coleman Headley and Tahawwur Rana. The US has been helpful thus far within the limits of their own laws. They have enabled us access to Headley. Our officials have been able to spend seven days questioning him. However, we have not been able to question Rana earlier given his rights as an accused under US law. But now that he is a sentenced prisoner, we will once again seek US Government's support for access to him and also for further access, as may be deemed necessary, to Headley.

We intend to continue to work with the US to seek access to others who may be of interest, and we will use all existing bilateral mechanisms for this. We also wish to continue to work with the US to help us in securing access to all others who are charge-sheeted and to produce them before the NIA court. We will work on all available legal channels and avenues to ensure that the court case of the NIA proceeds and that the charge-sheeted individuals are produced before the court.

If I may try and summarise what I have said so far, we have received good cooperation from the United States in the 26/11 cases; we intend to work closely with the United States in taking these legal processes forward; our demand for the extradition of Rana and Headley continues to stand.

Q: I am from the North East. China earlier constructed dams on the Brahmaputra in Tibet. Very shortly they are going to construct three

more dams in Tibet. During the rainy season the river waters will actually enter huge areas of North East including Arunachal Pradesh and Assam and adjoining areas and our neighbouring country Bangladesh also will be totally drowned, severe damage will be caused, lakhs of people will be rendered homeless, and property will be damaged. What steps is your Government going to take? Are you going to take the issue up with the Government of China?

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much, Sir, that is a fairly long question and I think along with that it is a statement too. Let me try and respond to some of the issues that you have raised.

The Government of India carefully monitors all development on the Brahmaputra River. As a lower riparian state with considerable established use rights to the waters of the river, India has conveyed its views and concerns to the Chinese authorities including at the highest levels of the Government of the People's Republic of China. India once again urges China to ensure that the interests of downstream states are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas. I hope that is an adequate response.

Q: Did the Chinese respond to our concerns? Do they indicate they are doing something about it or is it just a routine complaint that we have filed?

Official Spokesperson: I do not want to get into disclosing diplomatic dialogue. I think I will put out the statement that I have just made. If you read it, it covers all aspects including a response to that question. I would suggest please read it carefully.

Q: There are three dams we are talking about. We know that at least in one case last year on the dam at Jiache, after construction activity was detected India had raised it, as you rightly said. Have we raised the issue of the other two dams as well? **Official Spokesperson:** I am not going to get into the specifics at this stage. This question that he had asked was a specific question, and I have responded with a specific answer. I would suggest that please carefully read that answer, you will have elements of your question answered in that.

Q: Today I read on Twitter that India pledged some money for Mali. Would you please elaborate more about India's ... (Inaudible)... the situation in Mali?

Official Spokesperson: India's position on international terrorism has been clear and consistent. We unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Wherever and by whosoever committed, regardless of their motivation, we consider it criminal and unjustifiable. We also believe that the fight against the scourge of terrorism must be unrelenting. We as members of the Security Council last year, along with other members as well as the AU and the ECOWAS had made a shared attempt to arrive at a comprehensive strategy to deal with the crisis in Mali. The outcome of that was Resolution 2085. The United States Security Council had expressed its support and understanding of the ongoing military operation in the context of Security Council Resolution 2085.

As far as this issue was concerned, there was a meeting in Addis Ababa on 29th. This was attended by our Ambassador in Addis Ababa who is also accredited to the African Union. And we have decided that we would pledge one million dollars to the African Union Donors Conference in support of African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). In addition to that, we have a longstanding engagement with Mali in the fields of capacity building, human resources development, and creation of social and physical infrastructure.

An end to this crisis would enable us to resume this partnership for the benefit of the people of Mali. And it is our intention that this amount of assistance of a development nature would go as much as 100 million dollars, once the situation stabilizes.

Q: Is it in the form of urging China or is it in the form of a complaint to China? In case China does not listen to what India is saying, pay heed, is there any international recourse that India could resort to?

Official Spokesperson: I think on that issue let us take it step-by-step, let us not jump the gun. Again as I said, the statement that I have made will be available very shortly on the web site. Please read it carefully. What it means is self evident.

Q: I am working for a Spanish news agency. I would like to know if Mr. Khurshid has an idea to travel to Latin America.

Official Spokesperson: Welcome to our briefings first of all. It is nice to have you here and see your interest in Indian foreign policy. Our regular

practice is, once we tie up all arrangements only then we make announcements. I have started this meeting by saying that we have no announcement to make. Therefore, at this stage we have no finalized plans on any visits this week or the next.

Q: Pakistan has made counter charges against India of beheading their soldiers and also of using irregulars to behead civilians in Pakistan. And they have raised this issue with the UNMOGIP. What is your response and also what is India's position with regard to UNMOGIP?

Official Spokesperson: I have not heard through any diplomatic channel any such complaint that you have mentioned. Therefore, I am oblivious to what you are mentioning because this has not ever been raised through a diplomatic channel. Therefore, there is no requirement for me to answer. If you are referring to news reports, I think the Ministry of Defence had responded to those news reports and I do not need to respond to them because the Government of India speaks in one voice on this.

As regards your question on UNMOGIP, I think I have repeated that many times and I do not think we need to respond to this again because our Ambassador most recently at the UN had articulated our position. I will send you a copy of that statement which is fairly all-encompassing and provides our considered view on that. There is no change on this. This is not a position that we have articulated now. It has been a position that we have held for the last forty years.

Q: I need a clarification. The gentleman who has been on the Wanted List in India has been brought back from Indonesia after apparently getting his visa and passport renewed. Can you just explain as to why such a thing did happen? Or was there a mix up?

Official Spokesperson: If you mean his passport renewal, that is the only thing that I as the Ministry of External Affairs can respond to. I think Srinjoy Chowdhury and the Times Now Group have been following this for some time. But let me try and explain to you the situation which I have responded to previously on this.

We work on the basis of information available to the Ministry of External Affairs. When this question was put to me I think in May or June, we had

then responded that as far as we were aware, there were no restrictions provided to us by any agency of the Government of India not to renew passport of the individual – the individual in this context was the person you mentioned. Consequently, as an Indian citizen, he was entitled to all services that all other Indian citizens are entitled to. Subsequently in September 2012 we did receive information about his activities and the need to revoke his passport. That was done expeditiously. And subsequent to that his stay in Indonesia became difficult because he does not have a valid passport. Consequently, at a certain stage he was arrested or detained by the immigration authorities in Indonesia who immediately contacted our Mission there, which in turn promptly contacted those agencies who had since September 2012 been in touch with us about the alleged misdeeds of this individual.

We have very good cooperation from the Indonesian Government and that led to his deportation in double quick time as far as we are concerned. So as we see it, this was a success of the efforts of the Mission in Indonesia which acted proactively and quickly and promptly in responding to a request that was received by them last year. Anything that was done before that was in consonance with the norms that you would expect us to follow in dealing with Indian citizens.

Q: When is the PM going to Japan? There were reports that he is likely to visit in Feb. But that is being pushed back I think. So, when is he likely to visit Japan?

Official Spokesperson: I do not want to answer to speculative reports. I have no information of a visit that you are mentioning of at this stage.

Q: ...(Inaudible)... Does India see it as betrayal because so far the Pakistan civilian government has used the excuse that it was not completely in the know of what the Army was contemplating with regard to Kargil?

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and frame my response. That there is a debate going on in Pakistan on this issue is not new. This is a debate internal to Pakistan. It is a debate which has been there for quite some time. There are people, like the gentleman you mentioned just now, with a point of view: there are others with another point of view. As far as we in The Government of India are concerned, while we closely follow this

debate, we do not participate in this. Therefore, I do not want to break that tradition of trying to participate in a debate in another country which is internal to it. But the outcome of whatever was the basis of this decision making is that India did get impacted by this and Kargil happened is something that both sides now seem to agree. And this basically justifies what we have always been saying about it.

Q: I just want to ask you about the recently concluded African Union Summit. Did India send any officials or Ministers there? Was there a discussion on the Ezulwini Consensus about nominating African representatives for the permanent seats on the Security Council? Are you in a position to throw some light on that please?

Official Spokesperson: I am in a position to throw light on our efforts and role there, not on what the leaders there decided because it is proper for them to make that open. As far as we are concerned, yes, we did send a senior official. Secretary (West) Mr. Sudhir Vyas had gone there as Special Envoy. He did have meetings with a cross section of the leadership there. And the issue of UN Security Council reform and our position and our intention to make progress on that was communicated to all concerned.

Q: Again on Anil Bastawade, it is not just about the passport having been reissued but also that Enforcement Directorate claims that certain Embassies and Consulates in Abu Dhabi and Dubai did not cooperate with them when it comes to Anil Bastawade. Is MEA looking into the matter? Is there an enquiry set up as to who are the officers involved?

Official Spokesperson: Let me make it very clear at the outset, noncooperation is not a tradition of the Ministry of External Affairs. We always try to cooperate with every agency of the Government of India because we are the external arm of the Government of India. An Embassy represents India in its entirety outside. That said, nobody has told us what you are saying has figured in some media reports. Nevertheless, we always take our job seriously and we have started to find out information on the facts of the case. Our Embassy in Abu Dhabi has been contacted, and they will in due course send a report on this matter. While this is still in the realm of media reports, we thought it best to take it up and request our Ambassador because the agencies

concerned have not been in touch on this matter. That is what I meant when I said that its in the realm of reporting because if there was such an incident, it is normal for people to get in touch and indicate that if this incident happened some years ago, as is being indicated in that report, then it is perhaps proper that we should have been informed about this before. But nonetheless we have already initiated efforts in this regard and we will get to the bottom of this shortly.

Q: You said that we are getting good cooperation from the US with reference to terrorism. But in December we did have the Department of Justice saying that cases against two senior ex-ISI officials cannot be pursued with reference to their role in 26/11. Now I am again questioning whether we are really getting good cooperation from the US because you do have Secretary of State John Kerry confirm this. You do have a drawdown coming in Afghanistan. In this context, do you actually see good cooperation with the US on terrorism?

Official Spokesperson: I get your point. I think maybe I will need to put out what I said in print. I said 'good cooperation within the parameters of their laws'. What we have seen is that within their legal context they have been assisting us to the maximum extent possible. That it does not meet our legal needs is also quite clear, but that does not mean to say that we will not pursue our legal goals. So while it is good cooperation, we need to see it in the context of their legal regime, our requirements are different and we will continue to press on that.

Now as regards the ISI, we have put out a fairly detailed statement on that which is available for the record. I do not need to reiterate that. That elaborate statement indicates our view on that position. As regards any other development that you are saying, I do not know how they are directly linked to terrorism in terms of changes of personnel etc. So I will not even dare to delve into that area.

Q: Looking forward to the forthcoming BRICS Summit, could you give us a sense of what is the progress on the Development Bank? Are we also in the running to host the Bank?

Official Spokesperson: I think you have taken five steps before even the BRICS Finance Ministers have decided on this. But that said, this is a major element which is now currently under discussion between the

Finance Ministries of the BRICS countries. We expect an outcome which will be announced at the next BRICS Summit in Durban in March. I think based on that maybe your next questions can be asked at that stage because at this stage we are not even ready with an outcome. So once that outcome is available you may like to ask that and many other questions on BRICS and the proposal for the Development Bank.

Q: The Minister of External Affairs was in Brussels recently for this Ministerial meeting. Can you tell us what the result of this meeting was?

Official Spokesperson: Yes. Minister Salman Khurshid was both in Germany and in Brussels. He was in Germany on a bilateral visit. This is the first visit by External Affairs Minister of India in a bilateral context since 2002. Germany is our largest trading partner in Europe. Also we have a strategic partnership with Germany since 2000. As you are aware, this year there will be a summit-level meeting between our Prime Minister and the Chancellor of Germany. This is scheduled later during the year. Once we finalise those dates, we will let you know. But during the discussions in Germany he met the Foreign Minister of Germany Mr. Westerwelle. They had discussions on bilateral issues including on possible arrangements in terms of high-tech exports from Germany to India.

Also, as you are aware, we have a new National Manufacturing Policy. With Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor we are looking for investments from various countries including Germany in that area. In addition, they also discussed issues in the region which meant Germany has an active interest in Afghanistan; Germany is also part of the P5+1 talks. So there were issues on all these matters that were discussed. Then the External Affairs Minister visited Brussels, as you said. In Brussels he has had a meeting yesterday with Baroness Ashton. For those of you who would like to know further details than my short summary, we have put out a YouTube version of a fifteen-minute press conference between the two leaders. That gives you a broad idea of our discussions. But largely these were related to the FTA. The goal is to try and formalize it as early as possible.

The Prime Minister of India will also be visiting Brussels for an annual summit. Last time the summit was held in Delhi; so this time it is in Europe.

And discussions related to those matters. Also the EU is our largest partner in cumulative terms. There were discussions on those matters and on the EU acquiring a larger role politically on various issues. And we had opportunity to share information and ideas on those matters where the EU High Representative has a role to play. He will later today meet his Belgian counterpart.

Q: Sir, North Korea plans to conduct a nuclear test in the near future. Could we have the Indian reaction to that?

Official Spokesperson: When they conduct it we will have a reaction. We have previously had reactions saying that we are committed to UN Security Council resolutions and we hope that North Korea will abide by them. If there is any other change in that and there is a situation of the type that you are mentioning, we will respond to it in accordance with what we have responded previously.

Q: India and EU are discussing Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement since many years. When will it be finalized?

Official Spokesperson: I wish I could tell you that sort of a thing. I do not know whether any individual can tell you that but the idea is that there is a commitment to try and resolve this as quickly as possible, and to have an agreement because both of us see that it would be a win-win situation for both of us. But that said, as they say, the devil lies in the detail, and those details are being worked out. We hope that it can be finalized at an early date. How early is early, I will leave that choice for you to make.

Thank you very much.

(Concluded)



005. Media Interaction of Official Spokesperson.**New Delhi, January 31, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming today.

With all our Ministers traveling, I have no specific major news announcement to make to you, nor do I have an announcement to make in terms of anything that we would be undertaking during the next couple of days. Beyond that we have a hectic diplomatic schedule that is being worked out. I will make those announcements once all the arrangements are made. So I would like to inform you that I have no specific announcement to make, but I am open to responding to any questions that you may like to ask.

Q: I just wanted to know what the Government's reaction is to what Hillary Clinton said in her Global Town Hall the other day, first on David Headley where she said she believes he has got the best possible sentence and that he will continue to cooperate in future as well, basically in a sense ruling out extradition because that was the question put to her. Is India going to pursue his extradition? If so, how, given that he did have a plea bargain with the United States?

Official Spokesperson: We have always held that bringing to justice the perpetrators of 26/11 is a work in progress which we intend to take to its logical conclusion. Let me take some time and try and explain our position on this.

Our objective has been that the processes initiated with the filing of the charge-sheet against nine individuals by the NIA Special Court regarding the conspiracy surrounding the Mumbai terror attack is taken forward; and that is our goal. Two of these charge-sheets are against David Coleman Headley and Tahawwur Rana. The US has been helpful thus far within the limits of their own laws. They have enabled us access to Headley. Our officials have been able to spend seven days questioning him. However, we have not been able to question Rana earlier given his rights as an accused under US law. But now that he is a sentenced prisoner, we will once again seek US Government's support for access

to him and also for further access, as may be deemed necessary, to Headley.

We intend to continue to work with the US to seek access to others who may be of interest, and we will use all existing bilateral mechanisms for this. We also wish to continue to work with the US to help us in securing access to all others who are charge-sheeted and to produce them before the NIA court. We will work on all available legal channels and avenues to ensure that the court case of the NIA proceeds and that the charge-sheeted individuals are produced before the court.

If I may try and summarise what I have said so far, we have received good cooperation from the United States in the 26/11 cases; we intend to work closely with the United States in taking these legal processes forward; our demand for the extradition of Rana and Headley continues to stand.

Q: I am from the North East. China earlier constructed dams on the Brahmaputra in Tibet. Very shortly they are going to construct three more dams in Tibet. During the rainy season the river waters will actually enter huge areas of North East including Arunachal Pradesh and Assam and adjoining areas and our neighbouring country Bangladesh also will be totally drowned, severe damage will be caused, lakhs of people will be rendered homeless, and property will be damaged. What steps is your Government going to take? Are you going to take the issue up with the Government of China?

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much, Sir, that is a fairly long question and I think along with that it is a statement too. Let me try and respond to some of the issues that you have raised.

The Government of India carefully monitors all development on the Brahmaputra River. As a lower riparian state with considerable established use rights to the waters of the river, India has conveyed its views and concerns to the Chinese authorities including at the highest levels of the Government of the People's Republic of China. India once again urges China to ensure that the interests of downstream states are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas.

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Q: Did the Chinese respond to our concerns? Do they indicate they are doing something about it or is it just a routine complaint that we have filed?

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Q: There are three dams we are talking about. We know that at least in one case last year on the dam at Jiache, after construction activity was detected India had raised it, as you rightly said. Have we raised the issue of the other two dams as well? **Official Spokesperson:** I am not going to get into the specifics at this stage. This question that he had asked was a specific question, and I have responded with a specific answer. I would suggest that please carefully read that answer, you will have elements of your question answered in that.

Q: Today I read on Twitter that India pledged some money for Mali. Would you please elaborate more about India's ... (Inaudible)... the situation in Mali?

Official Spokesperson: India's position on international terrorism has been clear and consistent. We unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Wherever and by whosoever committed, regardless of their motivation, we consider it criminal and unjustifiable. We also believe that the fight against the scourge of terrorism must be unrelenting. We as members of the Security Council last year, along with other members as well as the AU and the ECOWAS had made a shared attempt to arrive at a comprehensive strategy to deal with the crisis in Mali. The outcome of that was Resolution 2085. The United States Security Council had expressed its support and understanding of the ongoing military operation in the context of Security Council Resolution 2085.

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An end to this crisis would enable us to resume this partnership for the benefit of the people of Mali. And it is our intention that this amount of assistance of a development nature would go as much as 100 million dollars, once the situation stabilizes.

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Q: I am working for a Spanish news agency. I would like to know if Mr. Khurshid has an idea to travel to Latin America.

Official Spokesperson: Welcome to our briefings first of all. It is nice to have you here and see your interest in Indian foreign policy. Our regular practice is, once we tie up all arrangements only then we make announcements. I have started this meeting by saying that we have no announcement to make. Therefore, at this stage we have no finalized plans on any visits this week or the next.

Q: Pakistan has made counter charges against India of beheading their soldiers and also of using irregulars to behead civilians in Pakistan. And they have raised this issue with the UNMOGIP. What is your response and also what is India's position with regard to UNMOGIP?

Official Spokesperson: I have not heard through any diplomatic channel any such complaint that you have mentioned. Therefore, I am oblivious to what you are mentioning because this has not ever been raised through a diplomatic channel. Therefore, there is no requirement for me to answer. If you are referring to news reports, I think the Ministry of Defence had responded to those news reports and I do not need to respond to them because the Government of India speaks in one voice on this.

As regards your question on UNMOGIP, I think I have repeated that many times and I do not think we need to respond to this again because our Ambassador most recently at the UN had articulated our position. I will send you a copy of that statement which is fairly all-encompassing and provides our considered view on that. There is no change on this. This is not a position that we have articulated now. It has been a position that we have held for the last forty years.

Q: I need a clarification. The gentleman who has been on the Wanted List in India has been brought back from Indonesia after apparently getting his visa and passport renewed. Can you just explain as to why such a thing did happen? Or was there a mix up?

Official Spokesperson: If you mean his passport renewal, that is the only thing that I as the Ministry of External Affairs can respond to. I think Srinjoy Chowdhury and the Times Now Group have been following this for some time. But let me try and explain to you the situation which I have responded to previously on this.

We work on the basis of information available to the Ministry of External Affairs. When this question was put to me I think in May or June, we had then responded that as far as we were aware, there were no restrictions provided to us by any agency of the Government of India not to renew passport of the individual – the individual in this context was the person you mentioned. Consequently, as an Indian citizen, he was entitled to all services that all other Indian citizens are entitled to. Subsequently in September 2012 we did receive information about his activities and the need to revoke his passport. That was done expeditiously. And subsequent to that his stay in Indonesia became difficult because he does not have a valid passport. Consequently, at a certain stage he was arrested or detained by the immigration authorities in Indonesia who immediately contacted our Mission there, which in turn promptly contacted those agencies who had since September 2012 been in touch with us about the alleged misdeeds of this individual.

We have very good cooperation from the Indonesian Government and that led to his deportation in double quick time as far as we are concerned. So as we see it, this was a success of the efforts of the Mission in Indonesia which acted proactively and quickly and promptly in responding

to a request that was received by them last year. Anything that was done before that was in consonance with the norms that you would expect us to follow in dealing with Indian citizens.

Q: When is the PM going to Japan? There were reports that he is likely to visit in Feb. But that is being pushed back I think. So, when is he likely to visit Japan?

Official Spokesperson: I do not want to answer to speculative reports. I have no information of a visit that you are mentioning of at this stage.

Q: ...(Inaudible)... Does India see it as betrayal because so far the Pakistan civilian government has used the excuse that it was not completely in the know of what the Army was contemplating with regard to Kargil?

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and frame my response. That there is a debate going on in Pakistan on this issue is not new. This is a debate internal to Pakistan. It is a debate which has been there for quite some time. There are people, like the gentleman you mentioned just now, with a point of view: there are others with another point of view. As far as we in The Government of India are concerned, while we closely follow this debate, we do not participate in this. Therefore, I do not want to break that tradition of trying to participate in a debate in another country which is internal to it. But the outcome of whatever was the basis of this decision making is that India did get impacted by this and Kargil happened is something that both sides now seem to agree. And this basically justifies what we have always been saying about it.

Q: I just want to ask you about the recently concluded African Union Summit. Did India send any officials or Ministers there? Was there a discussion on the Ezulwini Consensus about nominating African representatives for the permanent seats on the Security Council? Are you in a position to throw some light on that please?

Official Spokesperson: I am in a position to throw light on our efforts and role there, not on what the leaders there decided because it is proper for them to make that open. As far as we are concerned, yes, we did send a senior official. Secretary (West) Mr. Sudhir Vyas had gone there as Special Envoy. He did have meetings with a cross section of the leadership there. And the issue of UN Security Council reform and our

position and our intention to make progress on that was communicated to all concerned.

Q: Again on Anil Bastawade, it is not just about the passport having been reissued but also that Enforcement Directorate claims that certain Embassies and Consulates in Abu Dhabi and Dubai did not cooperate with them when it comes to Anil Bastawade. Is MEA looking into the matter? Is there an enquiry set up as to who are the officers involved?

Official Spokesperson: Let me make it very clear at the outset, noncooperation is not a tradition of the Ministry of External Affairs. We always try to cooperate with every agency of the Government of India because we are the external arm of the Government of India. An Embassy represents India in its entirety outside. That said, nobody has told us what you are saying has figured in some media reports. Nevertheless, we always take our job seriously and we have started to find out information on the facts of the case. Our Embassy in Abu Dhabi has been contacted, and they will in due course send a report on this matter. While this is still in the realm of media reports, we thought it best to take it up and request our Ambassador because the agencies concerned have not been in touch on this matter. That is what I meant when I said that its in the realm of reporting because if there was such an incident, it is normal for people to get in touch and indicate that if this incident happened some years ago, as is being indicated in that report, then it is perhaps proper that we should have been informed about this before. But nonetheless we have already initiated efforts in this regard and we will get to the bottom of this shortly.

Q: You said that we are getting good cooperation from the US with reference to terrorism. But in December we did have the Department of Justice saying that cases against two senior ex-ISI officials cannot be pursued with reference to their role in 26/11. Now I am again questioning whether we are really getting good cooperation from the US because you do have Secretary of State John Kerry confirm this. You do have a drawdown coming in Afghanistan. In this context, do you actually see good cooperation with the US on terrorism?

Official Spokesperson: I get your point. I think maybe I will need to put out what I said in print. I said 'good cooperation within the parameters of their laws'. What we have seen is that within their legal context they

have been assisting us to the maximum extent possible. That it does not meet our legal needs is also quite clear, but that does not mean to say that we will not pursue our legal goals. So while it is good cooperation, we need to see it in the context of their legal regime, our requirements are different and we will continue to press on that.

Now as regards the ISI, we have put out a fairly detailed statement on that which is available for the record. I do not need to reiterate that. That elaborate statement indicates our view on that position. As regards any other development that you are saying, I do not know how they are directly linked to terrorism in terms of changes of personnel etc. So I will not even dare to delve into that area.

Q: Looking forward to the forthcoming BRICS Summit, could you give us a sense of what is the progress on the Development Bank? Are we also in the running to host the Bank?

Official Spokesperson: I think you have taken five steps before even the BRICS Finance Ministers have decided on this. But that said, this is a major element which is now currently under discussion between the Finance Ministries of the BRICS countries. We expect an outcome which will be announced at the next BRICS Summit in Durban in March. I think based on that maybe your next questions can be asked at that stage because at this stage we are not even ready with an outcome. So once that outcome is available you may like to ask that and many other questions on BRICS and the proposal for the Development Bank.

Q: The Minister of External Affairs was in Brussels recently for this Ministerial meeting. Can you tell us what the result of this meeting was?

Official Spokesperson: Yes. Minister Salman Khurshid was both in Germany and in Brussels. He was in Germany on a bilateral visit. This is the first visit by External Affairs Minister of India in a bilateral context since 2002. Germany is our largest trading partner in Europe. Also we have a strategic partnership with Germany since 2000. As you are aware, this year there will be a summit-level meeting between our Prime Minister and the Chancellor of Germany. This is scheduled later during the year. Once we finalise those dates, we will let you know. But during the discussions in Germany he met the Foreign Minister of Germany Mr. Westerwelle. They had discussions on bilateral issues including on

possible arrangements in terms of high-tech exports from Germany to India.

Also, as you are aware, we have a new National Manufacturing Policy. With Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor we are looking for investments from various countries including Germany in that area. In addition, they also discussed issues in the region which meant Germany has an active interest in Afghanistan; Germany is also part of the P5+1 talks. So there were issues on all these matters that were discussed. Then the External Affairs Minister visited Brussels, as you said. In Brussels he has had a meeting yesterday with Baroness Ashton. For those of you who would like to know further details than my short summary, we have put out a YouTube version of a fifteen-minute press conference between the two leaders. That gives you a broad idea of our discussions. But largely these were related to the FTA. The goal is to try and formalize it as early as possible.

The Prime Minister of India will also be visiting Brussels for an annual summit. Last time the summit was held in Delhi; so this time it is in Europe. And discussions related to those matters. Also the EU is our largest partner in cumulative terms. There were discussions on those matters and on the EU acquiring a larger role politically on various issues. And we had opportunity to share information and ideas on those matters where the EU High Representative has a role to play. He will later today meet his Belgian counterpart.

Q: Sir, North Korea plans to conduct a nuclear test in the near future. Could we have the Indian reaction to that?

Official Spokesperson: When they conduct it we will have a reaction. We have previously had reactions saying that we are committed to UN Security Council resolutions and we hope that North Korea will abide by them. If there is any other change in that and there is a situation of the type that you are mentioning, we will respond to it in accordance with what we have responded previously.

Q: India and EU are discussing Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement since many years. When will it be finalized?

Official Spokesperson: I wish I could tell you that sort of a thing. I do not know whether any individual can tell you that but the idea is that

there is a commitment to try and resolve this as quickly as possible, and to have an agreement because both of us see that it would be a win-win situation for both of us. But that said, as they say, the devil lies in the detail, and those details are being worked out. We hope that it can be finalized at an early date. How early is early, I will leave that choice for you to make.

Thank you very much.

(Concluded)



006. Foreign Secretary's meeting with Apex Chambers of Commerce in New Delhi.

New Delhi, February 1, 2013.

1. Foreign Secretary, Shri Ranjan Mathai and Secretary (Economic Relations), Shri Pinak R. Chakravarty had a meeting with representatives of apex business chambers namely ASSOCHAM, FICCI, CII and PHD Chamber of Commerce.
2. Foreign Secretary spoke on Ministry of External Affairs Economic and Commercial Diplomacy, which has been an intrinsic part of India's overall diplomatic effort and sought views and recommendations of the business groups. Ministry of External Affairs continued outreach programmes through new divisions such as Energy Security, Investment and Technology Promotion, Public Diplomacy and the Development Partnership Administration were also highlighted. He further said that the 77 Passport Seva Kendras which have been established in last three years as a public-private partnership was also part of Ministry's adaption to changing circumstances and public requirements.
3. The representatives of business chambers, among other things suggested that Ministry of External Affairs should focus more on specific regions such as Africa and specific sectors such as energy, promotion of Indian services industries abroad, support

by Embassies to Indian SMEs, coordination with economic and infrastructure Ministries, etc. They also suggested that the Ministry should endeavour to secure a more liberal visa regime both for incoming business visitors to India and for Indian business visitors abroad.

4. Foreign Secretary and Secretary (ER) assured representatives of the apex chambers that the Ministry will look into the suggestions made by the participants. Secretary (ER) will chair regular meetings with the business chambers on sectoral issues.



007. Interview of External Affairs Minister with the *Business Standard*.

New Delhi, 25 January 2013.

(Business Standard/by Nayanima Basu)

India has formally rejected any offer for talks with Pakistan. How do you plan to solve the crisis and ensure that there is no more cease-fire violation?

We have not said no to anything. We just think that there is a proper time and place for everything. There are still signals on bilateral and also third party intervention. We have to be very clear. It is bilateral full stop. There is no scope and never has been for third party intervention under any circumstances. I think that must settle down. Two, it is important that any contacts that takes place which will go beyond the established procedures such as the contacts between the DGMOs (Director General Military Operations) and the contacts between the flag commanders on both sides, beyond those we should have the right atmospherics and right situation for further contacts. So nobody is saying no but I think it is important that this should be done carefully, sensibly and in an appropriate manner.

When you talk of right atmospherics, somewhere does the Indian government is apprehending that they might raise the Kashmir issue?

We do not have any apprehension. We want indications, signals of sensitivity to something that we have felt is an extremely serious and a hurtful event. We want something that indicates sensitivity to our concerns. This is important. Of course, when you talk there are no conditional discussions. Our revived comprehensive dialogue does not have any conditionality but you have sensible way of prioritizing how you will proceed with a dialogue. And that's what we were doing. So that's the major thing. Now the minor thing is something that can hurt the dialogue also needs to be settled by a dialogue but a dialogue to settle a larger dialogue issue should happen in an atmosphere that makes it possible, viable and feasible. I think that's basically what we are emphasizing.

Pakistan once again missed the deadline for granting MFN (most favoured nation) trade status to us. Do you think trade normalization with Pakistan is ever possible? How do you view the cancellation of the meeting between the commerce ministers of both countries? Did you speak to Pakistan government regarding this?

I think trade normalization will take place. It is important. It is not just trade that were discussed, there are many far-reaching and important matters that we have been talking about in the past. For instance the Tapi pipeline is one such thing. I think it is not very productive to be speculative on trade being derailed. But we work within a framework of atmospherics. Those are important. The substance and perception both have to go hand in hand. Of the course the deadline for MFN has been missed but it is a work in progress. I do not think it is end of the world that a particular deadline is missed. And I think it is not end of the world for an opportunity to further consult on that or discuss that has been lost because of reasons given of preoccupations at home. I can understand there would be preoccupations at home considering a rapidly changing political situation in Pakistan. The commerce minister (Anand Sharma) is fully briefed and he is keeping track of it. We (commerce minister Anand Sharma and I) do confer from time to time and we are sure whatever nudging and whatever pushing needs to be done will be done.

What is India doing to avert another debacle like GMR in Maldives? How do you now plan to encourage Indian industry to increase their footprint globally?

I do not treat it as a debacle or a setback. It is a disappointment because we like to see our flag flourish in terms of commercial initiative that are companies take particularly in friendly countries where we have had strong traditional links. And if we are unsuccessful in a commercial venture for one reason or another, obviously that is disappointing. There were obviously issues of legal nature as perceived by the government in Maldives and GMR has accepted the consequences of the legal issues that emerged and now it is only a matter of ensuring that the cancellation is followed up by other legal remedies that come with cancellation or termination of the contract. I think it is another event that we take in our stride and we move forward. Our effort was that this should not be given a political colour and this should not be used by people not friendly to India as a reason and occasion for driving a wedge between friends. I think that seems to be pretty much on track.

How do you plan to address the challenges posed by China while we also see them as one of our strategic partners? Trade deficit with China is increasing year-on-year. On the other hand, some Chinese firms are threatening to pull out investments, there were problems with Huawei. So how is the government viewing the state of Chinese investments in India?

We do believe we have a constructive partnership with China. We are also conscious that China offers in the marketplace a very stiff competition because they have expertise and they have advantages in terms of costs sometimes. But we also have our own advantages and I think there can be two competing models, one of India and one of China and that gives greater opportunity to all the spaces in which we both offer our services. I think we should not be necessarily self-conscious of any disadvantage. We should factor in disadvantages and also emphasize the advantages that we have. In terms of trade balance, yes, this is something we continue to address in different ways, including in our negotiations with China. So this remains a priority and we will continue to address it. But this requires a collaborative effort between government and industry and I hope that if the industry redoubles its efforts to ensure

that not only we have an acceptable trade balance but also that we have good flow of investments on both sides.

What are some of the major challenges to India's foreign policy today? Are you planning to bring about any major changes in India's foreign policy with such difficult neighbours?

I think we have a policy that is rooted in a broad consensus in the country. It also has a historical pedigree which I think is very significant. But in the broad contours of that consensus and policy we need to fine-tune tactically because this is a time of consolidating relationships with economic interaction and I think for that we have to be vigilant and willing to change our tactical approach because in many cases it is the market forces that will ultimately decide how things move. But we have also I think advantage in terms of soft diplomacy, our cultural diplomacy is important. We have a steady expansion programme of our cultural centres sponsored by the ICCR. We are continuing our engagement of people to people contacts and I think a combination of sustained cultural diplomacy, described often as soft diplomacy with sensible and competent economic planning of relationships will give us an effective presence in the world.

With the re-election of President Barack Obama in US, India's concerns over hike in professional visa fees and outsourcing will persist. How do you plan to tackle this issue in the year ahead?

In the months ahead we will have an opportunity to take up these issues. We have an ongoing dialogue with the US. We are waiting for their Cabinet to be in place. I think over the next month or so we will have other idea of schedules. Our agenda is clearly there. We will take it up with all the energy at our command as soon as people are in place to begin the dialogue.

What benefits will our integration with ASEAN yield in the long run?

I personally think that for the whole country it is of immense value. But particularly for the northeastern part of our country which has always been a special target for our development schemes because there are very special kinds of problems in the northeast and also a very special potential. And I think, in order to, engage with the northeast in an effective manner I think connectivity with ASEAN and trade with ASEAN will be

enormously important. It is the economic integration of that entire region which will play a major role. It will have not only direct benefits to the northeast but also give us a much higher profile and presence in countries like Myanmar where because of years of isolation, we have not been able to contribute and receive as much as our potential clearly indicates that there is for us to do.

What will be India's stance should there be a rise in tension in the South China Sea with growing Chinese ambitions there?

There are two issues there. One is the issue of freedom of navigation and other is the issue of sovereignty between neighbouring states. Now as far as sovereignty issue is concerned, we have repeatedly said that must be settled through bilateral negotiations between the countries concerned and we are not involved in that. As far as freedom of navigation is concerned, we have repeatedly said, bilaterally and multilaterally, that this is a matter on which India takes a clear position that law of the sea and freedom of navigation on open seas is something we stand by, we support and we are committed to. And this is being recognised by ASEAN in the stated code of conduct. I do not think we should really be speculating on the possibility of tensions rising to a level that it requires any further than what we have said and done and I believe they are all matured parties and they do realize beyond their stated positions there are certain overall compulsions of comity of nations that will keep us within levels that allow for a reasonable amount of dialogue to resolve these issues.

What will be India's strategy towards Afghanistan post 2014 when US troops pull out completely from there?

Our position is very clear. Our position is that Afghanistan must make up its mind how it wants to proceed. India is willing to help in every way possible within the wishes of the people of Afghanistan and the elected government of Afghanistan. We are in touch with stakeholders in that region, neighbours of Afghanistan, including in central Asia. And also when we have the opportunity to discuss this with US for instance, that what we like is to be able to be a part of the solution and not be in any way be seen or be dragged into becoming a part of the problem. As far as we are concerned, we are very good friends, we have extremely good and meaningful relationship. We have extended to them such help as they have expected and desired in the field of development in important

institution capacity building providing them with such training and assistance they require for their Afghan National Army to take over the responsibilities beyond 2014 and of course on which they already have taken responsibility in many districts. And we will continue to respond to the wishes of the people of Afghanistan and the elected government.



008. Address by Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on 'India's National Security – Challenges and Priorities' while delivering the K. Subramanyam Memorial Lecture.

New Delhi, February 6, 2013.

I am grateful to you for inviting me to deliver the K Subrahmanyam Memorial Lecture. When I first joined the Government in 1985, he was already a Secretary-level officer belonging to the hallowed Indian Administrative Service. My first interaction with him as Minister of State for Personnel left me with the impression that he was thoroughly disenchanted with the bureaucracy and the daily chores of a bureaucrat. As I watched him from a distance, I saw him move seamlessly from being a civil servant to a national security expert. Without doubt, as long as he lived, he was the most authoritative voice on matters relating to national security. He lectured and wrote extensively on national security issues and soon acquired a large following of aspiring scholars and admirers. It is to K Subrahmanyam that we owe the growing number of scholars and analysts on matters concerning national security.

2. Until recently, we had taken a very compartmentalised view of national security. Each threat to national security was neatly fitted into one compartment. The first, of course, was a war with Pakistan. That was fitted into a compartment and was meant to be deterred, or defended, through the might of our armed forces. A war with China was, and remains, unthinkable and therefore that threat was fitted into another compartment and reserved to be dealt with through a mixture of engagement, diplomacy, trade, and positioning adequate forces along the borders. Beyond Pakistan and China, we did not perceive any external threat to

our security. Other threats such as communal conflicts, terrorism, naxalism or maoist violence, drug peddling and Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) were bundled together under the label “threats to internal security” and were left to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Some threats were not acknowledged at all as threats to national security and these included energy security, food security and pandemics. K Subrahmanyam was one of the earliest to argue that we should take a more holistic view of the threats to national security.

3. Recently, eminent voices have echoed the views of K Subrahmanyam. The Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in his address to the Combined Commanders Conference on October 20, 2005 identified - as threats to national security - terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, low intensity conflicts, and threats to the security of sea-lanes. The National Security Adviser, Shri Shivshankar Menon, delivering the Raja Ramanna Lecture on January 21, 2013 said “We now need to consider our energy security, food security, technology security, and social cohesion and institutions, to name just a few, when we think of national security.” In another place in the same lecture, he argued that there was little distinction between internal security and external security and identified the internal security challenges as having ‘some roots outside India and (is) linked to what happens outside the country.’
4. A close examination of the threats to national security will reveal that each one of them is connected to one or more other threats. For example, the threat of terrorism is connected to the threat of proliferation of arms including weapons of mass destruction. The threat to the security of our sea-lanes is connected to the threat to energy security. Low intensity conflicts have a direct bearing on social cohesion. Technology security will be the key to building new institutions. Natural disasters, especially those caused by climate change, can wreck food security. Pandemics and diseases, if uncontrolled, can diminish our capacity to defend the borders against our adversaries or to defeat the militants within the country. National security is, therefore, caught in a complex

spider's web and unless we recognise that each strand of this web is connected to other strands, we would not be able to do justice to our fundamental obligation to protect and defend the security of the nation.

5. Defending and promoting national security stands on three important pillars: firstly, human resources; secondly, science and technology; and thirdly, money. I have placed money last, not because it is the least important, but because it is the most important pillar of national security. Without money, we cannot nurture and build our human resources. We need schools, colleges, universities, libraries, laboratories, skill development institutions and, above all, highly qualified teachers. It was in the sixth decade of independence that we were able to pass a law on the Right to Education. Only now we have been able to achieve near-universal enrolment of children in school, but there are still problems in retention and, according to 2010-11 statistics, only 73 percent of children who enrol in class I complete five years of schooling and only 59.4 percent complete eight years of schooling. Despite having 32,987 colleges and 621 universities, the Gross Enrolment Ratio is only 18.8 percent. The shortage of teachers at the elementary school level is estimated at 800,000. According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development we need 20,000 more colleges and 1500 more universities if we aim to provide post-school education to all the children who complete school. Even today we turn out only about 800,000 engineers from our engineering colleges and 44,000 MBBS doctors from our medical colleges every year. Only 72,202 scholars were enrolled in Ph.D programmes in 2012 and only 9,704 applications were filed for patents in calendar 2012 by Indians. The Central Government spends only 0.67 percent of GDP on education (2010-11), and that includes all heads of expenditure that could be broadly brought under the subject 'education'. It is estimated that all the State Governments put together spend another 2.36 percent of GDP on education (2010-11). The percentages may appear modest, but the absolute amounts are quite large. Nevertheless, the average child enrolled in class V has only attained the

competence of a child in class II. At the other end, none of our universities figure in the top 200 universities of the world.

6. Infant mortality rate is still at 44 per 1000 live births, maternal mortality rate is at 212 per 100,000 live births and, on both counts, we will not achieve the millennium development goal. Life expectancy has increased from 59.4 years in 1991 to 66.1 years in 2011, but during the same period the child sex ratio has declined from 945 girls to 914 girls per 1000 boys. The expenditure of the Central Government on 'health care' is 0.31 percent of GDP and State Governments spend another 0.60 percent of GDP. Thus, on education and health, the total Government expenditure is below 4 percent of GDP. Other emerging economies spend much more. For example, Brazil (9.1 percent), South Africa (9.6 percent) and China (5.9 percent) spend much more. If we can create the fiscal space that will allow us to spend an additional one percent every year amounting to an additional four percent over the remaining four years of the 12th Plan, it would make a huge impact on human resource development in the country.
7. Let me turn to science and technology. Every country that has moved up to the level of middle income country or a developed country has intensively promoted and heavily relied upon science and technology. It begins with the Gross Enrolment Ratio. Countries that have made the big leap in the last 30 years have an impressive GER. In Malaysia it is 40 percent; in Brazil it is 26 percent and in China it is 26 percent. China has about 1200 colleges devoted to engineering which produce about 700,000¹ engineering graduates every year.
8. None of the threats to national security can be effectively countered unless we embrace science and technology and impart instruction in science and technology beginning at the school level. There are four physical domains in our world – land, sea, air and space. We have a land border of a length of about 15,000 kms with Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, China, Bangladesh and Myanmar, and even a small length of 106 kms with Afghanistan. We patrol these borders using a variety of measures – from

sophisticated radars to camel-mounted border guards. On the Indian-Bhutan border, there are only two land custom stations at Jaigaon and Hatisar. However, a large volume of goods do not move through these stations and do not bear the endorsement of the Customs authorities. There are densely populated villages on either side of the India-Nepal and the India-Bhutan borders. Because only border guarding forces are in place, and hardly any technology is employed, it is widely acknowledged that the borders are porous. As I speak to you, there are 191 battalions of the BSF, ITBP, SSB and Assam Rifles on our borders, but little technology.

9. We also have a long coastline extending to 7516 kms. It is only after the Mumbai terror attack that we took steps to strengthen coastal security. We created a Coastal Command, authorised and funded a number of Coastal Police Stations, funded the purchase of boats for coastal policing, and installed some radars. However, given the thousands of boats – small and big – that are in the waters off the west coast, the threats to security still remain quite high. On the waters off the east coast, there is virtually no force other than the Navy. We have many defence and defence research installations on the east coast, the DRDO and the Department of Space use the east coast extensively, and there is a large programme for exploration of oil and gas in the Bay of Bengal. Except for the presence of naval and coast guard vessels, and some technology that they have brought in, we have not used technology in a big way to bolster our security along the coast line.
10. In the air, we rely on the Air Force. This is perhaps the most technology-driven arm of the Defence Forces. In space, we have a few satellites, mainly dedicated to communications, weather forecasting and other peaceful purposes. Some satellites are capable of surveillance, but we abide by the international regime that there should be no militarisation of space.
11. Apart from land, sea, air and space, there is another domain which is cyber space. Much of our critical infrastructure lies in cyber

space. Cyber crimes such as hacking, financial fraud, data theft, espionage etc. would, in certain circumstances, amount to terrorist acts. Further, the threat of disruption of financial, rail, air, power, critical information services through cyber attacks could also be construed as terrorist attacks. I need hardly emphasise that the latest advances in technology would be required to build our capacity to meet the threats in cyber space and, only recently, we made a modest beginning to build capacity to counter threats in cyber space.

12. It is a matter of regret that we are not ploughing in more funds and more human resources into R&D, especially R&D that is related to national security. Two days ago, Shri V K Saraswat, Director, DRDO, lamented that "one HAL, one ADE or one ADA would not suffice. Industry has to accelerate and increase investments in a big way if you want India to become an aerospace and aeronautical manufacturing centre." The situation will not change unless we allow more players, who will bring more resources, into security related manufacturing and services sectors. Our indigenous advance light helicopter (ALH), light combat helicopter (LCH), light utility helicopter (LUH), intermediate jet trainer (IJT) and basic trainer aircraft are still at the stage of design and development. Arjun, the main battle tank, after many years of development, was inducted into the Army in 2004, and the next model is still some years away. The largest conventional-powered naval vessel built in Garden Reach Shipyard is the Aditya weighing 17,000 DWT and a cruising speed of 20 knots. An aircraft carrier is under construction at the Cochin Shipyard. Capital expenditure in 2012-13 on indigenous defence production, including expenditure on R&D and in the DGOF and DGQA, was Rs.5,060 crore. If we wish to scale up both on technology and on numbers, we need far more resources than what we can afford today.
13. The last of the three pillars is money. It is also the pillar that will support the first two pillars. Money comes out of growth. The revenues of Government are tax revenue and non-tax revenue. Non-tax revenue constitutes a small proportion of total revenue

and is more uncertain. Tax revenue consists, mainly, of five taxes: excise, customs, service tax, income tax and corporation tax. Excise revenue is a function of growth in the manufacturing sector; customs revenue is a function of higher imports; service taxes are a function of more activity and more transactions in the services sector; income tax and corporation tax are a function of more incomes for individuals, families and corporations. Increase in tax revenue is, in a very large measure, the outcome of higher growth. When the economy is on a roll, tax revenues are buoyant and when the economy slows down, the first casualty is revenue from taxes.

14. In our own times, we have seen the difference between the period when the Indian economy was on a high growth path and the period when there has been a noticeable slow down. In the former phase (2004-2008), we were able to provide for virtually everything that we desired, but also for exceptional items of expenditure such as the agricultural loan waiver scheme. During that period, we were also able to reduce the fiscal deficit from 4.5 percent in 2003-04 to 2.5 percent in 2007-08. When there is a slow down, the consequence is the exact opposite. The first hit is on tax revenue. As the anticipated growth in tax revenue declines, but expenditure cannot be compressed in the short term, the gap between revenue and expenditure rises rapidly. The short term response is to borrow more, leading to a ballooning of the fiscal deficit. The medium term response will be to contain expenditure, but that has its own consequences. A cut back on public expenditure will further slow down the economy. It will also curtail the number of jobs that are created. A cut back on social welfare will hurt the poor: less money for education or health care will deny, to many more people, access to basic education or basic health facilities. And, finally, a cut back on expenditure on defence or on the police forces will severely compromise our defence and security preparedness and diminish our capacity to meet the challenges to national security.
15. It is therefore a self-evident truth that growth is the key for greater public welfare and greater security. Yet, we adopt a disdainful

attitude to growth. Some think that the value of growth is overstated and that we would be better off if we pursued not the goal of growth but other goals such as cultural nationalism or debt-driven egalitarianism.

16. There can be no better example of two countries on different growth paths, one a good two percentage points higher than the other, than of China and India. China has been able to grow at an average rate of 9 percent and above since 1981. India, on the other hand, achieved a growth rate of 9 percent or higher in only four years: 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08 and, finally, in 2010-11. Even while swearing by “socialism with Chinese characteristics”, China recognised the advantages of a higher growth rate. In his speech to the 18th Party Congress of the Communist Party of China, the outgoing President of China and General Secretary of the Party said: “The gross domestic product reached 47.2 trillion yuan in 2011 The infrastructure has been extensively upgraded. Urbanisation has been steadily advanced, and development between urban and rural areas and between regions has become better balanced. Notable progress has been made in making China an innovative country, and major breakthroughs have been made in manned space flights, the lunar exploration programmes, and in the development of a manned deep sea submersible, super computers and high speed railways.” In 2010, China spent 1.84 percent of its GDP on R&D and that was a humungous sum of USD 134 billion. India, on the other hand, spent 0.9 percent of GDP and that amounted to only USD 13 billion. President Hu Jintao also counted the improvement in living standards and its benefits and said: “Urban and rural employment has continued to increase; individual income has increased rapidly; household assets have grown steadily; people’s need for daily necessities such as clothing, food, housing and transportation is better met.”
17. It is sustained high growth that has enabled China to lift all but a small proportion of its people out of poverty. The estimate of poverty in China is 13.1 percent; in India it is 29.8 percent, even if one adopts a helpful standard of calorie intake. Forty two percent

of children under age 5 in India are malnourished compared to 3.4 percent in China. Life expectancy at birth in India is 66.1 years, while in China it is 73.3 years.

18. High growth in China inevitably translated into higher expenditure on security and, as a logical corollary, a high degree of security. In the same speech, President Hu Jintao said “Military preparedness has been enhanced. The armed forces have greatly enhanced their capability of carrying out their historic mission in this new stage in the new century, and they have accomplished a host of urgent, difficult, dangerous and arduous tasks.” The results of higher expenditure show up in the hardware. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), China has nearly 62 ICBMs. China is reportedly developing the JL-2 SLBM for its new strategic submarines, four of which are already sailing while two more are under construction. India has purchased one from Russia that is used for training purposes. There are reports that China has commissioned its first indigenously renovated aircraft carrier, unveiled its fifth generation stealth aircraft (the J-20 and the J-31) and tested an anti-satellite weapon once and a missile interceptor twice. There is also a report that China has developed a strategic heavy lift transport aircraft. China has a space lab in orbit and it also plans to launch 100 satellites during its on-going five year plan from 2011-15. Twenty space craft will be launched this year including its third Lunar probe and a manned space craft that will dock with China’s space lab. There are indications that, by 2020, China may have more than 200 space craft in orbit accounting for about one-fifth of the world’s total. These examples are sufficient to emphasise the point that sustained high growth is the key to become, if a country aims to become, a “comprehensive national power”.
19. I have spoken about national security defined broadly to include external security and internal security. I have not spoken about another dimension of national security which is social cohesion and harmony. In fact, the case for high growth will be much stronger if one took into account the dimension of inclusive development that contributes to social cohesion and harmony.

20. I conclude by asserting that there is no substitute for sustained growth over a long period of time if India should attain the status of, at least, a middle income country. It is only sustained growth that gives us a chance to tune the growth model in favour of inclusive development. Without growth there will be neither development nor inclusiveness.
21. What is constraining our growth is the lack of fiscal space. In 2012-13 BE, the fiscal deficit was 5.1 percent of GDP and, of this, the revenue deficit accounted for 3.4 percent of GDP, leaving no more than 1.7 percent of GDP (plus some other modest capital receipts) for capital expenditure. This capital expenditure is spread across a number of areas from rural roads to nuclear power plants and from primary health centres to central universities. It is obvious that we have to invest more as capital, but that would require creating more fiscal space for capital expenditure. The only way we can create that fiscal space is to bring the revenue deficit to zero and limit the fiscal deficit to 3 percent of GDP, so that the whole of that amount – which, I may remind you, is borrowed – is available for capital expenditure. And it is only when we reach a stage in our growth story when there will be a revenue surplus that we can afford to invest more in the form of capital. That day is still some distance away, but not unattainable, if we adopt the path of prudence and sound fiscal management.
22. As a nation, we seem to oscillate between embracing growth as the highest goal and deriding growth as no panacea for the ills that afflict the country. If we do not have sustained high growth over a long period of time, we will be, forever, an undernourished, undereducated, underprovided and underperforming nation. We will also fall behind in scientific and technological advancements and the gap between India and the developed world, and the gap between India and other emerging countries including China, will continue to grow. We will also be constrained in our ability to defend national security against both external and internal threats.
23. Today, we have a choice. We have a choice between becoming the third largest economy of the world and a middle income country

or becoming one of the largest economies of the world that muddles along with the bulk of its people trapped in a life of low income, poor quality, high morbidity and great inequality. Needless to say, the two models of India will have very different consequences for national security. The first model will make India a secure nation, capable of defending itself, and a force of peace in the neighbourhood and elsewhere. The second model will leave the country exposed to every kind of threat to which will be added internal conflicts, and India will be viewed as a strife-torn country that is a threat to the peace and progress of the world and, in particular, Asia. A nation that was the cradle of civilisation five thousand years ago must choose wisely and, once the choice is made, it must have the resolve and the power to stay the course. Recent history has many examples of nations that have, with single-minded determination, devoted themselves to the pursuit of prosperity and security. The early winners were Japan and Korea. More recently, Brazil, Mexico and Indonesia have demonstrated their potential to join the ranks of such countries. China, if it achieves its goals, will be the country to emulate. Whither India? Will India embrace the twin goals of prosperity and security and outshine all of them? I leave you with that question and urge each one of you to find the answer.

24. I thank you for the honour of delivering this lecture and for your courtesy.



**009 Foreign Secretary's interview to The Week.
February 11, 2013.**

(Interviewer: Mr. Ajish P. Joy)

What are the major achievements of the ministry of external affairs under your watch?

We have had good results in managing our relationship with a majority of our neighbouring countries. We had very active, productive relations with Russia, China, the United States and Japan. We are actively pursuing strong relations with the European Union. Our engagement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has been one of the big success stories. The signing of the free trade agreement with the ASEAN can be considered a milestone. We have continued very active engagement with Africa and Latin America. All these, I would say, are signs of a very active, encouraged foreign policy.

We organised the BRICS [Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa] summit last year in Delhi, which is a new forum of emerging economies of the world. In all these, I would say, we have achieved the balancing of different elements in our foreign policy.

We have created greater engagement with the academic community through our public diplomacy division. We have also started the passport *seva kendra* project. In two years, we have set up 77 passport *seva kendras*. When you consider that in 60 years before that we had only 38 passport offices in the whole country, I think it is a significant achievement.

Where do you think the MEA has fallen short?

I think we have not been able to resolve fully some of the dilemmas and difficulties in our own neighbourhood. As you are aware, we had some problems with some of our neighbours. We continue to face a shortage of resources, both in terms of human resources and financial resources, to be able to sustain projects we want to take forward.

I think our performance in the UN Security Council should be in the first list [of achievements]. We have done very well there. But there is a balancing to it. During this period, the progress towards the permanent membership has been very slow.

India's response to the Arab Spring has been inconsistent, considering the fact that millions of Indians live and work in the Arab world.

The situation in the Gulf and what happened in Libya and what is happening in Syria are different. In Libya, the Prime Minister has articulated our principled position, that societies cannot be reordered or changed from outside, with military force. If the international community has to be involved—it has to be in today's interconnected world—it should be as a facilitator for peaceful change. The instrument for that should be the United Nations, not a group of countries or a coalition of the willing.

In Libya, the fact that we have voted in a certain way was noted, by a new leadership which has emerged, and we have rebuilt our relationship with that country. In Syria, look at the pattern of the voting and the way in which we have voted. We have voted differently on different occasions. Critics like you may say that there has been inconsistency or incoherence. But whenever the United Nations was given a role, we have voted in favour. I think, by and large, in the Arab world, most certainly in Egypt, there is great appreciation for the position we have taken. They know [that] India and they themselves would not want a situation in which countries believe [that] interfering in the internal affairs of others is the norm. I think the overall sense in the Arab world is that India has remained engaged. It could have done more, but it should continue to remain engaged.

Two retired senior Pakistani military officers have disclosed that the Kargil operation was directed by Gen. Pervez Musharraf and that he even crossed the LoC into India for some time before the hostilities started. What is the reason behind India's muted response to the revelations?

I think we all know the facts about what happened. If the Pakistanis suddenly decided that they wanted to argue among themselves about it, so be it



010 Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson.**New Delhi, February 12, 2013.**

Q: With regard to the nuclear test by the DPRK today, please give me the reaction of the Indian Government. USA and Russia say they were informed yesterday by DPRK that they would conduct the nuclear test today. Was India informed before of it?

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Let me answer the second question first which is pretty easy to answer. No, we had not received any advance information about this nuclear test. We got this information from reports that have indicated that the DPRK has conducted a nuclear test earlier today.

For us it is a matter of deep concern that the DPRK has acted in violation of its international commitments in this regard. We call upon the DPRK to refrain from such actions which adversely affect peace and stability in the region.

Q: I would like to ask you a question about the recent news concerning the arrest in Italy of the President of the Defence Group Finmeccanica on the idea that there were some bribes on the selling of helicopters to India. Have you any comment on that or are you aware of the situation?

Official Spokesperson: We have heard this information from news reports. As far as we are concerned, we had through our Embassy in Italy requested the Italian Government to provide us information that they may have in connection with allegations which have been made on the matter. We have not received any response from them so far on that, the argument being that this is in Italy a judicial process. Because the prosecutors are perhaps working under judicial supervision, therefore, the executive is not able to share that information with us. That is where we stand on that.

Q: Syed sahab, When Yasin Malik went to Pakistan he participated in a political rally where Hafiz Saeed was also present. Has the Government taken up this matter with the Government of Pakistan? While granting visa it was a precondition that he would not take part in any political activity.

Official Spokesperson: I will try to answer your question in Hindi. I am from South India and my knowledge of Hindi is rudimentary. I will try. I have repeated our point of view many times, We regard Hafiz Saeed as the master mind of Mumbai attack. We have raised this issue with Pakistan many times. We have said bring him to justice. This is matter of visa and its conditions. It would better if you ask the visa authorities. External Affairs Ministry do not grant visa for going abroad. Of course if you ask the conditions for grant of passport which is the responsibility of MEA, we grant the passport after getting no objection from various authorities/agencies. The passport was issued by the Passport officer in Srinagar. This is now a matter between Yasin Malik and those agencies. If those agencies tell us to take action, we will do the needful as per law.

I will try and repeat that in English before we move ahead. I think his question was that were there any requirements to issue a visa. My answer to that was, we did not issue a visa. Perhaps the question more correctly is that were there any conditions specified for granting a passport. Now I would like to explain the process of granting a passport in such cases. The process entails obtaining No Objection Certificate from a variety of agencies before the Ministry of External Affairs through its Passport Officer in Srinagar grants this passport.

I would like to confirm to you that this is a limited validity passport. It was based on No Objection Certificates received from a variety of agencies. If those agencies have given that No Objection Certificate based on certain understandings that have been worked out, it is for those agencies to bring it to our attention that that No Objection Certificate was based on that premise, and that premise now does not hold, and therefore necessary action should be taken; and we will certainly consider it at that stage. So, I hope I have clarified to you the issues related to passport and to the extent that the Ministry of External Affairs is involved in this.

Q: Has there been any request from MHA to impound his passport or to revoke his passport?

Official Spokesperson: It is not our practice to indicate to you internal discussions or inter-Ministerial discussions. We have not done that in previous cases nor do we intend to do it today. That said, I can certainly tell you, should we receive such request, we will consider very carefully and act promptly on that.

Q: Sir, Yasin Malik is hobnobbing with what you call the evil mastermind of 26/11. What is Ministry of External Affairs' position on revoking his passport because some political parties have called for it?

Official Spokesperson: I have explained in great detail how passports are given. Let me also add a little bit more in terms of revocation of a passport. Revocation of a passport is a quasi-judicial process. For that it requires that we follow a process whereby a violation is indicated. So as I mentioned to you, if there are conditions on which the passport No Objection was given, if these conditions are violated and it is brought to our notice, after giving due careful consideration we will act on that promptly. So please understand. I think on that I have gone as far as I have information. If there are any other issues that you would like to ask, I am ready to answer.

Q: On this Italy issue, is there any kind of preliminary enquiry we had from our side? Is there any feedback that we had on this deal at all, if there was something fishy about it? And do we know whether this arrest is actually linked to the deal with India?

Official Spokesperson: My understanding was that this is a purchase that was made by the Ministry of Defense. Therefore, what we received was a request from the Ministry of Defense to obtain information from the Government of Italy through our Mission in Rome. That is as far as we are aware and our role is in this instance. Now as regards whether there has been any preliminary enquiry or an enquiry or discussion on this, I would suggest that it is best that you contact those who are directly involved in this, and that is the Ministry of Defense.

As regards your second question, we have no information linking any of these two which has been provided to us in a certain manner by the Government of Italy. What we have is what you have indicated. And I have responded to that saying that as far as the Government of Italy is concerned, we do not have any information shared with us on this issue. And I have given you their rationale for why they have said that they cannot share this information.

Q: How is India looking at Pakistan now that Yasin Malik is sharing the stage with Hafiz Saeed, a man against whom India has been seeking action for such a long time?

Official Spokesperson: I thought Yasin Malik is a citizen of India, we will deal with him as is deemed fit of a citizen of India. On the issue of looking at Pakistan, we have already said that Hafeez Saeed has continued to pour vitriol on India. He is, as far as we are concerned, a fit case to bring to justice as promptly as possible. We have repeatedly made that case to Pakistan, and we will continue to do that so at every opportunity.

Q: There is a report of a rape of an Indian teacher in Maldives. Can we have any details about whether the culprits have been nabbed, whether she is being given proper treatment? And has the Maldives Government got back to you?

Official Spokesperson: Yesterday we were informed about an Indian citizen aged 24 years who was subjected to a brutal rape in one of the atolls. Promptly our Mission got in touch with the Minister there. And that is the Minister of Gender I think who is overlooking this. Apparently the lady in question works in a private computer school in Maldives. She was also badly injured. She has been given blood transfusion, and her condition now is stable. The High Commission has this morning sent two officials including a lady officer to the atoll to try and provide whatever support we can on account of this sad happening there. We have taken it up quite strongly with the Government of Maldives, and we hope that justice will be done in this case promptly, and this has been assured to us by the concerned Maldivian Authorities.

Q: Sir, this is on Italian Marines. I have read yesterday and today in the Indian press that an agreement has been reached between Italy and India about the possibility that the two Italian Marines when condemned by the Indian justice can serve their sentence in Italy. Is it effectively in action, this agreement?

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and give you a context. We have similar arrangements; we call them as Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons. We have agreements by my understanding with twelve countries. With the Government of Italy, we have signed an agreement of this nature. This agreement has also been Gazetted. If any of you are interested it is available in the Gazette of India dated 17th December. I mean to say that this agreement was signed and it was

Gazetted. And for the agreement to enter into force there is a requirement. That requirement says that the two sides should exchange through diplomatic channels communications which indicate that they have completed their processes for implementing of this agreement. After this last communication is received from the two sides to each other, after a period of one month, on the first day of the second month this agreement will be in effect. Now we have not come to that as yet. Where we are is that we have signed this agreement; both sides are in the process of completing their procedures; and will finally exchange diplomatic communications, after which the requisite period has to be completed. Automatically after that the agreement will be in force. Now whether this agreement is applicable to A case or B case, this is only when the cases are tried and decisions come out of it that can we decide about it. At this stage it is too premature to say, does an agreement which has not yet entered into force apply to somebody who has not yet been sentenced. I hope you understand where we are on this.

Thank you very much

(Concluded)



**011 External Affairs Minister's speech at Global India Foundation Conference on "Iran's Eurasian Dynamic: Mapping Regional and Extra-Regional Interests".
New Delhi, February 13, 2013.**

Vice Admiral P J Jacob

Shri K Santhanam,

Dr Sreeradha Datta,

Shri Anil K Agarwal,

Prof Omprakash Mishra,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am happy to be in your midst today to inaugurate the conference on

“Iran’s Eurasian Dynamic: Mapping Regional and Extra-Regional Interests” which is extremely topical and important.

Iran is a friend of India, and we have strong civilisational links which has positive impact in our contemporary relations.

To think about the theme of today’s conference, it is common knowledge that Iran is a strong and influential player in the Gulf region. But its links, influences and interests in the Eurasian region will be an interesting concept to ponder and study. Iran’s historical, cultural and linguistic influence over Eurasia is also well established. Old trade routes linking Eurasia and Persia stand testimony to Iran’s intrinsic links to the Eurasian region throughout history.

With the advantage Iran has in terms of geographical proximity and a well developed network of road, rail and waterway connectivity with several countries in Eurasia, Iran can act as a gateway to Eurasia. It can host trade, transit and energy corridors linking Eurasia with rest of the world.

The Persian Gulf, particularly Iran, is under focus in recent years, on account of its pre-eminent position in the region. Iran’s nuclear programme has been under constant, close scrutiny and the international community has been talking to Iran to negotiate a peaceful course of action. One important question crops up in our minds. Should India be cautious and remain aloof in this process or should it engage actively in the dialogue that Iran has with the world in achieving a peaceful resolution of the issue.

India stands at the forefront of countries that appear to be in a position to give Iran the kind of advice, comfort and handholding that would be called for in these very critical and crucial discussions and dialogue which Iran needs to have, and it realizes that it needs to, with the rest of the world. We have had to take positions that obviously not necessarily align themselves with the aspirations or at least perceived aspirations of Iran in recent times.

The good news is that Iran has understood this. We have remained friends with Iran, and good friends with Iran, in a substantive way despite the fact that we could not stand by them in critical moments when it

came to voting in the United Nations. I know that they would be disappointed; anyone is disappointed if you cannot get someone to stand by you in moments which are critical. But the important thing is that we were able to continue talking with Iran, that Iran understood why we were doing what we were doing, and that it was clear to the world that we were not taking sides against Iran but that we were taking a principled position.

Having taken that principled position, we would want our engagement to continue growing and our support in those critical matters and dimensions in which it was important for Iran to fight the sanctions, and we would be there to be counted as a friend of Iran. I think this is a very interesting and a very important dimension of India standing today in the world.

I might underscore that we have a strategic partnership with the United States of America. We value our relationship with the United States of America, and we believe both in terms of pragmatism, as indeed in terms of principles, that our relationship with the United States of America as it has evolved over the last decade and a half is a very valuable and important relationship both in terms of energy security as indeed in terms of our engagement with the world. And to see this come out of the continued commitment in the NAM movement is obviously a very interesting thought. So we remain good friends with the United States of America; we are extremely good friends with Iran. Therefore, it places us in a very significant position to be able to bridge the gaps and to provide the linkages that are necessary for a meaningful dialogue.

I think this is also true in the greater region, in a region that is in a sense impacted by what is happening in this region and that is the region of West Asia, Palestine and Israel. Our past commitment to Palestine was a commitment that came devoid of any relationship with Israel. Our present-day commitment to Palestine comes with a very meaningful relationship with Israel. The important thing of course is that again both Israel and Palestine are willing and able to understand that we have a relationship which is a balanced relationship between the two.

In a sense, if I might be allowed to say so, the true fruition of non-alignment as far as India is concerned is getting reflected in our ability to engage on sides that would otherwise feel a great deal of trust deficit and would

have some reluctance in open dialogue. So, fortunately, the world has accepted that there is no alternative to dialogue although perhaps a little bit in the countries affected by Arab Spring, the significance and importance of dialogue may have been diluted considerably much to our despair. We do still continue to feel that dialogue is the answer and that dialogue should not be given up very easily.

So we do have a very important potential position vis-à-vis dialogue in this region. We have outstanding relationship with Russia. We have excellent relationships in the Central Asian region. I think these are not purely based on economic interests but go far beyond economic interests. There are some civilisational, instinctive rapport and engagement that provide the base for the edifice of economic interests, which of course are converging.

But given that the economic interests are converging, given that we have a high priority for energy security and sourcing energy for rapid growth of the Indian economy, the pipelines, the critical, crucial pipelines in Central Asia bringing in gas to India and to our region are very important. Though a lot of work has been done on this, I think we still have hiccups that prevent us from going forward as fast and as quickly as possible.

Coming back to the point that I raised for you which is, should India continue to be as careful, cautious and as aloof as it is despite the enormous potential that it has for improving the content of dialogue and the possibility of substantive dialogue, or should India begin to get into a greater mode of encouraging and therefore engaging itself more extensively, it is a big question. But in answering this question I think it is very important for us to understand what our own people want.

Sadly, and I say this particularly to all of you distinguished people here associated with the Global India Foundation, sadly, the engagement of India's domestic population and thinking processes with our standing in the world today is nowhere near it was after independence when the outcome of our independence movement and the very perception of our independence movement were seen as engagement on behalf of the disadvantaged and the subjugated people of the world, of Africa, Asia and elsewhere. Therefore, India's leadership reached out with a kind of a seamless approach to the idea of freedom for mankind.

Today, sadly and unfortunately because of domestic preoccupations, because of the manner in which our economy and our sociology and our sociological framework has changed, the same engagement of the ordinary Indian citizen with the world has suffered. And when that suffers, obviously the leadership would worry about - are we putting in too much time looking at the world, and should we be spending more time looking at ourselves?

I actually had a newspaper saying recently that India's Foreign Minister is wasting time travelling in the world, India's Foreign Minister would be much better arguing on television programmes in the evening some inane argument about what we should do about engaging the world in a hostile manner, and declaring war on five countries at the same time, rather than travelling the world telling people that we want to be friends and we want to work together for a peaceful world for our children to come. This is not a facetious remark on something that apparently is critical of India's Foreign Minister, but this is the truth about the illiteracy of people on international relations. Therefore, what you are doing is extremely, extremely important. I hope that not only will this engage minds that are familiar and have enormous amount of knowledge in this field but hopefully you will engage, particularly for you Prof. Mishra coming from Kolkata, looking at the remarkable opportunity today that we have of dominating the world intellectually.

I think the significance of what we are able to do with Chahbahar Port actually underscores what I have just said to you. We have shared this with the United States of America, our interest in Chahbahar Port. We have shared this with our interlocutors in Afghanistan. In the normal course, the reaction would be - hands off as far as building infrastructure in Iran is concerned. But that is not the reaction that we get. We get a reaction that they understand. And they understand not simply because they want to be kind and considerate to India but they understand because in 2014 when they leave Afghanistan, somebody has to fill the void, not of troops, because Afghans must look after their own security, Afghans must secure their own people, Afghans must take their own strategic decisions, but in terms of the infrastructure and trade and financial backup that they would need for stability in their society.

We would need corridors and we would need passage. And where would that passage come from if improvement in Afghanistan takes place faster or need for improvement in Afghanistan takes faster than what we may necessarily get in Pakistan. We will need corridors and passage to Afghanistan if we have to, in a meaningful way, be there after 2014 to rebuild Afghanistan and help Afghanistan rebuild itself. Now this is a good thing. This is understood. There are no black and whites as far as India's approach to the world is concerned. I think the shades of grey that have been accepted about India's engagement and India's personality are something that we should really be encouraging.

I believe there is still a lot of work to be done on TAPI and a lot of work to be done on the International North-South Transport Corridor. I think much of that again is a question of should we just let it happen in normal course or is it something that we should try from the front proactively looking at financial closures and getting Indian banks involved, getting Indian industry involved to the extent that Indian industry takes interest in many of these things. In the normal course they do. But should Government of India actually play a proactive role in the manner in which the Chinese Government plays for Chinese businessmen when they go out into the world? These are very important questions. These are questions which the Government alone cannot take a call on. But these are questions on which we as a people, the nation must take a view, that this is something that is not only legitimate but this is something that is an obligation of people and Government to promote interests of India through participation of private sector, which is why I am very glad that I am sitting next to Mr. Anil Agarwal hopefully speaking the same language.

Within this general conception comes in the whole idea about to what extent and how much time and effort we put in an organization like Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, more bilateral visits, etc., these are all very important questions. We are very happy with Prime Minister's visit to Tehran in August last year for the NAM Summit. I think the sort of outreach and the kind of reception that he received and the welcome that he had received from the Iranian Government was remarkable.

We are looking forward to the Joint Commission not in a few months, in a few weeks hopefully, to take these issues that you have talked about, forward. I think there is a major issue about how we enhance trade,

given the rupee arrangement is not entirely satisfactory because the demand from Iran of goods and items to be supplied still remains low. We did have a working arrangement through a Turkish bank but that presumably also has to go.

But again, let me underscore, and this is an important distinction, we accepted and we were participants and we were part of the sanctions imposed by the United Nations. But we did not accept the sanctions imposed unilaterally by the United States. And this has not caused a major concern between us and the United States because the United States accepts that despite being strategic partners, we can disagree. The important thing I think that India has been able to register with the world is the ability to agree to disagree. I think this is a very critical dimension of India's foreign policy that the world has recognized and I think something on which we can build further.

As I said, we will have the next JCM in the near future and I am sure that many of the conclusions that you have drawn here, we will be able to take those conclusions in a meaningful way and use them in preparation for our JCM which will take place, as I said, in the next few weeks, and benefit from them generally also in our understanding of the larger region, and I hope in getting some inputs from people like you about how proactive India should be in the world.

People hope that we will be more active; people nudge us to be more active. Our aloofness has been in a sense useful to us to give us the profile that we have today that we are trusted, that people are comfortable, that people trust us. Greater engagement is, therefore, advisable or not advisable. Greater engagement will bring its own risks and the greater engagement will bring its own awards. Both of these dimensions I think need to be kept in mind as you look at the specifics of the position that we need to take.

With these few words, I thank you very much for inviting me here today. I believe that we need to have much greater interface, interaction between the Ministry of External Affairs and organizations like yours. I think we must have many more organizations from other parts of the country as well. I am very glad that you are a Kolkata-based organization because we tend to be a little bit incestuous in being confined to Delhi-based

organizations. So I am very encouraged that in Kolkata and Mumbai and also in Bangalore, there are a lot of very outstanding people establishing themselves across the country.

I hope that we will see, if I borrow the phrase, “a thousand flowers bloom” in the country how organizations like yours are making our job in a way easier and in a way more difficult.

Thank you very much



012. Keynote Address by Minister of State Sh. E. Ahamed at the valedictory function for the 56th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD), at the Foreign Service Institute.

New Delhi, February 14, 2013.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

& Participating Diplomats,

I am very happy to be present today at the Foreign Service Institute to deliver this valedictory address to the young diplomats from 20 countries who have successfully completed the month-long 56th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD), being conducted by the Institute since January 16th, 2013.

From the Course Programme and Dean(FSI)'s welcome address, I understand that the participating diplomats had an opportunity to learn not only about India but also issues of regional and international importance such as “Diplomacy in Emerging New World Order”, “Fundamental Principles of International Law”, Globalization, Climate Change, UN & Reforms, India's Foreign Policy Priorities and Global Security Concerns. I believe these topics will not only continue to be relevant in times to come but will also form the mainstream of global discourse.

India is a country full of diversity and plurality. It has a rich kaleidoscope of religions, languages, and traditions. No two regions are the same. I am quite sure that visits and study tours in and around Delhi, to Agra and to Hyderabad have given participating diplomats a glimpse of the size of our country, and the common bond of unity in diversity that it exemplifies.

The core principles of India's foreign policy, whose foundation was laid during our freedom struggle, have stood the test of time. A belief in friendly relations with all countries of the world, the resolution of conflict by peaceful means, the sovereign equality of all states, independence of thought and action as manifested in the principles of Non-alignment, and equity in the conduct of international relations have been the hallmark of the conduct of India's foreign policy. India has been moving ahead to build mutually beneficial relationships with friendly countries on the basis of these time-based principles.

The primary objective of Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD), when it was launched in 1992, was to help bridge the distance between India and the participating countries, to initiate mutual cooperation and understanding, and forge an everlasting bond of attachment among the diplomats of visiting countries. Over the last two decades, these 56 training programmes have provided more than 1250 participants with an opportunity to visit India and share in our knowledge and understanding of global and regional issues interplaying the world politics, economics and culture.

Today, the job of a diplomat is more complex than what it used to be in the last century. Firstly, non-state actors and NGOs are playing a significantly enlarged and important role. Secondly, though the primary duty of a diplomat still remains safeguarding the interest of his or her country and people, a diplomat is also engaged in the well-being, safety, and survival of the world and humanity. Issues like climate change, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, human rights etc. have become very real concerns of the entire humanity. Water, food, health, energy and migration, etc. have become very potent non-traditional security threats. The content of PCFD programmes has steadily evolved to encompass the changing role of a diplomat in a rapidly transforming world.

At a broader level, India is convinced that there is a need for fuller cooperation and solidarity among the developing countries. The world has steadily changed after the end of Cold War Period and so have the diplomatic challenges. New challenges and complex problems which call for common action have emerged. The developing countries need to come together at different multilateral fora to protect their interests. This need is felt even on issues of Environment, Trade, Terrorism & International Security of various forms. It is essential, therefore, for us to come together, and express ourselves in a common voice in order to protect and advance our interests.

I hope that by training together at the 56th PCFD and having time to discuss and interact freely and frankly, the participants would have gained deeper understanding of regional and global issues of importance. Tomorrow, when these diplomats represent their countries as Heads of Missions or be policy makers in their respective capitals, they would be in a better position to appreciate the need for enhanced cooperation and solidarity.

I congratulate the participating diplomats for successfully completing their course. I see in them fast and enduring friends of India who together with India will work for the prosperity and security of the entire world. I also extend my warm wishes through these diplomats, to the people of their respective countries.

I wish the participating diplomats a safe return to their country and family. May they have a bright and successful career ahead.

Thank you



013. Interview of the External Affairs Minister with the *Economic Times*.

New Delhi, February 18, 2013.

The Economic Times/by Sruthijith KK

What is the situation in Maldives?

The former president is a guest in the mission. He came and we extended courtesies and that's it. This was explained to the foreign minister. We are not taking sides with anyone. We are not engaged or involved in the internal politics. As friends of Maldives, our only expectation, and this is the expectation of the democratic world, is that elections which have been announced will hopefully be free and fair. As friends we obviously have advised anything that detracts from the perception of free fair elections is obviously not good for Maldives.

Male accuses Nasheed of evading judicial process and taking refuge in Indian mission. Doesn't sheltering him in the mission amount to interference?

The people of Maldives have India's support. Whoever the people of Maldives elect will have India's support. Maldives can't change its history. Maldives cannot deny the history of somebody who was president of Maldives. And we cannot deny Maldives' present by saying that whatever there is at present is not to our liking. It's the people of Maldives who decide and whoever they decide as their elected leadership, we will respect.

On Finmeccanica, isn't a letter rogatory essential to secure information from Italy?

There was no investigation here. Now there is an investigation, so now it can be done. See, nobody can choose, except the agencies that are authorised to take the decision, as to when the investigation will begin. Now as an enquiry has been ordered, all instruments available to investigating agencies will be put in motion. By the way, no court in a foreign land is necessarily obliged to answer a letter rogatory.

Will the Agusta scandal cast a shadow on the British PM's visit?

Why would it be brought up with him? What does he have anything to do with it? This is a preliminary investigation. CBI hasn't even come to any

conclusion. Let it come to a conclusion. But it depends on when it is found necessary to raise the particular subject after considerable amount of preparation has gone into it.

What is India's biggest expectation from the British prime minister?

Both France and Britain are supportive of India's bid for a broad-based agreement on trade and investment with the European Union. This is important... Britain has recently been involved in a tripartite meeting with the Taliban and the Afghan government. They want to put in place some kind of a mechanism post 2014. We have shared our views on this so that our concerns will be kept in mind and India will remain updated on any efforts going on there. All efforts we make in development in the region will go waste if peace doesn't hold beyond 2014. To that extent it is important for us to be kept in the loop on the developments there and this would be discussed with the British.



**014. Meeting of the Informal Working Group on Energy Security.
New Delhi, February 20, 2013.**

The Informal Working Group on Energy Security, which is a forum comprising officials from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), line energy Ministries, Planning Commission and representatives of public sector enterprises, met on 20th February, 2013. This Informal Working Group meets on a regular basis. Secretary (Economic Relations), Shri Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty chaired the meeting.

The meeting discussed several new initiatives undertaken by MEA with respect to energy issues. Energy Security is a high priority item on the agenda for interaction with foreign countries and entities. MEA and its Missions and Posts abroad support international engagements of the line ministries and Indian companies. MEA has also instituted a regular dialogue with Chambers of Commerce. Foreign Secretary and Secretary (ER) met representatives of apex chambers of Commerce on February 1, 2013.

In today's meeting of the Informal Working Group on Energy Security, representatives of line ministries, Planning Commission and public sector undertakings in their interventions underlined the likely areas and regions to which India should pay greater attention for ensuring energy security for the nation. Energy opportunities in countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Lebanon, Egypt, Canada, Tanzania, Mozambique and USA were discussed. MEA also informed the meeting that it had requisitioned the services of PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd. and Indian Institute of Foreign Trade to produce research papers on specific energy security related issues.

The next meeting of the Informal Working Group on Energy Security will take place in May 2013.



15. Address of Chief of Naval Staff: "Role of Indian Navy in Maintaining Peace in Indian Ocean Region."

New Delhi, March 5, 2013.

Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), Admiral D K Joshi, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM, ADC

1. Admiral PS Das, Dr Arvind Gupta, DG, IDSA, senior serving and retired officers, members from the strategic community, ladies and gentlemen. Good morning.
2. It is indeed a privilege to be addressing such a distinguished audience, on a topic of immediate significance. At the outset, let me thank the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses for providing me this opportunity. Since inception, IDSA has performed yeoman service as one of India's premier think tanks, influencing the country's strategic thought for over four decades. It goes without saying that the Armed Forces too benefit immensely from IDSA's endeavours.
3. To discuss challenges to peace and stability, an examination of the historical and contemporary significance of the Indian Ocean would be in order.

4. The Indian Ocean has probably affected humanity more profoundly than any other ocean. Through the continuum of history, this region has been significant in geo-politics and in the evolution of mankind.
5. Some of the world's oldest civilizations germinated here and for several millennia, flourished in the region's abundant natural wealth. Major religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam etc. originated here and fanned out to rest of the world, mostly through sea routes, making the IOR a melting pot of myriad societies. Hindered by natural barriers on the continental landmass, the interaction between cultures took place over the sea, predominantly through benign expeditions and trade.
6. The region's economic potential thus attracted extra-regional players. Initial ventures, driven by pure mercantile interests, then gave way to colonisation of most of the region. The Industrial Revolution further escalated the region's significance with the colonies doubling up as sources for raw materials, cheap labour and as captive markets for imperial Europe's industrial output. The colonial period also influenced geo-strategy of the region in an unprecedented manner. The IOR, thus, became an arena for military competition, with European blue water navies vying for control of its waters. This, in a way, led to evolution of IOR as a common geo-strategic entity.
7. Although imperialism ended after World War II, extra-regional interest in the region continued to grow, due to competition for resources, most notably hydrocarbons, and for domination of vast markets. Through the Cold War, extra-regional powers competed to expand their influence in the IOR, leading to many proxy wars.
8. The end of the Cold War was a watershed in geo-politics, with a paradigm shift in how nations view peace, security and national power. Concepts such as **comprehensive security** have displaced a hitherto narrow military-centric approach.

9. 'Peace', in a **comprehensive security framework**, goes beyond the mere absence of conflict, and encompasses military, economic, societal, energy and environmental security among other factors. For instance, the National Security Index, envisages a combination of many diverse, yet inter-related factors, centred on economic prosperity, which in turn provides the wherewithal for all national endeavours.
10. The Indian Ocean Region, comprising the ocean and its littorals, is India's **regional or immediate geo-strategic environment**. It exists on the fringes of our boundaries and has a on the internal state of affairs. Addressing the Combined Commanders' Conference recently, the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, had stated and I QUOTE,

"Our immediate geo-strategic environment comes with its own conventional, strategic and non-conventional security challenges. India's strategic calculus has long encompassed the waters from the Gulf of Aden to the Strait of Malacca." UNQUOTE.
11. The Hon'ble Prime Minister's statement has a distinct nautical flavour. In a way, it defines the Indian Navy's primary Area of Maritime Interest, where we seek to address the challenges having a bearing on national security and the nation's overall socio-economic development.
12. Sustained growth has positioned our country on the path to economic eminence. We are already the 3rd largest economy in Purchasing Power Parity terms. Our ability to fulfil the stated socio-economic aspirations squarely rests on unhindered prosperity. With substantial economic activity, including 90% trade by volume and bulk of our energy imports, happening over the sea, **maritime security** is central to overall development of our nation. Concurrently, India cannot hope to develop and grow peacefully with an unstable and turbulent neighbourhood. Prevalence of peace in the Indian Ocean Region is therefore a key national security imperative. We achieve this through a combination of diplomatic, economic and military means all of which have a maritime connect.

13. Security challenges ranging from pandemics to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, from piracy to terrorism, and from climate change to money laundering confront all nation-states. This has engendered a **cooperative approach** to security, especially in the maritime domain, where majority of global economic interests get intertwined and to which a majority of the challenges to security are associated.
14. Riding on the benefits of globalisation, littorals of the IOR are now re-emerging to achieve their original potential. The emergence of many regional countries, as economic powerhouses, reflects this reality. Consequently, several regional economic groupings such as ASEAN, BIMSTEC, SAARC, IOR-ARC, GCC and few others have evolved over time in the IOR to harness the advantages of economic integration.
15. The region's natural bounties and maritime trade carried over its sea lanes drive the global economy. The fact that two-thirds of the world's oil shipments, one-third of its bulk cargo and half of the container traffic transit over its sea lanes, and through its choke points, a large part of which is meant for countries outside the region, underscores the Indian Ocean's importance for the world at large.
16. The IOR at the same time is also marred by historic faultlines, in some cases, due to ambiguous colonial boundary delineations and inequalities that breed instability. The centrality of the 'ocean' in the region's affairs is further underscored by the fact that problems on land invariably find a reflection at sea. I shall now touch upon some key maritime challenges that endanger peace and stability in IOR.
17. The **foremost challenge** obviously emerges from **inter-state armed conflicts**. Most of the armed conflicts in the post World War II era occurred in the IOR, underscoring the region's geo-political fragility. West Asian conflicts, South-Asian conflicts, Iran-Iraq war, the Gulf Wars, Afghanistan, the list is long.

18. While economic interests may initiate extra-regional military presence in these waters, at times, the presence itself may escalate contest and competition. Armed conflicts impinge upon regional peace in decisive ways, given the region's delicate socio-economic structure. Peace ultimately returns, but not without costs in terms of widespread destruction, human suffering, financial losses and consequential regional instability. It dents the conducive external environment necessary for a nation-state to develop and grow peacefully.
19. More than armed conflicts, currently what complicates security dynamics is the array of **non-conventional threats perpetuated by non-state or even, state-sponsored actors**. There are several reasons for this security conundrum.
20. **Firstly, these threats are omni-present.** Weak governance or the absence of governance in some littorals has allowed the state to lose its '**monopoly on the use of legitimate force**'. The resultant anarchy on land manifests itself as lawlessness and non-conventional threats at sea. The flourishing piracy off Somalia and the terror attacks on USS Cole and MV Limburg are few such examples.
21. **Secondly, these threats are amorphous, with an uncanny ability to evolve, thus challenging established security structures.** Maritime piracy, which, until a few years ago, was mainly limited to armed robbery at sea, has now evolved into criminal acts, orchestrated by well organised global crime syndicates. Pirates today are well armed and capable of striking over 1000 miles from coast. Hijacking of ships for ransom, amounting to millions of dollars, is also a relatively new practice. Besides the economic and humanitarian dimensions of piracy, its evolving links with terrorism, and states supporting terror outfits, compounds the problem.
22. **Then there is the legal aspect.** Evolving threats such as piracy, highjacking of merchantmen, suicidal terror attacks, proliferation of WMD-related material et al, expose the inadequacy of current

national and international laws and conventions to deter them or deal with them effectively.

23. While maritime piracy and maritime terrorism are more obvious, there are **other non-conventional challenges**, such as illegal arms trade, drug and human trafficking, poaching etc, which continue to engage our attention and resources on a regular basis.
24. As stated earlier, **economic security** is central to the comprehensive approach to security. In this globalised world, the Indian economy is integrated with, and consequently interdependent on other world economies. The prospect of disruption of trade at critical chokepoints, such as the Strait of Hormuz or Malacca, can be catastrophic for the global economy. The downstream effects of such economic upheaval are certainly disastrous for regional peace. Maintaining unimpeded flow of energy and other commodities over the sea is therefore a prime concern for all nations, including ours.
25. Growing economies need additional space to exploit resources. With the resources on land already under pressure, exploration would perforce have to expand into the maritime domain. Thus far, the Exclusive Economic Zones have mainly been exploited by coastal states for shallow water extraction of hydrocarbons and seafood. The focus is now shifting to the vast mineral resources from deeper waters. Besides the technological challenges involved in seabed mining, the need for long term protection of such resources and associated infrastructure becomes another security consideration. Blocks allocated to India and some other countries in South Indian Ocean for deep sea bed mining become factors for consideration, in this regard.
26. **Human security** holds special relevance in the maritime domain. More than half of humanity lives within 200 km of the coast, which accounts for only 10% of the available landmass. It is also this thin slice of land that bears the brunt of maritime natural disasters such as tsunamis, cyclones and floods. The IOR alone is the locus of nearly 70% of the world's natural disasters, the consequences of which are further aggravated by high population

densities and the lack of capacity to react effectively in their aftermath.

27. There is an intricate link between the oceans and the atmosphere, as they regulate the planet's climatic conditions – something so central to sustenance of all forms of life, including human. The effects of **climate change**, therefore pose significant challenges to human security in our region. Geographically, the Arctic may seem a remote place for us in the IOR, but the accelerating environmental changes there would have profound implications, globally. Of those, rising sea levels, directly threaten the IOR's low-lying coastal states and island nations such as parts of Bangladesh and Maldives.
28. Having dwelled on a broad range of maritime challenges, I shall now outline the Navy's vision and endeavours in meeting them.
29. Famous maritime historian KM Pannikar, in one of his seminal works had stated and I QUOTE, "*The vital feature which differentiates the Indian Ocean from the Atlantic or the Pacific is the subcontinent of India, which juts out far into the sea for a thousand miles. It is the geographical position of India that changes the character of the Indian Ocean.*" UNQUOTE
30. India's **geo-strategic location** positions us right at the confluence of major arteries of world trade. The Indian Navy is therefore viewed by some of the littorals as a suitable agency to facilitate regional maritime security in the IOR as a **net security provider**. India's standing as a **benign power** provides credence to this perception, making us a preferred partner for regional security.
31. The first means of maintaining peace is, of course, the **prevention of armed conflict**. Our own experience during Operation Vijay (Kargil Operations) bears testimony to the utility of strong maritime forces in dissuasion and control of escalation. You would be aware that the Indian Navy's posture in the North Arabian Sea, contributed significantly to the early achievement of India's operational goals and, more importantly, in limiting the scope of the conflict.

32. Our perspective plans are centred on building **not just our force structure, but capabilities** to meet the identified and emerging challenges. However, neither do we intend, nor is there a need to match numbers with any other country. Instead, we are focused on creating **capabilities and leveraging our strategic geography to assert and defend our sovereign interests** in the maritime domain. With modern aircraft carriers, along with potent surface, sub-surface and air platforms, we have a balanced force capable of undertaking a range of operations, from the brown to the blue waters, and also contribute to regional security.
33. Military intervention, in support of friendly nations, at their request, or under the aegis of United Nations, is also an option for conflict prevention and crisis resolution. When mercenaries attacked and took control of Male in Nov 1988, our prompt politico-military response, as part of Op Cactus, remains etched as one of India's most successful operations in support of regional stability. The Indian Navy has also made significant contributions during Operation Pawan in Sri Lanka and UN operations in Somalia.
34. Another dimension to promoting peace is through **cooperative security**. The Navy discharges this responsibility through a broad spectrum of cooperative and inclusive endeavours. These encompass coordinated operations, bilateral exercises, security assistance and military-to-military dialogue.
35. Preserving good order at sea and **ensuring security of International Shipping Lanes** in the IOR is another duty of the Navy in the interest of the global commons.
36. The MV Alondra Rainbow incident of Nov 1999, culminating in the capture of the hijacked vessel, along with pirates, was the first major anti-piracy operation undertaken by the Navy. We also undertook anti-piracy patrols in the Strait of Malacca when piracy was thriving there a decade ago.
37. In the East, we undertake bilateral coordinated patrols, or simply CORPAT, with Thailand and Indonesia, which address a range of maritime security issues. Plans exist to include Myanmar in

this endeavour. India is also a party to ReCAAP or Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, a government-to-government agreement on anti-piracy cooperation and information sharing. The fact that the menace of piracy has largely been controlled in South-east Asia bears testimony to the strength of a cooperative approach.

38. In more recent times, the Indian Navy has been at the forefront of anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, since Oct 2008. Our ships and aircraft have seen sustained prolonged deployments, escorting Indian, as well as, foreign flagged ships. Our robust actions, such as sinking of four pirate mother ships in 2011, have deterred piracy, close to the Indian coast. The dealings clearly signalled India's resolve to curb this menace. Since then, no successful pirate attack has been reported within 450 nm of our coast. Similarly, in the Gulf of Aden, no ship under our escort has been pirated during the last four years. Over 2400 ships have been escorted by Indian Naval Ships, 40 piracy attempts foiled by us and more than 120 pirates arrested.
39. While we deploy forces independently in the Gulf of Aden, our actions are nevertheless underlined by a cooperative approach. We coordinate our operations with other navies and regularly exchange information through participation in cooperative mechanisms such as SHADE. I must also highlight that the 13th Plenary Session of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) was held at the UN Headquarters in New York, in December last year, under India's chairmanship.
40. Of late, there have been many encouraging signs. Thanks to concerted international efforts, there has been a declining trend in pirate activity since 2011. It merits reiteration that piracy is a manifestation of larger problems ashore. Therefore, as long as poor governance continues in coastal states, lawlessness and piracy will prevail at sea and engage much of our efforts.
41. **Maritime terrorism** is another grave challenge. The events of 26/11 brought to fore the porosity of our long coastline and its

resultant vulnerability to terror attacks perpetrated from the sea. Moreover, the prospect of terror attacks on off-shore infrastructure and sea-borne traffic, close to the coast, puts a premium on ensuring **coastal security**. Consequent to government directives, the Navy is now responsible for overall maritime security of the country, including the coast. A comprehensive coastal security framework, involving a number of organisational and materiel measures, has been created. The setting up of Joint Operation Centres, raising a dedicated force for Coastal Security (Sagar Prahari Bal), creating a network of coastal radars and AIS chains, are all meant to enhance our Maritime Domain Awareness, close to the coast.

42. On request, we also deploy assets to undertake EEZ surveillance and anti-piracy patrols for some of our neighbours. We are cooperating with several IOR nations in the installation of coastal radars and AIS chains to enhance domain awareness. In addition, our continuing assistance in terms of hydrographic surveys, technical assistance and product support are of great value to our maritime neighbours. Our foreign cooperation initiatives are aimed at their **capacity building and capability enhancement**. Several IOR nations are currently the focus our cooperative policies. As I speak, the Navy's sail training ship Sudarshini is on the last lap of her six-month long MEA-sponsored voyage to South East Asian nations under a joint India-ASEAN venture to celebrate the 20th anniversary of India's diplomatic relations with ASEAN.
43. For many years now, **training initiatives** have constituted the cornerstone of the Navy's interaction with friendly navies. Besides offering training opportunities at our professional institutes, we also depute our training teams abroad. Furthermore, bilateral operational exercises constitute important avenues for maritime diplomacy as well as capacity building. The Indian Navy regularly exercises with regional and extra-regional navies on a range of military, constabulary and benign functions, including counter-piracy, counter-terrorism, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief etc.

44. As regards human security, the Indian Navy already has rich experience in **HADR**. It may be recalled that in 2004, within hours of being hit by the tsunami, we had dispatched several ships and aircraft, across the Indian Ocean, to provide assistance to our neighbours, while coping with the disaster ourselves. This vividly demonstrated our operational capability and commitment to the region. The Navy continues to remain ever-prepared to respond swiftly in any similar unfortunate eventuality in the future.
45. In addition to operations and exercises, **dialogue** forms a key avenue for strengthening **military-to-military relations**. When nations cooperate militarily against common threats and challenges, it enhances mutual trust, thus reducing avenues of conflict. As on today, we engage 15 navies in institutional naval staff talks and prospects exist for adding more.
46. The **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)**, an inclusive forum, comprising the Indian Ocean navies, is one such landmark initiative, which we are proud to have pioneered. Since its inception in 2008, IONS has grown from strength to strength and today it has 35 member navies from across the region. This endeavour has led to establishing and promoting consultations and cooperation amongst various participants and is also facilitating evolution of a common set of strategies to enhance regional maritime security. The Indian Navy continues to make seminal contributions to this initiative. We have taken the lead in establishing the IONS website last year; and this year, we would be conducting a workshop at Mumbai, on the topic, "*Role and expectations of emerging Navies in cooperative engagement for peace and stability in IOR*". This, in a way, captures the very essence of my talk today and also the Navy's strategy for maritime diplomacy and security cooperation in the region.
47. Similarly, *MILAN*, a biennial gathering of select regional navies at Port Blair, is another path breaking initiative of the Indian Navy. Beginning with just five members in 1995, we hosted 14 navies in 2012 for this biennial event. This indeed has been a very successful endeavour in fostering goodwill among participating

navies through professional and social interaction of naval personnel.

48. During my talk, I have outlined only the major maritime challenges and some of our important endeavours. There are many more. For a planet with more than two-thirds covered by the water, the destiny of humanity is inextricably linked to the sea, more so, in a globalised world. Conversely, the surrounding human activities in the littoral also influence the maritime environment in myriad ways.
49. In conclusion, maintenance of a peaceful maritime environment is an imperative, for our nation and the region, to sustain our growth trajectories and to achieve our national aspirations. The oceans are vast, challenges too many, and resources limited, for any individual state to assure security of the global commons. This, therefore, calls for a cooperative approach. By virtue of **India's geo-strategic location** in the Indian Ocean and her **maritime capabilities**, the Indian Navy is deemed by many to be the net security provider in the IOR.
50. A cooperative and supportive approach is central to our endeavours. Mindful of the region's strategic importance for India, and the world, we are marshalling our capabilities and efforts to promote regional security, in concert with other stake holders. At the same time, being aware that cooperation co-exists with competition, we also remain watchful and committed to prevent the IOR from becoming an arena for another round of extra-regional military contestation.
51. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention. Jai hind.
(bold letters are as in the original)



016. Media Interaction of Official Spokesperson.**New Delhi, March 7, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends. I am available now for any question that you may like to ask. I will subject myself to the volley of questions that you have on inevitable issues. Let us begin.

Q: Sir, has the meeting between Mr. Salman Khurshid and Pakistani Prime Minister been firmed up now; when are they meeting; who will be accompanying them; what are they going to discuss; what is going to happen; what food will be served? It is just one question.

Official Spokesperson: All this is subsumed under one question!

Q: These are various parts of the same question, Sir.

Official Spokesperson: All right. Let me try and answer all aspects of that question.

The High Commission of Pakistan in New Delhi did inform us last week that the Prime Minister of Pakistan His Excellency Mr. Raja Parvez Ashraf had expressed a desire to undertake a private visit to Ajmer. Following subsequent consultations, the Ministry of External Affairs will be facilitating this one-day private visit by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

It is expected that the Prime Minister of Pakistan will be accompanied by members of his family and will be arriving in Jaipur in the morning of 9th March. The External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid, will host a lunch for him at a local hotel in Jaipur, following which the Prime Minister will depart for Ajmer. Upon completion of ziarat and prayers at Ajmer, the visiting Prime Minister is expected to return to Jaipur on the same evening and take a special flight back to Islamabad. We will provide you with a detailed media advisory indicating the photo opportunities that will be available during this visit for the visual media. The Prime Minister is not visiting New Delhi and no substantive discussions are scheduled to be held in Jaipur. I think I have answered most of your questions. I think you wanted the name of that hotel. It is not a big secret. It is Hotel Rambagh Palace in Jaipur.

Q: Any condolence message sent to the Venezuelan President?

Official Spokesperson: The Prime Minister of India has issued a condolence message, which is available. If you have not got access to it, we will certainly circulate that.

Q: As far as Mr. Ashraf's visit is concerned, last year we saw President Zardari, he was invited at the last minute. The invitation essentially has to come through the host country in a way. Can you take us through the reasons why perhaps a similar invitation was not extended to the visiting Prime Minister?

Official Spokesperson: I think you are drawing two different parallels. He has expressed a desire to visit Ajmer on a private visit along with members of his family or perhaps extended family. We have abided by that desire and indicated that he would be provided due courtesies, and all requirements that meet his needs are being met. In addition we have not received any other request for any other need.

Q: I just want to understand why the Indian Government is going out of its way to have an official interaction with the Pakistani Prime Minister given that the Prime Minister himself had said that this is not business as usual after the LoC flare out?

Official Spokesperson: I think I made it quite clear that there would not be any substantive discussions. That said, he is the Prime Minister and the Head of Government of a country with which we have diplomatic relations. It is an important country, and in accordance with normal diplomatic protocol, we are extending him due courtesies.

Q: Sir, this is regarding the Afghan Deputy NSA calling on the international community to blacklist ISI. Will India support such a move that has been made by Afghanistan since we are also at the receiving end of ISI?

Official Spokesperson: First of all, I think I am the wrong person to answer a question on intelligence. As you are aware, I have no expertise in that. I am a mere diplomat. But that said, I would draw your attention to a statement that we issued on December 19, 2012. It lays out our views on the matter of immunity and jurisdiction for all organizations. I would suggest that you have a look at that. It covers our response. It is available on our website.

Q: Is anyone going for the funeral to Venezuela?

Official Spokesperson: I will check this up and let you know before the end of the day, in the next hour. I did not follow this up.

(Subsequently we have informed all media by email that Mr Sachin Pilot, Minister of State with Independent Charge of Corporate Affairs will represent India at the funeral on 8 March 2012)

Thank you very much.

(Concluded)



017. External Affairs Minister's address at the inaugural meeting of "The Growth Net".

New Delhi, March 10, 2013.

Good afternoon to all of you Ladies and Gentlemen. It's an honor indeed to be here in the presence of my very good friend Shri Gautam Thapar, Chairperson of Aspen Institute India, and of course Mr. Claude Smadja, who has been a leading light and inspiration across the globe and as President of Smadja & Smadja, today steering this remarkable gathering. Shri Tarun Das who remains a constant pillar of strength.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman,

Allow me first to thank the organizers of "The Growth Net" for creating this remarkable platform to interact with the eminent economists and thinkers, and of course it is privilege to be able to share my thoughts with you all at this inaugural meeting which seeks to share knowledge and perspectives amongst emerging economies and I do understand that this is a beginning of a very, very major exercise. And the phrase that you have used is the "new constellation of growth", I think provides tremendous sense of energy there to denote what we have traditionally called "Emerging economies".

I do believe it is important that regular and meaningful exchange of ideas and experiences within this new constellation continues so that the benefit

of their own growth as well as the understanding of the growth of the rest of the world can be enhanced and can be multiplied many times over. To that end, "The Growth Net" serves I believe commendable congregation of great minds such as yours and indeed it is a privilege to be sharing this moment with you.

Many of us are probably surprised to see how the world economy has changed today and one of the most important of these changes is the growing share of this new constellation of rapidly developing economies, that is I said has traditionally been known as the "Emerging Economies" and there is no doubt that in today's era of globalization, the rise of diversified global conglomerates and agile new businesses from these economies is inevitably changing the way world business is done.

There may well be despite a sense of understanding, there may well be some difficulty as far as analysis is concerned by academics and by people who are involved in actually defining the very concept of an emerging economy and I think you'd be aware that the World Bank definition of the Emerging Market, countries to have a gross national income per capita of US \$ 11,905 or less of course. According to Goldman Sachs, Emerging Markets include the fastest growing economies, and these countries are the ones that are experiencing rapid industrialization, urbanization and increased global trade classifying where in BRIC, Indonesia, Mexico, Turkey and South Korea as the growth markets based upon GDP growth rates, demographics and of course the size and depth of market.

And I might add here that India in that sense will be for you both a great opportunity in terms of definition and also in terms of a challenge and I would recommend to you to think of India as a unique example of being able to factor in many of these forces that you have pursued and that you have analyzed and tried to understand as indeed offering some unusual and unique challenges. And I think those of you who have studied India and China in terms of contrast and in terms of the convergence, that some people might see, people think of us as an alternative to China, as competition to China or the other way around. But we have and our Prime Minister has said this very categorically and clearly that the world is large enough for both of us to be able to operate successfully both in terms of politics and in terms of economics. There are strengths that we

have in India that would be very educative and instructive for anyone who is building new architecture for business in the world. There are strengths that China has and we recognize each other's strengths and I do believe that at certain moments we even try to replicate these strengths but they will remain for a very long time unique strengths of our two countries, so as you look at the pantheon of the countries in the constellation, it would be rewarding and it would be wholesome contribution to your understanding of what you are doing together to be able to emphasize our respective strengths and see how they work in each set of circumstances.

The growing importance of Emerging Markets is striking with respect to demographic importance, economic importance, both at the macro and micro economic level, and perhaps culturally as well and here India believes that it has a special, unique contribution to make. Both our historical cultural, bonds and linkages with the world and indeed our present attempts to provide an outreach to the world.

In terms of demographic importance, Emerging Market countries are home to half of the world's population and India is of course one of the two population giants still growing not necessarily something we appreciate. While the numbers are startling in terms of population, they are also increasingly impressive in terms of economic size and you know Emerging Markets account for almost 40% of the world GDP at purchasing power parity and are stated to be growing at more than 7% per annum on an average over the past few years.

In economic terms, businesses from these countries are listed among the world's 20 largest in terms of market value and a number of the richest individuals in the world are from these markets alone. One study has found that BRIC could be over half of the size of today's six largest industrialized economies by 2025 and in less than 40 years they could well overtake them.

Global economic situation I need hardly tell you remains a matter of concern. The Eurozone crisis although I have been reassured repeatedly that Eurozone crisis and sovereign debt crisis that have created enormous uncertainties in the global economy are gradually, steadily but surely on amend. The economic recovery is slow, of course, and

that calls certainly for an important policy action on several fronts and I do imagine that this is happening across Europe. I know that it is little more difficult in United States of America but it's happening there as well and I hope that people will tell you about how we, in our own way, have tried to attempt this in our country.

The slowdown in advanced economies is affecting emerging countries through lower exports and smaller capital flows and this harsh truth. One silver lining of course is that, developing economies have greater ability to respond with fiscal and monetary stimulus if conditions worsen. We did that, and we did that with great deal of success but there are of course the side effects of successful stimulus which is what we are now trying to tackle in terms of putting a lid on fiscal deficits.

Infrastructure investment in developing countries assumes special importance in this regard, and that's for us, flagged as one most important element. It lays the foundation for rapid growth in the longer term, while providing an immediate stimulus for their economics and for the global economy by creating demand. An expansion of investment in infrastructure is possible only if they get access to long-term capital. The multilateral development banks can, thus and therefore play a major role in this context.

As I said that like other Emerging Economies, India too slowed down. We were aiming at 9%, we had reached 8 % GDP growth and then began to slip. We came down to 7, came down to 6, we then came down to 5.8% but as our Finance Minister and Prime Minister have said with tremendous confidence based not just on political loud speak but on the work that's been done that over the next two years we will inch back to 7%.

The global downturn , contraction of global demand and the impact on capital flows have obviously, played a part. Internal constraints, that's what I hope you will reflect on have affected in addition, have affected our economic performance. Sustaining a high growth for a country like India, we are now saying to our people, clearly is not an option but a social imperative and as only through sustained economic growth we will be able to lift our millions out of poverty. When we lift them up out of poverty, we get the additionally of providing a greater thrust to the economy. Not only do we put an end to the drag on the economy because

of the poverty but we also get an enormous new energy in our economy when we lift people of poverty.

We can feel encouraged that the fundamentals of Indian economy remain strong and this is something that was shown by us when the Asian tigers were in trouble and this is something that I hope that we've been able to indicate also when US and European crisis emerged. We are confident of bringing back the rhythm of high growth. As I said, we are focusing heavily on infrastructure investment and also put in place a problem resolution mechanisms to overcome implementation of bottlenecks. We've began, we started this process with high powered Cabinet Committee that is headed by the Prime Minister himself to ensure that bottlenecks particularly in the area of environmental clearances to major projects can be fast-tracked and decision can be taken in one place.

Fiscal discipline is a priority for the Government and in this direction of course controlling of subsidies becomes important. A landmark effort is underway in India to facilitate delivery of a whole range of financial and other services directly through effective targeting and reduced leakages in subsidy schemes. And here we have the largest and most ambitious Unique ID number assisted direct transfers of benefits that we believe are necessary to go to our people. I think there is a conceptual change taking place. All the advice that we've got about subsidies dragging us down but subsidies that we cannot politically and in humanitarian terms completely overlook. The conceptual answer to that is now coming by ensuring that subsidies intended for the consumer but being used by the manufacturer will now actually end up in the consumer's bank and this is a major conceptual and functional difference that you will see over the next one year.

Our general budget that recently been given had some very good initiatives. I believe that this is a budget that's been described as budget to attempt to consolidate our fiscal position but it's actually consolidation of range of positions we've taken over the last 5-4 years and I think that it's a budget that actually can be seen as a budget of great deal of confidence despite difficult economic situation because this budget does not allow for any retreat of all the things that we did. It doesn't provide for runaway spending and therefore it's a budget that gives stability and it

gives clarity of the direction that we've taken and our confidence in that direction. To boost manufacturing sector, we have announced investment allowance rate of 15% to manufacturing companies that invest more than rupees 100 crores in plant and machinery. In infrastructure, we've allowed certain companies to raise tax free bonds up to rupees 50,000 crores and encourage infrastructure debt fund. Some people might say this is too little, it doesn't go far enough but it's something that to be seen in the context of the situation as we saw it last year and preparation and laying the ground for what can possibly be done next year and therefore, I believe this is consolidation and a new beginning.

The global crisis has also given us a historic opportunity to reform global political and economic governance. The global financial and economic crisis of 2008-09 exposed the fragility of existing global financial and economic institutions, and the limitations of existing macroeconomic policy tools. But I think, gathering such as yours, indeed should reflect on this larger issue besides looking at the fine tuning of policy frameworks

Recent geo-political crisis in Middle-East and African countries has underscored the need to involve countries and have their say in the global economic and political governance proportionate to their economic prowess. Hence, our sustained argument for UN reforms.

To some extent, the formation of G20 is a significant geopolitical shift in global economic governance. The G20 members represent almost 90% of global GDP, 80% of global-trade and 2/3 of the world's population. G-20 also has a unique balance, where both advanced and emerging countries come together as equal partners. The global crisis has been a catalyst for this change. And whatever is left will be soaked up by the presence of this gathering of 30, I believe, it is, so from G8 to G20 and from G20 to your Growth Net of 30 and perhaps more.

Globalization has put all economies in the globe under the same boat with the end result that the implications of events in one economy can impact the entire global system. The crisis we see today is a case in point. The governance of the world economy has perforce therefore to change in terms of both format and substance.

The rising influence of Emerging Economies has shifted the balance of power in their favour. The emergence of some developing countries as

key players and as real contributors to global dialogue on trade and economics is a fundamental feature of this new geo-political reality.

These emerging powers are no longer policy takers, they are policy makers or if you like contributors, influencing the pattern and scope of international trade, creating new supply and demand pulls and flexing their influence in international organizations in a meaningful way. Emerging Economies are also shouldering the growth burden gradually. After all, who thought that BRICS would add US \$ 83 billion for IMF's additional firewall?

The road ahead

The global economy is expected to grow at a slow rate and that's not rocket science. The Eurozone may remain in recession in 2013 and the continuing US fiscal standoff will weigh on the global economy. Global economic cooperation is needed more than ever. It is reassuring to learn that the G20 is working towards bringing about strong, sustainable and balanced global growth.

G-20 is very well placed to cooperate in key areas so as to strengthen global recovery towards strong, sustainable and balanced global economic growth. Moreover, Emerging Economies have shown much more resilience and have maintained high growth path for quite some time. These factors position the Emerging Economies as the most important engine of the global economic recovery and I do believe, India stands there in a very visible position.

We have developed in India a gradually emerging as the fourth largest economy globally today in PPP terms. India appears to be writing a dynamic new future for itself, managing its transition from a developing country to a developed one.

Our exceptional growth in IT sector has changed the perception of the Indian economy to a major extent. India, with its good legal structure, corporate governance, banking system, financial sector and its skilled manpower and young force has become the new economic icon of the emerging powers. India's developmental model is managing to deliver long term economic pay-offs at much lower levels of investment.

Investors coming into India do so with three main things in mind, we know that the- high potential of our domestic market, cost competitiveness

due to availability of low cost labour and inexpensive manufacturing capabilities. Investors are increasingly seeing India as a destination for the new manufacturing projects as they tend to target the industrial machinery, equipment and tools and the automotive sector. Many believe that India will be one of the top three manufacturing destinations of the world in the near future.

Innovation has therefore become crucial to India's industrial and services sector to take them to the next higher level. R & D landscape in India is expected to grow rapidly with over 700 MNCs currently basing their R&D centres in the country. India has a tremendous potential to become the "frugal innovation Centre of the world".

As companies and government enhance R & D expenditure, we will emerge as competitive technology providers. India has the largest scientific manpower in the world with over 12 million engineers and doctors and an equal number of post-graduates in science and mathematics and there is an annual addition of 2 million graduates, 7 lakh post graduates and 3 lakh engineers.

Government of India has, therefore, declared 2010-2020 as the "Decade of Innovation" realizing roadmap for innovation in the country needs to be chalked out as the innovation that produces affordable products and cheaper services without compromising on safety, efficiency and utility being need of the hour.

An alarm bell is the concerns expressed by investors and I think we will be candid and honest. These include lack of adequate infrastructure as the single biggest hindrance to doing business in the country. The World Economic Forum rated Indian infrastructure as 89th amongst 133 countries surveyed. Our government is therefore, committed to augmenting infrastructure capacity. Over the next five years, India plans to spend US \$ 1 trillion on infrastructure, half of which, we hope, will come from private sector.

Governance and transparency are the other key issues which have been cited by investors as hurdles as it is felt that bureaucracy and red tape restricts an open environment for investment.

These are of course other major concerns namely revitalization of the rural economy, education, health, rural and urban infrastructure,

environmental upgradation, need for better enhanced delivery of essential public services, upgrading the financial system for better global integration and a better regulatory system.

Our government has focused its priorities on addressing these issues. Despite huge challenges, India has registered significant gains based on liberal economic reforms pursued over the last two decades. Now is the time for the next phase of economic reforms and also address the fundamental structural issues in our economy. So we have gone up and then plateaued for a while and I believe that we will start our climb once again very shortly.

A few lines about India's efforts in building capacities in other developing countries would not be out of place. We share our developmental experiences with other countries traversing the same path to growth and economic upliftment, both as a moral obligation, political obligation and what we believe is enlightened self-interest.

From relatively modest beginnings, our capacity building programmes have expanded considerably in range and volume. Over the last year, nearly 9,000 civilian training slots were allotted to 161 developing countries for about 280 courses in disciplines such as finance management, IT, telecommunications, rural development and agro-processing. Special courses were offered in election management, WTO studies, parliamentary practices, public-private partnership in infrastructure development and mass communications. At the invitation of partner countries, we send experts in specified fields. To take just a few examples, we are in the process of sending a town planner to Fiji, a Police advisor to Belize and a consultant to a public Administration Institute in Namibia.

We are now moving one step further and are setting up capacity building institutions in partner countries. In our neighbourhood, we are establishing an Institute of Information Technology in Myanmar, agriculture research institutions in Myanmar and Afghanistan and Vocational Training Centres in Sri Lanka. At the India Africa Forum Summits in 2008 and 2011, India committed to establishing institutions to strengthen capacities at the pan-African, regional and bilateral levels in Information Technology, Education Planning, Civil Aviation, Agriculture Rural Development and Earth Sciences.

Two other important strands of India's development are concessional loans and development projects under grant assistance. Lines of Credit on concessional terms enable partner countries to undertake projects in accordance with their development priorities. We now have about 150 operative Lines of Credit of over US \$ 9 billion. They finance a wide range of projects from drinking water schemes to irrigation, solar electrification, power generation & transmission, cement plants, technology parks and railway infrastructure.

Major projects are under implementation with Indian grant assistance in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka-in infrastructure, hydroelectricity, power transmission, agriculture, industry, health and other sectors.

The significant expansion of India's development cooperation programmes in recent years motivated the creation of a Development Partnership Administration in the Ministry of External Affairs to bring under one umbrella the entire range of our external developmental assistance and to manage more efficiently the formulation, appraisal, implementation and evaluation of its projects. This is not a new direction in our foreign policy; it is a sharpening of focus on one of its important dimensions and is meant to enhance the coherence of its delivery mechanisms.

We would like to fine-tune our programme to more effectively meet the developmental priorities of our partner countries. We are formulating transparent procedures to create a level playing field for our public and private sector companies to participate in projects under lines of credit and grant assistance. We intend to engage more with NGOs involved in socioeconomic programmes in India, so that we can replicate their Indian successes in other developing countries. We are also exploring innovative models of partnership with Indian business to implement larger developmental projects in our partner countries. We believe opportunities exist for this in, for example, the infrastructure and connectivity projects in Africa & ASEAN.

To conclude, I wish to leave a thought in your minds. It is clear that the Emerging Economies can take their rightful place in global order only if they achieve political stability, ensure energy and food security, adapt to clean technologies, invest in innovation, harness their demography, embrace revolutions in ICT, usher in transparency and last but not the

least, share their experiences. It is beyond doubt that only if the economic growth is backed by the above factors, can it be comprehensive, strong, sustainable and inclusive. We need policy inputs to achieve the same. We look up to you to provide that and I am glad that many of these issues are on your agenda over the next few days.

My compliments for the topical initiative and wish all the participants engaging in productive discussions. I think that will briefly indicate to you that your meeting here in Delhi will be a rewarding one in the backdrop of the good things that are happening in India

Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen.



018. Weekly Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson.

New Delhi, March 18, 2013.

Official Spokesperson: Good Afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming for this interaction.

I just have an announcement to make and that is about the visit of President Morsi to India. He will be arriving late this evening. And we have provided you the details of his activities here in Delhi. My understanding is now that the delegation, since we last briefed, has further increased and there are now six ministers who are accompanying him. along with another official who is equivalent to minister. So we have approximately seven senior Minister level officials who are accompanying President Morsi, who will be arriving later tonight in Delhi. I do not have any other announcements to make, but if you are interested in any other issues that you may want to ask me about I am willing to answer.

Q: We are told that the Italians served a note verbale on 15th March saying that they have diplomatic immunity and the court order of 14th March cannot be executed on them. What was, if you replied to it, your reply?

Official Spokesperson: I think first of all, the terminology that you used perhaps is not the correct one to say -"served". A note-verbale is an

ordinary means of communication between two governments. So yes, we did receive a note-verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy on the 15th through our Mission in Rome and that note-verbale drew our attention to the provisions of the Vienna Convention regarding diplomatic agents. And, of course, we are conscious of the provisions of the Vienna Convention and our obligations under the Vienna Convention, but we are also bound by the directions of the honourable Supreme court on this matter and we have made it clear to them.

Q: Has the government decided, which way to go in Geneva, because verdict comes up on Thursday? Thank You.

Official Spokesperson: My understanding of the situation in Geneva is that the resolution in its final form will be available late this evening, Geneva time. And I also understand that the Foreign Secretary has asked our Ambassador or the Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mr. Dilip Sinha to come over to Delhi tomorrow so that we can have consultations on matter. As this is an important matter for us and he will be able to brief to senior officials of the government on what are the ground level realities in Geneva and the latest position on that. So the call will only be taken subsequent to the availability of the resolution and the arrival of the Ambassador here for consultations with senior officials in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Q: How does the Ministry of External Affairs see the use of the word "genocide" in any potential resolution and also the demand for an international probe?

Official Spokesperson: I think there is a very well used idiom in English that we will cross the bridge when we come to it. There is no resolution as of now which is available to us. So what you say is only something that you are speculating about. We haven't seen the final format of that resolution and it is only going to be available, as I said, later tonight, Geneva local time. Our assessment about it will be communicated by Ambassador Dilip sinha when he comes here to New Delhi tomorrow.

Q: In view of many voices coming from European Union that (inaudible). How do you see possibility of a more diplomatic and a legal action. Is there a possibility of Joint investigation coming soon or some kind of out of Court Settlement. How realistic it can be?

Official Spokesperson: I think you are aware of the developments today at the Supreme Court. And we, as officers of the Govt. of India, are bound by the directives of the court on this matter. And we will abide by them. So at this stage, we will take it when the court discusses this next. My understanding of that, is now that it is on April 2.

Q: We asked the Ambassador designate not to go to Rome right now. So are there any further diplomatic steps that would be taken between you while Supreme Court process on here?

Official Spokesperson: I think we did mention that there's underway a study of the entire expanse of our relationship with Italy following the Prime Minister's statement in parliament that you are all aware of and that study, when it is completed, will provide us a variety of suggestions and its only then we will consider various matters based on what the study provides as recommendations and suggestions on the entire expanse of our relations. At this stage that's not yet ready.

Q: When is the Prime Minister finally going to Japan?

Official Spokesperson: As you are aware, it is always best to finalize dates before we make such announcements. At this stage, there has not even been an advance team which goes and make preparations. So I think it would be premature on my part to make any suggestions or references to such visit. Yes, the Prime Minister is keen since he could not undertake that visit in November last due to domestic developments in Japan and we hope that he will be able undertake the visit at the earliest possible opportunity which is convenient to both Japan and India.

Q: This news coming from abroad of contacts and discussions going on between India and Italy at diplomatic level. Can you say something more or you are not aware at all of the existence of this kind of discussion and secondly are you aware that our Ambassador is also accredited in Nepal and that he could go to Kathmandu tomorrow?

Official Spokesperson: I am aware of the concurrent jurisdiction of the Ambassador of Italy in India. That said, may be I'll use the same idiom now—let us cross the bridge when we come to it. Let us not be speculative and think of hypothetical situations. If you have some information that he is going tomorrow, he has not communicated that as of this moment to the Ministry of External Affairs.

Q: Sir, could you tell us if we have approached the UK for information on the Augusta-Westland investigations there, because we've signed a deal with them. Have they responded to us till now?

Official Spokesperson: I think I'm not aware of developments recently. But yes, we had approached UK previously and at that stage they had indicated in a preliminary manner that they would await the outcome of the investigations which are underway in Italy. Subsequent to that their Prime Minister was here and this was raised by our Prime Minister quite strongly. And there is on record, his response, about UK's willingness to be very transparent about these things. Since then, we've not had any further diplomatic level information exchange on that matter.

Thank very much



019. Interview of External Affairs Minister with *The Tribune* on Miscellaneous matters.

New Delhi, March 25, 2013.

(The Tribune/by Raj Chengappa)

On the recent vote in the UNHRC (United Nations Human Rights Council) there is criticism from experts that India had always dealt with Sri Lanka bilaterally on issues that concerned us but we are now resorting to multi-lateral means. As an example they cite the recent vote by India in favour of the US resolution and a similar one last year calling for devolution of powers to the Tamils and an inquiry into human rights violations by the Sri Lankan army. Isn't India compromising its foreign policy approach in many ways?

Interesting, that you should ask this question. I have had a lot of people within the political establishment in India saying that why we are not doing what we should be doing which is seeking amendments to the resolution or bringing your own resolution saying that there should be a credible independent international investigation. The closest we came to this was saying that the independent and credible investigation that must

take place should be to the satisfaction of the international community. We even suggested to the US that this be taken on as an amendment but within the parameters and dynamics of the body of that nature. They felt that it would have disturbed the consensus that they had been able to get together over a long period and, therefore, they did not agree to our suggestion. Now why is all this a departure from India's foreign policy?

The fact that we are moving away from the bilateral approach. Does it mean that we have a diminishing clout with Lanka?

Fortunately, whatever we have said multilaterally is what we are saying to Sri Lanka directly. The 13th amendment was the bilateral agreement between India and Sri Lanka that there was a commitment given to India because Sri Lanka felt that it was necessary to give that commitment and we certainly desire that commitment. We do believe to this date and that is what can ultimately guarantee sustainable peace in Sri Lanka and there has to be sustainable peace in Sri Lanka. It is good for them and it's obviously necessary for us. But it must be within the sovereign rights of the Sri Lankan state.

Why did the DMK move out then?

Frankly, this was their call. The world sees India as having made a very determined effort to both appeal to Sri Lanka and to add to the world view as far as the human rights issue was concerned. So it can't be that we were wrong in both places or that we were wrong in not doing enough as far as the DMK was concerned. Right now it may appear that we owe explanations to the people in Tamil Nadu but frankly I think as tempers calm down, as the dust settles and clarity prevails, people will ask them why you are not admitting the extent to which the Government of India has, as you said, redefined some of its positions but tried to address the aspirations of the people of Tamil Nadu and we are not going to shy away from saying this. Fortunately, and I hope that this will remain true, our compulsions and the principles of the stand that we have taken have been understood by Sri Lanka.

Coming to the Italian marine crisis, Italy's major reason for keeping the marines back was that they believed that they should be tried either by the International Court or by their own domestic process. What was the problem with that?

The problem was that our courts said no, we can only go by what our court says about jurisdiction. Our courts, including the Supreme Court, said prima facie the jurisdiction does exist, it does not exist in the state government of Kerala, but it exists in the Central government to appoint a special court to try this matter. But they have also left open that the court that tries this matter can examine the jurisdiction issue in its entirety and then finally come to a conclusion whether the full trial is permissible or not. That's the Supreme Court judgement – we accepted it and so did Italy.

So why did the problem arise?

They have a larger stated position about international tribunals and international disputes; but within the largest stated position, they accepted the pronouncement and the judgement of our Supreme Court because they are party to it. And then subsequently, relying upon that very judgement and their being party to it and accepting the jurisdiction of the court, they then sought permission to leave, having come back once under permission that was given by the High Court. This time they sought permission from the Supreme Court and they were given permission against an affidavit that their Ambassador gave. Frankly, what is our fault in it? It's the assessment they made which is the submission to the jurisdiction that they did, we did not force anything on them and in view of that they were allowed to go to Italy for four weeks. That is the judgement of the court and we should all respect the judgement. Then they were advised presumably that they did not have to come back, we persuaded them that that was wrong.

Did we give them guarantees and that is why they came back?

We have given them a clarification in writing. They asked us whether the marines will be arrested on their arrival in India, we said no because they were supposed to arrive by the midnight of 22nd and if they arrived before the midnight of 22nd, then they were complying with the Supreme Court orders. So what could we arrest them for? And the other issue was: would they be subjected to death penalty? We said no because our understanding of the Indian law is that this is not the rarest of rare case as we understand from all Supreme Court judgements and, therefore, there is no apprehension of death penalty. It was a clarification,

we are in no position to give guarantees and then as an abundant precaution we ran this by the Attorney General and then gave a written clarification. We have also written to the Attorney General to make all this available to the court when it reopens on April 2.

So you look upon this as a success of Indian diplomacy and that you were able to avert a nasty situation?

I won't call it a failure but I think yes it could have become very, very difficult because there were the competing claims — one of domestic law and one of the Vienna Convention and to be put through that very tough test of which way you should tilt is something that was avoided by timely and far-sighted decision of the Italian government. I think there is no reason why we shouldn't appreciate that and acknowledge it.

You had lunch with the Pakistani Prime Minister recently in Jaipur when he came to India. Why didn't the Indian Prime Minister invite him to Delhi for lunch?

Look at the kind of reactions to my having lunch with him — it would have been much worse if the Prime Minister had had lunch with him. He was on a private visit and not on official visit. There was a minimalist time required for him to go and pay obeisance at the Ajmer Dargah. We took a call that it would be appropriate for the Foreign Minister to go. So I went there, had lunch with him and came back.

Did you discuss relations between India and Pakistan?

We kept mostly to general topics. We talked about Sufism, we talked about music, we talked about food. But I did ask the Prime Minister if he had a vision for the relationship between India and Pakistan. We didn't go into specifics. I just asked him about a broad vision as anyone would over a meal. He then expanded on that. He talked a lot about it. Then I asked him what he was saying, which was obviously very positive in articulation, was only a position of his party or was it acceptable across the board in Pakistan politics. He said everyone shares it and that Pakistan was changing, particularly the younger generation.

Did you raise any of India's concerns with him?

No, this was a spiritual visit and I made it very clear that we didn't want to raise the issues we had. Words are not the only things that you require

to convey feelings. These things are understood instinctively by people at that level. You don't have to take him through the alphabets all over again. I had made it clear that we were extending a courtesy for the spiritual visit. Therefore, my discussions hovered over spiritual issues more than politics.

So India's dialogue with Pakistan is almost dead?

I would not say it is dead or in a coma. I will say it has gone very sleepy.

When a new government in Pakistan takes charge in May, what does India expect it to do?

One, we have to go beyond the irritants as they serve little purpose. The irritant on the LoC, for instance, I don't think it served any purpose. If someone thinks it served an electoral purpose, they were probably barking up the wrong tree. Two, we still do not know whether it is lack of conviction on their part whoever is in the civilian government or lack of capacity to deliver on all those things that we want them to deliver in terms of the safety and security of our citizens. The bottomline is this that these mosquito bites must stop.

You would call the attacks mosquito bites?

Well, I think we are too powerful a country. We should not undermine our own strength and our own stature by reducing ourselves to that. I don't think it is more than very itchy mosquito bites. India is not going to be pushed and shoved by a mosquito bite. I think it is important that we get beyond the pranks and tricks of the past and make a serious effort to take forward the investment that both countries have made in the peace initiative.

Do we expect any changes in our relationship with China with a new leadership taking over?

The signals they have given us are very good. So far we have not had any eyeball-to-eyeball contact. But our Prime Minister developed a very good working relationship with the previous Chinese government. We have been given to understand that there is going to be continuity and enhancement of the relationship. We are very happy with that and we will reciprocate it. The good thing is the fundamental understanding that difficult issues will not keep us away from moving forward on areas of

convergence. It is already articulated by them, by us and by the new Government in China and we reiterate that as well.

Moving to another trouble zone Afghanistan and regional security. With the US pullout in a year's time, what is likely to happen?

I do not know. This is a huge imponderable. We keep telling Afghanistan that India wants to be part of a solution and not part of the problem. We have said we are not entirely excited by the American idea that they should talk to Taliban; we know that they will have to talk to Taliban because they are their citizens and they have to talk. But distinguishing between good and bad Taliban or Taliban and Al-Qaida is not something that comes to us naturally. But if it is an Afghan-driven exercise and the redlines that the world agreed too with Afghanistan remain, then I guess it is the best thing that they can do.

In our relations with the US, there seems to be some kind of cooling recently. What needs to be done?

We have to get back and start talking again. There was no cooling but there was a pause because they were preoccupied with campaigns, with the new government, with the fiscal cliff etc. But now we will have a visit by the new Secretary of State and I will also pay a visit. Our Prime Minister will engage with their President and in the next few months, you will see things back in action. The export of natural gas was an issue we have to settle quickly. There are many issues relating to cooperation with their industry and our agencies with regard to the nuclear deal that need to be worked out. We are in touch with them and the high level intensity of exchanges will resume.

Any big bang developments expected during Barack Obama's second term as President and the UPA's second stint?

For us it is a consolidation term. For him it is a legacy term. I do not think there are legacies to be hunted here in the second term; there are legacies to be hunted in the Middle East or somewhere else. But consolidation is very important. President Obama's time and energy will be sought by India to consolidate a relationship that, we believe, has come a long way and has become very stable and I think that all the beginnings we have made must be taken further. That's what we will try to do.

With Bangladesh we still have not fully addressed the land border issue or agreed on water sharing of the Teesta?

No worries on that. We are working on the land border issue. We will introduce it in Parliament after the current recess. There are a few odds and ends that we need to explain to some MPs from Assam. I think we have got it tied up pretty well. I hope there will be a consensual passing of this historic land boundary Bill; it will be a tribute to India's lasting relationship with Bangladesh and will be one of high points of our foreign policy. As regards Teesta, it does not involve anybody except West Bengal. We will take up the Teesta issue once the land boundary issue is sorted out.

What is your world view now that you have been almost five months in the saddle?

The world is waiting for us, the world wants to engage with us, the world wants to be friendly with us, the world wants to be our partner in prosperity and the world admires India in many ways. Only one who can spoil this is India itself. So my appeal to all our political parties and sections of our society is that we have a lot of things that we disagree upon in our country and that happens in our emerging, growing and maturing democracy, but we have been lucky because throughout we have had a consensus on foreign policy and that has given us moral standing in the world far, far beyond this strength that we have both in terms of economy and military prowess.



020. Keynote address by Foreign Secretary at Conference of Southern Providers- South-South Cooperation : Issues and Emerging Challenges.

Delhi, April 15, 2013.

Dr Biswajit Dhar,

Ambassador Wu Hongbo

Distinguished guests,

1. It is a pleasure to be here with you at this important conference on development cooperation. There has been an intensive dialogue in recent years, involving governments, NGOs and academia of both developed and developing countries, on the conceptualization, delivery mechanisms and evaluation of various forms of development assistance. Much of this dialogue has concentrated on bridging the divide between North-South and South-South engagements. Surprisingly, there is not quite as much vibrancy in exchanges of perspectives between developing countries – the countries of the South – on the impact of their development cooperation strategies and institutions and on their approach to the ongoing debate on the global development agenda. I welcome this opportunity to share with you our perspective on some of these issues. We look forward to hearing from you over the next two days.
2. In the last decade or so, the range and quantum of South-South cooperation has expanded significantly. This trend has paralleled disturbing signs of what could be described as a slackening of donor enthusiasm in developed countries, in the background of difficult global economic conditions. It has also inspired spirited multilateral discussions on harmonizing the traditional frameworks of North-South cooperation with the emerging patterns of South-South developmental partnerships. These discussions have focussed on evolution of universal norms for identification, delivery and evaluation of all development assistance – North-South and South-South. They have raised important questions about values, motivations and desirable outcomes. There is, however, a

pervasive sentiment among countries of the South that they do not factor in sufficiently the underlying premises of South-South cooperation, the circumstances in which it developed and its unique character.

3. I will outline India's experience to illustrate this point. From the time of our emergence as a free nation, we recognized the importance of human resource capacity building as a requirement for economic growth and independent policy making. This recognition informed the course of our cooperation with other developing countries with whom we shared the aspiration of eradicating poverty and under development. The Indian Technical and Economic Assistance programme, ITEC, was launched in 1964 with the objective of sharing our knowledge and skills with fellow developing countries. Over nearly five decades, ITEC and its sister initiatives, the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme (SCAAP) and the Technical Cooperation Scheme of Colombo Plan, have contributed substantially to capacity building in many parts of the world. Last year, nearly 9,000 civilians from 161 countries attended training courses in diverse disciplines, conducted by 47 Indian institutions. We offer 2300 scholarships annually for degree courses in Indian universities. In addition, we run special courses at the request of countries or regions on specialized subjects such as election management, WTO studies, parliamentary practices and public-private partnerships. At the India-Africa Forum Summits in 2008 and 2011, we committed to establishing about 100 institutions in different African countries to strengthen capacities at the pan-African, regional and bilateral levels. We depute experts abroad to share expertise in areas like information technology, auditing, pharmacology, public administration and textiles research.
4. The core idea is to share the lessons we have learnt and continue to learn, with other countries traversing the same path towards development. This is the spirit in which illiterate grandmothers from various countries are trained in a remote village in Rajasthan, so that they can carry back solar electrification technologies to their remote villages in Africa, Central America, Asia or the Pacific

Islands. The NGO SEWA – Self Employed Women’s Association – similarly contributes to women’s empowerment in rural Afghanistan through livelihood generating programmes. An earlier example is from our agricultural Green Revolution, when we shared with Vietnam our research on high-yielding rice varieties through exchanges of scientists and the establishment of a Rice Research Institute in southern Vietnam. Today, Vietnam is a major rice exporter and in fact competes with India in world markets.

5. In their structure and diversity, such programmes do not have many parallels in traditional North-South cooperation. Perhaps the best tribute to their efficacy is the fact that a number of donor agencies and multilateral developmental organizations are now building such socioeconomic development programmes and training in Indian institutions into their aid programmes for countries in Africa and Southeast Asia.
6. Over the years, we have considerably expanded our development cooperation portfolio through grant assistance to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka for projects in infrastructure, hydroelectricity, power transmission, and other sectors identified by the host government as priority areas for their development. Another strand has been concessional Lines of Credit. Over the last decade or so, over 150 Lines of Credit totalling over US\$ 9.5 billion have been allocated, financing a wide range of projects from drinking water schemes to power plants to technology parks and railway infrastructure in developing countries in Africa and elsewhere.
7. In all these strands of development assistance, our underlying philosophy remains that which underpins South-South cooperation. Our engagement is demand-driven and responds to the developmental priorities of our partner countries. We do not attach conditionalities, we do not prescribe policies and we do not challenge national sovereignty. We promote a mutually beneficial exchange of development experiences and resources.
8. It is a well-established truism that South-South cooperation is on an entirely different footing from North-South cooperation in

inspiration, implementation and impact. There is an acknowledged historical context to Official Development Assistance (ODA), which distinguishes North-South Cooperation from South-South Cooperation. The focus on South-South cooperation in the prevailing international discourse on aid architecture increasingly glosses over this fact. It conveniently overlooks the reality that developing countries even the so called emerging economies continue to confront major economic challenges of their own, exacerbated by the current global economic situation, which place an inherent limitation on their capacity to contribute to international development cooperation. The assistance which developing countries offer to other developing countries should therefore continue to remain voluntary and free from externally imposed norms drawn from North-South Cooperation. Simply put, whereas North-South cooperation is a historic responsibility, South-South cooperation is a voluntary partnership. The fact that the traditional donor community often underplays this distinction does not diminish its validity.

9. In the present global realities, it is self-evident that while South-South Cooperation supplements North-South Cooperation, it is not yet in a position to replace it in any significant measure. The North-South engagement leads the aid process and should continue to do so.
10. The importance of ODA should not be allowed to be diluted. In fact, the present predicament of many developing countries – facing contracting capital flows, economic slowdown and fiscal difficulties – makes their need for enhanced ODA even more critical than before. It is therefore a matter of great satisfaction that several donors have come forward to declare their continued commitment to their 1970 UNGA pledge of achieving an ODA level of 0.7 per cent of their GNP. Japan, Germany, Australia and UK have targeted attainment of this goal by 2015.
11. These are perspectives that should continue to feed into the important on-going discussions on the post-2015 Development Agenda, which seek to identify the key international development

priorities and to define a template for global cooperation in the coming decade and beyond. We should resist excessive emphasis being placed on South-South Cooperation as a crucial pillar of the Agenda. We should reinforce the argument that while South-South Cooperation and the voluntary efforts of developing countries such as India would continue to play an important role, it would be a travesty to project them as the principal new component of a redefined Global Partnership for the new Agenda. South-South Cooperation has to be accompanied by a significant enhancement of North-South aid flows, not their diminution.

12. In this context, we were disappointed with the content of the recently released Bali Communiqué of the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on the post-2015 Development Agenda. It is quite astonishing that, even as the crucial importance of ODA for many developing countries is being reiterated at various high-level fora, this document does not contain a single mention of ODA. We need to register the note of caution that if the recommendations of the Panel are to make a meaningful contribution to evolving a new Development Agenda, they should reflect in equal measure the concerns of both the developing and the developed world. We should be careful not to dissipate the political consensus reached in the Rio+20 Outcome.
13. The Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness at Busan in 2011 encouraged increased efforts to support effective development cooperation, and noted that South-South efforts could be accommodated within the envisaged Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, but on a voluntary basis. Without doubt, there is scope for an exchange of learning between the North-South and South-South models. There are concepts and practices that the South can absorb from the North-South engagement. Equally, the North can draw from the outlook and methodology that the South applies to its development partnership. A sustainable Global Partnership on Development Cooperation can only be built from a harmonious synthesis of the two models.

14. There is apprehension in some quarters that efforts to establish a Global Partnership are being directed at centralizing the monitoring and evaluation of developmental assistance flows and encouraging their convergence at the recipient level. If it is pursued in a clinical manner, such an approach would dilute the richness and diversity of development experience-sharing between developing countries. We need an informed debate on this aspect.
15. I believe that more regular and sustained interactions among the countries of the South will facilitate a crystallization of their approach to all these aspects of the global development cooperation debate. A culture of consultations and more effective experience-sharing between our development cooperation institutions will enhance our ability to feed Southern perspectives more effectively into the global dialogue.
16. I am sure that this Conference will make a valuable contribution to this process. We have a broad spectrum of Southern providers and recipients of development assistance, and the welcome involvement of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs at the level of Under Secretary General Wu Hongbo, I hope this Conference will address these issues in depth and emerge with some consensus on the major preoccupations of developing countries in the emerging global development environment. I wish you all success in this endeavour.

Thank you



021. Speech of Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on “The Rise of the East: Implications for the Global Economy” Delivered at South Asia Institute and Mahendra Centre at the Harvard University.

Boston, April 17, 2013.

“It is a great pleasure to be back in the grounds of Harvard University and a great honour to be invited to speak by institutions that are part of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, including my alma mater, the Harvard Business School. Last time too I spoke at the Harvard Business School and I feared that they may just say ‘Once is enough’. I thank the South Asian Institute and Mahendra Humanities Center at the Harvard University for the opportunity.

Oh, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet. “Thus, in the year 1889, wrote Kipling in his famous Ballad of East and West. Little did he know that globalization was only less than a hundred years away.

The rise of once-upon-a-time poor countries has been the central economic story of our time. More than the growth, it is the pace of the growth that tells a more fascinating story. It took Britain 150 years, after the Industrial Revolution, to double its economic output per person. The United States, the emerging market of its time, took 50 years to do so in its period of fast development. When China and India began their period of high growth in recent decades, they took 12 and 16 years, respectively, to double per capita GDP. And while Britain and United States embarked on their take-off with a population of 10 million, China and India started out with a population of a billion or so each. So, in terms of force, as a McKinsey report on emerging markets suggests, the two leading emerging economies in the East are experiencing roughly 10 times the economic acceleration of the Industrial Revolution at 100 times the scale.

In 2012, at market exchange rates, emerging economies accounted for 38 percent of world GDP and 61 percent of world growth. The transformation in world trade has been of a similar magnitude. At purchasing power parity, emerging markets accounted for 80 percent of world growth, with China accounting for 35 percent and India accounting

for 10 percent. If you are a businessperson looking for growth and new markets, you have to look East (and perhaps South).

Another way to see this is to look at market shares. Emerging markets have over three quarter of the world's market share in steel consumption, cell phones, and foreign exchange reserves. They account for more than one-half of the motor vehicles sold, with China overtaking the United States as the largest car market in the world. They account for more than one-half of global investment. While China's investment story has been much commented upon, India's is just starting out.

Before examining the consequences of this shift in economic power, it might be useful to note that the East is recovering from a long growth recession lasting nearly 250 years. As Angus Maddison of the University of Groningen has noted, India was the largest economy in the world in the early 1700s, before the onset of the Industrial Revolution, with China close behind. India's goods were sold around the world, though not always welcomed. After all, it was only a few miles from here that tea from the East, transported by the British East India Company, was unceremoniously dumped in Boston Harbour 240 years ago. Of course, we respect the sentiment that led you to do it, but hope you will not do it again. Fish do not drink tea and it would be a waste of good Darjeeling.

Going forward, China and India will continue to be drivers of world growth, with China growing at 8-8.5 percent and India at 6.1-6.7% between 2013 and 2014. ASEAN-4 (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand) is also projected to grow at more than 5.5 percent. China is reported to have already overtaken the United States in economic size (measured by real per capita GDP in purchasing power parity terms) by 2012-13.

I do not wish to numb you with numbers. But let me mention one other well-known difference between a number of emerging markets and industrial countries: it is the demographics. A lot of the growth in the East is still to come as it reaps its demographic dividend. For instance, India's share of the working age population will continue to rise. Nearly one-half the additions to the Indian labour force over the period 2011-30 will be in the age group 30-49, even while the share of this group in advanced countries will decline. This means greater production, savings and investment in India as the demographic dividend is reaped.

So what do these changes in the locus of global demand mean? Before I turn to that, let me first say that not all the patterns we had seen emerge in global savings and investment, before the global financial crisis of 2008, were sustainable. Indeed, the financial crisis could be seen as evidence that the imbalances that were building up were unsustainable.

Simply put, the industrial world, even as its population was ageing and as promised entitlements were becoming due, increased spending, and financed the spending with huge amounts of debt. Many emerging markets built up substantial trade surpluses as they gleefully catered to industrial countries' demand. And, ironically, they financed industrial countries' consumption by investing their savings in industrial countries' paper.

This served both industrial countries and emerging markets while it lasted. For industrial countries, strong consumption growth papered over looming fiscal problems. Emerging markets too benefited as net exports grew. But it could not last. Sovereign debt, bank debt, and household debt in the industrial world increased to the point that investors were reluctant to buy more paper. Hence, the industrial world is being forced into austerity.

Emerging markets too have not been immune to the resulting slowdown. Even though, unlike other emerging markets, India has been a net importer of goods and capital, it too has become more open over this period – the sum of Indian goods and services traded exceeded 55 percent of GDP in 2011-12. The slowdown in industrial countries has affected India, especially exports.

Ladies and gentlemen, the world has to adjust. Industrial countries have to save more while emerging markets have to spend more. Such an adjustment will help industrial countries pay down heavy debt loads, even while leaving global demand to be supported by the emerging markets. Of course, the nature of spending will vary across emerging markets. China probably has to consume more, while India has to invest more. But as the world moves towards one where consumption and investment shifts towards the emerging markets, especially in Asia, and ageing industrial countries will learn to save more, what are the opportunities and challenges? That is what I want to speak on in the next fifteen minutes.

I wish to talk about challenges to corporations, to the location of investment, to global financing, to social pressures, and to global governance that will come about from these momentous changes. Start first with corporations around the world. As demand from emerging markets accounts for not just the bulk of a multinational company's growth but also the majority of its sales, it will have to make changes. Products must now be designed for the emerging markets rather than designed for industrial countries. Who would have imagined that buying a burger at McDonalds could mean getting an *aloo tikka* - or potato - burger? Shift in demand will require big changes in the mindset of the product designers as well as changes in the location of decision making.

Some industrial country firms have managed the transition. For instance, it may interest you to note French luxury brand Hermes' foray into saris. The patterns for these saris are based on the popular Hermes scarves, which in turn, interestingly, were inspired by Indian design (Financial Times, October 7, 2011). In another interesting twist, a Spanish porcelain manufacturer now has an entire range of Buddhist and Hindu deities, including several fascinating interpretations of the popular elephant-headed Hindu god Ganesha and images of Kwan Yin, a goddess of compassion revered in Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism.

Such changes require corporations to restructure their decision making. After all, it is easy for fashion decisions to be made in New York when the primary wearers of the fashion are promenading outside the store windows on Fifth Avenue. But what if they are 10,000 miles away? Can you make product decisions at long distance? Or do you have to shift headquarters to Shanghai or Hong Kong, as global bank HSBC has done?

Emerging market companies understand local needs better. Consider frugal engineering, an entirely new way of designing, engineering, and delivering products cheaply so that they can cater to the enormous number of people making a few dollars a day. To produce innovative frugal products, emerging market firms know they need the design capabilities and technologies possessed by industrial country companies as well as the scale from catering to global markets. Indeed, while the number of majority acquisitions increased globally by 6 percent, acquisitions of industrial country companies by emerging market firms

grew at an annual rate of 26 percent. India, Malaysia, and China, account for more than half of the M&A deals, with India spearheading the acquisitions market.^{1[1]}

What I find interesting is the extent to which these companies have gone global. The UNCTAD calculates a trans-nationality index based on the average of foreign assets to total assets, foreign sales to total sales, and foreign employment to total employment. In this, Hutchison has a whopping score of 80.8 percent, TATA Steel 64.5 percent and Singapore Telecom 64.3 percent. In comparison General Electric has a score 59.7 percent, Toyota Motor Corporation 52.1 percent and Exxon Mobil 66 percent. That is, some of the new eastern multi-national companies are actually more global than established global giants. Tatas is the largest private sector employer in the U. K. today.

Let me turn to investment. The shift in activity will create enormous new investments, not just in China but elsewhere too. As one example of what is likely, the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor, a project with Japanese collaboration entailing over \$ 90 billion in investment, will link Delhi to Mumbai's ports, covering an overall length of 1483 km and passing through six States. This project will have nine mega industrial zones, high speed freight lines, three ports, six airports, a six-lane intersection-free expressway connecting the country's political and financial capitals, and a 4000 MW power plant.

India saves a lot – the savings rate at its lowest in recent years was about 30 percent of GDP. But India's savings fall short of its investment needs. Moreover, India needs intelligent risk capital that will ensure that investments are monitored and brought to fruition. And India needs long term patient capital that is willing to collect a return over many years.

Industrial countries, with their ageing populations, would seem to have a matching need – a need, as they increase their savings, to see them invested in attractive long term instruments producing adequate returns. There is a perfect match here provided both sides work at reducing barriers. We constantly hear of moves in industrial countries to engage in financial protectionism, to keep savings at home in order to finance overextended industrial country governments. Any move in this direction would be terribly misguided.

At the same time, emerging markets have to increase the comfort level of international investors, to improve their sense that their capital is well protected. After all, why would they invest over the long term if their capital can be expropriated by a change in laws or by the whims of the government? The best guarantor of investment protection is a stable and democratic political structure, a belief in the rule of law, and a transparent and independent legal system. India has all three. So have many other emerging markets.

The rise of the East may also be contributing to social tensions. Historically, advanced industrial economies have adapted by creating new jobs and endowing their workers with the skills to do those jobs. But the pace with which the East has grown may have reduced the time companies and workers in industrial countries have had to adapt. The high levels of persistent unemployment in industrial countries may reflect, in part, the lack of such adaptation. This is creating new problems. How will the West deal with a 55 year old auto worker who is too old to learn a new trade but too young to retire? How will advanced industrial countries find people for the jobs that are vacated by retiring workers if their fertility rates fall below the replacement rate? The answers will determine the character of such societies in the years to come. The wrong answer is to blame immigration, trade or technological progress. The right answer will be to harness these forces to provide the remedies.

Emerging markets too have their problems of adaptation. Some sections of their people are already in the post-industrial society that we see around us here in Cambridge. They live in gated communities, travel to air-conditioned offices in air-conditioned cars, invest in equal proportions at home and abroad, consume as much as their peers in industrial economies, and believe naively that they have shut out the heat and the dust and the pain and the suffering of the emerging market. But governments cannot ignore the growing disparity between these winners in the process of globalization and the masses, the majority of whom in a country like India are still dependent on agriculture or low paying casual jobs. Inclusive growth is not an option for India, it is an imperative.

In my view, a good, decent job is the best form of inclusion. So, India's efforts have been focused on trying to enable the poor to obtain better nutrition and health, education and skills, and financing, that will allow

them to secure good livelihoods. In this regard, India is in the middle of a massive effort to empower the poor through a system of rights-based entitlements including the right to information, the right to education, the right to medical care, and the right to food. Inclusive growth will enable India to have a fairer, and in many ways more stable, society.

Let me turn finally to the geo-political implications of the rise of the East. As the people in the East look for houses, cars and bikes, and washing machines, it will create enormous demands for resources; it will entail higher expenditure; and it will present severe challenges to the environment. Our planet, given current mitigation technologies, will not allow all of us to enjoy the lifestyles of the rich countries – there is an overall budget constraint imposed by the environment. Of course, technologies will improve, but for now sustainable development will require all of us to adapt.

I do not want to dwell on what needs to be done. But I think environmental sustainability adds to the range of economic issues on which we need global dialogue and global co-operation. And, I am afraid, the quality of that dialogue, and the degree of co-operation, has, so far, been deficient.

In part, this is a consequence of the rapid rise of the East. Global multilateral organizations were set up to deal with a set of problems based on an agenda and a framework set by the industrial countries. The problems have changed, the players are different, and their relative importance has altered significantly, but the organizations, the agenda setting, and the lens through which solutions are devised have not changed enough.

Even as the old great powers still dominate the multilateral organizations, thus causing emerging markets to remain silent or sullen, new structures like the G-20 are yet to find traction. There is a vacuum in global economic policy discussion that can prove dangerous as the shift in economic power creates new frictions. Perhaps we need new multilateral institutions, institutions set up for the post-financial crisis era that are not compromised by the legacy and the power structures of the past. A real concern is that the old great powers do not feel the need for change because they know the emerging markets do not have common goals and can be easily divided. But denying emerging markets real power will be very shortsighted.

Let me also acknowledge that there is the potential for tension within the countries of the East, as competition for resources and markets increases. In recent months we have seen talk of conflict over islands, underwater resources, or even water itself. We need to work collectively to reduce these tensions and to ensure that trade, investment, and mutual gain trumps narrow self interest.

Finally, as the East grows in economic strength, it will need the intellectual heft to provide the solutions to the myriad problems that will arise. Speaking as an Indian, let me say our universities are growing in strength. But great institutions of learning like Harvard University can play an important role: by teaching our youth, by training our teachers, and by engaging in intellectual dialogue that will strengthen mutual understanding.

Let me end by saying that the rise of the East is not, and should not be seen as, a threat to the West. Properly managed, it can result in enormous gain for all and a true meeting of civilizations. Perhaps the third line of Kipling's poem will in fact come true: "But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth." It is with that hope that I leave you today. And I thank you for your kindness and patience.



022. Speech of the Prime Minister at the Inaugural Session of the 46th AGM of the Asian Development Bank.

New Delhi, May 4, 2013.

"On behalf of the Government and people of India, I warmly welcome you all to the 46th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank. I also congratulate President Nakao on his election as the President of ADB. Let me also place on record not only India's but the entire region's sincere appreciation of the role that the ADB's former President Haruhiko Kuroda played in guiding the ADB over the past eight years.

After centuries of stagnation and deprivation, Asia is once again regaining its primacy in the global economy. For almost half a century, the ADB

has been a trusted partner of the Asia Pacific region in general and the developing member countries in particular in this very exciting journey. You have an even more important role to play in the times to come and I wish you all the very best.

The 21st century is rightly spoken of as the Asian century. In a proper perspective, this should be seen as a process of resurgence, of Asia regaining the position it had on the global stage some 250 years ago. The rapid modernization and expansion of Asian economies is acknowledged as one of the most dramatic developments in the economic history of the world. This process has also pulled out of poverty the largest number of people ever in the history of human kind. If the current momentum continues, Asia's share in the world economy would double by 2050 and would account for over half of the global GDP.

In 2013 the IMF expects advanced developed economies to grow at only 1.2% while developing Asia is expected to grow more than five times faster at 7.1%. The Asian region is expected to play a crucial role in driving and stabilizing the global recovery process.

The resurgence of Asia is a part of a process where economic power has been shifting to emerging economies in recent years. At Purchasing Power Parity, emerging economies accounted for 80% of the world growth in 2012, with emerging Asia accounting for a majority of it and China and India accounting for 35% and 10% of world growth respectively. This trend is only likely to continue in the years to come.

As the world moves towards one where consumption and investment shift towards emerging markets, especially in Asia, several opportunities and challenges arise. They include accommodating different models of growth, ensuring that growth is inclusive and providing Asian countries with a voice in international fora that is commensurate with the aspirations and needs of their people. The ADB is uniquely positioned to facilitate this change and work with governments to make the world order more inclusive, fair and stable.

While it is true that Asia and the Pacific region, growing at over 8% annually over two decades, is the most dynamic region of the world, there are still stark differences across and within countries in this vast region. Though there has been a significant reduction in poverty in many countries, inequalities have not fallen, and some social indicators, including the

extent of malnutrition, have not improved significantly. Deficiencies also exist in the delivery of public services, health, education, infrastructure development and the protection of environment. It is time Asian economies step-up their efforts to address common challenges by investing resources in areas that help to empower all sections of our people. The ADB can play an important role in this regard.

With 1.7 billion people still continuing to live on less than \$2 per day poverty alleviation must indeed remain as the most immediate goal of public policies in Asia. At the same time there should be a longer-term view and a vision of an Asia beyond poverty, a vision of shared prosperity. I hope the ADB will commit itself with renewed vigour to address the challenges posed by these two different needs of Asia.

High economic growth is essential. But it cannot be an end in itself. The benefits of rapid growth must necessarily lead to a betterment in the lives of the common people. Equitable distribution of the fruits of development requires the pursuit of development through empowerment of people. This is the key to inclusive growth. Creation of new productive job opportunities for the growing labour force is the most powerful means of empowering the people. For this purpose, skill development is the most potent instrument.

One hears a lot about the demographic dividend that developing Asia could enjoy in the coming decades. We need effective institutions and effective policies to make this happen. Adequate investments in sectors such as health, primary and higher education, skill development, as well as industrial sectors that can provide gainful employment, are very crucial. With the limitations of agriculture in absorbing additional labour, high productivity jobs need to be created in sectors outside agriculture. This would broaden the base of economic growth and add vibrancy to the labour market.

Adequate investments in the much needed infrastructure sectors require timely access to capital. As investments in infrastructure are inherently long-term, and the private sector continues to be risk averse in many cases, a concerted global effort towards infrastructure financing and investment has to be high on the global agenda. This is where Multilateral and Regional Development Banks come in. As I said at Los Cabos meeting of the committee of twenty, infrastructure investment in

developing countries not only lays the foundation for rapid growth in these countries, but it also provides a good stimulus to the advanced economies, and promotes global recovery and job creation through a rebalancing of the global economy. We have expanded the resources of the IMF enormously in response to the crisis in Europe. We now need to substantially expand the resource base of Multilateral Development Banks so that they have the firepower to help developing countries reach their development potential.

I understand that the level of lending that the ADB can sustain is projected to come down. At this juncture, ADB should take the initiative to find innovative ways to channelize global savings into infrastructure projects in Asia Pacific. ADB's good rating and technical expertise can be leveraged to raise resources in domestic and international markets through appropriate instruments. Pooling investments across various countries can mitigate risk which can be further reduced through credit enhancement by the ADB. Moreover, expanding infrastructure financing and investment through the intermediation of the ADB could help lower the cost of financing long-term infrastructure projects. I hope the ADB can consider moving in this direction and propel growth in this vast region.

Regional cooperation and integration among countries in Asia and the Pacific can play a critical role in accelerating the process of economic growth, reducing poverty and economic disparities. The importance of building cross-border infrastructure, of eliminating trade and investment barriers, and of cooperation including transfer of technology, in regional public goods such as clean air and energy, energy efficiency, management of water resources, control of communicable diseases, and management of natural disasters cannot be over-emphasized. We believe that promoting regional cooperation is the key mandate of the agreement that created the ADB and a testament to the sagacity of the founding fathers of this great institution.

India is a firm believer in the benefits of regional integration and is committed to promoting it. We stand committed to deep engagement with the countries of East and Southeast Asia.

India has set itself a target of over 8% annual growth in our Twelfth Five Year Plan, which runs from 2012 to 2017. This is the rate of growth that the country achieved over the past decade. We are initiating measures to spur investment and to make India more attractive to investors both at home and abroad. We

have taken steps to fast track major infrastructure projects. In recent months, we have also introduced strong measures to achieve fiscal consolidation.

Both India and the ADB have a strong commitment to a common agenda in making the growth processes more inclusive and sustainable. I sincerely believe that this is not just a social and political imperative, but also a sound economic underpinning for sustained long term growth. Therefore, we place special emphasis on livelihood security, food security, healthcare, education, skill development and on clean and renewable energy.

Decentralized governance through the institutions of Panchayati Raj in India has empowered ordinary citizens and has gone a long way in making them active participants in processes of development. Today, more than 3 million elected representatives in local governments, almost 40% of them women, are shaping the development agenda in their communities across India. Similarly, the women's self-help group movement today has in its fold more than 30 million women across the country, engaged in various livelihoods, and taking on newer and more important roles in their communities.

In recent years we have introduced legal entitlements to work, education and information from public authorities. We also plan to provide our people a legal entitlement to food at affordable cost. A legislation in this regard is before our Parliament. We are also creating the world's largest electronic identity database under the programme "Aadhaar" to serve as a basis for citizen identification and efficient delivery of public services and entitlements. The Direct Benefits Transfer programme will make it simpler for the beneficiaries to have access to benefits and will also eliminate corruption and wastage in the delivery of public services.

Asia today stands on the verge of a momentous transformation. If the potential of our economies is harnessed fully through appropriate policies and a strategic vision, Asia will certainly play a far greater role in world affairs and in promoting global well-being. Each one of the Asian countries must find ways and means of contributing to the fulfillment of this noble vision. I strongly feel that the time has come for greater cohesion among our economies for building a more empowered, stable and secure world and for the major development bank in the region to play a pivotal role in this regard. I wish you all success in your 46th Annual General Meeting."



023. Address made by the Finance Minister P. Chidambaram during the Frist Business Session of ADB Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors at IEML.

Greater NOIDA, May 4, 2013.

Mr. President, Honourable Governors and friends,

It has been a year when we last met at Manila. It is time to look what has been done and what more is required to be done to continue with the growth and development of our region.

India took robust stimulus measures to counter the slowdown induced by the global financial crisis in 2008-09. As a result, the country achieved a growth rate of 8.6 per cent and 9.3 per cent in 2009-10 and 2010-11, respectively. However, particularly with demand-supply imbalances in the food sector, the economy started to show inflationary tendencies. Growth with macroeconomic stability is the abiding goal of the government, and appropriate policy measures were initiated to restore price stability. As a result of such action, annual headline inflation as measured by the wholesale price index, which had reached an alarming 10 per cent rate in September 2011, came down to 5.96 per cent in March 2013. However, there was a growth slowdown as well, and the economy grew by only 6.2 per cent and 5.0 per cent in 2011-12 and 2012-13, respectively.

Government is determined to accelerate the pace of inclusive growth, while maintaining macroeconomic stability, to achieve its overriding goal of empowering the people and eradicating poverty. We are committed to fiscal consolidation. It will reverse the slippages that took place as a result of the stimulus packages. In 2012-13, the fiscal deficit as a proportion of GDP is likely to have been about 5.2 and we aim to bring it down to 3 per cent in 2016-17. This we will achieve by a prudent combination of revenue enhancement as well as expenditure rationalization.

We are determined to boost investment – both domestic as well as foreign. The gross fixed investment rate has declined from 32.9 per cent in 2007-08 to 30.6 per cent in 2011-12. Many projects are plagued

by “last mile” bottlenecks in fuel supply, environment clearance, forest clearance, and land acquisition. We have set up a Cabinet Committee on Investment under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister to fast-track projects, particularly in key sectors such as coal, power, steel and roads. We have permitted FDI in areas such as multi-brand retail, power exchanges and aviation . As I am fond of saying, India’s story on investment is just starting out.

ADB and India

India, as a founder member, is proud of its record of association with ADB. We have a deep appreciation of ADB as our partner in development. ADB in India is today engaged in the development of transport & energy sectors, urban infrastructure, public resource management, integrated water resource management, khadi reform, and agribusiness infrastructure. It is active in promoting innovations in infrastructure finance and building frameworks for public private partnerships. It has expanded its engagement in low income states and is making meaningful interventions in capacity building. I am pleased to note that ADB is now embarking on supporting initiatives in skills development. To take our engagement with ADB further, let me offer you three broad ideas.

1. Special role for ADB in helping with the development of economic Corridor

Government of India has been emphasizing the development of economic corridors, including industrial corridors and freight corridors, as a means of integrating and connecting centers of production and demand, and creating income opportunities all along their paths. A coordinated approach to economic corridors transforms not only cities and towns, but also the rural hinterland.

The Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) is India’s most ambitious infrastructure program. In addition to the DMIC, other important economic corridors being developed are Chennai-Bengaluru and Mumbai-Bengaluru corridors.

Developing economic corridors that connect lagging states to economically dynamic states holds considerable potential for achieving high and inclusive growth. We invite ADB to carry out an in-depth

exploration of how it could employ its expertise in energy, logistics, urban, and skills development around a few such economic corridors.

In order to realize their full potential, these economic corridors should also be part of broader regional economic corridors and regional integration efforts. ADB can not only partner in these efforts but also actively pursue the potential of a corridor linking India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, ASEAN and People's Republic of China.

2. Role for ADB in developing special financing vehicles to support infrastructure and utilities projects

Our estimates show that over the 12th Plan period spanning fiscal years 2012-2017, India will need around \$1 trillion of investment in infrastructure, of which around 48% will have to come from the private sector. A fundamental challenge in infrastructure development lies in funding the needed investments.

We would like to see ADB support the development of innovative special financing vehicles to support the expansion of infrastructure finance. In doing so, ADB must build upon its recently approved innovative project - supporting credit enhancement of infrastructure project bonds so as to enable infrastructure developers to tap the vast resources available with insurance firms and pension funds. More specifically, ADB could explore credit enhancements for road funds and municipal bond issuances in order to expand the finance available for transportation and urban infrastructure, respectively.

3. A push on RCI—with a special role for ADB via SASEC

India is committed to the goal of regional integration and recognizes how least integrated South Asia is in terms of this metric. Given the focus of Strategy 2020 on regional cooperation, and ADB's expertise in infrastructure as well as regional cooperation, we welcome ADB's intensive engagement in promotion of regional cooperation by bringing together participating countries under South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) to design initiatives in three priority areas: (i) Transport; (ii) Trade Facilitation; and (iii) Energy. However, to give a push to its regional cooperation initiatives, ADB should ensure that the funds for the regional projects are given to the participating countries as an additionality, over and above the country support programme.

With ADB actively reengaging with Myanmar, the scope for reaping enormous gains by linking South Asia to South East Asia stare at our face and ADB should mobilize itself fully for realizing the gains.

Let me conclude by expressing my confidence that the Asia and Pacific region can meet the challenges ahead and continue to grow toward greater prosperity and opportunity. I would like to place on record our appreciation of ADB for giving us the opportunity to host 46th Annual General meeting. I hope you are enjoying your stay here and take back some cherished memories.



024. Closing Address by the Chair, Board of Governors and Alternate Governor for India Dr. Arvind Mayaram, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs during the concluding Business Session of 46th ADB Annual Meeting of Board of Governors.

New Delhi, May 5, 2013.

Distinguished Governors,

President ADB,

Ladies and gentlemen:

The 46th Annual Meeting of the Asian Development Bank now draws to a close. On behalf of the Government of India, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to fellow Governors, ADB President, Management and staff, and all the participants for their cooperation and contribution to the success of this annual meeting. I am also grateful to the Governors of Georgia and Switzerland, for their assistance as Vice Chairs. I would also like to thank the meeting secretariat for their hard work in making this annual event a success.

It has been four days of lively discussion, and I am gratified that we emerge from our deliberations with a broad-based consensus on ADB's continuing key role in the development of Asia and the Pacific. I believe

the meeting provided an excellent opportunity to exchange views on pressing agenda items. We covered many development issues, including poverty reduction, and had lively discussions on the future direction of ADB.

The theme of this Annual Meeting *Development through Empowerment* has been very topical. It is engaging the attention of all the developing countries. This is also the secret key to inclusive growth. Looking to the future, it will be more important than ever to ensure that growth is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable and inclusive. ADB has the experience and the expertise to make a significant contribution to achieving this objective and making Asia and the Pacific a model for other regions of the world.

Finally, I would like to call on all of us – ADB's members and shareholders – to continue working together to support ADB. By doing so, we can all make a lasting contribution to development that improves the living standards of the Asia-Pacific's poorest citizens. I take this opportunity to welcome the new Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr. Yerbolat Dossayev, the Governor for Kazakhstan. I am sure he will guide ADB to fulfill its commitment to the region with renewed vigour. We look forward to another fruitful meeting next year in Astana.

I trust that your stay in National Capital Region of Delhi has been a happy experience while giving you the chance to hold fruitful discussions. Thank you all for being a part of this occasion and for your valuable contributions. I wish you a safe and pleasant journey back home.

Thank you.



025. India welcomes decision of the Arctic Council admitting it as an Observer State.

New Delhi, May 15, 2013.

In response to a media query on the India being admitted as an Observer State of the Arctic Council, the Official Spokesperson said:

"We welcome this consensus decision admitting India as an Observer State of the Arctic Council and affirm our commitment to contribute our proven scientific expertise, particularly in polar research capabilities, to the work of the Arctic Council and to support its objectives."



026. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the meeting of Officials of the Ministry of External Affairs with the Export promotion Councils and Business Chambers.

New Delhi, May 16, 2013.

Shri Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty, Secretary (Economic Relations) held a meeting with various Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) and Apex Business Chambers namely, FICCI, CII, ASSOCHAM and PHD Chamber of Commerce on 15.5.2013. The meeting, convened by the Ministry of External Affairs was attended by representatives of 26 Export Promotion Councils and the 4 business chambers. It follows an earlier meeting chaired by Shri Ranjan Mathai, Foreign Secretary in February

* Media reports said that India's bid for observer status in the Arctic Council succeeded along with that of five other countries - China, Italy, Japan, South Korea and Singapore - at a meeting in Kiruna, Sweden. At the level of real politik, India will be looking at the opportunities for hydrocarbon exploration offered in the Arctic circle by joining hands with either of the five countries gearing up for the purpose - the US, Canada, Norway, Russia and Denmark. When geography is considered Russia emerges as the most attractive partner. But for that to happen, India will have to take a firm political stand on the Lomonosov Ridge and the Mendeleev Ridge which Russia claims are an extension of its continental shelf. By supporting Moscow's position, India could get access to the rich deposits and also utilise the North Sea Route. Officially, India maintained that its approach will be solely scientific.

2013, wherein it had been decided that regular meetings would be held with the business chambers and other entities to identify focus areas for trade and investments.

The meeting tried to identify the possible thrust regions and products for undertaking export promotion activities. Export Promotion Councils gave recommendations and suggestions on the kind of activities which could be carried out by the Missions. Providing market intelligence was one area in which missions' assistance was found useful and this could be further strengthened. The possibility of investment promotion and business development in the two key sectors of pharmaceuticals and electronics was discussed. In this context, the main features and incentives under the National Manufacturing Policy and the National Electronics Policy were also outlined. The Export Promotion Councils identified certain areas and countries, which in their view, could be concentrated upon for market expansion activities. These included markets of Latin America, Eastern Europe, East Asia and South East Asia. The representatives of EPCs indicated some of the problems being faced by them in different sectors. The participants were assured that their suggestions would be looked into and conveyed to Indian Missions abroad, where necessary.

The Ministry of External Affairs intends to try and draw a roadmap for Indian Missions abroad in the identified core areas of export and investment so that all export promotion activities have a certain focus and are result oriented. It was also agreed that regular meetings on investments, exports and sectoral issues would be held by the Ministry so that these interactions are dynamic and lead to substantial outcomes.



027. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the election of Roberto Carvalho de Azevêdo for the post of Director General, WTO.

New Delhi, May 17, 2013.

India welcomes the election of Ambassador Roberto Carvalho de Azevêdo of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the post of Director General, WTO.

India supports a fair and rule-based multilateral trading system and has remained actively engaged in the discussions in WTO and in other multilateral forums including G-20, G-33, etc. to ensure that the interests of developing countries are protected. India hopes that the vast experience in the matters in the remit of WTO which Ambassador Azevêdo brings, would help break the impasse in the Doha Round as well as strengthen the WTO.

India and Brazil are committed to creating an enabling international order conducive to alleviation of hunger and poverty and social development. Both our countries are working closely in various multilateral forums including BRICS, IBSA, G20 and others on reform of global political and economic governance. In this context, election of the Brazilian candidate for the post of Director General WTO assumes salience.

India will work closely with the new Director General and with other developing countries for the forthcoming 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2013 for a balanced package with adequate outcomes for the developing countries, Lest Developed Countries and the Small Vulnerable Economies.



028. Prime Minister's speech on the occasion of the release of the 'Report to the People'.

New Delhi, May 22, 2013.

"This Report to the People which we are going to release in a few moments is last before the next general elections. Next year, we will report to our people directly, seeking a renewed mandate. It is only appropriate that this year we take a longer term perspective and report to our people on what we have been able to achieve in these past nine years. Before I proceed further, I would like to place on record our deep sense of gratitude to Chairperson, UPA, Smt. Sonia Gandhiji whose inspiring leadership has made these achievements possible.

A detailed review of government programmes is contained in the Report and I urge all of you, especially the media, to read it fully. Let me focus today on four key achievements: one, the improved performance of the economy; two, making the growth process more inclusive; three, delivery of better governance and better delivery of welfare and development programmes; and, four, improved relations with a changing and challenging world.

Friends, we can legitimately claim, and with pride, that the UPA Government has taken our country forward on all these four fronts in the nine years. We have journeyed many miles, though we know we have more miles to travel.

Let me begin with growth. Faster growth is necessary to provide expanding opportunities to our young people and to generate revenues to support inclusiveness programmes. It is true that growth slowed down to 5 percent in 2012-13, but this was also a global phenomenon. GDP actually declined in the Eurozone. It grew very slowly in Japan and the U.S. It slowed down in China, and also other developing countries.

Last year our economy did slow down, but this slowdown is temporary. Taking a longer term view, we see that India was among the fastest growing economies of the world with an average growth rate of 8 percent in the last nine years, including the years of slower growth. The NDA Government delivered an average growth of only 5.7 percent during its six years in office.

Some of the slow down was due to external factors over which we have no control. It is also true that domestic problems had also arisen. These are being addressed. Many large investment projects have been held up because of various regulatory clearances. A Cabinet Committee on Investment has been set up to deal with this problem, and this is already yielding results.

The economic situation is turning around. Inflation is coming under control. The fiscal deficit is being brought under control. The current account deficit is high, but we will bring it down gradually.

We are confident that growth in 2013-14 will be better than 2012-13 and could exceed 6 percent. This will set the stage for trying to achieve the Twelfth Plan target of 8 percent growth for the five year period. This, I recognize, will be difficult, but it is not impossible. We have done it before, and if we receive a mandate next year, we will certainly achieve it once again.

Let me now turn to the crucial aspect of inclusiveness.

Many people who are willing to concede that we have done a good job on growth, question our performance on inclusiveness. This is an important issue since our stated objective has always been that growth must be inclusive and must benefit the poor, particularly those in rural areas. I believe the UPA government has a good record in this dimension as well.

Agricultural growth is critical for prosperity in rural areas where most of the poor live. We achieved 3.7 percent growth per year in agriculture during the Eleventh Plan compared with only 2.4 percent in the Tenth Plan. We are targeting 4 percent in the Twelfth Plan, and I am confident we can and we will do it. Our efforts at increasing food grain production are working as also our efforts to diversify our agriculture. This is the foundation which allows us to introduce Food Security legislation in Parliament

Faster agricultural growth, combined with government programmes such as MGNREGA, and the expanded pace of investment in rural infrastructure have improved real wages of agricultural labour. Agricultural wages grew at the rate of 6.8 percent per year in real terms after 2004, which is six times faster than the rate of growth between 1994 and 2004.

The impact of our policies on rural prosperity can be seen from the fact that rural per capita consumption grew at 3.4 percent per year in real terms after 2004. This is four times faster than the growth rate of 0.85 percent observed in the earlier period.

The percentage of the population below the poverty line has also fallen much faster after 2004 than in the earlier period. I know many people feel that the official poverty line was too low, and an expert group has been set up to revise it. But, the conclusion that the percentage below the poverty line has fallen faster will apply even if the line is raised, provided the same line is applied in the base period.

Growth has also spread to the erstwhile backward states. The so called backward states grew much faster in the Eleventh Plan than in earlier Plans.

Inclusiveness is not just about income and consumption. It also involves access to essential services such as health and education and skill development which directly improve the level of living of the weaker sections and also enable them to participate more fully in the growth process.

The Report gives a detailed account of the UPA's efforts in these areas through programmes such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the Mid Day Meal Scheme, the ICDS, The National Rural Health Mission, the Janani Suraksha Yojana, the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana, the Skill Development Mission among others.

I am happy to say that there is progress in all these areas to report. Primary school enrollment is near universal. Literacy has improved. The percentage of women accessing institutional deliveries has increased. Polio has been wiped out.

These are important achievements. Of course public debate often focuses less on what has been achieved and more on whatever is still to be done. Where access has been provided, quality is still an issue and we need to push hard to address these issues satisfactorily. To our critics I would only say that in many of these areas since the glass was almost empty when we started, it will take some time before it is really full. The important point to note is that it is being filled.

I must emphasise that success in this area depends crucially upon the states. I should also add that experience varies across states and there are many states where very good progress is being made.

Let me now turn to the third area I had mentioned – governance and delivery of programmes. This covers a very wide field. It includes the assurance of safety and security for every citizen, including especially women. It includes the assurance that public services will be delivered upto specified standards and that redress can be demanded when this does not happen. It includes freedom from delays and harassment which invariably breed graft and corruption and have to be got rid of. Finally, it includes elimination of corruption in the procurement and allocation decisions of the government.

These weaknesses in governance erode trust and faith in government and we cannot, as a people, afford such an outcome. The problems are not new, nor are they unique to India. Indeed consciousness about these problems, and the demand to remedy them, has risen all over the world. This is especially so in democracies. We are the world's largest democracy with a very free Press and an increasingly active civil society movement. These are our strengths. But they do put pressure for early and decisive action on all these fronts. This sometimes leads to impatience and hasty judgement.

Problems of governance have to be addressed by both the Centre and the States. The UPA Government has taken several steps which taken together are improving governance and accountability. The Right to Information Act has become a key instrument of empowerment of our people. They now access information that reveals deficiencies and puts pressure on the system to take corrective action. We have introduced the Lokpal Bill, which responds to a very wide demand for a more independent institution to probe allegations of corruption. We have introduced a Government Procurement Bill which will make the process of Government procurements and contracts much more transparent, thus reducing the opportunities for corruption. We have introduced a Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation Bill to replace an old and highly unfair colonial legislation with a new Bill which will be much fairer when enacted to those whose land is acquired.

Much is made of problems that arose with the way scarce resources such as spectrum and mining blocks were allocated in the past and there have been allegations of deliberate malfeasance. We have introduced more transparent systems for the future, i.e., auctions rather than relying on administrative allocations. The problems with past allocations are being dealt with, as they should be, under the Law of the land. Allegations of impropriety are being investigated and cases of wrong doing will be punished. But we can claim credit that the root cause of the problem, which was the perceived non-transparency in the manner of allocation, has been addressed and these problems will not arise in the future.

Improving the quality of governance in a vast nation like ours is a major challenge. Both the Centre and the States have to act to deal with this problem. The UPA government has done more in this area than any other government.

Finally, I come to the fourth area, our relations with the world. More than two decades ago I said in Parliament that the rise of India as an economic powerhouse of the world is an idea whose time had come. We have seen in these past nine years the full implication of that idea as India has engaged with the international community as the fastest growing democracy in the world.

Our improving economic performance and the talents of the Indian people have enabled us to build bridges with both developed and developing countries. We have deepened our relationship with the United States, Russia, and Europe. The initiative that we took with the US on civil nuclear agreement has opened a new chapter in India's technological development.

Our Government has taken the lead in India's active participation in the Asian community building process. India is today warmly welcomed to almost every important Asian and Asia-Pacific forum. India has increased its economic and security engagement with the Indian Ocean and the Indo-Pacific region. We have strengthened our economic and defence relations with countries of West Asia and the Middle East and of East and South-east Asia.

In our immediate neighbourhood we have been able to manage some very difficult challenges to our bilateral relationships. Relations with China

are showing our ability to manage difficult issues while working together in areas of convergence. I can say with some satisfaction that we have placed the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation on firmer foundations. We have increased regional economic cooperation all around the Indian sub-continent.

What message does this experience of the past nine years convey to our young people who are about to enter their working life and have therefore high expectations?

The central message is that the UPA Government is working to realise your dream of an economically resurgent and socially just India. An India in which every citizen can expect to live a life of security and dignity with every opportunity to develop their own capacity to participate in and benefit from one of the great historical transformations that will take place over the next twenty years; the re-emergence of India as a major economic player in Asia and the World. This re-emergence will involve many transformations. It will involve transformations in the way government functions, shifts from agriculture to non agriculture, a rapid expansion in the manufacturing sector, a revolution in information and communications technology which will change both government and business processes, an expansion in the population in urban areas and a corresponding transformation in the way urban governments work and function.

It is, I submit to this august audience, an exciting transformation which will generate many strains and strains. Under the inspiring leadership of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, the UPA Government is determined to bring about this transformation in a way in which all our people will benefit and participate.”



029. Press Release of the Ministry of Defence on the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Indian National Defence University.

New Delhi, May 23, 2014.

The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh today in an impressive function laid the foundation stone for the Indian National Defence University (INDU) at Binola, Gurgaon in Haryana.

The event was attended among others by the Governor of Haryana Shri Jagannath Pahadia, Defence Minister Shri AK Antony, Minister of External Affairs Shri Salman Khurshid, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Ms. Selja Kumari, Minister of State for Defence Shri Jitendra Singh, Chief Minister of Haryana Shri Bhupinder Singh Hooda and the three Services Chiefs.

The proposed Indian National Defence University spread over more than two hundred acres of land which will be fully functional in 2018 will be set up as a fully autonomous institution to be constituted under an Act of Parliament. While the President of India would act as the Visitor, the Defence Minister will be its Chancellor.

It may be recalled that after the Kargil conflict, the government had set up a Review Committee, headed by eminent strategic expert K Subrahmanyam, which had recommended the establishment of a university to exclusively deal with defence and strategic matters. The aim of INDU would be to provide military leadership and other concerned civilian officials knowledge based higher education for management of the defence of India, and keeping them abreast with emerging security challenges through scholarly research & training. The INDU would develop and propagate higher education in Defence Studies, Defence Management, Defence Science and Technology and promote policy oriented research related to National Defence.

The think tanks of the University would provide inputs for policy formulation. The university would prepare officers for high level leadership, Staff & Policy responsibilities. National College of Defence Studies (NCDS), Indian Institute of Defence Technology (IIDT), Indian Institute of Defence Management (IIDM) and Defence Institute of Distance

& Open Learning (DIDOL) would be the constituent colleges and institutions of the INDU.



030. Speech of the Prime Minister at the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony for the Indian National Defence University at Gurgaon.

Gurgaon, May 23, 2013.

“It is a great privilege for me to join you today on this auspicious occasion of laying the foundation stone for the Indian National Defence University. This is an idea that has been long in the making and I am very happy that today we are witnessing the first step towards its becoming a reality.

At the outset, I wish to thank my friend, the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Haryana for his generous support for this project and, in particular, for providing land. The proximity of this University to Delhi would facilitate the much needed close interaction between its faculty and students and defence policy makers and practitioners in the national capital. I would also like to thank my senior colleague Raksha Mantri ji, the senior leadership of the Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defence for the hard work they have done in realizing this project of national importance. I have no doubt that, when completed, this unique University will become a world-class institution for higher defence studies, in which we will be able to take justifiable pride.

India’s defence and security are a fundamental obligation of the Government to our people and an essential prerequisite for our national social and economic transformation. Our Government has attached the highest priority to these tasks. We seek to advance peace, stability, friendship and cooperation in our region and beyond, and we do so with the confidence that our Armed Forces can defend our country against any threat. This confidence is based on the many steps that the Government has taken to strengthen our nation’s defence capabilities.

In the last few years, we have added significantly to the land forces to protect our borders and inducted new equipment to increase the Army’s

firepower. Our ability to service our frontiers with improved infrastructure and enhanced air mobility is considerably greater today than in the past. We have enhanced the full spectrum of capabilities of our Air Force and are equipping it to remain at the cutting edge of technology for the decades that lie ahead. Not only are our borders stronger, our seas are also more secure. The capabilities of our sea-borne forces to guard our coastline and offshore assets has seen enormous expansion in the last five years. We have placed special emphasis on strengthening the capabilities of our Navy, which is fully equipped to operate at great distances from our shores, protect our maritime interests, respond to natural disasters and provide humanitarian assistance to the need.

Over the last nine years, our deterrence capabilities have also matured and have been given concrete shape. At the same time, we are better equipped today to deal with non-conventional threats, especially in the cyber and space domains. We are implementing a national architecture for cyber security and have taken steps to create an office of a national cyber security coordinator.

Our government is conscious of the fact that adequate defence preparedness is critically dependent on sound defence acquisition policies. We have paid close attention to this and have continually reformed those policies to ensure that our Armed Forces have the best equipment. We have also been guided by the objective of making our defence acquisition transparent, smooth, efficient and less vulnerable to unethical practices. We will continue to seek the highest standards of probity in defence acquisition.

Another issue to which we have paid close attention is indigenisation of defence procurement. Our government is committed to taking further steps to stimulate the development of our domestic defence industry, including the Indian private sector. This is important not only to enhance our security, but also to spur industrial development and economic growth of our country. We must fully utilize the sophisticated management and technological capacities that are already present in our private sector, including in the defence field, not just for production but also for defence research and development.

India faces the entire spectrum of security challenges. This is inevitable as we live in a difficult neighbourhood, which holds the full range of conventional, strategic and non-traditional challenges. We are also situated at the strategic crossroads of Asia and astride one of the busiest sea lanes of the world. We inhabit a networked and digital world. Our dependence on imported energy is significant and is likely to grow. We are also living at a moment of history when the world is witnessing change on a scale and at a speed rarely seen before.

Nowhere is this change more pronounced than in Asia, where we are witnessing multiple security challenges on account of the intersection of fragile states, internal conflicts, proliferation of arms and terrorist groups. Explosive development of technology is also transforming defence capabilities. As our dependence on the cyber and outer space domains grows, new sets of challenges will emerge, which can also assume military dimensions. The nature of conflict and competition is changing at the same time when national boundaries are being blurred by deepening global integration. Therefore, while defending and securing our homeland, we also have to be prepared to preserve India's expanding international assets.

These multiple challenges notwithstanding, we must also be conscious of our strategic opportunities. India's security has never been stronger than it is today and our international relationships have never been more conducive to our national development efforts. Our engagement in our immediate neighbourhood has increased. We have deepened political, economic and strategic relations in the Asia-Pacific, Indian Ocean and West Asian regions. Our relations with all major powers have become stronger and more productive. We are also particularly participating in key global and regional foras, ranging from the Group of 20 to the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN groupings.

Our defence cooperation has grown and today we have unprecedented access to high technology, capital and partnerships. We have also sought to assume our responsibility for stability in the Indian Ocean Region. We are well positioned, therefore, to become a net provider of security in our immediate region and beyond.

Taken together, these challenges and opportunities should prompt a reorientation of our strategic thinking and a reappraisal of our higher defence organisation. It is imperative that our defence professionals remain abreast of the complex environment we face and the avenues that are available as a result of the enormous transition taking place in India. On this occasion, I am reminded of a late 19th century observation by General Sir William Francis Butler. In a biography of the British General, Charles George Gordon, Butler wrote: "The nation that will insist on drawing a broad line of demarcation between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools, and its thinking done by cowards."

That is where this great university comes in.

It is meant to ensure that our country, our government and our armed forces benefit from the best military advice that is available. It is meant to provide an avenue for our soldiers to think beyond the physical arts of war and for our thinkers and policymakers to understand the complexities of war and conflict. It is also meant to provide our defence professionals with a deep understanding of the interplay between all attributes of national power. Those who pass through the portals of this university will need to track regional and global trends, new and emerging technologies and developments in defence capabilities and strategies. They will also need to map the contours of future conflicts and understand the relationship between defence and finance, between external and internal security and between defence and diplomacy. Only then would they be able to fulfil the vision of the late Dr. K. Subrahmanyam who, in proposing the establishment of the National Defence University, had highlighted the need to educate and adequately prepare national security leaders to enable them to look at security challenges holistically and frame policies based on informed research.

Our expectations from this institution, therefore, are high. I am equally confident, that they will be met fully. I look forward to the Indian National Defence University emerging as an excellent platform to promote scholarship of a high order and train and equip future generations of leaders to meet India's defence needs and fulfil our international responsibilities. The University, I hope, will set the highest standards of

professionalism, creativity and debate. I am sure that it will also foster a climate of closer interaction between defence and civilian leaders. Once again, it gives me great pride to be here on this auspicious occasion and I look forward to this campus coming up and becoming a great centre of defence studies in the quickest possible time.”



031. Prime Minister’s address at the Chief Ministers’ Conference on Internal Security’.

New Delhi, June 5, 2013.

“I welcome all Chief Ministers and other distinguished participants from States to this very important annual conference on internal security.

We are meeting today in the aftermath of the brutal and inhuman attack by Left Wing Extremists on Congress leaders and workers and their security personnel in Chhatisgarh a few days back. Such violence has no place in our democracy. The Centre and States need to join hands to ensure that such events do not recur. I have noted from the agenda papers that there is a separate session on Left Wing Extremism in this conference and I would urge you to make good use of this opportunity to come up with some concrete measures to deal with the very grave threat of Naxalism.

I must point out here that the challenge of Naxalism has received our serious attention for quite some time now. We have adopted a two-pronged strategy to deal with the challenge: conducting proactive and sustained operations against Maoist extremists; and, addressing development and governance issues in Left Wing Extremism affected areas. A number of measures have been taken as part of this two-track strategy. These include strengthening the security apparatus, improving road connectivity in 34 most Left Wing Extremist affected districts, relaxation of norms of various development schemes in the affected areas, and the Integrated Action Plan for 82 selected tribal and backward districts.

We have achieved some successes too. In the last couple of years there has been a substantial reduction in the number of incidents and deaths caused by Left Wing Extremist groups and an increase in the number of Naxalite surrenders. But, major violent attacks by Naxalites like the recent one in Chhattisgarh are setbacks that have occurred periodically. The Centre and States need to work together to eliminate such large-scale attacks.

The Central Government on its part has already started taking steps in this regard. The Cabinet Secretary, the Home Secretary and my office have been involved in an exercise that would lead to a further strengthening of our defensive and offensive capabilities against Left Wing Extremists. I hope that the State Governments will cooperate fully with us and add to the effectiveness of these efforts.

I must also emphasize here that the two-pronged strategy that we have followed so far needs to be strengthened and pursued with rigour. Even as we intensify our efforts to strengthen the security and intelligence apparatus in areas affected by Maoist violence, we should be able to ensure that people residing in Left Wing Extremist affected areas are able to live in an environment of peace and security and derive full benefits of our development efforts.

To build a broader national consensus on the strategy to tackle the Naxalite challenge, Government has convened a meeting of all political parties on the 10th of this month.

The year 2012 saw a significant improvement in the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Our strategy to prevent cross-border infiltration by militants and our intelligence based counter-terrorism operations in Jammu and Kashmir have resulted in a decline in the level of terrorist violence by about one-third in 2012 as compared to 2011. In fact, terrorist violence parameters in 2012 have been the lowest since the upsurge in terrorist activities two decades ago. The record inflow of tourists and pilgrims during 2012 also points to an improved security situation in the State.

The implementation of several infrastructure projects in Jammu and Kashmir is progressing well. The Himayat and Udaan schemes which aim at providing additional gainful employment to the youth have also

achieved a fair measure of success. These are all welcome developments.

The security situation in the North East continues to be complex, with insurgency, extortion and agitations being the main disruptive elements in the hands of the insurgents. However, there has been considerable progress in dialogue with several insurgent and ethnic separatist groups in the North-Eastern region. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with both factions of Dima Halam Daogah of Dima Hasao in Assam. Three Meitei insurgent groups have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in February 2013. Talks with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland are continuing.

The Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) has been set up as an autonomous body in August 2012 to administer the Gorkhaland region and ensure its all-round development. The Centre is committed to providing financial assistance of Rs 200 crore per annum for three years for projects aimed at developing the socio-economic infrastructure in the GTA areas.

We are committed to undertaking and bringing to a satisfactory conclusion dialogue with all groups and organizations which are willing to give up violence to seek solutions within the framework of our Constitution. We are equally firm in our determination to continue assisting the States of the North-East to enhance their law and order enforcement capabilities, so that the people of the North-East.

I also wish to take today's opportunity to draw your attention to two other issues relating to our internal security that require special attention. The first is the increase in number and intensity of incidents of communal and sectarian violence during 2012 as compared to the previous year. I am sure that all of us agree that maintenance of communal harmony in our country is critical for our continued growth and prosperity. It is absolutely imperative that we deal very firmly with communal forces of all types. Simultaneously, we also need to recognize and address the special needs of minorities and weaker sections of our society, particularly Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The second issue which requires our collective action is that of crimes against women and children. We have recently enacted several laws

providing stringent punishment for such crimes and more sensitive treatment of victims during investigation and trial. These include the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013; The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012.

We also need to put in place institutional mechanisms to ensure the safety and security of women and children, particularly in the urban context. Such mechanisms include sensitization of police personnel, particularly at levels with which the victim comes into contact, setting up dedicated help-lines, measures for safety at the work place, and so on. I would urge all of you to explore how these outcomes can be best achieved.

Capacity building and modernization of State Police Forces are absolutely essential for meeting the emerging challenges to internal security which range from terrorism to urban policing. The Centre remains committed to supporting States in this regard. The scheme for modernization of State Police Forces has been extended for a further period of five years with a total outlay of about Rs. 12,000 crore. An amount of Rs. 433 crore has been additionally provided for Mega City Policing in the six cities of Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad.

We are also committed to improving border management and coastal security. Greater focus and priority than before is being given to the work of fencing and construction of additional Border Outposts along the India-Bangladesh border, the construction and up-gradation of roads along the India-China, India-Nepal and India-Bhutan borders as well as the development of integrated check posts on the India-Pakistan and India-Nepal borders. We are also continuing implementation of the Border Area Development Programme and of Phase II of the Coastal Security Scheme.

The need for coordinated effort by Central and State agencies to deal with terrorism and other security challenges, irrespective of whether they are internal or external in origin, has been emphasized in all earlier conferences of Chief Ministers on internal security. In view of the criticality of this requirement, I would urge you once more to explore how we can achieve even better coordination between the Centre and States.

I also believe that time has now come to view the challenges of terrorism, communal violence and Left Wing Extremism in a holistic manner. I think each one of us needs to be completely objective in our approach to these issues, acting in national interest rising above narrow political and ideological divides. I would appeal to all political parties and all sections of society to work together to find effective ways and means of meeting these grave challenges.

Let me end by wishing this conference all success. I look forward to receiving your valuable suggestions on how to further strengthen the internal security of our country.



032. Speech by Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai at the International Students' Convocation Ceremony at Symbiosis Institute.

Pune, June 8, 2013.

Dr. S. B. Majumdar, Chancellor

Members of the Faculty,

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps,

Young Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am honoured and grateful for this opportunity to speak at the convocation. 41 years ago – I graduated from Fergusson College and 39 years from the University in this great city. So it is good to be back.
2. Addresses at convocations or conventions have sometimes been occasions for making policy statements. Think of Marshall's address to Harvard in 1947; this launched the "Marshall Plan". Or think of Pandit Nehru's addresses at Allahabad, Calcutta and Aligarh Universities. In a famous 1948 address at the last, Panditji made that well remembered remark that "I am proud of India not only because of her ancient magnificent heritage, but also

because of her remarkable capacity to add to it by keeping the doors and windows of her mind and spirit open to fresh and invigorating winds from distant countries”.

3. And that is what you do at Symbiosis – You are now one of the windows through which fresh winds blow in and through which our knowledge flows outward. This is a classic blend of Indian roots with branches leading out to friends and partners in Asia, Africa and hopefully Latin America. My heartiest felicitations to the graduating class of students of this wonderful international community! Today marks the culmination of the hard work that you have put in to acquire specialized knowledge and skills, but more importantly heralds a new beginning where this knowledge will be put to use. Use it well not only for your benefit but also for the larger good of mankind wherever you are. The world beckons you and I am confident that each one of you will contribute to make it a better place.
4. Symbiosis started around the time I left Pune to start my career which took me to 9 countries abroad on assignments and many more on travels. I am happy to hear that the internationalist perspective that Dr. Majumdar gave to this institution from its inception is indeed alive and well in all of you.
5. We live in a globalized world. It is perhaps a reflection of this that you are here in India for higher studies. Increasing numbers of students are moving out of their countries for studies. UNESCO estimates that there will be over 7 million international students globally by 2020. Just think about that number - 7 million young people on the move! – This will mean that students will form one of the largest migrant groups worldwide. You will create a new wave of globalization and help shape international discourse. I compliment Symbiosis for being at the crest of this wave.
6. In doing this Symbiosis lives up to India's tradition of providing vital centres of learning for the world. The famous Nalanda University which flourished from 5th to 12th century AD attracted great scholars from distant lands. An international initiative to recreate the university at Nalanda is now underway. We plan to

develop it into a high standard, world class institution. Similarly, the South-Asian University has been established in New Delhi for students from SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries. It gives us some gratification to note that India which has been a major source of outgoing students (is 2nd after China) is now attracting increasing number of students from abroad. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) through the ICCR has been trying to make studying in India a friendly, positive and productive experience for foreign students. I am aware also that we have much more to do to make this a reality. We have to attend to bureaucratic rules and pay more attention to your living conditions though I might say that your living conditions here are much better than mine were!

7. As the Foreign Secretary I am usually expected to speak on foreign affairs with information and analyses on Indian foreign and security policies, whether with regard to our priority areas of the neighbourhood or in the larger world. But I would like to connect you to our foreign policy by saying that what we in the foreign policy apparatus seek to do is linked to national growth and development of India. The first imperative in that context is a stable, prosperous, democratic and peaceful neighbourhood. As we have finally got on to a high growth trajectory, we have built networks of inter-connectivity and trade and investment so that benefits of development are shared by the people of the sub-continent and beyond and they have a stake in our growth. Equally important are cultural and educational exchanges which lead to mutual understanding. We have contributed to development assistance and capacity building programmes in our neighbouring countries and in Africa, South East Asia and small island States. Today almost half of the entire budget of MEA is dedicated to international assistance. It is said that foreign policy cannot be based on altruism. Obviously, we are concerned with national security, assisting national defence, seeking allies in the fight against terrorism, building trade and investment links, maximising our gains from international commerce, assisting the search for resources, for technology, and for finance, and assuring India and its people and its culture a place in the world. This means we

have to be engaged with the power centres of the world, a priority as high as our neighbours, and also keep focus on other critical areas.

8. Beyond our immediate neighbours we are reviving the civilizational contacts with South-East Asia. In the early 90s, Government launched a 'Look East Policy' to strengthen these civilizational bonds by enhancing our political, economic and cultural cooperation with the region. Our 'Look East Policy' has been successful and has helped us develop strong ties with the people and countries of the region. It has been expanded to countries in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific. Last year, to mark the 20th anniversary of our dialogue partnership with ASEAN and 10th anniversary of our interactions at the highest level, the Government organized a Commemorative Summit in New Delhi during which our relationship with ASEAN was raised to a strategic partnership. We would see further deepening of our bonds across all areas including our political dialogue, trade and commerce, scientific and cultural area, and greater interaction amongst our peoples - professionals, academia, students and businesses.
9. On the other flank of India are West Asia, Iran, Central Asia and the Arab world which have also been traditional neighbours. Today it is the Gulf region which has acquired particular salience as over 6 million expatriate Indians live there, contributing to the economy of the area and sending back valuable remittances. The region is also the source of 70% of our oil and a big chunk of our global trade. We work closely with governments of all countries of the region and share their desire for stability and prosperity. We also have regular interactions with the overseas Indian community from all parts of the world, Guyana and Suriname to South Africa to Mauritius to Singapore and on to Fiji through Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas gatherings which provides Government an opportunity to hear of their requirements and aspirations. India has historically had close ties with countries of Africa and Asia and we are also reaching out to Latin America. We have contributed substantially to capacity building in African countries,

a process which was re-invigorated through the launch of Africa-India Forum Summit in 2008 in New Delhi. I am happy that the Vice President of India addressed the Commemorative Summit of the OAU in Addis Ababa last month. A 'Connect Central Asia Policy' was launched recently to further promote relations with Central Asian countries, an integral part of which is greater people-to-people exchange.

10. I hope I have been able to give you some sense of the interdependence and mobility in an increasingly shrinking and globalised world – a world which would be your arena when you step out to work. We have learnt through experience that events anywhere in the world directly affect Indians if not all of India. A lot of you might work for your country or the companies there or perhaps pursue independent professions. Either way, in the world of today, you would have to deal with factors which are external to your country. Similarly, the likelihood of your travelling and staying in different parts of the world in your professional capacity is a lot more today than it was in the past. Hence you will get involved with foreign affairs in your own countries. This cannot be the domain of a few bureaucrats. It is in every country a national imperative in which you are all participants.
11. Now in dealing with this reality - you would recognize that we have to be engaged at simplest level with the fact that people need to travel. As I said earlier, there are growing numbers of Indians including professionals, students and tourists travelling out of the country. We have expanded our passport services by establishing a large number of Passport Seva Kendras for issuance of passports to facilitate this process. There have been some teething troubles but the procedure is being streamlined, as we go along. Similarly, our effort has been to provide better facilities for international students coming to India under programmes such as ICCR scholarships, Colombo Plan schemes, etc.
12. Beyond travel arrangements, we in MEA have continued outreach through our Public Diplomacy, Press interactions, and policy

planning. We believe – perhaps more than any other wing of the Government – in explaining what we do, building bridges to the academic communities, and creating more stakeholders for the great challenge of managing India's relationship with the wider world.

13. It is this function that all of you would get involved with. So let me share a general message with the students whether from India or friends from abroad.
14. We are now entering an era when for the first time in the last four centuries we are shaping not only our own political destinies but carving out economic, technological, cultural and civilisational space for ourselves in the world. Former President A.P.J. Kalam spoke of Vision 2020 targeting that year for India's achievement of middle income status and ending poverty as we know it. This required technological upgradation in all arenas of activity. The 2020 Vision came out long before the BRICS report which projects India as the third largest economy in the world in the coming decades. This has begun to be regarded as something inevitable. Many thought that the pursuit of technology and what Keynes called the magic of compound interest rates would help us achieve uninterrupted growth. Clearly this was a bit optimistic. Clearly our capacity to make progress and shift the balance of power in the world cannot be doubted any longer. If current trends can be maintained then in 10 years time we should be able to drastically reduce poverty in India and become a middle income nation. The same is true in 20 years for Africa. And then we will see the real power shift which the Chancellor spoke about. I am not sure it will be limited to a few countries. Power is shifting not only to East but to the South as a whole. But just as clearly – this process is not going to be smooth or easy. No one should assume that our progress will be welcomed by the current holders of power and influence. That is why access to finance, technology and information networks is becoming more difficult and political restrictions remain a gamble. Our ability to change the world will be still constrained by vested interests, and the entrenched global order. If we are to bring about change, we must go back to the

basics i.e. self-reliance and a willingness to help our natural partners. Recall what Nehru said to the students at the University of Lucknow “you are a generation condemned to hard labour”. This message was for my father’s generation. We had it somewhat easier, but you, just when you are on the cusp of change, will find yourselves facing a new set of challenges. And to quote Nehru “This is a time when work is required, when labour is required, peace is required, cooperative effort is required, when all the concentrated energies that the nation possesses are required to be put to great task of the nation”.

15. I do believe Nehru meant hard work – when he referred to labour – and this can be in any field, IT, biotech, mass media, energy, space technology, scientific agriculture or any other sector. And the “task of the nation” will increasingly be defined not by political leaders or bureaucrats but in the minds of people like you. You have to remain united whatever the profession you are in, because the setting of the agenda for the future will come within the domain of young people empowered by sharing of ideas and information, by technology, and by the liberation of the mind. But Nehru’s message is valid in that we still have to make a supreme effort to lift our societies and our nations over the last few hurdles before we enter into a new era. And I hope the introduction to modern ideas, technology and practices – you have gained at Symbiosis will give you the ability to carry out these tasks in your own countries. I also hope your education here will give you the firm footing you need as you make your way in life.
16. At the end of the day you do need a firm foundation. Because as the US Federal Reserve Chairman, Bernanke told the students at Princeton “Life is amazingly unpredictable. Any 22 year old who thinks he or she knows where they will be in 10 years much less in 30, is simply lacking in imagination. Don’t be afraid to let the drama play out”.
17. Your experience in India and at this University is part of the drama. I trust you have found your stay here beneficial and had the opportunity to travel around and experience the diversity and

cultural richness of our country. Wherever you are and whatever you might do, for us you will always be friends of India. It is quite possible that your profession will bring you back to India. If not, do take time off and visit and explore the country more. I wish you all the best for your future life.

18. Since Bernanke spoke of drama, and the President of the Students Council spoke of fledglings leaving the nest. I will finally recall the words of a song I learnt when I was passing through the portals of University in this wonderful city 40 years ago. Because 40 years is a flash in time; when you reach my age – you will look back on today – and remember the time when you were young as if it were just yesterday. And you must stay young in your thinking and ideas. And the song says “May you stay forever young!”

Thank you very much



- 033. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on the travel of External Affairs Minister to Norway and some other miscellaneous questions.**

New Delhi, June 11, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. Since we had not met for quite some time in this format I thought it would be useful to have our usual interaction. As usual, I will begin with an announcement that I have to make following which you are free to ask me questions on that first and subsequently on anything else that you would like.

(For Briefing on EAM Visit to Norway please see Document No. 530).

Q: This is with regard to reports that two Indian aircraft violated the Pakistan airspace. Can we have any details if Pakistan has complained to India about it? What was the real picture?

Official Spokesperson: I do not know what the picture is. As far as I am involved, these are only related at the diplomatic level. As of now as I speak to you, I just rechecked, we have not heard any information on what you are saying at the diplomatic level.

Q: Nepal's former Prime Minister is here. He has met Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister also. Can you throw some light on the conversation that has gone on?

Official Spokesperson: I think we have been through this before. Please do not expect me to be a fly on the wall. Having said that I can certainly say that this is part of our engagement with all stakeholders in Nepal. As you are aware, there have been other leaders of other political parties from Nepal visiting India. Our idea is to understand from them if there is anything that we in India could do to assist. As far as we are concerned, we would be ready to help Nepal at a pace and in the way the Nepalese Government would want. Therefore, it is part of our engagement with different segments of Nepalese society on this. He has had very constructive discussions, as did the previous visitors to India.

Q: Special Envoy of Italian Government de Mistura is in town. Is there any development?

Official Spokesperson: Yes, the Special Envoy of the Italian Government Mr. Staffan de Mistura reached Delhi yesterday. And in preparation for your presence here today I did ask about this. The External Affairs Minister, prior to his departure late last night, did meet Mr. de Mistura, and they had a discussion. Of course, as you are aware, this discussion was related to the desire of the Italian Government to have a speedy trial for the two marines. And the External Affairs Minister was apprised of the view of the Italian Government on this since their last meeting. And he has explained the situation based on his understanding of where the judicial process is.

Q: Saudi Arabia has informed all foreign countries that they are going to decrease 20 per cent Haj quota this year. How is India going to take up this issue with Saudi Arabia?

Official Spokesperson: As you are aware, we have a regular dialogue with Saudi Arabia on Haj matters. This is an appropriate situation that will be discussed during that dialogue. I do not know the details of what

you are mentioning. But it has always been our view that there is a growth in terms of number of Indians wanting to undertake the Hajj pilgrimage, and the Saudi authorities have generally been very accommodating of our needs. Even when the last quota was fixed, we had then indicated that we would require a slightly larger number and the Saudi authorities had indicated that at the end of their consultations with everybody they will address this issue because it depends on their understanding of what would be the total number of pilgrims who would be coming. So, at this stage, we will only be able to take it up through the mechanism that I have suggested. But I will have a look whether this has an impact on Indian pilgrims that we have agreed to as of now.

Q: There were reports of some Indians being detained in Kuwait. Can we have the status of that? Have they been released or not?

Official Spokesperson: I think you have been following that case previously. Let me try and explain to you the situation in Kuwait. We have currently approximately 700,000 Indian nationals who are resident in Kuwait. These are in various categories. Since the beginning of this year the Kuwaiti Government has announced a policy whereby they would try and reduce the number of expatriates in general over a ten-year period.

As part of that approach they have initially focused on those who do not have valid visas and also those who have come on a certain type of visa, that is domestic worker's visa, and are working in other areas. In Kuwait there are broadly two types of visas – one for working as domestic help and the other for working in other organizations. Now, there is a feeling that there may be large number of expatriates, Indians included, who may be coming to Kuwait in one category and perhaps working in another category. And those are the ones who have been targeted.

My understanding is that we have taken it up with Kuwait both in New Delhi and in Kuwait that if this is their policy it is best to communicate this and provide a timeframe for everybody who is not in compliance with this to either sort their status out or to return to their home countries. Now this is for all expatriates; it is not targeted towards Indians alone. Of course Indians are amongst the largest number of expatriates in Kuwait - as I said approximately 700,000 - and so there are likely to be a number of Indians. At this stage the number is fairly small.

My understanding is that from the beginning of the year till now we have issued less than 1000 Emergency Certificates for Indians wanting to return to India. Of these, not all have returned because by the time some of them desired to return they were able to regularize their status. That is where we are. The numbers are small but this is an issue. Our Embassy has been proactively following this up.

Now the Kuwaiti Government has decided that they would pay for the air ticket for those who are to return. But they are being only paid for the air ticket up to the nearest destination, which is Mumbai. So, as part of a welfare measure, the Embassy is working with the local authorities and the excess amount - if somebody would travel from say Mumbai to Delhi or to Rajasthan - of airfare is being paid through the Embassy through the Indian Workers Welfare Fund. In addition, our labour officials are regularly going to the Deportation Centres to try and assist any Indian nationals who may have a willingness to change over their papers rather than go back. That is where we are.

These are sporadic occasions when there are some raids or something in certain areas where there are large number of expatriates including Indians who may be involved and we respond to that.

Q: This is regarding a BCIM meeting held at Kunming. There is a report in The Hindu that India was not represented at that meeting. Is there any specific reason for that? The meeting was held just after Premier Li's visit where a Joint Statement was issued.

Official Spokesperson: I must confess I have no readout on that. This is the first time I am hearing about it. I will have a look and we will provide a response since you have raised that question. Could you tell me the dates when it was held?

Q: I think it was in the last week.

Question:...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I think what you are saying is what she is referring to. It is the Shangri-La Dialogue rather than a BCIM meeting that you are referring to. There are two separate issues in this perhaps.

Q:...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I think all of you need to get your facts right as to whether it is a trade expo, whether it is a Shangri-La Dialogue or it is a BCIM meeting.**

Q:...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I will try and find out factual information on this and we will try and respond to it.

Q: On July 3, the three-month grace period is expiring in Saudi Arabia for those affected by Nitaqat. Where do the Indians expatriate stand, how many are affected, how many would be coming back, and what were the talks? Our EAM went there and other Ministers also went there. Where do we stand?

Official Spokesperson: Today is Gulf session I think! But I think you have a valid question. Let me try and put out what we have.

As you perhaps are aware, there are a total of 2.8 million Indians in Saudi Arabia. Since this issue of the possibility of expatriates who are not in compliance with their visa status being returned to India arose earlier this year, we have followed a rather proactive approach. We have tried to tackle it at various levels. One is at the political level where we had our Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Mr. Vayalar Ravi visit along with a delegation of the Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. E. Ahamed, and Advisor to the Prime Minister Mr. T.K.A. Nair. They went there and had detailed discussions with the Labour Ministry.

The idea was that we acknowledge that it is the sovereign right of a country to have a policy that they determine appropriate for residency in their country. However, what we felt was that since there was a change from the policy which existed so far, the idea was to provide time and to treat those who are adversely impacted by that policy, with a degree of humaneness and dignity. That was the focus of our political contacts. This was reinforced when the External Affairs Minister went to Saudi Arabia. He did meet his counterpart Prince Saud al-Faisal. He also met the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia as well as several senior Saudi officials. In each of those engagements it was emphasized that this was not something that was targeted towards Indians; they did have lots of praise for the Indian community there; there was an acknowledgement that

Indians were a preferred community as far as Saudi Arabia was concerned; there was no attempt at targeting one or the other community, but to follow a policy which would ensure that those who were irregularly there would have to leave the country.

Since then, the second level at which we have been functioning is at the grassroots level where our Embassy and our Consulate are taking a very proactive view. While we have only an Embassy in Riyadh and a Consulate in Jeddah, the Ambassador did open up a special office of a temporary nature in Dammam which is in the Eastern Province which is about 400 km away from Riyadh. We have a regular Officer stationed there to assist all Indian nationals.

In addition, there are several Indian community schools which are spread out all over Saudi Arabia. These are at distances varying from 600 km to more than a 1000 km from Riyadh or Jeddah. Each of these schools have their non-teaching staff assisting Indian nationals by collecting their applications for either change of their status or for Emergency Certificates. In this process, over the last few months I understand approximately 72,000 applications have been received. These applications are, as I said, either for grant of Emergency Certificates or their willingness to find new jobs and to move on to perhaps other employers.

The Embassy has been able to identify 150 Saudi employers who are willing to take Indian employees. These are in various categories. The names of these employers have been displayed and communicated to all these Centres where we are collecting information about people wanting to go back. So, these 70,000 people who applied to either change their status or to return to India have been informed of what opportunities are available for them to find alternative employment.

We have also set up a 24x7 help desk where anytime anybody can phone and seek information not only in English and Hindi but in several Indian languages. A third way that we have been proactive is that approximately 600 volunteers have volunteered to provide assistance to the Indian community. These volunteers with Embassy officials are stationed on 24x7 basis at the Deportation Centres in Riyadh and in the Eastern Province in Dammam as well as at the airports. So, any Indian wishing to travel back to India having problems at the airport is being assisted.

At this stage we do not know the total number of people who may return because of this. The last time when we had this sort of a situation of an amnesty where people were asked to return, we had provided about 30,000 Emergency Certificates. However, it is estimated that only about 3,000 people came back. So, at this stage I cannot tell you exact numbers of people who may want to come back. But I can only give you an understanding of how many have applied, what is the past practice, and what the situation is.

We are also in touch with the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and through them with various State Governments to try and ensure if there can be some assistance of facilitation at this end. That is because if there are people in significant numbers coming from various States, it devolves on those States to provide opportunities for settlement of those people. So, we are in touch with the various State Governments involved in this venture through the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs.

Also with the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Air India, and the State Governments we have shared the data bases and list of people who have applied for the Emergency Certificates so that they are aware of the dimensions of this issue and should there be requirement for additional flights or for assistance at the airports or in the places where they stay, they are all well aware.

I would like to just try and sum up by saying that we have done our best, we have worked proactively, and we hope that you have not seen this crisis burgeon into a major issue simply because the Embassy and the Ministry of External Affairs along with other Ministries is trying to do our best to ameliorate what is a difficult situation that has arisen there.

Q: There was another ceasefire violation in the Poonch District along the LoC this morning. This makes it the second in the last two weeks. Are we taking it up diplomatically?

Official Spokesperson: Between India and Pakistan there are several avenues for responding to such issues. You referred to this as the second instance. As with the first, at this stage there has not been a diplomatic requirement because this is assessed by the authorities in the field of what is the best way that they feel this can be addressed. So, a diplomatic redressal or response is one area but there are other mechanisms which

exist. Perhaps other mechanisms are being used, and I would not be the right person to respond to those other mechanisms because they are handled separately. There has not been a need that has been raised by those people who are in authority there to take this up at the diplomatic level.

Q: Just a follow up to the Italian question. This is the fifth meeting in three months. Do you think it is normal? Can you elaborate a little bit more? I know that the desire for a speedy trial was reiterated. But what kind of diplomacy?

Official Spokesperson: Maria, you have lived in India long enough to understand that the judicial process has its own speed. It has its own manner of proceeding. As you are aware, ultimately the outcome will be determined in a case which is sui generis by the judicial process. We acknowledge that this is a case which has not happened previously and it is a case which was new both to India and to Italy. As two friendly countries we can only work together and try and see in asui generis case which has no precedent we try and work our systems in a manner which is acceptable to both, and that is what we are doing. The executive in India has a limited role in terms of judicial outcomes except to make the case in front of the judiciary. We are trying to do that; we are trying to do this as quickly as possible. Both India and Italy, have repeated this commitment that the idea is to ensure that this matter is expeditiously resolved because we do not want this to be a major issue between two countries which enjoy otherwise excellent relations.

Q:...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: If you want to ask whether we are concerned by media disclosures suggesting that data relating to private communications of Indian citizens may have been harvested, my answer to you is, yes we are concerned and surprised about it. Between India and the US we have a Cyber Security Dialogue, and it is coordinated by the National Security Councils on both the sides. We feel that this is the appropriate forum to discuss such issues. We intend to seek information and details during consultations between interlocutors from both sides on this matter in that appropriate forum.

If you ask that if it is discovered that Indian laws relating to privacy of information have been violated what would be the view of the Indian

Government, obviously we would find it unacceptable. If Indian laws relating to privacy of information of ordinary Indian citizens have been violated, surely we would find it unacceptable. I hope broadly I have tried to respond to you on where we stand.

Of course, this is an evolving situation. Every day we find new issues coming up. Rather than jump to conclusions at this stage, we will take it as it evolves and have a better understanding and a clearer paradigm of how to tackle this issue once the broader parameters of this in its entirety are available for us.

Thank you very much

Following the interaction the following additional information was obtained regarding Saudi Arabia and provided.

“We have been informed by the Saudi government about the decision to reduce 20% pilgrims from overseas. Given the fact that the processes for Haj pilgrimage have already been initiated in India, we have requested the Saudi authorities both in Delhi and in Riyadh to reconsider their decision taking into account the advanced stage of preparations. We are awaiting a response from them”



034. Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson on some Miscellaneous matters.

New Delhi, June 21, 2013.

Q: Mr. Julian Assange in his interview made a couple of allegations against the Government of India one of which is that you did not respond to his request for asylum. The other one was he accused the Government of India of almost being ungrateful in the context of a purported request from Edward Snowden for asylum. The same report quoted the Official Spokesperson or rather an External Affairs Ministry official saying that there were no records of such a request. Would you clarify the position?

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): I am grateful to you for having asked that question. Let me reiterate what I had said then. We

have not received, are not aware of any request for asylum either from Mr. Julian Assange or from Mr. Snowden. I hope that sets at rest every bit of speculation on this. We have not received any request for asylum. I think the newspaper that you quoted was talking of a letter that was written, and delivered. There is a difference between a letter and a request for asylum. I do not know the contents of that letter, but I can be certain there has not been any request for asylum on this matter. I hope this sets that at rest once and for all.

Q: Is there any response from Saudi Arabia on the Haj delegation? Connected with that, if you are reducing the 20 per cent, will it be on the private tour operators or from the Haj panel?

Official Spokesperson: The Saudi Government has indicated that they have as a norm decided, given that there is an expansion being undertaken in the holy cities they do not have the capacity to absorb so many pilgrims for the forthcoming Haj. Therefore, they decided, as per our understanding, that 50 per cent domestic pilgrims will be reduced and 20 per cent from all over the globe. This is a norm that they have set for everyone, and they have requested us to abide by that norm. We have received this response.

As you are aware, for the Haj there is a Haj Conference which deliberates all aspects of India's Haj policy. This consists of representatives of all State Haj Committees as well as the Central Haj Committee and the Government of India. This conference is to be held in the last week of this month. Based on consultations and discussions and views expressed at that conference, the Government of India will then take a view on how to go about in view of the new circumstances that have arisen there after the signing of the Haj Agreement.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I am not aware. I think there are officials who are specific charged to handle this. I am not aware of this.

Q: The Taliban has reportedly opened their office in Doha and there are reports. I know Mr. Doraiswami was here and he did say that Afghanistan is on the table for talks. But my specific question relates to the US opening talks with Taliban and groups like the Haqqani. That is a sensitive issue

for us because we blame the Haqqanis for the bomb attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul. So, how are we looking at this?

Official Spokesperson: We have followed developments relating to the opening of an office of the Taliban in Qatar and statements made by the representatives of that office and others. These statements reflect some confusion about the name of the Qatar office, its structure, its political and legal status, and its objectives. We have also seen the reaction of the Government of Afghanistan to these developments.

Our position is clear. Government of India has always called for a broad-based Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled reconciliation process, within the framework of the Afghan Constitution and the internationally accepted red lines. Such a process would necessarily recognise the centrality of the Government of Afghanistan in the process, and involve all sections of the Afghan society, as also the insurgent groups, including the Taliban, who wish to join the mainstream.

The reconciliation process should not seek to create equivalence between an internationally recognised Government of Afghanistan and insurgent groups, confer legitimacy to insurgent groups or convey the impression of two competing state authorities for Afghanistan, which could undermine the legitimate Afghan State, Afghan Government and the political, social and economic progress witnessed in Afghanistan over the past decade, to which the international community itself has contributed in great measure.

India remains committed to supporting the Government and the people of Afghanistan, in accordance with the India-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement, and a reconciliation process that has the support of the Government and the people of Afghanistan.

These are the broad parameters under which we will engage on this matter.

Thank you very much



035. Inaugural Address by External Affairs Minister at the Passport Seva Divas and Passport Officers 'Conference – 2013'

New Delhi, June 24, 2013.

Colleagues from the Ministry,

Passport Officers,

Distinguished invitees,

Friends from the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I extend a very warm welcome to all of you. I would have been here in the morning itself but for some more pressing engagements which could not be rescheduled. Nevertheless, I am sure that you would have had some fruitful discussions in the forenoon.

I am extremely pleased to be in your midst to inaugurate the Passport Officers' Conference 2013. I also feel privileged to declare 24th June as 'Passport Seva Divas' to mark the notification of Passports Act, 1967 on this day. As we all know, this Act provides a sound legal framework for rules and regulations governing issuance of passports and other travel documents and it is befitting that we observe this historic day every year as Passport Seva Divas in order to create public awareness about the value of Passport services in the country. On this occasion, I extend my heartfelt greetings to all officials engaged in Passport work at Passport Offices, Passport Seva Kendras and Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the establishment of first five Regional Passport Offices in 1955 and the formation of the Central Passport Organization (CPO) in 1959, passport issuance has traversed a long journey. As I understand, in the 1950's, we were issuing on an average 30,000 Passports per year. These days, we issue more than 30,000 Passports in a single day! Meeting this ever increasing demand for a travel document has been a major challenge for the Ministry. Over the years, expanding the network of Passport Offices, their computerization, machine-readable passports in

place of hand-written ones and decentralization of passport services, are but a few of the landmarks in passport issuance. More recently, the Passport Seva Project, aimed at comprehensive overhaul of passport delivery system, has been successfully implemented across the country with the operationalisation of 77 Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) acting as extended arms of 37 Passport Offices. The setting up of PSKs is part of the Government's firm commitment to provide timely delivery of passport services to our fellow citizens. I take this opportunity to re-affirm the citizen-centric role of Passport Offices, by adopting measures which facilitate speedier and courteous service, greater convenience and comfort to the public at large.

I am happy that with joint efforts of the Ministry and the Service Provider – the Tata Consultancy Services, the PSP was rolled-out in a very short time. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all the members of the CPV Division, Central Passport Organization the TCS team for their earnest efforts in speedy implementation of this high impact e-governance Project. That the Computer Society of India adjudged PSP as the most significant e-Governance initiative of the Government undertaken during 2011-12 is an ample recognition of Ministry's successful efforts in application of ICT for good governance. We would also be working towards obtaining ISO Certification of the Project.

Of particular significance are measures taken by the Ministry in the area of strengthening Public Grievance Redressal, making the Passport Portal more user-friendly, improving physical infrastructure of Passport Offices and incorporation of Letter Screen Image in passport booklets as additional security feature. In addition to the facility of multi-lingual call centre operating in 17 major languages and round the clock and e-mail based helpdesk, the Ministry has introduced mPassport Seva – to offer to smart-phone users, anytime anywhere, a wide variety of services such as passport application status tracking, location of PSKs and general information on various steps involved in obtaining passport.

Under the Passport Seva programme, the Ministry has introduced some innovative methods for improved governance and citizen service delivery. One such measure is a requisite visit in person by an applicant to the nearest Passport Seva Kendra. To give the citizen assured service, we introduced the concept of a visit at a pre-appointed time. This is intended to address overcrowding which used to be a regular feature in

old days. However, as we progressed over the last few months, obtaining online appointments in some of the regions in the country became a formidable challenge and a recurring theme of public scrutiny. We are hopeful that with the launch of the scheme of advance payment of passport fees through electronic modes and SBI challans at the time of online filing of application and scheduling of appointment, this challenge would be adequately met. I am extremely happy that this scheme is finally live across most parts of the country and will be fully completed in another 10 days or so. We have started receiving positive feedback from citizens about the utility and efficacy of this scheme.

One of the core component upon which hinges the timely delivery of passport services is the Police Verification system. The delay in Police Verification of passport applications leading to delay in passport issuance has been a major area of concern. As I gather, online interface with District Police Authorities has brought encouraging results in some States. This model must be implemented across India. The Ministry has taken up this matter with the concerned Chief Secretaries of state governments for speeding up verification process. At the level of Passport Officers, I feel there is scope for increased coordination with the local police would greatly help in reducing delay in clearances and improve citizen service delivery.

We are cognizant of the fact that the success of any e-Governance Project depends on what is called 'digital inclusion'. The Ministry is currently finalizing the modalities on co-opting Common Service Centres for taking passport services closer to rural hinterland. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Ministry has reached an understanding with the help of the Department of Information Technology to integrate over 60,000 Common Service Centres in bringing 'public services closer home', the motto of the Government's National e-Governance Plan.

The Ministry is also looking at expanding further the network of passport service access points in the areas left untouched earlier. The Government is committed to setting up a Passport service outlet in each State and Union Territory. Our focused attention would be on establishing Passport Seva Laghu Kendras in the Northeast over the coming months. We have also requested the National Institute for Smart Government to conduct a feasibility study on the 'Next Steps' in Passport Seva Project.

Rapid advances in technology and the increasing rightful demand for transparency have created a challenging environment in which service organizations need to operate and respond more efficiently to the aspirations of citizens. Capacity building, training and development of skills are key factors in attaining mission objectives. To this end, in the coming months, the Ministry would be working on establishing a Research and Training Centre. Such a centre, apart from imparting training to officials and personnel from other stakeholders, will also work on improvement in Passport booklet, keeping in pace with the international norms in the field of travel documents.

As you know, a committed and motivated workforce is pre-requisite for achieving goals of the organization. The Ministry has taken several steps to improve the service conditions of the CPO personnel by re-structuring of the cadre, fast-track promotions and notification of Productivity Linked Incentive Scheme. I trust the CPO personnel would benefit from uniform and well-defined work procedures, state-of-the-art infrastructure and system deployment, skill enhancement through training and the totality of their efforts would lead to higher level of satisfaction for citizens. I am told that as on date, in the new system, more than one crore passport related services have been delivered to citizens. With a view to recognizing your valuable efforts, the Ministry has selected the best Citizen Service Executive, Verification Officer, Granting Officer and Passport Office in the country based on their meritorious performance and output during 2012-13. I congratulate all the awardees and hope that these awards would go a long way in creating benchmarks for excellence in performance and devotion to public duty.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Celebrating anniversaries, commemorations or observance of days such as this are not ritualistic but instead provide opportunity to re-assess our performance and to engage ourselves in constructive interaction to learn transferable lessons for betterment of passport service delivery across the country. The Passport Offices being the public interface of the Ministry, it is essential to ensure that sustained efforts are made at every level to enhance citizen experience.

The deliberations during this Conference, I am confident, would lead to practical and forward looking suggestions for improving overall

management and image of the CPO. Today as we celebrate this Passport Seva Divas, let us rededicate ourselves to respond with empathy and more efficiently in a transparent manner to meet increasing expectations of citizens to make passport issuance simpler, speedier and more secure and thus contribute our mite to good governance in the country. I wish you a very happy Passport Seva Divas and wish the Conference all success.

Thank you



036. Weekly Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson.

New Delhi, June 28, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming. It looks like from here that your weekend has begun, so, I am grateful to you for having come on a weekend. I have two announcements to make and those relate to the External Affairs Minister's travels.

The External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid, will be visiting Brunei. His visit to Brunei is linked with three meetings that he is to attend there. The first is for the 11th India-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting which will be held on the 1st of July. Following that he will participate in the 3rd East Asia Summit Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministers. And finally he will also participate in the 20th ASEAN Regional Forum meeting. All these meetings are to be held on the 1st and the 2nd of July.

Subsequent to his visit to Brunei, the External Affairs Minister will also visit Singapore on 3rd and 4th July. This is for a bilateral meeting and this is his first bilateral visit to Singapore. In Singapore, apart from the bilateral meeting he will also participate and chair the regional meeting of Indian Heads of Mission in the ASEAN as well as the Pacific and East Asia. Our Heads of Mission from ASEAN countries as well as from Japan, Korea, Australia, and New Zealand will be present there.

Let me try and tell you something about the India-ASEAN meeting. This is the 11th meeting. As you know, we had a very successful summit meeting last December in Delhi following which we have continued to interact with ASEAN in a rather intensive manner. Currently we have 25 mechanisms of various sorts which underpin our interaction with ASEAN. These include six at Ministerial level. The Ministerial level interactions are: foreign affairs, trade, agriculture, tourism, environment, and new and renewable energy.

Our people-to-people interaction too has been at a fairly intense pace. We expect that this year too we will have 250 ASEAN students visit India. In addition, 20 ASEAN journalists had visited earlier this year, and 20 more will be visiting later this year. Eight of your colleagues who are missing from here are right now in Kuala Lumpur, I understand, en route to Brunei so that they can attend the meeting of the ASEAN as well as visit another ASEAN country. This is part of the media exchange between India and ASEAN.

We also will continue the special course at the Foreign Service Institute for ASEAN diplomats. My understanding is that we have approximately 1100 ITEC scholarships for ASEAN countries. We are also examining the possibility of establishing additional English language centres in Cambodia, Lao and Vietnam. For those of you who are interested, in the coming month we will also have a Joint Commission meeting between India and Vietnam here in Delhi.

I just wanted to give you these details so that you understand the degree of interaction we have with the ASEAN. We have this Ministerial meeting, then we have a bilateral meeting of the Foreign Minister in Singapore, and then we will have the Vietnamese Foreign Minister shortly here in India. So, within the space of one month, there will be several ASEAN-related interactions.

For those of you who would like to know, our trade with ASEAN has been growing quite rapidly. It grew last year, I understand, by over 37 per cent and has reached 79 billion dollars. We are on track to touch the 100 billion dollar mark by 2015. That is all I have as far as ASEAN is concerned.

As regards the East Asia Summit Ministerial Meeting, they have consultative mechanisms at various levels. These include the Foreign

Ministers, the Energy and Environment Ministers, the Finance Ministers, Education, Trade and Economic issues. As far as we are concerned, The Asia-Pacific is very much part of our Look East Policy. And the East Asia Summit plays a significant role as a forum for building an open, transparent, and inclusive architecture for regional cooperation. We are committed to the cause of economic integration in the Asia-Pacific and are actively taking part in the RCEP negotiations between ASEAN States and their FTA partners.

During this East Asia Summit, Brunei as the Chair has proposed two new initiatives. These relate to food security and setting up a Track-2 study group. We would also be informing the East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers Meeting participants about progress made at the Nalanda University because several of them have been forthcoming in their willingness to contribute to the Nalanda University.

That brings me to the last part of this Brunei visit and that relates to the ASEAN Regional Forum. ASEAN Regional Forum is the focus for CBMs and preventive diplomacy as well as peace building. It inculcates habits of cooperation in areas such as counterterrorism, organized crime, maritime security, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. We have participated in specific exercises under this rubric. And the ARF has agreed work plans on maritime security, counterterrorism. This provides a forum for countries to express themselves on international security-related issues such as the DPRK, South China Sea and Afghanistan. Like in the past, the External Affairs Minister will participate and make a statement during the plenary to present our position on some of the issues on the agenda. I think that broadly covers the Brunei part of it.

As regards the Singapore part of it, Singapore is our most active partner in terms of the ASEAN economically. Our trade with Singapore is the highest among ASEAN members. Singapore's investment to India during the last decade is estimated by various sources to be about 10 per cent of the FDI flows in India.

In 2014-15 we will celebrate 50 years of India-Singapore diplomatic relations, and the External Affairs Minister will use the opportunity to see how we can chalk out various ideas that we have to implement this in a befitting manner.

He will also deliver a lecture at the Institute of South Asian Studies on – “India and South East Asia : Today and Tomorrow”. Mr. Khurshid will also be interacting with members of the Indian community as well as the business communities in Singapore.

If I have not mentioned before, apart from the Foreign Minister, Mr Khurshidis expected call on the Prime Minister of Singapore, the Emeritus Senior Minister, and the Deputy Prime Minister, Coordinating Minister for National Security.

I think I will stop there and take any questions that you may have on this.

Q: When is he leaving?

Official Spokesperson: He is leaving in the afternoon on 30th and he will be reaching there that evening.

Q: When will he be back?

Official Spokesperson: He will be back on the 4th night.

Q: What is this work plan on maritime security?

Official Spokesperson: This is a work in progress. It is an attempt to see if we can cooperate on anti-piracy measures largely, coordinate and cooperate on areas where we can have our navies work together in a coordinated manner.

Q: I was wondering whether any bilateral meetings are lined up on the sidelines of the ARF meeting, especially with China or Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: There are several meetings that are lined up and there are several more in the pipeline. At this stage I can confirm Indonesia, likely Australia, China and Bangladesh. That is what I have right away. But there are several in the pipeline and, as you know, during these conferences there could be several unscheduled meetings too.

Q: Could you elaborate on Brunei's proposals on food security and Track-2 study group?

Official Spokesperson: This is a proposal that they have indicated that they will unveil. It will finally be approved only at the summit because, as you know, the East Asia Summit is a leaders-driven body. What they

have indicated to us at this stage is that these are the two proposals that they will unveil to the Foreign Ministers and they will outline the contours of these two proposals at the Foreign Ministers meeting and this will be on the agenda. Based on that, it will then be discussed and will be considered at the summit because the final outcome will be only at the summit. So, these are only sort of tentative indications which we thought we will share with you.

Q: As EAM would be meeting his Bangladesh counterpart, would extradition of Anup Chetia figure anywhere because he has withdrawn his application and the Indian Home Minister has indicated that he might be handed over in the next month?

Official Spokesperson: You know, we never tell you the outcomes in advance. There are others who do that and there are many of you who speculate about such outcomes. But our view has always been that we will only share the outcomes at the completion of those meetings. If any specific outcome or issue is raised, I certainly will be able to share with you once that is done. So, let me keep you in a little bit of suspense, unlike several of you who are blowing trial balloons in the air.

Question: Brunei is a tiny country but they have lots of oil. The Ruler of Brunei was once upon a time the richest man in the world. Do we buy oil from them, and does Brunei invest in India?

Official Spokesperson: I forgot, there will also be a bilateral meeting with the host Foreign Minister of Brunei.

Yes, we are buying oil from them. I think it is in the vicinity of something like two billion dollars, but I do not have the details about the investment. But my understanding is that we always welcome investment from anybody who has confidence to invest in India. And if the Ruler of Brunei would like to invest, we will certainly welcome that because we have previously made efforts in that regard. I do not have the factual details, so I do not want to guess on that.

Q: Recently the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs said that there is no problem related to Nitaqat in Kuwait. What is the real situation in Kuwait?

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and summarise for you the issues in Kuwait. First you have to understand that the Indian community in

Kuwait totals approximately 700,000. This is actually an increase of more than 25,000 since the beginning of the year. So, let us be clear that there is a continuing increase of Indian nationals in Kuwait.

Secondly, in Kuwait there have been recent cases where they have tried and targeted people who do not have either a visa to work because they have come on another visa and are working illegally, or people who have overstayed and are working, and people who have come on for example domestic visa but are working in an institution. These are clearly irregular in the perception of the Kuwaiti authorities and, therefore, they are undertaking checks etc. And there have been cases also of deportation.

Let me try and explain to you the magnitude of this. During this year, there has been a total number of about a thousand Emergency Certificates issued. These people who have left by Emergency Certificates are 1,000 in number but there are others also. What we see is that in the first six months a total of about 3,600 Indians have through various means been deported back to India. These are inclusive of the 1,000 who took the ECs. So, 1,000 with Emergency Certificates and another 2,600 who had their passports and were deported back to India.

Now you may well think that the number is very large. Actually, it is smaller than the number last year for the same period. So, the issue of movement of Indian nationals to and from the Gulf countries, and Kuwait in particular because you have raised this issue, is a normal phenomenon. I have told you, from the beginning of the year till now there has been an inflow of Indian nationals of about 25,000 extra compared to what they were at the beginning of the year, and the numbers of who have returned or deported is approximately 3,600.

There have been some instances where people have said that they were harassed or suddenly taken by surprise etc. Our Mission has been working on this matter rather proactively. We set up a 24/7 help desk and also an email identity where anybody can write if they have such concerns. By our account, approximately 600 telephone calls have been received so far on this matter. There are also approximately 100 emails that have been received. None of them relate to any specific case of harassment. These relate to general concerns, fears, apprehensions, worries; and they are being responded to.

What we have told is that every instance of harassment, if it is communicated to the Indian Embassy, we will certainly take up actively and pursue it to its logical conclusion. But at this stage, since we set up this mechanism about fifteen or twenty days ago, despite all these numbers that I have given to you we have not had one specific case. The Embassy and Ambassador are also in touch with the local organizations there, that is the Indian organizations. These are based sometimes on regional basis or sometimes on other professional basis.

Finally, they are in touch with large employers, those employing more than 5,000 etc. They have had meetings with them to ascertain from them whether any of their employees in their personal capacities have faced problems or not. This is what we are doing proactively with the Indian community.

On the other hand we have taken this up with the Kuwaiti authorities both in New Delhi and in Kuwait. We are suggesting that should they want to implement a policy whereby they want to crackdown on people who are irregular, it is best to provide space and time for them to leave of their own volition. So, what we have requested is that some sort of option be given under which people are given a certain amount of time whereby they can leave. Alternatively they can regularize their stay in Kuwait in accordance with Kuwaiti requirements.

After all it is their country and they do have the right to enforce the law as they deem fit. Our request is only that it should be done in a manner where everybody knows that this is now the norm and they are provided time and space to adjust to this. That is where we are in terms of issues relating to the Indian community and Kuwait.

I think I may have answered your question. But if you have any other specifics, I am willing to answer that.

Q: I believe there is an understanding between India and Pakistan that allows two journalists from India to be posted in Pakistan and vice versa. What is the visa status of these two journalists who are posted in Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: Journalists represent their individual organizations. As far as India is concerned, there are no requests either received or pending from Pakistani organizations for stationing journalists

in India. As far as journalists from India in Pakistan are concerned, we have seen reports of issues in this context and I think it is best for the Pakistani authorities to answer to that. We are aware of one organization which did raise this issue that they have been seeking a replacement for one of their journalists and they had sought our assistance in that matter. We have taken this up previously with the Pakistani authorities.

Q:...(Inaudible)... Could you tell us the outcome of the discussion with the Kuwaiti authorities on the suggestions we made?

Official Spokesperson: We have made these suggestions. We understand that these are being worked through their system. It is for them to accept or not to accept. We made this in good faith. We made this based on our understanding of how the situation is and our experience. We will leave it now for the Kuwaiti authorities to make the final decision on that. We have made these proposals and we hope an option or a solution is worked out which is in the best interest of all Indians and all expatriates.

By the way I perhaps did not put the caveat previously but I would like to put it now that this is not an issue related to India and Kuwait, this is an issue related to expatriates in Kuwait. Therefore, this is not a bilateral issue in that sense of the term. The term Nitaqat is specifically confined to Saudi Arabia and this has not been an issue which has come up in Kuwait, and I can reconfirm what you have heard from the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs.

Q: NSA is there in Beijing talking to his counterpart. Can you give us an update on what are the issues which he is going to talk about and any parameters can we take at this stage that we are talking about?

Official Spokesperson: It would be highly unusual to comment while the visit is under way. But let me assure you that tomorrow when the visit is over we will try and put out in the public domain what we perceive as the outcome. It is not our practice to put in the public domain any details while a visit is on whether it is India or it is overseas. So, please bear with us. All I am saying is reiterating what we have always followed as a practice. This is not unusual. We never do it even when the visit is under way here in India until the visit is complete or the discussions are over. In this case, it is not that.

Q: US Special Representative on Pakistan and Afghanistan Ambassador Dobbins was here yesterday and he had meetings with Foreign Secretary and Indian Special Envoy. Can you give a sense of the meeting and what specific concerns India raised and how he responded to them?

Official Spokesperson: You have come back to an approach which I have always desisted from and that is 'can you tell us what happened in the discussions'. Always my view has been that I am not a fly on the wall. I have also said this before that if I was, I would not be sitting here, I would have been swatted long ago by people who ensure the security of such discussions.

That said, India and the US have a relationship whereby we are in close touch on a wide variety of issues including on Afghanistan. We have had bilateral consultations on Afghanistan, and Ambassador Dobbins visit yesterday was in that context. This is not the first we have had these consultations and these are of an ongoing nature.

Now if I can try and say the broad rubrics that they discussed, yes, he did explain to us the state of play on the reconciliation process. That was number one. And he explained what was the nitty-gritty on this issue. We indicated to him our views on how we perceive this. That is one area. The second area we discussed was, our own cooperation in this along with Afghanistan. As you know, we have a trilateral meeting and we are very keen that the next trilateral should be held.

The first trilateral was held in New York during the UN General Assembly. The last one was held here in Delhi. We are very keen that a third trilateral is held at an early date. We have requested the US to indicate to us dates so that we can take this trilateral format of discussions further because it has been very useful and we find it a good platform to use to pursue our developmental activities there in coordination with others. That is about what I can say, unless you have any specifics on it.

Q: The question is on UK visa bond issue. Has India taken up the matter with London? Any assurances if India will be kept out of the pilot scheme?

Official Spokesperson: Yes, following media reports on this matter we did take it up both at a political level - because our Minister of Commerce and Industry Mr. Anand Sharma was there in the UK – and also at the diplomatic level. In both these conversations the response we seem to

be gettingis, and if I can try and summarise for you without getting into the details, is that this is a work in progress. They will discuss with us these issues.

We had indicated, if you would recollect, that should there be matters of such a nature, we would like to discuss these at the India-UK Consular Forum meeting. My understanding is that it will be held in the latter half of July. They have agreed that this matter could be a basis for discussion there. At this stage it is a work in progress. So, I think they have also made this publically known that they are still mulling it over and I think it is fair that we wait till we hear from them on what is their view.

Of course they are well aware of the concerns raised in India and these were communicated both by many of you in the media as also by our Minister as also by our Mission there. So, they are well aware of the situation. Let us wait and see how and in what format they talk to us about any plans that they may have for the future on visa-related issues. We will take it up then.

Q:...(Inaudible)...killed in Lahore or died in Lahore. Any details on the autopsy report? I suppose we are still awaiting the autopsy report of the two other prisoners who died in Pakistan.

Official Spokesperson: Let us take this prisoner. The name of this prisoner, Mr. Zakir Ali, figures in the list that Pakistan provided to us at the beginning of the year. Consequently, we sought consular access. Both at the time of the visit of the Judicial Commission which visited Pakistan, if you remember towards the end of April, and subsequently after that, on both these occasions, we were not able to get information about him from the prisoner himself because he was not in a mental state where he could articulate details about himself.

Therefore, while he figures on that list provided by Pakistan to us, we were not able to identify his nationality on two occasions when the Indian Judicial Commission met them and when our Consular officers met them later on - I think the Consular officers met him on the 8th of June. Since we did not have the details available about where he was from, where in India are his contact points, we are trying to ascertain them now because he was not able to provide these details. Should we be able to find some information on this, we will take it forward.

As regards earlier cases we did receive some partial autopsy reports previously and we have communicated these appropriately.

Thank you very much



**037. External Affairs Minister's interview to the *Statesman*.
New Delhi, June 29, 2013.**

Foreign policy does not boil down to a single issue

(In an interview with SIMRAN SODHI, External Affairs Minister Mr Salman Khurshid spoke about the various foreign policy issues facing the country and his views on how India plans to deal with them.)

In context of the recent visit of US Secretary of State Mr John Kerry, do you feel that India's concerns on Afghanistan have been addressed? With talks between the US and Taliban slated to happen soon, do you feel India's role might get squeezed out in the process, with Pakistan getting a bigger role?

Secretary Kerry was very appreciative of India's role in Afghanistan, especially in the area of development. At the Press conference he addressed, he said clearly that the attempt to talk to the Taliban was essentially a conversation they want with the willing Taliban. Also, that this would be an Afghan-led process. Now, all this sounds like music to us and is just the approach we would like to have. But, at the same time, we have cause for concern and we have conveyed to him that there are red lines that the Taliban needs to adhere to. The good thing is that Secretary Kerry said the talks with the Taliban is an experiment ~ it could work or not work. Even President Karzai wants to talk with the Taliban; this is something we have checked with him. I think there are still a lot of different ways of looking at what is happening and we would want to keep a watch. We are aware that some elements in Pakistan may want to exclude India from Afghanistan, which is, fortunately, not acceptable to others.

Do you think investing in Karzai was a good idea?

President Karzai, if nothing else, is a bridge to the future of Afghanistan. You can walk on a bridge and say it could have been better. You can walk on a bridge and say it is not wide enough or solid enough. You can say all kinds of things, but the important thing is that it is a bridge that took Afghanistan from its state of war to where it stands today. I think it's not fair not to give him credit for what he has achieved.

Is there a chance President Karzai might stay on even after the elections in Afghanistan?

The Constitution doesn't allow it. He has always said that he doesn't want to. Periodically, there is talk that he should stay on because there is no alternative. But I have personally spoken to him, and he has always said that there is a constitutional mandate that comes to an end. But the picture ahead is still far from clear.

Would you agree with the view that the Indo-US relationship has slumped in recent years and there are no new areas of co-operation between the two countries?

I think the highs that people perceived came after long periods of lows and so the highs were perceived to be higher than they were. Similarly, when you have achieved a high point, you can't just keep going higher and higher. You have to slow down and consolidate. There is a lot of follow up job that needs to be done. There are a lot of things under the radar that have moved forward. But having said that, I know that there are a lot of critical things, from both sides, that need to be addressed. If we don't address them, then a lot of things we have achieved in other fields would be undermined. Both sides have issues about trade access. There are issues about H1B visas; they have issues about the time NPCIL is taking to sign the contract; there are still talks taking place about the nuclear liability issue.

These are very, very complicated issues, given the nature of politics in their and our country. But we are on a solid ground and it will be good if we can resolve some of these issues before September, when Prime Minister Mr Manmohan Singh visits the US.

Today, India has a relationship with most major countries in the world. India also has strategic partnerships with several countries. Which would you say has been the single most challenging bilateral relationship?

By saying that this is challenging, you might give the impression that this is a problem. It's the effort that goes into servicing a relationship that can make the relationship challenging. And the size of the relationship, seen in context of the effort required, can make it challenging. I think in that sense, both in terms of content, in terms of size, expectation and visibility and the close scrutiny of the media, the relationship with the US is the most challenging. Having said that, I would say that if the challenges are great, the rewards are equally great.

Could you list the three most important bilateral relationships?

The question is not fair. I will tell you the areas that, for us, invite special attention. The P5 (referring to the five permanent members of the UN Security Council) inevitably, also because we want to be on the Security Council and they all seem to acknowledge that one day we will be on the Security Council.

The other important focus is the region that is responsible for our energy security - west Asia, central Asia and Iran. We have a huge opportunity in the South-east Asia region. Europe, which is our largest trading partner, and Africa, where we have made the best of relationships, are also crucial. Each one is important in its own way, and requires attention. I also took special steps to revive links with Latin America.

The race for India's next foreign secretary has thrown up a debate over seniority versus merit. Your take on it.

There's no debate in our mind; it's all in the papers. I don't think you should see seniority in isolation, you should also not see merit in isolation...seniority and merit go together. You don't spend 30 years in the Indian Foreign Service and by some quirk of fate get to the top. And when you are on top, you have to be somebody who served in the P5 countries, somebody who served in the neighbourhood, SAARC countries, or somebody who has been at critical moments in the driving seat of policy.

Your visit to Iraq came 23 years after the last visit by an Indian minister. What would say is the reason for this long hiatus?

Iraqis think we are afraid of the violence there. I don't see any reason why we should be afraid. There is a lot of security paraphernalia in Baghdad and I went only to Baghdad. I felt a tremendous amount of affinity when I was in Iraq, a tremendous sense of being welcome, both for me personally and for the country. I also think it's remarkable, the kind of willingness they have to work closely with us.

Would you say that we are moving towards Iraq because we are trying to reduce our oil dependence on Iran?

We are not reducing our dependence on Iran. Iran is our friend and we can't say that you are a friend in trouble and we don't want to touch you. But there is a practical difficulty ~ if there is nobody to carry the crude oil from Iran to India, no tankers are available and banks are not available, how do you get oil? But at the same time Iran knows we have taken a position in the IAEA and they know why we have taken that position.

Has it been easy balancing relations with Iran on one hand and the US on the other?

We have, haven't we? No one has complained to us. We are developing the Chabahar port and we are not hiding it from anyone. But at the same time, we do accept the United Nations Security Council sanctions. I think it is a world of contradictions and we have to live with these contradictions and harmonise them.

In the last few weeks, the Rajapakse government has taken steps towards diluting the 13th amendment. In one of the possibly strongest statements issued by India, we expressed dismay at the steps. Do you think the Rajapakse government will back down and not dilute the 13th amendment before elections are held to the Northern Provincial Council?

Elections will be held and that's a good thing. What kind of dilution takes place is something we need to study. We don't want any kind of dilution. There is a very strong feeling in our country that there should be no dilution at all. But political life is not tranquil and there can be reasons to depart from something you have done in the past. But because it's a

promise made to the world and to us, it's only fair that an attempt should be made to explain to us why they are departing from that position. And if they are departing from that position, there may be many other areas in which you can compensate. And there are a lot of areas, the LLRC (Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission) for instance. So if you are diluting, though we are totally against it, you could strategically compensate it in some way.

How do you view the new government in Pakistan and its desire to pursue peace? Do you trust them?

I don't think it's a good way to start a relationship by saying 'I don't trust you'. We have to be careful in dealing with the Pakistan government, not because you have an inherent mistrust of them, but because we know they work under compulsions. Pakistan cannot change overnight. What has happened in Pakistan will not go away in one election. But nevertheless, Nawaz Sharif had very bravely said the right things during the election campaign and after taking the oath of office. We should give him a chance.



038. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs announcing the appointment of Ambassador Smt. Sujatha Singh as the next Foreign Secretary.

New Delhi, July 2, 2013.

Smt. Sujatha Singh, an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officer of the 1976 batch, will be the next Foreign Secretary of India, with a term of two years. She will assume charge on 1st August 2013.

Smt. Singh is presently India's Ambassador to Germany.



039. Press Release of the Ministry of Home Affairs on the steps to combat terrorism.

New Delhi, July 2, 2013.

Addressing the members of Consultative Committee attached to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) here today, Union Home Minister Shri Sushilkumar Shinde informed that the Government have taken a series of steps to combat terrorism in the country. He mentioned that the legal regime and mechanism for counter terrorism like amendments of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 in 2008 and 2012, sharing of intelligence through close and effective co-ordination amongst Central and State level agencies and creation of four regional hubs (Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkatta) of National Security Guards (NSG) to cover the whole country has strengthened the efforts to combat terrorism.

Shri Shinde informed the members that the establishment of National Investigation Agency (NIA) for dealing with cases of terrorism exclusively, border security measures to guard land border through fencing along with flood lighting and border roads on the Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Bangladesh Border has also improved the security situation.

Shri Shinde further informed that the modernization of State Police Forces, steps to deal with the issue of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) and NATGRID, envisaged to link further data bases for creating actionable intelligence is also under establishment as steps being taken to combat terrorism. He mentioned that the recent attack on the Army convoy by militants, the brutal attack by CPI (Maoists) in Chattisgarh's Bastar District and attacks on a train at Jamui in Bihar were attacks on our democratic values and freedom to participate in political activities. The Home Minister said that the Govt. is committed to make all out efforts to address the genuine grievances of deprived sections of society as the development can not happen in an environment of terror. He said that the acts of violence against innocents will be dealt firmly.

Further explaining the situation of internal security, the Home Minister mentioned that there is an improvement in the security situation in the country during the last year. The Minister stated that the terrorist threat and challenges to internal security can be broadly categorized coming from four categories namely J&K, North Eastern States, Left Wing

Extremism (LWE) and terrorism in the Hinterland of the country. The Minister also informed the members about the employment generation scheme like “UDAAN” and “HIMAYAT” in the State of J&K. He said that the Central Govt. is continuously assisting the North Eastern States by deploying Central Armed Police Forces to assist the State Police in their counter -insurgency operations against the militant outfits and augmenting and upgrading their police force by way of sanction of Indian Reserved Battalion.

The LWE is one of our gravest challenges and the strategy to be adopted to combat violence in these areas has to be a combination of security measures coupled with development. As far as terrorism in the Hinterland is concerned, the country witnessed two major bomb blasts in 2013, first in Hyderabad and second in Bangaluru.

Earlier, Union Home Secretary Shri Anil Goswami introduced the agenda and stated that there has been continuous efforts to bring about better initiatives to tackle terrorism by comprehensive rules of engagement, inclusive of legal framework, additional recruitments, intelligence network and coordination with Civil Administration. Border management, mobility and communication system for improving the security situation and combating terrorism are other measures in this regard, he added.

The members deliberated on all aspects of combating terrorism in the country and discussed the recent incidents of security situation in the State of J&K, North Eastern States, Left Wing Extremism, co-ordination amongst security agencies, rehabilitation policy and security arrangements along the borders. The Committee also appreciated the services of the forces including para military forces in relief and rescue work during the recent Utrakhand floods.

The following members of Consultative Committee were present at the meeting. Shri Ismail Hussain, Shri Kamal Kishor, Shri Lalu Prasad, Dr.Rattan Singh Ajnala, Dr.Thokchom Meinya, Shri Yogi Aditya Nath from Lok Sabha and Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita, Shri H.K.Dua, Shri Mohd.Ali Khan, Shri Om Prakash Mathur, Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav and Shri Vinay Katiyar from Rajya Sabha.



040. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson.**New Delhi, July 3, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon everyone and thank you very much for coming here for this interaction. I hate to disappoint you all, but I will today by saying that I have nothing to say. However, if any of you have anything to ask me on anything, I will be willing to respond.

Q: Sir, has the External Affairs Minister said that India is alright with talks with Taliban, that is the US talking to Taliban, as far as the Afghan reconciliation is concerned? And are there no concerns for India because a part of the Taliban team would also include Haqqani Network?

Official Spokesperson: What I would suggest is that the statement by the External Affairs Minister is put on the website of the Ministry of External Affairs and this can be seen.

As regards our approach to the reconciliation process in Afghanistan, let me try and encapsulate it for your benefit. We do understand the need for reconciliation in Afghanistan, and we have said it repeatedly that we would welcome any efforts towards reconciliation and this reconciliation should include all Afghan parties, it should be Afghan led and Afghan controlled.

Also we have said that as far as we are concerned this reconciliation process should involve following what are known as the red lines which have been agreed to between Afghanistan and the international community. These redlines, if you would like me to reiterate, are: the process should be transparent, Afghan led, inclusive; it should include those who are ready to abjure violence; and we would be willing to accept that it includes all Afghan parties including those who are currently out of the mainstream but wish to abjure violence and join the mainstream, and this includes the Taliban.

Q: Some Indians were killed in Afghanistan in Kabul. Is there anything on that as yet?

Official Spokesperson: I do regret to inform you that yesterday morning in the course of an attack on a housing compound in Kabul which housed

foreigners, three Indian nationals were killed. The three were: (1) Mr. Gilaji Sandeep who was working as a waiter, he is from Andhra Pradesh, (2) Mr. Chakraborty Kaushik, who was a laundry manager, he is from West Bengal, and (3) Mr. Gurudi Naveen Kumar, who was the front office manager also from Andhra Pradesh. These were among the more than 50 Indian nationals who were working there through a contractor. They were providing various services at the housing compound. Our Embassy is in touch with their employer to try and assist them in completing the legal formalities and the medical formalities before they repatriate the dead bodies back to their hometowns. The rest of the Indian nationals are safe but obviously shocked by the attack.

Q: I just wanted to ask you on the Snowden story. On the day that the story initially broke you gave a very strong statement saying that if there is any violation of Indian privacy laws, it would be unacceptable. But we heard the Foreign Minister yesterday say that this is not snooping, that this is scrutiny. He seemed to be taking a different stand from the initial MEA reaction. So, what is the Government of India's position on this? Has it been diluted? It seems that the Foreign Minister is justifying the American snooping.

Official Spokesperson: All those adjectives you use in terms of describing the External Affairs Minister are yours. I do not think he used any of those words in terms of justification, dilution, etc. Our view remains what we have said previously that we were concerned at these reports, also that this would be taken up.

The External Affairs Minister was only elaborating about his discussion with the US Secretary of State during their last meeting. Also we had indicated to you that these are technical issues and need to be discussed in a technical forum, and we had indicated to you that the Cyber Security Dialogue was the forum for discussion of these. That remains our position. I hope I have been able to clarify that.

Q: Just a follow up to that question. There are reports that Indian Embassy in Washington was also under NSA surveillance. Have you verified the authenticity of the reports and any response to that?

Official Spokesperson: First let me put a caveat. While this is a follow up to Nidhi's question, this is a separate issue. The issue that Nidhi was

talking of was in terms of the metatext and assessment of metatext by US agencies, which is a different issue, and that was what was the response that we gave previously, and that was also the issue that the External Affairs Minister was responding to in terms of his discussions with Secretary Kerry.

Now as regards the media reports that you are mentioning about, this is a separate issue about our Embassy. Yes, we have seen and studied the media reports of our Embassy in Washington being amongst a list of diplomatic missions which were intrusively monitored by US agencies. Obviously, we are concerned at such disconcerting reports and we will certainly raise with US authorities these serious allegations.

Q: Antony is visiting China. This is important considering that he will be the first Defence Minister in seven years to visit China. What is his diplomatic brief and what are the MEA inputs?

Official Spokesperson: I think we have been through this before. (a) It is not the norm or the approach that we follow in trying to tell you what are the intra-governmental inputs that are provided. (b) I do appreciate your interest in matters relating to the defence, but there is a full-fledged Division there that can respond to the specifics that you would like to be responded to. I certainly am not responsible for the functioning of that Department.

Q: Can you tell us something about Basil Rajapaksa's upcoming visit tomorrow? What is he going to do and who is he going to meet? And are you going to be able to say something about Mr. Menon's visit to Colombo?

Official Spokesperson: You are aware that India and Sri Lanka have regular high-level consultations, and the visit of Mr. Basil Rajapaksa comes in that context. He is likely to have meetings here in Delhi. This is a work in progress, but he certainly will meet the External Affairs Minister among others.

As regards what he will discuss, you know my answer to that but you still have ventured to probe me on that matter and I will desist from falling for that bait. It is our usual practice that we respond at the outcome of the discussions rather than prejudge what they will discuss.

As regards any other visit, if they deal with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs I will respond. But you have referred to a visit other than by the Ministry of External Affairs and my answer to that remains what I told Rajiv, which is that my limited ambit of discussion is either matters relating to the Ministry of External Affairs, or the visits of the Prime Minister of India, or the Vice-President and President. These are the areas information about which two in the External Publicity Division are responsible for disseminating. So, I would beg your pardon that I will not be able to respond to those specifics that you are asking about other visits.

Q: Will Mr. Rajapaksa call on the Prime Minister?

Official Spokesperson: As I said, I can confirm the meeting with the External Affairs Minister. The rest of his programme is still evolving. Should we have such a meeting, we will certainly let you know. At this stage I can confirm to you the meeting with the External Affairs Minister.

Q: Sir, it has been reported that Russia offered assistance in disaster management in Uttarakhand rescue and relief but this was declined by India. Your comments please.

Official Spokesperson: As you know, as a general policy in case of rescue and relief operations we have followed the practice that we have adequate ability to respond to emergency requirements. And for a variety of reasons we have not also in the past too, unless there are specific circumstances, been able to accept offers of assistance for rescue and relief.

However, as you know, such events are cataclysmic in nature and they have a longer term impact. So, beyond the rescue and relief phase there are other phases. These are rehabilitation, reconstruction, and so on. If reconstruction and other measures are provided for those elements, we will examine how they fit into the broader plan in terms of rehabilitation and reconstruction in the region and take a call at that stage rather than say that this was for all times, etc. I hope I have clarified our position on that.

Q: This is regarding the Italian Marines. Today is the 90 days of the beginning of the investigation of NIA. According to some speculation there are some obstacles regarding the Italian witness. I would like to

know if there are any updates, and if the 90 days are mandatory or not for the investigation?

Official Spokesperson: Maria, frankly I must confess that for once I am not able to respond to your questions because again this is a complex matter which deals with several parts of our executive as well as judiciary. Now whether certain dates are mandatory or not is for the judiciary to take a call on.

As to whether there are some shortcomings or inability of any witnesses to come, I suggest you need to contact those who are in a position to make those witnesses come, and that in this case is the Italian Government. After all those witnesses etc., may also be employees of that Government and it is easier for them to facilitate that. We can only make those requests.

Let me reiterate, it is always our desire to try and quickly resolve this case which is unique in nature. It *issui generis*. We do not want this to impinge on other aspects of our relationship. We stand ready to work with Italy to try and facilitate in a manner which is possible under our judicial system so that an outcome which is judicially determined is arrived at the earliest.

Q: Sir, this meeting between Sartaj Aziz and Salman Khurshid in Brunei, was it decided that India would resume the format of Composite Dialogue process with Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: I do not know where you heard this. What is available as an outcome of that dialogue is available in terms of the statements made by both the External Affairs Minister and by Mr. Sartaj Aziz there. A video is available, you could have a look.

As far as we are concerned, we are awaiting the dates for different aspects of the resumed dialogue, and that is the dialogue that we have been pursuing so far. I do not know of anything else that you are saying about because what is on the table is the continuation of the resumed dialogue because, as you perhaps are aware, the resumed dialogue started immediately in September 2012. That was the third round of the resumed dialogue. It began with the meetings of the Commerce Secretaries.

Subsequent to that there were meetings which were scheduled relating to the Tulbul Navigation Project and the Wullar Barrage. That did not take place. That was perhaps to be in early February and they could not be at that time be pursued because we had indicated that our lead negotiator in that was unable to continue because he was retiring end of the month in January. Therefore, we had requested for fresh dates. Those were the only two elements of the resumed dialogue that were agreed on. There remain other elements of the resumed dialogue where we now have to work on dates, and that is the issue that is being discussed and focused on.

Q: A few countries have issued travel advisories for Egypt. Are we concerned about our citizens in the country and have we had any discussions with the Government over the Constitutional crisis?

Official Spokesperson: A couple of things. It is not our practice to revert to advisories unless we deem the situation is so difficult that it makes it absolutely necessary for us to indicate that there is no need for Indians to travel, and in such cases we have. In this case we have not. However, our Ambassador there is in touch with the Indian community. As you are perhaps aware, there is an Indian community but not a very large one. The Mission has indicated to them the areas where these protests are taking place so that for the present they avoid those areas.

As regards the situation itself, this is a matter for the Egyptians to decide internally, and so we have not taken it up. If the question you asking us is whether this has been taken up bilaterally, the answer is no because it is not our practice and policy to intervene in matters which are essentially in the domain of internal jurisdiction of a country.

Thank you very much



041. Speech by National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon at Fourth International Meeting of High Level Officials Responsible for Security.

Vladivostok, July 4, 2013.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I wish to begin by thanking you, Mr. Patrushev, and the Russian government for your initiative in arranging this important international meeting, which has now established itself in the calendar as a meeting that we all look forward to, for your hospitality, and for the importance and topicality of the discussions. I will say a few words on cyber security.

Cyberspace is today the fifth domain of human activity, in addition to land, sea, air and outer space. During the last two decades, the Internet has grown exponentially in its reach and scope. Equally, our dependence upon cyberspace for social, economic, governance, and security functions has also grown exponentially. Unfettered access to information through a global inter-connected Internet empowers individuals and governments, and it poses new challenges to the privacy of individuals and to the capability of Governments and administrators of cyberspace tasked to prevent its misuse.

Our task is complicated by the unique characteristics of cyberspace. These include, as we are reminded every day: its borderless nature, both geographically and functionally; anonymity and the difficulty of attribution; the fact that for the present the advantage is with offense rather than defence; and, the relatively anarchic nature of this domain.

Let us consider each of these briefly.

Borderlessness

The anonymity and inter-connectivity of cyberspace are exploited by criminals, terrorists and even States to carry out identity theft and financial fraud, conduct espionage, disrupt critical infrastructures, facilitate terrorist activities, steal corporate information, and plant malicious software (malware) and Trojans which can be exploited in different ways.

Anonymity

Because of the anonymity and the difficulty in attribution, securing cyberspace against misuse by either State or non-State actors is a multi-dimensional challenge that requires concerted efforts on the part of all stakeholders. Cyber security involves securing our national Information Communication Networks and Critical Information Infrastructure, combating cyber crime and protection from cyber attacks. It involves threat monitoring, assessment, mitigation, risk management, forensics, hardening of systems and capacity building in terms of both technical as well as human resources. All these require technical advances to make it possible for us to be able to redefine anonymity so as to separate legitimate from other uses of cyberspace.

Offense and Defence

We have seen that there is an inextricable link between cyber crime, trans-national organized crime and cyber terrorism. Active actors range from ordinary individuals to cyber criminals, extremists, terrorists, social, and political groups. We have also seen that launching destructive cyber attacks costs little, but defending against such attacks is becoming increasingly expensive and complex. The increasing use of “cloud computing” models, and third party network based servers which form the “cloud”, has introduced new policy challenges such as defining jurisdictional boundaries for law enforcement, protecting privacy and civil liberties according to national laws, and liability in the event of a breach of security.

Anarchy: International and Governance Aspects

Different countries have different approaches to this issue, based on their national experience and perceived interests. We are each learning as we go. Fortunately we now see the beginnings of a common realization of the need to ensure security of cyberspace and to institutionalize safeguards for individuals and society against its misuse.

Given the inter-dependencies that are a characteristic of cyber space, the international community needs to make concerted efforts to secure cyberspace, which is a common resource. Many issues relating to cyber security have trans-national components and these challenges cannot

be addressed by individual nations or in isolation. There is a self evident need for cooperation to exchange experiences and to share best practices for protection of information infrastructures.

There is a need to develop a common understanding on norms of State behaviour in cyberspace. India would prefer norms derived from existing international legal frameworks relevant to the use of ICT. As a member of United Nations Group of Experts, India has worked with Russia and with other countries on the Group's Report, which will be submitted to the UN General Assembly.

India supports democratic and representative Internet governance. International institutions that are invested with authority to manage or regulate the Internet need to be broad-based and internationalized if they are to make meaningful decisions on what is today a global commons.

India's Experience

India is one of the major IT destinations in the world. We have the third largest number of Internet users after the USA and China. India has a Gen Y population, between the ages of 15 to 29 years, of approximately 310 million adept at using the Internet and social media networks. There are over 700 million mobile phones and about 670,000 km of optical fibre laid across the country. We add over 7 million new mobile phone connections every month. Such phenomenal growth in access to information and connectivity has added to our vulnerabilities.

The Government of India has recently approved a National Cyber Security Policy and a Framework to address cyber security concerns. This Framework envisages a multi-layered approach to ensure defence in depth and a clear delineation of functional responsibilities amongst stakeholders, while stressing coordination and sharing of real-time information. It also seeks to strengthen our assurance and certification framework to address supply-chain vulnerabilities, hardening networks, and promoting Research and Development in cyber security with an emphasis on capacity-building.

In July 2012 we established a Joint Working Group with representatives of Government departments and the private sector. The Report of this Joint Working Group contains a detailed roadmap for public-private

partnership on cyber security, which includes the setting up of institutional frameworks, capacity building in the area of cyber security, development of cyber security standards and assurance mechanisms and augmentation of testing and certification facilities for IT products. This Joint Working Group is a standing body and has generated considerable enthusiasm in the private sector.

Conclusion

In ensuring cyber security, we have to be careful that the free flow and access to information is not hindered or compromised. There should be no doubt about our commitment to preserving the democratic nature of cyberspace which is one of its most enduring features. India is stoutly committed to freedom of expression, which includes freedom of expression in cyberspace. At the same time, we have to be concerned with securing our cyberspace for trusted e-commerce, security of data and protection of Critical Information Infrastructure. We have to guard against malicious activities of those who may seek to undermine our economies or disrupt social harmony. The imperatives of national security have thus to be balanced with protecting the privacy of individuals.

We in India look forward to working with the international community in finding this balance and in the task of keeping cyberspace secure and safe for all our citizens and societies.



042. Foreign Secretary's speech at the launch of MEA's smart phone Mobile Application 'MEAIndia'.

New Delhi, July 29, 2013.

When I joined the Foreign Service in 1974 conventional wisdom had it that diplomats were not meant to be seen or heard in public. In fact most of us in Government believed in the ideal of the faceless bureaucrats. The only real mass media were print and radio. Some engaged with the print media but quietly and in a detached manner. But overall, we were required to be little visible and encouraged to work in anonymity except through structured engagements. As this function demonstrates all this has now changed.

Communication has become essential to management. The requirements of communications have changed and evolved and so have we in the Ministry of External Affairs. We have adapted and adopted to these new demands of technology and means of communications.

Over the last two years, we have changed our appearance in multiple ways. Take for example, our website. Since last year it now has a new look. It attracts more than three times the visitors than the old version did. We are on a course to get a million visitors in the first year of this new website. This is in fact four times the annual numbers who visited our earlier website in the last year it functioned.

Our Common Digital Identity is falling in place. All Indian Missions are adopting similar templates. So if you look at MEA Website and that of our Missions say in Tokyo (Japan) or Cairo (Egypt) or London (UK) or Caracas (Venezuela), they now have common templates even though they are on different continents. There was some scepticism over the suitability of this scheme when plans were laid down for it in my office just under two years ago. It is still a work in progress. But fifty of our Embassies have adopted this new template and made the transition to our common new digital identity. Come 2014, we hope that websites of our Missions will be instantly recognizable as they will have a common digital identity.

The launch earlier today of the Smart Phone App is one more step of integrating our public platforms. As was explained, all our public services can now be accessed through this one simple means. Whether it be

information on passport status applied anywhere in India or location of centres which attest documents in India, or pilgrims travelling to Saudi Arabia for Haj, this “One stop shop” will provide you all you need to know.

As delivery mechanism for dissemination of information has changed, we too have expanded our presence across a variety of new media platforms. As new media has narrowed the differences between traditional media and social media we too have adjusted. Today, if we take the number of people who follow MEA, our Missions abroad, our senior officials across the various social media platforms, the total will exceed more than a million. A number similar to that of visitors to our web sites.

We have also reached out across the country to different language media. Of necessity since English is the language that India conducts its diplomacy in, focus on English as a means of public communication remains. Of course, we also have a website which provides all of this information in Hindi too. In addition, due to the growing interest of a large number of language media in India in issues relating to foreign policy, we are now reaching out to our countrymen in Malayalam, Bengali, Tamil and Urdu too. I understand that press releases in Assamese and Telugu too are soon to be initiated. I would not be wrong if I acknowledge that the language media in India has been a growth area for coverage of foreign policy issues, reflecting yet another change that we have factored in.

We are also poised to take the audio route and have agreed with Prasar Bharati to tie up for a regular programme on FM Radio of India’s foreign relations.

The idea behind encapsulating all these changes to you today is indicate that we are making every effort in communicating India’s foreign policy and the sense of our timing to the public at large.

I also take this opportunity to thank all those who have been involved in enabling us to move ahead on issues related to the media during the last two years and more specifically in this venture. As the landscape has expanded we have tried to adjust and adapt. The help we have received from all of you has been crucial in this.

Thank you



043. Remarks by Foreign Secretary on the occasion of Presentation of Green Building Certification to Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan.

New Delhi, July 30, 2013.

1. At the outset, I thank Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for their cooperation and support to the Ministry of External Affairs in its endeavour to implement Green Building measures at Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan. This collaborative effort has resulted in Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan obtaining a Gold rating for energy conservation measures. It is a matter of pride for us that Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan is the first Government of India office to receive a Gold certification.
2. The construction of Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan has been an interesting and at times challenging experience for the Ministry of External Affairs. Those who initiated action many years ago rightly desired to construct a state of the art, and energy conscious building with an excellent working environment on a plot of land in a cultural and arts area/ Central Vista. Of course being on this plot meant we were subject to height restrictions and could not build one more floor.
3. The architectural features of JNB include Red and Dholpur stone work (composite walls), strong plinth and cornices, colonnaded verandah and projected balconies, courtyard planning, structural glazing and barrier free environment for differently able and elderly persons. Despite challenges on architectural front, the Ministry took an early decision , at a time when the green building/ environment codes were being finalized by the CPWD, to incorporate green building features, both active and passive features, with a view to facilitate execution of these measures during the construction phase itself.
4. The special features in the building include energy efficiency measures, improved air quality, water efficiency and a working environment that promotes efficiency. We are thankful to the executing agency, CPWD, as well as other agencies, especially VS Kukreja and Associates, Raja Aederi Consultants Pvt. Ltd.

and Environmental Design Associates for their support during the construction of Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan and in implementing green building measures.

5. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the building has been awarded 50 points against the objective set for achieving a gold certification requiring 39 points. This has encouraged the Ministry to aspire for a Platinum rating for the JNB as a functioning building.
6. I take this opportunity to place on record the debt we all owe to my predecessors the previous Foreign Secretaries who actually initiated this project in the time of Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran who contributed immensely towards getting the green design incorporated, my predecessor after that Mr. Shivshankar Menon and finally pushed towards the construction of Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan from its initial stages, my immediate predecessor Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao. I also thank my colleagues for their utmost cooperation during my tenure and the hardships they have undergone in the recent past to make the Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan a fully functional and efficient building. We worked a great deal on it because we were under pressure to vacate the Akbar Bhawan which is now the seat of the South Asia University. I and others in the Ministry were determined not to repeat the experience of 1985 when we were pushed out of South Block by the irresistible force of the PMO and could not find any more place from the immovable object that is MOD and we were packed off to Akbar Bhawan in the matter of weeks. I am glad that by the time we actually moved people into this building, this was a work in progress but a functional working environment. I must place on record my appreciation to all those in the Administration and Establishment in particular who pushed and helped in every step of the way. My association with this project has been an interesting and a fulfilling experience. And I thank all of you.

Thank you



044. First Media Interaction of Foreign Secretary after taking over charge of the office of Foreign Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs.

New Delhi, August 1, 2013.

Q: We could see that India is facing multi-faceted challenges right from Afghanistan to USA, from Sri Lanka to China. So what are your foreign policy priorities going to be?

Foreign Secretary: I think that immediate priorities would be in our immediate neighbourhood, that's where our immediate interests lie. And that is where our most intense interactions are. Beyond that it is important to strengthen relations with our strategic partners all over the world. I think that there is also a good deal to be done here with in the Ministry of External Affairs. To build on the work done by my predecessors in strengthening the Ministry. So my immediate priority would be to optimize the resources that we already have and to work with all the multiple stake holders in India's foreign policy.

Q: If I could ask you certain questions on Pakistan a) Pakistan has proposed dates for talks for resumption of dialogues , by when can we expect a response to that from the Indian side. b)Prime Minister Singh is expected to meet Prime Minister Miyawala Nawaz Sharif along the side-lines of United Nations General Assembly, so how would you see the relations with Pakistan playing up in terms of talks. Also there is video that has been now doing rounds of some of the killers of Capt. Saurabh Kalia whereas we heard Mr. Rehman Malik when he was on India tour saying that he could have died because of bad weather. How does India intend to take up this issue?

Foreign Secretary: First, it is always been India's policy to develop peaceful and cooperative relations with Pakistan. Naturally, this presupposes an environment free of violence and of terror. On the dialogue with Pakistan, this was resumed in 2011. Two rounds have been held since then and we will be picking up the threads. There is a new government in Pakistan now. We will be picking up the threads from where we left off with the old government. On the incident relating to the TV footage of Capt. Saurabh Kalia, you must be aware that we

strongly condemn any treatment of our soldiers that is not in line with the Geneva Conventions. This is precisely why the issue has been repeatedly taken up starting with Mr. Jaswant Singh with his then counterpart Mr. Sartaj Aziz. It was also raised in Geneva and we have continuously been taking up this issue with the Pakistani Government. If there are some new facts that have come to light, we will assess it and then we will decide how to proceed further in taking this up.

Q: This is about Bhutan. There are many observers who felt that India's decision to suspend the fuel subsidy to Bhutan was a major factor in swinging the elections. How do we address their perception and now that the subsidy has been restored and new government is in place, is there a High-level visit which is on the cards?

Foreign Secretary: As you know, India and Bhutan share a unique relationship which has always been characterized by mutual trust and confidence. We are working closely with the new government of Bhutan to continue to consolidate our privileged partnership and I can confirm to you that as of today the unfortunate technical lapse that has led to this kind of comment and debate is now a thing of the past. We attach priority to our relationship with Bhutan and I am glad to inform you that my first bilateral visit will be to Bhutan. You are also aware that our Prime Minister has invited the Bhutanese Prime Minister to visit India and I will be visiting Thimpu and when I am there I will consult with our Bhutanese friends on how we can work towards an early visit of Prime Minister Tobgay to India.



045. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs regarding protection of Interest and Welfare of Overseas Indian Workers.

New Delhi, August 22, 2013.

The Government of India has taken several initiatives to protect the interest and welfare of overseas Indian workers. India has signed Labour agreements with Jordan and Qatar and bilateral Memoranda of understanding (MoU) with the major worker receiving Countries for ensuring protection and welfare of Indian emigrants. MoUs were signed with United Arab of Emigrates, Kuwait, Oman, Malaysia and Bahrain.

The Government has also taken measures for protecting the safety and welfare of women workers of the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category to emigrate to 17 notified countries such as restriction of 30years for women emigrating on ECR passports to ECR countries, minimum referral wage for emigrants being fixed by Mission , security deposit of 2500 dollars to be paid by foreign employer, compulsory pre-attestation of employment documents by the Indian Mission concerned for all women emigrants, pre-paid mobile phone facility for housemaids to be provided by foreign employer and operating shelters for distressed emigrants by Indian Missions .

Moreover A 24x7 toll-free helpline that is Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) has been set up in Delhi to enable emigrants and prospective emigrants to seek information and file complaints against recruiting agents and foreign employers. Migration Resource Centers (MRCs) have been set up at Cochin, Hyderabad and Panchkula in (Haryana). A Nation-wide Awareness-cum-Publicity Campaign through Media has been taken up to educate potential emigrants including benefits or hazards of legal and illegal migration . Indian Community Welfare Fund(ICWF) has been established in all the Indian Missions for on-site welfare of emigrants. Around 28,000 emigrants have benefitted from the Scheme during the last three years and Rs.37 crores has been utilized for the purpose. For redressal of grievances at Dubai at the Indian Workers Resource Centre (IWRC) there is a 24x7 toll free multilingual helpline. Apart form this Computerized emigration clearance system exist in all Protector of Emigration offices.

This information was given by Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Shri Vayalar Ravi in Parliament in a written reply today.



046. Address of Prime Minister at the conferment of the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development on Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

New Delhi, September 12, 2013.

“It is a great privilege to have amidst us Her Excellency President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia on the occasion of the conferment on her of the prestigious Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for the year 2012.

Every recipient of this award has left an indelible imprint on history and made a difference to the lives of people, societies and nations. This year, we honour a person who not only meets those criteria, but also embodies the character, the convictions and the courage of the personality after whom this prestigious award is named. She also holds dear the very same causes that were particularly important and dear to Shrimati Indira Gandhi.

Shrimati Indira Gandhi laboured tirelessly in the causes of peace and a just international order. When asked whether India leaned left or right, her answer was that India stood upright. She campaigned resolutely for a life of dignity, equality, justice and opportunity for the weakest and most vulnerable sections of society. Her rallying cry against poverty and her staunch defence of India’s security and territorial integrity remain indelibly inscribed on our memories. Sustainability and inclusiveness were at the heart of Shrimati Indira Gandhi’s vision of social and economic development. This is reflected in her pioneering emphasis on the protection of the human environment.

For Indira ji, India’s own independence and development were indivisibly linked to freedom and progress throughout the developing world, especially in Africa. Her association with the African continent is reflected

in the abiding friendships she built with its leaders and its people. She crafted a modern vision of a relationship that was founded on an old bond between India and Africa. This bond was forged by trade and culture, nurtured by our common struggle against colonialism and our shared aspirations for development and sustained by the rich legacy of our leaders like Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Shrimati Indira Gandhi and Shri Rajiv Gandhi. All of them believed that Africa's success was important not just for the wonderful people of this rich continent, but also for the world as a whole.

Today, India's relations with Africa are defined by emotions, values and interests. An ocean separates us but a shared destiny unites us. Ours is a natural partnership between people with common concerns and values. It is imperative for our progress and development and for shaping a world that accommodates our aspirations. We feel for Africa's challenges, and we rejoice in the successes we see there.

Therefore, Madam President, your acceptance of the award and your presence here today add a very special lustre to this occasion. The remarkable story of your life, Madam President, is a reminder of the timeless truth that an enterprising human spirit driven by a great moral cause can overcome any adversity and challenge.

Yours, Madam President, is a fascinating journey. Between the professional heights that you scaled in public, private and multilateral institutions and your long periods of political exile, you maintained your spirit of selfless devotion to the cause of your people and your country. This moving and inspiring journey is one that only those with strength, intellect and character of the highest order can undertake.

Madam President, you have made history as the first elected female head of state in Africa. More importantly, you have set your country on the path of peace, stability, democracy and development after two decades of suppression, violence and conflict. You have reached out to your neighbours in recognition of the reality that Liberia's future is linked to peace and stability in its region. Your struggles through two decades of strife reflect the challenges of a continent in transition. Your success shows the hope and promise of your country, your region and your continent. You have therefore richly deserved the accolades and awards that have been bestowed upon you.

Madam President, it is often easy to end a conflict, but hard to win enduring peace. It is sometimes easier to end violence and injustice, but more difficult to heal and to reconcile. Getting political freedom does not always lead to sustained democracy. You and your nation have shown great wisdom in addressing these challenges and we wish you continued success on that global path.

Madam President, today, as India celebrates your life, your vision and your efforts, we also promise to be a reliable and enduring partner and friend in Liberia's peaceful development. We are grateful to you and your people for hosting a small community of Indians and a growing number of Indian investors in Liberia. Our two nations are committed to forge a partnership that will demonstrate that neither asymmetry of size nor the challenge of distance matters, when nations with shared values and mutual respect work together for mutual benefit and the larger good of humanity.

I congratulate an ardent democrat and a champion of peace, who has both transformed Liberia and is a symbol of a resurgent Africa, on receiving the Indira Gandhi Prize. Madam President, you serve as an inspiration not just for women but for all those who seek a better life for their fellow human beings. I wish you continuing success as you work with your people to chart a new course for your great country."



047. Speech of National Security Advisor Shivshanakr Menon at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis on 'Kautilya's Arthashastr'.

New Delhi, October 8, 2013.

Dr. Arvind Gupta, Director IDSA,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you for asking me to speak at this seminar on Developing Indigenous Concepts and Vocabulary: Kautilya's Arthashastra. This is indeed a welcome initiative that the IDSA is carrying forward. I was

impressed by the range of scholarship reflected in the papers that are being presented here and look forward to reading them. We have come a long way in the year since your first seminar. My congratulations to Arvind Gupta and all those who have contributed to this exercise.

Your seminar is a welcome initiative because, in my opinion, the study of Kautilya is one of the significant ways in which we can become more self-conscious about the strategic culture that we have, and in which we can contribute to its evolution. Too much of our earlier scholarship on the Arthashastra attempted to apply the Arthashastra mechanically or formulaically to present policy dilemmas or issues, such as how to deal with Pakistan or our nuclear policy. This may yield some useful insights in a tactical sense. In fact, it is my belief that the results of a Kautilyan analysis would not be very different from our present nuclear policy or policy towards Pakistan. But the larger point is that a mechanical application of “Kautilyan” formulae to our present condition does not contribute to building our capability to think strategically. Your seminar, on the other hand, will do so.

What then should we be studying of the Arthashastra?

Exactly what you are proposing to do — the concepts and, even more significantly, the ways of thinking that the Arthashastra reveals. This is useful because in many ways the world which we face today, (of multiple states, of several major powers, of an uneven but lumpy distribution of power among those major states even while the system has one predominant military power), is similar to the world that Kautilya operated in when he built the Mauryan Empire to greatness. There are no exact parallels in history, but there are certainly ways of thinking conditioned by context and similar circumstance. While our technologies and experiences may be very different from those Kautilya knew, human nature, politics and state behaviour do not appear to have changed quite as much or so drastically as to be unrecognizable. In other words, since Kautilya's time theories have multiplied and changed drastically, politics has not.

That may explain why the Arthashastra is so integral to our strategic culture, and to the ways in which the ordinary Indian thinks of these issues. The Arthashastra is certainly not the only work that has shaped

our strategic culture, for there are other works from the past, like the Shantiparva of the Mahabharata, that also play a formative role in popular thinking. Besides, the modern Western overlay of the nineteenth and twentieth century on our academic thinking is now very strong. But there is no gainsaying the fundamental importance of the Arthashastra in our thinking. Kautilyan ideas of mandalas, of the basic functions of the state, of the necessity and justification for the use of force, and of *raison d'état*, are part of the popular vocabulary and thinking on politics and international relations in India. Much of this is unselfconscious and instinctive today. Your work here is therefore important in bringing us to the next stage of self-aware thinking on these issues.

The last few years have already seen considerable progress in this direction. Since the time when the IDSA's first Director K. Subrahmaniam ploughed a lonely furrow, there has been a significant increase in the number of Indian scholars, think-tanks and institutions teaching, researching and commenting on strategic issues. The problem now is not one of quantity but of quality, of coherence, and of analytical rigour in that effort. Most important is the issue of relevance to Indian conditions and needs, which can not result from the wholesale borrowing of concepts and ways of thinking from abroad. I welcome the IDSA continuing to lead this effort, as it has from the beginning, and am most impressed by all that you have done under Arvind Gupta's leadership to achieve these goals.

With these few words, let me wish you success and fulfillment in your work on Kautilya, encourage the IDSA to continue this good work, and wish your seminar great success.

Thank you



048. Speech by P. Chidambaram, Finance Minister, at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on Recapturing India's Growth Momentum.

October 11, 2013.

Dr. Perkovich, Vice President for Studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Thank you for the invitation to speak at one of the oldest and well-regarded global think tanks. I understand Carnegie is in the midst of establishing a Carnegie South Asia Centre based in New Delhi, and I welcome that initiative. Carnegie currently has two captains of Indian industry on its Board of Directors, Shri Sunil Mittal and Shri Ratan Tata. I am glad to see these growing Carnegie-India links. One of Carnegie's core priorities today is building a research program on India's political economy. To this end, I gather you have recently launched your "India Decides 2014" initiative. I wish you all the best in this exercise, but may I tell you in advance that your study will discover that India will vote my government back to power. I thought I may caution you lest you should waste too much time and effort to figure this out.

Let me now turn to the topic of India's economic growth. India's growth story attracted the attention of the world when our economy grew at an average of 8.5 per cent per annum during the period, 2004-05 to 2010-11. This was achieved despite the strong negative spill-over effects of the global financial crisis in 2008 and subsequently. Growth slowed down in the crisis year, 2008-09, but India took the world by surprise by rebounding quickly from the slower growth of 6.7 per cent in that year to record rates of growth of 8.6 per cent in 2009-10 and 9.3 per cent in 2010-11. However, there was a further downturn in the global economy in 2011 on account of the sovereign debt crisis in Europe and the subsequent slump in the World economy. We also witnessed the emergence of domestic constraints on investment and consumption. As a consequence, India's growth rate declined again to 6.2 per cent in 2011-12 and further to 5.0 per cent in 2012-13. The increasing trade deficit and fall in net invisible earnings led to a widening of the current account deficit to USD 88 billion or 4.8 per cent of GDP in 2012-13. With a sharp slowdown in manufacturing growth and a moderation in the

expansion of services, the growth in the first quarter of 2013-14 further declined to 4.4 per cent. India's experience in this period is not unique. Virtually all the major emerging economies around the world have seen a sharp decline in growth — the so-called Great Descent.

However, we are now seeing that some of the worst-affected countries of the Euro zone are showing signs of recovery, with significant improvements in their current account and fiscal deficits. The expectations of improvement in the economic and financial conditions of the US, coupled with the decision of the Fed to postpone the tapering of the quantitative easing, have shaped expectations of a gradual global revival. But I am aware that there may be possible 'bumps' on the road ahead. In line with this emerging global outlook, the Indian economy has also showed early indications of recovery with a pick-up in exports in July, August and September – our second quarter; reversal of the negative growth in manufacturing; and a reasonable rise in freight traffic, indicative of economic activity picking up. With very good rainfall in the current year and a sharp increase in the sown area, we expect robust growth in farm output. We have also taken numerous reform measures over the past one year. We expect these measures to show their impact from the second half of the current fiscal and believe that the Indian economy will grow at over 5.0 per cent and perhaps closer to 5.5 per cent in 2013-14. I know that the World Economic Outlook report does not share my optimism, but I may tell you that we do not share their pessimism. Set against the current global economic background, even a growth rate of 5.0 per cent looks good, but is much lower than the ambitious standards that we set for ourselves in 2004. I would be the first person to say that we need to do better and recapture the growth momentum of the last decade.

Macro economists maintain a very clear distinction between trend and fluctuations. The fluctuations are the function of open economy macroeconomics, of fiscal policy and of monetary policy. To understand trend growth, however, we have to look deeper. Trend growth is largely determined by the underlying microeconomic fundamentals. In the next ten minutes I wish to speak to you about the microeconomic fundamentals which have given us one doubling of our GDP every decade. In my reckoning, there are at least six main stories:

- (i)** Demographics. As is well known, India has young demographics. Alongside, we are doing well on improving the quality of the workforce. Household survey data (the CMIE Consumer Pyramids database) shows that for children of age 12, literacy is now 95%. We have a great surge in college enrolment: a full one-fifth of 21-year-olds now have a college degree. Every year, millions of young people are added to the labour force and their education is qualitatively superior to that of the elderly cohort leaving the labour force. We have also launched an ambitious national mission on Skilling in order to qualify young men and women with only a school education for jobs in the manufacturing and service sectors.
- (ii)** The second growth fundamental is international economic integration. On the current account and on the financial account, India is now engaging with the world on an unprecedented scale. Gross flows on the current account are now 63.3 per cent of GDP and gross flows on the financial account are now 55.3 per cent of GDP. These add up to gross flows across the border of 118.6 per cent of GDP. This makes India one of the more open economies of the world. Engagement with the world drives a flow of ideas into the economy, which is a growth fundamental.
- (iii)** The third growth fundamental is an increasingly “capable” financial system. On average, we invest 35 per cent of GDP every year. Finance is what determines the allocative efficiency of how this investment is done. What industries and what firms get is controlled by the financial system. We are taking measured steps on strengthening the financial system and taking the best that the global financial system has to offer. Every year, our financial system is getting better and stronger and, through this, we expect to translate our good investment to GDP ratio into a higher GDP growth rate. I shall speak a bit more on this in a moment.

- (iv)** The fourth growth fundamental is sophisticated firms. As all of you are aware, Indian firms are increasingly becoming capable and competitive. We used to think – and fear — that if India opened up, our so-called large firms (I shall not take names) were third world dinosaurs that would collapse in the face of global competition. Instead, we have a clutch of firms in steel, oil and gas, mining, power, information technology, and hospitality that have become multinationals and are buying out companies in the advanced economies.
- (v)** The fifth growth fundamental is sophistication of the workforce. A young girl of age 21, who started her labour market career in 1991, now has 21 years of experience in a competitive and globalised market economy. She has dealt with modern technology, foreign companies, and a truly competitive domestic environment. The forty-somethings of India today are qualitatively superior to the older cohorts who grew up in a closed economy and did not face modern technology or foreign companies or competition.
- (vi)** The sixth growth fundamental - and I know this will be contested by many - is democracy. While it is fashionable to criticise the workings of Indian democracy, when we look deeper, I think it is working reasonably well. Liberal democracy is the ultimate foundation of rule of law and legal certainty, without which nobody can trust a country or invest in it. At its best, democracy is a great conversation, where diverse views and aspirations get heard, and the issues that genuinely concern the majority of the people become the priorities of policy makers. On a bigger scale of history, when we start from 1947, I think India has fared well on the project of constructing a liberal and open democracy.

To summarize, the Indian trend growth of the last 21 years was caused by several microeconomic fundamentals, and I have listed six of them. Nothing has changed on these. In fact our resolve to strengthen these

fundamentals has become stronger. I believe India continues to have great prospects based on these fundamentals.

From the viewpoint of public policy, our job is to clear our minds of old cobwebs as well as of day to day problems and stay focused on laying the long-term foundations of a capable State that is able to deliver.

While India has greatly deregulated, there is much more to be done. However, looming large is the issue of State "capacity". We need a State that has in place institutions to resolve market failures. We need a State that will deliver public goods quietly, efficiently and economically. This is the prime challenge in India today. In a liberal democracy, we need to build the full framework of laws that will clearly articulate specific objectives, empower the arms of government that will enforce these laws, and put in place mechanisms that will ensure performance and accountability.

If you believe what our newspapers and television channels report you may conclude that no Indian politician or civil servant is doing any work. Actually, the pace of work has been quite hectic. Let me illustrate this with examples of what have been done to improve the Indian financial system, only in 2013. So far, we have had four historic events. A commission of eminent people has drafted a new Indian Financial Code: a path breaking piece of law that has been drafted to replace 50 existing laws governing finance with a single, integrated, coherent, modern financial law. This is a law which dwarfs the scope of the Dodd-Frank Act. We have enacted a brand new Companies Act to replace a law that was 57 years old. We have shifted the subject of commodity futures to the Ministry of Finance, something which has not been possible in the US even after the 2008 crisis. We have enacted a law establishing the Defined Contribution Pension system under a statutory regulator. The New Pension System is already one of the world's big individual account DC pension systems with over 6 million participants.

Each of these four was a huge project involving enormous planning and preparation. The genesis of the Indian Financial Code goes back to 2004, when we started deep thinking about the possibilities of Mumbai as an international financial centre. The Companies Bill was pending before Parliament for many years. The work on shifting commodity futures to

the Ministry of Finance began in 2003. The NPS was originally designed in 1999. All these projects have been largely bipartisan. We have dug in through these years, chipped away at the objections, cultivated the technical capacity, and built consensus, through which we are now able to reap the fruits of the long years of labour.

To conclude, I would urge everyone not to lose sight of the microeconomic foundations of Indian growth, which are delivering one doubling of GDP every decade. That is not an insignificant achievement. It will find its place in history in due course. The defining challenge in India however is in augmenting State capacity. How do we construct a competent and ethical State, that will minimally interfere with the rights of citizens in property and contracting, that will focus on preventing or resolving market failures, and that will successfully produce and deliver public goods? A wave of new thinking in public administration is now underway in India. We need to build completely new organization charts within government, leading to sharply focused agencies that can be held accountable for delivery on specific objectives. Those are the first few lines of an absorbing new story that I hope will begin in the near future. And that is the story that I am sure will captivate the world in the next ten to twenty years, as India takes its place as the third or fourth largest economy in the world.



049. Vice President Addresses on “Effective Political Structure- A Critical Ingredient to Operationalize National Security Strategy”.

New Delhi, October 14, 2013.

Effective Political Structure-A Critical Ingredient to operationalize National Security Strategy

“The subject given to me for today’s talk strides across disciplines, touches upon the efficacy of political structures, drifts into the nebulous arena of national security, and delves into the bewildering complications of putting into operation a strategy to attain the objectives of both.

Such an endeavour, at the best of times, would be challenging. An attempt to do it in a single lecture may be foolhardy. The wish of the College, nevertheless, has to be complied with.

I begin with a truism. A principal objective of social order is to seek security and to develop the capacity to face challenges to it through a systemic attempt to synergize its various dimensions. National security today means comprehensive security, traditional and non-traditional, covering the core ingredients and values that a society considers essential for its existence and wellbeing and which it is prepared to defend by all the means available to it. The political structure of society is part of these core values and has a vital interest in defending it. This establishes a convergence of interests.

The efficacy of individual political structures is to be judged in terms of the objectives they assign to themselves. In the case of a modern democratic state, its four essential ingredients are legitimacy, consensus, consent, and compliance. The citizen body bestows legitimacy by concurrence on the objectives and gives its consent to comply with the directives pursuant to these objectives. It also expects appropriate results; failure or shortfalls is factored into the democratic accountability process.

Power in a state, as this audience knows well, emanates from a complex web of interdependencies between political, economic and social institutions and activities which divide power centres and which create multiple pressures to comply. State power is a central aspect of these structures but it is not the only key variable.

The nature of threats that a modern state faces or is likely to face in the foreseeable future fall into seven categories:

- ❑ Threats emanating from the nature of the international order: These include international arrangements that threaten security, political or economic interests and resultant constraints on policy options.

Ideological threats: These may relate to external or domestic attempts to posit an alternate view to the basic structure of the state and its core values and principles.

- ❑ Territorial disputes with neighbours, resulting in threats of invasion and/or subversion.

- ❑ Constraints on access to resources essential for survival and development of a society. Related to this would be the imperative of regional water management and energy-related external requirements.
- ❑ Threats emanating from new technologies: It has been argued that 'the potential exists for a cyber attack to inflict relatively prompt, catastrophic levels of destruction on states with advanced infrastructures'.
- ❑ Internal threats to social cohesion and harmony: These range from acute religious and political dissent, ethnic, regional and caste-based grievances, separatist agendas, ideological movements motivated by economic deprivation or injustice, traffic in drugs and narcotics, and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.
- ❑ Natural calamities, environmental and health threats inclusive of, but not confined to, climate change, pandemics and related matters.

A comprehensive and effective national security strategy is expected to cater to each and all of these and to have for it the requisite human and material resources and organizational structure. For purposes of today's discussion, our focus is on the latter and specifically on its political and policy aspects.

At this point in the discussion, questions become specific. Is the political and policy-making framework specific and identifiable? Does it have political legitimacy? Is it accountable? Is its functioning regular or sporadic? What are the parameters for its interaction with the professional and expert segments of the national security establishment? What is its efficacy in terms of the tasks it has set for itself?

It is tempting, in such a framework, to compare the structures and results of (a) countries with similar systems and (b) those with different systems. The difficulty with such comparisons lies in developing comparable models in terms of the nature and size of challenges. No two societies are identical, nor are their problems similar. In the final analysis, therefore,

the analyst is compelled to treat each model as *sui generis*; lessons from such comparisons, therefore, are at best of a generalised nature.

This necessarily brings us to the case of India and to seek answers to the six questions in relation to India. The answers, to my understanding, would be as follows:

- ❑ The locus of policy-making is in the government of the day, elected and installed by the constitutional process.
- ❑ The government is accountable to Parliament on a regular basis and to the electorate periodically.
- ❑ Policy-making and implementation is the responsibility of the Government. This is done through the Cabinet, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) and the National Security Council. Given the diversity of threats to national security, responses would be specific to situations but without losing sight of the fact that the perspective has to be holistic rather than compartmentalised since one set of threats often impact on others.

II

The above depicts the formal arrangement. How reflective is it of reality? Here, two areas need to be explored. Firstly, how effective is the accountability mechanism? Secondly, how comprehensive is the policy-making process, vertically and horizontally, to ensure that the interaction between different strategic objectives are given due weight and made to retain a balance?

The accountability mechanism is posited in Parliament and in its Standing Committee on Defence (DSC). The instruments available to Members are Questions and debates or discussions under various rules of procedure. Data for the period 2003-04 to 2013 shows that the Ministry of Defence answered 2857 questions in Rajya Sabha and 3599 in Lok Sabha. In addition, a few discussions were also held. Of course, more can be done if the functioning of Parliament could be taken beyond the present sub-optimal level, energised, and if the gap between commitment and practice could be lessened.

The responsibility of the Standing Committee on Defence (consisting of 21 Lok Sabha and 10 Rajya Sabha Members) is to (a) consider Demands for Grant (b) examine and report on proposed Bills referred to it (c) consider and report on the Annual Report of the Ministry of Defence and (d) consider and report on national basic long term policy documents referred to it by the Presiding Officers of the two Houses of Parliament. The Committee can avail of expert opinion or opinion of the public as inputs in its reports. Ministers are not members of the Standing Committees and, by convention, are not required to appear before it. In the present (15th) Lok Sabha, the DSC has so far made twenty reports on different aspects of the responsibilities entrusted to the Ministry of Defence.

So a mechanism for accountability is very much in place. It can be argued, with some justification, that this aspect of Parliament's work should be made better known to the public. Another corrective could be a provision for attendance by Ministers since this would lend greater political credence to the work of the Committee.

The question of the comprehensiveness of the policy-making process and of the synergy between the military and civil inputs into it continues to be the subject of much discussion. The Kargil Review Committee Report of December 1999 recommended that 'the entire gamut of national security management and apex decision-making and the structure and interface between the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces Headquarters can be comprehensively studied and reorganised.' A recommendation to this effect was also made by the Standing Committee on Defence. More recently, the Naresh Chandra Task Force on National Security has examined the matter further. Since its report is not yet in the public domain, the best I can do is to refer you to the National Security Advisor's observations made here a few months back.

I am personally not knowledgeable enough to comment on the desirability or otherwise of creating new institutions on the pattern of what exist elsewhere. Part of the problem, I suspect, may be attributable to the ethos of work culture, a propensity to be exclusive, and a reluctance to share information for the common good. Secrecy is often a device to hide inadequacy.

Addressing the Combined Commanders Conference last October, the Prime Minister spoke about the need for 'constructive debate' on integrated decision-making structures and weaponry and on the sources of new threats.

In view of the seamlessness of civil and military inputs that go into the formulation and operationalisation of national security strategy, strict compartmentalization of civil and military dimensions of national security is erroneous. Instead, the need of the moment is a more integrated approach with dynamic oversight of the elected political leadership. There is no reason why different disciplines cannot be interactive and cooperative in pursuit of a common objective.

It has been argued in many quarters that apart from periodic net assessments, we in India do not have a formal document in the shape of a National Security Strategy document to project officially a comprehensive approach to security. The intention, I presume, is to go beyond Chapter 1 of the Annual Report of the Ministry of Defence. Much of the discussion on this pertains only to traditional or military security and unavoidably touching upon developing challenges and evolving capacities and strategies. This has limited utility since comprehensive planning scenarios and predictions do not cover all eventualities and history is replete with the fate of doctrines that did not survive the first contact with the enemy.

III

Since this talk is about the need for an effective political structure to operationalise national security strategy, allow me to touch upon the non-traditional segment of national security. This puts comprehensive or human security at the centre of the debate. The picture here is fuzzier because while governments and societies have traditionally attended to its individual aspects, fewer attempts have been made to develop a conceptual framework. And yet, as Professor Kanti Bajpai puts it, 'the key argument is that ultimately state security is for individual security. In the end, the state is the provider of security for the citizenry; it is a means to security, and its security cannot be the end of security'. The dimensions of this perception are still evolving though segments relating to economic security, public health and pandemics, drug trafficking, human rights, environmental disasters and other matters affecting the public directly

figure prominently but episodically in the functioning of the political structure.

Political structures have to be effective in dealing with both internal and external threats to national security. Territorial integrity can be protected by creating strong, well equipped and modern armed forces, para-military and civil police institutions, which can protect the country against external aggression, armed rebellion and internal disturbances.

Either as a result of the political processes or distorted socio-economic developments, many of the internal threats and challenges that societies experience emanate from real or perceived exclusion from the mainstream of a section of its citizen body. This is true of India also.

Rampant poverty, rising inequality, unemployment, illiteracy, discrimination based on religion, caste, creed, language, race or ethnicity etc. are some of the reasons which lead to extremism and violence. We have examples of this in different parts of the country and not all of them can be attributed to external inputs. These problems do not have a purely military solution and also cannot be treated merely as a law and order issue. They require robust political intervention aimed at seeking solutions within the constitutional framework.

Keeping our neighbourhood peaceful and stable is also essential for pursuit of our developmental goals. Government seeks this through peaceful resolution of disputes, enhanced trade and economic relations, and greater people to people contacts. These are essential ingredients of a comprehensive strategy to safeguard and promote national interest. Diplomacy has a critical role in building international partnerships for confronting trans-national threats and in promoting interests.

For each of these, effective domestic political structures are essential in order to enable a country participate in the international fora on equal footing, with credible domestic mandate, so that national interests can be safeguarded in bilateral and multilateral negotiations.

Let me end by stating that sustainable national security for a country is an outcome of the good health and strength of its society and economy, its defence preparedness and competence of its diplomatic institutions. The attainment of these goals in a coordinated manner depends critically on an effective and responsive political structure.

I thank you for inviting me today.

Jai Hind.



050. Speech of the Vice President at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies on “Identity and Citizenship: An Indian Perspective”.

Oxford, November 1, 2013.

Identity and Citizenship: An Indian Perspective

It is a privilege to be invited to address this august audience. Conscious of the gap between the immensity of the honour and the inadequacies of the speaker, I am humbled by the realisation that six decades earlier Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a very distinguished predecessor of mine as Vice President of India, was for long the Spalding Professor of Eastern Religion and Ethics at this University.

A few years back, when I was in the vicinity of Oxford in a group dabbling in the unfathomable mysteries of the Iraq quagmire, Dr. Nizami provided a welcome distraction by inviting me to see the site, and the plans, for the new building of the Centre. He also mentioned the debate on the proposed architectural design, and of the view in some quarters that it would change the inherited landscape of a hallowed community.

The change, as I understood it, implied an assertion of identity. It is now conceded, I am told, that the new structure did no aesthetic or spiritual damage to the skyline of Oxford. Perhaps, the injection of diversity has enriched it.

Speculating on the ‘ifs’ of history, Edward Gibbon had visualised a course of events that might have resulted in the teaching of the interpretations of the Qur’an at Oxford. He could not foresee a happier, intellectually more rewarding, happening that the concluding decades of the twentieth century would bring forth. Among its manifestations is the establishment of this Centre.

This is a tribute to Oxford's capacity to accommodate the unusual.

Encouraged by this accommodative approach, I wish today to share some thoughts on the twin concepts of identity and citizenship and the manner of their impact on the building blocks of modern states.

Needless to say, it is an Indian perspective and draws in good measure on the Indian experience. It may be of relevance to some of the objectives of this Centre, since India counts amongst its citizens the third largest Muslim population in the world and the largest Muslim minority anywhere.

It is a truism that the human being is a social creature and societies consist of individuals who come together for a set of common purposes for whose achievement they agree to abide by a set of rules and, to that extent and for those purposes, give their tacit or explicit consent to the abridgment of individual free will or action. They, in other words, do not get subsumed totally in a larger whole and retain their individual identity. This identity, as pointed out by William James and sustained by more recent social-psychological research, is a compound of the material, social and spiritual self. Further more, and when acting together in smaller groups, they develop group identities and these too are retained. Thus in every society we have identities at three or four levels, namely individual, group, regional and national. We can also, in this age of globalisation, add an international dimension to it. The challenge in all societies, therefore, is to accommodate these layered identities in a framework that is harmonious and optimally conducive to social purpose.

Much has been written about identity, its theoretical framework and practical manifestations. An eminent sociologist has defined it as 'the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is given priority over other sources of meaning. For a given individual, or a collective of actors, there may be a plurality of identities.' The question is to determine how this identification is expressed in everyday life of individuals who are members of such specific groups?

Conceptually and legally, citizenship of a modern state provides this framework and encapsulates the totality of rights and duties emanating from the membership of the citizen body, inclusive of the right of representation and the right to hold office under the state. By the same

logic, a certain tension is built into the relationship, even if the society happens to be relatively homogenous, in itself a rarity in modern times. Rabindranath Tagore described his family background as a 'confluence of three cultures, Hindu, Mohammedan and British'. Away from India but in our own neighbourhood, Abdolkarim Soroush depicted the Iranian Muslim as 'the carrier of three cultures at once' having national, religious and Western origins.

Thus instead of a narrow concept of a singular identity implied by the classical concept of citizenship, the need is to recognise and accommodate the existence of a plurality of social identities. The contours of this were explored earlier by Thomas Marshall, and more recently by Will Kymlicka, Manuel Castells, Charles Taylor, Gurpreet Mahajan and others. Put simply, it has been argued that identity encapsulates the notion of authenticity, the demand for recognition, the idea of difference and the principle of equal dignity.

What then has been the Indian approach to, and experience of, the concepts of identity and of citizenship in a modern state? What is the accommodative framework for identities in modern India?

A distinctive feature of Indian society is its heterogeneity. The historian Ramachandra Guha depicts our recent history as 'a series of conflict maps' involving caste, language, religion and class and opines that conflicts relating to these 'operate both singly and in tandem'. Each of these also brings forth an identity of varying intensity; together, they constitute what the opening line of the Preamble of our Constitution depicts as We, the People of India.

In other words, the superstructure of a democratic polity and a secular state structure put in place after independence on August 15, 1947 is anchored in the existential reality of a plural society. It is reflective of India's cultural past. Our culture is synthetic in character and, as a historian of another generation put it, 'embraces in its orbit beliefs, customs, rites, institutions, arts, religions and philosophies belonging to different strata of societies in varying stages of development. It eternally seeks to find a unity for the heterogeneous elements which make up its totality'. It is a veritable human laboratory where the cross breeding of ideas, beliefs and cultural traditions has been in progress for a few

thousand years. The national movement recognised this cultural plurality and sought to base a national identity on it. The size and diversity of the Indian landscape makes it essential. A population of 1.27 billion comprising of over 4,635 communities 78 percent of whom are not only linguistic and cultural but social categories. Religious minorities constitute 19.4 percent of the population; of these, Muslims account for 13.4 percent amounting in absolute terms to around 160 million. The human diversities are both hierarchical and spatial. 'The de jure WE, the sovereign people is in reality a fragmented 'we', divided by yawning gaps that remain to be bridged.' Around 22 per cent of our people live below the official poverty line and the health and education indicators for the population as a whole, despite recent correctives, leave much to be desired.

The contestation over citizenship surfaced early and was evident in the debates of the Constituent Assembly. The notion of citizenship was historically alien to Indian experience since throughout our long history (barring a few exceptions in the earliest period) the operative framework was that of ruler and subject. There was, of course, no dearth of prescriptions about the duties of rulers towards their subjects and about the dispensation of justice but none of these went beyond Kautilya's pious dictum that 'a king who observes his duty of protecting his people justly and according to the law will go to heaven, whereas one who does not protect them or inflict unjust punishment will not'. The constitution-makers therefore had to address three dimensions of the question relating to status, rights, and identity, to determine who is to be a citizen, what rights are to be bestowed on the citizen, and the manner in which the multiplicity of claimed identities is to be accommodated. This involved addressing three aspects of the question: legal, political and psychological. The outcome was the notion of national-civic rather than national-ethnic, emphasizing that the individual was the basic unit of citizenship whose inclusion in polity was on terms of equality with every other citizen. At the same time and taking societal realities into account, the concept of group-differentiated citizenship was grafted to assure the minorities and other identity-based groups that 'the application of difference-blind principles of equality will not be allowed to operate in a way that is unmindful of their special needs, and that these needs arising out of cultural difference or minority status will receive due attention in policy, and that the polity will be truly inclusive in its embrace'.

The crafting of the Constitution was diligent and its contents reflective of the high ideals that motivated its authors. The Preamble moved Sir Ernest Barker to reproduce it at the beginning of his last book because, as he put it, it seemed 'to state in a brief and pithy form the argument of much of the book and it may accordingly serve as a keynote'. The Constitution's chapter on Fundamental Rights addresses inter alia the protection of identities, and accommodation of diversities. These identities could be regional, religious, linguistic, tribal, caste-based, and gender-based. The right to equality and equal protection of the laws and prohibition of discrimination on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth is guaranteed. Affirmative action is mandated by law in favour of those historically discriminated against on grounds of caste or tribal origin as well as all those who are identified as socially and educationally backward. Also guaranteed is freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practice and propagate religion. Yet another section safeguards the right to have and conserve language, script or culture and the right of religious or linguistic minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. The purpose of these, taken together, is to bestow recognition, acknowledge the difference and thereby confer dignity that is an essential concomitant of equality.

An inherent problem nevertheless was evident to the constitution-makers, or at least to some of them. This was expressed candidly, almost prophetically, by Ambedkar in words that need to be cited in full:

"On the 26th of January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so laboriously built up."

Thus the objective of securing civic, political, economic, social and cultural rights as essential ingredients of citizenship was clearly delineated and the challenge squarely posed to the beneficiaries of the new dispensation. The dire prognosis of the last sentence, however, has not come to pass! The very complexity of the landscape impedes linear and drastic happenings. One serious student of Indian polity has noted that 'the Indian model of development is characterised by the politicisation of a fragmented social structure, through a wide dispersal and permeation of political forms, values and ideologies'. As a result and in a segmented society and unequal economy, the quest for substantive equality and justice remains work in progress. Nevertheless, the slowing down of the egalitarian social revolution that was envisaged by the Constitution-makers and the implicit social contract inherent in it, does give rise to wider concerns about its implications.

Two questions arise out of this and need to be explored. Firstly, what has been the impact of this on the perception of identity? Secondly, how has the challenge been addressed?

Identity assertion in any society has three sets of impulses: civic equality, liberty and opportunity. Identity groups are a byproduct of the right of freedom of association. They can be cultural, voluntary, ascriptive and religious. They are neither good nor bad in themselves but do present challenges to democratic justice. This is true of India also. The functioning of democratic institutions and the deepening of the democratic process along with the efforts to implement constitutional mandates for affirmative action induced higher levels of political mobilisation. These manifested themselves, most visibly, in demand groups each with its own identity. A multiplication of identities seeking social status and economic wellbeing through the route of politics thus emerged as a logical consequence.

It has been argued that 'casteism in politics is no more and no less than politicisation of caste which, in turn, leads to a transformation of the caste system'. The same holds for religious and tribal minorities. In an evolving quasi-federal state structure, yet another imperative emanates from the requirements of regional or state identity. 'The new politics of caste has also reinforced old, upper caste solidarities. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Bramharishi Sabhas have re-emerged and the logic of electoral politics has forced the forces of social justice to strike strategic alliances with

them'. These, together, have induced political actors to develop narrower foci on their electoral management methodologies; these have been reinforced by the shortcomings of the first-past-the-post electoral system and the ability of a high percentage of candidates to win on a plurality rather than the majority of votes cast in an election.

A society so diverse inevitably faced the challenge of integration. It was two fold, physical and emotional. The former, involving the merger of 554 large and miniscule princely states with those parts of the former British India that became the Indian Republic, was attended to with commendable speed and was almost completed by the end of 1949. Emotional integration, on the other hand, was a more complex process. As early as 1902, Tagore had cautioned that unity cannot be brought about by enacting a law and in 1949 Sardar Patel, the architect of integration of states, had laid emphasis on the process taking 'healthy roots' and bringing forth 'a wider outlook and a broader vision.' The challenges posed by it were aptly summed up by a political scientist:

'In the semantics of functional politics the term national integration means, and ought to mean, cohesion and **not fusion, unity and not uniformity, reconciliation and not merger, accommodation and not annihilation, synthesis and not dissolution, solidarity and not regimentation** of the several discrete segments of the people constituting the larger political community

'Obviously, then, Integration is not a process of conversion of diversities into a uniformity but a congruence of diversities leading to a unity in which both the varieties and similarities are maintained.'

Thus the Indian approach steers clear of notions of assimilation and adaptation, philosophically and in practice. Instead, the management of diversity to ensure (in Nehru's words) the integration of minds and hearts is accepted as an ongoing national priority. Some have described it as the 'salad-bowl' approach, with each ingredient identifiable and yet together bringing forth an appetising product.

The question of minority rights as a marker of identity, and their accommodation within the ambit of citizenship rights, remains a live one. It is not so much on the principle of minority rights (which is unambiguously recognised in the Constitution) as to the extent of their

realisation in actual practice. A government-commissioned report on Diversity Index some years back concluded that 'unequal economic opportunities lead to unequal outcomes which in turn lead to unequal access to political power. This creates a vicious circle since unequal power structure determines the nature and functioning of the institutions and their policies'. This and other official reports delineate areas that need to be visited more purposefully.

How far can this to be taken? A Constitutional Amendment in 1977, adding a section on Fundamental Duties of citizens as part of the Directive Principles of State Policy, carries a clause stipulating promotion of harmony and spirit of brotherhood "*transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities.*" It is at this point that the rights of identity and the duties of citizenship intersect. The identification of this point, with any degree of precision, is another matter. The litmus test, eventually, must be the maintenance of social cohesiveness through a sense of citizenship premised on equality of status and opportunity so essential for the maintenance of democracy. The need for sustaining and reinvigoration of this sentiment is thus essential.

The Constitution of India was promulgated in 1950. The past six decades have witnessed immense changes in social and political perceptions in societies the world over. Theories and practices of 'assimilation', 'one-national mould' and the 'melting pot' have been discredited and generally abandoned; instead, evolving perceptions and practical compulsions led individual societies to accept diversity and cultural pluralism. In many places, on the other hand, a process of reversal induced by xenophobia, Islamophobia and migrant-related anxieties, is also under way. The concept of multiculturalism, pioneered to address accommodation of diversity within the framework of democracy, is being openly or tacitly challenged. An ardent advocate of multiculturalism concedes that 'not all attempts to adopt new models of multicultural citizenship have taken root or succeeded in achieving their intended effects' because 'multiculturalism works best if relations between the state and minorities are seen as an issue of social policy, not as an issue of state security'.

There is an Indian segment to the debate on multiculturalism. It has been argued that 'while a multicultural polity was designed, the principles of multiculturalism were not systematically enunciated.' It is asserted that

multiculturalism goes beyond tolerance and probes areas of cultural discrimination that may exist even after legal equality has been established; it therefore 'needs to explore ways by which the sense of alienation and disadvantage that comes with being a minority is visibly diminished, but in a way that does not replace the power of the homogenising state with that of the community. It should therefore aspire towards a form of citizenship that is marked neither by a universalism generated by complete homogenisation, nor by particularism of self-identical and closed communities'.

These debates and practices vindicate in good measure the vision and foresight displayed by the founding fathers of the Republic of India. The vindication is greater when considered in the context of the size and diversity of India and the stresses and strains it has withstood in this period. And yet, we cannot rest on our laurels since impulses tilting towards 'assimilationist' and homogenising approaches do exist, suggestive of imagined otherness and seeking uniformity at the expense of diversity. Indian pluralism, as a careful observer puts it, 'continues to be hard won'. Hence the persisting need of reinforcing and improving present practices and the principles underlying them. Such an endeavour would continue to be fruitful as long as 'the glue of solidarity' around the civic ideal remains sufficiently cohesive, reinforced by the existential reality of market unity and the imperative of national security. There is no reason to be sceptical about the stability of the tripod.

Thank you



051. Highlights of Prime Minister's address at the Annual Conclave of Indian Ambassadors/High Commissioners abroad.

New Delhi, November 4, 2013.

“India in the Changing World: Priorities and Principles”

This is a time of immense flux in the world and you work in an environment of expanding responsibilities, rising expectations and relentless public scrutiny. That you do this with modest resources and often in difficult and dangerous circumstances is to your great credit.

Over these past nine years, our Government has sought to engineer a fundamental reset in our foreign policy based on our national priorities and what we believe is India's role and destiny in world affairs.

The great leaders of our freedom struggle instinctively saw the intrinsic link between our foreign policy and the economic aspirations of our people. A free India had to be also a prosperous India. This has been the central vision of our foreign policy and must continue to remain so. Therefore, the foreign policy we pursue must reflect our national priorities and concerns and be in concert with our capabilities.

I believe five principles have come to define our foreign policy.

First, recognition that India's relations with the world – both major powers and our Asian neighbours – are increasingly shaped by our developmental priorities. The single most important objective of Indian foreign policy has to be to create a global environment conducive to the well-being of our great country.

Second, that greater integration with the world economy will benefit India and enable our people to realize their creative potential.

Third, we seek stable, long term and mutually beneficial relations with all major powers. We are prepared to work with the international community to create a global economic and security environment beneficial to all nations.

Fourth, we recognize that the Indian sub-continent's shared destiny requires greater regional cooperation and connectivity. Towards this end,

we must strengthen regional institutional capability and capacity and invest in connectivity.

Fifth, our foreign policy is not defined merely by our interests, but also by the values which are very dear to our people. India's experiment of pursuing economic development within the framework of a plural, secular and liberal democracy has inspired people around the world and should continue to do so.

As you go about discharging your day-to-day responsibilities, please ask yourselves how these five principles are guiding your work.

I do appreciate that, in recent years, MEA has adapted well to its changing environment and emerging responsibilities. I also recognize that your efforts must be supported by adequate and timely availability of resources. I would urge you, however, to prioritize the use of our limited financial and human resources in the most efficient and effective manner.

The work you do is central to the progress of our country.

I hope your deliberations will help the government deal more competently with the world. I wish them all success.

Thank you



052. Vice President Inaugurates Fourth Biennial Conference of Asian Society of International Law.

New Delhi, November 14, 2013.

"I am happy to be here today for the Fourth Biennial Conference of Asian Society of International Law (ASIL) being hosted by the Indian Society of International Law (ISIL). I extend my warm welcome to the distinguished participants.

By a happy coincidence today we are celebrating the birthday of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who had inaugurated the ISIL over 50 years ago. This platform has excelled as a proponent of the developing countries' perspectives on international legal issues.

The objective of the 4th Biennial Conference of the ASIL is to provide a vibrant platform for meaningful interaction and exchange among scholars and practitioners in the field of international law in order to promote better understanding of international legal issues and to comprehend the emerging trends.

The theme of this Conference: “*Asia and International Law in the Twenty-first Century: New Horizons*” is appropriate and timely. The topics chosen are relevant and reflective of changing times and perceptions.

India’s commitment to international law is enshrined in Article 51(c) of our Constitution which enjoins the State to endeavour to foster respect for international law and treaty obligations.

This audience is aware that Public International Law has evolved rapidly since the beginning of the 20th century. Three stages are discernable. Initially, it was essentially European in the first half of the century since nations in the rest of the world did not have independent status. In that period, and in the period between the two World Wars, the focus was primarily on protection of civilians, humane treatment of soldiers, rights of minorities in Europe and related matters.

In the second half of the 20th century, international law addressed itself to matters pertaining to human rights, genocide, crimes against humanity and racial discrimination. More specifically, it was compelled to address questions of the right of self determination of people against colonialism; legitimacy of liberation movements and assertion of the right of permanent sovereignty over natural resources by the newly independent countries. This included extension of their jurisdiction over fisheries and other natural resources in the adjacent seas up to 200 nautical miles, declaration of common heritage of mankind of the seabed or subsoil and declaration of outer space as a common province of mankind.

International law was thus essentially concerned with political and economic relations between the States and also between States, the United Nations and other international organisations.

Since the 1990s and in the first decade of 21st century, international law has witnessed a significant evolution in both substantive and institutional terms. It has now developed into an extensive web of rules and

institutions, which also concern and address the role and responsibilities of non-state actors, including individuals.

Today, international law touches the lives of millions by addressing trade and business, trans-national crimes, human trafficking, climate change, terrorism, cyber crime, corruption, torture, intellectual property rights, child rights, women's rights, rights of the disabled, piracy and a host of other issues.

Globalisation has added another dimension to traditional international law. For this reason, India and other Asian countries are committed to ensuring that relations between sovereign States are governed by international law and not by use of force; hence their active participation in shaping it to safeguard their essential national interests.

Public international law questions that confront us today include the following:

- ❑ The prohibition on the use of force and settlement of disputes by peaceful means. This is specifically mandated in the Charter of the United Nations and yet continues to be violated or abridged from time to time.
- ❑ The observance of human rights by states is specifically prescribed but continues to be side-stepped for considerations of statecraft and power politics.
- ❑ The protection of individuals during wars and armed conflicts. International humanitarian law defines the rules of war and especially those concerning the protection of civilians, especially women and children, the wounded and prisoners of war.
- ❑ **The fight against terrorism and other serious crimes:** Efforts to deal with such threats can only be effective if they are based on internationally recognised legal principles.
- ❑ **Piracy:** The piracy and armed robbery at sea which are endangering maritime security and navigation could be tackled effectively if States cooperate within the

framework of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 and the series of resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council.

- ❑ **Environment and sustainable development:** The more universal the rules on protecting climate and preserving natural resources are, the more effective they will be. For equity and justice, the ongoing negotiations on climate change should be based on the broad principle of “common but differentiated responsibility”, as enshrined in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992.
- ❑ Corruption, which has become a major governance challenge globally today, can be tackled by the States by cooperating with each other in the framework of the UN Convention against Corruption of 2002.
- ❑ **Cyber Crime and Cyber Security:** The growth of ICT, has contributed immensely to development and human welfare. However, it has also created risks in cyber space thereby adversely affecting national and international security.
- ❑ **Investment:** International understandings are essential for ensuring balance between the protection of investment and developmental needs of societies.

In the context of WTO and the stalled Doha Round, I hope this Conference will explore some of the more common legal cultural disconnects and commonalities that exist across Asia. The issues range from implementation of intellectual property commitments pursuant to the TRIPS, as it conflicts with non-individualised and more communal notions of property, to such issues as the legal cultures associated with rural and agricultural communities conflicting with commitments on subsidies and tariffs.

This Conference is expected to come up with specific recommendations for handling such legal cultural disconnects, so as to advance both the goals of international trade and the survival of local, unique and cherished

legal cultural approaches that would otherwise be at risk from a blind implementation of international trade commitments.

The rationale for the observance of international norms is evident. Just as men cannot live together in a society without laws and customs to regulate their actions, similarly States cannot relate to each other without usages and conventions to regulate their conduct. International Law should not be considered as impinging on state sovereignty by creating new structures or norms for regulating relations across borders. These can be useful tools for interaction and conduct of relations between civilised societies.

International Law creates principles and practices for governing relations between nation states with principles of sovereignty and equality as the basis for the interaction.

International Law as we know derives not from actions of any executive or legislative branch or any central authority, but from customary law and agreements signed by sovereign States. It also differs in respect of enforcement, which depends not on the power and authority of a central government, but on reciprocity, collective action and international norms.

The conflict between international law and national sovereignty is today the subject to vigorous debates and there is a growing trend towards judging a State's domestic actions in the light of international law and standards. It is the general belief that the nation-state is the primary unit of international affairs, and only States may choose to voluntarily enter into commitments.

Certain scholars and political leaders feel that these modern developments endanger nation states by taking power away from the governments and ceding it to international bodies such as the U.N. and the World Bank. They argue that international law has evolved to a point where it exists separately from the mere consent of states and erodes their sovereignty.

This occurs especially when states violate or deviate from the accepted standards of conduct adhered to by all law abiding nations.

What then is the prospect for international society? One answer was provided many years back by the late Headley Bull. A sustainable world

order would be possible, he said, if elements constituting the international society maintain and extend the consensus about common interests and values that together constitute a cosmopolitan culture.

Such a consensus, it is evident, cannot be imposed and would be possible only with the participation and consent, amongst others, of Asian countries. I hope this Conference would come out with some practical and workable ideas in this regard.

I wish the conference success in its deliberations.”



053. Second South Asian Diaspora Convention at the Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore.

21st November, 2013.

Opportunities and Challenges for Diaspora Investments in India:

Shri P Chidambaram,

Finance Minister, Government of India

It is said that ‘you can take an Indian out of India, but you cannot take India out of an Indian’. Indians, anywhere in the world and irrespective of their citizenship, retain a lot of their ‘Indianness’. It is certainly true of overseas Indian workers and it is also true of first generation migrants. I find that it is also true of the children of first generation migrants. One would have to wait some more years to see whether this unique characteristic of Indians is preserved by the children of children of first generation migrants.

Nowhere is this more true than in Singapore. There is a ‘little India’ in Singapore. The sights, the sounds, and the flavour of that sweet spot in this international city are almost totally Indian – even while the residents are genuinely proud of being citizens or long-term residents of Singapore. Singapore represents a plural society at its best. Is it any wonder therefore that the diaspora in Singapore is perhaps among the most diverse and most progressive diaspora of the great cities of the world? I am therefore truly happy to be part of the second South Asian Diaspora

Convention and to address you on 'Opportunities and Challenges for Diaspora Investments in India.' I compliment the Institute of South Asian Studies of the National University of Singapore for bringing together the region's policy makers, business persons, authors, journalists and leaders of civil society on the platform of SADC 2013

The Indian diaspora is heterogeneous. There are descendants of those who migrated in the 17th century and again in the 19th century to South Africa and further to the west. There are Indian families who travelled to other South Asian and South East Asian countries for work or trade since the beginning of the 20th century and have happily settled down there for several decades. There are first generation migrants and their children and grandchildren who live in developed countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. In the last forty years, a very large number of unskilled and skilled workers have found job opportunities in the Middle East and live and work for long years in those countries. Recent years have witnessed another wave of migration to countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong, China.

Each of these segments has a distinct view of India and the India Opportunity. These views are, understandably, moulded by the country and the environment in which they live and by their own perceptions of what is good policy and what is good governance. However, it is important to remember that India is a country of 1.3 billion people. Three hundred million at the top can be described as the aspirational class, but there is an equal number that looks towards the Government for help and support – and subsidies – to climb out of poverty. It is not a mean achievement that India has, in a period of ten years between 2002 and 2012, reduced the incidence of poverty by over 15 percent. I would urge you to keep that context in mind while you draw your conclusions and make your choices.

Let me begin by speaking to you on the India Opportunity.

India's potential growth rate is 8 percent and above. In the best year, the savings rate was 36.8 percent and the investment rate was 38.1 percent. In the worst years, the savings and investment rates were 30.8 percent and 32.8 percent respectively. Between 2005 and 2008, India achieved its potential – in fact exceeded it – and recorded growth rates of over 9 percent. During the 20-year period from 1991 to 2011, the average growth rate was 7 percent.

The key to sustain a high growth rate is investment. Other factors are also important. The fiscal deficit must be contained below the widely-accepted norm of 3 percent of GDP. The Current Account Deficit must be capable of being financed safely. Inflation, even allowing for the space required by a developing economy, must be moderate. The exchange rate must be resilient even while it is insulated against speculative attacks and excessive volatility. Any Government must be fully alive to these fundamental requirements of a stable and progressive economy. Given these fundamentals, it is investment that will determine the growth rate of an economy.

I believe that there is no country in the world that requires so much investment as India does in virtually every sector of the economy. On infrastructure alone, the 12th Plan document covering the period 2012-2017 envisages an investment of USD 1 trillion, of which one-half is expected to come from the private sector. A few examples will illustrate the magnitude of the need and the challenge. In the power sector, the 12th Plan document projects an addition of 88,577 mega watts of capacity during the period of five years. In railways, we intend to add 10,000 kilometres of rail track while doubling 5,344 kilometres of rail track. In steel, we plan to enhance capacity from the current level of 84.4 MnT to 142.3 MnT. In the port sector, total capacity of our ports will increase from 702.8 MnT in 2012 to 884.6 MnT by 2017. We are now engaged in building 34 non-metro airports.

I may also give you the example of Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor. It will entail an investment of USD 90 billion. Together with the dedicated western freight corridor being built by the Railways, it will link Delhi to Mumbai's ports. It will cover a length of 1483 kilometres and pass through six States. There will be nine mega industrial zones of about 200-250 sq. kms each, high speed freight lines, and a six-lane intersection-free expressway connecting India's political capital to its commercial capital. Along the corridor, there will be three ports, six airports, a 4000 MW power plant, and a plug-and-play environment to promote manufacturing industries. Other corridors that are in the planning stage are the Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor and the Bengaluru Mumbai Economic Corridor.

India can offer to the investor a variety of investment opportunities. There are Government securities and corporate bonds. There are mutual funds and Infrastructure Development Funds. We can offer equity in our public sector enterprises that are under the disinvestment programme. There is a clutch of projects in the oil and gas sector that will welcome strategic investors. Shortly, we will offer a public sector Exchange Traded Fund that will allow you to buy units backed by underlying equity shares. Private promoters have offered a number of specific projects in sectors such as roads, power, urban infrastructure, ports and water transportation, and in Special Economic Zones.

Just as India and other developing countries need investment, let us also remember that the capital surplus countries need to invest. They cannot invest in their domestic economies alone. Given the increase in their savings and their ageing populations, they need to find investments that will give them higher returns over a long term. They need to find avenues of investment for their growing pension funds and sovereign wealth funds. The Indian equity market has given a compounded annual growth rate of 15.8 percent over the 10-year period 2003-2013. Government securities have given a return of 7.92 percent, 8.52 percent and 8.36 percent in the last three years. I believe that there are few markets in the world which give comparable returns.

Mindful of the fundamental factors that I mentioned earlier in my speech, we have taken a number of measures to stabilize the economy and give greater confidence to the investors. Last year, after I returned to the Ministry of Finance, I announced a new fiscal consolidation path under which the fiscal deficit would be contained at 5.3 percent in 2012-13 and reduced every year until it reached 3 percent in 2016-17. At the end of March, 2013, we did better than the target and the fiscal deficit was contained at 4.9 percent. For the current year, I have drawn a red line at the original target of 4.8 percent and I have made it clear that the red line will not be breached under any circumstances. The Current Account Deficit for 2012-13 was at a challenging level of USD 88 billion. In the current year we have taken a number of measures – some of them like compressing gold imports have already yielded results – and I am confident that the CAD will be contained at a level well below USD 60 billion and that it will be fully and safely financed.

Inflation has been more intractable. Both the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) are driven by food inflation. The weights of food items in the two indices are 24.3 percent and 46.2 percent, respectively. It may surprise you that there is reasonable stability in the prices of major commodities such as wheat and rice. Sugar prices have actually fallen by about Rs.6 per kilogram. However, prices of fruit, vegetables, meat, milk and eggs are elevated and are driving the inflation rate. Several steps, including increase in the policy rate, have been taken and we hope that the WPI-based inflation rate will moderate to a level below 5 percent.

The exchange rate witnessed a period of considerable volatility during May to August this year. The reasons are well known. Many currencies were affected. The Reserve Bank of India took a number of steps – some that were clearly emergency steps – and once volatility was contained, some of those steps were reversed. We believe that the exchange rate of the rupee today is a better reflection of its true value and we are confident that both volatility and speculation have been largely contained. The excellent market response to the rupee bond floated by IFC two days ago indicates market confidence in the Indian rupee, although I would hesitate to draw conclusions at this stage.

All these, in my view, augur well for attracting more investments.

Apart from the macro economic fundamentals that I referred to, I would ask the diaspora to look at some micro economic fundamentals of the Indian economy. The first is our young demographic. A little more than one-half of the people of India are below the age of 25 years. Literacy among children below the age of 12 years is 95 percent. There is a surge in enrolment in colleges and a full one-fifth of all 21-year olds have a college degree. We have launched an ambitious skill development programme that aims to skill 500 million youth by 2022.

The second is the integration of the Indian economy with the world economy. Gross flows on the current account are 63 percent of the GDP and on the financial account 55 percent of the GDP adding up to gross flows across the border of 118 percent of the GDP.

The third is the increasingly 'capable' financial system. We have drafted a new Indian Financial Code that will replace the fifty existing laws

concerning finance. We have a brand new Companies Act and a statute-mandated Defined Contribution Pension system.

The fourth is the international clout – based on capacity and competitiveness – acquired by a clutch of Indian firms in steel, oil and gas, mining, power, information technology and hospitality.

The fifth is the famed consumption-led growth story. India's household final consumption is an impressive 57 percent of the GDP making it one of the few vibrant markets, in a sluggish world economy, for goods and services.

The sixth is the maturity of our democracy and our adherence to a model governed by the rule of law. India has entered into 72 Bilateral Investment Protection Agreements. India is also a partner country in four Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreements and is in the process of negotiating an RCEP with the ASEAN countries.

I believe that, taken together, the macro economic fundamentals and the micro economic fundamentals make India an attractive and safe investment destination.

The Indian diaspora is estimated at over 20 million. While it is only 2 percent of India's population, their total wealth is estimated at USD 1 trillion which is nearly 50 percent of India's GDP. Of the USD 1 trillion, one-half is estimated to be financial assets. The income of the Indian diaspora is estimated at USD 400 billion a year.

We take the diaspora seriously. There is an exclusive Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. In 2007, the Ministry set up the Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) in partnership with CII, a leading industry association, as a non-profit body to guide and facilitate investments of Indians residing abroad. OIFC offers well-researched fact-files on different sectors of the Indian economy. The Government has also set up a Global Advisory Council that consists of the diaspora's scholars, scientists, business persons, and political and community leaders.

'Invest India' is our official agency dedicated to investment promotion and facilitation. It is a joint venture between FICCI, a leading chamber of commerce, and the Government. It is the first reference point for the global investment community and provides sector-specific and State-

specific information to a foreign investor, assist in expediting regulatory approvals, and offers hand-holding services.

At present, we recognize a Non-resident Indian (NRI), a Person of Indian Origin (PIO) and an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI). An NRI has near-equal treatment with resident Indians and can invest in Government securities, Treasury Bills, domestic mutual funds etc. An NRI can also invest in the construction sector including townships and housing. A PIO may not be an Indian citizen but has parity with NRIs in the matter of investments except acquisition of agricultural property. A PIO does not require a visa to visit India. An OCI is of Indian origin but is a citizen of another country. He is entitled to a multiple entry, multi-purpose life-long visa and has parity with PIOs in the matter of investments.

Eleven million Indians live and work in Asia and the Middle East. Of these, 5.9 million are in the countries of the Middle East, there are 2.0 million in Malaysia and 500,000 in Singapore. The bulk of them are unskilled or semi-skilled workers. Nevertheless, they have high savings and they remit a large amount of money to their families in India. You are aware that, since 2003, India has been the largest recipient of overseas remittances. Remittances rose from a modest USD 2 billion in 1991 to USD 70 billion in 2013. Indian banks offer attractive products to non-resident Indians. Among them is the famous FCNR(B) scheme. Two months ago, the Reserve Bank opened a special window to attract more funds into FCNR(B) and I am happy to report that, as I speak to you today, the scheme, which will close on November 30, 2013, has received USD 16 billion. The FCNR(B) allows the account holder to retain his deposits in foreign currency and earn interest at a rate up to LIBOR plus 400 bps.

In recent times, we have turned our attention to the successful Indian-origin entrepreneurs and high networth individuals. Many of them are at the top of the pyramid. In the Silicon Valley alone, four out of 10 start-ups are promoted by NRIs and PIOs and seven percent of the valley's hi-tech firms are led by Indian CEOs. Some of the well-known names are Vinod Dham, Vinod Khosla, Bharat Desai, Gururaj Deshpande and KB Chandrasekhar. The Forbes list of the United States' Top 400 rich contains the names of three persons of Indian origin. It did not also surprise me to read that the Forbes list of Singapore's Top 40 rich contains the

names of four non-resident Indians. There are over 40,000 Indian origin doctors in the US and over 15,000 Indian origin doctors in the UK. The number of engineers, chartered accountants and lawyers of Indian origin in the developed countries runs into several thousands. They represent the best of India that was chiselled and honed in the universities and institutions of those countries. India, the country of their origin or the country of their forefathers, is truly proud of them. A number of them are present in this distinguished gathering and I admire and salute your love and affection for India and the Indian people.

Ladies and gentlemen, planet Earth is home to seven billion people. No home can hold the very rich and the very poor together without addressing the question of inequality and poverty. The world is undergoing a rebalancing of economic power. Rebalancing of political power will, inevitably, follow in due course. The Asian countries are likely to become the pivot of the rebalanced world. The Asian diaspora, including the Indian diaspora, must therefore help the countries of their origin. Nothing can be more satisfying and rewarding than Indians living abroad connecting with Indians living in India. In a world committed to ending extreme poverty and sharing prosperity, that connection is best forged through investments.

Let me conclude by welcoming the Indian diaspora to seize the India opportunity, invest in India, and be part of the unfolding India story that will make India the third largest economy, even in nominal terms, by the year 2030.

I thank the Institute of South Asian Studies, and particularly Ambassador Gopinath Pillai and Professor Tan, for the opportunity to address this distinguished gathering. I thank you for your patience and courtesy.



054. Excerpts of address by the Prime Minister at the Combined Commanders' Conference.

New Delhi, November 22, 2013.

It is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to speak once again to this gathering of the senior-most leadership of our Armed Forces. Our men and women in uniform function in an exceedingly complex and difficult security environment, but they have always faced the challenge with exemplary professionalism, valour and commitment. As their leaders, you have played a critical role in building the confidence and pride that our forces inspire in our nation. I therefore thank each and every one of you for your services.

Let me at the outset pay solemn tribute to those who have in the past year laid down their lives in the service of our country. We remember with particular pain and sadness our sailors who perished in the submarine accident in Mumbai and our soldiers who died defending our borders and combating terrorism. We also recall our pilots and airmen, who sacrificed themselves to rescue precious lives in Uttarakhand. We owe a profound debt of gratitude to them. Equally, we remember many others whose stories did not become public but who were claimed by the daily risks of soldiering in inhospitable and hostile environments. They too served our country and served it well.

Friends, I do not intend my address today to be a rendition of our achievements in the arena of defence in this past year. You are already aware of those and know the subject much better. Instead, I wish to focus on the environment around us and what I think we need to do to ensure that our armed forces are fully enabled to handle it. Let me outline a few general points that come to mind before dealing with the unique security challenges that confront us in our neighbourhood.

Firstly, if you survey the global strategic environment over the past decade, it would not escape your notice that, just as the economic pendulum is shifting inexorably from west to east, so is the strategic focus, as exemplified by the increasing contestation in the seas to our east and the related "pivot" or "rebalancing" by the US in this area. This, to my mind, is a development fraught with uncertainty. We don't yet know

whether these economic and strategic transitions will be peaceful, but that is the challenge this audience must grapple with institutionally.

Secondly, and evidently, globalization is a phenomenon that we have to deal with in every domain. But this in itself is not a new or a post- Cold War phenomenon. We only need recall Pliny and the Roman Empire and the bemoaning of the fact that the coffers of imperial Rome were being emptied to import silk and spice from the east. What is new today is the pace and texture of globalization driven by technology, including the ubiquitous Internet.

While globalization has induced growing and complex inter-dependencies among states and multinationals on the economic and trade front, it has also nurtured intense competition and rivalries in the security domain. Managing this contradictory tenor, which has been highlighted by the global surveillance operation mounted by the US National Security Agency, is also a policy imperative for us. Naturally, our objective must be to acquire tangible national capacity, or what the lexicon now refers to as comprehensive national power. This is the amalgam of economic, technological and industrial prowess, buttressed by the appropriate military sinews.

Thirdly, the first six decades after independence have seen the country facing many challenges to its territorial integrity and sovereignty. And the nation and its military have risen to the occasion every time. Fittingly, the people acknowledge the Indian military for its patriotism and professionalism. But what is the way ahead for the Indian military? We are committed to the path of peace but the military must be able to protect Indian interests if they are threatened or challenged. Thus, creating a military that is driven by abiding interests, as opposed to the transient threat, is the driving principle.

Coming to the situation in our neighbourhood, there is no doubt that we will continue to confront formidable challenges. Further afield, the continuing turmoil in West Asia could not only imperil our energy security and the livelihood and safety of seven million Indians, but also become a crucible for radicalism, terrorism, arms proliferation and sectarian conflict that could touch our shores too. The Asia Pacific region, with which our relations are intensifying in every domain, is equally critical, not least

because it is becoming the arena for shaping the behavior of major powers.

Our higher defence organization should pay close attention to these specific developments. In addition, our strategic horizons should also include the need to protect our global seaborne trade in goods, energy and minerals, the well-being of Indian expatriate communities worldwide and the growing global footprint of Indian capital. As our capabilities grow, we will increasingly be called upon to help in natural disasters or zones of conflict and instability.

How to deal with these multiple questions is the task before you. Allow me to share with you some of my thoughts on what we need to do internally and make a few brief points.

I urge the Defence Ministry and the armed forces, as also the DRDO, to build on this experience and urgently review the different Task Force reports that our government has initiated with a view to achieving a higher index of indigenous capability in military inventory production. For too long, we have debated the merits of private versus public sector. It would be more useful to think in terms of aggregate national capacity that harnesses the full power of our public sector, private enterprises, research laboratories and universities to create an innovative and efficient indigenous base for production, research and development. We must also take advantage of a favourable international environment to build a domestic defence industrial base.

We require urgent and tangible progress in establishing the right structures for higher defence management and the appropriate civil-military balance in decision making that our complex security environment demands. Again, I encourage you to give this the highest professional consideration, harmonize existing differences among the individual services and evolve a blue-print for the future. I can assure you of the most careful consideration of your recommendations by the political leadership.

The two issues that I have just raised are also relevant to a looming and a serious challenge before us. We need to match our investment in military equipment and forces to our national resources. During most of the past decade, we have had the benefit of average annual growth rates of 8%.

But the last two years have seen slow growth and we continue to face an uncertain international economic climate marked by volatile exchange rate fluctuations and the possibility of fragmenting trade regimes. I have no doubt that we will overcome our current economic slowdown, but we will have to exercise prudence in our defence acquisition plans and cut our coat according to our cloth. While we must take into account the capabilities of our adversaries, we have to plan our long term acquisition on the assumption of limited resource availability. This is an exercise that has to be done with a high degree of priority and urgency.

People are at the heart of our armed forces and it is the distinctive value system of the military that provides cohesion to its human resource. The globalization I referred to earlier and the rising levels of individual aspirations have had a significant impact on our people. The military is no exception. As the senior leadership, you are responsible for the lives and welfare of your men and women in uniform. As commanders, you also have to introspect over fidelity to inviolable principles and set an example. Where the institution has frayed, remedial policy initiatives are imperative and I urge you to heed the old adage that the management of human resources is of the highest importance to any military. The Indian military has an illustrious pedigree and there can be nobody who knows better than you how best to burnish it.

There have been concerns that have been raised in recent times about the nature of civil-military relations in our country. Let me assert, clearly and unequivocally, that the political leadership of India has the highest faith in its military and its institutional rectitude within the democratic framework. The apolitical nature of our military and its proven professionalism are the envy of the world and have also nurtured the Indian democratic experience. Our democracy and institutions have proven their ability to deal with any issues or doubts that may arise.

Friends, I know you will agree with me that the real strength of our country will come from an overriding sense of national purpose. We need to return our economy to the high growth path. We need to develop our industrial and manufacturing base. We need to unleash the power of innovation in India, so that we can find new solutions to our pressing challenges. We also need to make our economic development socially and economically more inclusive, regionally balanced and

environmentally sustainable. Above all, we need to strengthen the values that define us - democracy, rule of law, individual liberties, social and religious harmony and commitment to global peace.

I know that our armed forces live by this creed and serve as an example to the rest of the world. They embody formidable strength, but wield it with maturity and responsibility. They are prepared for the toughest missions, but are committed to the cause of peace. They brave storms, extreme cold and searing heat to guard our nation, so that India can pursue its dreams. In the weeks and months ahead, our security challenges will remain complex but our resolve too must remain steadfast. I am confident that our armed forces will discharge their collective responsibility towards flag and country with the zeal and passion that has become their byword. I wish you all success in all your endeavours.
Thank you. Jai Hind.



055. Interview of External Affairs Minister with a TV channel - CNBC-TV18.

New Delhi, November 28, 2013.

CNBC-TV18 (Ms Shereen Bhan): Hello! Welcome to The Appointment – The Election Exchange. I am Shereen Bhan and we are in conversation with the Minister of External Affairs Salman Khurshid.

Mr. Khurshid, I appreciate your joining us on CNBC-TV18. Let me start by asking you about what is being seen as this historic Iran pact. How much of a benefit is it going to be for India? There is all kinds of speculation on whether India actually played a role in brokering this peace agreement. Is that too much credit to us?

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): I guess people do take India seriously. We do not have to always step in and say we will play the honest broker and we will get everyone together. But the fact that India is around ...

CNBC-TV18: We were not a broker at all in this?

External Affairs Minister: We were not brokers, but the fact that we were around, the fact we kept our channels of communication with everyone, the fact that I visited Iran when they were under severe sanctions, the fact that we were in a constant conversation between ourselves in Europe with Cathy Ashton, with Secretary Kerry during his visit here and of course during my visit with the Prime Minister to the US, and of course we kept an open line with Iran. We had a lot of visits here; and when I went there I met President Rouhani in Bishkek on the sidelines of the SCO meeting. So, we were saying the sensible thing, and the sensible thing I believe was taken seriously. We were told periodically that Iran trusts you, continue talking to them. And just as they said, we do not think that we do not have communications with others but ...

CNBC-TV18: But were you the back channel?

External Affairs Minister: No, not back channels. Whatever we did was upfront. We would say that talk to Iran properly. They have a civilisational perception of themselves. You have to talk to them with that class. You have to talk to them with a sense of sincerity, and you will get a response from Iran. This is my reading. I gave this a year ago to Baroness Cathy Ashton. And I must say that she was extremely sensitive and she picked up the cues as it were rather well. And I think whatever else everyone will be seeing as having done but I think her sensible way of steering things towards a consensus has been quite remarkable.

CNBC-TV18: Now what is this really going to mean now in terms of India? And let me start talking specifics. What is it going to mean in terms of Iranian oil imports? The Oil Minister and you, you have been talking about increasing or hiking Iranian oil imports, which are down 40 per cent by the way year on year. How soon can we see a difference?

External Affairs Minister: You know why. It is because people were not willing to provide insurance for oil tankers because of their understanding of the sanctions. People were not willing to provide reinsurance for refineries in India.

CNBC-TV18: How soon can we see those channels being activated now that we have this pact in place?

External Affairs Minister: I think that the signals that we have had, these are only early signals that we have had, understandings that they have reached, what our Ambassador has conveyed to us. I think the details are being made available. I would imagine that this should open up many many avenues which could ultimately lead to a much more convenient passage of oil from Iran to us. Iran has been very keen to stand by India in its needs for sourcing energy. And we have always said to them that except for multilateral sanctions to which we will not be... *(Inaudible)*... Security Council, we are not accepting any other sanctions. But you may not accept sanctions, you may not endorse sanctions, but they do affect the banking system, they do affect the insurance channels and so on.

CNBC-TV18: I agree with you. But you must have had conversations with your counterpart in the Oil Ministry because you know Mr. Moily has said that we could see a savings in excess of US\$ 8 billion if we were to import 11 million tonnes of Iranian crude. What can we really expect in this fiscal and then the next?

External Affairs Minister: I do not have a calculation on this. I think that calculation will have to be done by Mr. Moily's Ministry. But I am in touch with him, closely I am in touch with him. We will look at all possibilities that there are to ease the sense of confinement that we felt because there were restrictions. We had banking channels available up to a point and then they dried up as well. So, there was a severe problem of even if you wanted to, to be able to do it. But we continued. We continued in a very wholesome relationship with Iran.

I think the good thing is that Iran understood that we had taken a principled position about the NPT. We are not signatories. They are signatories. And we felt that those who are signatories must continue to comply with the NPT. That is all we said. We continued to say that they have a right for peaceful use of nuclear energy. And I think that has now come about quite apparently. So, at the end of the day I think it works out well. But this is only the first phase. There are other phases to come. But I think that Iran has shown the will, Iran has shown the commitment. I think that this is a very wholesome movement forward.

CNBC-TV18:What about this business of dealing with Iran in Rupees as far as crude imports are concerned? Where do things currently stand on that? And not just Iran but between you and the Commerce Minister we are given to understand that you are actively engaging other countries to be able to trade in Rupees as well.

External Affairs Minister: There I follow the leader the Commerce Minister because the Commerce Minister...*(Inaudible)*... with these issues. But we have given him support on this. You know that the oil trade we have had with Iran is 60:40 but we have not been giving everything in hard currency to them. And of course the money that we have been paying has been kept in banks here which can only be used to a certain extent because of the sanctions. Now that will open up and I think it will be much more convenient for them to be able to both to repatriate that money as well as invest it here in various forms in trade. But there are limits to how much you can use up for bilateral trade but also for investments downstream, upstream as far as the petrochemicals sector is concerned.

CNBC-TV18:Sir, the Iranian Delegation was here in the capital over the weekend. They said that they anticipate bilateral trade between the two countries going up from the US\$ 15 billion currently to about US\$ 20 billion. Is that a fair expectation?

External Affairs Minister: I think so. I think it is a fair expectation. What we are looking at is a major engagement with Iran. Over the years we have talked to them about the pipeline. They talked about the pipeline.

CNBC-TV18:Is it likely to be a reality now?

External Affairs Minister: I think it should. I think we should put our ambitions up a bit. Of course it is not going to be entirely a government-to-government thing because we need private sector investment. And I hope the private sector will get a strong signal from us that this is something that is on. Iran raised the issue again, they are very keen, and I very categorically said that we are on, we are interested, and we are committed to this. And the only way that they can export gas by pipeline to Pakistan is that it provides economies of scale by being pumped all the way to India. I think there is a double advantage – interdependence between Pakistan and India on something that is very important economically to

both of us, and certainly to them because they would not be able to afford it otherwise, and of course a major link with Iran. Then once we have this pipeline going through, the TAPI pipeline going through, India is going to be a different place altogether.

CNBC-TV18: It is still far from reality. But let me ask you when do you believe that active engagement with Iran will start on the basis of Iranian oil imports because that is what the markets are excited about, that is what they want clarity on?

External Affairs Minister: It will be now. We are not going to wait. It will be now as we get to know the exact plan of action that they have worked out between 3+3 and Iran. As soon as we know the details, we will begin to work on them. Whichever windows open up, we will be there, we will be knocking on those windows eventually. So, there is not going to 'let us sit back and think about it for a while'. We are engaged. We have the infrastructure with them. We have the connectivity both in terms of politics as well as of interdependence. And as soon as the windows open, as I believe they are opening, we will be there.

CNBC-TV18: Let me now ask you about a possible backlash from countries like Israel and Saudi Arabia. Israel has come out very categorically and said that this is a historic mistake. Saudi Arabia has been a bit more sort of cautious in its opposition to this pact. Does India anticipate backlash because in a sense your foreign policy stance on Iran stands vindicated today? And if we are going to be upping our engagement with Iran, what is this actually going to mean?

External Affairs Minister: We have never made a secret of our relationship with Iran when we deal with Saudi Arabia. We have been very clear in our relationships in the world that our relationships are not predicated on our relationship with someone else. We have an outstanding relationship with the Saudis. I visited them before I went to Iran. I had a very very good round of meetings with the Saudis. And you can be sure that there is nothing that we have kept from anyone. Everybody knows we are transparent, we are above board, and that we have multiple relationships. There are disagreements or divergence of views on certain issues with one country but that does not mean that we do not have a convergence with that same country on another issue. Take Turkey, take Egypt, take Israel, take Saudi Arabia, take Iran, take

Iraq – all these countries may have difference of opinion or divergence on particular aspects. But as far as we are concerned, on merit we have a very good relationship with all of them and that is how we would like to see it happen.

CNBC-TV18: Let me go away from Iran and talk to you about another controversial issue and that is this issue of bilaterals and specifically the bilateral that has been signed between India and the UAE which in a sense is linked to the Jet-Etihad deal. You were part of that Group of Ministers whose opinion was sought on whether or not this bilateral should have been changed. It is now a matter which is being challenged in court by Subramanian Swamy. What was your contention for changing the bilateral, because you voted in favour of the change because you believed that sovereign wealth funds from the UAE and we would see more investment coming in? What was the argument that you presented to change the bilateral?

External Affairs Minister: I cannot understand! I think it is less a case of our having to justify why we took the position we did than a case of other people having to justify why they are against this position. Investment in India – we do not want? Greater collaboration with UAE – we do not want?

CNBC-TV18: But the argument on the other side is that India loses its position as a hub, that Air India will suffer on account of this bilateral agreement, and that this is a bilateral agreement that is being in favour of a particular transaction.

External Affairs Minister: We are very clear. We live in a modern world of commerce. In the modern world of commerce who says that Air India should confine itself to carrying labour to the Middle East. We think that Air India can be the finest airline in the world; and I think Air India needs to be ambitious. These seats are available to Air India and to UAE airlines. They are available to both. And Air India should come forward and take these seats and use them. Now, you cannot be a dog in the manger saying, 'I cannot use these seats, therefore you must not give them to anyone else'. I do not think this will work anywhere in the world anymore.

CNBC-TV18: But why was this done as far as UAE was concerned? There was a position that the Government had taken that we are going

to hold back as far as the negotiating of bilaterals is concerned. Requests had come in from Singapore etc., but the decision was not to look at or review bilaterals. Why then the decision to review the UAE bilateral?

External Affairs Minister: We are looking at bilaterals for others as well. And this is not just UAE, we are looking at Qatar as well. They want to renegotiate seats as well, and I think we should.

CNBC-TV18: But when will we see you review the bilateral with Qatar?

External Affairs Minister: That is for the Civil Aviation Ministry. The core mandate must come from the Civil Aviation Ministry. It is possible that sometimes they may think that they are not at present ready to take on another opportunity or challenge. We of course take it in the larger context of our relationship with the rest of the world. And each of these issues if they are very important to someone on the other side and they are not detrimental to us, detrimental to us in terms of the totality of investment that we can get into India, then why should we be niggardly and say no?

CNBC-TV18: But how much of the UAE bilateral is also in a sense linked to the telecom debacle? The UAE-Etiscalat lost significant amount of money in the 2G scam. How much of it was really in a sense to appease investor sentiment?

External Affairs Minister: It is not a question of appeasing investor sentiment. It is a simple question I ask. Do we need investment or we do not need investment? My understanding is that we need investment. And if we need investment, we must go and get it on the terms on which it is available so long as those terms are not detrimental or in principle unacceptable to us. Now if you go to the marketplace, you do not want to say I am going to fight with everybody in this market. You will be charming and you would be nice because you have to sell yourself. And you then go and negotiate a good price. But at the end of the day nobody else can tell you that you have not negotiated a good price. You are a free person. You have to go and decide what price you want to buy something at, what you need more and what you need less, and you take that decision as a sovereign country.

CNBC-TV18: Sir, how charming are you being when it comes to reviewing the BIPAs because that is another bone of contention? Where do things currently stand? There has been absolute silence on the BIPA.

External Affairs Minister: We have moved ahead on BIPA with the UAE where we did not have a BIPA. We have moved ahead on BIPA with UAE. I hope it will be signed shortly. And wherever we are negotiating a BIPA now, a standalone BIPA, we do indicate that this would have to be brought in line with whatever is the standard template that people have for BIPA for across the globe. I am told by the Finance Ministry that they are now within a whisker of getting the final template. Possibly in the month of December they will be ready with a template that will then be available for renegotiating BIPA with wherever we already have. But again, my understanding is that even as we negotiate BIPA we have got to understand that this is the high point for us to seek investment. There is an investment actually coming as a downpour into India today. We are lucky that investment lines have held, and that is wonderful. But in order to attract more investment, we need to be an attractive destination.

CNBC-TV18: Since you are talking about positioning India as an attractive destination, we are talking about investment protection agreements, let me talk to you about Vodafone. That in a sense was the start of the debacle as far as the India Story was concerned because it brought to light issues of tax uncertainty, of changing the rules of the game so to speak. Reconciliation talks have been continuing. There has been so much back and forth on this matter. Where do things currently stand? Are we going to see a resolution on the Vodafone issue in the tenure of the Government?

External Affairs Minister: There will be. There will be. It is not just the tenure of the Government but within the time that we have for legislation, because whatever solution is found and the negotiated settlement will then have to be reflected in legislation and it will have to come back to Parliament. My instinct and my understanding is that we have now possibly reached that stage where Finance Minister can now bring it to Parliament. The important thing to remember is that Vodafone was not the only issue. Many of us had different opinions on Vodafone. There were people who saw it from the point of view of the very opinion that you may find in the UK and in Europe where people have complained about companies coming in. ...*(Inaudible)*...

So, in that sense we were not completely way off the mark. But looking at what was important in terms of messages that we were sending to investors in the world ...

CNBC-TV18: I think because this was retrospective and because there was a Supreme Court judgement in favour of the company.

External Affairs Minister: So, there were problems and I think therefore we decided let us set those problems straight.

CNBC-TV18: Explain to me. You said that your instinct is that the Finance Minister is close to moving legislation on Vodafone matter and taking this to Parliament. As early as the Winter Session? And what do you mean by moving legislation? Will you move to amend the retrospective law?

External Affairs Minister: That he will have to take a call on. I do not want to foreclose anything that structurally what he thinks is the way to put a closure on this. But I do want to go back once again to what were the negative signals. The negative signals were not only about Vodafone, rightly or wrongly, but they were also about the way we through our courts handled a lot of other investments.

I believe, and I want to say this very clearly to you, that when we went back to the Supreme Court for an advisory opinion, there were nine questions that the Supreme Court was given. The Supreme Court said, we will answer five questions. They actually answered four. I think at some point of time the Supreme Court has to look at the fifth question and give us an answer. The fifth question was, when you decide something on the basis of domestic law, should you or should you not keep in mind the impact it has on the obligations that the sovereign government of the state has vis-a-vis other governments?

Obviously there are any number of cases that the Supreme Court has decided when it said that you must interpret the law in a manner consistent with and harmonious with your commitments to the rest of the world. And I think that fifth question that I thought as Minister of Law that we were desperately in need of an answer for from the Supreme Court, unfortunately we could not get. Now not having got an answer, we are handicapped. But at least I think I can expect and imagine what that answer would be if the Supreme Court finally was to handle it.

CNBC-TV18: But legislation to be moved as early as the Winter Session of Parliament?

External Affairs Minister: We probably have a last session because there will be one final session for vote on account, etc. But the last real legislative session will be Winter Session. So, I would imagine that if something is possible and needs to be done, it will be done during that Session. But this is a Finance Minister's call. I cannot, as I said, foreclose any decision that he takes.

CNBC-TV18: Since you were talking about your experience as a Law Minister, let me ask you a question which perhaps you looked at as well because it has been going back and forth for so long - the issue of the residual stake sale in Hindustan Zinc. This is a matter which was dealt with in 2002, that is when the original disinvestment took place. Today the Law Ministry and the Mines Ministry's opinion is that the Metals Corporation Act needs to be amended. The Finance Ministry believes if the original disinvestment was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2012, what is the issue with the residual stake sale? Where do you stand as a lawyer and the former Law Minister?

External Affairs Minister: Unfortunately I am not in the loop on this at all. All I would say is whatever we do, there is no morality involved in this. There is only good, sensible business sense that is involved, of course within the four corners of the Constitution, which is what the Supreme Court said. When they took up the auction issue, they said auction is not the only way of allocating resources, you have got to do it in any way which is reasonable but within the four corners of the Constitution. So, I would say the same thing. Within the four corners of the Constitution whatever makes good business sense, that is what we should do. But I am not in the loop. Therefore, I cannot give you a direct answer.

CNBC-TV18: Fair enough! We are running out of time. Let me ask you a specific question on what is happening with the sugar crisis in Uttar Pradesh. There seems to be a state of complete disarray! The State Government refuses to act. The Centre says we will look into the matter. The Congress has not really come out in support of either the farmers or the sugar mill owners in Uttar Pradesh. The BSP is quiet. The BJP has not said anything. Is there more to this than meets the eye?

External Affairs Minister: This is what makes running the Indian economy very difficult and very tough. There is a very very important element of political aspiration. It may not be enlightened, it may be just a matter of one's stomach, a matter of one's livelihood. But the farmers who are into sugarcane in UP, not from this year alone but for decades, have been asking for higher prices. And what the State Government and the Centre have been doing is that they are gradually pushing the prices that the farmers get up higher and higher. Of course it is done through a proper process and so on. But the industry says, we cannot afford to pay. This is like the equivalent of a Constitutional crisis. This is an economic crisis and we need to find an economic answer.

CNBC-TV18: Given the fact that this is in Uttar Pradesh, political opportunity perhaps as well, will the Centre intervene by way of a package like the one that was announced in 2006-07?

External Affairs Minister: That is the only answer. When you give a package when somebody wants a package, it becomes incumbent on the State Government to come and tell the Centre, look this is an impossible situation, this is an economic crisis, please help us, let us work together to find a solution. We cannot be sending postcards and we cannot be sending money or... (*Inaudible*)... to a State that does not even tell us, can you please work with us to find a solution. I am sure the answer lies in the State and the Central Governments putting their heads together and finding a solution. This is an important economic issue that must be solved and must be solved as quickly as possible.

CNBC-TV18: My final question to you. Elections are round the corner. Polls seems to suggest that the BJP has a clear advantage in States like Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan perhaps is close, Delhi I do not know is it going to Aam Aadmi Party or the BJP, but polls certainly seem to suggest that it is not going to be the Congress. My final question to you, does it look like you are in a losing battle?

External Affairs Minister: I do not know. Wherever I have been it does not look that bad.

CNBC-TV18: You think it does not look that bad but it is looking bad.

External Affairs Minister: No. It is not a runaway election for us. It is not a landslide election for us because we have incumbency issues. We

have had some issues of central incumbency. We fought it hard. I think from what I have seen of Mrs Gandhi's rallies and Rahulji's rallies, I see that people are coming out. I am not prepared to throw the towel in. I think that we have a good fight and we will talk about this on the day the results come. We are still in the campaign. Tomorrow morning I am going to be in Rajasthan again. So, we are still in the campaign. Why should we accept what everyone is saying? I am not going to run into this problem of Oh, these things are not reliable; or your sample size is too small. Whatever the opinion polls will say and whatever exit polls will say ...

CNBC-TV18: You are not sounding confident Salman Khurshid.

External Affairs Minister: I am sounding confident. I am not foolish like other people who say, you will see phenomenal results. They have said it before and they have lost. So, they can say it again and they will lose. What we are saying is, we know what our job is. Our job is cut out. We are doing it. We are going step by step. We are doing what is the right thing to do - in a sober way, confident way, go and fight the elections and then take the results in your stride.

CNBC-TV18: Salman Khurshid, always a pleasure speaking with you. Thank you very much for joining us on The Appointment – The Election Exchange.

External Affairs Minister:

Thank you



056. Speech by President Pranab Mukherjee to the members of the Arunachal Legislative Assembly.

Itanagar, November 29, 2013.

Nested in the foothills of the Himalayas, the State of Arunachal Pradesh has always occupied a unique space in the Indian imagination. The natural beauty of the state along with it being home to a diversity of cultures, religions and peoples has rendered it a special character within the Indian Union.

Arunachal is the largest state area-wise in the north-east region with ever green forests covering 82% of the State. The state is inhabited by 26 major tribes and 110 sub-tribes, who speak different dialects. At the same time the state has the lowest density in the country of 17 persons per sq. km.

Arunachal Pradesh abounds in places of historical and cultural importance. It finds mention in the Puranas and the Mahabharata. It is believed that here Sage Parashuram washed away his sins, Sage Vyasa meditated, King Bhishmaka founded his kingdom and Lord Krishna married his consort Rukmini. Arunachal is also home to the 400 year old Tawang Monastery and the birth place of the sixth Dalai Lama, Tsangyang Gyatso. Arunachal Pradesh is a nature's treasure trove and home to more than 500 varieties of orchids, 500 indigenous species of medicinal plants, 115 species of Rhodendrons and 60 species of indigenous Bamboo. The richness of flora and fauna that occur in this state presents a panorama of biological diversity.

I am pleased to know, this Assembly has over the years taken many legislature initiatives in the fields of Land Reforms, Education, Social Welfare, Health, Protection of Forest and Environment, Panchayat Raj, Municipal Corporation etc. The emphasis laid by successive Governments on faster and inclusive development under the guidance of this Legislature over the last 38 years has resulted in significant improvement in the quality of life.

The State which started from almost zero literacy rate at the time of independence is soon going to touch the national average. The Prime Minister's Package announced on January 31, 2008 is under speedy

implementation. It is a matter of joy that within couple of months the people of this State will get their first ever train in the State capital. I congratulate and compliment all of you on the many achievements of Arunachal Pradesh in recent times.

Arunachal Pradesh has always recorded a relatively high percentage of voter turn-out in every election. This shows the interest and political consciousness of the people of the State. This is very encouraging and further promotes the growth of representative democracy.

Traditions of consultative decision-making have been prevalent in our country since the ancient times. It is said that during the Vedic age, Assemblies of people conducted the business of administration by deliberating on policies, formulating legislation and dispensing justice. The popular assembly was a regular institution in the early years of the Buddhistic age. They used to consider petitions of people and also act as the Supreme Court of appeal. Archaeological inscriptions of the Tenth and Eleventh centuries of the current era indicate that the institution of the Sabha or assembly in our country had achieved a high degree of efficiency.

In a similar manner, the people of this land have also ruled themselves through customary and traditional laws of respective tribes. Institutions like Buliang, Kebang, Mouchuk etc. were democratic institutions which derived their authority from the expression of the will and power of the people. These systems are still prevalent and function side by side with the modern system of representative democracy. I was delighted to learn that leaders of the traditional councils like Kebang, Buliang etc. recite at the beginning of their meeting – (quote) “Villagers and brethren, let us strengthen our custom and our council, let us improve our relations, let us make the laws straight and equal for all, let our laws be uniform, let our customs be the same for all, let us be guided by the reason and see that justice is done and the compromise reached that is acceptable to both parties. Let us decide while the dispute is fresh, lest the small disputes grow big and continue for the long time. We have come together for a council meeting and let us speak in one voice and decide our verdict. So let us decide and mete out justice.” (Unquote). Modern day legislators would do well to heed this sage advice of the tribal elders.

India today is recognized as a role model of a successful modern Constitutional parliamentary democracy. The fact that we are operating in a highly pluralistic and diverse society beset with myriad challenges is also well known. When we opted for parliamentary democracy as the governing model for free India, the world viewed us with scepticism, and even suspicion. But, we have proved the prophets of doom wrong and maintained our unity, established a highly successful democracy and registered rapid economic growth.

The Parliament and Legislatures are the cornerstone on which rests the edifice of our democratic polity. One of the basic objectives of a representative democracy is to see that governance is carried out keeping in mind the interests of the people and their needs and aspirations. In a parliamentary democracy, the legislature represents the sovereign will of the people.

Friends, being a representative of the people is a matter of privilege and a great honour. This privilege however carries with it great responsibility. Elected representatives have many roles to play and there are competing demands – from one's Party, from the Assembly and from the constituency. The job of a legislator is a 24/7 responsibility. They have to be sensitive and responsive to the problems of the people and give voice to their grievances by raising them on the floor of the Legislature. They must act as the link between the people and the Government.

The Legislative Assembly is a master of the Executive in the sense that the Chief Minister along with his Council of Ministers is accountable collectively and severally to the Legislative Assembly. The Executive can be unseated at any time by passing a resolution of 'No Confidence' in the State Legislative Assembly by a simple majority. Moreover, most of the instruments of governance are executed through appropriate laws passed by Legislatures. The Executive's dependence on Legislature is total and it is essential that legislatures are responsible and responsive to this huge task entrusted on it by the Constitution.

Elected representatives have exclusive control over money and finance. No expenditure can be incurred by the Executive without approval of Legislature, no tax can be levied except by a law passed by the Legislature and no money can be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund of the State without the approval of the Legislature. With the heightened complexity

of administration and legislation, Legislators must ensure adequate discussion and scrutiny before passing of legislation.

Our founding fathers dreamt of an India in which the three pillars of the State, namely, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary work in conjunction, exercising checks and balances on one another in a manner that ensures that its citizens can grow in an environment of freedom, justice and equality. This separation of power avoids absolute concentration of power in any one organ of State. In addition, the Constitution of India also provides for separation between the two levels of government – Centre and State with the legislative powers of each clearly defined in the Constitution. The last few decades have shown that the founding fathers had chosen wisely and well, and that our people, have proved detractors to be wrong, and have made a wonderful success of our democracy, which is the largest in the world.

Arunachal Pradesh is an integral and important part of the North East region of India and a core stakeholder in India's Look East foreign policy. India has long standing civilizational bonds with its neighbours in South and South East Asia as well as East Asia. The north east of India provides a natural bridge between us and South East Asia. The essential philosophy of our Look East Policy, is that India must find its destiny by linking itself more and more with its Asian partners and the rest of the world. We seek to make our neighbours partners in our development. We believe that India's future and our own best economic interests are served by closer integration with Asia.

There is little time to be lost. Considering the huge pool of natural resources and the quality of its human resources, the North East of India has the potential of being an important investment destination and a centre for trade and business. We must harness the opportunities that are emerging from the rise of Asia and India's growing economic integration of India with the region. No longer should this State be considered remote. The Centre and State Government should together rapidly build the infrastructure linkages and connectivity with the rest of India that is required and this Legislature and the people of Arunachal should extend every assistance possible to this venture.

The State has a total hydropower potential of about 58,000 MW. I am happy to know that projects of almost 46,000 MW hydro-power potential

have been allotted for development to central public sector undertakings and various independent power producers of which majority of allotment is for development of projects in joint sector with the state government. It is a challenge for the people and the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh as well as the Central Government to ensure that these Hydropower Projects are commissioned in time and the economy of Arunachal Pradesh gets a quantum jump to become one of the richest states in the country. Since Arunachal Pradesh has common borders with three countries, the development of border areas is also vital and must receive our utmost attention.

The biggest asset of India as an emerging global economic power is our talented, forward looking and resourceful youth population. The people of the Arunachal Pradesh are fast in learning, adaptable to change, open in their outlook and technology friendly. We need to collectively ensure that our youth are equipped with the best of skills and knowledge. They must be provided every opportunity possible to develop their innate talents and contribute to not just this state and country but entire humanity.

I am happy to note that the political leadership of the State is fully seized of the challenges and opportunities and is working sincerely to usher in a new era of peace and prosperity to its people. There is nothing which can stand in the way of Arunachal Pradesh provided there is will and determination on the part of its people and leaders.

I wish all of you gathered here and the people of the state all success in your efforts to attain speedy and sustainable economic development of the state. I call upon the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly to continue to maintain the highest standards of democratic practice and dedicate itself totally to the welfare of the people.

May Arunachal Pradesh emerge as a land of grace and beauty, a shining jewel amongst the diverse states that make our wonderful country.

Thank you

Jai Hind!



057. Inaugural Address by the Prime Minister at the 8th Asia Gas Partnership Summit.

New Delhi, December 3, 2013.

“I am very happy to be associated with the Asia Gas Partnership Summit once again, and to address the distinguished delegates who have come here both from within our country, and outside. It is my great pleasure to extend to you, welcome to India, where several exciting developments are taking place all along the gas value chain.

This is a unique platform in the area of energy. The conference had a humble beginning 10 years ago, but now sees participation from several leading oil and gas companies of the world. I congratulate the Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) for their initiative in organizing this event and making it a huge success every year.

Natural gas, as we all know, is the fuel of choice today. It is an efficient fuel for power generation. As a cleaner alternative for vehicles, it reduces air-pollution and leads to an improved quality of life.

Over the years, natural gas has become increasingly important as a source of energy in our country, with the rate of growth in natural gas consumption being the highest among all commercial energy sources. There are a variety of reasons for this including environmental concerns, the need for fuel diversification, energy prices and market deregulation.

Our primary public undertaking in this field, GAIL, has also grown over the years and has become a diversified conglomerate. Today, GAIL is one of our best Public Sector Enterprises and has been categorized as a Maharatna. I am very happy to see GAIL expanding its operations to far-off markets in order to contribute to our energy security.

The natural gas sector has undergone a sea change in recent years in the global context as well. Rapid growth in the production of Shale gas in the United States has opened possibilities of similar success in other parts of the world. The technological and economic possibilities that the Shale gas revolution has opened up are likely to further change the global energy landscape in the years to come. There will be new producers, new consumers and new trading arrangements that will come into place.

We too are hopeful that we will be fortunate in discovering Shale gas reserves in our country as well.

The Shale gas revolution has been made possible primarily by two factors – technology and market-based pricing. This is a combination that is essential to provide rapidly growing economies like ours with energy solutions commensurate with our needs.

Asia has been the driver of the global LNG demand. It accounts now for around 70% of all LNG traded globally. It is projected that Asia will continue to occupy the same share in global LNG demand which is likely to grow to 2 to 3 times the current levels by the year 2020.

India needs to increase its energy supply by 3 to 4 times within next two decades. It currently ranks as the world's seventh largest energy producer, accounting for just about 2.5% of the world's total annual energy production, while it is the 4th largest energy consumer. With oil and gas constituting around 41% of India's primary energy consumption, India is expected to be the 3rd largest energy consumer by the year 2020.

To bridge this gap between supply and demand, we are encouraging domestic and global companies to explore our onshore and offshore regions. I take this opportunity to assure investors of our Government's commitment to providing a stable and enabling policy environment for exploration of new sources of energy.

India is also progressively pursuing other options to achieve energy security. One of these is the acquisition of energy assets in other countries. I congratulate GAIL, ONGC Videsh Ltd., and other companies for their efforts in this direction. These will not only help us in securing new supplies of energy but also in acquisition of the latest technological know-how.

The theme of this summit – “Asian Gas Market: Challenges & Opportunities in the changing Paradigm” is of great importance given the huge demand for natural gas in Asia, and the rapid developments which have recently taken place in the oil and gas sector. I am sure the summit will help in finding creative solutions leading to stronger partnerships between buyers in Asia and international sellers. Despite having a huge demand for natural gas, countries like India are not able to secure adequate volumes owing to differences in price expectations

between buyers and sellers. I hope this and other similar issues will be addressed during this two day event.

There are exciting opportunities in India for partnerships for joint investments in areas like gas pipeline development, LNG terminals, Petrochemicals, gas trading hubs and city gas distribution. I also hope that the participants in this conference will return with better insights about these opportunities in India as well as in other emerging markets of Asia.

With these words, I wish the 8th Asia Gas Partnership Summit all success. I also wish our guests from abroad a very pleasant stay in our country.



058. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Secretary General of the Arab League and other miscellaneous matters.

New Delhi, December 13, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good evening friends. Today is a busy news day although it is the end of the week, and there are lots of issues that I suppose you may be interested in. So, apologise for coming a bit late.

For Briefing on the visit of the Secretary General of the Arab League please see Document No.....

Q: Sir, this is regarding the incident in New York about Devyani. Her family members say that the domestic help has blackmailed her. Meanwhile the other issue is, can a diplomat be arrested other than it is a murder or whatever? Is not there something called diplomatic immunity? And if there is, how did this happen and are we taking it up with the Americans? What are the facts of the case as you have it?

Official Spokesperson: Shrinjoy, let me start by saying that Dr. Devyani Khobragade is a diplomat who is in the US in pursuance of her duties and hence is entitled to the courtesy due to a diplomat in the country of

her work. She is also a young mother of two small children. We are shocked and appalled at the manner in which she has been humiliated by the US authorities. We have taken this up forcefully with the US Government through our Embassy in Washington. We are also reiterating in no uncertain terms to the US Embassy here that this kind of treatment to one of our diplomats is absolutely unacceptable. The Ministry of External Affairs is working to resolve the matter at the earliest.

As regards the facts of the case, our Embassy in Washington has put out a press release and these are available, as we perceive them. If there are issues of a legal nature, these will be resolved separately. And you would appreciate that at this stage I would not be in a position to go into the legal issues if there are any. But as far as we are concerned, this sort of behaviour towards an Indian diplomat is completely unacceptable.

Q: Sir, this is second such incident related to maids and Indian diplomats in the US. Considering the allegation which has been made by the US that facts had been misinterpreted and they are calling it fraud to obtain a visa for the maid by showing a fraudulent contract with her, promising to pay her ten dollars an hour, considering that this is second such incident involving maids in the US, would there be some kind of an advisory by the MEA to its diplomats?

Official Spokesperson: Vikas, I understand your need to probe this case further. But as I mentioned to you earlier, given that these have some legal issues involved we will use the appropriate forum to respond to that. We are open to responding in other mechanisms to any of this because there is nothing that accounts for humiliating publically a young woman with two small children, a person who has been sent as a diplomat to represent her country.

We will take issues of legal nature separately but there is no justification or acceptability of what has happened this morning to a young Indian diplomat who was there to drop her children in school. This is simply not acceptable to us.

Q: Could you just give us a little more in terms of what you are asking the US to do? In a sense the US Attorney's office seems to be very clear about the charges that they have put against her, and has made a

point of saying on its website in its statement that in fact this has nothing to do with her duties when it comes to diplomatic duties. So, she is being treated as an ordinary citizen who has in fact committed what they think is a visa fraud and a criminal charge. In fact in addition to what Vishal was saying is that it is not the second but the third such case in three years, is there a specific problem here because all of them seem to emanate from the Consular General of New York?

Official Spokesperson: Suhasini, I understand your desire to understand this thing in a broader perspective and we certainly will provide you that information. However, nothing that we say today should impinge on what is a substantive issue which we will contest substantially. But that does not absolve the US authorities of having humiliated and traumatised an Indian diplomat who is in the US performing her duties. We will take those other issues up in the fora that they desire and try and resolve it. For the present, please be patient with us because anything that we say may have an impact on what is a delicate matter which we are trying to resolve. So, I ask and seek your indulgence for some space and time as we work to resolve this issue.

Q: Sir, do Indian diplomats get an allowance for this maid thing abroad? And would you be considering an increase in allowance considering that there is this need to be thrifty as well as to keep a 24-hour person to look after?

Official Spokesperson: Sandip, it is a well-known fact that anybody who works with the Government of India gets paid. So, I think it is quite disturbing that you ask whether an allowance is paid. Obviously anybody who works will be paid for it. As I said, again I do not want to get into the details for the simple reason we will have a briefing for all of you on this matter when things are a bit clearer. We are right now in the process of resolving this issue. Anything that we say should not impinge on the facts of the case or on the substance of the matter. So, I would request you to bear with us in terms of seeking information on the substance. We put out what our perception is; they put out what their perception is. There are fora to work this out and we will work that out. But working this out does not in any way justify what has happened this morning. We certainly feel that this is unacceptable, and we will take this up extremely seriously.

Q: Just taking on from what Sandip has asked, when a diplomat takes someone to help or him, who pays that person, who pays the maid? It must be their personal thing.

Official Spokesperson: Let me repeat. It is a very complex issue because whoever travels on behalf of Government of India has a passport issued by the Government of India as an official. We have a case, we will make that case. I do not want to make that here in front of everybody because if there is a legal case, we will provide for that legal case. Who pays for it, how much the Government of India pays for it varies from place to place. We will try and explain to you the entire panorama of that situation.

But nothing that we say should in anyway adversely impact on a case where we are confident that we will be able to justify. So, please hold on. The facts of the case, there is a forum for explaining that and we will explain that. I understand your interest and concern in this, but it should not override our ability to make that case in the proper fora. Please understand that.

Q: Akbar, we have over 30 structured dialogues between India and the United States. Do not you have a mechanism to address these issues? Given that an Indian diplomat is humiliated publicly, and given your strong reaction, do not we have a way to resolve these issues more amicably? And where do things go wrong?

Official Spokesperson: I take your point. These are first of all isolated incidents. Therefore, these need to be resolved as they happen. There is no system that everything can be covered in any number of dialogues. So, while we do have a Consular Dialogue with the US on matters of a consular nature, these are matters relating to diplomatic and consular privileges, rights covered under the conventions which are agreed to multilaterally. So, we will take this up and discuss bilaterally. Different people can have different interpretations but that does not mean that you can humiliate a young diplomat who is also the mother of two small children publicly when she goes to drop her children to school.

Q: Are Indian diplomats not aware of US labour laws that they keep getting into trouble where hiring housekeepers and maids is concerned? I am told this is the third incident of its kind. Why does it happen again and again?

Official Spokesperson: I think if you have read the statement put out by our Embassy in Washington, it clearly states that a court in Delhi had given an order. So, please do not think that there was a lack of awareness. There was already a judicial recourse taken by that young Indian woman diplomat. There is a court judgment from that case which has been given. So, let us not jump to conclusions about lack of knowledge. There is enough knowledge. There is a legal process. And in this case she did follow that process.

But please try and understand that at this stage we do not want to get into further details and try and explain to you the entire expanse because this case will be made, it will be made forcefully, it will be made clearly and we will try and resolve this issue.

Q: This is regarding President Karzai's meeting with the Prime Minister. What is India's stand on Afghanistan's Bilateral Security Agreement with America? What is India's advice to President Karzai?

Official Spokesperson: President Karzai is currently on his thirteenth visit to India. This is the fifth in the last three years. It shows the intensity of our relationship. It shows also the degree of belief in each other, that our destinies are intertwined. President Karzai right now, a little later today, will be completing his official working part of the visit, that is, he is to meet the President of India. And ordinarily we do not comment on a visit while it is ongoing. However, I will try and respond to you in the sense of giving you an idea of what our approach to this matter is.

If you would like to know whether the BSA was discussed, the answer to that is yes. It was discussed because India and Afghanistan feel our destinies are intertwined. Both India and Afghanistan see the BSA as important for the stability and security of Afghanistan. As you are aware, our approach to Afghanistan has always been one of not being prescriptive, not being intrusive, and not being judgmental. Therefore, while we will have a little bit more to say to you at the end of the visit, you would appreciate that this is the paradigm through which we approach this matter.

We are confident that President Karzai is a sagacious and wise leader, and he will do what is best for the people of Afghanistan. As a close and steadfast friend of Afghanistan and in accordance with the Indian approach to Afghanistan, we will support it.

But you will have to wait for further details. I assure you that we are working on a more detailed explanation of all the issues that are discussed during the visit.

Q: Sir, Pakistan has raised the Kashmir issue in OIC. What is India's reaction on that?

Official Spokesperson: You are right and we note with regret that the OIC has once again made factually incorrect and misleading references to matters internal to India including the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir which is an integral part of India. We reject all such references and resolutions. The OIC has no locus standi on matters concerning the internal affairs of India or the recent incidents on the LOC.

Q: Sir, my question is on Bangladesh. The situation is so volatile there that it is very difficult to put all the questions in a single format. Still I am trying my best.

When the Foreign Secretary met the US Secretary of State, I saw a PTI report stating that the situation inside Bangladesh was also discussed. Yesterday Quader Molla was hanged. After that a lot of violence has taken place today. What would be India's line of thinking on this issue? How do you approach this issue?

Official Spokesperson: I think you have asked three questions and I will try and answer all three of them so that you do not ever feel that we are evasive on this.

Yes, when the Foreign Secretary did go, and even previously, we have had discussions on regional issues in South Asia, as we have done before, with the US. And the issue of the situation as you indicated in Bangladesh did come up. We have acknowledged this previously also that there have been conversations between India and US as we are engaged in a strategic partnership which covers a variety of regional, international and bilateral issues, we do cover issues in the region including in this case the issue related to Bangladesh. That is the first point that I would like to make.

The second point is that we proceed with our relations with Bangladesh on the principles of mutual respect, mutual benefit, non-interference and respect for each other's sovereignty. Our relations with Bangladesh are

broad based and inclusive. India has always respected and will always respect the wishes of the people of Bangladesh. It is for the people of Bangladesh to decide their future. We have deep respect for their wisdom and achievements. And we are confident that as a democracy the people of Bangladesh will resolve their differences through dialogue and peaceful means in an atmosphere free of violence.

That brings me to your last question. The execution of the death sentence of Abdul Quader Molla the Assistant Secretary-General of Jamaat-e-Islami, is an outcome of the internal judicial processes and laws of Bangladesh. I hope I have covered all the three areas even though they were encapsulated into one question.

Q: Sir, back to Afghanistan. Last time when President Karzai was here in India he had openly demanded arms and other logistical help. Has this issue come up this time too and whether India has any stand on that?

Official Spokesperson: I think you are so eager you would like to jump the gun. I suggested to you that at the end of the day when all the discussions are over we will provide you a more detailed statement on all areas that we have discussed.

Q: I am not asking you whether you have discussed this particular issue but I would like to know, given the emphasis that has been there on the issue of Afghanistan as well as other points – though you spoke of issues of our interest in peace and stability in Afghanistan and also respect for non-interference and the principle of sovereignty – what is the view that the MEA takes on the Afghan President's own Spokesman having spoken of Washington trying to incite people in the present regime against President Karzai with whom we are holding talks? When I say incitement I mean the US Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defence, all of them saying that it is not necessary for the President to sign the BSA.

Official Spokesperson: I think what I had on the BSA I have told you. I would suggest that from those you can draw inferences of what our position is. If you read it carefully, the answer to your question is already there. That said, if you would like to wait, wait for some more time, a couple of hours perhaps, and you will have a more detailed version. I have shared what I can at this stage and I think that question already stands answered, if you read carefully what I have said.

Q: What is the status of the Indo-Myanmar border issue in Manipur?

Official Spokesperson: I think you are new to covering issues which I handle. My view has always been that what happens on the border is handled by the sentinels of the border. I deal only with the political implications of those. If there are issues happening on the border, I suggest that you direct your questions to those who have responsibility of that border. In this case it would be the Ministry of Home Affairs which deals with that.

Q: I will be happy if you just clear the statement of the US NSA on the snooping and surveillance. Is the Indian Government satisfied with the statement?

Official Spokesperson: I have not seen that statement if it is just a new one. So, I am not aware of that. But I will have a look at that statement and I am willing to respond to you and to send it across to everybody if there is a new statement.

Q: What is the update on the Japanese Prime Minister coming to India?

Official Spokesperson: You have been for long covering our conferences. I just announced a visit coming on the 16th of December. And I have no idea of any visit during this year from the country you mentioned because we had a very very successful visit of the Emperor and the Empress recently. If you are talking of visits in the next year, I think there is still a long way to go.

Q: Our Foreign Secretary was in the US. What are two or three broad outcomes that float from there? Also, we are all a little intrigued given the much trumpeted closeness between India and the United States, how do incidents like what you said as regards the Indian diplomats happen? I mean it is just contrary to the spirit of India-US relations.

Official Spokesperson: I think I have answered that question. If you see the answer, it is already there. This is an isolated incident, we are trying to work through this. However, on the other broader things, the focus of that visit was to see how we proceed in 2014 following from the outcomes of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's meeting with President Obama earlier this year. So, the idea was to try and see where are the major issues that we need to focus on next year, how do we go about it.

We intend to have an Energy Dialogue early next year. That will be held in Delhi between Deputy-Chairman, Planning Commission and Energy Secretary on the US side. You would have noticed that Foreign Secretary did meet Deputy Secretary Ponemen regarding this issue. There are other dialogues which are being lined up. You also have noticed that Foreign Secretary had her first dialogue on strategic security with the Acting Under Secretary of State for Non-proliferation Matters. So, this is an intensification of our engagement. It is looking forward and trying to see how we can proceed further in the next year on intensifying the relationship.

Q: My question is also related to FS's visit to the US. Did she raise the issue of snooping again with the US authorities and what was their response?

Official Spokesperson: We have raised this in different fora. I have not seen the entire readout to indicate whether this specific issue was raised. But our view is pretty clear on this. We have raised it several times. I can recollect at least three times that it has been raised in the last three months. And our views remain what they are.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Official Spokesperson: I said I do not know whether this was raised specifically at this meeting because it also needs to be the appropriate interlocutors on the other side. I have not seen the entire details of all her meetings. But this does not mean that this is not an issue of concern to us. This is an issue of concern, we have raised it three times. Whether it figures in one meeting or the other, this remains a matter that we intend to pursue.

Q: Bangladesh opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia accused India of not respecting the maximum peoples' opinion of Bangladesh. What is your comment?

Official Spokesperson: I think I answered that in a way when Gautam asked that question, and I can repeat it if you would like to know. We proceed in our relations with Bangladesh on the basis of principles of mutual respect, mutual benefit, non-interference, and respect for each other's sovereignty. It is for the people of Bangladesh to decide upon their future. We have deep respect for their wisdom and achievements. And we are confident that as a democracy the people of Bangladesh will resolve their differences through dialogue and peaceful means in an

atmosphere free of violence. I have said that before and I just repeat it. It is basically an answer to Gautam's question where there was a veiled allusion to what you have come out more forthrightly.

Thank you very much.

(Concluded)



INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-II

MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

ASIA COOPERATION DIALOGUE**059. Statement by Minister of State E. Ahamed at 12th Foreign Ministers Meeting in Manama, Bahrain.****Manama (Bahrain), November 25, 2013.**

His Excellency Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Kingdom of Bahrain,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to be here once again today. The Kingdom of Bahrain has extended all facilities to around 3,00,000 Indians who have made Bahrain temporary home. We share excellent relations in political, economic and cultural spheres and leaderships of the two countries have invested considerable energy and interest in developing these relations. The recent Bahrain-India Exhibition and Conference held on October 22-24, 2013 strengthened our relations further.

I take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to Republic of Tajikistan for successfully hosting 11th ACD Ministerial meeting in Dushanbe on 29 March 2013 and also to Royal Kingdom of Thailand for initiating and coordinating ACD forum since inception.

We welcome Republic of Turkey as the 33rd member of ACD. We have deep historical, civilisational and cultural connections with Turkey. With the joining of Turkey, we believe the ACD will further the realisation of Asian continent into Asian community and add dynamism to ACD process.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am happy to note that Kingdom of Bahrain has selected the theme 'Promoting Intra-Asian Tourism' for the 12th Ministerial meeting. We extend our support to the novel concept of the Asian Tourism City.

I wish to mention that India is keen to join this initiative and would wish to offer to host the Tourism Business Forum. We need to harness our strengths and potential in tourism for the benefit of Asian community.

ACD has completed 10 years of cooperation with a historic Summit in Kuwait in 2012 and expanded its membership from 18 to 33. This shows ACD has provided a significant platform for dialogue and cooperation in

Asia and has contributed to enhancing friendship, promoting peace and development. In the present global economic crisis, there is a need to strengthen cooperation in a few project areas identified by ACD members so as to enhance efficiency and effectiveness and visibility of ACD, to make 21st century truly as Asian Century.

Asia has a rich civilisational heritage and distinctive cultures. I am happy to inform that as a co-prime mover in cultural cooperation, India hosted the 2nd Senior official meeting on April 19-20, 2012, which was successful with the participation and cooperation of member countries. This has been further taken forward by Islamic Republic of Iran by hosting the 1st Cultural Ministers meeting on May 7-8, 2013. We need to take forward the cooperation by implementing the activities agreed so that bonds of friendship will be further strengthened. India has taken the initiative to compile an anthology of poetry of eminent writers of the region which will enhance our understanding and cultural exchanges.

Bio-technology has become a powerful enabling technology. I am happy to inform you India has established a Regional Centre for Bio-technology at Faridabad near New Delhi under auspices of UNESCO. We have offered 4-5 fellowships for ACD members to benefit from this Institute and we want you to join in this process.

India as a prime mover in transport linkages area, has circulated a concept paper on Transport linkages such that we can have seamless connectivity and economic corridors that bring us close. We can link up with other regional organizations who are also working for better connectivity. It is important for our experts to meet and develop a common agenda to bring our people and our economies closer together. We want to develop economic corridors across Asia providing hope, opportunity and efficiency to our mutual benefit. We also appreciate Royal Thai Government for organising an initial Working Group meeting on enhance ACD Regional Connectivity on 17 July, 2013 in Bangkok and we offer to host the next working group meeting on Regional Connectivity in India in 2014.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Energy Security is fundamental for ensuring development of our people. The current steep rise and volatility in fuel prices threaten to derail many members economies. The

stability of energy prices and fair energy pricing are important specifically to developing countries

The ACD Energy Action Plan circulated by Republic of Indonesia is a timely initiative. The areas of cooperation and implementation modality proposed are in line with Government of India's approach of actively pursuing cooperation including among Asian countries for sharing knowledge, experience and market access. In this regard our experience in dissemination of renewable energy could be of much use to other Asian countries. We support the Action Plan and we should ensure the participation of member countries in the Action Plan.

Water is scarce and precious resource especially in the emerging challenge of Climate Change. Declining per capita availability and low water use efficiency are some of issues which could be addressed by ACD through water cooperation by sharing ideas & experiences, facilitating transfer of technology, and capacity building. There is a great potential for regional cooperation on water resources development and management among ACD countries. Our Ministry of Water resources could offer two week short term training courses and share its experience on regulatory laws, approaches and policies on ground water.

I would propose that we also collaborate closely on the issue of Food Security. Growing populations and changing patterns are imposing new demands and as responsible Governments, we have to work towards adequate food stocks for meeting exigencies and other needs.

Our sincere condolences to the people of Philippines for the loss of life and destruction caused by Typhoon Haiyan. It is a grim reminder to all of us to cooperate in mitigation and reduction of Disasters. ACD member countries are also highly prone to Hydro-meteorological and Geo hazards particularly earthquake and tsunami. The establishment of ACD Coordination Network among early Warning Centres would be a welcome move. In this regard, we support the initiative of the Republic of Tajikistan on establishment of network of Early Warning Centres.

As we move towards establishment of Provisional Secretariat, we should not lose sight of the significance of informality and voluntary contribution of members resources. There should be considered discussion among all parties on the role and structure of such mechanism and we should ensure there is progress on the ground in cooperative projects.

India has been an original member of ACD and has seen the growth in dialogue and exchanges over time. I believe ACD has a bright future through joint efforts. India is ready to play a positive role in enriching action on the ACD agenda and help in furthering the objectives and projects of the ACD to promote our common pursuit of stability, peace, growth and prosperity.

Before I conclude, I would like to place on record my appreciation to Kingdom of Bahrain for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation and the excellent arrangements made for the success of 12th Ministerial meeting.

Thank you



ASEAN & EAS

060. Keynote address of External Affairs Minister at the Inaugural Session of Delhi Dialogue – V.

New Delhi, February 19, 2013.

Your Excellency Secretary General of ASEAN, Mr Le Luong Minh, Your Excellency Deputy Foreign Minister of Malaysia Senator Kohilan Pillai, Your Excellency Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar U Zin Yaw, Your Excellency Deputy Foreign Minister of Vietnam Mr. Pham Quang Vinh, Representatives of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand and Singapore

Distinguished Panelists & Guests,

Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you all to the inauguration of Delhi Dialogue V.

Delhi Dialogue-V has emerged as a successful Track 1.5 venue for discussions between government representatives, Track II experts and business representatives on political, economic and security issues of interest to both India and ASEAN.

Today, Delhi Dialogue V assumes far greater significance since it is the first event after the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in December last year, where we enhanced the level of our relationship to a strategic partnership. The Vision Statement adopted at the Summit presents vast opportunities for stronger cooperation between ASEAN and India.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme for this year's Delhi Dialogue, "India-ASEAN: Vision for Partnership and Prosperity" sums up our common aspiration in furthering our Strategic Partnership for collective peace, progress and prosperity. India's relations with the ASEAN member countries have seen a constant flow of ideas, culture, knowledge and practices. It has been a two-way civilizational connect and a history of trade, commerce, and educational exchanges. In modern times, we are not only able to rediscover it but also advance it to diverse areas for mutual benefit of peoples of India and ASEAN region.

In the recent times, as the global dynamics witness unprecedented changes and trends today, Asia is assuming new responsibilities commensurate with its capacities.

Political, economic and security structures are evolving globally, and, in a more pronounced manner, in East Asia. ASEAN and India are and will remain natural partners in defining their perspectives and addressing their common requirements of economic growth and prosperity.

India and ASEAN member countries share a vision of a peaceful, prosperous and resurgent Asia, which contributes to global peace and security. We share a dynamic economic space, which houses a quarter of humanity, and has a combined GDP of USD 3.8 trillion. We have put in place the Free Trade Agreement on trade in Goods in 2009 and have now concluded negotiations on the FTA on Services and Investment, which will help create greater synergy between our people, our industry and capacities.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

ASEAN-India trade has been growing at over 22% during the last few years, and as much as 37% in 2011-12, which helped cross the target mark of USD 70 billion last year, ahead of time. We are now striving for

the target of USD 100 billion by 2015 for ASEAN-India trade. As we look to the future, we must empower our youth across the spectrum of higher education, practical skills and vocational training, oriented to trade and technological advancement.

We have simultaneously resolved to meet non-traditional challenges and safeguard our collective politico-security environment, important for smooth flow of raw materials, merchandise and energy supplies. ASEAN-India engagement is proceeding well in the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, ADMM+ and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum, which are important initiatives for evolving an open and inclusive regional architecture. We continue to support ASEAN's central role in this regional architecture.

International terrorism, transnational organized crime, money laundering, drug-trafficking, information and cyber security issues are today demanding greater collaboration of effort by the international community. With repercussions for global and regional security, these issues require new, innovative solutions that can remain ahead of the growing complexity in these issues.

Brainstorming and finding synergy of interest and effort in these areas is all the more important when we consider the global economic situation. The economic crisis of 2008-09 continues to persist. Our hitherto resilient economies are getting compounded by the Eurozone crisis. Our rates of growth have depressed but are still healthy and respectable. ASEAN member countries and India continue to be growth centres in Asia, widely expected to lead the global economy out of the ongoing economic crisis.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Connectivity with ASEAN - geographical, institutional, or people-to-people, is a strategic priority for India. Relevant mechanisms established under the ASEAN-India framework to further connectivity, including some at Ministerial level, have been held during the Commemorative year.

India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway project is progressing well. Route alignments for extending this Highway to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam need to be pursued further. The Mekong-India Economic Corridor, which will connect the industrial and freight corridors in India

with the production networks in the Mekong region through the Chennai-Dawei sea link and the land connectivity to our Northeast, will have a beneficial effect on all our economies. These connectivity projects are capital intensive and we need to think of innovative means of financing them. Public Private Partnership is one such method, but there are several other as well, which I am sure would be discussed at tomorrow's session on connectivity.

In this digital age, we also need think of virtual networks as a way forward for connecting the region. We have welcomed the ASEAN Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Master Plan 2015 and also the efforts to strengthen ASEAN-India Connectivity in ICT. As a beginning, we are exploring capacity building programmes and sharing best practices in technological development and policy regulations related to e-connectivity.

We support the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) so as to contribute to the ASEAN vision of an ASEAN Community by 2015. As integration within ASEAN proceeds, it is also important that integration between ASEAN and India progress apace. We have already seen some traction on this as the 6th East Asia Summit called for a "Connectivity Master Plan Plus" which would expand Connectivity beyond ASEAN.

We can bring about progress and shared prosperity only when the people of ASEAN and India are able to co-author Asia's economic growth and resurgence. I would like to hear recommendations tomorrow for making geographic borders open to trade and investment and the movement of professionals and experts. We will be continuing our capacity building emphasis in the ASEAN India strategic partnership.

Development of effective energy systems, ensuring energy access utilizing all forms of energy to all the sections of population, promotion of energy efficiency technologies and use of renewable energy should see urgent prioritization on our cooperative calendar. The meetings held for the first time by my colleagues last year with their ASEAN counterparts in environment and renewable energy took cognizance of this. To my mind, the current predicament on these issues call for a sharing of expertise and knowledge, capacities and technology, a conviction that India has subscribed to for the last 65 years.

I am confident your deliberations will come up with recommendations on transforming the vision of our Leaders into reality, thus furthering the ASEAN-India strategic partnership to the next high level.

I would also like to compliment the Organizers of Delhi Dialogue V, the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the SAEA Research Group of Singapore, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), as well as the Economic Research Institute (ERIA) in Jakarta.

I wish you success in your deliberations, and look forward to receive your recommendations.

Thank you



061. 15th ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting.

New Delhi, February 21, 2013.

1. The 15th ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting (AISOM) was held in New Delhi on February 21, 2013. The meeting was Co-Chaired by Shri Sanjay Singh, Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs and H.E. Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof, SOM Leader, Brunei Darussalam. Senior Officials from all the 10 ASEAN Member States and Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN participated in the Meeting.
2. The Meeting was the first official engagement between ASEAN and India following the elevation of the relationship to a Strategic Partnership at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in December 2012 in New Delhi. The meeting discussed ways to implement the vision of the ASEAN Leaders and Prime Minister of India, as envisaged in the ASEAN-India Vision Statement of December 20, 2012.
3. The Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN briefed the AISOM on the progress and status of developments within ASEAN on the three pillars of political security, economic and socio-cultural

cooperation, including narrowing the development gap between the ASEAN Member States. He also mentioned the progress on operationalization of the AHA Centre and on the significant aspect of connectivity under the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity. The Brunei Co- Chair and SOM Leader explained the theme for the Chairmanship of ASEAN by Brunei Darussalam in 2013, “Our People, Our Future Together”, stressing the role of the ASEAN people in realizing the objective of the ASEAN Community by 2015. There was appreciation for India’s continued efforts to support the objectives of ASEAN Community, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity and the centrality of ASEAN to the political security and economic architecture in East Asia. India’s efforts in setting up Entrepreneurship Development Centres (EDCs) and Centres for English Language Training (CELTs) in the region were appreciated.

4. The AISOM discussed the important and constructive contribution by India in the region and emphasized intensification of cooperation to meet challenges relating to international terrorism, piracy and drugs trafficking. India’s contribution to the ARF, ADMM+ and Expanded Maritime Forum, which has been steadily expanding, was appreciated.
5. The SOM Leaders took stock of the sectoral cooperation between ASEAN and India, including in agriculture, science and technology, commerce and trade, environment, renewable energy, tourism and connectivity. The SOM Leaders noted the successful meeting of the ASEAN-India Heads of Agriculture Universities and Research Institutions on February 19-20, 2013 in New Delhi and the useful discussion at Delhi Dialogue V on the same dates. The latter has consolidated as a premier track 1.5 forum bringing together ASEAN and Indian Government representatives, Industry, academia and track II experts. There was a sense of satisfaction at the pace and intensity of cooperation and implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action 2010-15.
6. In the context of the conclusion of negotiations on the ASEAN-India Trade in Services and Investment Agreement, AISOM

supported the common resolve to prepare the FTA on Services and Investment for signature by the time of the meeting between ASEAN and Indian Economic Ministers in August this year. It was felt that with its signature, the resultant ASEAN-India Free Trade Area, one of the largest with a population of 1.8 billion and a combined GDP of USD 3.8 trillion, would give a significant fillip to economic cooperation and integration in the region. Towards this, the meeting noted that ASEAN and India could together contribute to the realization of the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership).

7. The meeting was appreciative of the various initiatives during the Commemorative Year to improve people-to-people interactions between ASEAN and India, including the highly successful ASEAN-India Car Rally and the expedition of INS Sudarshini to ASEAN countries. It was resolved to continue the trend of intensification in people-to-people activities.
8. The Brunei SOM Leader briefed ASEAN Member States and India on the preparation for the 46th AMM/PMC/3rd EAS FMM/ 20th ARF on June 24-27, 2013 and the 11th ASEAN-India Summit and the 8th EAS Summit on October 9- 10, 2013 in Brunei Darussalam.



062. Valedictory Address by Secretary (East) at the Asian Relations Conference IV: 'Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific Region: Asian Perspectives'.

New Delhi, March 22, 2013.

Amb. Rajiv Bhatia, DG, ICWA, Amb. Bhagirath, Secy. Gen., IOR-ARC

Prof Swaran Singh President AAS

Amb. Ravi, Amb. Saurabh Kumar

Senior Colleagues

Distinguished Panelists and Speakers

Members of the Think-Tank community and the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the very outset let me commend the effort by ICWA and the Association of Asian Scholars for organizing this very topical Asian Relations Conference (ARC) IV, on the 'Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific Region: Asian Perspectives'. I would also like to thank ICWA for inviting me to deliver an address at the Valedictory Session on this very important subject to this distinguished audience. Since the last couple of years, the term 'Indo-Pacific' is being used increasingly during discussions amongst policy makers, strategic thinkers and think tanks. This Seminar has attempted to define it spatially, obtain perspectives from the Indian Ocean, South East Asia, US, Russia & EU. It has discussed India's engagement with the region and the prospects for its economic integration.

I am glad that ICWA has launched this debate seeking to contribute to the Asian perspective on it, given the significant geo-political and strategic importance this concept has regionally for Asia and, I daresay, even globally. It is not a construct that can be left ambivalent nor should it be understood in monochromatic terms. I do hope that as a result of these discussions over the last two days, we have greater clarity, since this concept is increasingly being used to describe the dynamics within the region and has relevance to regional security, stability and development in Asia.

This debate on the Asian perspective of the Indo-Pacific comes at a time of significant progress in India's 'Look East' Policy, an important basis for an Indian definition. On the other hand, another anchor for an Asian perspective of the Indo-Pacific region would be the changing geopolitics and its effects on the region and on its stakeholders and their strategic priorities. There is an increasing desire within Asia towards tackling common challenges and creating a politico-security architecture to promote growth and prosperity, peace and stability. Indian strategic thinkers had traditionally focused on the area which extended from the Straits of Hormuz to the Straits of Malacca. They would describe Indo-Pacific as a logical corollary to India's 'Look East' Policy, and an extension of the region of interest to also include within its ambit the Western Pacific.

Over the centuries, the Indian Ocean Region has seen myriad nations that have navigated its waters with freedom, promoting trade and fostering cross-cultural influences. Today, through organizations like the IOR-ARC, the region seeks to open new channels of communication and cooperation towards the development of the economies along its littoral rim. The six priority areas of IOR-ARC – maritime safety and security; trade and investment facilitation; fisheries management; disaster risk reduction; academic and S&T cooperation; and tourism promotion and cultural exchanges – reflect this approach of a collective community seeking to deal with contemporary challenges, build collective capacity and assume greater salience to the strategic perspective in the region.

The same strength of purpose can be seen in some measure in the ASEAN+1 relationships, especially the ASEAN India strategic partnership, which has as its focus a common economic space of 1.8 billion people and a combined GDP of over USD 3.2 trillion. The ASEAN India Plans of Action provides direction to the project related aspects of our cooperation across the political, security, economic and socio-cultural pillars. It underlines our common perspective of economic growth, shared prosperity, peace and stability, the increasing focus on capacity building and connectivity across geographic corridors, over land, sea and air, between institutions, people-to-people and now through the digital space. All this is meant to optimize a unique partnership aimed at the constructive definition of our collective space. With the Eurozone crisis and the slowdown of economic activity in the United States, amongst the fastest

growing component of our trade and economic engagement is today with ASEAN and East Asia. With the likely fruition of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area and the launch of negotiations for a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the relative importance of the region for us is only going to increase. This is the natural culmination of 20 years of a constructive dialogue partnership between India and the ASEAN. We continue to believe in the central role of ASEAN in the evolving regional architecture. We have identified connectivity within the ASEAN India region as one of our strategic priorities, especially road connectivity with ASEAN along the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, which would be a part of the proposed Asian Highway No.1, ultimately to connect Tokyo to Istanbul.

The East Asia Summit, and its evolving architecture in the political, security and economic realm, has brought in certain competing definitions, overlapping interests and reinterpretations. The state of the global economy, the ongoing and, perhaps, deepening crisis in the Eurozone, and the imperative of collective action to deal with this economic contagion as well as nontraditional security threats such as terrorism, piracy, energy and food security, sustainable development and environmental challenges have come in for increased focus, much as they have in the Indian Ocean littoral. India has been part of the EAS dynamics to invigorate the economic recovery, secure the global commons in the region, strengthen cooperation to meet common challenges and anchor an open, inclusive and transparent architecture of regional cooperation in the region. We have endorsed the utility of the EAS as a Leaders' led forum for contributing to enhancing mutual understanding and promoting peace, stability and security in the region. We have supported principles of international law and recourse to peaceful resolution of differences. Connectivity in the greater East Asian Region has also come in for greater attention since the 6th East Asia Summit. In this context, we believe that the development of East-West Connectivity corridors is essential and this objective should be internally driven.

Our perspective of the region is, therefore, more than just an economic and security one. It is about focusing the aspirations and the destinies of the people of this region on a common path.

The wider Indo-Pacific region is home to nearly 3 billion people and a combined Gross Domestic Product of nearly \$20 trillion. It has three of the four largest economies in the world i.e. China, India and Japan, and the most significant of the world's seaborne trade, including that most relevant for food and energy security. With globalization and the consequent compression of geographic spaces, 'Indo-Pacific' has come to reflect contemporary realities.

As our Defence Minister noted at the 2012 Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, we are actively engaged in the process of constructive dialogue on security issues with a number of countries, especially with the ASEAN community, and support ongoing initiatives in building an inclusive security architecture, which would foster a spirit of consensus on all issues that have common resonance. We have active security cooperation with countries of the region. We are contributing to the discussions at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) and the expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum.

Indian Navy and the Navies of the region are already coordinating, especially in anti-piracy and disaster management exercises. Multi-national maritime exercises have been held focused on common concerns in the changing and prevalent security scenario in the region, including gun running, anti-narcotics, and humanitarian issues, apart from maritime security and ways to forge specific cooperative initiatives. The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) is another initiative in this direction.

As the global power fulcrum sees further shift towards Asia, it is important to understand the dynamics within the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. We need to work towards a security construct that leverages the civilizational linkages to expand cooperation and build partnership across the Indo-Pacific.

To conclude my address, I would like to quote our Prime Minister who said "We see our partnership with ASEAN not merely as a reaffirmation of ties with neighbouring countries or as an instrument of economic development, but also as an integral part of our vision of a stable, secure and prosperous Asia and its surrounding Indian Ocean and Pacific

regions. Our future is inter-linked and a stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region is crucial for our own progress and prosperity”.

I am grateful that you gave me the opportunity to share my thoughts with you on this very important topic and I do hope that I have been able to share with you elements which should inform its delineation.

I thank you



063. Speech of External Affairs Minister at the launch of ASEAN-India Centre.

New Delhi, June 21, 2013.

Ambassador Shyam Saran,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to inaugurate the ASEAN India Centre today, six months after the Prime Minister & ASEAN Leaders directed its establishment in their Vision Statement at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit of December 20, 2012. I am happy to see the ASEAN Heads of Missions and their officials, Indian representatives from the ASEAN India Eminent Persons Group, prominent members of the strategic community in India, representatives from the media, and officials from the different Ministries involved in furthering the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership, join us at this launch.

The ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership has strong foundations of shared civilizational bonds, a recent history of common effort towards economic growth and prosperity and a common future that has to be secured not just within the new security and economic architecture of the Asia Pacific but also the Indo-Pacific.

Over the last few years, our region has seen a multiplicity of stakeholders and a fraternity of purpose for tackling common challenges. We need to build an architecture that contributes to the geo-strategic importance of the region to global processes and, most importantly, secures economic

growth and prosperity for the people in our countries. This is the strength of the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership as an anchor of stability from the western confines of the Indian Ocean to the shores of the Pacific, from the Straits of Hormuz to the Straits of Malacca.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The centrality of the ASEAN and the ASEAN way of progress at a pace comfortable to all has contributed to the unanimity of strategic objectives amongst us and also motivated us to look at greater synergy in our multifaceted relationship. The partnership with ASEAN countries, in fact, constitutes the core of India's Look East Policy, given that the combined population of India and ASEAN is approximately 1.8 billion, around one-fourth of the global population and the combined GDP of the region is approximately US \$ 3 trillion.

Today there are very clear achievements in ASEAN-India relations across the three pillars of political and security cooperation, economic integration and socio-cultural exchanges. Last year we saw an intensive engagement across Governments and meetings or programmes between experts, think tanks, private sectors, academia, diplomats, farmers, students, media and, in fact, across professions and ages at the people-to-people levels. We intensified the dialogue in agriculture, trade, tourism, new & renewable energy and environment. In the run up to the Commemorative Summit, our people-to-people and institutional connectivity has strengthened and acquired an annual periodicity.

These, together with the ASEAN-India Car Rally 2012 and the sail training ship INS Sudarshini expedition to 9 ASEAN countries and their related business and cultural 'marker' events, proved catalytic to the forging of a consistent partnership which extended into the online space also.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Capacity building, development, economic growth and peace and stability have been the characteristics of the ASEAN-India partnership. The numerous projects under finalisation as per the Plan of Action for 2010-2015 are set to bring a qualitative enhancement in our partnership. From agriculture to space cooperation, from English language and entrepreneurship development training to capacity building in renewable energy and environment protection, from encouraging SMEs to

strengthening our trade and investment linkages, we have now a comprehensive engagement between ASEAN and India. As the deadline for ASEAN Community by 2015 approaches, India has renewed its commitment to support ASEAN's community building efforts, including the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan II, Narrowing Development Gaps and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity.

And yet, there is still tremendous untapped potential in the ASEAN-India partnership. There are also areas such as the new non-traditional threats to our socio-economic and political systems that need effective redressal. We are looking for ways to combat the fast evolving threat from terrorism and to counter drug trafficking, both of which incrementally threaten the future of our younger generations. We need to add form and substance on the ground to our existing geographic and civilizational connectivity, and to extend it simultaneously towards an integrated and sustainable economic prosperity.

We need to ensure that as the ASEAN countries integrate amongst themselves, their integration with India runs apace. We need to take cognizance of the pace of progress in the subsets of the Mekong Ganga Cooperation process and BIMSTEC as also the intra-ASEAN groupings so as to increase integrative capacities in the region. In short, we need to continue the dynamism in our potential for partnership into the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to see that Chairman RIS and former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran has taken on the task of defining the role for the ASEAN India Centre against this backdrop. In the Vision Statement we resolved to establish an ASEAN-India Centre using existing capacities. The Research and Information Systems for Developing Countries (RIS) is already nodal to several ASEAN-India activities at track 1.5 and track 2 levels and has also been closely associated with strengthening ASEAN-India cooperation in the field of connectivity. RIS Chairman Shyam Saran was the Co-Chair of the ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group, which had given recommendations towards the Vision Statement, including, inter alia, the establishment of an ASEAN India Centre.

So, I daresay, that I have high expectation of the ASEAN India Centre as a key resource to assist us in further defining the contours of the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership. In terms of its future tasks, I hope it

will assist the Governments of ASEAN and India to make a selection, for instance, from the abundance of theoretical constructs and several studies in the last two years about the connectivity corridors and economic processes in our region. The AIC should help us to simultaneously begin the process of putting in place policies and facilitators to drive economic content on these geographic corridors so that by the time the network of roads, maritime and air links are strengthened, the dimension of their economic viability has also been addressed.

By helping the Governments find practical ways and means to increase connectivity and strategic content in the ASEAN-India Partnership, the Centre will bridge the knowledge gap that currently limits the opportunities for ASEAN-India cooperation. I would, in particular, like to see Detailed Project Report parameters being built up for the agenda on geographical connectivity on the basis of work at the ASEAN India Centre.

The ongoing negotiations on the RCEP and the conclusion of the FTA between ASEAN and India on Services and Investment would provide new opportunities and challenges which need careful examination, without waiting for the completion of these processes.

I would like to see some well anchored ideas on furthering India's contribution to the ASEAN processes of the ADMM+, the ARF and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum. As the global power dynamics see further shift towards Asia, it is important to understand the dynamics within the Indian Ocean and the Pacific and work towards a security construct that leverages the civilizational linkages to expand cooperation and build partnership across the Indo-Pacific.

The setting up of the ASEAN-India Centre is, therefore, recognition of the fact that the ASEAN-India Partnership is not only of long standing but also of great current and future strategic relevance, oriented as it is to economic growth, development, capacity building and peace and security.

With this, I formally launch the ASEAN-India Centre and wish the Centre all success.

Thank You



064. Inauguration of the ASEAN-India Centre by External Affairs Minister.

New Delhi, June 21, 2013.

1. The ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) was inaugurated by the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid on Friday, June 21, 2013 at Magnolia Hall, India Habitat Centre. The Centre has been established in fulfilment of the direction given by ASEAN Leaders and Prime Minister of India in the ASEAN-India Vision Statement, adopted at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit on December 20, 2012. It is being set up under the guidance of Chairman, RIS & former Foreign Secretary Shri Shyam Saran.
2. The establishment of the ASEAN India Centre was also one of the recommendations of the ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group to further strengthen the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership. The 15th ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting in New Delhi on February 21, 2013 had discussed the modalities of establishing the ASEAN-India Centre using existing capacities.
3. ASEAN Heads of Missions in New Delhi, members of the strategic community, think tanks, media representatives, members of the ASEAN Missions in New Delhi and senior Government of India officials participated in the inauguration.
4. The AIC would work to strengthen India's cooperation with ASEAN in its realization of the ASEAN Community by 2015, comprising the three pillars: ASEAN Political Security Community; the ASEAN Economic Community; and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. The AIC would serve as a resource centre for ASEAN Member States and India to fill the knowledge gaps that currently limit the opportunities for cooperation. The AIC would also undertake regular networking activities with relevant organizations and think tanks in India and ASEAN Member States, with the aim of providing up-to-date information, data resources and sustained interaction to promote the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership. The AIC would assist in the implementation of the ASEAN-India connectivity agenda, apart from promoting ASEAN-

India cooperation in the interlinked areas of water, energy, food security etc.

5. The AIC would maintain a website in support of its efforts to further the ASEAN India strategic partnership.



065. Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the signing of the Headquarter Agreement between the Ministry of External Affairs and the Nalanda Univeristy.

New Delhi, June 28, 2013.

The Union Cabinet today gave its approval to the proposal of signing of a headquarters agreement between the Ministry of External Affairs and Nalanda University. This agreement would confer on the University and members of its academic staff privileges and immunities considered necessary to provide an overall framework for the efficient functioning and operation of the University, and allow it to obtain talent from across the globe. The Agreement will come into force immediately upon signing and notification.

The signing of the headquarters agreement will facilitate hiring of the best academicians from across the world, well before the commencement of the first academic session. Recruitment of the University's faculty cannot take place without fixing their terms and conditions, for which the conclusion of the headquarters agreement is essential.

The University will serve as an international centre of excellence in higher learning. It would integrate modern, scientific and technological knowledge and skills with basic human values and promote universal friendship, peace and prosperity through the spiritual awakening of the individual and society.

The detailed Project Report prepared by EdCIL in July, 2012 has estimated funding requirements of approximately Rs. 3,532.62 crore between 2010-11 and 2021-22. The Government of India will meet the University's expenditure to the extent required. Signing of the headquarters agreement does not involve any additional expenditure.

The following are the salient features of the agreement:-

- i) The host country shall take necessary steps to protect the University premises against any intrusion or damage and facilitate the work of the University.
- ii) The University, its assets, its income and other property shall be exempt from all direct taxes, customs duties and prohibitions and restrictions on imports and exports for articles imported/exported for its official use.
- iii) The Vice-Chancellor and academic staff of the University, who are not from the host country shall be granted exemption from taxation in respect of their salaries, honoraria, allowances and other emoluments; the right to get the appropriate visa; the freedom to maintain moveable and immoveable property while in the employment of the University in the host country, and the right to import free of customs duties, taxes and other levies.
- iv) The Vice-Chancellor and academic staff of the host country that is India shall be granted exemption from taxation in respect of salaries, honoraria, allowances and other emoluments in connection with the services provided to the University.

Background

At the 4th East Asia Summit (EAS) held in Thailand in October, 2009, member States issued a Joint Press Statement which supported the establishment of Nalanda University as a non-State, non-profit, secular and self-governing international institution with a continental focus, that would bring together the brightest and most dedicated students from all countries of Asia.



066. Opening Remarks by the External Affairs Minister at the ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' meeting.

Bandar Seri Begawan, July 1, 2013.

Your Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Foreign Minister of Brunei Darussalam,

Your Excellency Mr. Hor Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister of Cambodia,

Your Excellency Dr. Marty Natalegawa, Foreign Minister of Indonesia,

Your Excellency Mr. Pham Binh Minh, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam

Your Excellency Mr. Alounkeo Kittikhoun, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR

Your Excellency Mr. Le Luong Minh, Secretary General of ASEAN

Distinguished Leaders of Delegations from Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam,

Ladies & Gentlemen,

It is with a great sense of pleasure that I join you all today for the 11th ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting, especially since this is the first time we are meeting after our partnership has been elevated to a strategic level. It's always a pleasure to be among friends, but it is particularly good to meet at a time when the trajectory of our partnership is on a climb! I would like to begin by conveying my gratitude to the Foreign Minister of Brunei Darussalam for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to me and to my delegation and also thank him for the excellent arrangements for our meeting.

Excellencies,

As we enter the third decade of our partnership, we share our sense of achievement over the last two decades in all the three pillars of our cooperation. I would like to place on record our sincere appreciation to every one of you for having put the building blocks of our strategic partnership in place. I would especially like to thank Brunei Darussalam, the current Country Coordinator, and Cambodia, the Country Coordinator

before Brunei Darussalam, for their constructive and positive roles to further this strategic partnership.

The fact that ASEAN and India are natural partners is our collective strength. We often say that our partnership with ASEAN is the foundation of our Look East Policy. It is a natural and mutually enhancing partnership where both historical basis and future ambitions make the vectors of our interests congruent in an unparalleled manner. We all share the vision of a stable, secure and prosperous Asia Pacific region. The decision of the ASEAN Leaders and Prime Minister to upgrade the relationship into a strategic partnership was a natural progression to the ground covered since India became a Sectoral Partner of the ASEAN in 1992, Dialogue Partner in 1996 and Summit Level Partner in 2002.

The road-map in the Vision Statement of our Leaders for the future of the ASEAN-India strategic partnership has sound foundations. The rapid pace and momentum in the meetings and events in the run up to our celebrations at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit saw an overwhelming involvement of the people in our countries. A calendar led by Governments became fully participative of the people, industry and media. Mid-way through the implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action for 2010-15, we already have seen progress in most of the areas and we are on track for the execution of this Plan ahead of time, if we can fast track some of our project proposals in the pipeline.

I would also like to acknowledge the presence amongst us of 8 Indian journalists, who are visiting Brunei Darussalam under the ASEAN India Media Exchange Programme. They have already been to Malaysia. I would like to express my thanks to Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam for hosting them.

I look forward to an exchange of views with you on future ASEAN-India strategic cooperation and I would welcome your valuable suggestions on achieving our common objectives.

Thank you



067. Remarks by the External Affairs Minister at the 11th ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Brunei Darussalam.

Bandar Seri Begawan, July 1, 2013.

Excellencies,

1. I thank you for your suggestions and views on further enhancing our strategic partnership. I am particularly comforted by the consensus around this room to improving connectivity, promoting cooperation among our institutions and deepening linkages between our people. This has been the unique defining feature of our partnership.
2. I am happy to inform you that we will now be assisted by the ASEAN-India Centre, which has been established pursuant to the direction of our Leaders in their Vision Statement six months ago. This Centre will serve as a resource to assist us, in particular, in implementing connectivity projects across the three dimensions: geographic; institutional; and people-to-people. We look forward to ASEAN suggestions on the specific mandate for the Centre. We will soon be getting from RIS, which is hosting the ASEAN-India Centre, suggestions towards the composition of the Board. I understand that the Chairman of the ASEAN New Delhi Committee has already been invited to be on the Board and there is expectation that ASEAN nationals would eventually join the Indian resource personnel at the Centre. We will review the functioning of the Centre after two years.
3. The Vision Statement and the elevation of the partnership to a strategic level last December came in the wake of significant progress during the last two years in our Plan of Action for 2010-2015 under all the three pillars. The ASEAN Secretariat has worked very interactively with us in its implementation. I would like to thank the Secretary General for the support from his team and inform that we have provided the latest update to ASEC of the numerous activities that have been put under the Plan of Action. We have also begun discussions this month through the

ASEAN SOMTC+India consultations in Da Nang, Viet Nam on June 21, to further our collaboration under the ASEAN Political Security Community Blueprint 2015. I am also happy to share with you that we are looking forward to ASEAN participation in an International Symposium on Public Service Excellence towards the end of this year. With these additional activities, our mid-term review of the Plan of Action for 2010-2015 indicates that we could meet the Plan objectives ahead of time, if we are able to fast track some of the project proposals already in the pipeline.

4. We now have more than 25 mechanisms for functional cooperation between ASEAN and India. In the last one year, we initiated Ministerial level meetings in environment and new & renewable energy, began a dialogue on cooperation in the vital SME sector and had the first meeting between the Heads of Space Agencies. The Ministerial level meetings in the sectors of tourism, trade and agriculture have continued with good progress. We also brought in new mechanisms at the levels of officials. I would suggest, Excellencies, that we urge our Ministerial colleagues to keep up, like us, the annual periodicity of their sectoral meetings.
5. Our economic and commercial engagement has seen very impressive trade growth, 10 times in the 10 years, since we launched our Summit level partnership in 2002. But it is very important that we do not rest on our laurels. The FTA on Trade in Goods signed in 2009 helped us to meet our trade target of USD 70 billion ahead of time when the trade turnover in 2012 reached USD 80 billion. But the more recent trend of a relative decline in ASEAN-India trade during 2012-13, though minor, should serve as a wake up call. Excellencies, I would suggest a sense of urgency to concluding the legal scrubbing of the ASEAN-India Trade in Services and Investment Agreements and an early signature of these agreements before our Leaders meet again in another three months. This is also essential for achieving our trade target of USD 100 billion by 2015 as directed in the Vision Statement by our Leaders.

6. Excellencies, we are happy to note the progress amongst the ASEAN countries in integrative processes towards the ASEAN Community by 2015. I would like to emphasize that as ASEAN countries integrate amongst themselves, the process of integration with India should also move apace, whether on facilitating our people-to-people linkages, our institutional and trade complementarity or our geographical connectivity. We would like to engage with you as to how India can contribute further to the processes towards the ASEAN Community by 2015.
7. I would like to mention one of the most progressive developments under the chairmanship of Brunei Darussalam, that we have initiated the annual ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC)-India Meeting, to facilitate coordination and policy decisions on connectivity issues. This meeting discussed, inter alia, the idea of a possible maritime transport route linking India, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Viet Nam and has suggested the setting up of a Joint Working Group on Maritime Connectivity to explore linkages to complement the ASEAN Roll-On/Roll-Off (RO-RO) Shipping Network. The Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) has done commendable work in suggesting the utility of a Mekong India Economic Corridor and we need to, as Governments, look at providing incentives, including setting up of SEZs to attract our private sectors to vest in these connectivity corridors. We look forward to receiving from Lao PDR the coordinated route alignments so that examination of the extension of the Trilateral Highway to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam can begin. Our commitments to the Trilateral Highway linking India-Myanmar-Thailand are proceeding as planned. We are looking forward to engage with the ASEAN in the upcoming seminars on connectivity in Thailand in July and November as also in Brunei Darussalam in August. I also concur with the ACCC-India recommendation to address issues relating to enhancement of tourism cooperation between ASEAN and India. I find the Indian tourists see the value for money in tourist destinations in ASEAN and I would like to see a similar perception increase tourist inflows into India from the ASEAN countries! We are internally discussing the feasibility of providing a link from

ASEAN to the Buddhist sites in India to facilitate tourist arrivals from ASEAN.

8. In our support for the ASEAN Community by 2015, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), the Narrowing of the Development Gap and the Master Plan on ASEAN Plus Connectivity (MPAC), we are continuing with the process of building capacity through the Entrepreneurship Development Centres (EDCs) and Centers for English Language and Training (CELTs) in CLMV countries, apart from offering more than 1100 scholarships to ASEAN countries under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. We had recently, in May 2013, sent a delegation to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam to take further the process of setting up additional CELTs, EDCs and VTCs and I look forward to your suggestions on how to utilize these resources better.
9. Excellencies, as I mentioned before, our calendar of activities, led by Governments, has become fully participative of our people. This strengthening of people-to-people linkages is in keeping with our historical experience and of relevance to the future of our strategic partnership. Our exchange programmes for ASEAN students, farmers, diplomats, media and scientists now have annual periodicity but I have been told that more Indians than ASEAN eminent persons have travelled under the Eminent Persons Lecture Series. I would urge that we remedy this imbalance in the EPLS. I hope my colleagues from Brunei, Vietnam and Singapore, who have been invited under the EPLS programme this year, will consider my suggestion to lend their support to it. I look forward to seeing them in India.
10. I have also sought your convenience, Excellencies, for dates in March 2014 for Delhi Dialogue-VI. I value your support in strengthening this premier track 1.5 interaction as also the ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks, which would be held in Lao PDR later this year.
11. In terms of priorities ahead, in the run up to our 11th Summit on October 10, 2013, we look forward to working with you on the:

- ❑ Setting up of four IT Centres in CLMV and an IT Resource Centre in India by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing;
 - ❑ Establishment of Tracking and Data Reception Station & Data Processing Facility for ASEAN in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam;
 - ❑ Upgradation of the Biak II Telemetry Tracking & Command Station in Indonesia
 - ❑ Training of ASEAN Personnel in Space Science and Technology,
 - ❑ Take further the process of finalization on the project for cooperation on Bio-diversity between the ASEAN Centre for Bio-diversity (ACB) and National Bio-diversity Authority of India (NBA).
12. Excellencies, India remains convinced of the continuing relevance of the ASEAN-India strategic partnership as an anchor for peace, stability and prosperity in the region as also globally. There is a mutually beneficial synergy in our partnership. We continue to see the relevance also of ASEAN centrality to our regional fora such as the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum. I look forward to continuing our dialogue on this at the ARF and EAS meetings.

Thank you



068. Media Briefing by External Affairs Minister In Brunei Darussalam.

Bandar Seri Begawan, July 1, 2013.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Good evening and welcome. I think you have been given some brief press note of the substance of what we have been able to do today. This will just give you in a capsule form what we have been able to do.

I think we had a very good engagement at the ASEAN-India Dialogue. Very positive assessments have been made of the midway that we have reached on the Action Plan 2010-2015. I think the steps that we have taken have been noticed and welcomed including the setting up of the ASEAN-India Centre. And I have of course requested the involvement of members from other countries as well in the Centre.

There was tremendous emphasis on connectivity which is a high priority as far as we are concerned. A range of issues were discussed, flagged, noted, proposed, but I think connectivity - whether by sea or by air or by road and digital connectivity - has been probably the most important dimension with everybody almost automatically and nationally focused on. We are very happy with that thought because for us, as I said to you earlier in the day, connectivity is a high priority.

Connectivity for us is not just connectivity between India and ASEAN but that part of India that we are committed to in terms of giving it opportunity, opening, connecting it with the areas of opportunity in the world, which is our North-East, and this converges very beautifully together. So this was largely what we focused on.

Then we followed up with a whole lot of bilaterals. Of course there were so many bilaterals everyone was doing and space was so constricted that we could not complete all the bilaterals we would have liked to do today. So, they will spill over to tomorrow. But we have done some very very useful bilaterals today I think, and we have given ourselves an enormous amount of follow-up work that we have to do. So, in that sense this ASEAN get-together has given us a tremendous opportunity for much of the bilateral work that takes much longer because you wait for an opportunity of Foreign Office Consultation or a visit from either side.

We had excellent meetings with Mongolia. We had an outstanding meeting with Bangladesh, with Turkey. We had an outstanding meeting with Canada particularly, great willingness and being prepared to cooperate with us in counterterrorism and in countering any element that is against the Indian interest, willing to share information, willing to cooperate.

Turkish Foreign Minister said that if there is a political will, India and Turkey have a special relationship on which you can build up to the stars because they have been working very hard on several countries including Russia, China and Brazil. But he actually flagged India as a very special area of interest because of our historic connections. I have conveyed to him that I will be traveling to Turkey very shortly. By the 20th of this month I will be in Turkey for three days. He was good enough to invite me other than the official meetings to visit the Konya which is the area from where he comes and where there are some very important historical sights that he would like me to visit.

I also had a good meeting with DPR of Korea. Of course they have been our traditional friends. I made it clear that in the changed world circumstances we have to evolve and take up positions that are consistent with global points of view unless there is of course a matter of very special principle.

They said they wanted us to understand from their point of view why they are taking certain postures and positions. They conveyed that to us; we have taken note of it. But we were also very candid in explaining to them that sometimes we depart even from positions that our friends take because we take principled positions and, therefore, it should not be taken as a departure from friendship. But there is a clear departure from some positions they may take for their own reasons. We cannot take the same position. And where we do not, we would like them to hear us out and for us to hear them out and for us to be able to explain to them that this is not something on which we see even from their point of view an outcome that would be beneficial for their people. And for the rest, on humanitarian issues, on other issues which we can be of support, both in terms of food assistance or any such assistance, we are always willing and forthcoming.

We also had a very good meeting, an outstanding meeting with the

Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste who wants to engage much more closely, who cherishes the contribution that two Indians made, of course as part of the Commonwealth presence, at the time of the birth of Timor-Leste - one was Mr. Kamlesh Sharma the Secretary General and Atul Khare previously from our Foreign Service who served under Mr. Kamlesh Sharma.

With Bangladesh we had a detailed discussion. The Foreign Minister explained to me what is happening in Bangladesh, also indicated that for the first time in many years the Opposition is attending parliament. That is a good sign that the Opposition is attending Parliament. In the streets of course there is still a lot of divided opinion but that is the case in any democracy. We thank them for the cooperation they have given us in security matters, particularly as far as the border is concerned. We have reiterated our commitment to work jointly with them to ensure that there are no border incidents which periodically disturb the relationship balance.

We have also said that we must look at a vision plan, at sharing the electricity and power because we are just going to provide grid connectivity and give them 250 MW from the state sector, and they are looking for another 250 MW from the private sector. But this is a one off thing. We hope that there can be a vision plan in which we can encourage and succeed in getting Bangladesh also to invest in projects for production of electricity and power.

With Mongolia there has been a huge range of issues. Mongolian Foreign Minister had been to India. I have met him there. He has called on Mr. Anand Sharma. He has met with other Ministers. He is very very keen that India and Mongolia work closely together in many fields. He has welcomed us in the field of mining. I have suggested to him that we should work together on capacity building, adding institutions to strengthen democracy in their country. They have just had a successful election in which the President has been re-elected. I congratulated them on the election of the President. And we hope that in the next few months we will be able to come up with a very detailed action plan for much greater engagement between Mongolia and ourselves.

We had a very good meeting with Cambodia. They thanked us for our symbolic contribution of 40,000 bottles of indelible ink. So, the indelible ink that has become a standard of India's free and fair of elections will

now travel to one more country and that is Cambodia. On 28th of July they will have their elections and their voters will be marked by Indian ink, and he has expressed his gratitude.

We have agreed that, just as we did with Angkor Vat, there are other very important shrines that we should work on. He wanted us to have complete air connectivity as far as the Buddhist sites are concerned. We agree with that. Of course we need to work with the Civil Aviation Ministry to see how we can have two-way traffic of people visiting Buddhist shrines and Buddhist places of historical interest.

We have highlighted to them as well as to Mongolia the importance of Nalanda University and how institutions in other countries should look in to Nalanda University because this is one of the major edifices that will mark India's soft diplomacy and engagement with Asia based on our historic and spiritual links but providing it with a new vigour and a new energy in our times in the 21st century.

I will meet the Chinese Foreign Minister tomorrow. In recent times we have met several times but it would be useful to engage in just an update on how things have moved. The NSA has just been back from China. He had a good useful meeting with the new Special Representative on the Chinese side, concentrating on peace and tranquility on the border and also looking at strengthening the existing mechanisms for peace and tranquility as well as looking forward to a resolution of the border issue. So, it is work in progress, obviously another step incrementally.

We engage repeatedly in order to see that we are able to eliminate any hiccups that come at any time due to any reason and also to continue to consolidate on the progress that has been made. This was the sixteenth round of dialogue between the Special Representatives. So, we will get the Chinese perspective on it. We know from our side, but we will get a Chinese perspective on that as well.

Q: Is there any update on the BDCA which we are trying to negotiate with the Chinese?

External Affairs Minister: We are not trying to negotiate, they have suggested. They have given us a draft and they have suggested it. It is the next step to whatever is already in place, agreements and protocols that are in place. This is the next step that they have suggested but it is

being examined. These documents take a little bit of time because you have to look at every aspect. And since we are doing this step by step we do not want to do anything in haste because you do not want regrets caused by haste. They had given us a draft, we are looking at it. Obviously the NSA would have touched upon it, perhaps given some update on where we have reached. But this is still work in progress.

Q: Sir, in your meeting with DPRK, did you raise Proliferation concerns in our neighbourhood, particularly since there are reports about...(Inaudible)...between DPRK and Pakistan?

External Affairs Minister: In my statement in the morning I have mentioned that. We did not have enough time to go into details. The important thing is that they were trying to explain to us the reason why they take up a position on nuclear weapons. They say that we are doing it to protect ourselves. And we said to them that protection also comes if you are not isolated; it is important not to be isolated in the world and to remain engaged with the world, then you can have many more people helping you; but if you get isolated, then many people who want to help you may also not be able to help you. So, this is the advice that we could give as friends and we did that.

This was no occasion really because we would have had to go into much more detail. But what I have suggested is that we are hoping that their Vice Minister will travel to India for Foreign Office consultations and we will keep this as an agenda for more detailed discussion. Then all these issues can be taken up. The very fact that they want to engage with us and that they want to communicate and reach out to us, gives us a good opportunity to say to them that if we have to be in an honest relationship, then it is important that just as we are listening to their concern and trying to factor that into our understanding, they must also factor in our concern. And we do have a concern about proliferation.

He did say very clearly, I am just going by the words that he used, that we are doing whatever we are doing to protect ourselves, we have no intention to indulge in any proliferation. So, at least he has given us some opening that we can in a subsequent meeting bring up and discuss our discomfort at their contribution by way of proliferation with Pakistan.

Q: Is there any likelihood of any high-level visit from India to North Korea?

External Affairs Minister: I am not sure. They would like us to come. There is already a series of events that have to take place to celebrate and those are going on this year – the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations with them. There is also the 60th anniversary of their victory, what they call Victory of Father Land. There we are examining the possibility of a Parliamentary Delegation of three parliamentarians going to Korea. I do not think there is any other proposal on the horizon.

Q: Was the Anup Chetia extradition issue raised with Bangladesh Foreign Minister?

External Affairs Minister: No, we did not. On this occasion I did not raise it. We looked at the broad issues. But we are in constant touch with them. Bangladesh is right there in the neighbourhood. So, these are issues that are periodically raised and I am sure that the High Commissioner is following it up.

Q: Any possibility of a visit by Bangladesh PM?

External Affairs Minister: I mentioned that our Prime Minister is hopeful that their Prime Minister will visit, and to convey that desire to her. Obviously, it is difficult time for them because this is the election year. We are also moving towards election year. But I hope that she will be able to visit. I have indicated that even if it is for a short visit she can come, it will give an impetus to a lot of the things that are in the pipeline, on which Bangladesh Foreign Minister expressed a general satisfaction and pleasure at things going smoothly.

Q: India has been wanting Bangladesh to invest in power. They have not reached any decision on the Tipaimukh I think.

External Affairs Minister: They wanted some more information on Tipaimukh which we are giving them through our High Commission. But we want them to look at other projects, the futuristic projects that will come because that is the best way of being fully informed about what we are doing and having a stake. Otherwise, there is always this danger that people will create a horrific story about how India is going to take away everything and so on. But if we are partners and we are working together, then all the information and the ground reality will be known to

their side and then ultimately they need power so might as well have a stake in the production of power.

Q: But it means that they are not still convinced about the Tipaimukh, right?

External Affairs Minister: These are big investments and big investments you have to be careful, you have to do due diligence, you need to seek information. And we have nothing to hold back, we are giving them information which is going through our normal channels.

Q: So, on Tipaimukh they are seeking information before their investment decision.

External Affairs Minister: They had sought. I informed her that we are giving that information. It must be in the process of being conveyed.

Q: Any chance of meeting Mr. Sartaj Aziz who is also going to be here?

External Affairs Minister: He is not here today, he would probably come tonight. If the occasion arises and he shows an interest, or there is occasion where we feel perhaps this will be a good time to meet, we will meet. You know, he is highly respected in our country. He has a lot of people who have known him in the past. I have not had the good fortune to meet him, but I am sure that there is no reason why, if the opportunity arises, we will not be able to spend some time together.

Thank you



069. Intervention by the External Affairs Minister on “Exchange of views on regional and international issues” at 20th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting.

Bandar Seri Begawan (Brunei Darussalam), July 2, 2013.

Your Royal Highness and dear colleagues,

Allow me to express my deep gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman for the excellent arrangements made for this meeting and the cordial and hospitable reception that has been extended to us.

We are heartened by the signs of deepening economic interdependence and cooperation within the Asia Pacific region. With globalisation, intertwining of economies has become a reality. This interdependence contributes significantly towards our shared goals of peace, security and prosperity. At the same time, as we have heard this morning, there are some real anxieties about grave political and security issues that need to be addressed. The ARF provides a forum for dialogue on such issues and India has faith that this dialogue can be constructive and fruitful, provided it is carried out with commitment and vision by all concerned parties.

The universal scourge of terrorism unleashed by terror groups with global reach requires a comprehensive global approach to which all of us have to be committed in an unqualified manner. The global regime against terrorism needs to be hinged on a holistic framework for which the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the UN requires early conclusion. Within the ARF community, we must practically enhance our cooperation by pooling our information and resources, not only to prevent terrorist attacks but also to apprehend and bring terrorists to justice and to demonstrate in a categorical way our commitment to combat terror.

It is terrorism that poses the main threat to peace and stability in Afghanistan, securing which is in the interest of all ARF countries and the international community and we have heard this repeated several times today. There is a need for joint and concerted efforts to dismantle terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens, particularly beyond Afghan borders. We must assist Afghanistan in its efforts to become a stable, democratic and pluralistic state. The international community must stay committed to Afghanistan in the form of development and security assistance during this critical period of transition and transformation.

We support the efforts made by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish a peaceful dialogue with all armed opposition groups. It is important to underscore that this process must be a broad-based Afghan-led Afghan-owned reconciliation one, within the framework of the Afghan Constitution and internationally accepted red lines, to which we have all subscribed. This dialogue must involve all sections of the

Afghan society and armed opposition groups, including the Taliban, willing to give up their arms and subscribe to the Constitution. The reconciliation process must not undermine the legitimacy of the Afghan State and Government and the political, social and economic progress witnessed in Afghanistan over the past decade, through contributions made by many in the international community. I may emphasise here that India's Afghanistan policy does not have an exit policy. India has played an important role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan and intends to remain committed to Afghanistan's future.

Another area of deep concern to us is that of clandestine proliferation of WMD technologies, which poses a grave threat to international security. With a view to address the risk of nuclear weapons, materials and technology falling into the hands of terrorists, India has been piloting a UN resolution in this regard for the past several years. In this context, the situation in the Korean peninsula and the DPRK and the possible clandestine proliferation deserves careful scrutiny. India has expressed deep concern about the nuclear test conducted by DPRK on February 12, 2013 in violation of its international commitments. We hope that the voice of reason will prevail. We call upon DPRK to refrain from such actions which adversely impact on peace and stability in the region. We support the objective of de-nuclearization of the Korean peninsula, a vision that the DPRK has endorsed, and the resumption of talks among relevant parties.

The imperatives of globalisation and our economic inter-dependence require a stable maritime system, given the demands of trade and commerce and energy flows. Safety and security of sea lanes of communication is, therefore, of paramount importance. Non-state threats to maritime security stemming from piracy and smuggling that we have seen in recent years should be addressed through dialogue, transparency and close cooperation. There is also need to reaffirm the importance of unimpeded right of passage and other maritime rights in accordance with accepted principles of international law. These principles obviously should be respected by all. Maintenance of peace and security in the region is of vital interest and sovereignty issues must be resolved peacefully by all countries concerned, in accordance with international law. We oppose the use or threat of use of force. We hope that all parties

to disputes in the South China Sea region will abide by the 2002 Declaration on Conduct in the South China Sea and work together to ensure peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international law, including 1982 UNCLOS. We urge all parties concerned to take forward these discussions towards adoption of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea on the basis of consensus.

The Asian security architecture now has a multiplicity of forums, albeit with converging agenda. We believe that the ASEAN should continue to be in the lead in each of these forums. We also believe that the activities under these forums should be coordinated so as to minimise duplication and encourage greater synergy. India remains fully committed to these processes and will participate in and contribute to the ARF as well as the ADMM+, Expanded Maritime Forum and others.

I would also like to touch on the situation in Syria and the Middle East. India is concerned at the deteriorating security situation in Syria and calls upon all parties to stop violence and engage in inclusive national dialogue in order to resolve the conflict through peaceful political means, taking into account the legitimate aspirations of all Syrians. This must be done in accordance with internationally approved political and legal principles including the UNSC resolutions 2042 and 2043 and the Joint Communique of the Geneva Action Group.

We also support the revival of the Middle East Peace Process which should result in the realisation of the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to an independent State, living side by side and in peace and security with Israel. May I also take this opportunity to convey my good wishes to our good friend and neighbour Myanmar as it prepares to take on the Chairmanship of ASEAN and thus the ARF in 2014?

Thank you



070. Chairman's Statement of the 3rd East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

Bandar Seri Begawan (Brunei Darussalam), July 3, 2013.

1. The 3rd East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held on 2 July 2013 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. The Meeting was chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Brunei Darussalam.
2. The Ministers acknowledged the development and growing importance of the EAS in the regional architecture. Recognising the EAS as a Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common concerns with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia, the Ministers emphasised the need to further consolidate and strengthen the EAS and to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of Leaders' discussions and decisions.
3. The Ministers noted Indonesia's call for ASEAN to formulate aspirational goals beyond 2015, such as doubling ASEAN's combined GDP and having the percentage of people living in poverty in the ASEAN region by 2030.
4. The Ministers discussed the follow-up to the 7th EAS and welcomed the progress of the implementation of the EAS cooperation, especially in the six (6) priority areas, namely environment and energy, education, finance, global health issues and pandemic diseases, natural disaster mitigation and ASEAN Connectivity.
5. The Ministers looked forward to the effective and timely implementation of the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative, which was adopted at the 7th EAS in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in 2012. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed China's proposal to formulate a Plan of Action (POA) to implement the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative and agreed for the officials to stock-take

EAS initiatives under the Phnom Penh Declaration and develop a plan of action.

6. The Ministers commended Russia on its proposal for a framework of principles on strengthening security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. In this regard, the Ministers tasked the Senior Officials to convene a series of dialogues and workshops on this matter, taking into account the existing security cooperation. The Ministers also took note of Indonesia's idea for an Indo-Pacific framework envisaged based on the principles contained in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and in line with the 2011 Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations (Bali Principles).
7. The Ministers reiterated the importance of ASEAN's central role in the evolving regional architecture and agreed that the EAS would continue to support the realisation of the ASEAN Community and pave the way towards broader and deeper regional integration.
8. The Ministers recalled the 2010 Ha Noi Declaration on the Commemoration of the 5th Anniversary of the EAS, and the 2012 Chairman's Statement of the 7th EAS that welcomed Brunei Darussalam's proposal to conduct a stock-take review and reflection aimed at further consolidating and strengthening the EAS on the basis of its established principles, objectives and modalities and to provide recommendations to the 8th EAS.
9. The Ministers noted the progress of the U.S. – Asia-Pacific Comprehensive Energy Partnership (USACEP) by Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and the United States of America. The Ministers also welcomed the establishment of the Renewable and Alternative Power Generation Work Stream co-chaired by Brunei Darussalam and the United States of America at the 18th EAS Energy Cooperation Task Force Meeting. The Ministers also noted that the Work Stream shall be brought to the 7th EAS Energy Ministers' Meeting (EAS EMM) for endorsement in September 2013 in Bali, Indonesia, and to be announced by Leaders at the 8th EAS. The Ministers acknowledged the

commencement of new research studies by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) with support from Japan, and the successful convening of the Workshop on the ASEAN Energy Outlook on 7 May 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand, collaborated with the International Energy Agency (IEA), aiming at its launch in the 7th EAS EMM. The Ministers noted the successful convening of the 1st East Asia Summit New Energy Forum held on 15-16 April 2013 in Kunming, China.

10. The Ministers welcomed the successful convening of the 4th High-Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (HLS-ESC) held on 21-22 March 2013 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, co-organised by Australia, Indonesia, Japan and Viet Nam. The Ministers also noted the proposal by Australia on an EAS climate change adaptation workshop and the Philippines in 2013-2014.
11. The Ministers welcomed the outcome of the Second East Asia Low Carbon Growth Partnership Dialogue held on 18 May 2013 in Tokyo, Japan and co-chaired by Cambodia and Japan.
12. The Ministers acknowledged the continued work under the EAS Education Action Plan (2011-2015) and the benefit of supporting education cooperation projects that would help to improve the quality and mobility of qualifications across the region. The Ministers welcomed the 2nd EAS Education Ministers' Meeting to be held in Lao PDR in 2014.
13. The Ministers welcomed Brunei Darussalam's offer of scholarships for an 18-month Master of Public Policy and Management (MPPM) programme, which would commence on 27 December 2013 at Universiti Brunei Darussalam.
14. The Ministers appreciated Japan's youth exchange project, entitled "Kizuna (bond) Project", which involved approximately 11,000 youths between Japan and the regions of Asia, Oceania and North America. The Ministers welcomed the launching of the Japan East-Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) 2.0 Project in January 2013, which would exchange a total of 30,000 young people between Japan and

Asian/Oceanic region to promote mutual understanding and friendly relations. The Ministers also welcomed the launching of the "KAKEHASHI Project", which would exchange a total of 4,600 people between North America and Japan for the same purpose.

15. The Ministers welcomed the progress on the revival of Nalanda University and noted that the tenders for construction would be invited shortly. The Ministers noted India's proposal for the signing of an Inter-Governmental Agreement to facilitate the setting up of the Nalanda University as a non-state, non-profit and self-governing international institution of excellence.
16. The Ministers welcomed India's suggestion that EAS members begin thinking about a multilateral agreement among interested EAS member countries for bringing in equivalence of qualifications.
17. The Ministers looked forward to the implementation of the Declaration of the 7th EAS on Regional Responses to Malaria Control and Addressing Resistance to Anti-malarial Medicines and encouraged all non-ASEAN EAS participating countries to support ASEAN's efforts to cope with the spread of this disease, either in form of financial or technical assistance. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the convening of the inaugural Asia-Pacific Leaders' Malaria Alliance (APLMA) to be co-chaired by the Prime Ministers of Australia and Viet Nam at the sidelines of the 8th EAS. The Ministers further noted that Australia and India would co-chair the Access to Quality Medicines Task Force under the APLMA. The Ministers also affirmed the importance of promoting universal health coverage in order to address diverse health needs.
18. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of enhancing cooperation in disaster management through regional mechanisms. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the various cooperation and linkage between the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and other disaster management authorities in non-ASEAN countries, which contributes to the strengthening of capacity for disaster management in this region. The Ministers

welcomed the support of the EAS participating countries to the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).

19. The Ministers also welcomed the convening of the first open session of the ACDM on EAS Cooperation on Disaster Management held on 10 January 2013 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The Ministers also noted the ACDM's decisions to have such a session on a regular basis to discuss the linkage between the EAS paper on "A Practical Approach to Enhance Regional Cooperation on Disaster Rapid Response" and the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme (2010-2015) and looked forward to the next session to discuss this further.
20. The Ministers affirmed their support for the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Japan in 2015.
21. The Ministers also welcomed the outcomes of the ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiREx) held on 7-11 May 2013 in Cha-Am, Thailand, and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and Military Medicine Exercise (ADMM-Plus HADR & MM Ex) held on 17-20 June 2013 in Brunei Darussalam. The Ministers looked forward to the convening of the
22. ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Exercise (ARDEX) to be held in October 2013 in Viet Nam and welcomed Indonesia and Australia's EAS workshop on rapid response to be held in Darwin in September 2013 as well as the Mentawai Mega thrust Disaster Relief Exercise in Indonesia in March 2014.
23. As a follow-up to the outcome of the "EAS-India Workshop 2012: Building Regional Framework for Earthquake Risk Management" held in New Delhi on 8-9 November 2012, the Ministers welcomed India's proposals to establish a network of 24x7 Points of Contacts among the National Disaster Response Agencies of

the EAS Participating Countries and a Virtual Knowledge Centre (VKC) to share knowledge and best practices related to natural disaster risk assessment, mitigation and response.

24. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of cooperation in finance and expressed their support to further develop this priority area of EAS cooperation.
25. The Ministers reaffirmed the need to further promote cooperation to support the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) and to enhance connectivity within East Asia, taking into account the Declaration of the 6th EAS on ASEAN Connectivity adopted by the Leaders in 2011 in Bali, Indonesia. The Ministers welcomed the engagement to be undertaken between the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and non-ASEAN EAS participating countries, to work out the issue of financing connectivity projects towards realising the MPAC, and noted that this would include discussion of Australia's paper on establishing an EAS Connectivity Forum.
26. The Ministers recognised the importance of mobilising financial and technical resources and the promotion of public-private partnership (PPP). In this connection, the Ministers welcomed the theme of the 4th ASEAN Connectivity Symposium entitled "Partnering Private Sector for ASEAN Connectivity" to be held in August 2013 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, with the contribution of the ERIA. The Ministers also welcomed an EAS Regulatory Roundtable to be co-chaired by Thailand and New Zealand, which is aimed at supporting ASEAN's own objectives with regard to regulatory reform and at sharing best practice in this area. The roundtable will be held back-to-back with Thailand's initiative to host the Workshop on "Enhancing Connectivity through Multi-layered Regional Frameworks: The Roles of Dialogue Partners" in July 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand.
27. The Ministers also welcomed the Statement of ERIA's 6th Governing Board Meeting issued on 4 May 2013 and its work plan to undertake research and policy recommendations to enhance community-building efforts.

28. The Ministers recognized the necessity of strengthening economic relations among EAS members and underscored the importance of negotiations on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which would affirm ASEAN centrality in the emerging regional economic architecture and the interests of ASEAN's FTA partners, and would provide a platform for future trade and investment integration in Asia and the rest of the world. The Ministers recognized that the RCEP complements the interests of EAS in supporting and contributing to economic integration, equitable economic development and strengthening economic cooperation among participating countries, through working towards a comprehensive, high quality and mutually beneficial agreement.
29. The Ministers recalled the 2012 Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative encouraging EAS countries to cooperate in promoting food security and nutrition. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed food security as an area of focus in the EAS in 2013 and the progress of the work by Senior Officials on an EAS Declaration on Food Security to be adopted by the Leaders at the 8th EAS.
30. The Ministers also adopted the Terms of Reference for an EAS Track II Study Group on Enhancing Food Security through Sustainable Fisheries Management and Marine Environment Conservation and looked forward to the appointment of representatives to the Study Group by September 2013.
31. The Ministers underscored the importance of peace, stability, and maritime security in the region and reiterated the Leaders' call for regional efforts to enhance cooperation in promoting maritime cooperation. In this regard, the Ministers looked forward to the convening of the 2nd Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), back-to-back with the 4th ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) to be held in the second half of 2013 in Malaysia.
32. The Ministers shared the view on the need to further enhance cooperation on non-traditional security issues, including terrorism, narcotics, and other transnational crimes. The Ministers also

strongly supported strengthening of global regime for disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, calling for further elaboration of strict verification mechanism for non-proliferation and disarmament obligation.

33. The Ministers underscored the importance of accelerating the efforts towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in East Asia by 2015. The Ministers will strive to establish an effective and coherent post-2015 development framework centred on sustainable development and guided by human rights and dignity, equality and equity.
34. The Ministers welcomed the convening of the 5th Ministerial Meeting of Gender Quality of East Asia on 15 May 2013 in Beijing, China.
35. The Ministers underscored the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea and noted the ASEAN Statement on the Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea. The Ministers stressed the importance of peaceful settlement of disputes through friendly consultations and negotiations by sovereign states directly concerned in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The Ministers welcomed the collective commitments of ASEAN Member States and China to fully and effectively implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), including the Guidelines for the Implementation of the DOC and to work towards the adoption of a code of conduct in the South China Sea (COC) on the basis of consensus. In this regard, the Ministers appreciated the continued ASEAN-China consultations and dialogue for mutual trust, confidence and cooperation, and the convening of the 8th Meeting of ASEAN-China Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DOC on 29 May 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Ministers were encouraged with the convening of the 6th ASEAN-China Senior Officials' Meeting on the Implementation of the DOC and the 9th Meeting of the Joint Working Group on the implementation of the

DOC to be hosted by China in September 2013 during which all parties will have official consultations on the code of conduct. The Ministers noted that steps will be taken to establish an Eminent Persons and Experts Group (EPEG) and/or other mechanisms to provide support to such consultations.

36. The Ministers stressed the need to maintain peace, security and stability in the Korean Peninsula, and encouraged peaceful dialogue including the resumption of the Six Party Talks. The Ministers reiterated the importance of fully complying with the obligations in all relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions, and commitments under the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to fully implementing the relevant UNSC Resolutions and their full support for all efforts to bring about the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the Trust-building Process on the Korean Peninsula and the Peace and Cooperation Initiative proposed by the President of the Republic of Korea. The Ministers also emphasised the importance of addressing issues of humanitarian concerns of the international community.
37. The Ministers also discussed the preparations for the upcoming 8th EAS to be held on 10 October 2013 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam.
38. The Ministers looked forward to the 4th EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar in 2014.



071. Press Release of the Ministry of Defence on the Second ASEAN Defence Ministers' Plus Meeting.

Bandar Seri Begawan, August 29, 2013.

The second ADMM Plus meeting was held in Brunei. The Minister of State for Defence Shri Jitendra Singh led the Indian delegation at the meeting. The Ministers issued a joint Declaration at the end of the meeting in which it has been decided that the ADMM Plus countries will establish practical measures that reduce vulnerability to miscalculation and avoid misunderstanding and undesirable incidents at sea.

Among other decisions taken at the meeting of the ADMM Plus, was the establishment of an additional (sixth) Expert Working Group on Humanitarian Mine Action which will be co-chaired by India with Vietnam.

Following is the text of speech rendered by the Minister of State for Defence Shri Jitendra Singh at the second ADMM Plus meeting held in Brunei.

"I am honoured to be present at the second meeting of the ADMM Plus. At the outset I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our hosts and in particular to you, Mr Chairman, for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey the good wishes of my senior colleague and the Defence Minister Mr A K Antony who was unable to participate in this important event due to Parliament related work.

India views our partnership with the ASEAN as a critical element of our vision of a stable, secure and prosperous Asia and its surrounding Indian Ocean and Pacific regions. We acknowledge that our own security and prosperity are vitally linked to the Asia Pacific region. Therefore, three years ago, we welcomed the establishment of the ADMM Plus and viewed our participation in this forum as a natural and logical corollary to our multifaceted political, economic and security engagement with the ASEAN member states. We see this Ministerial meeting as an important opportunity to review progress and to further strengthen cooperation on the basis of the agreed declaration that will be adopted today.

We commend the ASEAN for its role as the principal architect and driver of the economic and security cooperation structures which are emerging

in the region. By building mechanisms which are based on the principles of inclusivity, dialogue and consensus, the ASEAN has created opportunities for all of us in this region to contribute towards peace and prosperity. ASEAN centrality and leadership have been rightly recognised as the essential elements for the success of these forums and India fully supports ASEAN's central role in these efforts.

The strategic environment in the region remains in a state of flux. This region represents a significant portion of the world's population, its economic strength and also the largest militaries. We cannot, therefore, miss the opportunity that this forum presents, to facilitate an environment of peace and stability, which would be conducive to the aspirations of every nation in this region.

The ADMM Plus was built with the objective of developing synergy and cooperative frameworks to enable us to address the complex security challenges which we face. We hope that the model of accommodation and consensus and of following a gradual, step by step approach will positively influence the conduct of all States in the region. We have, therefore, welcomed the proposal to convene this forum every two years.

Terrorism represents a major threat to the peace, stability and security of the entire region. India has been urging that the global regime against terrorism needs to be strengthened through the early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the UN. To deal with terror groups which operate across borders and have acquired global reach, we must combine efforts to ensure that terrorist sanctuaries, safe havens and the networks for financing to terrorist groups are dismantled.

Since the main threat to peace and stability in Afghanistan emanates from terrorism, it is imperative that terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens, particularly those beyond Afghan borders, are dismantled. The international community must redouble efforts to assist Afghanistan become a stable, democratic and pluralistic state. India supports the efforts of the Afghan Government to establish a peaceful dialogue with all armed opposition groups. The reconciliation process must be Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled, within the framework of the Afghan constitution and internationally accepted redlines. The recent

attack against our Consulate in Jalalabad will not deter us in our efforts to assist Afghanistan in the reconstruction and development efforts.

The deteriorating situation in Syria is a matter of continuing concern to the international community. India has supported calls for stopping of violence and commencement of an inclusive national dialogue to resolve the conflict through peaceful political means. The dialogue should also take into account the legitimate aspirations of all Syrians, in accordance with internationally approved political and legal principles including the relevant UNSC resolutions. If recent reports regarding use of chemical weapons outside Damascus are confirmed by the UN investigation team, it would be a matter of grave concern. The international legal norm against the use of chemical weapons must not be breached. India has consistently supported the complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapon worldwide and for strict measures to prevent their access to non-state actors and terrorist groups.

India has expressed deep concern about the nuclear test conducted by DPRK in February 2013. We support the objective of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the resumption of talks among the relevant parties.

Issues of maritime security in this region are being addressed at a number of levels and through various dialogue frameworks. The safety and security of the sea lanes of communication is of paramount importance. We note that cooperation and coordination among States has improved their ability to address non-state threats to maritime security. There is need to reaffirm the importance of unimpeded right of passage and other maritime rights in accordance with the accepted principles of international law. These principles should be respected by all. Maintenance of peace and security in the region is of vital interest and sovereignty issues must be resolved peacefully by all countries concerned, in accordance with international law. We oppose the use or the threat of use of force. We hope that all parties to disputes in the South China Sea region will abide by the 2002 Declaration on Conduct in the South China Sea and work together to ensure peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international law, including the UNCLOS. We urge all parties concerned to take forward these discussions towards adoption of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea on the basis of consensus.

We commend the useful work that has been done by the 5 Expert Working Groups in their mandated areas and we look forward to the strengthening of cooperation that has been established between our defence establishments. India is committed to strengthening the ADMM– Plus forum. Our participation in the recent HADR exercise at Brunei Darussalam and our already stated desire to partner with Vietnam in a new area of cooperation, namely Humanitarian Mine Action, are a reflection of our commitment to contribute to the success of this Forum.

We agree that there is need to steer the activities of ADMM - Plus in a manner that adds value to its efforts and to synergise the activities of this forum with other forums like ARF and EAS. The leaders of ADSOM - Plus should work out efficient modalities to ensure greater synergy and efficiency.

To end, I wish to reaffirm India’s commitment to work with our partners in this forum to create an open, balanced and rule-based security architecture that is capable of addressing current and future challenges to peace and stability in this region.

I thank you, Mr Chairman and Excellencies, for this opportunity to share my views. I also take this opportunity to convey our felicitations and good wishes to our friend and neighbour Myanmar, as it prepares to take on the Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2014.”



072. Address by the External Affairs Minister at the inaugural session of 2nd ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT) Conference.

Vientiane (Laos), September 10, 2013.

Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR Dr.

Thongloun Sisoulith

Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN for Corporate & Community

Affairs Dr. A.K.P. Mochtan

Director General, RIS Dr. Biswajit Dhar

Distinguished Panelists and Speakers from ASEAN countries

Members of Think Tank Community in the region

Ladies and gentlemen

I am delighted to inaugurate the 2nd Round Table of the ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks in this beautiful and serene city of Vientiane. I would, in particular, like to extend my support to RIS for their decision to rotate the AINTT Round Table between India and ASEAN Member States. The choice of Vientiane to host the 2nd Round Table will allow Indian and ASEAN members of the strategic community to strengthen their linkages with the Institute of Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR, the partner to this Round Table.

The AINTT was an initiative announced by Prime Minister of India during the 7th ASEAN-India Summit in Thailand in 2009, to provide an essential bridge between the think tank communities in ASEAN countries and India. It was felt that the strategic community in the region could contribute usefully towards policy decisions by the Governments of ASEAN countries and India to further strengthen the ASEAN-India Dialogue Partnership. As you are aware, the process of adding substance and 'meat on the bones' of the relationship acquired particular momentum during the Commemorative Year celebrations in 2012, marking 20 years of the ASEAN-India partnership. Prime Minister of India and the ASEAN Leaders upgraded this Dialogue Partnership to a Strategic Partnership at the special Commemorative Summit on December 20, 2012.

I hope that you will keep this context in mind when you brainstorm over the next two days. I dare say that there is a huge volume of academic studies on the potential in the ASEAN-India relationship. What the Governments would welcome would be practical suggestions which can be implemented in tangible terms, keeping in mind ground realities. In a sense, we are hoping that you all would become an extended team to the Governments in this endeavour. The process of your brainstorming from one Round Table to another would also need to take on the character of a process in continuum.

Ladies and gentlemen

The substantive parameters for the future of the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership are contained in the Vision Statement which was adopted at the December Summit. This sets the direction for strengthening all pillars: political and security, economic as also the socio-cultural linkages between India and ASEAN. I was very happy to launch the ASEAN-India Centre in New Delhi on June 21, 2013. This Centre, which will be functioning under the guidance of Chairman RIS, has been set up to act as a resource to assist the Governments of India and ASEAN in strengthening the strategic partnership across the three pillars. I would suggest that there is a requirement of synergy between the ASEAN-India Centre in New Delhi and the deliberations of AINTT.

If one were to analyze the over 60 meetings/ events/ programmes organized between ASEAN and India last year and also study India's participation in official Ministerial meetings with the ASEAN, and the approach to ASEAN centric fora such as ADMM+, ARF, Expanded Maritime Forum Plus and, of course, the discussions during the ASEAN-India Summits and the East Asia Summit, there is a predominant emphasis on practical issues of cooperation.

The fact that there is great synergy of objective between ASEAN and India, both amongst Governments and at the level of the strategic and business communities, has contributed to this emphasis on tangibles in ASEAN-India cooperation. India has suggested activities under almost all paras of the Plan of Action for 2010-15. There has been an intensification of training programmes and capacity building in sectoral cooperation.

Ladies and gentlemen

Regular annual meetings between Ministers of Agriculture, Commerce, External Affairs and Tourism are the norm. Ministerial meetings have been initiated in Environment and New & Renewable Energy. The numbers of ITEC scholarships offered by India to ASEAN countries have seen substantial increase and our people-to-people programmes have also expanded. Both AINTT and Delhi Dialogue are acquiring significant following and I would, in fact, urge that we begin looking at creating a supportive line between these two dialogues reaching out to the strategic communities interested in our region.

One of the most significant developments has been the integration of the economic space between ASEAN countries and India. An annual growth rate of 22% over the last 11 years allowed us to cross the target of USD 70 billion by 2012. Trade volumes in 2012 reached USD 80 billion, making India the 6th largest trading partner of ASEAN and the 7th largest source of investment in the region. ASEAN contributes 10% of India's global trade. These figures point to the potential and the opportunities that need to be realized if we are to meet our ambition of reaching USD 100 billion by 2015 in trade volumes and USD 200 billion by 2020. The implementation of the FTA on Trade in Goods has contributed to this growth.

We expect that early implementation of the FTA on Services and Investments will be key to achieving these objectives. The combined GDP of USD 3.8 trillion that ASEAN and India bring together defines one of the most important economic spaces to impact the lives of 1.8 billion people. Our Ministry of Commerce & Industry is presently in discussion with ASEAN counterparts on the setting up of the ASEAN-India Trade & Investment Centre, specific to the realization of this economic space. I am happy to see that you would be debating some of these imperatives in Session I.

In the aftermath of intensive studies by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and RIS, India set up an Inter-Ministerial Group on Transport Connectivity with ASEAN, to participate in the Land Transport Working Group and Maritime Transport Working Group Meetings of the ASEAN. On June 10 this year, India became the third

country, after China and Japan, to begin annual ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee-India Consultations to comprehensively further the agenda of connectivity. We are, therefore, convinced of the strategic importance of connectivity with the ASEAN countries.

Ladies and gentlemen

Strengthening geographic connectivity through land, sea and air will require finding innovative means to finance the infrastructure requirements. This is a dimension for study in the AINTT as to how can the involvement of ADB, ASEAN Infrastructure Fund and World Bank be optimized to meet this strategic objective of the ASEAN-India partnership. We also look forward to suggestions on how the soft infrastructure required to support the movement of goods and services on these physical corridors of connectivity can be put in place even as we examine the construction of these corridors. This exercise must be simultaneous and not linear. Your suggestions on the required engagement on soft infrastructure, including issues such as a common motor vehicles act, customs and tariff regulations, immigration requirements etc would be most topical. I hope that some of these issues will be discussed in Session II of the AINTT. There is also need to strengthen institutional connectivity and bring in a concerted focus on human resource development in order to leverage our people-to-people ties. There are reflexive levels of comfort amongst our people, given the strong foundations of civilizational ties, which have enriched our countries in terms of a two way traffic of ideas, innovations and culture. Your Session III should aim to identify some out-of-the-box measures to strengthen socio-cultural and development cooperation between ASEAN countries and India. One useful dimension would be to see how we can make it easier for our businessmen, professionals and members of the strategic community to travel between our countries so that they can be participant to the new political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions emerging in the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership.

Ladies and gentlemen

India has been very supportive of the objective of an ASEAN Community by 2015 and the initiative for ASEAN integration. We look forward to applauding your sense of achievement in 2015. Looking to the future, I

would like to emphasize that as the ASEAN countries integrate better amongst themselves, it is necessary that their integration with India also progresses apace.

I would be curious to see if the AINTT itself can bring in the strategic community in a more participant manner to these various dimensions that I have mentioned today. I would like to make a suggestion that if the think tanks in the room today can consider taking on two young researchers each from within the ASEAN-India region for short periods of internship, it would help us to widen the constituency for a stronger ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership to the youth in our countries in a more meaningful manner.

Ladies and gentlemen

This is a partnership not only with longstanding relevance but also one with increasing relevance, especially at this time when the political, security and economic architecture in our region is undergoing evolution and when it is urgent that we insulate our growth-oriented economies from the persistent downturn in the global economy. The ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership is today, more than ever, vital for progress and prosperity and peace and stability regionally as also globally.

I wish you an interesting two days of useful discussions and I look forward to your conclusions and recommendations.

Thank you



073. Media Briefing by Secretary(East) on the Prime Minister's visits to Brunei and Indonesia.

New Delhi, October 7, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. The focus of this afternoon's briefing is Prime Minister's visit to Brunei and Indonesia.

We have here with us Secretary (East) Mr. Ashok Kantha who will brief you about those forthcoming visits of the Prime Minister. On his right is Mr. Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Joint Secretary (South), who handles these countries bilaterally.

In accordance with our usual practice I will request Secretary (East) to make his opening remarks, following which the floor will be open for any questions that you would like to ask on issues that he makes his opening remarks on. Subsequent to that, if you have any other questions related to Secretary (East), he will respond. And finally if there are any other questions which are not related to today's briefing and if you would like us to respond, we will respond to them.

May I also mention to you the ground rule - one question per person. So, please choose your questions carefully. With those introductory remarks, I will request Secretary (East) to make his opening remarks.

Secretary (East) (Shri Ashok Kantha): Thank you, Akbar.

As Akbar just mentioned, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh will be travelling to Brunei to participate in the 11th ASEAN-India Summit and 8th East Asia Summit on 10th October 2013. He will also be paying an official visit to Indonesia from 10th to 12th October at the invitation of President of Yudhoyono.

The 11th ASEAN-India Summit will be the first Summit after the elevation of the relationship to a strategic partnership. It would mark the maturing of this partnership as it enters its third decade. In recent years we have seen considerable substance and depth being added to this partnership. Its elevation to a strategic level at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in December last year was in fact a natural progression. Both ASEAN and India attach importance to the contribution of this strategic partnership to progress and prosperity, and peace and stability in the

region. The 11th ASEAN-India Summit is also being held against the backdrop of ASEAN integration towards an ASEAN Community by 2015.

As you are aware, the ASEAN-India partnership is a cornerstone of our foreign policy and the foundation of India's Look East Policy. It has seen substantive progression since India became a Sectoral Partner of the ASEAN in 1992, Dialogue Partner in 1996 and Summit Level partner in 2002. There has been significant intensification across the three pillars of cooperation, viz., politico-military, economic and socio-cultural. We have currently 26 inter-governmental mechanisms between India and ASEAN and the number is growing.

Prime Minister's interaction with the ASEAN Leaders at the Summit will take forward the different aspects of the strategic partnership. ASEAN countries and India have concluded the legal scrubbing of the FTA on services and investment. And we expect the signature of this document to be completed sometime later this after all concerned countries have completed the internal approval formalities. RCEP negotiations have also begun, with the first round held in Brisbane in September this year.

As you are aware, the future direction of this strategic partnership is set by the Vision Statement adopted by the leaders at the Commemorative Summit last December. The ASEAN-India Centre has been inaugurated in New Delhi on 21st June 2013 by our Minister of External Affairs, that was within six months of the Vision Statement being adopted. The Centre will be functioning as a resource in support of the governmental efforts underway to strengthen the strategic partnership. We are also in the process of setting up a separate ASEAN-India Trade and Investment Centre.

ASEAN-India connectivity in all its dimensions - geographic, institutional and people-to-people - is a matter of high priority. Prime Minister will be discussing the progress in these areas with his ASEAN counterparts. We have begun the annual ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee -India meeting in June this year. We expect progress on this important issue of engagement with ASEAN at the next summit.

The ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity, signed at the 3rd ASEAN-India Summit in 2004 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, sets out the roadmap for long-term ASEAN-India engagement;

and this is being implemented through the Plan of Action for 2010-15, adopted after successful implementation of the previous Plan of Action for 2004-2010. We are continuing our support to ASEAN Community building efforts, including the Initiative for ASEAN Integration, Narrowing the Developmental Gaps, Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, and a Drug-Free ASEAN by 2015.

Under the political-security pillar of cooperation, India and ASEAN have begun discussions on trans-national crime and drug trafficking. ASEAN and India continue to strengthen their maritime cooperation.

The intensification in people-to-people linkages in 2012 has continued in 2013 through programmes for ASEAN students, farmers, diplomats, media and strategic communities. We are circulating details in this regard.

Under sectoral cooperation with ASEAN we have organized a number of events and activities during the past one year. Here also we are circulating details shortly.

Apart from participating in the ASEAN-India Summit, as I mentioned earlier, Prime Minister will also be attending the 8th East Asia Summit. This summit, as you know, is the leaders-led forum for dialogue on broad strategic, geopolitical and economic issues of common interest, with the aim of promoting peace, security, stability and economic prosperity.

India has participated in all the seven Summits held so far, and we support ASEAN centrality in the entire process.

At the forthcoming summit, one area which will receive special attention relates to our initiative on Nalanda University. You would recall that EAS members have supported the revival of Nalanda University as a non-profit, secular and self-governing international institution. We have now proposed an MoU on the establishment of Nalanda University. And at Brunei we would begin the process of signing of the MoU with those countries which have completed their internal approvals.

India is working with EAS member countries to augment collective capacity for disaster relief and rescue. We are also collaborating with Australia to combat drug-resistant malaria. We would also be exploring other cooperative initiatives in the sector of healthcare including by taking new initiatives at the forthcoming summit.

The 6th East Asia Summit had adopted an EAS Declaration on Connectivity. We believe that there is scope for greater cooperation among EAS members in this important area.

Security issues, especially non-traditional security concerns like piracy, smuggling, international terrorism, transnational crimes, drug-trafficking and so on are finding greater salience in EAS discussions, and I have no doubt that this trend will continue at the 8th EAS Summit as well.

The leaders are expected to adopt the Declaration of the 8th East Asia Summit on Food Security. We have supported this initiative taken by Brunei, Darussalam. We look forward to working with the EAS participating countries and to take part in regional initiatives to further implement India's own commitments in ensuring food and nutritional security.

In Brunei, on the sidelines of ASEAN-India Summit and East Asia Summit, Prime Minister will have bilateral interactions with EAS leaders. PM will hold bilateral meeting for instance with the newly-elected Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott. As you are aware, India and Australia share a strategic partnership characterised by multifaceted contacts and exchanges in politico-security, economic, scientific, education, skills dimensions, and in people-to-people contacts.

From Brunei, Prime Minister will be travelling to Jakarta on an official visit to Indonesia, as I mentioned earlier. You would recall that President Yudhoyono had visited India as the Chief Guest for our Republic Day in January 2011, and again for the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in December 2012. In fact during the last ten years there have been eight visits – four from India to Indonesia and four from Indonesia to India - which shows the importance the two countries attach to this important relationship. But this will be Prime Minister's first visit to Indonesia in bilateral context. PM had earlier visited Indonesia for the Commemorative ASEAN-India Conference in April 2005, and for the 6th EAS in November 2011.

During his forthcoming visit to Jakarta, Prime Minister will have official talks with President Yudhoyono on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest, and will meet with other political leaders. We are working on a number of initiatives to promote our bilateral relations which will be announced during the visit.

India and Indonesia share a strategic partnership which was established in 2005. Our relations with Indonesia are characterised by warm and friendly exchanges which are diverse, strong and growing. Our political-security, economic, cultural and people-to-people contacts are robust and expanding.

Following the visit of President Yudhoyono in January 2011, during which we had concluded major agreements on security, trade and investments, connectivity and cultural cooperation, we have since re-energised our institutional mechanisms and created new ones to achieve progress in key areas such as Foreign Office consultations, energy resources, defence and security cooperation, trade and economic relations, space cooperation, and connectivity.

We have made rapid strides in strengthening defence and security cooperation. The visit of Raksha Mantri (Defence Minister) to Indonesia in October last year enhanced our defence exchanges with that country. On the security front, we have concluded MLAT in criminal matters, an Extradition Treaty, and we are now exploring an Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons.

Our bilateral trade reached US\$ 20 billion in 2012-13. In fact, trade has grown almost five times since the establishment of a strategic partnership with Indonesia in 2005. We are positive that the target of US\$ 25 billion by 2015 will be achieved. Indian companies view Indonesia as an attractive investment destination and have a significant presence in infrastructure, power, textiles, steel, automotive, mining of resources, banking, FMCG manufacturing and other sectors.

The visit of Prime Minister to Indonesia is expected to further consolidate and expand our strategic partnership and provide a new focus for future cooperation. We are providing some more details about the relationship in a piece of paper Akbar will be circulating shortly.

Thank you very much. These are the opening remarks I wanted to make. I will be very happy to take any questions you may have.

Q: Sir, a territorial dispute over South China Sea would be probably one of the important issues at the ASEAN Summit. How do we look at ASEAN-China talks on the code of conduct over the South China Sea?

Secretary (East): The issue of South China Sea has been getting attention at EAS as well as ARF, as also at various ASEAN Summits with partner countries. As far as India's position on this issue is concerned, I think it has been fairly unambiguous. Protection of maritime commons, we believe, is an issue of increasing relevance to growing economies of East Asia.

We have consistently reaffirmed the unimpeded right of passage and other maritime rights in accordance with accepted principles of international law. We believe that the sovereignty issues that you referred to must be resolved peacefully by all countries concerned in accordance with international law. We oppose the use or threat of use of force.

We welcome some recent developments including the collective commitment by the concerned countries to abide by and implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in South China Sea, and to work towards the adoption of a code of conduct in the South China Sea on the basis of consensus.

Q: This is on FTA on services and investment. How confident are we that we are going to sign it during the Summit, or you said that later this year? And also, the Philippines and Indonesia, if I am not wrong, have raised some concerns over ... (Inaudible)... transfer of people-to-people in each other's territory. What is the update on that? Have those issues been sorted out?

Secretary (East): All issues pertaining to FTA covering our trade in services and investment have been sorted out. The process of legal scrubbing has been completed. There were certain observations by Philippines and Thailand which have been suitably addressed in the document. Now, the concerned countries are undertaking their respective internal approval procedures. We believe that the signing will take place within the calendar year 2013. This depends on internal procedures in member countries, but we are quite optimistic that it will happen this year.

Q: Could you please give an update about the land and rail connectivity between India and ASEAN? For years we have been told about the missing link of 100 kilometres and odd in Mizoram, Moreh. What is the

update and when do you think there could be complete land and rail connectivity at least with some of the ASEAN countries?

Secretary (East): Connectivity with ASEAN is an area of very high priority for us. So, we are working on several projects here, the most important of them being the trilateral highway project which involves India, Myanmar and Thailand. 160 kilometres of Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo road of the trilateral highway project is almost complete. Work has begun on other 120 kilometres in Kalewa-Yargi sector, and the repair of 71 bridges on TKK road. The request for proposal for appointment of Consultant to prepare feasibility study on Kalewa-Yargi sector has already been issued, and approval has been taken for tender for 71 bridges.

What I am trying to say is that in these areas where progress is taking place. In fact there is an understanding among India, Myanmar and Thailand that the Foreign Ministers of the three countries will meet sometime later this year to take stock of progress; and we have agreed that this project must be completed by the year 2016. And we seem to be on track.

In parallel we have started working on the soft infrastructure of the project. Once connectivity is established, how do you use that connectivity? That will be one area we will discuss also at the forthcoming meetings in Brunei. In addition there is also a maritime component to our connectivity project. I will not go into detail. The short point I would like to underline is that connectivity with ASEAN is a very high priority for us.

Q: The newly-elected Prime Minister of Australia is very enthusiastic about selling uranium to India. Talks have been going on for some time between the two sides. Can you kindly give an update? When are we likely to sign an agreement with Australia to get uranium?

Secretary (East): As you rightly mentioned, after taking over as the new Prime Minister, Mr. Abbott has made positive comments about the need for expediting, accelerating negotiations between India and Australia on nuclear cooperation. We already have held two rounds of negotiations, and we are hoping to hold a third round of negotiations if possible in December this year. We have not yet firmed up the dates. But I believe there is a strong desire on both sides to try and bring these negotiations to a successful conclusion at an early date.

Q: Mr. Secretary, the maritime concern is one of the major issues to take up with the ASEAN. One you talk about the security and the vacuum of security in this region, and the second is the maritime silk route which has been promoted as a business, instead of the routine silk route. How does India assess the maritime issues with the neighbouring countries?

Secretary (East): I will not comment on any vacuum in security because I do not quite see a vacuum in terms of security architecture in the region. Our focus, as I mentioned earlier, is on a trilateral highway as well as on our engagement with ASEAN countries.

As I mentioned in my opening statement, India has started a dialogue with ASEAN Connectivity Coordination Committee (ACCC), and the first round took place in June this year. That is an important forum under which we are progressing our important agenda pertaining to enhanced connectivity with ASEAN.

Q: Sir, on this trilateral highway India has been doing its bit but, I heard, other countries are not really contributing. Thailand for instance is not doing its bit towards the highway, not as much as it should. So, is that report true?

Secretary (East): That is not our impression really. I was present when Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Thailand Yingluck Shinawatra in late May. From Thai side there is strong commitment both to trilateral highway as well as maritime dimension of the connectivity project. Likewise, Myanmar has been cooperating quite closely with us with regard to these projects.

Q: Could you give some update on the progress on air connectivity between India and ASEAN countries?

Secretary (East): We have reasonably good air connectivity with ASEAN countries, though there is still scope for improvement. For instance, during Prime Minister's visit to Indonesia this will be an important area where we are seeking further movement. I will ask Sanjay to give some details in this regard about Batik Air, their plans to operationalise direct links with India.

By and large while we do not have an open-skies policy *vis-a-vis* ASEAN countries in terms of movement of passengers, cargo is a different matter;

but we have adopted a fairly liberal regime when it comes to our civil aviation arrangements with ASEAN countries. And that is also reflected in an increase in flights between India and Singapore, India and Thailand, India and Malaysia, with various countries of ASEAN. I will ask Sanjay to add something on Indonesia and other ASEAN countries.

Joint Secretary (South)(Shri Sanjay Bhattacharyya): We have Air Services Agreements with most of the ASEAN countries, which are fairly comprehensive. In addition, we have an ASEAN Air Services Agreement under which there are 18 additional points. And these are absolutely open, and the services can be open within these 18 points. The focus of these 18 points has been on the secondary stations as well as the North East because for us it is very important to link the North East to the ASEAN as part of our connectivity projects. While the road and other projects are going on for connectivity of the North East to the ASEAN hinterland, the air services is something that can be taken advantage of immediately.

As regards Indonesia, we have already got the designation of Batik Air to open direct air services between Indonesia and India. And there is a code-sharing agreement which has been worked out between Garuda and Jet.

Q: When we talk about trade and economic cooperation with the ASEAN partners, is the transpacific partnership going to be raised or discussed at all, how it is going to impact most of the members here? There have been some concerns over there.

Secretary (East): As you are aware, we are engaged in the RCEP process but not in TPP process. So, we are not a participant in TPP negotiations. But of course what will be the impact or implications of TPP on India is something that we closely monitor. Our first focus was completing India-ASEAN FTA arrangements. As you know, trade in goods we did earlier, and now we have completed services and investment, and FTA covering trade in services and investment will come into force by July 2014, next year, once all countries have done their approval formalities and we have signed the agreements. Now in September we have started negotiations within the framework of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). So, we are making progress, but we are not part of TPP.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Secretary (East): There are some other countries which are there like Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam. They are part of that. But it is more limited coverage among EAS countries.

Official Spokesperson: Okay, anyone else on anything else?

Question: Has the MoD sent any information to MEA regarding the Keran Sector infiltration bids and the crossfire that is on at the border areas? Also, is the Government going to take it up given the fact that Salman Bashir the Pak High Commissioner has already said that there is no Pak involvement?

Official Spokesperson: Geeta, let me try and answer your question although you know that we never talk about intra-Ministerial consultations. That said, I think you have raised an issue which deserves response in its entirety and let me try and frame the response to that.

As you aware, we have repeatedly emphasised that the maintenance of the sanctity of the Line of Control is for us of primary importance. Even at the last meeting between Prime Minister and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif this issue was reemphasised.

As regards the current situation, you are aware that our armed forces who are responsible for ensuring the sanctity of the area that you referred to are undertaking currently appropriate necessary measures. We have full confidence in their abilities to take those appropriate necessary measures and to address the challenges that have been posed to them. Therefore, at this stage we will await the outcome of their efforts in this regard. I hope I have responded to your question.

Q: High Commissioner of Pakistan in India Salman Bashir had yesterday said I think in Hyderabad that the whole thing of infiltration from Pakistani side is baseless. I think it is one of the most baseless statements in the coming years. What is your take on this?

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much for your question and the response to that. I do not need to respond, you have already responded to that question with your own answer.

I have given the viewpoint that currently our armed forces are taking appropriate necessary measures, we have confidence in their abilities

to respond to the challenges posed to them. Based on the outcome of those, we will take further necessary action as appropriate. At this stage, let our brave armed forces do their jobs.

Q: After the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan met in the US, it was agreed that the DGMOs of the two countries would talk regarding this violation of ceasefire on the LoC. Any development on that front?

Official Spokesperson: Parul, since you cover the Ministry of Defence also perhaps you are aware that the DGMOs talk on Tuesday. Today we are still on Monday. So, please bear with the schedule of discussions that they have. Every Tuesday is when they talk telephonically.

The issue of when they will meet will depend on the outcome of their talks telephonically. These are step-by-step processes which we will pursue based on the instructions and the agreement of both the Prime Ministers. So, as and when these things happen, you will know about that.

Q: Sir, after some days of Salman Khurshid coming back from Moscow, what can you say about the results of his visit? And based on his visit and the future visit of Manmohan Singhji to Moscow again, what as for you is the top priority in the Indian relationship with Russia?

Official Spokesperson: Our relationship with Russia is one which is tried and tested. The meeting of the External Affairs Minister was there for the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC). This meeting sets the agenda for the annual summit. What we will do is have a separate briefing for you on the entire expanse of issues that will be covered by the summit, and then you will have ample time to ask me these questions. Today let us focus on the here and now. The visit of Prime Minister to Russia is in the latter half of this month. Certainly we will provide you all the details of what will be the major areas of discussion.

But you are aware of the perennials of India and Russia. I do not need to list them out, but I could list them out for you. These are issues of cooperation in a host of strategic sectors including nuclear, including defence, including space, science and technology, etc. The details of those we will provide you later. As you are aware, there are two aspects of the Inter-Governmental Commission – one is where Mr. Khurshid chairs and another is when the Defence Minister interacts with his

counterpart. Once both these are over, we will then set the agenda. At this stage, both are not yet over. So, please bear with us for some more time on this.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I have already told you it is in the latter half of this month. You have been following us for a long time. On the 9th Prime Minister is visiting Brunei. We just shared with you that date today. By those standards, I assure you I will not disappoint you.

Q: Sir, after Moscow, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is also expected to go to Beijing. Is China pushing for any specific thing under BDCA in the run up to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Beijing? And is there anything that has been mutually agreed upon?

Official Spokesperson: Maha, when there is a process under way you do not expect us to conduct diplomacy in public glare. May I request you to bear with us until we come out and unfurl and unveil for you the entire issues related to Prime Minister's forthcoming visit to China, and like in the case of Russia because this visit will be after the visit to Russia, so you know we are pretty slow in these matters, we go step by step. Please bear with us in those terms. We will certainly provide you information. We are not like you, three steps away. We have three visits before the visit that you are mentioning will come. So, slow and steady wins the race.

Q: The Prime Minister's of India and Pakistan met in New York on the 29th. Thereafter, on the 1st, after their directive to the DGMOs to discuss plans for restoring the ceasefire, the DGMOs spoke on the 1st. And they are also free to speak whenever to pick up the hotline. Now, there is one massive incursion attempt which has been going since the 23rd of September. Subsequently, after the Prime Ministers spoke and gave the directives to their respective DGMOs, there have been two other attempts in the same area, in the Keran Sector. Now, do we infer that the directive of the Pakistani Prime Minister to his forces on the ground is not having any effect?

Official Spokesperson: Is this a question or a statement?

Q: It is a question.

Official Spokesperson: You said, do we infer? Let me reverse it. I said, right now the challenge is to ensure that our armed forces complete their job. If at the outcome of those efforts there is a requirement for us to take this thing further ahead, we will do so. We cannot do so while an activity is under way. So, please wait for that activity to be completed. We will then make an assessment and the inference will also be known to you.

Q: On the Keran sector, even after 14 days the Indian armed forces have not been able to neutralise the infiltrators. How serious is the situation there? Do you think it will affect the talks process further?

Official Spokesperson: Ranjit, we are going back and forth on the same issue. It is for those who are in charge of security of that area, the sentinels of our borders, to make that assessment. It is not for diplomats to sit here and do that. So, please understand that once they are over with their activities we will then take a call on anything further. So, please have patience and let them finish their activities.

Q: Can you please tell me if in the last two, three weeks there has been some step ahead on the issue of the Italian marines? The investigation of the NIA and police has stopped. Is there any possibility of a dialogue or there is probably a judiciary exit to the question?

Official Spokesperson: Mario, I think we all have to take a clear view of this and that view is that the case is sub judice. Therefore, the final outcome of that case will depend on what the judiciary decides. What was being discussed as part of a discussion between the Italian authorities and the Indian authorities was to overcome some hitches in the judicial process proceeding, not a sort of an extra-judicial outcome of it or not an out-of-court outcome of it. So, the discussion was about how to move ahead with the judicial process because there were some hitches in how India sees that judicial process moving ahead and Italian views on that judicial process moving ahead.

There have been discussions on this and following those discussions and having understood the Italian viewpoint, our authorities are now in consultation to see what we can do and how to take forward the Indian judicial process fully within the four corners of our legal process, nothing beyond that.

Q: Day before yesterday, Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh laid the foundation stone of a power plant in Bangladesh, which is a joint venture between India's NTPC and their Power Grid Corporation. The power plant is very close to Sundarbans and there has been widespread protest on environmental grounds against this power plant, and there has been a long march of people who say that biodiversity will be ruined. I would like to know what is India's stand on this environmental concern.

Official Spokesperson: Obviously environment is an issue that we take seriously. Obviously we factor into any decision making what will be the impacts. This power plant that you are mentioning has, its obvious there have been people who have indicated their views which are contrary to what we feel. This is a matter which will be addressed at the time of the Detailed Project Report. When we take these various factors into account, that too will be taken into account. But prima facie our understanding is that it does not have an impact of the nature that you are alluding to.

Q: Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik was not allowed to board the flight to Nepal this morning, and he has also said that his daughter's visa application has not been processed till now, it has been nine months. Can we have some status on that?

Official Spokesperson: What is your question for the Ministry of External Affairs?

Q: He was not allowed to board the flight.

Official Spokesperson: The immigration control is an issue which I think you need to address to those who manage immigration. And you know who they are.

Q: And about his daughter's visa application?

Official Spokesperson: I think you know who handles visas. Come on, let us not go through tried and tested territory again and again.

Thank you very much



**074. Information Sheet on ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership,
East Asia Summit and Bilateral Visit to Indonesia.**

October 7, 2013.

ASEAN-India

ASEAN-India mechanisms today include the ASEAN-India Summit and seven Meetings at the level of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Trade, Agriculture, Tourism, Telecommunications, Environment and New and Renewable Energy. We expect more dialogue mechanisms to open up in the coming months.

ASEAN-India trade today is at USD 76 billion and we have a target of USD 100 billion by 2015 and USD 200 billion by 2022.

India has met its commitments on the 160 kms of the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo road of the Trilateral Highway and has taken on an additional commitment of 120 kms in the Kalewa-Yargyi sector. India will also be repairing 71 bridges in the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo sector.

A Mekong-India Conference is being organized as an industry led initiative on November 19, 2013 in New Delhi by ADB and CII.

Mid-way into the implementation of the Plan of Action 2010-15, a Mid-Term Review held in Jakarta in May 2013 saw satisfaction at the pace of implementation.

Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and India, when they met in Brunei Darussalam on July 2, 2013 also expressed their pleasure at the pace of progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action.

ASEAN and India have begun discussions on transnational crime and drug trafficking. Our delegations met on June 21, 2013 in Da Nang, Vietnam.

India participated in the Second Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) in Malaysia on 3 October 2013, which was held back-to-back with the Fourth ASEAN Maritime Forum.

125 ASEAN students visited us in September 2013. Another batch will be coming later this year (from November 17-26). The students exchange programme has been on since 2007 but the numbers were increased from 100 to 250 last year.

20 Indian farmers visited Malaysia from April 14-23, 2013. You would recall that 20 ASEAN farmers had visited India in December 2012 at the time of the Commemorative Summit.

20 ASEAN journalists visited India during Delhi Dialogue V in February 2013, while 8 members of the Indian media visited Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam in July 2013 to coincide with the 11th ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers Meeting.

53 ASEAN diplomats will be undergoing training at the FSI from November 13 to December 12, 2013. This programme has been in place for the last eight years. We have brought in diplomats from the ASEAN Secretariat for this programme since last year.

Delhi Dialogue VI is under planning for March 2014. Delhi Dialogue V under the theme 'ASEAN-India: vision for Partnership and Prosperity' was held in New Delhi on February 19-20, 2013;

EAM inaugurated the 2nd Roundtable of ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks in Vientiane on September 10 this year.

A Protocol to amend the 'MoU on Strengthening Tourism Cooperation between ASEAN and India' was signed at the 4th ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers Meeting in Vientiane on January 21, 2013, where an ASEAN-India Tourism Website was launched

Conference of Heads of Agricultural Universities and Research Institutes of India and ASEAN was held on 19-21 February 2013 at New Delhi.

India participated in the ASEAN Maritime Transport Working Group (MTWG) Meeting on 12-14 March 2013 at Mandalay.

ASEAN-India Workshop on Marine Bio-technology at Goa from March 19-22, 2013.

ASEAN-India Programme in Quality Systems in Manufacturing in New Delhi from 8-11 April, 2013.

3rd ASEAN-India Working Group on Agriculture and Forestry Meeting was held in New Delhi on May 6-7, 2013.

ASEAN Sub Committee on Space Technology and Application (SCOSA)-India Meeting was held at Tagaytay, Philippines on May 20-21, 2013.

ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Connectivity (ACCC)-India Meeting was held at Balikpapan, Indonesia on June 10, 2013.

ASEAN-India Centre was inaugurated by EAM in New Delhi on June 21, 2013.

11th ASEAN Economic Ministers-India Consultation was held in Brunei Darussalam on August 21, 2013.

Indian scientists participated at the 13th ASEAN Food Conference in Singapore from September 9-11, 2013.

Indian Parliamentary delegation participated as Observer at the 34th General Assembly of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly in Brunei Darussalam from September 17-23, 2013.

3rd ASEAN-India Agriculture Minister Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur on September 28, 2013.

40 ASEAN students are expected to participate in our National Children Science Congress from December 27-31, 2013 at Bhopal.

East Asia Summit

The East Asia Summit started in 2005 December as a Leaders-led forum comprising of the 10 ASEAN countries, plus Australia, China, India, Japan, ROK and New Zealand. United States and Russian Federation joined at the 6th EAS in Bali, Indonesia in November 2011, taking the membership of EAS to 18 countries.

The East Asia Summit integrates a market of more than 3 billion people with a combined GDP of USD 17.23 trillion. EAS Finance Ministers are going to meet on October 12, 2013 in Washington DC on the sidelines of the IMF/ World Bank meetings to discuss issues relating to regional financial integration.

This year, an Indian delegation from DEA participated in the "East Asia Summit Regulatory Roundtable" and a delegation from MoRTH in the Workshop on "Enhancing Connectivity through Multi-layered Regional Frameworks: The Role of Dialogue Partners".

The 2nd ADMM+ was held on August 29, 2013 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Jitendra Singh headed the Indian delegation to this meeting. India also attended the 2nd Expanded

ASEAN Maritime Forum met in Kuala Lumpur on October 3, 2013 to discuss ways to strengthen regional maritime cooperation.

India-Indonesia

India and Indonesia share a strategic partnership, established in 2005. Our relations with Indonesia are characterised by warm and friendly civilisational exchanges which are diverse, strong and growing. Our political-security, economic, cultural and people-to-people relations are robust and expanding. Following the visit of President Yudhoyono in January 2011, during which, we had concluded major agreements on security, trade and investments, connectivity and cultural cooperation.

We have made rapid strides in strengthening defence & security cooperation. The visit of RM to Indonesia enhanced our defence exchanges and added content to our broad based engagement including training, exercises and staff talks. We are working together on CORPATs, anti-piracy operations, maintenance of security of sea lanes and HADR. On the security front, we have concluded MLAT (Criminal) and Extradition Treaty and are now exploring an Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons. We have strengthened mechanisms and outlined a work plan for enhanced cooperation between our law enforcement agencies, particularly, in counter terrorism and are now expanding to other areas including illicit trafficking of drugs, cyber crimes and other transnational crimes.

Our trade and investments have shown a positive growth trend and reached \$ 20 billion in 2012-13, despite a dip last year due to the global financial situation. Trade has grown almost 5 times since the establishment of strategic partnership in 2005.

Indian companies view Indonesia as an attractive investment destination and have a significant presence in infrastructure, power, textiles, steel, automotive, mining, banking, FMCG manufacturing and others. Enhanced private sector involvement has contributed to business partnerships and growth in trade and investment. The potential, however, is still greater.

We have close cooperation in space, S&T, technology exchanges and ICT. ISRO and LAPAN work closely on satellite launch, telemetry and data stations, training of scientists and collaborative ASEAN space projects.

Our cultural ties play an important role in deepening the civilizational and historical bonds. The imprint of Indian culture, architecture and mythology is evident in the social ethos of Indonesia. The Ramayana and Mahabharat are as popular in Indonesia. We have been involved in close cultural exchanges through our culture centres in Jakarta and Bali and through the Chairs of Sanskrit and Indian Studies in different Universities. ASI did a major renovation programme in the Prambanam temples, which was widely appreciated. We also have closed exchanges through ICCR and ITEC scholarships. We greatly appreciate the contributions of the Indonesian side towards the establishment of the Nalanda University as an international institute of excellence.

The Indian Ocean is an area for closer cooperation from the security and economic perspectives and we have stepped up our collaboration in IOR-ARC and IONS. Recently, we also held a trilateral track-II dialogue with Indonesia and Australia on issues pertaining to the Indian Ocean.



075. Statement by the Prime Minister prior to departure for Brunei and Indonesia.

New Delhi, October 8, 2013.

I am proceeding today on a visit to Brunei Darussalam and Indonesia, two of our important partners in South East Asia. In Brunei, I will take part in the 11th India-ASEAN Summit and the 8th East Asian Summit. I will thereafter pay an official bilateral visit to Indonesia.

Our engagement with the ASEAN and its member countries is the cornerstone of our “Look East” policy and has evolved into a strong, comprehensive and multi-faceted partnership in recent years. It started with a strong economic emphasis, with focus on commerce and connectivity, but has increasingly acquired strategic content. The Summit in Brunei will be the first since the elevation of our relations with the ASEAN to a Strategic Partnership at the special Commemorative Summit in New Delhi and the conclusion of the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement in Services and Investment in December 2012. It will give me and my ASEAN colleagues an opportunity to review the progress in

our relations over the last few months and explore initiatives to add further momentum and content to our relationship.

The East Asia Summit is the foremost forum for promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the dynamic Asia Pacific region. Given our vital stakes in the region, India has been closely involved in the evolution of an open, balanced and inclusive regional architecture, on the basis of the centrality of the ASEAN. India sees the East Asia Summit as a springboard to regional cooperation and integration and is participating in the negotiations for a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership among the ASEAN and its FTA partners, which will help create an economic community in the region. The Summit has been highly supportive of India's initiative for the revival of the Nalanda University, which is slated to begin academic programmes next year. On the margins of the East Asia Summit, I will have the opportunity to meet other world leaders.

My next destination, Indonesia, is not only a key ASEAN member and a country with growing regional and global profile, but also an important bilateral partner. India and Indonesia share centuries old people-to-people, cultural and spiritual ties. Today, we have extensive common interests as maritime neighbours and in the fields of economy, energy, security, space and development.

We see our ties with Indonesia as an essential part of India's integration with the broader region. I intend to utilize this visit also to re-emphasize our commitment to building a stronger partnership with ASEAN. We will also have the opportunity to exchange views on regional and global issues of common interest.

It will be my effort to maintain the momentum in our comprehensive relations generated by the visit of President Yudhoyono to India as the Chief Guest at our Republic Day in 2011 and create an institutional framework to further enhance the content of our cooperation in the years ahead.

My visits to Brunei Darussalam and Indonesia will further intensify our engagement to our East, which has been at the forefront of our foreign policy, and contribute to peace, prosperity and stability in the Asia Pacific.”



076. Opening Statement by Prime Minister at 11th India-ASEAN Summit.

Bandar Seri Begawan (Brunei Darussalam), October 10, 2013.

Your Majesty Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Sultan of Brunei Darussalam,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great pleasure to join all of you in this beautiful country for the 11th India-ASEAN Summit. I am grateful to His Majesty the Sultan and the people of Brunei Darussalam for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality accorded to my delegation and me and the excellent arrangements made for our meeting today.

I also thank all of you for a memorable Commemorative Summit in New Delhi last December. Our decision at that Summit to elevate India-ASEAN relations to a Strategic Partnership has set the stage for a truly enriching relationship between us.

Excellencies, all our countries have equal stakes in the security and prosperity of our shared Asian neighbourhood. The global economic crisis and turmoil in different parts of the world underscore the salience of our robust partnership. The scope of India's engagement with East and Southeast Asia has grown steadily in the last two decades. We seek to promote not only mutually beneficial bilateral relations, but also to work institutionally with regional partners and foster a climate that is conducive to stability, security and economic development in our region.

Excellencies, it is to the great credit of the ASEAN countries that they have led the way in cooperation and integration, not only among themselves, but also in the broader region. For India, it is an article of faith of our Look-East policy that ASEAN must remain central to the future evolution of regional mechanisms, which must be open and inclusive. We share your vision and aspirations for the region and we applaud your march towards an ASEAN Economic Community in 2015.

Excellencies, over two decades, India and ASEAN have established a comprehensive agenda of cooperation and a wide-ranging framework to

pursue it. Today, we stand on the threshold of the third decade of our engagement. In keeping with our substantial achievements, the recent elevation of our ties to a strategic partnership and the rich potential of our cooperation, I feel it would be appropriate for me to take this opportunity to announce that India will soon set up a separate Mission to the ASEAN in Jakarta with a full time resident Ambassador. I hope we will have your full support and cooperation in this endeavour.

Excellencies, since we last met in Delhi, there have been some important developments that I would like to highlight. India stands ready for the signature of the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement on Services and Investment by the end of this year and its early implementation. This will complement our Agreement on Goods and bolster our economic partnership. I also welcome efforts by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry to revitalize the ASEAN-India Business Council and to set up an ASEAN-India Trade and Investment Centre. These measures will contribute to stronger trade and investment flows between us.

India-ASEAN trade stood at 76 billion US dollars last year. I remain confident that we can meet our target of 100 billion US dollars by 2015 and double that volume by 2022.

Connectivity is a strategic priority in our relationship. We are nearing completion of the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo sector of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. Repairs to 71 bridges on this road and work on upgrading a 120 km sector between Kalewa and Yargyi are to begin soon. We will work closely with Thailand and Myanmar to ensure that this project is completed by 2016.

It would be useful to look at the extension of this Highway to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, its further linkage with ports in ASEAN countries and its integration with models like Special Economic Zones. This would call for innovative financial and institutional mechanisms. I hope our Ministers and officials can discuss these ideas further.

The first meeting between the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee and India took place this year. The decision to establish a Working Group on Soft Infrastructure along our corridors of connectivity addresses a key factor in the success of the connectivity projects. I

would suggest that our officials begin discussions on an ASEAN-India Transit Transport Agreement with a view to completing it by 2015. I also look forward to the proposed Maritime Transport Working Group being set up soon.

Excellencies, the ASEAN theme of “Our People, Our Future Together” for this year is indeed appropriate. People-to-people engagement must also sustain the India-ASEAN Strategic Partnership. We must create a policy environment and visa regime that facilitates our professionals and entrepreneurs to travel and work across our region.

I am particularly pleased with the success of our recently established exchange programme for our students, farmers, diplomats, media and parliamentarians and the ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks. These exchanges sow the seeds of better understanding and productive partnerships between our countries. I am glad to inform Your Excellencies that, as announced last year, we have set up an ASEAN-India Centre in New Delhi to supplement these efforts towards cooperation.

Many of our cooperative projects with the ASEAN under the Plan of Action for 2010 to 2015 are coming to fruition. The project to establish a Satellite Tracking and Data Reception Station and Data Processing Facility in Vietnam and the upgrading of a Telemetry Tracking and Command Station in Indonesia will begin to see implementation by April 2014. Projects to set up four IT Centres in CLMV countries, supported by a Resource Centre located in India, have also been finalized for implementation.

Excellencies, I would like to thank you for your support to the revival of the Nalanda University. Nalanda is a common heritage of India and Southeast Asia. As the University begins its academic programme next year, I would welcome active participation of ASEAN students and faculty in making it a successful venture.

Excellencies, the growing strategic content in relations between India and ASEAN responds to our shared security challenges and supplements India’s deepening security cooperation with ASEAN countries bilaterally. I am pleased that India and ASEAN have identified eight focus areas for cooperation on transnational crime and that we are in the process of formulating a work plan to combat international terrorism.

Excellencies, before I conclude, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the role played by Brunei Darussalam as the ASEAN Country Coordinator for India this year. I would also like to place on record our appreciation for the ASEAN Secretary General and his team for their assistance in implementing the specific contours of the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership. Finally, we wish Myanmar, our bridge to the ASEAN, all success and pledge it our support as it assumes the ASEAN Chair in 2014.

Thank you



**077. Statement by the Prime Minister at 8th East Asia Summit.
Bandar Seri Begawan (Brunei Darussalam), October 10,
2013.**

Your Majesty Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Sultan of Brunei Darussalam
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I join other speakers in thanking His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah for the excellent arrangements made for the 8th East Asia Summit and the warm welcome we have received in his beautiful country.

We gather in Brunei when the need for collective action, cooperation and collaboration in the Asia Pacific region has never been felt more acutely. Global economic uncertainty and political turmoil in other parts of the world have impacted countries in our region equally. In addition, this vast region faces challenges arising not only from its diversity, but also from differences. Clearly, the potential of unprecedented prosperity for our peoples can be realized only by inculcating a cooperative temper. The East Asia Summit is a forum that is, in my view, ideally placed to help us realize our common goals for advancing security and prosperity in a cooperative framework.

In terms of priorities, the implementation of the 6th East Asia Summit Declaration on ASEAN Connectivity requires a sense of greater urgency.

Building of physical infrastructure needs to go hand-in-hand with creation of soft infrastructure along the connectivity corridors. India welcomes dialogue and cooperation with like-minded countries on innovative means of financing these infrastructure requirements. We welcome Brunei Darussalam's initiative to hold a meeting between the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee and the East Asia Summit later this year.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, launched in Phnom Penh last year, has given us a roadmap for regional economic integration that can reinforce growth and accelerate development across the region, besides enhancing mutual stakes in regional stability and security. India remains fully engaged in and committed to the RCEP process.

We must supplement this effort with cooperation on the challenges of energy, food, health and human resource development. We, therefore, welcome the adoption of the Declaration of the 8th East Asia Summit on Food Security. We support Australia and Vietnam as co-Chairs of the launch of the Asia-Pacific Leaders' Malaria Alliance. We are happy to co-chair with Australia the Task Force on Access to Quality Medicines to combat malaria. We have also proposed a new initiative for cooperation among East Asia Summit members in trauma care and nursing.

I would like to thank the East Asia Summit participating countries for their support for the establishment of Nalanda University as an international institution of excellence. I am happy that the process of signing the inter-governmental Memorandum of Understanding on the Nalanda University has begun. Academic sessions at the University are set to begin next year. I hope students and faculty from all EAS countries will participate in this exciting venture.

A stable maritime environment is essential to realize our collective regional aspirations. We should reaffirm the principles of maritime security, including the right of passage and unimpeded commerce, in accordance with international law, and peaceful settlement of maritime disputes. We welcome the collective commitment by the concerned countries to abide by and implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and to work towards the adoption of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea on the basis of consensus. We also welcome

the establishment of the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum for developing maritime norms that would reinforce existing international law relating to maritime security.

Cooperative mechanisms in disaster management would not only fulfil a humanitarian need, but also foster broader confidence and cooperation in the region. India has initiated the process of establishing a Virtual Knowledge Centre as well as a network of round-the-clock Points of Contact among EAS countries. We hope to strengthen these initiatives further with your support. We should also strengthen efforts to counter threats of piracy, international terrorism, transnational crimes and drug trafficking.

Your Majesty, Excellencies, Asia has been a late starter in terms of building regional architectures of cooperation. We have embarked on this collective journey in large part because of the outstanding vision and leadership of ASEAN, first in pursuing ASEAN integration and then expanding it to the wider region. We will be successful if we adhere to the principles of unity, cooperation and integration that have guided ASEAN and if ASEAN centrality continues to shape the East Asia Summit processes. I reaffirm India's commitment to contribute to this process.

Thank you



ASEM & CHOGM**078. Media Briefing on multilateral conferences-ASEM & CHOGM.****New Delhi, November 9, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good morning everybody and thank you very much for coming over the weekend. I apologise for the slight delay in keeping up with time and I am sorry that you had to wait this morning for this briefing on a weekend.

I have a couple of issues that I will take up first. I also have with me my colleague Mr. Pavan Kapoor who is Joint Secretary (United Nations Political) who is the main pointsperson as far as the Government of India is concerned relating to CHOGM. Pavan will talk about the CHOGM, the agenda for the CHOGM, and India and CHOGM. Before I hand over to Pavan, I have a couple of announcements to make.

You are aware that we had indicated previously that the President of Ghana will be in India from the 10th to the 13th. Since then we have received a communication from the Government of Ghana that due to pressing domestic developments, President John Dramani Mahama will not be able to visit India. We will have to work out through diplomatic channels new dates for his visit. His visit, as you know, was to take place from the 10th to the 13th of this month and that is now not going to happen.

The other issue relates to perhaps one of the biggest diplomatic gatherings this year in India and it is the ASEM Foreign Ministers who are to meet on 11th and 12th of November. This is the first time India is hosting an ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting. It is preceded on 9th and 10th and essentially also on the 8th by Senior Officials meetings, and those meetings are right now on.

We have received unprecedented and enthusiastic response for this meeting. We have 36 Foreign Ministers coming from various Asian and European countries; 12 Deputy Foreign Ministers and two Vice Ministers are participating. In essence, all 51 members of the ASEM are being represented at this meeting.

As you are aware, ASEM is a unique forum which is dedicated to bringing Asia and Europe together. It represents about 60 per cent of the world's population, 52 per cent of the global GDP, and 68 per cent of world trade. ASEM Ministerial Meetings are biennial and they alternate with summit meetings. Last year there was a summit meeting in Lao Peoples Democratic Republic. This year India is hosting the ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting.

For those of you who would like to know a little bit of background, we joined the ASEM in 2007, and this is the first time we are hosting this major ASEM event. The Foreign Ministers Meeting will be inaugurated by the Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari; and the External Affairs Minister will chair the meeting. This year the theme of the meeting is: ASEM – Bridge to Partnership for Growth and Development.

As Chair of the ASEM we have been trying to push for a fresh approach that would reorient discussions of ASEM meetings from dialogue towards actual tangible cooperation thereby taking ASEM to the next level of maturity. ASEM traditionally has been focused on three dimensions - political dialogue, economic collaboration, and socioeconomic cooperation.

Over the years it is a fact that political dialogue has dominated the proceedings. As Chair of ASEM we have ventured to bring about a greater balance in those three dimensions that I just mentioned, and there is support for this approach in the ASEM. We hope it would be confirmed by the Senior Officials and taken up by the Ministers, a more comprehensive approach where all three dimensions of ASEM will be focused on following the outcome of this ASEM Ministerial Meeting.

We have listed several areas for cooperation. These are specific and focused on interests of ASEM member states, for example, on renewable energy, water management, skill development, food safety issues, as well as on disaster management and mitigation.

The ASEM meeting has two Plenaries and a Retreat. The first Plenary will focus on Economic Growth and Sustainable Development - Challenges and Opportunities in Asia and Europe. The second Plenary will focus on Non-Traditional Security Challenges. In addition, on the

second day there will be a free-flowing discussion on regional and international issues of interest to ASEM members.

We also hope that we will have a concise outcome document at the conclusion of this meeting. We have tried a different approach this time and we hope that will be successful because it will be concise and will list out tangible areas of cooperation.

To sum up I would say that our effort is to reorient ASEM deliberations through consensus between Asian and European members towards developing it into a bridge that aspires to be a bridge for growth, development and capacity building, a bridge for bringing together expertise to tackle common challenges, a bridge of resources and ideas, a bridge founded on making connections between people, and a bridge strengthened by tangible cooperation and outcomes. That is the agenda for the next four days in what is going to be a very hectic diplomatic period during the next few days.

On the sidelines or the margins of ASEM, the External Affairs Minister, who will chair the Ministerial Meeting, will have several bilateral meetings. I have listed out to you some of them already, and I will circulate the list of the rest so that all of you are aware of all the bilateral meetings on the 11th and 12th also. I think that is what I have in terms of ASEM.

I will now request my colleague Mr. Pavan Kapoor to talk to you about the CHOGM. Following that we will open the floor for questions on all the three issues and on anything else that you want.

Joint Secretary (United Nations Political)(Shri Pavan Kapoor):Thanks Akbar.

As you are probably all aware, we have got CHOGM happening in Colombo from the 15th to 17th of November, that is next Friday to Sunday. Traditionally CHOGM is from Friday morning till Sunday afternoon.

This would be preceded by the Foreign Ministers Meeting, what is called formally the Pre-CHOGM Foreign Ministers Meeting of the Commonwealth, which is on the 13th and 14th of November. And that gets preceded by a couple of days of meetings of the Senior Officials in what is formally known as the Committee of the Whole, on the 11th and 12th of November. So, it is a cumulative meeting across six or seven days, and all that gets cracking on Monday morning.

The programme for CHOGM, as I said, starts on a Friday morning. It starts with an opening ceremony. It then has a formal family photograph. It then gets into its Executive Sessions which are on the record, and that is two of them on the 15th. In the evening there is a dinner hosted by the Prince of Wales and his spouse for visiting Heads.

Next day, the 16th, is really a day of retreat. This is something which is unique to CHOGMs but has been developed over time where it is just Heads in an informal atmosphere sitting around in a semi-circular format without aides, and discussing issues. And there is no formal record of that meeting. But the Secretary-General and the Chair, who in this case would be President Rajapaksa, will come out with developments which they think will take a sense of the house and then come out with what they feel comes out from it.

Seventeenth morning, Sunday, is the final Retreat Session for an hour and then the formal Executive Session, the third one, which really is writing in the records of the developments of the past two days into a formal system. And that is how it wraps up on Sunday at about lunch time. That is as far as the programme is concerned.

In terms of India and our contribution to the Commonwealth, you are probably aware that we are certainly the largest member of the Commonwealth. We contribute about 60 percent of the population of the Commonwealth. We are the fourth largest Commonwealth contributor in terms of the assessed budgets of the Commonwealth.

We are also the fifth largest contributor to a voluntary fund or the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, which is this big fund in the Commonwealth which provides technical assistance in capacity development to its member states. We have of course got the current Secretary-General Mr. Kamlesh Sharma, who is now in his second term which will carry on actually till early 2016 but by 2015 they will have a new person chosen.

In terms of the theme for this CHOGM, the Sri Lankan Government has chosen the theme called Growth with Equity or Inclusive Development. They feel this is something which is very pertinent to all. They prepared a basic background paper on it, talked about how many developing countries in the Commonwealth are lacking in terms of achieving the

Millennium Development Goals and what all they need to, and have made some suggestions on how that can be taken forward. This should be discussed both at the Executive session and the Retreat.

The agenda frankly this time would be a very development-oriented agenda. Just in terms of background, the last CHOGM which was held in Australia had focused primarily on the governance side of things. Democracy and development are considered the twin pillars of the Commonwealth. So, last time there had been a big focus on governance issues. There was an Eminent Persons Report with 106 recommendations, and a report on strengthening the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, which is this body of nine Foreign Ministers of the Commonwealth who meet periodically to suggest if there are countries who are erring in terms of fulfilling the values and objectives of the Commonwealth.

This time around the Sri Lankans have made it clear they want the focus back on development. It is now, therefore, focused on the post-2015 development framework. It is focused on the ability of climate-vulnerable small states to access financing.

On the debt, solutions for debt challenges of small states, remember that 32 out of the 54 countries of the Commonwealth are small states. Small states in the Commonwealth context are defined as countries with a population of 1.5 million or less. So, it is a very unique organisation which gives a lot of voice to these countries who are in a majority in this particular format.

Also they are meeting, a month or a few weeks in advance, in the WTO Ministerial in Bali. So, obviously leaders may like to talk and discuss that on international trade. There are a few reports that have just been submitted in advance of CHOGM. There is a report that was done by President Bharrat Jagdeo, former President of Guyana, on this climate financing aspects which has been submitted. There is another one which has been done by the Prime Minister Sinkinson Nevis on the debt and financing challenges of small states.

There is also a report that has been submitted by the Ramphal Institute. This is on trying to reduce the border constraints and travel between Commonwealth countries, looking at possibly how we can make travel

easier for business persons and tourists within Commonwealth countries. These are some of the reports that will be considered by CHOGM and see where they will take it from there.

In terms of outcome documents, there will be as usual a communiqué, which is still being negotiated, which will cover a range of international and regional issues and some Commonwealth specific issues. There is also the likelihood of standalone declarations possibly on youth, something on international trade, and possibly something on the theme itself of inclusive development.

I think that is broadly it and I will stop there.

Official Spokesperson: Any questions on ASEM?

Q: India and Pakistan both are members in ASEM. India and Pakistan are members in the Commonwealth also. Do you think that this time we are going to raise the issue of terrorism after the new Taliban leader is elected in Pakistan? And do you think that we are going to focus on terrorism in this area because this is one of the major problems in the South Asian region?

Official Spokesperson: I already indicated to you what the agenda is. What we have between India and Pakistan will be discussed on the sidelines or margins of the ASEM meeting between India and Pakistan. I have also told you what we will discuss there. So, you can put two and two together and work out what will be the agenda of the ASEM. And if you like, I will try and repeat it.

I previously said that in terms of India-Pakistan interaction on the margins, the focus will always be flowing from what was the outcome of the last meeting. The outcome of the last meeting was that for our discussions to go forward, the precondition is that there should be peace and tranquillity on the LOC. And that will be the basis for further discussions during the meeting on the margins.

Q: This is about the bilaterals during ASEM. Of course you said you will circulate the list later. But can I ask if a bilateral has already been scheduled with the Japanese Foreign Minister, and if yes, when?

Official Spokesperson: I can confirm to you that a bilateral has been scheduled with the Japanese Foreign Minister. As of now it will be during

the ASEM meeting but not preceding it because the bilaterals preceding the ASEM I have announced and indicated to you. My understanding is that it perhaps will be on the 12th. But the schedule remains flexible because these meetings which are on the sidelines are at short notice. But we try and work out if it is possible perhaps on the 12th.

Official Spokesperson: If there are no other questions on ASEM, the floor is open for questions on CHOGM.

Q: Has a final decision been taken on Prime Minister's visit to Colombo? If the Prime Minister is going, will he also go to Jaffna? Who is representing?

Official Spokesperson: Decision making in terms of participation in an international event starts when we receive an invitation and there is a process after that. As an open and pluralist democracy we have been in that process. Many of you have through your perches at different phases and stages of this process come to some conclusions on the outcome based on certain inputs. But for us as diplomats, the process ends when we confirm to the host Government the composition of our delegation for an international event. We have not yet done that.

As Pavan mentioned to you, there are two meetings before the summit level. For those we have communicated who would be our representatives. For example for the Senior Officials equivalent Meeting, our Additional Secretary (International Organisations) Mr. Navtej Sarna and Mr. Pavan Kapoor will be our primary delegates.

As regards the next level, which is the Ministers, we have communicated that the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid will be our representative. He will also be assisted by the two officials who I mentioned to you earlier, that is Mr. Navtej Sarna and Mr. Pavan Kapoor, as well as the Foreign Secretary Mrs. Sujatha Singh. That leaves the Summit. We have not as yet communicated to the host the outcome of our internal decision making process. And it is normal in diplomatic practice to make this public once we have communicated.

On a possible visit to Jaffna, let me put this to you in terms of historical perspectives. All this depends on who is to lead the delegation. There have been previous leaders from India who, when they visited Sri Lanka

had visited Jaffna. For example the former External Affairs Minister Shri S.M. Krishna, in January 2012 when he visited Sri Lanka also visited Jaffna. Another example is, when the External Affairs Minister Shri Khurshid earlier this year visited Colombo on a bilateral visit also did visit Jaffna.

I see in your question a Trojan horse. I can only tell about whether visit to Jaffna is on only once we confirm to the Sri Lankan Government who are the hosts about who would lead our delegation. Once that is done the answer to your question will also be known. You please understand what I am saying. You will have to just bear with us and wait and see who will lead the delegation. As I said, we are now in the process of doing that. Once we do that, we will make it public.

Q: In case the Prime Minister decides not to go, who will be the alternative? Is the Vice President likely to attend the Summit?

Official Spokesperson: I understand your question but let me try and put it in perspective. I have here with me a list of Indian participation in the CHOGM during the last two decades. That would perhaps give you a perspective of how this is done. This list indicates that in ten summit-level meetings since 1993 - we have taken a 20-year perspective - in those two decades there have been ten summit-level meetings. Of these, there have been five instances when the Prime Minister participated. On five other instances other Ministers or the Vice President had participated.

What you can surmise from this is that what we have followed in terms of participation in the CHOGM is an approach something akin to horses for courses. We focus on what is required for our national interest, our foreign policy priorities, and our international obligations. Taking those into account, we have our delegations led by different people.

Let me repeat. Ten summits, five at the Head of Government level, four at the level of different Ministers - some External Affairs Minister, some other Ministers – and one at the level of Vice President. From this diversity you would observe that we followed what suited our national interest on each of these occasions.

Q: In the five summits that the Prime Minister has not attended, are any of those in Asia?

Official Spokesperson: There was no summit in Asia in that period. So, this question is moot. We are talking about the last 20 years, I just mentioned. And Pavan has something to add.

Joint Secretary (UNP): That is one thing to be kept in mind, the last summit held in Asia was in India or in South Asia which was 1983. That was thirty years ago. The next time it is coming back to South Asia is this time in Colombo in thirty years. We are looking at 1993 to 2011 so far, Cyprus in 1993 and then moving all around.

Official Spokesperson: Also we would like to tell you that in the history of the Commonwealth after we joined, a maximum of two summits have been attended by Prime Ministers from India. In the fifty-year history there have been a maximum of two Prime Ministerial participations by a Prime Minister. We have had several Prime Ministers over the years and it is normal or it has been so far the trend that you have seen the Prime Minister's visits have been two times by a Prime Minister. That is the factual position. What we are trying to give you is a perspective of this.

And Commonwealth by definition is not an Asian organisation or an Asian forum. It is a forum with Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and also Asia Pacific being parts of it.

Q: The delegates for the Ministerial and Official Meetings have been communicated. When is the last date by which you will have to communicate who would be the head of the delegation? When would they be expecting it to be communicated?

Official Spokesperson: When you deal with Heads of Governments, there are no such barriers and timelines and schedules kept. Both the host as well as those invited are cognizant of the importance of communicating in time and, as I said, we are in that process.

Joint Secretary (UNP): Just to add one more thing, if you look at the history of CHOGMs, normal participation from over the globe - and it is 54 countries as I said at this stage there are one suspended member and one which has withdrawn recently, so 52 invitees as it were - you normally do not have more than 30, 32 participating at Heads of Government level. So, that is also something which has got to be borne

in mind. And I do not think that the actual figure at this time's CHOGM will be widely off that mark.

Q: Is the composition of delegations known? Are the Plenary open for the press or not?

Official Spokesperson: The composition of the delegations is known. If you would like any specific delegation, I will let you know about that. Plenary is not open. We have circulated in accordance with ASEM requirements what are the events which are open. These are available on our website and can be checked. And if you would like to know, from Italy I think it is the Deputy Foreign Minister. I will give you the name. It is not the Foreign Minister.

Official Spokesperson: Anyone else on anything else?

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Official Spokesperson: Ashok, if you could look at the record of the last briefing, I have provided on RIC it is available on the website. You were also sitting here.

Q: Is there something more?

Official Spokesperson: There is never an end to more. There is never an end to appetite for more. I think I have given quite a few details. Have a look at it.

Q: The Foreign Ministers of India and China are going to be meeting on the sidelines of ASEM, and this meeting is taking place barely weeks after the summit meeting. I am just wondering what would a couple of specific issues which would be on the table?

Official Spokesperson: I think I answered this question at the last meeting when somebody else asked. But let me run through it again.

There are several outcomes of the summit meeting which was held. It is the intention of the two Foreign Ministers to take up issues which are listed as outcomes to be followed up. I can list those but these are easily available in public domain and we will take it from there.

Q: Many of the visiting Foreign Ministers perhaps have asked for a meeting with the Prime Minister, especially the Pakistan's Advisor to the

PM Sartaj Aziz and other Foreign Ministers. Could you confirm whether the PM is meeting him?

Official Spokesperson: This question was also asked previously and I did say that we have received a request. We are still in touch and working out what are the scheduling timings of Mr. Sartaj Aziz's arrival here and departure from here. Based on that we will have a look at it. At this stage we are not aware of the exact schedule of timings. Once those timings are available, we will then have a look at it. But as I said, since the External Affairs Minister will be in the same place where the ASEM meeting is taking place, we have confirmed the meeting with the External Affairs Minister.

Q: The bilateral meeting with the Foreign Affairs Advisor of Pakistan is something that Pakistan has indicated they have requested. Do we know when it is going to be and what is likely to be discussed?

Official Spokesperson: (a) I can confirm the meeting. (b) I am not able to give a specific timing for the simple reason that we are not aware of when he arrives and when he leaves. Once we know those details, we will try and fit it in. But there is a commitment to have that meeting.

As regards what we will discuss, I think I mentioned earlier but let me repeat. It will take up the outcome of the last meeting between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and our Prime Minister. And there was one outcome of that and that is for India and Pakistan to engage it is important as a precondition that there should be peace and tranquillity on the Line of Control. So, what they will engage in right now is to see the situation since the two Prime Minister's last met, and decide on where to go forward based on what is their assessment of the situation during the period that has elapsed since the discussions between the two Prime Ministers.

Q: About the Nitaqat in Saudi Arabia, still lot of Indians are in great concern. They are also saying that the Government of India and the Embassy there are not helping them. Would you like to say something on this?

Official Spokesperson: I think we need to understand this in perspective. When the Nitaqat programme was initiated there were 2.4 million Indians there. Today there are 2.8 million. So, in the period while there has been an option given for people to regularise their stay the number of Indians has increased. (b) Out of the 2.8 million, 1.4 million

have in various ways adjusted their legal requirements to stay. (c) 130,000 or so Indians have returned out of which 90,000 were based on the Emergency Certificates provided by the Indian Mission and the Consulate. We are one of those few countries which launched a major campaign using every available avenue to ensure that our nationals abide by local requirements.

It is not my case that everyone has met the deadline. We are committed to assisting all others, who are smaller in number. I have given you these huge numbers. Sure, there may be some people who still have not met the deadline; there may be some people who are having a problem, and we are committed to helping them. If we have been committed for the last six to eight months pursuing this issue vigorously, we certainly will not abandon anybody at this stage. But please understand this in that broader perspective that there are no major issues.

There will always remain issues. Where there is a large Indian community there will remain a few issues. And we are committed to addressing them. Let me assure through you that we intend to reach out and help out everybody who is in need of assistance.

Q: The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has said that the Government is going very soft on the fishermen issue. Will this also figure when the External Affairs Minister is in Sri Lanka?

Official Spokesperson: The External Affairs Minister as well as the Foreign Secretary will utilise the opportunity when they are in Sri Lanka to have discussions with their respective counterparts. Yes, this is an important issue which we have always focused on in our bilateral interactions with Sri Lanka. We see this as a humanitarian concern which needs to be addressed in a humanitarian way. And I can assure you that at every opportunity we will continue to pursue this.

Q: I just wanted to know what had been our major expectations from Sri Lanka and what has not been fulfilled. This is nothing related to the visit.

Official Spokesperson: We are in diplomatic dialogue with Sri Lanka on every possible occasion. Our participation in CHOGM stands by itself, and our engagement with Sri Lanka is eternal, it will continue. In an engagement there are things that you are satisfied with, there are some things that you are not fully satisfied with, and there are some things that

you would expect more. Now it is publicly known what are the things that we are fully satisfied with. Some of the things that we are not satisfied with one of your colleagues just raised, issues related to fishermen. Some of the other things that we are not fully satisfied with or there are concerns, are issues related to the wellbeing of the Tamil minority community there, regarding the 13th Amendment and the commitment to move ahead in a 13th Amendment Plus Process.

But this is an engagement that we are in with Sri Lanka for the long term. Sri Lanka is a close neighbour; it is an important country; it is a country where we have linkages going back to hundreds of years. And it is our neighbour. Like you know we have always emphasised in terms of Indian foreign policy that for us neighbourhood is the most important area of focus and we will continue to engage with Sri Lanka in that endeavour of engaging with important neighbours.

With that we come to the end of this event.

Thank you



ASEM

079. Inaugural Address by Vice President at 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

New Delhi, November 11, 2013.

Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I am happy to join you this morning for this Inaugural Session of the 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting. India is honoured to be the host today.

The vitality and continuing relevance of ASEM highlights its importance as a bridge between Asia and Europe and as a platform for dialogue to promote stability, peace and development. The theme of the conference,

“ASEM: Bridge to Partnership for Growth and Development” is reflective of this.

Our forum brings together 60% of the world's population, 52% of the global GDP and close to 70% of world trade.

Dialogues have to be relevant in situational terms. We are witness today to important evolution in the political-security and socio-economic architectures across the two continents, as also globally. The world economy continues to be sluggish and emerging economies that were previously seen as the engines of economic growth have been compelled to take tough decisions they can ill afford, given the enormity of their developmental needs.

The international community is also facing a degree of unprecedented sophistication in non-traditional security threats. These transcend national borders and traditional response patterns and necessitate considerably higher levels of comprehension and cooperation.

In today's context, therefore, the strategic importance of the Asia-Europe partnership is evident. I believe we should look to optimize ASEM's potential with a sense of greater urgency. We should endeavour to take it beyond being a forum for political dialogue only, make it reach out to the people of Member States and create wider stake-holding amongst economic partners and civil society. We should invest its outcomes with tangible deliverables.

Collective action under ASEM can strengthen the understanding between our peoples, the dynamism in our economies and the realization of our developmental priorities. It can also help us to continue the process of understanding and consultation between ASEM countries in order to respond more effectively to global challenges.

I do hope your discussions will come up with ideas for using the synergies available in the collective capacity within ASEM. While Asia has the strength of emerging markets and its human resource potential, Europe has existing capacities and an edge in technological innovations. There are natural and beneficial partnerships here, which can be strengthened further. Bringing about greater focus on areas of relevance for developing countries and emerging markets will allow us to tap into areas of positive growth and prosperity.

I also hope that your deliberations in the Retreat will add to our understanding and consensus on how best to deal with issues of regional and global concern.

Now that ASEM has reached significant maturity of approach and purpose it is, perhaps, time to take its processes beyond the confines of diplomatic space to involve civil society, industry and media. This could also serve as an accurate barometer for ASEM to gauge the common aspirations of people in Asia and Europe. There is a historical tradition of the flow of ideas, practices and systems between the two continents. We need to see this exchange continue and strengthen.

I would like to commend ASEM FMM-11 for taking on the responsibility to add to the relevance and vitality of ASEM by emphasizing the important dimension of tangible cooperation between its member countries. ASEM can lead the way amongst the numerous multilateral frameworks that exist today to respond to common challenges at the regional and global level. Many of these fora are seeing important success and I see no reason why ASEM cannot assume a leading position amongst these.

ASEM has an unparalleled edge in terms of membership, capacity, economic influence, intellectual depth, strategic expertise and political leadership. ASEM's outcomes must accord greater visibility to these strengths.

This is an ambitious agenda but all our countries, Excellencies, will have to share the burden. I sense greater resolve amongst us to deliver on this expectation.

I wish you strength in your collective political will to take ASEM towards greater maturity, success and more tangible outcomes. I look forward to the continuation of this process at ASEM-10 next year and, I assure you, that India will remain steadfast in partnering Italy at the next ASEM Summit.

Thank you



080. Opening remarks by External Affairs Minister at the Press Conference on conclusion of 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

New Delhi (NCR), November 12, 2013.

We have just concluded the 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting. This is the first time that India has hosted the biennial ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting since we joined the group in 2007.

ASEM FMM11 was attended by 34 Foreign Ministers and 11 Deputy Foreign Ministers from Asia and Europe. All 51 ASEM members were represented.

Vice President of India, Shri M. Hamid Ansari inaugurated the ASEM FMM11 yesterday morning. We, thereafter, had two Plenary sessions, followed by Retreat today. This is the first time ASEM Foreign Ministers have met in Retreat.

The overall theme of the meeting was "ASEM: Bridge to Partnership for Growth and Development." It provided us a very useful opportunity to have discussions on a number of issues of interest, including economic and financial issues, sustainable development, non-traditional security challenges and regional and global issues. We also assessed the achievements of ASEM over the past 17 years of its existence as well as the way forward.

In our meeting over the last two days, we agreed to intensify efforts to bring about greater synergy between Asian and European partners in ASEM across the three pillars of political dialogue, economic collaboration and socio-cultural exchanges.

We have issued a Chair's Statement that is a summary of our actual discussions, prepared by the Chair in consensus with ASEM partners. We have successfully avoided the endless text negotiations that had taken up precious time in previous meetings!

Breaking away from the declaratory nature of previous ASEM deliberations, India, as Chair, sought to steer the forum from 'dialogue' to 'deliverables' and I am glad to say that we were successful in our endeavour. ASEM FMM11 was successful in using the strength of political dialogue in ASEM to forge tangible cooperation amongst members. This

marks the beginning of a new orientation for future ASEM meetings. Members agreed that the dynamism of ASEM should find expression in tangible result-oriented initiatives which could be utilized to define joint responses by Asia and Europe to global and regional challenges and also seize opportunities for growth and development.

12 areas have been identified by members for tangible cooperation. For each area, multiple countries have expressed interest in identifying specific initiatives for enhancing cooperation in that area between ASEM members.

India would be working with interested ASEM partners in the areas of Sustainable Water Management, Energy Efficiency Technologies, Disaster Mitigation and Response, Vocational and Skills Training and Education and Human Resource Development.

Disaster risk mitigation and management has come out to be an urgent priority for collaboration in ASEM, more so because of the destruction and loss of life caused in Philippines and Viet Nam by the typhoon Haiyan. ASEM Ministers expressed solidarity and support for the victims. We felt that ASEM should have capacity to respond immediately in such instances. Many members have committed support in response to the specific requirements conveyed by the Philippines and also indicated their readiness to do likewise for Viet Nam.

We have seen immediate results in the case of ASEM's response to devastation caused by the typhoon Haiyan. As a measure of support, India proposes to send immediate relief supplies to the Philippines to help those affected by the typhoon. An aircraft with 15 tonnes of relief supplies will depart for the Philippines tonight. The material will consist of medicines and hygiene chemicals; fresh water and water purification material; tents, blankets, mattresses, tarpaulin and ground sheet for shelter; pre cooked meals, biscuits and milk powder; such that the affected persons can be provided immediately relief in terms of medical treatment, shelter and food. As a follow up measure, we shall consider sending a ship to the affected areas equipped with water treatment facilities and additional relief material to provide rehabilitation measures as well as transport to effectively ameliorate the sufferings of those affected.

We have exchanged views and ideas on how to revive growth, create jobs especially for the youth and catalyze economic growth. We have also discussed non-traditional security threats in detail, particularly, terrorism, drug trafficking and transnational crimes. We exchanged ideas to address food, water and energy security, as well as address the emerging issues of cyber space and the issues related to cyber crime and cyber security which are confronting national governments and institutions on both Continents.

We have endorsed the recommendation by our Senior Officials to set up a Working Group comprising ASEM members and ASEF to devise a Press and Public Awareness Management Strategy for ASEM.

In this context, I would like to mention the joint initiative by India and the Asia Europe Foundation to host the 9th Asia Europe Foundation Journalists' Colloquium in Gurgaon on 11-12 November, 2013. We will also be co-hosting with ASEF a two week project in early 2014 on "Sustainable Urbanisation in Heritage Cities" aimed at students and young professionals from ASEM partner countries.

ASEM will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2016 and the Ministers have decided to set up a Working Group from amongst ASEM members and ASEF to devise a road map for the 20th Anniversary celebrations. This will continue as work in progress until the 12th ASEM FMM in 2015.

The Asia-Europe Foundation, as the only permanent institution of ASEM, is making an important contribution to the ASEM process. We have endorsed the recommendation of Senior Officials that the ASEF Board of Governors and Executive Director partner the effort to bring closer synergy between ASEF activities and ASEM.

We also discussed Croatia's request for membership of ASEM following its accession to the EU earlier this year. Ministers welcomed Croatia as "Guest of Chair" for all ASEM meetings in 2014 till a decision on its membership at the ASEM10 Summit in Milan, Italy in the second half of 2014.

The EU and Italy briefed us on preparations for the 10th ASEM Summit which will take place in Milan, Italy in 2014. Luxembourg has offered to host the 12th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2015.

In all, it was an excellent meeting. I think we made real progress. We have given voice and visibility to the priorities of Asia in the ASEM agenda. Growth and development are of interest and relevance to both Asia and Europe. The reform in working methods will allow ASEM members to make more focussed efforts to give form and content to urgent priorities on both Continents.

I also had bilateral meetings with many of the visiting ASEM Foreign Ministers on the sidelines including my counterparts from China, Japan, Bangladesh, Romania, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Malta, Cyprus, Czech Republic, RoK, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Portugal, The Netherlands and the EU High Representative.

Thank you



**081. Chair's Statement on the ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting.
NCR-Delhi.
November 12, 2013.**

The 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting (ASEM FMM11) was held in Delhi-NCR, India from November 11-12, 2013. It was attended by 34 Foreign Ministers from Asia and Europe, including the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, Mrs. Catherine Ashton and the Secretary General of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Mr. Le Luong Minh. 11 countries were represented by Deputy Foreign Ministers. The meeting was Chaired by the External Affairs Minister of India, Mr. Salman Khurshid.

2. The theme of the 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting: "**ASEM: Bridge to Partnership for Growth and Development**" provided opportunity for the Ministers to exchange views on a number of economic and financial issues and sustainable development as also non-traditional security challenges and regional and global issues. They also assessed the achievements of ASEM in the

past 17 years and its future orientation. Ministers agreed to intensify efforts to bring about greater synergy between Asian and European partners of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) across the three pillars of political dialogue, economic cooperation and socio-cultural exchanges.

3. Ministers commenced their deliberations with expression of solidarity and support for the victims of the typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines and Viet Nam. They felt that ASEM should develop capacity to deliver immediate support for relief and rehabilitation in such instances of natural disasters. Many ASEM members committed support in response to the specific requirements conveyed by the Philippines and also indicated their readiness to do likewise for Viet Nam.
4. Ministers underlined that ASEM provides a strong foundation for a more dynamic partnership between Asia and Europe for addressing regional and global challenges. Dialogue, consensus, flexibility and informality continue to define the strength of deliberations in ASEM. There was consensus that the dynamism of the ASEM partners should find expression in tangible result-oriented initiatives amongst ASEM partners. These initiatives could define joint responses by Asia and Europe to global and regional challenges and also catalyze opportunities for growth and development in Asia and Europe. Ministers underscored the need to strengthen public support for ASEM in Asia and Europe.
5. Recalling ASEM guiding principles, including the 2006 Helsinki Declaration, Ministers endorsed recommendations of ASEM Senior Officials for further optimization of ASEM working methods to strengthen ASEM's substance, efficiency and coherence. In this regard, Ministers welcomed the Yangzhou Initiative as an important contribution to improve ASEM working methods. It was felt that ASEM processes must continue to be responsive to the evolving international situation.

Economic Growth, Sustainable Development and Future Direction of Partnerships for Development

6. Ministers reaffirmed ASEM's utility for finding synergies to mitigate the global financial crisis and address concerns relating to weak demand and high unemployment in member economies. They noted the importance of implementing nationally defined social protection floors at the development pace of respective countries. Ministers underscored that a sustainable model for growth could be found by matching technological innovations and capacities available in many ASEM members to markets and human resource requirements in others. Such bridging of intellectual, scientific and economic capacities between Asia and Europe as well as ensuring inclusiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) could act as a force multiplier to facilitate economic growth and sustainable development. ASEM should fully reflect the strong economic and financial interdependence between Asia and Europe. Ministers encouraged early resumption of the ASEM Economic Ministers Meeting.
7. Recognizing the importance of an open rule-based multilateral trading system for global growth, Ministers expressed their deep concern about protectionism, endorsed rolling back of protectionist measures and reiterated that barriers to trade and investment, imposition of export restrictions or implementation of WTO-inconsistent measures must be avoided. Ministers strongly supported efforts for the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali in December 2013 to deliver substantial outcomes towards the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round.
8. Ministers recognized that global financial regulatory reform is an ongoing process. They reaffirmed the importance of the call for continuing reforms of international financial institutions to reflect structural changes in the world economy, including, *inter alia*, the priority of early ratification of the 2010 IMF quota and governance reforms. Ministers acknowledged the need for adequate protection of intellectual property rights, including genetic resources and traditional knowledge and folklore, as well as for efforts to fight counterfeiting and piracy.
9. Ministers urged intensification of efforts to utilize technological and financial capacities in Asia and Europe as well as promotion

of Public-Private Partnership to meet the growing need of infrastructure in the emerging economies. This was seen as critical for sustained economic growth, poverty reduction and job creation, in particular, for tackling youth unemployment. Ministers expressed strong political will to restore sustainable and inclusive growth to the global economy.

10. Ministers welcomed the G20's efforts to coordinate common approaches to global economy and finance, including the outcome of the G20 Summit in St. Petersburg in September 2013. Australia provided a briefing on priorities for their G20 Presidency.
11. Ministers noted that ASEM is at a significant crossroads. The depth and maturity of political dialogue in ASEM over the past 17 years must lead to further strengthening of the inter-continental bridging. This would add to the vitality of ASEM. Greater balance in the three pillars of cooperation would strengthen the relevance of ASEM.
12. Ministers emphasized the need to strengthen regional and inter-regional connectivity for more efficient flow of goods, services, capital and people, especially for narrowing developmental gaps.
13. Ministers underscored the need to transform jointly the challenges related to food, water and energy security into opportunities for growth and sustainable development.
14. Ministers acknowledged the potential for human resource development through institutes of technological excellence in ASEM partner countries. It was felt that ASEM's biennial Rectors Conference and ASEM's Higher Education Programme could be further dovetailed to take this forward. They recognized the importance of encouraging the private sector to look at joint ventures in this sector, with transfer of technology as an element to bring about qualitative improvement in education, create jobs and foster economic development.

Non-Traditional Security Challenges

15. Ministers exchanged views on strategies to meet non-traditional security challenges such as all aspects of terrorism, drug

trafficking, money laundering and cyber crime. These issues were seen as having serious repercussions for regional and global security, particularly because of their tendency to come together to compound the challenge from terrorism. They underlined the need for a comprehensive global approach to counter terrorism. Ministers also called for greater cooperation to meet other emerging threats such as piracy, smuggling, transnational crimes, human trafficking, illegal migration, arms trafficking and trafficking in plant and animal products, particularly in endangered species. Ministers also emphasized the importance of collective attention to deal with the growing challenge from pandemics.

16. Ministers underscored the need to exchange information on activities of cyber crime and where cyber space is used by terrorists for financing, recruitment, communication and radicalization. They emphasized the need for ensuring cyber security, while underlining that the security of the Internet should not be achieved at the expense of freedom of expression. They noted the work of the UN Group of Government Experts and underlined that the governance of the Internet needs to be democratic, transparent and representative of all stakeholders. Ministers also noted the outcome of the 2013 Conference on Cyber Space held in Seoul on October 17-18, 2013.
17. Ministers underlined that climate change continues to be an important challenge. ASEM partners underscored their commitment to work together to address climate change and environment protection in accordance with all the principles and provisions of UNFCCC, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. They reiterated their commitment to implementation of the outcomes of previous conferences, including most recently, the Doha Conference, and developing a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the UNFCCC applicable to all parties. ASEM partners looked forward to working with Poland as the incoming COP-Presidency towards achieving a successful outcome at COP 19. Recognising the importance of climate finance, Ministers

emphasized the need to work together for the early and successful operationalisation and timely resource mobilization of the Green Climate Fund.

18. Ministers supported greater collaboration and coordination in disaster risk reduction and management and mitigation, including, *inter alia*, through awareness programmes, early warning systems, use of innovations in technology, search, rescue and relief operations and post-disaster rehabilitation. They agreed to mainstream disaster risk reduction and management in the ASEM agenda. They welcomed the ASEM Conference on Technology and Innovation for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management and Climate Change Adaptation to be held in the Philippines in September 2014 and the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Sendai, Japan in 2015.
19. Ministers supported greater collaboration in ASEM for ensuring food, water and energy security for future generations. They suggested attention to the use of R&D in agricultural productivity, farm practices, conservation of agro-biodiversity and the use of advanced technologies to mitigate the effects of climate change. Ministers emphasized collective interest of members in examining measures to address the volatility of food and agricultural commodity prices, while recognizing national measures to support food security objectives and protect livelihood of farmers.
20. Ministers emphasized the importance of open, competitive and globally integrated energy markets in enhancing energy security. They underlined the importance of ensuring the full engagement of both producers and consumers in global energy governance structures. The need to attain a sustainable energy mix according to national priorities and circumstances was recognized. Ministers also reaffirmed their commitments to promote energy access and energy diversification through exchange of information and best practices and research on new, alternative and renewable energy development. They supported energy efficiency and conservation and the use of affordable environmentally friendly technologies, particularly for developing countries.

21. Ministers supported sustainable usage and integrated management of water resources. They noted that water is a promising area of cooperation with complementarity of capacity within ASEM members, and supported collaboration between ASEM partners, especially through transfer of technology and expertise in this sector. In this context, they took note of the outcome 6 of the ASEM Dialogue on Sustainable Development in June 2012.
22. Ministers encouraged ASEM partners to strengthen collaborations in the above sectors for joint research, development and demonstration, sharing information and knowledge, expanding technology hubs and creating networks for capacity building.

Regional and International Issues

23. Ministers had a candid and constructive discussion on a number of international and regional issues of common interest and concern in the Retreat. They exchanged views and assessments on issues such as Asia-Europe cooperation, including as a net contributor to international peace, security and development; situation in Afghanistan; Iran's nuclear programme; developments in Middle East and North Africa, including Syria, Middle East Peace Process, Libya and Egypt; situation in the Horn of Africa; threat of piracy; problem of illegal migration and increasing flows of internally displaced persons and refugees; protection of vulnerable sections in conflict situations; developments in North East Asia, including the nuclear programme of DPRK and situation in the Korean Peninsula; freedom of navigation, maritime security and other issues pertaining to South China Sea; the objective of a world free from nuclear weapons and issues of proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery; enhancement of efficacy of multilateral institutions, including UNSC reform; expectations from ongoing COP19 negotiations in Warsaw and the forthcoming 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali; and cooperation under the Arctic Council. Ministers agreed that ASEM is a valuable forum for political dialogue and cooperation among members in Asia and

Europe with diverse and complementing capacities, perspectives and approaches.

24. Ministers commended the successful outcomes from the 23rd ASEAN Summit and related Summits held in Bandar Seri Begawan on October 9-10, 2013, including the development of the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision. Ministers also commended the successful outcome of the European Council meetings in 2013. Ministers took note, with appreciation, of the successful conclusion of the APEC Economic Leaders Meeting in Bali on October 8, 2013.

ASEM Initiatives for Tangible Cooperation and Future Meetings

25. Ministers welcomed the initiative of the Chair to encourage ASEM members to achieve result-oriented tangible outcomes under ASEM and the Annex I to the Chair's Statement, which would allow countries to continue work on this agenda with like-minded members. They took note of the numerous meetings to be held in 2013-14, listed in Annex II to the Chair's Statement. Ministers supported the trend to incorporate a wider stakeholding amongst business, civil society, media and academia. They suggested that the implementation reports of such initiatives feed into subsequent ASEM meetings and documents, including the SOM meetings.

ASEM Press/ Public Awareness Management Strategy

26. Ministers called for greater effort to promote public awareness and visibility of the ASEM processes for the general public, business, media, executive and parliamentary representatives in ASEM partners. They endorsed the recommendation of the Senior Officials to set up a Working Group, comprising ASEM members and ASEF, to devise a Press and Public Awareness Management Strategy to be discussed further at the ASEM SOM in April 2014 in Brussels. The Ministers noted that the suggestions and topics contained in Annex IV to the Chair's Statement would provide the starting point for discussions in the Working Group. They commended use of modern technologies and social media to strengthen the public interface of ASEM. They supported

strengthening of ASEM InfoBoard maintained by ASEF and welcomed the ASEM Dialogue Facility developed by the EU as an additional tool for ASEM to enhance dialogue and cooperation.

27. In this context, Ministers took note of the convening of the 9th ASEF Journalists Colloquium in Delhi-NCR from November 10-12, 2013, organised by ASEF in collaboration with India, to take forward the on-going debate on sustainable development.

Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

28. Ministers recognised ASEF's contributions to the ASEM process, particularly in enhancing awareness of ASEM in civil societies and promoting people-to-people exchanges between Asia and Europe. They recalled ASEF's important mandate as laid down in the Dublin Principles 1996 and mentioned in the Asia-Europe Cooperation Framework (AECF) 2000, i.e. "to continue strong support and encouragement for ASEF which is an important vehicle to promote and catalyze cultural, intellectual and people-to-people exchanges". Ministers welcomed ASEF's result-oriented projects planned for 2014 (Annex-III) and encouraged ASEF to optimize its capacity to attract more annual financial contributions. Ministers endorsed the recommendation of Senior Officials that the Board of Governors and Executive Director of ASEF be requested to offer suggestions for closer synergy between ASEF activities and ASEM, for discussion at the ASEM SOM in April 2014.

Celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of ASEM in 2016

29. On the recommendation of Senior Officials, Ministers decided to set up a Working Group from amongst ASEM members and ASEF to devise a detailed strategy and roadmap for the 20th Anniversary celebrations of ASEM in 2016 and took note of suggestions that were made in this regard as a starting point.

ASEM Enlargement

30. Ministers noted Croatia's request for joining ASEM following its accession to the EU as its 28th member on July 1, 2013. In

keeping with the two-key approach of ASEM Enlargement, the Ministers welcomed Croatia as “Guest of Chair” for all ASEM meetings in 2014 till a decision on its membership status at the ASEM10 Summit in Milan, Italy in the second half of 2014.

Preparations for ASEM10 Summit

31. Ministers were informed by the EU and Italy about the preparations for the ASEM10 Summit to be held in Milan, Italy in the second half of 2014. They also discussed events that could be organized in conjunction with the Summit. Ministers assured the EU and Italy that ASEM partners would actively support the successful organization of the ASEM10 Summit.
32. The Ministers welcomed Luxembourg's offer to host the 12th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting (ASEM FMM12) in 2015.

Annex I – Collated List of Interested ASEM Members for Tangible Cooperation. Annex II – ASEM Initiatives in 2013-2014. Annex III – ASEM Projects in 2013 and 2014. Annex IV – List of Topics for Discussion on ASEM's Press/ Public Awareness Management Strategy.

<i>Annex I Collated List of Interested ASEM Members for Tangible Cooperation</i>	Areas of Tangible Cooperation	Names of Interested ASEM Members
S.No. 1.	Disaster Management and Mitigation, Building Rescue and Relief Capacities, Technologies and Innovation in Rescue Equipments & Techniques	India, Philippines, Greece, Netherlands, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Belgium, Japan, Pakistan, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Australia, New Zealand, China
2.	Efficient and Sustainable Water Management, Innovations in Water & Waste Management	India, Denmark, Slovakia, Indonesia, Hungary, Spain, Viet Nam, Malta, Mongolia, Pakistan, China, Romania, Bulgaria, Bangladesh, Singapore
3.	SME Cooperation	India, Greece, Brunei Darussalam, Lao PDR, Hungary, Malaysia, Pakistan,

<i>Annex 1 Collated List of Interested ASEM Members for Tangible Cooperation</i>	Areas of Tangible Cooperation	Names of Interested ASEM Members
S.No.		Malta, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Myanmar, Indonesia, China
4.	Renewable Energy: mitigation, adaptation, financing and technological innovations	India, Philippines, Greece, Lithuania, Brunei Darussalam, Hungary, Spain, Pakistan, Malta, Poland, Mongolia, New Zealand
5.	Energy Efficiency Technologies	India, Denmark, Lithuania, Brunei Darussalam, Hungary, Spain, Poland, Mongolia, Pakistan, China
6.	Higher Education	Philippines, Latvia, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Ireland, India, Poland, Thailand, United Kingdom
7.	Vocational Training & Skills Development	India, Netherlands, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Ireland, Latvia, United Kingdom, China
8.	Food Safety Issues, including training of Farmers	China, Slovakia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Thailand, Mongolia, New Zealand
9.	Education and Human Resources Development	Greece, Hungary, Malaysia, Myanmar, India, Pakistan
10.	Waste Management: More efficient use of material resources, the waste sector as a central	India, Denmark, Lithuania, Singapore,



BRICS**082. Media Briefing by National Security Advisor after BRICS Meeting of High Representatives on National Security.**

New Delhi, January 10, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being present here for this media interaction.

Since this was the first time that the High Representatives for Security of the BRICS nations are meeting here in New Delhi, we had requested the National Security Advisor to brief you about the concept as well as the discussions that he had today with his counterparts. Along with the NSA we have the Deputy National Security Advisor Ms. Vijaya Latha Reddy and, further to NSA's left, Secretary (ER) Mr. Pinak Chakrabarti.

I would now request the NSA to make his opening remarks and then the floor is open for questions.

National Security Advisor (Shri Shivshankar Menon): Thank you Akbar.

We have just concluded the meeting of the National Security Advisors or High Representatives responsible for national security, as we are also called, of BRICS countries. We were honoured to host this meeting; and I must thank all my colleagues in the BRICS for having made this a very successful meeting.

The BRICS NSA's have actually been meeting since 2009. We first met as a group to prepare the Yekaterinburg summit of BRICS leaders which was the first summit of BRICS leaders. But this is the first time that we are doing a standalone meeting of the NSAs. We met after that as well by the way. We met on the sidelines of Sanya; we met on the sidelines of other summits; in Brazil as well. But this is the first standalone meeting as such. We did this because in the Delhi Summit in March we were asked to meet and to look at issues of common concern, and to look at the international situation.

Over time, as you know, the BRICS itself as a platform has grown both in significance and in the nature of the dialogue and the work that we do

together. It started of primarily looking at economic issues, at economic cooperation. Over time those consultations and the work that we do has grown considerably. It is natural given the kind of similar interests that we have as emerging economies that national security issues should also come on to the agenda and become an important element. So, what we really used the meeting for was to consult, to coordinate, and to see where we can cooperate on some of these issues.

We discussed how the BRICS - which today account for 43 per cent of the world's population, around one quarter of the world's GDP – of how we can work together for global peace, for stability, for development, and how BRICS could be a factor of stability and growth. I think it is clear that when you look at the world economy and the condition it is in, much of the growth in the economy is actually coming from emerging economies, from what are called developing countries.

Today, most of our discussions actually concentrated on the important regional and global developments. Naturally West Asia and North Africa was a very large part of what we discussed - Syria, Libya, Male. We also discussed ways to enhance our cooperation and coordination in issues like cyber security, terrorism, piracy and other such threats to international security.

We looked at ways to increase coordination and cooperation among us as BRICS on these issues. We each have strong and healthy relationships with each of the other BRICS countries. Those are bilateral. But what we looked at today was how we as BRICS, as a collective, could do something about these issues.

Discussions throughout were constructive, positive, forward looking. There was a high level of congruence in our discussion of these issues. We found it very useful, in fact useful enough that at the end everyone said we must do this again. That gives you an idea of how successful the participants thought it was.

In one sense what we were doing will feed into the preparations for the Durban Summit at the end of March which will be the summit of BRICS leaders and which will be the fifth summit in the first cycle of leaders' summits. Starting in Yekaterinburg we have done it in each of the other countries.

We also had some discussion of what we expect from the Durban Summit. The South African side briefed us about their preparations for it which are well on track and going very well. Much of what we discussed we will report back to our own leaders and then we hope it feeds into what they do at Durban.

I will stop there and maybe leave it open to questions.

Official Spokesperson: Since the NSA has spoken about a vast canvas, we will focus on those issues that he has spoken on first and then we will have questions, if there is time left, on other issues.

Q: Sir, you spoke about issues of national security which came up during the BRICS summit. Could you give us some details on what kind of national security issues came up particularly with reference to India?

National Security Advisor: I told you, terrorism, piracy, cyber security, these were all national security issues, and some of the threats that come out of the situation, the turmoil in West Asia and in North Africa.

Q: ...(Inaudible)... take the opportunity ... BRICS NSAs about what happened between India and Pakistan, the mutilation of the soldiers?

National Security Advisor: No, I did not.

Q: Why not?

National Security Advisor: I do not expect BRICS to do something about it.

Q: Sir, is there any kind of a joint mechanism that is likely to be set up among the BRICS countries to deal with the national security issues? We have many working groups with other countries. Is there any kind of a joint effort or joint mechanism that you are thinking of to deal with the security issues?

National Security Advisor: The way BRICS has worked so far is, we have had occasional meetings of National Security Advisors. When we have a particular issue that we want to develop, that we think that many of us or all of us feel that we need to work on, we set up ad hoc working groups, expert groups and so on. That is how for instance we develop the idea of a BRICS bank for infrastructure development which now seems almost ripe, which will be coming to the Durban.

Today when we discussed these issues which I have mentioned to you, in many of them the other NSAs felt that these are worth carrying forward in expert level discussions. So, what we will try and do now is we will actually see where we can set up groups, which issues there is enough traction in. It is a continuous process. It is not meeting to meeting. We have Sherpas, in fact that is why Secretary (ER) is our BRICS Sherpa, we have Su Sherpas who stay in touch with each other. They will make sure that this process continues.

When you ask if there is a permanent mechanism, I am not quite sure how to answer it. As we have a job to do, we will have a mechanism. And we agreed that we will meet again as well. But we did not say we will meet every month on the second Tuesday or fix a date and time. Nothing like that.

Q: Security situation in Syria is deteriorating rapidly. Have you specifically discussed this issue and evolved a common position on Syria?

National Security Advisor: We had a fairly detailed discussion on it. I hope I reflect the sense of the discussion correctly when I say that it was quite clear that all of us felt that it is for the Syrian people to choose their future; the international community can only be a facilitator. Secondly, we thought that the deterioration in the situation and the increasing violence was something of great concern to all of us, also, the rise in extremist and terrorist forces in the region and in Syria itself which seems to be increasing over time. Our own feeling was that what is needed is that a political process which actually tries to include all Syrians in it is what is required. There are no military solutions to this kind of a problem. There was a detailed discussion on it.

Q: Sir, the question of cyber security sounds very important. How do you and your colleagues see the cooperation of BRICS countries in this question? Did you discuss any mechanism on this cooperation?

National Security Advisor: I think many of us felt that, in fact there were many ideas on cyber security because each of our countries is in the process of putting in place their own systems for cyber security. Whether it is India, China, each of us is in the process of putting in place regulations, structures, organizations to deal with this. So, there was a fairly detailed discussion of that. We all had many ideas actually on how

the BRICS could cooperate to do this, whether it is exchanging best practices, whether it is putting our emergency response teams in touch with each other, whether it is dealing with cyber crime. So, we went through it in some detail and there were many good ideas on the table which now we will carry forward as we continue to discuss it as I said in this Su Sherpa process. But it is obviously an issue which bothers all of us. The more networked we get and the more of our citizens who use and depend upon the Internet and social media, the more concern there is about that it be safe, secure and healthy.

Q: Did you have any bilateral discussion with Chinese NSA?

National Security Advisor: We are meeting tomorrow. Most of us are doing bilateral discussions on the sidelines. Some have taken place, some will happen tomorrow, some just after this.

Question: Will you discuss border talks?

National Security Advisor: We will discuss our whole relationship.

Q: The next meeting of the Special Representatives?

National Security Advisor: All that. Let us meet first.

Question: What do you think of Pakistan's suggestion that UNMOGIP should investigate the January 8 incident on the LoC?

National Security Advisor: UNMOGIP still exists? I thought they do not have a role.

Q: CBMs across LoC are unraveling and new rules of engagement are called for. Do you think that Pakistan is trying to make ...(Inaudible)...

National Security Advisor: If you want to make a statement, come and sit here and make it. Do not put words in my mouth.

Q: Can we come back to BRICS...(Inaudible)...

National Security Advisor: Thank you for doing that.

Question: But is there something conclusive coming out of this meeting which we can tell the people?

National Security Advisor: As I said, if you look at the nature of the BRICS process, it started off as an idea originally as BRIC, of four emerging economies, and as an economic concept. The first few meetings

were at lower levels where we discussed how we could cooperate in economic fields. That bore some fruit. As that bore fruit, it was raised to the level of the Foreign Ministers. Finally the leaders met in 2009. That process itself took five years. By that time the agenda had grown to cover not just bilateral economic or multilateral economic cooperation but also the global economic situation, issues of global governance, issues of political significance. When you came to the Sanya meeting of the leaders for instance there was a large section expressing views on political developments in the international situation. The first reference to what was happening in West Asia was in Sanya in 2010.

Slowly the ambit of what BRICS has worked on has grown. I think it has resulted in some concrete cooperation measures. There are networks of course of think tanks, there are exchanges at various levels between various BRICS countries. But I think the most concrete suggestion that is now on the table is the one for a development bank or a BRICS bank for infrastructure.

If you ask us on the national security side, it has been in a growing field of cooperation. As I said, we already have strong bilateral cooperation in this field whether it is India-Russia, India-China, India-Brazil, India-South Africa. The question is what we as a group can do on issues. Cyber security for instance is an issue which no individual country or no two countries can actually deal with just on their own. So, there is a long list of things that we think we should be looking at as BRICS. But if you ask me today what have you done, I will say what we have done is take another step forward on this rather long road which we will keep walking on. And everybody who was there in the room at the end thought it had been very useful and very positive.

Q: Mr. Menon, I understand and appreciate your statement that you do not expect BRICS to do anything on this LoC incident. But during your standalone meeting and during your bilaterals, did any of the BRICS NSAs broach the topic with you? Did you happen to brief them, and what is your own assessment of the situation?

National Security Advisor: Simple answer. No.

Q: ...(Inaudible)... to you here. We saw the Foreign Office's statement yesterday on the LoC incident. My question is, whether there is any

...(Inaudible)... in the Government about ...(Inaudible)... There is some speculation that is going around.

National Security Advisor: All this is speculation. You have heard what the Foreign Minister said. He has made it quite clear that he is not jumping to any conclusions at this moment. So, I suggest you wait. After all he has been speaking to you even today. So, I think you need to at least give him more than fifteen minutes before you ask, have you reevaluated, have you changed policy again.

I think it is quite clear. Government has said what it has to say on the event. You have a selection of adjectives – reprehensible, barbaric, dastardly, whatever you want. Sadly, it is not the first time this has happened. I hope it never happens again. But we have also told you exactly what we intend to do. So, now I think you should let Government go about its business.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

National Security Advisor: But you would not hear anything different from me from what he told you.

Q: Could you give us a sense of the number of increase in the ceasefire violations that have been reported especially over the last one year? And given that even during the peak winter timing it is happening, is there a sense that perhaps there are infiltration attempts happening with the possible back up cover of the Pakistan army? Or are there sections within the Pak army that are not on the same page as far as the dialogue process is concerned?

National Security Advisor: I do not speak for the Pak army. I cannot tell you what is in their mind. I can tell you what happens. There has been an increase in ceasefire violations. There been an increase in infiltration attempts, not only in the last few months. In 2012 there was an increase overall over 2011. That is a fact. And that is something we are dealing with, both ourselves and with the Pakistani authorities.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event.



083. Prime Minister's statement prior to his departure for South Africa.

New Delhi, March 25, 2013.

I leave today for Durban, South Africa, to attend the Fifth BRICS Summit at the invitation of President Jacob Zuma.

Over the last few years, BRICS has emerged as a consequential voice in the international arena. Close coordination between its members through the means of an annual Summit and several area-specific meetings as necessary has strengthened cooperation and improved the effectiveness of the forum. Given the collective economic weight and global standing of BRICS countries, the forum represents a unique mechanism to address regional and global challenges, particularly in so far as the interests of the developing world are concerned.

As the current BRICS Chair, India received the unstinted support of its partners in successfully implementing the ambitious agenda adopted at the New Delhi Summit in March 2012. The Durban Summit gives us an opportunity to make further progress on the initiatives that we launched in Delhi to deepen intra-BRICS cooperation and fulfill our international responsibilities. I look forward to discussions on new ideas in Durban to advance our goals.

At the time when the world is facing multiple challenges, the Durban Summit provides a useful and timely opportunity to consult and coordinate on a broad range of issues with our BRICS partners. We will discuss ways to revive global growth and ensure macroeconomic stability, as well as mechanisms and measures to promote investment in infrastructure and sustainable development. India will also urge faster movement on reform of institutions of global political and economic governance. It is important that BRICS continue to consult closely on developments affecting global peace and security.

This will be the first BRICS Summit on African soil. The 'Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialization' between BRICS and Africa will be an important theme of the Durban Summit. Given India's long-standing and close friendship with Africa and our growing economic partnership with the continent, including through the India-Africa Forum

Summit mechanism, I look forward to the dialogue that BRICS leaders will have between themselves and, in a special retreat, with a large number of distinguished African leaders who are coming to Durban. I will reaffirm our strong and enduring commitment as a steadfast partner for inclusive development in Africa and for advancing our common interests in international forums.

I will also take the opportunity of my visit to hold substantive bilateral meetings with other BRICS leaders. I look forward to meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. It will be an opportunity for me not only to greet the new Chinese President personally, but also to discuss how we can maintain the positive trajectory of our relationship and further strengthen this very important bilateral relationship. I also intend to review with President Putin of Russia the progress in India-Russia relations after the successful Summit in Delhi in December 2012. I also look forward to meeting with President Zuma of South Africa and President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, both of whom will also join us in Delhi in June for the IBSA Summit.



084. Prime Minister's statement on his arrival at King Shaka International Airport, Durban for the 5th BRICS Summit.

March 25, 2013.

I am delighted to be in South Africa once again. We have extremely cordial relations with South Africa. This visit is for the BRICS Summit. BRICS is a new grouping, young with a lot of promise. I look forward to meeting all the dignitaries who are attending the Summit.



085. Statement by the Prime Minister at the BRICS Leaders Africa Dialogue Forum.

March 27, 2013.

Your Excellency President Jacob Zuma,
Distinguished BRICS colleagues,
Distinguished Heads of African countries

Distinguished Heads of institutions from different parts of Africa,

I am pleased to have this opportunity for a dialogue on how BRICS, and in particular India, could contribute to and benefit from the tremendous transformation that has made Africa the continent of hope today.

India's relations with Africa are rooted in the history of our solidarity against colonialism and apartheid. Mahatma Gandhi developed the tools of peaceful resistance on this very soil. Our engagement with Africa has come a long way since then and today we have built a new template for partnership in the form of the India-Africa Forum Summit. This partnership is guided by the vision and priorities of our African partners. India will assist Africa in charting its own course through institution-building, infrastructure development and technical and vocational skill development.

The pan-Africa e-Network for tele-medicine and tele-education, which is now functional in 47 countries in Africa, is a major success story of our institution-building partnership with countries of Africa. We are ready to work with our African partners on e-governance to help bridge the digital divide in Africa. India is also happy to share its experiences of participative political institutions, local governance, media and civil society with Africa.

Human resource development and capacity-building assistance were mentioned in this very meeting, and we consider them to be at the core of India's cooperation with Africa, because they enable and empower people to take charge of their own future. Over 15,000 African students are studying in India. Agricultural and scientific fellowships specially designed for African scholars are highly popular. Our assistance with vocational and entrepreneurial skill development, with particular emphasis on small and medium enterprises, is helping promote employability and job creation for the youth in Africa.

Our concessional assistance is directed towards development of agriculture, infrastructure and industry. We are reviewing the terms and conditions of our lines of credit so that they meet the budgetary requirements of our partners, and are in line with their own development priorities, utilizing local resources and skills, and creating sustainable revenue-generating assets. On the trade front, our non-reciprocal Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme for LDCs has significantly enhanced the access of African LDCs to the growing Indian market.

Excellencies, India's enterprising private sector is one of the key drivers of the India-Africa partnership. The Confederation of Indian Industries and the EXIM Bank of India last week organized the 9th Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership, which generated interest in 500 projects worth 70 billion US dollars.

Excellencies, as has been rightly mentioned by one of the distinguished personalities here, sustainable economic development requires an environment of social and political stability. India actively supports African initiatives for peace and security in the continent. More than 6,500 Indian soldiers support UN Peacekeeping Operations in various parts of Africa. A large Indian contingent is helping the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo carry out its mandate. We have also made financial contributions to the African Union Mission in Somalia and the African-led International Support Mission to Mali. We strongly support the restoration of Mali's territorial integrity as well as constitutional order in that country.

Excellencies, let me conclude by reiterating India's resolve to work with Africa with the entire spectrum of our expertise and capacity. The BRICS forum offers another avenue for our cooperation. Initiatives such as the BRICS bank could further leverage the collective capacity of the BRICS countries to assist the historic transformation taking place in Africa. This is an objective that India remains committed to.

Thank you



086. 5th BRICS Summit - eThekweni Declaration and Action Plan.**Thekwini, March 27, 2013.**

1. We, 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 in Durban, South Africa, on 27 March 2013 at the Fifth BRICS Summit. Our discussions took place under the overarching theme, "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation". The Fifth BRICS Summit concluded the first cycle of BRICS Summits and we reaffirmed our commitment to the promotion of international law, multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations (UN). Our discussions reflected our growing intra-BRICS solidarity as well as our shared goal to contribute positively to global peace, stability, development and cooperation. We also considered our role in the international system as based on an inclusive approach of shared solidarity and cooperation towards all nations and peoples.
2. We met at a time which requires that we consider issues of mutual interest and systemic importance in order to share concerns and to develop lasting solutions. We aim at progressively developing BRICS into a full-fledged mechanism of current and long-term coordination on a wide range of key issues of the world economy and politics. The prevailing global governance architecture is regulated by institutions which were conceived in circumstances when the international landscape in all its aspects was characterised by very different challenges and opportunities. As the global economy is being reshaped, we are committed to exploring new models and approaches towards more equitable development and inclusive global growth by emphasising complementarities and building on our respective economic strengths.
3. We are open to increasing our engagement and cooperation with non-BRICS countries, in particular Emerging Market and Developing Countries (EMDCs), and relevant international and

regional organisations, as envisioned in the Sanya Declaration. We will hold a Retreat together with African leaders after this Summit, under the theme, "Unlocking Africa's potential: BRICS and Africa Cooperation on Infrastructure". The Retreat is an opportunity for BRICS and African leaders to discuss how to strengthen cooperation between the BRICS countries and the African Continent.

4. Recognising the importance of regional integration for Africa's sustainable growth, development and poverty eradication, we reaffirm our support for the Continent's integration processes.
5. Within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), we support African countries in their industrialisation process through stimulating foreign direct investment, knowledge exchange, capacity-building and diversification of imports from Africa. We acknowledge that infrastructure development in Africa is important and recognise the strides made by the African Union to identify and address the continent's infrastructure challenges through the development of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), the AU NEPAD Africa Action Plan (2010-2015), the NEPAD Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative (PICI), as well as the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plans that have identified priority infrastructure development projects that are critical to promoting regional integration and industrialisation. We will seek to stimulate infrastructure investment on the basis of mutual benefit to support industrial development, job-creation, skills development, food and nutrition security and poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa. We therefore, reaffirm our support for sustainable infrastructure development in Africa.
6. We note policy actions in Europe, the US and Japan aimed at reducing tail-risks in the world economy. Some of these actions produce negative spillover effects on other economies of the world. Significant risks remain and the performance of the global economy still falls behind our expectations. As a result,

uncertainty about strength and durability of the recovery and the direction of policy in some major economies remains high. In some key countries unemployment stays unusually elevated, while high levels of private and public indebtedness inhibit growth. In such circumstances, we reaffirm our strong commitment to support growth and foster financial stability. We also underscore the need for appropriate action to be taken by advanced economies in order to rebuild confidence, foster growth and secure a strong recovery.

7. Central Banks in advanced economies have responded with unconventional monetary policy actions which have increased global liquidity. While this may be consistent with domestic monetary policy mandates, major Central Banks should avoid the unintended consequences of these actions in the form of increased volatility of capital flows, currencies and commodity prices, which may have negative growth effects on other economies, in particular developing countries.
8. We welcome the core objectives of the Russian Presidency in the G20 in 2013, in particular the efforts to increased financing for investment and ensure public debt sustainability aimed at ensuring strong, sustainable, inclusive and balanced growth and job creation around the world. We will also continue to prioritise the G20 development agenda as a vital element of global economic stability and long-term sustainable growth and job creation.
9. Developing countries face challenges of infrastructure development due to insufficient long-term financing and foreign direct investment, especially investment in capital stock. This constrains global aggregate demand. BRICS cooperation towards more productive use of global financial resources can make a positive contribution to addressing this problem. In March 2012 we directed our Finance Ministers to examine the feasibility and viability of setting up a New Development Bank for mobilising resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing

countries, to supplement the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development. Following the report from our Finance Ministers, we are satisfied that the establishment of a New Development Bank is feasible and viable. We have agreed to establish the New Development Bank. The initial contribution to the Bank should be substantial and sufficient for the Bank to be effective in financing infrastructure.

10. In June 2012, in our meeting in Los Cabos, we tasked our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to explore the construction of a financial safety net through the creation of a Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) amongst BRICS countries. They have concluded that 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. We are of the view that the establishment of the CRA with an initial size of US\$ 100 billion is feasible and desirable subject to internal legal frameworks and appropriate safeguards. We direct our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to continue working towards its establishment.
11. We are grateful to our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors for the work undertaken on the New Development Bank and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement and direct them to negotiate and conclude the agreements which will establish them. We will review progress made in these two initiatives at our next meeting in September 2013.
12. We welcome the conclusion between our Export-Import Banks (EXIM) and Development Banks, of both the "Multilateral Agreement on Cooperation and Co-financing for Sustainable Development" and, given the steep growth trajectory of the African continent and the significant infrastructure funding requirements

directly emanating from this growth path, the “Multilateral Agreement on Infrastructure Co-Financing for Africa”.

13. We call for the reform of International Financial Institutions to make them more representative and to reflect the growing weight of BRICS and other developing countries. We remain concerned with the slow pace of the reform of the IMF. We see an urgent need to implement, as agreed, the 2010 International Monetary Fund (IMF) Governance and Quota Reform. We urge all members to take all necessary steps to achieve an agreement on the quota formula and complete the next general quota review by January 2014. The reform of the IMF should strengthen the voice and representation of the poorest members of the IMF, including Sub-Saharan Africa. All options should be explored, with an open mind, to achieve this. We support the reform and improvement of the international monetary system, with a broad-based international reserve currency system providing stability and certainty. We welcome the discussion about the role of the SDR in the existing international monetary system including the composition of SDR’s basket of currencies. We support the IMF to make its surveillance framework more integrated and even-handed. The leadership selection of IFIs should be through an open, transparent and merit-based process and truly open to candidates from the emerging market economies and developing countries.
14. We emphasise the importance of ensuring steady, adequate and predictable access to long term finance for developing countries from a variety of sources. We would like to see concerted global effort towards infrastructure financing and investment through the instrumentality of adequately resourced Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and Regional Development Banks (RDBs). We urge all parties to work towards an ambitious International Development Association (IDA) 17 replenishment.
15. We reaffirm our support for an open, transparent and rules-based multilateral trading system. We will continue in our efforts for the successful conclusion of the Doha Round, based on the progress

made and in keeping with its mandate, while upholding the principles of transparency, inclusiveness and multilateralism. We are committed to ensure that new proposals and approaches to the Doha Round negotiations will reinforce the core principles and the developmental mandate of the Doha Round. We look forward to significant and meaningful deliverables that are balanced and address key development concerns of the poorest and most vulnerable WTO members, at the ninth Ministerial Conference of the WTO in Bali.

16. We note that the process is underway for the selection of a new WTO Director-General in 2013. We concur that the WTO requires a new leader who demonstrates a commitment to multilateralism and to enhancing the effectiveness of the WTO including through a commitment to support efforts that will lead to an expeditious conclusion of the DDA. We consider that the next Director-General of the WTO should be a representative of a developing country.
17. We reaffirm the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) mandate as the focal point in the UN system dedicated to consider the interrelated issues of trade, investment, finance and technology from a development perspective. UNCTAD's mandate and work are unique and necessary to deal with the challenges of development and growth in the increasingly interdependent global economy. We also reaffirm the importance of strengthening UNCTAD's capacity to deliver on its programmes of consensus building, policy dialogue, research, technical cooperation and capacity building, so that it is better equipped to deliver on its development mandate.
18. We acknowledge the important role that State Owned Companies (SOCs) play in the economy and encourage our SOCs to explore ways of cooperation, exchange of information and best practices.
19. We recognise the fundamental role played by Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the economies of our countries. SMEs are major creators of jobs and wealth. In this regard, we will explore opportunities for cooperating in the field of SMEs and

recognise the need for promoting dialogue among the respective Ministries and Agencies in charge of the theme, particularly with a view to promoting their international exchange and cooperation and fostering innovation, research and development.

20. We reiterate our strong commitment to the United Nations (UN) as the foremost multilateral forum entrusted with bringing about hope, peace, order and sustainable development to the world. The UN enjoys universal membership and is at the centre of global governance and multilateralism. In this regard, we reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more representative, effective and efficient, so that it can be more responsive to global challenges. In this regard, China and Russia reiterate the importance they attach to the status of Brazil, India and South Africa in international affairs and support their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN.
21. We underscore our commitment to work together in the UN to continue our cooperation and strengthen multilateral approaches in international relations based on the rule of law and anchored in the Charter of the United Nations.
22. We are committed to building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity and reaffirm that the 21st century should be marked by peace, security, development, and cooperation. It is the overarching objective and strong shared desire for peace, security, development and cooperation that brought together BRICS countries.
23. We welcome the twentieth Anniversary of the World Conference on Human Rights and of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and agree to explore cooperation in the field of human rights.
24. We commend the efforts of the international community and acknowledge the central role of the African Union (AU) and its Peace and Security Council in conflict resolution in Africa. We call upon the UNSC to enhance cooperation with the African

Union, and its Peace and Security Council, pursuant to UNSC resolutions in this regard. We express our deep concern with instability stretching from North Africa, in particular the Sahel, and the Gulf of Guinea. We also remain concerned about reports of deterioration in humanitarian conditions in some countries.

25. We welcome the appointment of the new Chairperson of the AU Commission as an affirmation of the leadership of women.
26. We express our deep concern with the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Syria and condemn the increasing violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law as a result of continued violence. We believe that the Joint Communiqué of the Geneva Action Group provides a basis for resolution of the Syrian crisis and reaffirm our opposition to any further militarization of the conflict. A Syrian-led political process leading to a transition can be achieved only through broad national dialogue that meets the legitimate aspirations of all sections of Syrian society and respect for Syrian independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty as expressed by the Geneva Joint Communiqué and appropriate UNSC resolutions. We support the efforts of the UN-League of Arab States Joint Special Representative. In view of the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria, we call upon all parties to allow and facilitate immediate, safe, full and unimpeded access to humanitarian organisations to all in need of assistance. We urge all parties to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers.
27. We welcome the admission of Palestine as an Observer State to the United Nations. We are concerned at the lack of progress in the Middle East Peace Process and call on the international community to assist both Israel and Palestine to work towards a two-state solution with a contiguous and economically viable Palestinian state, existing side by side in peace with Israel, within internationally recognized borders, based on those existing on 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital. We are deeply concerned about the construction of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which is a violation of

international law and harmful to the peace process. In recalling the primary responsibility of the UNSC in maintaining international peace and security, we note the importance that the Quartet reports regularly to the Council about its efforts, which should contribute to concrete progress.

28. We believe there is no alternative to a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We recognise Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy consistent with its international obligations, and support resolution of the issues involved through political and diplomatic means and dialogue, including between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran and in accordance with the provisions of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and consistent with Iran's obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We are concerned about threats of military action as well as unilateral sanctions. We note the recent talks held in Almaty and hope that all outstanding issues relating to Iran's nuclear programme will be resolved through discussions and diplomatic means.
29. Afghanistan needs time, development assistance and cooperation, preferential access to world markets, foreign investment and a clear end-state strategy to attain lasting peace and stability. We support the global community's commitment to Afghanistan, enunciated at the Bonn International Conference in December 2011, to remain engaged over the transformation decade from 2015-2024. We affirm our commitment to support Afghanistan's emergence as a peaceful, stable and democratic state, free of terrorism and extremism, and underscore the need for more effective regional and international cooperation for the stabilisation of Afghanistan, including by combating terrorism. We extend support to the efforts aimed at combating illicit traffic in opiates originating in Afghanistan within the framework of the Paris Pact.
30. We commend the efforts of the AU, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Mali aimed at restoring

sovereignty and territorial integrity of Mali. We support the civilian efforts of the Malian Government and its international community partners in realising the transitional programme leading up to the presidential and legislative elections. We emphasise the importance of political inclusiveness and economic and social development in order for Mali to achieve sustainable peace and stability. We express concern about the reports of the deterioration in humanitarian conditions in Mali and call upon the international community to continue to cooperate with Mali and its neighbouring countries in order to ensure humanitarian assistance to civilian population affected by the armed conflict.

31. We are gravely concerned with the deterioration in the current situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) and deplore the loss of life. We strongly condemn the abuses and acts of violence against the civilian population and urge all parties to the conflict to immediately cease hostilities and return to negotiations. We call upon all parties to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access. We are ready to work with the international community to assist in this endeavour and facilitate progress to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Brazil, Russia and China express their sympathy to the South African and Indian governments for the casualties that their citizens suffered in the CAR.
32. We are gravely concerned by the ongoing instability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). We welcome the signing in Addis Ababa on 24 February 2013 of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. We support its independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. We support the efforts of the UN, AU and sub-regional organisations to bring about peace, security and stability in the country.
33. We reiterate our strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stress that there can be no justification, whatsoever, for any acts of terrorism. We believe that the UN has a central role in coordinating international action against terrorism within the framework of the UN Charter and in

accordance with principles and norms of international law. In this context, we support the implementation of the UN General Assembly Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and are determined to strengthen cooperation in countering this global threat. We also reiterate our call for concluding negotiations as soon as possible in the UN General Assembly on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and its adoption by all Member States and agreed to work together towards this objective.

34. We recognize the critical positive role the Internet plays globally in promoting economic, social and cultural development. We believe it's important to contribute to and participate in a peaceful, secure, and open cyberspace and we emphasise that security in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) through universally accepted norms, standards and practices is of paramount importance.
35. We congratulate Brazil on hosting the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June 2012 and welcome the outcome as reflected in "The Future we Want", in particular, the reaffirmation of the Rio Principles and political commitment made towards sustainable development and poverty eradication while creating opportunities for BRICS partners to engage and cooperate in the development of the future Sustainable Development Goals.
36. We congratulate India on the outcome of the 11th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Conference on Biological Diversity (CBD COP11) and the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.
37. While acknowledging that climate change is one of the greatest challenges and threats towards achieving sustainable development, we call on all parties to build on the decisions adopted in COP18/CMP8 in Doha, with a view to reaching a successful conclusion by 2015, of negotiations on the

development of a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties, guided by its principles and provisions.

38. We believe that the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) address the needs of developing countries, many of which continue to face developmental challenges, including widespread poverty and inequality. Low Income Countries (LICs) continue to face challenges that threaten the impressive growth performance of recent years. Volatility in food and other commodity prices have made food security an issue as well as constraining their sources of revenue. Progress in rebuilding macro-economic buffers has been relatively slow, partly due to measures adopted to mitigate the social impact of exogenous shocks. Many LICs are currently in a weaker position to deal with exogenous shocks given the more limited fiscal buffers and the constrained aid envelopes, which will affect their ability to sustain progress towards achieving the MDGs. We reiterate that individual countries, especially in Africa and other developing countries of the South, cannot achieve the MDGs on their own and therefore the centrality of Goal 8 on Global Partnerships for Development to achieve the MDGs should remain at the core of the global development discourse for the UN System. Furthermore, this requires the honouring of all commitments made in the outcome documents of previous major international conferences.
39. We reiterate our commitment to work together for accelerated progress in attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the target date of 2015, and we call upon other members of the international community to work towards the same objective. In this regard, we stress that the development agenda beyond 2015 should build on the MDG framework, keeping the focus on poverty eradication and human development, while addressing emerging challenges of development taking into consideration individual national circumstances of developing countries. In this regard the critical issue of the mobilization of means of implementation in assisting developing countries needs to be an

overarching goal. It is important to ensure that any discussion on the UN development agenda, including the “Post 2015 Development Agenda” is an inclusive and transparent inter-Governmental process under a UN-wide process which is universal and broad based.

40. We welcome the establishment of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in line with the Rio+20 Outcome Document which reaffirmed the Rio Principles of Sustainable Development as the basis for addressing new and emerging challenges. We are fully committed to a coordinated inter-governmental process for the elaboration of the UN development agenda.
41. We note the following meetings held in the implementation of the Delhi Action Plan:
 - Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the margins of UNGA.
 - Meeting of National Security Advisors in New Delhi.
 - Meetings of Finance Ministers, and Central Bank Governors in Washington DC and Tokyo.
 - Meeting of Trade Ministers in Puerto Vallarta.
 - Meetings of Health Ministers in New Delhi and Geneva.
42. We welcome the establishment of the BRICS Think Tanks Council and the BRICS Business Council and take note of the following meetings which were held in preparation for this Summit:
 - Fifth Academic Forum
 - Fourth Business Forum
 - Third Financial Forum
43. We welcome the outcomes of the meeting of the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors and endorse the Joint Communique of the Third Meeting of the BRICS Trade Ministers held in preparation for the Summit.

44. We are committed to forging a stronger partnership for common development. To this end, we adopt the eThekweni Action Plan.
45. We agree that the next summit cycles will, in principle, follow the sequence of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
46. Brazil, Russia, India and China extend their warm appreciation to the Government and people of South Africa for hosting the Fifth BRICS Summit in Durban.
47. Russia, India, China and South Africa convey their appreciation to Brazil for its offer to host the first Summit of the second cycle of BRICS Summits, i.e. the Sixth BRICS Summit in 2014 and convey their full support thereto.

eThekweni Action Plan:

1. Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the margins of UNGA.
2. Meeting of BRICS National Security Advisors.
3. Mid-term meeting of Sherpas and Sous-Sherpas.
4. Meetings of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in the margins of G20 meetings, WB/IMF meetings, as well as stand-alone meetings, as required.
5. Meetings of BRICS Trade Ministers on the margins of multilateral events, or stand-alone meetings, as required.
6. Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development, preceded by a preparatory meeting of experts on agro-products and food security issues and the Meeting of Agriculture Expert Working Group.
7. Meeting of BRICS Health Ministers and preparatory meetings.
8. Meeting of BRICS Officials responsible for population on the margins of relevant multilateral events.

9. Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Science and Technology and meeting of BRICS Senior Officials on Science and Technology.
10. Meeting of BRICS Cooperatives.
11. Meetings of financial and fiscal authorities in the margins of WB/IMF meetings as well as stand-alone meetings, as required.
12. Meetings of the BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI).
13. Meeting of the BRICS Friendship Cities and Local Governments Cooperation Forum.
14. Meeting of the BRICS Urbanisation Forum.
15. Meeting of BRICS Competition Authorities in 2013 in New Delhi.
16. 5th Meeting of BRICS Heads of National Statistical Institutions.
17. Consultations amongst BRICS Permanent Missions and/or Embassies, as appropriate, in New York, Vienna, Rome, Paris, Washington, Nairobi and Geneva, where appropriate.
18. Consultative meeting of BRICS Senior Officials in the margins of relevant sustainable development, environment and climate related international fora, where appropriate.

New areas of cooperation to be explored

- BRICS Public Diplomacy Forum.
- BRICS Anti-Corruption Cooperation.
- BRICS State Owned Companies / State Owned Enterprises.
- National Agencies Responsible for Drug Control.
- BRICS virtual secretariat.
- BRICS Youth Policy Dialogue.

- Tourism.
- Energy.
- Sports and Mega Sporting Events.



087. Onboard media interaction with Prime Minister on March 28, 2013 on return from BRICS Summit.

March 28, 2013.

I have just concluded a very satisfying visit to South Africa for the fifth BRICS Summit.

As you would have seen from the BRICS Declaration, a number of important steps have been taken. I am particularly glad that some projects, which were either conceived at the New Delhi Summit of BRICS in March last year, or were piloted by India during its just-concluded chairmanship of BRICS, have registered important progress.

These include the agreement on Contingent Reserve Pooling arrangements, the announcement on the setting up of a BRICS Development Bank and the setting up of the BRICS Business Council and the BRICS Consortium of Think Tanks.

Apart from pursuing such cooperation that is for our mutual benefit, the BRICS Forum also provides its leaders a platform on which to consult and coordinate policy positions on issues of major international significance. I was glad to see once again that there are many areas in which BRICS countries have shared concerns and perspectives.

I also took the opportunity of my visit to have bilateral meetings with my counterparts. In particular, I had a meeting yesterday with the new President of the People's Republic of China. It was our first meeting and both of us agreed that we would continue to maintain the strong tradition of frequent high-level exchanges between our two countries to further strengthen our relationship. We also agreed that high level visits will be exchanged this year between India and China. I look forward to the

opportunity of an early meeting with the new Prime Minister of China as well.

I also held a very productive meeting with President Putin, in which we reviewed progress in our bilateral relationship and major regional and international issues.

Q: I understand in Durban that for the first time you met the new Chinese President. So how you assess your relationship with the new Chinese leadership whereas you had an excellent rapport with his predecessor?

Answer: Well even before the formal meeting, last evening, I had a very productive exchange of views with the new President of China on the sidelines of the Summit. We both agreed that the type of intimate exchanges that used to take place when President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jia Bao were holding their respective positions, and both of us agreed that we should aim to maintain similar relationship under the new leadership of China.

Q: We are very excited about your first meeting with the new leadership of Chinese Republic. Can you share with us views exchanged specifically about water issue and what exactly is happening in Brahmaputra?

Answer: We reviewed the whole gamut of our bilateral relationship and also discussed the opportunities that exist in exchanging views and coordinating our positions in various regional and international foras. I also took the opportunity to raise the issue of trans-border river systems and I requested the Chinese Government to provide a joint mechanism to enable us to assess the type of construction activity that is going on in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. The President of China assured me that they were quite conscious of their responsibilities and the interest of the lower riparian countries. As regards the specific mechanism that I had suggested, he said that they would have it further looked into. But as of now, our assessment is that whatever activity are taking place on the Brahmaputra region in Tibet, they are essentially the run-of-the-river projects and therefore there is no cause for worry on our part.

Q: Continuing with the China question, the new President soon after he took over laid down five policy proposals in his dealing with India. Does he represent continuity? Do you see change in it? What are your own proposals in handling the relationship now?

Answer: This was my first meeting and both of us, I think, were keen to get acquainted. While we reviewed the whole gamut of our relationship, we did not go in depth into specific solutions for specific problems. But, I got a distinct impression that the new Chinese leadership is as serious as the former Chinese leadership to promote good neighbourly relations and to find practical, pragmatic solutions to outstanding issues between our two countries.

Q: While we have been talking about multilateralism, all engagements seem to be essentially engagements with China by rest of the world (one sided engagement by world with China). How does China benefit from any economic deal? Are there any issues of joint multilateral collaboration? What are your views about it?

Answer: I think for us BRICS is a very important forum. It represents nearly 27% of the global GDP, about 40% of the world population and as such there is a growing complementarity. Of course this relationship between India and China has elements of coordination, cooperation and competition. But for us it is very useful to have a forum like BRICS whereby we can exchange views not only on events which have implications for the management of our bilateral relationship, but also how the global system affects our interests and our concerns. So I find this as a very useful forum, I certainly value this opportunity annually to review the strength of the global economy, the events that are taking place in various regions of the world and events which have obviously implications for our own growth and prosperity.

Q: Sir, you have staked considerable political capital on the nuclear deal but for the past two-three years your senior foreign policy managers have been trying to sort out the differences in nuclear liability law with other countries with which you have signed deals for nuclear plants. When do you expect all this to be sorted out?

Answer: We have been exchanging notes and papers. We have just received a note from the Russian side. I am confident that we will be able to find practical, pragmatic solutions to various issues that have arisen.

Q: In your five point suggestions yesterday in the Plenary Session of BRICS, the fifth point was regarding the IMF and UN Security Council reforms. What are your expectations from the reforms?

Answer: I think as regards the Security Council, we feel, I think, there is a need to revisit Security Council membership taking into account the contemporary realities and countries like India should certainly find a place in the expanded Security Council. With regard to the IMF, the developing countries would certainly like to have a greater say in the decision making processes, in quotas and it is somewhat disappointing that the reform agenda which got a stimulus soon after the 2008 global economic crisis, there seems to be a slowdown in that areas. Therefore that is a matter of concern to us.



088. Prime Minister's Statement to the Media after the Plenary Session of the 5th BRICS Summit.

Durban, March 27, 2013.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Members of the Media,

I would like to thank His Excellency President Jacob Zuma and the people of South Africa for the warm hospitality and for the excellent arrangements made for Fifth BRICS Summit.

I also take this opportunity to thank the local government and the people of Durban for their welcome. India has a special affinity for this city as it was Durban that first welcomed the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, when he arrived in South Africa nearly 120 years ago in May 1893.

The BRICS platform has evolved tremendously since the First Summit at Yekaterinburg in 2009. Our agenda now encompasses diverse areas, including global economic developments, peace and security, reforms of political and economic institutions of global governance, international trade, sustainable development and food and energy security. We have just concluded very fruitful discussions on many of these issues.

As Chair of BRICS during the last year, India's focus was on consolidating intra-BRICS cooperation, as well as highlighting the capacity of BRICS

to contribute meaningfully in addressing global challenges. I am happy that with the support of our BRICS partners, we were able to implement the ambitious Action Plan adopted at the New Delhi Summit in 2012.

It gives me great satisfaction to note that one of the ideas that we first discussed at New Delhi, that of instituting a mechanism to recycle surplus savings into infrastructure investments in developing countries, has been given a concrete shape during the Durban Summit. Our Finance Ministers will now work to develop the details of this project.

Our discussions today demonstrated the similarity of our perspectives on many global issues, such as the situation in West Asia and efforts to rekindle global economic growth. A number of substantial outcomes, such as the launch of the BRICS Business Council and the Consortium of Think Tanks, as well as the enabling agreements between our Development Banks to enhance financing of projects in Africa and for sustainable development, signify the promise of intra-BRICS

cooperation. This being the first BRICS Summit on African soil, it is only appropriate that it includes a special BRICS – Africa event and I look forward keenly to our interaction with African leaders later today. I once again thank President Zuma for hosting this Summit, and for admirably guiding it towards a very successful outcome. I also extend my best wishes to him as he takes over the Chairmanship of BRICS.

Thank you



089. BRICS Media Note on the informal meeting of BRICS Leaders ahead of the G20 Summit in St. Petersburg.

St. Petersburg, September 5, 2013.

BRICS Leaders met on 5 September 2013, ahead of the formal opening of the G20 Summit in St Petersburg.

The Leaders noted the continued slow pace of the recovery, high unemployment in some countries, and on-going challenges and vulnerabilities in the global economy, particularly in advanced economies. They believe that major economies, including G20, could do more to boost global demand and market confidence.

In light of the increase in financial market and capital flow volatility during recent months, the BRICS Leaders reiterated their concerns they had expressed in the Durban Summit in March, regarding the unintended negative spill over of unconventional monetary policies of certain developed economies. They emphasized that the eventual normalization of monetary policies needs to be effectively and carefully calibrated and clearly communicated.

BRICS Leaders also expressed their concern with the stalling of the International Monetary Fund reform process. They recalled the urgent need to implement the 2010 IMF Quota and Governance Reform, as well as to complete the next general quota review by January 2014 as agreed at the G20 Seoul Summit in order ensure the Fund's credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness.

The Leaders look forward to the 9th World Trade Organisation's Ministerial conference to be held in December 2013, and expect that it will be a stepping stone to the successful and balanced conclusion of the Doha Development Round.

The Leaders of Brazil, India, China and South Africa congratulated Russia for the successful Presidency of the G20 in 2013 and appreciated the emphasis by the Russian Presidency on the development agenda.

The Leaders welcomed the good progress made towards the establishment of the BRICS-led New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA).

On the NDB, progress has been made in negotiating its capital structure, membership, shareholding and governance. The Bank will have an initial subscribed capital of US\$ 50 billion from the BRICS countries.

On the CRA, consensus has been achieved on many key aspects and operational details regarding its establishment. As agreed in Durban, the CRA will have an initial size of US\$100 billion. Country's individual commitments to the CRA will be as follows: China – US\$ 41 billion; Brazil, India, and Russia – US\$ 18 billion each; and South Africa – US\$ 5 billion.

In light of the progress achieved both in the negotiations of the NDB and CRA the BRICS leaders expect tangible results by the time of the next Summit.

The Leaders welcomed the first meeting of the BRICS Business Council held recently in Johannesburg, South Africa, and encouraged the business community to increase contacts and cooperation.

The Leaders noted that the recent developments in the world economy and emphasised the necessity for intra-BRICS economic cooperation.



090. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary in St. Petersburg on BRICS Informal Meeting on the Sidelines of G20 Summit.

St. Petersburg, September 6, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here for this briefing.

We have here with us Mrs. Sujatha Singh who is the Foreign Secretary of India to brief us on the BRICS meeting today because that was the event that has just been completed. So, we will focus on the meeting of the BRICS on the sidelines of the G20 Summit. I will request Mrs. Singh to make a few opening remarks. Followed by that she is willing to respond to any questions that you may have, if that is alright.

On Foreign Secretary's right is Mr. Dinesh Bhatia, Joint Secretary who handles Multilateral Economic Relations in the Ministry of External Affairs

in India. To his right is Mr. Pankaj Pachauri, Communications Advisor to the Prime Minister of India.

With those opening remarks I would request the Foreign Secretary to speak to you for a little while.

Foreign Secretary (Shrimati Sujatha Singh): Thank you, Akbar. Good evening everybody. I hope you are enjoying the bright sunshine in this beautiful city!

The BRICS leaders had their informal meeting this afternoon. Actually St. Petersburg has a very special significance for BRICS because the journey of BRICS started in 2006 from one such meeting at the margins of the G8-O5 outreach meeting when President Putin proposed that BRIC countries should meet as a group. It was BRIC at that time, now it is BRICS. Since then there have been several meetings and it has become an established tradition. Prime Minister paid tribute to President Putin for this visionary initiative. He made it a point to refer to it in his remarks. These meetings are basically meant to facilitate closer consultations among BRICS countries on the G20 agenda.

You would have all seen the media note that has been distributed. So, basically those were the issues that were discussed - the Development Bank, the Contingent Reserve Arrangement and the other areas on which the media statement has covered some ground. I will give you a little feedback on what the Prime Minister covered in his statement.

I was actually struck by the confidence that Prime Minister expressed that the BRICS countries would in the long run remain important drivers of the global economy and will carry significant weight in global affairs. He said that his confidence stemmed not only from the potential of the individual countries in BRICS but also from the progress that we have made on various BRICS initiatives. Of course one of these BRICS initiatives is the new Development Bank which was first mooted during the New Delhi Summit. And now there seems to be agreement on key issues. There are a few remaining issues and we hope these will be resolved soon, before the next BRICS Summit at any rate.

As you have seen from the media statement, we have agreed to subscribe 50 billion US dollars as capital for the Bank. India feels that the authorized capital could be set at a higher value. That is something

to be discussed. We welcomed the progress on the Contingent Reserve pooling arrangement, especially now amidst the ongoing global currency volatility.

There was some concern expressed about the external effects of monetary policies, especially on the growth and macroeconomic stability of developing economies. Now, G20 has a vision of policy coordination. So, this achieves a special importance in this connection.

Prime Minister emphasized that we needed to pay attention to promoting growth and creating jobs and that the development agenda must be a core element of our deliberations.

That was by and large the points that he dwelt on. The other BRICS leaders made similar statements on the issues that were between them. It was a good meeting.

I will be happy to take questions.

Q: Was Syria discussed during these discussions?...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: Syria was not on the agenda.

Q: So, it was not discussed at all?

Foreign Secretary: No.

Q: Madam, in the statement prior to the departure for St. Petersburg, the Prime Minister had expressed hope that the BRICS countries would be able to forge a consensus in terms of the tapering of the unconventional monetary policies overseas. And the Reuters news agency has quoted very senior officials from both China and South Africa that their statements reflect that they are not in sync with India's concern over this. So, would it be fair to say that this initiative - which both the PM as well as the Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs on the way had emphasized - was not a success at BRICS?

Foreign Secretary: About the new Development Bank?

Q: No, about the developing economies to take a coordinated effort in telling developed countries that you should be careful, and the tapering of the unconventional monetary policies should be done in a calibrated and predictable manner. Deputy Finance Minister of China and the

Finance Minister of South Africa have independently talked to news agencies saying that this is not a concern, not in so many words but ...

Q: In fact even Russia has said that. Basically they have said that these are individual problems because of which...*(Inaudible)*... specific countries, these are not on common agenda. This is quite disturbing...*(Inaudible)*...Even on currency swap they have said that it is going to happen whenever it happens...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: If you look at the press note, the press note clearly reflects what the collective position is. "In the light of the increase in financial market and capital flow volatility during recent months, the BRICS leaders reiterated the concerns they had expressed in the Durban Summit". And that was the position. That was pretty much discussed in the informal meeting. So, I am a little surprised that this ...

Q: Madam, this statement is diplomatese.

Foreign Secretary: It is the common position.

Q: But the thing is they have categorically said on record that it is basically India's problem. That is what they said.

Foreign Secretary: I can only tell you what I heard. And I heard all the leaders pretty much expressing concern about this issue, about the spillovers of monetary policies.

Q: Specific numbers have been mentioned on the currency reserve arrangement.

Foreign Secretary: Yes.

Q: I am very keen to know about two things. One is, essentially was this reaffirmation of these numbers today or were these numbers firmed up a bit more today? Also, the statement says, 'to expect tangible results by the time of the next summit'. So, is it fair to expect let us say by this time next year the CRA will actually be in place? Can we expect that? I would also like to see if on the NDB also you can put a timeframe or a timeline on it.

Foreign Secretary: I do not think you can put a timeline on these things. This depends on several issues that have not yet been resolved. That also is clear in the media statement that there are some aspects that still

need to be finalized. These figures as given in the statement - China, US, 41 billion dollars, etc. - that is pucca. It is the other areas ...

Q: Those numbers were decided earlier, not today.

Foreign Secretary: They were decided earlier.

Q: On this occasion is there any consensus where the Bank would be located?

Foreign Secretary: Not yet decided.

Q: Madam, in fact that same report mentioned that the Deputy Finance Minister of China and a senior person from Russia have actually said that in India's case they need to tackle the external deficit by devaluing the currency and raising interest rates. Your comments on that.

Foreign Secretary: I do not want to comment on somebody else's comments on my economy. On the Indian economy I would rather go by our own comments.

Q: Was there any discussion on the...*(Inaudible)*...?

Foreign Secretary: There was certainly no discussion on the Indian economy.

Q: Not on Indian economy but did Russia and China raise the issue of what other emerging market economies should be doing?

Foreign Secretary: No. They did not.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: Just let me repeat. I can only tell you what I heard. There was no discussion on these issues. There was a general concern raised about the spillover effects of monetary policies and the withdrawal of quantitative easing.

Q: What are we really taking back? We came here expressing a lot of hope and raising a whole lot of substantial points on how to deal with the so-called global economic crisis. Even Mr. Mayaram told us onboard the aircraft that this is all linked to global developments and we need to thrash this out. So, what are we really taking back with us?

Foreign Secretary: Are you talking about the BRICS or the G20?

Q: About our currency problem, about our economic mess. Are we taking back anything specific, concrete steps, any assurances?

Foreign Secretary: I suggest that you wait till tomorrow morning when the Deputy Chairman will brief you. The G20 has just started. It is going to continue tomorrow.

Q: There is a tweet on PMO saying that PM expressed concerns over the developments in West Asia. In that light, was Syria actually discussed or it was not discussed at all?

Foreign Secretary: PM did not say anything on Syria. There was no discussion on Syria. It was just mentioned in passing by one of the delegations who talked about it in the context of the global economic situation.

Q: You said it was discussed on the agenda...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: It was not discussed, it was on the agenda, it was raised in passing by one of the delegations. It was not discussed. He did not say anything on Syria. Syria was not discussed.

Q: Madam, this agreed position of the BRICS countries, what would be the format? How would this be placed in the G20? Will it be raised by the individual countries or as BRICS group they will articulate their views in the G20? What would be the format?

Foreign Secretary: BRICS meets informally on the margins of the G20. So, once they go into the G20, they would express their views as members of the G20.

Q: Madam, this is a question on the Indian contribution that has been mentioned in the statement as far as the currency reserve arrangement is concerned – 18 billion dollars. The statement says that tangible results would be had by the next BRICS summit. The question that comes is, is there a commitment in terms of a timeline because this 18 billion dollars will have a clear impact on our currency and, therefore, this would be read probably a little negatively back home?

Foreign Secretary: There is no timeline.

Q: Are BRICS nations going to press for including their views on a calibrated withdrawal from monetary stimulus in the communiqué which will be released tomorrow?

Foreign Secretary: I think we need to be clear that the BRICS meeting is an informal meeting on the sidelines of the G20. Once the G20 starts, then it is the G20 process that takes over. So, let us wait and see how the various members of the G20 formulate their positions and arrive at a common position.

Q: One small supplementary, Madam. Since you said that you cannot put a timeline and there are aspects that need to be firmed up, is it possible to perhaps indicate a couple of these factors that might be of concern in their working out of details, at least in terms of broad parameters?

Foreign Secretary: I do not want to go into further details beyond this. I suggest you ask the Deputy Chairman when he speaks to you in his media briefing tomorrow.

Q: What are your expectations from the G20 Summit which is going to start today? Are you thoroughly satisfied with the informal discussion which BRICS held?

Foreign Secretary: I think it is important to understand that all these mechanisms are mechanisms to exchange views on various issues whether they have been ongoing for some time and the various other issues that engage the countries that take part. So, it is a way of talking directly to each other, finding out how they approach the problems, how they approach the issues. And as such it is an important part of our policy of reaching out and engaging with key economic and political partners. So, to that extent, yes, I am happy with the manner in which things have gone in BRICS. We had a good meeting. Even with the G20 these are useful mechanisms, they are useful mechanisms to bring the leaders of the most important economies in the world together and to make sure that each of them knows what the other feels about the current state of the economy and the steps that need to be taken in this regard.

Q: I just wanted to know if BRICS summit is giving a strong consensus for the unintended spillover effects. Do you hope to see that in the G20 because that is what we were told that India will be pushing for? How hopeful are you that you will be able to achieve that?

Foreign Secretary: I do not want to prejudge the situation. Let us wait for the G20 to finish. Let us wait for the G20 to come to its conclusions and then you have people who are actually sitting on those meetings.

You have Arvind Mayaram, you have the Deputy Chairman, you can speak to them about that. I do not want to prejudge the issue.

Q: The position was not like this as was discussed in the BRICS today or in the Note: the promises made in 2010 are now sought to be redeemed before the next Summit. Things like IMF quota reforms or financial restructuring etc should be redeemed now in the Summit. How firm is the position of the Government of India or of other BRICS countries on this question. (free translation from Hindi text)

Foreign Secretary: *The Prime Minister has said in his speech that these structural reforms should be undertaken early. He described the delay as unfortunate. All the BRICS countries have also expressed their disappointment. Our position is quite firm. It is too indicated in the media note. (free translation from Hindi text)*

Q: Madam, you said...*(Inaudible)*...some

aspects ...*(Inaudible)*... Could you just throw light on one or two aspects that have ...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: I wish I could but the point is that it is Arvind Mayaram who is heading the group that looks after these issues. So, he would brief on that.

Unless there is something you want to add, Dinesh!

Joint Secretary (MER)(Shri Dinesh Bhatia): There are so many issues, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly one issue or two issues. It is not every day that you set up a bank of this order. So, there is a humungous amount of issues.

Q: Anything on the currency arrangement?

Joint Secretary (MER): For currency arrangement as well as for the Development Bank, the same expert group is working on which is led by Secretary DEA, as Foreign Secretary mentioned. And they are in discussion; they have had extremely good meetings in the past. The last meeting was held in Delhi in the beginning of August and they have been able to thrash out the capital of the Bank as well as the total amount of the CRA. But further details as to how to implement, how to formalize both the things, the discussions are yet to take place.

Q: So, we have no idea on the timeline?

Foreign Secretary: No, there are no timelines.

Q: What was discussed today because all these issues were discussed earlier also? We know...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: We did not know about the amount, the 50 billion for the New Development Bank.

Q: Of the two ideas which have progressed, one is the Bank and the other one is currency swap arrangement. I was at the Durban BRICS Summit and I had the distinct impression that of the two, the currency swap is on a faster track. Is that true? There seems to be greater urgency on that.

Foreign Secretary: I cannot tell you this because this is something that Arvind Mayaram is dealing with. I would have been very happy to have had him sitting next to me at this media briefing but he is in there at the G20. So, you will get the details from them. They are the ones who are in the nuts and bolts of this.

Q: The sense I have is that the currency swap has far less disagreements than the idea of Bank which has a lot of other micro details to be tied up.

Foreign Secretary: You probably are right but I do not want to confirm or deny because I am not the person who should be doing that. I would rather leave it to the people who are actually dealing with this issue. So, I seek your indulgence on that.

Q: Can I ask you a question on Syria? Today Putin has given an interview to Channel-1 in Russia where he very clearly says and very aggressively says that there is no concrete evidence as far as he is concerned in regard to chemical weapons having been used by the Syrian Government. And he says it seems absolutely absurd that a regular armed force currently on the offensive and which is in control of the situation in many areas should be using such weapons and attracting use of force. He called it simply absurd and illogical. Does India kind of broadly agree with this view?

Foreign Secretary: India has her own view. You would have seen the media statement that was released just two days back. That pretty much

sums of our view on that. President Putin has his views, we have our views.

Q: *Madam, This has not been mentioned in these words. Do you accept that the position on Syria of the BRICS is against the American position? (free translation from Hindi text)*

Foreign Secretary: *When Syria was not discussed, how can I say what was the dominant position.*

Q: So far, as of yesterday or today it seemed that barring Russia...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: I would not really like to generalize on this. I think that there are nuances in each country's position. You cannot just put it all together and say that it is overwhelmingly against one country's position or another's.

Q: Does India still stand by its position that you would like to go through the UN Security Council for whatever action needs to be taken against Syria?

Foreign Secretary: The UN Security Council has to authorize collective action, is not it?

Q: But President Obama has a different view. Putin says that...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: President Putin says what he says, which is President Putin's prerogative. We say what we say, which is our prerogative.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event..... etc.

Thank you



091. Joint Press Statement on the meeting of BRICS Foreign Ministers on the margins of the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, September 26, 2013.

The BRICS Foreign Ministers met on 26 September 2013 on the margins of the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Ministers congratulated the South African Presidency and appreciated the good pace of implementation of the eThekweni Action Plan.

The Ministers exchanged their points of view on the following issues of the United Nations agenda.

SYRIA

The Ministers expressed deep concern about the ongoing violence and the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria. They called upon all parties to commit immediately to a complete cease-fire, to halt violence and to end all violations of human rights and humanitarian law.

Taking note of the Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, the Ministers strongly condemned the use of such weapons by anyone in any circumstances.

The Ministers expressed satisfaction with recent important developments that bring renewed hope for a peaceful resolution to the Syrian conflict. They welcomed the framework agreement for the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons reached by Russia and the United States. They further welcomed, in particular, the decision of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the commitment of the Syrian authorities to provisionally apply the Convention prior to its entry into force and the delivery of the initial roster. They recognised the key responsibility of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in this regard and look forward to the decisions of the OPCW and the Security Council in support to the Framework Agreement.

The Ministers reiterated that there is no military solution to the conflict and that it is time for diplomacy.

They stressed that the elimination of chemical weapons and the political process aimed at resolving the Syrian conflict should be pursued in parallel. They also reiterated their support for the convening of an international conference on the Syrian situation as early as possible. They stressed that only an inclusive political process, led by the Syrians, as recommended in the Action Group on Syria Communiqué issued in 2012 could lead to peace, to the effective protection of civilians and to the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian society for freedom and prosperity. They expressed their full support to the efforts of the UN-Arab League Representative Lakhdar Brahimi in helping finding a political solution to the crisis.

MIDDLE-EAST PEACE PROCESS

The Ministers welcomed the announcement of the resumption of negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis as an encouraging development. They reaffirmed that the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a prerequisite for building a sustainable and lasting peace in the Middle East region. They expressed their expectation that this renewed effort will lead to a two-state solution with a contiguous and economically viable Palestinian state, existing side by side in peace with Israel, within internationally recognized borders, based on those existing on 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital. In recalling the primary responsibility of the UNSC in maintaining international peace and security, they noted the importance that the Quartet reports regularly to the Council about its efforts, which should contribute to concrete progress. They expressed concern about the construction of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which constitutes a violation of international law and is harmful to the peace process.

CYBER SECURITY

The Ministers expressed their concern about the reported practices of unauthorized interception of communications and data from citizens, businesses and members of governments, compromising national sovereignty and individual rights. They reiterated that it is important to contribute to and participate in a peaceful, secure, and open cyberspace and emphasized that security in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) through universally accepted norms, standards and practices is of paramount importance.

The Ministers thanked Brazil for the briefing on the plans and preparations for the VI BRICS Summit to be held in 2014.



092 Media briefing on multilateral conferences - ASEM & CHOGM.

New Delhi, November 9, 2013.

Please See Document No 78



093. Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) Declaration.

15-17 November, 2013.

Colombo Declaration on Sustainable, Inclusive and Equitable Development

1. We, the Commonwealth Heads of Government, recognise that accelerating growth has become central to policy efforts globally. However, we note that rising inequality at both international and national levels has implications for poverty reduction and future growth potentials of member states. Countries grappling with natural and man-made disasters and other pressing global challenges are the worst affected. This situation has led to the economic marginalisation of societies, within and among countries. Therefore, we agree that achieving growth with equity and inclusivity must be one of the main policy priorities for the Commonwealth, in keeping with its Charter adopted in December 2012.
2. We express our deep concern about the adverse impacts of the world financial and economic crises on development prospects, particularly in developing states. We emphasise the need to act decisively to tackle the challenges confronting the global economy to ensure balanced, sustainable, inclusive and equitable global growth with full and productive employment. We affirm the importance of reforms of the international trade, monetary and financial institutions in order to ensure fair representation for developing countries.
3. We recognise that improving access to productive employment is a critical element to achieve equitable growth, and requires enhancing employability of the workforce, and creating productive employment opportunities. Improvements in employability are largely linked to access to quality education, skills development, better health care, and equitable access to resources. We agree to take concerted efforts to create productive employment with equitable access to all, to achieve inclusive growth.
4. We reaffirm the right to development for all individuals, and commit

ourselves to eliminate disparities and focus on making growth more inclusive for all, including for vulnerable groups, women, youth, and the differently abled.

5. We recognise the importance of meaningful social protection for all, in achieving inclusive development, and also as an important tool in addressing poverty, inequality, vulnerability and social exclusion. Given the varying degrees of vulnerability to crises, particularly among the developing states, we underline the need for having proactive national initiatives on social protection, based on relevant international agreements.
6. Member states of the Commonwealth are home to a diverse array of natural resources, which have been preserved and sustainably utilised over centuries for their benefit. We recognise the sovereign right of nations to manage their own natural resource base, according to national needs and priorities, in a sustainable manner, enabling their further growth and development.
7. We note the findings of the 2013 UN Millennium Development Goals Progress Report, which states that some of the MDGs have already been met and that more targets are within reach by the 2015 target date. However, we are concerned that certain targets remain off-track both globally and within the Commonwealth. We therefore call for an urgent implementation of all commitments undertaken, individually and collectively, in particular on Goal 8, related to global partnerships. We reaffirm our determination to collectively call for a strong and effective partnership for development, while emphasizing that the successful achievement of the MDGs by 2015 should remain a global priority.
8. We therefore pledge to engage collectively and help shape the Post-2015 Development Agenda, by constituting an open-ended High-Level Working Group of Heads to identify through a Commonwealth Statement on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, our shared Commonwealth perspectives and recommendations. We will advance these shared perspectives through individual member governments in the intergovernmental

consultations at the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly.

9. We welcome the Report of the High Level Panel of the Eminent Persons Group on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Report of the UN Secretary-General entitled *A Life of Dignity for All – Accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and Advancing the UN Development Agenda beyond 2015*, United Nations Development Group consultations, the United Nations Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. We note their contents as inputs into the intergovernmental process on the Post-2015 Agenda.
10. As we seek to further strengthen the global partnership, we are aware of the wealth of knowledge, expertise and experience available within the Commonwealth which remains underutilised. We therefore commit to actively explore the unrealised potential for collaboration and partnerships within the Commonwealth. We also recognise it as a useful step to facilitate the efforts of individual member states towards equitable distribution of benefits and to achieve better living standards and prosperity for all.
11. In the context of a rapidly-changing global environment, achieving growth with equity and promoting sustainable development will require intensified efforts at both the national and international levels. At national level, this could be achieved through strengthened public administration and institutions and reinforcing accountability; developing the necessary institutional capacity, knowledge and skill levels, particularly among young people; promoting the smoother functioning and increasing openness of markets; and strengthening the private sector and expanding infrastructure to foster long-term growth, including by making full use of public-private partnerships (PPPs) as an investment tool to achieve sustainable development. At the international level, we acknowledge the importance of strengthened financial, technical and institutional efforts to support national efforts in addressing vulnerability and building resilience and the need for new international approaches that respond to the rapidly changing global environment in which sustainable development policies

are being pursued. We recognise the special role the Commonwealth can play in exchanging experiences and lessons learned.

12. In furthering partnership building, we also recognise the useful contribution that tools such as 'Commonwealth Connects' can bring to the member states, and encourage its full use to enhance connectivity among the people of the Commonwealth.
13. We express our commitment to work towards developing supportive global policies to address poverty, food security, climate change mitigation and adaptation, inequalities in trade, predictable and adequate finances, investments, knowledge and technology transfers, as well as in increasing voices in the global economic, trade and financial order to achieve growth with equity.
14. We recall the Millennium Declaration and the outcome of the United Nations General Assembly special event on the MDGs. We reaffirm their commitment to the Millennium Declaration, the outcome document of Rio+20, the Monterrey Consensus, the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development and the outcomes of all major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields. We will continue to be guided by the values and principles enshrined in these texts. We reaffirm all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as set out in principle 7 thereof.
15. We are of the firm view that our chosen national paths forward to realise sustainable, inclusive and equitable development in our societies can be reinforced and further advanced through concerted initiatives in the economic sphere. To this end, we request the Commonwealth Secretariat to convene and inform a discussions at forthcoming Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meetings, drawing on inputs from members and expert development practitioners, on the key economic and other factors affecting Commonwealth member states' ability to meet

development goals, including the Post-2015 Development Agenda once defined. This work should consider other areas of potential for economic cooperation within the Commonwealth. Progress will be reviewed at the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2015.



CLIMATE CHANGE

094. Remarks by External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid at the Valedictory Session of Delhi Sustainable Development Summit.

New Delhi, February 5, 2013.

1. I am delighted to address this distinguished gathering at the Valedictory Session of the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit. I thank the organisers for giving me this special privilege.
2. The year 2012 has indeed been a special year for sustainable development. We celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the landmark Earth Summit in Rio, Brazil in June of last year and adopted a comprehensive and significant document on “the future we want”. Later the same year, India hosted the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biodiversity in Hyderabad. As the Presidency, it was a matter of satisfaction for us that the Conference agreed to double finances for biodiversity. This was particularly significant when the world is focussing its energies on climate change, sometimes at the cost of other equally important environmental and sustainable development issues. And finally, we concluded a successful COP on climate change in Doha in December 2012. In many ways, 2012 has laid the foundation for sustainable development of our planet for some years to come.
3. Rio+20 has placed poverty eradication at the centre of global sustainable development agenda. Freedom from want and hunger

is the best antidote to social inequality and environmental degradation. It is also the path as well as the direct beneficiary of resource-efficient growth and development, which is the theme of this conference. I am reminded of the words of Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi at the Stockholm Conference of 1972 when she observed perceptively 'Poverty is the biggest polluter.'

4. India has had a long tradition of living in union with nature. We have not perceived a duality between development and resource efficient growth. The Earth is the giver of life and happiness. We are its progeny and in turn have a responsibility to protect it and utilise its fruits sustainably. My government is committed to pursuing holistic sustainable development in its march towards economic growth and development.
5. Just when we have started solving the problems of our generation, we have new challenges facing us as indeed the rest of the world. Shrinking of opportunities to ensure food, energy, water and livelihood security, expansion of unplanned urban growth and mass migration, and growing inequalities coupled with depleting natural resources and land degradation, and unsustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles of the developed countries place undue burden on developmental aspirations. Lack of access to energy remains a concern. The slowdown in the global economy have only made things worse. Means of implementation for developing countries are drying up. Our ability to provide safety nets to the vulnerable sections of our society has been shrinking, thereby widening the North-South gap. As the Father of our Nation said "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed."
6. Even as we grapple with these multiple issues, and realising the multiple challenges facing us, internationally we are engaged in charting out a post-2015 Development Agenda. Discussions are taking place in different UN and other fora on evolving an architecture which would accommodate the on-going implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out by Rio+20 and forge an acceptable post-2015 Development framework

which all countries can subscribe to. We view this as an important development and my government has already put in place a process to take a clear stand on the various issues that would inevitably be dealt with in this architecture. Naturally, the emphasis is on the word “development” where national policy space and priorities are preserved while focussing on economic growth, social protection and environmental preservation. We hope that the rubric will apply to both developed and developing countries, unlike the MDGs, and does not become a mere governance agenda, but address sustainable development issues in a holistic manner. In this pursuit, we need to be respectful of the Rio Principles, reaffirmed in Rio+20 last year, as well as the UNGA mandated intergovernmental process about to start in a few days time in New York.

7. Even as we seek to forge a post-2015 Development Agenda, and chart ways through resource-efficient growth and development is achieved, it is natural that there is increased expectation of enhanced means of implementation among developing countries. New and additional financing, especially public finance as a catalyst for private investment, is more than just a cliché for those struggling with day-to-day existence, particularly in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Small Island Developing States. Technology transfer remains the key to solving many new challenges. Our efforts should not just be to divert domestic funding of such countries, but also ensure genuine partnership between the Developed and the Developing so that there is meaningful cooperation in transfer of environmentally-friendly technology, in encouraging creativity, incentivising research and promoting innovation and in financing of sustainable development activities.
8. Sustainable Development is a process which should involve the civil society, private sector, local governments and all stakeholders. We must strengthen their hands to forge stronger partnerships and enable governments to take the right decisions. In this, we remain committed to sharing our knowledge and expertise with our fellow developing countries in particular the

Least Developed Countries, countries in Africa and the Small Island Developing States.

9. While we may agree or disagree on issues, or argue on the how and why of things, its important that we do not let short-term difficulties and interests act as a red herring to achieve our more important objectives - that which may alter fundamentally how we live on this planet. We need to accommodate each others views and approaches, but, as Mahatma Gandhi said "All compromise is based on give and take, but there can be no give and take on fundamentals."
10. Before I conclude, allow me to thank the organisers once again for giving me this opportunity to share a few thoughts on the issues of importance facing the world today as we seek a sustainable world.



095. Joint Statement issued at the Conclusion of the 14th BASIC Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change Chennai, India

16 Feb 2013

1. The 14th BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) Ministerial Meeting on climate change was held in Chennai, India on February 15-16, 2013. H.E. Mrs. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister for State (Independent Charge) Environment and Forests of India, H.E. Mr. Xie Zhenhua, Vice Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission of China, H.E. Mr. Carlos Augusto Klink, Secretary for Climate Change and Environment Quality, Ministry of Environment, Brazil and Mr Alfred James Wills, Deputy Director General, Department of Environmental Affairs of South Africa, participated in the meeting. In line with 'BASIC-Plus' approach, H.E. Mr. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, President of COP18/CMP8, Qatar also participated in the meeting.
2. BASIC Ministers welcomed the Doha Climate Gateway (as the package of Doha decisions is called) as a balanced outcome

of COP-18/CMP8. In this regard, Ministers expressed their appreciation for the leadership of Qatar as the COP-18/CMP8 Presidency and the contribution of H.E. Mr. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah to its success. Ministers reiterated their support to the Government of Poland as the incoming Presidency to achieve a comprehensive and balanced outcome in Warsaw in an open and transparent, inclusive and party-driven process.

3. Ministers welcomed the decision on operationalization of the 2nd commitment period and the consequent amendments to the Kyoto Protocol as a key element of Doha Climate Gateway. They appreciated the leadership shown by those developed country parties which have joined the second commitment period. They reaffirmed that Kyoto Protocol remains a key component of the international climate regime and an essential basis for ambition within the regime. They called for parties, particularly developed country parties, to ratify the amendments as soon as possible so as to ensure legal certainty.
4. Ministers emphasized that one of the key issues to be considered in the run up to COP 21 is the question of ambition under both the KP and the Convention. They stressed that Annex I Parties should raise ambition and, in this context, also take into consideration the latest available scientific evidence on climate change trends, the impact of historical emissions of developed countries at the global level and the IPCC report which indicates that aggregate emissions of greenhouse gases by Parties included in Annex I should be reduced by at least 25–40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020 .
5. Ministers expressed disappointment over the low level of mitigation ambition pledged under the 2nd commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. They hoped that the developed countries who have taken commitments under the 2nd commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol will raise their ambition level in 2014 in consonance with science and their historical responsibility. At the same time, they strongly emphasized that developed countries which are not part of Kyoto Protocol or have not joined the 2nd commitment period must equally raise their ambition in

the same timeframe and take on comparable mitigation commitments under the Convention.

6. In addition, Ministers stressed that actions of others can be enhanced further with greater provision of finance and technology transfer. They urged that, in the overall interest of raising global ambition, the developed countries must take the lead and scale up ambition not just in mitigation but also in adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity building.
7. Ministers reiterated that the developing countries, including the BASIC countries have done much to raise the global ambition. They have voluntarily presented their ambitious nationally appropriate mitigation actions at the international level and have agreed to a regime of transparency of actions. These actions constitute far greater in quantum and impact than those of the developed countries. Keeping in mind the need to enhance global effort, Ministers urged the developed countries to come forward and reciprocate the gesture and efforts of developing countries.
8. Ministers reaffirmed the centrality of the principles and provisions of UNFCCC process. In this regard they welcomed the Doha decision on agreed outcome pursuant to Bali Action Plan that Parties efforts should be undertaken on the basis of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and should be supported and enabled by finance, technology transfer and capacity building directed towards developing countries and should take into account their imperatives of equitable access to sustainable development.
9. Ministers underlined the importance of means of implementation to enable the mitigation and adaptation actions in developing countries and stressed that the obligations of developed countries to provide financial, technology transfer and capacity building support to developing country Parties must be fulfilled to enhance the implementation of Convention. They reiterated the importance of achieving the goal of providing US\$ 100 billion per year by 2020 as committed by developed country Parties and underscored the need for a clear roadmap in

this regard. They expressed disappointment on the lack of commitment to any roadmap to ratchet up the provision of such finance and called upon Annex I Parties to continue to provide, in the short term, at least the same level as Fast Start Finance till the roadmap is delineated. They underscored the need for Global Environment Facility to provide additional financial resources to developing countries, including for preparing National Communications and Biennial Update Reports.

10. Ministers underscored that the early and meaningful operationalization of the mechanisms set up in recent years to support developing countries, including the Green Climate Fund, Technology Mechanism, Adaptation Committee etc needs to be prioritized.
11. Ministers welcomed the advancement in work of the Durban Platform and the planning of work through decision adopted at Doha. Ministers reiterated their belief that the work of the Durban Platform was not taking place in a vacuum but rather is based on and must build on the work carried out by parties under the Bali Road Map with its two tracks of KP and LCA.
12. Ministers welcomed the decision in Doha that acknowledges that the work of ADP shall be guided by the principles of the Convention. This understanding was the basis for the agreement on the Durban Platform at COP-17. They reaffirmed that the objective of Durban Platform is to enhance efforts of all parties by further strengthening the multilateral rules-based climate regime and ensuring the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention after 2020. The Durban Platform is by no means a process to negotiate a new regime, nor to renegotiate, rewrite or reinterpret the Convention and its principles and provisions. As agreed by all Parties, both the process and the outcome of the Durban Platform are under the Convention, in accordance with all its principles and provisions, in particular the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

13. In the context of ADP, Ministers stressed that the pre-2020 ambition should primarily be addressed in the context of actions of parties under KP CP2 and the agreed outcome pursuant to Bali Action Plan and in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention, respecting the nationally appropriate mitigation actions already presented.
14. Ministers underlined that the new market based mechanism under the Convention requires the enhancement of emission reduction commitments by developed countries given their current low levels of ambition. In this context, the new market based mechanism should be guided by the principles of the Convention, including CBDR and Equity, and promote environmental integrity. They also emphasized that the framework for various approaches should not be decided in isolation and should also include the scope and nature of such approaches.
15. Ministers further underlined that the principles of the Convention should underpin the on-going discussions in the ICAO on international civil aviation emissions and in the IMO on maritime emissions. In the context of international civil aviation negotiations in ICAO, they rejected the unilateral approach of EU under the EU-ETS and reiterated the importance of adhering to multilateralism. Further, there was a need to focus on the entire basket of measures and considerably enhance work on non-market based measures. The discussion on market based measures in ICAO, even if these market based measures are undertaken within the national jurisdiction, should be based on the principles of the UNFCCC, environmental integrity, voluntary participation and not prejudice the outcome of the negotiations in the UNFCCC.
16. Ministers reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism in addressing climate change in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention and reiterated their strong opposition to any unilateral measures on international aviation and shipping as well as similar intentions regarding other sectors.

17. Ministers emphasized the importance of adaptation and loss and damage for developing countries and underlined that particular focus should be given to enhance risk management, risk reduction, climate resilience and disaster response and to clarifying the institutional mechanism for addressing loss and damage.
18. Ministers recognized the importance of 2013-15 Review under the UNFCCC and welcomed the reaffirmation that the Review was not a review of the Convention itself and must include a review of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention.
19. Ministers noted the recommendation of the BASIC experts to organize an international conference on scientific and technical aspects of black carbon and the need for further work for enhancement of knowledge and understanding of the potential role of black carbon in global warming, besides reduction of the extant uncertainty. They further noted the recommendation of the BASIC experts to devise a work programme on aspects, such as Equity and the market based mechanism, considered relevant in the context of international climate change negotiations. They requested BASIC experts to provide inputs for the 2013-15 Review under the UNFCCC. Ministers also requested the experts to engage on the IPCC 5th Assessment Report and inform them periodically.
20. Ministers underlined their commitment to their unity of the BASIC countries. They stressed the utmost importance of the unity of G77 and China, and reaffirmed the commitment of BASIC countries to strengthen it. Ministers underlined the urgency of tackling climate change, and reiterated their continued efforts to enhance South-South cooperation.
21. Ministers welcomed the offer by South Africa to host the 15th BASIC Ministerial Meeting in the second quarter of 2013.



096. Speech of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at the 4th Clean Energy Ministerial Conference.

New Delhi, April 17, 2013.

I am very pleased to inaugurate this Fourth Clean Energy Ministerial in New Delhi. This is the first time this Ministerial meeting has been convened in India. I take this opportunity to welcome all the participating Ministers and members of their delegations, and also the representatives of international organizations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations participating in this important meeting.

The search for clean energy is extremely important for two reasons. First, energy is both scarce and expensive and yet it is vital for development. If developing countries are to meet their developmental objectives they have to expand all sources of supply, including both conventional and non-conventional energy. Second, clean energy is especially important because it can progressively substitute for fossil fuel based energy, which brings with it the collateral damage associated with emissions of CO₂ and other green house gases.

Greater use of clean energy obviously contributes to sustainability of the development process, and this issue will become more important in the years that lie ahead. Developing countries account for 82 percent of the world's population and they use 55 percent of the available global supply of energy. They must aim at faster growth of their GDP to improve the living standards of their populations and this will entail an expanded demand for energy. If they follow the industrialized countries in meeting their energy requirements through fossil fuel based energy, we know that the impact on the global climate would be simply unsustainable.

This poses a global challenge. We can only meet the challenge by responding in two ways. First, we must contain the total growth in energy associated with the growth of GDP by improving energy efficiency. Second, we can work to shift from conventional to non-conventional or clean energy.

Both actions help to mitigate emissions and both involve costs. But, the costs are borne by the country taking the actions whereas the benefits extend to the whole world. An optimal level of mitigation on the part of all countries can come only through globally coordinated action. An

acceptable global energy strategy must also be based on equitable sharing of the burden of mitigation and adjustment.

On any principle of equity, the industrialized countries have to bear a large share of the burden. They are historically responsible for the bulk of the accumulated GHG emissions and this alone suggests a greater responsibility. They also have high per capita incomes which give them the highest capacity to bear the burden. They are technically the most advanced, and to that extent best placed to provide workable solutions not only for themselves but for the entire world.

These issues have been the focus of intense discussion in the Climate Change Negotiations being conducted under the auspices of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Unfortunately, progress in these negotiations is painfully slow. The goal of stabilising global temperatures at acceptable levels is nowhere in sight.

However, while we must work to ensure that the UN Framework Convention process reaches some acceptable outcome, individual countries have to take action to increase energy efficiency and also promote clean energy. There is need for inter-country consultation and discussion in these areas to promote information exchange and to identify possible areas of collaboration, and also to learn from each other's experience in addressing common problems. The Clean Energy Ministerial has made a major contribution to such discussions.

The initiative for launching the Ministerial was taken by Dr. Steven Chu, U.S. Energy Secretary. Dr. Chu, a very distinguished Nobel Laureate, has announced his intention to return to academic life. We are therefore fortunate in having him with us today, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his contribution and to wish him well for the future. I have no doubt that he will continue to contribute to evolving a consensus on the important issues which the CEM has been grappling with.

In the three years since it was first launched, the Clean Energy Ministerial has promoted a number of initiatives in the area of expanding supplies of clean energy and promoting technologies for energy efficiency in a cost effective manner. I am very happy to state that India is an active participant of several of these initiatives.

Our 12th Five Year Plan recognises the importance of evolving a low carbon strategy for inclusive and sustainable growth. We have set ourselves a national target of increasing the efficiency of energy use to bring about a 20 to 25 percent reduction in the energy intensity of our GDP by 2020. The Plan also envisages an expanded role for clean energy, including traditional sources of clean energy such as hydel power and non conventional sources such as solar and wind power.

The full exploitation of hydel power has long been a part of India's energy strategy, though there are environmental limitations in this regard owing to problems of submergence of forests and the need to rehabilitate affected populations. We will work to resolve these problems.

We are also taking steps to exploit non conventional clean energy sources such as solar and wind power, and also energy from the bio mass. It is proposed to double the renewable energy capacity in our country from 25000 MW in 2012 to 55000 MW by the year 2017.

The pace at which we can expand our reliance on these new energy sources is constrained by the fact that they are more expensive than conventional energy. However, costs are falling. The cost of solar energy for example has nearly halved over the last two years, though it remains higher than the cost of fossil fuel based electricity. If the cost imposed by carbon emissions is taken into account, then solar energy is more cost effective, but it is still more expensive. However, with costs expected to fall further in the years that lie ahead, it will soon be fully competitive at the margin.

Counting on the probability of falling costs in this area, we have launched a Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission with the objective of developing 22,000 MW of solar capacity by the year 2022 covering both solar photovoltaic and solar thermal. The cost differential is being covered by different forms of subsidy and cross subsidy. A solar capacity of about 1500 MW has already been installed in the country, and an additional 10,000 MW will be implemented by the end of the 12th Five Year Plan, ending in 2017.

Solar energy has the advantage of permitting decentralized generation which is cost effective in serving people in the remote rural areas where extension of the grid would be rather expensive.

As we expand our reliance on solar energy, we are keen to ensure induction of the best technology and also to encourage domestic production of the equipment needed. India is potentially a large market for production of such equipment. It is also a potentially competitive and attractive production base for supplying other countries. We therefore strongly encourage global manufacturers to set up production facilities in this area.

As part of the Solar Mission we are setting up a National Institute of Solar Energy, which would be a global level R&D centre, which could draw upon international cooperation as well, to enable the creation of more affordable and convenient solar power systems, and promote innovations that enable the storage of solar power for sustained, long-term use. It is expected that this Institute will be in position by the year 2015.

India's wind potential in both onshore and offshore areas is being re-assessed to draw a long term plan for exploiting this source of energy. It appears that our potential for harnessing wind power is much larger than was earlier anticipated, though the potential is concentrated in certain parts of our country.

Expanding grid interactive renewable power requires supporting improvements in technologies of grid management to deal with the expected fluctuation in generation from these energy sources. There are fluctuations within the day as in the case of solar energy, and also fluctuations over seasons in the case of wind. How are we to manage a system where important components fluctuate significantly is an important focus area for our Government. Battery storage is one solution and pump storage another. Here too costs are critical but there is scope for cost reduction. We are keen to learn from international experience in this regard.

The Government has also launched a National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency to focus on energy efficiency in sectors ranging from appliances, buildings, transport and industries. The Mission focuses on establishment of standards and also on market related incentives based on the imposition of mandated efficiency standards in selected industries with tradable energy certificates incentivising companies to do better than the standard.

I am sure other countries participating in this Ministerial have similar initiatives. We are keen to learn from their experience and would be happy to share ours.

We are in the process of raising fuel efficiency standards in our transport sector. We have already decided to mandate 5% blending of ethanol in the motor spirit.

We are also launching a National Mission on Electric Mobility and I am happy to state that the Government of India will be joining the Electric Vehicle Initiative of the Clean Energy Ministerial.

One of the critical issues in promoting expansion of clean energy is financing of green energy. Investments in green energy are subject to technological, commercial and regulatory risk. For the moment green energy is not viable on its own without subsidy or regulatory incentives. Investors obviously need assurance that these incentives will continue. Market forces alone will not provide sufficient financing in this environment unless the risks of policy change are appropriately addressed. I am happy that the Ministers have scheduled a separate session on financing. We need to know more about what each of us is doing and this Ministerial is an excellent platform for experience sharing across the countries.

These are early days in our effort at developing a workable strategy and much remains to be done. I have no doubt that your deliberations will go a long way in developing a workable agenda for energy efficiency and expansion of clean energy for the world.

I wish you all success in the course of your deliberations over these two days and I hope you will all enjoy your stay in New Delhi, and perhaps even get a chance to see some of our country.



097. Media report that India has opposed signing a piecemeal Global Climate Treaty.

September 19, 2013.

India has opposed proposals to sign a piecemeal global climate treaty with greenhouse gas reduction targets being decided first in 2015 and decisions on technology and finance adaptation being segregated and postponed for later years.

The global community is to sign a new compact on climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by 2015. The negotiations for this deal have been on since 2011 and are beginning to heat up with the next big meeting — referred to as the Conference of Parties (COP), slated for this November in Warsaw, Poland.

Perceiving that the developed countries have through the year been pushing at a piecemeal approach to the global deal, India has put in a submission to the UNFCCC, advocating that all elements of the deal — mitigation, adaptation, technology and finance — should be addressed at the same time as part of a balanced package.

Any action by the developing countries to reduce emissions is required to be enabled by funds and technology from the developed world under the UNFCCC. This linkage between the provision of enabling finance and technology has been diluted over the past few years through successive decisions at the annual COPs. But, the recent push from the developed world to postpone final decisions on all other elements of the 2015 deal, except for mitigation, has been read in the Indian camp as a grand ploy to completely de-link the actions of the developing countries from the support they should rightfully be getting under the UNFCCC to achieve these goals.

“In the negotiations throughout this year, we have warned that these elements are part of a balanced package and progress cannot be made on just one at the cost of all others but we have seen that the developed countries are only interested in discussing mitigation till 2015,” said an Indian climate negotiator who wished to remain anonymous.

He explained that such segregation would break the linkage between the provision of finance and technology on one hand, and the mitigation actions on the other.

The Indian submission to the UNFCCC reads, "The work of Ad- Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform is a comprehensive process, covering mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building and transparency. It must address the issues related to these pillars of the Convention in a holistic, balanced and coordinated manner."

The Ad-Hoc Working Group is one track of negotiations under the UNFCCC. It was launched in 2011. This track itself has two distinct streams of talks. One of the two is meant to finalise the new global deal meant to be signed by 2015 and operationalised by 2020. The other stream of talks is also meant to produce decisions on what actions can be taken between now and 2020.

The submissions from the U.S. and the EU in the run-up to the November COP meeting have not inspired much confidence in the Indian negotiating team either. The focus in the submissions has remained strongly on fixing the nature of mitigation actions that they propose should be undertaken in the 2015 compact. On this they have presented detailed suggestions. Their submissions on funds to be made available to the developing world for adaptation, on the other hand, have remained rather general.



098. Media report on BASIC Ministers call for specifics on funds to mitigate climate change.

October 30,2013.

The BASIC countries have countered the US position and demanded that the global climate agreement to be signed by 2015 should not focus just on actions to reduce greenhouse emission reductions but also resolve how these actions in the developing world be funded, supported by technology transfer and the adaptation needs met.

The BASIC position was put forth in a meeting of the four countries – India, China, South Africa and Brazil in Beijing on October 29. The meeting was held to strategise ahead of the annual climate negotiations that are to start in Warsaw on November 11.

The statement put out by the four countries jointly at the end of the meeting said, “(The BASIC) Ministers reiterated that the 2015 agreement should address all elements referred to in paragraph 5 of Decision 1/CP.17 in a balanced and comprehensive manner, and should not just be confined to mitigation.”

The decision referred to in the statement demands that countries discuss all the key elements of the UN climate talks - mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer, transparency of action and support, and capacity-building for reaching a comprehensive 2015 agreement.

More than 190 country members of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change have decided that a new agreement would be signed by 2015 to combat climate change and be made operational by 2020.

The US had earlier suggested in a formal submission to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change that the 2015 climate pact should concentrate on emission reduction targets and issues of how countries are held accountable for what they claim to be doing and the rest of the concerns should be relegated to less legally onerous forms of decisions under the UN climate convention.

The BASIC countries and several developing countries have expressed reservations that separating mitigation actions from the enabling support

– financial and technological – would diminish the existing obligations of the developed world to pay for actions of the poorer countries.

The BASIC ministers meeting in Beijing countered the US proposal, stating “Ministers called for a more balanced, structured and formal mode of work focusing on the four pillars of the Convention, i.e. mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology.”

The BASIC countries went on to say, “Ministers noted with concern that pre-2020 ambition gaps exist not only in mitigation, but also in adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building as well as in equitable access to sustainable development.”

The phrase ‘ambition-gap’ has often been used in public domain to refer only to the difference between the reductions that existing commitments of countries - to cut greenhouse gas emission - can achieve and what is required to keep temperatures from rising to dangerous levels. The BASIC countries have tried to push the point that the gap in action exists as the developed world has not provided the resources to the poorer countries to do more, as is currently required under the UN climate negotiations.



G-20

099. Media Briefing by Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission on G20 Summit.

New Delhi, September 2, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming here towards the end of the week.

As you are aware, this is a briefing about the forthcoming G20 meeting in St Petersburg. We have here with us Deputy Chairman Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, who is the Sherpa of the Prime Minister for this meeting. Along with him is Mr. Dinesh Bhatia, Joint Secretary from the Ministry of External Affairs who is the Su Sherpa. Further to his right is Ms. Usha

Titus, Joint Secretary from the Ministry of Finance. She also is the Su Sherpa.

What we will do is I will request the Deputy Chairperson to make a few opening remarks following which we will open the floor for questions relating to the G20. I am certain that you would also like questions on other issues. So, after the closure of the questions on the G20, the Deputy Chairperson has agreed to respond to a few questions on other matters.

With those introductory remarks I will ask the Deputy Chairperson to make his opening remarks.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission (Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia): Thanks very much and thank you all for coming.

There is not much to be said in the opening remarks other than to say that we are heading out to a very important summit meeting at Saint Petersburg. As you know, the G20 was constituted to be the premier international forum for discussing international economic issues, and that is going to be the agenda. There are lots of international economic issues that are concerning many people. So, we are looking forward to a really good meeting.

It is going to be a two-day meeting. The Heads of Government will come. Out of that, based on various discussions some of which have actually started and they will now intensify in the next two days when the Sherpas and Finance Deputies meet, we hope that at the end of it we will have a sort of Saint Petersburg Action Plan which will sort of indicate how do the G20 see the top priorities for the coming year.

Since I am about to head out there tomorrow, I cannot anticipate what will happen in these meetings. But I would be very happy to give you our perspective on whatever questions that you have. So, questions.

Q: This is specifically related to the G20. There has been a build-up of expectations in a lot of commentary over the past four to five weeks that (1) India is considering approaching multilateral institutions for support to counter the ongoing economic issues that it faces, and then (2) two days back, in fact yesterday, there have been reports quoting Finance Ministry officials, advisors, that as far as currency is concerned this is going to be a specific issue that will come, a currency swap arrangement,

which in fact there was something that we had already operationalised a year back and have not utilised from countries like Japan. Could you offer us details on whether you are going to take up and approach the issue of currency stabilisation in any manner whatsoever at the G20 deliberations? And from your point of view, from the country's point of view, what are the other points that you would like to bring on the agenda there?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: You asked I suppose questions on the same subject but triangulating from different ways. So, let me respond. At one stage you seemed to be asking whether we are using this summit to approach the multilateral institutions. Presumably you had in mind approaching them for some sort of financial assistance. Categorically – no, that is not on the agenda. And my personal view by the way is that we do not need it either. If we ever needed it, of course we have done it before and we can do it again. But I can assure that as far as I am concerned, this is not at all on the agenda. This will not be discussed.

It is a different issue that the role of multilateral institutions vis-à-vis emerging market countries, that of course will be discussed. But it is not an India-specific issue and certainly not connected with any of the currency volatility that you have seen.

Then you talked about Finance; Finance Ministry officials should speak for themselves. But as far as currency swap arrangements are concerned, you mentioned the one we have with Japan. It is there. That is not something that we would be discussing in the summit for sure.

You also mentioned something on which a decision had been taken and I think you have in mind the possibility of a currency swap among the BRICS, and that has been discussed. Again it would not be on the agenda of the summit. But it is quite possible that the BRICS leaders – they usually meet on the sidelines of the Summit - might give an indication of what the latest position is. We have been in favour of entering into some kind of a swap arrangement. But that again is not really the G20 summit. That is simply updating you.

If I am not wrong, I think in Durban last year they sort of agreed on a swap adding up to 100 billion dollars, and then they have been working

on what would be the different components etc. Maybe you will get an update. I do not have any role vis-à-vis the BRICS because I am not the Sherpa for the BRICS summit. So, that is the position really.

Now on the larger issue, I do think that currency volatility is going to be and should be a very important part of the summit-level discussions because newspapers all over the world have been focusing on the fact that the anticipated sort of withdrawal of Quantitative Easing 3 will lead to a change in flows, and already markets have anticipated that and money flows to the US have gone up and money has moved out from other markets into the United States and that has led to a lot of currency volatility, we have also been affected by that.

Obviously countries have to have their own monetary policy guided by whatever their national and domestic objectives are. That is what we do, that is what the European Central Bank does. But the purpose of the G20 is that different policies which are ultimately guided invariably by national interest should be so calibrated to keep in mind the impact on other countries because actually that is also in the national interest. It is not in anybody's interest to do something assuming that the domestic positive effects are good and, if there are negative global effects that they would not impact on them.

So, certainly my view, I have no idea exactly how the discussions go, is that the G20 mutual assessment process which was designed to be able to talk to each other and to get a sense of what are you going to do, what am I going to do, what is going to be the combined effect, etc., I think this should include consideration of deployment of monetary policy instruments for the reserve currency countries. In principle the same thing would be true in all other countries also. But the spill-over effects of a non-reserve currency monetary policy are very small. And certainly we will raise this issue. I have no idea how people will react to it. But that is an important part of the plurilateral effort to coordinate policy amongst these major countries.

Q: Dr. Ahluwalia, the G4 leaders also will be there. Are you expecting a possible meeting of the G4 on the sidelines of the G20?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Who is G4?

Q: The Group of Four countries aspiring for Security Council membership – Germany, Japan, Brazil and India.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: That G4? Okay. Is that a conventional terminology now?

Official Spokesperson: Yes, ...(Inaudible)... politically.

Q: Is there likely to be a meeting of the G4 leaders and does the possibility of the expansion of the Security Council ever figure in the G20 meetings? And is it likely to be taken up at this meeting?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: That is a good point. It tells you, since I did not even recognise the phrase G4, this is not my area. This is the principal forum for international economic interaction. So, the whole UN structure that you can call economic, which is the Bretton Woods institutions WTO, others, etc., they are included. To my knowledge, in the past we have not focused on Security Council reform or even broadly UN reform. That is a very important area. But I do not think it has ever been covered in the G20. Therefore, I assume that it would not be on the formal agenda.

Q: Dr. Ahluwalia, Azim Premji wrote to the prime minister last week suggesting that the USA immigration bill has become a big problem for the industry, particularly for the IT industry; just like UK visa fee, which everyone has to pay two and a half lakh. Every year there is discussion in the G20 on protectionism. Will these issues be raised by the government this year? (free translation from the Hindi text)

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: *This is a bilateral issue between India and the USA. I can tell you that when India-US discussions take place, this question will certainly be raised. This is not an issue for the G20. This could have been an issue for the G20, if there were an international agreement on immigration. But there is no international agreement. Immigration is not covered by the agreement in the WTO on goods. So, it is not an international issue. You can do whatever you want on immigration without violating any international agreement. That does not mean you should do it. And we certainly argue with them bilaterally.*

This is an important issue you have raised. They have not yet imposed those restrictions, but it is in the legislative process. This will hurt India.

Our view is that it will impact the US competitiveness also. But this is a bilateral issue. May be it will come up in September when the PM goes there. (text in italics is free translation from Hindi text)

Q: Dr. Ahluwalia, I just would want you to elaborate a bit on the currency swap as a concept. It is very sketchy right now I agree but at least at the conceptual level we should have some clarity. You have a 100 billion dollars tied up in Durban. What does it mean? Maybe Ms Titus can answer that. Also, the larger question is, does it in any way resemble the old rupee trade or anything that we used to have with Russia?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Good point! Since this particular arrangement is not yet in place, I will give you a reaction based on what currency swaps normally are, and I am sure that whenever we get the details it will be something similar.

Point No.1 is this is not rupee trade, this is not bilateral settlement of trade in any way in local rupees. This is a straight forward, if you like, cooperation in providing liquidity. And most currency swaps operate in the following manner. That is what Chiang Mai does. Basically different countries agree to make a certain amount of money available. Okay? When they make a certain amount of money available, then each country can draw on that pool. And if a country needs to draw, then the other countries in effect make the money available in the proportion that they have committed to the pool.

So, it is not as if you take the money and put it into another organisation. It is there on call and you make the money available. And usually there are some rules. Those rules usually are that let us say hypothetically if you enter into a swap where you are contributing 10 billion or 20 billion or something like that. So, if you are contributing 10 billion dollars, then what it usually means is a certain amount you can draw just for the asking. If you want three, four billion dollars or something like that, everybody else has to dish it out and you repay it at a certain time.

Q: It is akin to the Special Drawing Rights in some way.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: That depends on how you denominate the swap. This is nothing to the IMF. This is a cooperative arrangement between three or four central banks. If there are four central

banks and one of them decides to draw the money, the other three fellows will dip into their reserves and give them the money like a kind of loan.

I want to add one more thing and that is that I think in Chang Mai when you go beyond a certain level, countries concerned actually say, look if you want more money then it has to be linked to an IMF arrangement. That is interesting because if you are forced to go to the IMF, then it is not a completely free swap. But on the other hand the argument is that you will be going to the IMF for less than you otherwise would. And that strengthens your bargaining power with that institution.

None of these things is relevant for us at present in my view because I do not think our reserves position is such that we would need. However, it has become a bit of a fashion globally now to have currency swaps. If you read some of the documents that the IMF produces, the latest assessments are that there are three levels of safety nets. Level No.1 of safety nets is your own reserves; level No.2 of safety nets is some kind of regional currency arrangement, which is a little more informal and depends on whatever your own relationship is. Level No.3 is going to be IMF which is much more formal and usually involves conditionality. So, that is the position. I have no idea what is going to happen. My information is that 100 billion is agreed; we now have to operationalise it. This is not a G20 issue, this is a BRICS issue.

Q: Sir. Prime Minister yesterday during his clarification in Rajya Sabha said that he has certain influence over the Finance Ministers and Heads of State in G20. So, it will be interesting to know what issues are you going to raise in G20 meeting. Are you going to suggest any mode by which India can regain its old status in economy? Are you going to take any help from IMF at this point of time?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: You mean take the help of the IMF to make suggestions to the G20 or you are saying go to the IMF?

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I have already said, I am not aware of any plan to approach the IMF. I do not think our current economic situation requires it. My view on these matters is that if your

situation requires it, we are members of the IMF, we should go. But we do not need to go. And I do not anticipate that in the near future at all.

Now the question you asked is, what is PM going to say. I do not want to anticipate that because after all if you are going with him on the flight you can always ask him. He will be better informed by then. But broadly I would expect that as always he would be a very important, to my mind, knowledgeable voice reflecting not just India's concerns but actually the concerns of the major emerging markets and also the developing world as a whole. That is a very big agenda. The agenda includes the global economy, it includes development issues, it includes financial sector reform post the financial crisis, it includes international financial architecture reform, the World Bank, IMF reform and those kinds of things, it includes trade and it includes energy and a whole slew of other issues.

So, I think on all of these issues he will be talking his colleagues. We will be briefing him on what are the other countries saying. So, basically it will be India's view on these issues that he will be putting forward and we would hope that he will be able to persuade his colleagues to a similar point of view and the extent to which he is able to do that will be reflected in whatever the declaration is that comes out.

Q: There is going to be an important meeting of BRICS leaders on the sidelines of the G20 summit. What broadly is going to be the agenda? It has been five months since the Durban Summit. What is the progress on Development Bank for example? Also, is the BRICS grouping going to work as a grouping within the G20 process to advance common position and interest?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: As I have already clarified, I am not the Sherpa for the BRICS meeting and so I am not informed. But on both these issues – BRICS bank and so on – I think the actual hard work on that is done in the BRICS Finance Ministers meeting, and when they are ready the summit more or less endorses. You remember, this is not a BRICS Summit, this is a BRICS meeting on the sideline of the G20. So, generally I would have thought major announcements of a BRICS new initiative would come in the BRICS summit. The next summit is going to be in Brazil. That is when all the BRICS preparatory work takes place.

They have in the past traditionally met on the sidelines of the G20 partly to simply coordinate their views or hear each other - you know that is one of the things that make a lot of sense – and sometimes they have used the occasion to update people on ongoing BRICS activity. The two ongoing items are the currency arrangement and also the BRICS Bank. But whether they will be in a position to make an announcement on those, I honestly do not know. I doubt if you will get any announcements on the BRICS Bank because I do not think that work is done. They will be reviewing progress in these areas.

Q: Mr. Ahluwalia, you talked initially about the Saint Petersburg Action Plan. I just want to know a broad outline of the component of the Action Plan which is likely to emerge of cooperation among the G20.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: To some extent when we get there that is when it is drafted. Normally what has happened is the Action Plan sort of reflects what is the agreed position of leaders, but it puts it down with a little bit more detail and it builds into it what the G20 Finance Ministers have also agreed. So, this will be one of the things that we will be looking at in terms of drafting sessions. Therefore, it is not yet a final product any way. I think broadly it will cover the issues I have talked about.

But most importantly, it will signal what do the leaders say on these issues or in a way is it possible at this point to say that would be what it would be unless you resort to astrology or something. To be fair, there are lots of drafts that float around typically at any given time. There are drafts, then hundreds of comments from different countries and there is not a document which is an agreed document there.

Q: Sir, yesterday the Prime Minister in both the Houses of Parliament raised the issue about subsidies, as you see, the monetary policy is having an effect on the dollar vis-à-vis the oil subsidy. Do you believe that this is something that does not really benefit the poor, and does this mean that we should be ready for cutting the oil subsidy bill because it is now going to nearly Rs.1,80,000 crore?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I think we have moved away from the G20 to a domestic matter. Let me put it this way. Let us finish with the G20.

Incidentally the issue of energy subsidies is one of the issues that come up in the G20. The G20 on many summits have said that we must cut down fossil fuel subsidy except those that are targeted to the poor. The Indian policy documents, the Eleventh Plan, the Twelfth Plan, the integrated energy, all of them say the same thing. We do not have any real difference with the rest of the world on the merits of this broad approach. I do not think they are asking us to make any commitments or anything.

The only commitments that are being made in the G20 are, are we going to maintain a reasonable fiscal deficit or not. And I think we have indicated to them - the Finance Minister has indicated this, the Prime Minister has indicated this – that the fiscal deficit is going to be at 4.8 per cent of the GDP. Now on energy subsidies more generally, our policy has been to phase out energy subsidies except those that are targeted. And I think that is correct policy. So, I hope that that will actually be implemented over time.

Q: Sir, could you run us through the key issues in terms of trade and tariff barriers, etc? Also, on Syria, it is bound to come up at the G20. If it does come up, what is going to be our position? Or will we make a statement on that?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: As you can imagine, since this is a very recent development, and no earlier meeting has actually discussed Syria, and besides it is not part of the normal economic agenda, it is obviously a very important issue. So, I cannot judge what would be the position in that regard and to what extent the leaders would want to take note of it at all. So, on Syria I have really no comment to make at all at this point.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: As regards trade, I am sorry I zeroed in one obviously what is the most, what everyone is speculating on.

On trade I will tell you what our position has been. First of all, and I think most countries agree with this, multilateral trade liberalisation is an extremely important part of any sensible global policy for stimulating growth and production and efficiency and so on. We have been engaged

in the Doha Round. It used to be called the Doha Development Round and we have been engaged in it for a long time, not been able to make progress. Most countries would want to assert that we should bring the Doha Development Round to a successful conclusion. Certainly that would be our position and I would hope that the Summit also endorses that. More practically, there is going to be a Ministerial meeting in Bali on the 9th of November and that has certain items on it. There are several but trade facilitation is one of them, something on agriculture which responds to the developing countries' concerns is another, global value chains was the third. And I think that most people would like to see a successful outcome in Bali.

As far as we are concerned, that is also our view but we do not view Bali as a separate thing. Really it should be a stepping stone to achieving a successful outcome of the Doha Round. I think India and many other developing countries are concerned that the central focus on making progress in the Doha Round should not be lost sight of.

Meanwhile, in the past we have voluntarily, all of us, undertaken some kind of a pledge not to resort to protectionist measures. The truth is that the WTO gives us a report as to what extent has this been maintained. They look at every single measure that a country has taken including liberalisation measures and then they try to look at the net effect. I think their assessment has been that in past several occasions it is not the case that no protectionist measure has been taken. The measures that have been taken are all small and many of them are offset by measures to liberalise. The general assessment is that this declaration has certainly contained what many would have feared to be an excessive resort to protectionism. Although if you view it on the sort of whitest of white kind of criteria, almost every country has undertaken some measures which can be called a little bit protectionist.

I think this issue will come up again and I know that many countries want that since we have not concluded the Doha Round, the last promise we made was that we undertake not to have any protectionist measures until the end of December 2014, which is next year. Most people feel that there is not enough time to conclude the Doha Round between now and then. So, there is a move that perhaps the leaders should give a commitment to extend this pledge. There are different views on this. So, one of the interesting things that would come out of the Summit is what

happens to this move. Do the leaders agree to extend the pledge or not? I think that is a substantive issue.

Q: Russia offered to organise a G20 agenda based on three priority issues in eight areas. Which amongst them India feels is special for itself?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I think most countries, certainly India, generally have agreed with the broad priorities that the Russian Presidency has brought to the Saint Petersburg Summit. None of those areas are areas that we do not think are important. I do not want to say now which one is important and which one is less important, I think they are all important. I would hope that we will see progress in each of them.

Q: *You briefed us about many aspects of currency. I have a small question. The situation in which currency is, the country's well known economists, intellectuals, policy makers, who understand the country closely, and are nationalist too, when the dollar is in happy situation and the pound is doing better, when will our rupee have a better time. Considering this is the situation for the past four months, do you think better situation will come; It would be appreciated if you could throw some light.*

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: So, are we closing the G20 discussion?

Official Spokesperson: I think there is one more question. We will come back to this.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Yes, madam. There has been no gender balance in this press conference so far, so why do not you ask your question.

Q: On taxation I understand that Mr. Chidambaram after meeting Finance Ministers had said that it should be 'enriched' to take into account the concerns of developing countries. This is on transfer pricing and legal taxation. Is there going to be anything further from India's point of view in terms of a suggestion on what needs to be done because this has been a big issue of late here?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: That is a very important point actually. The OECD and the G20 together had initiated some work

in what they call base erosion and profit shifting. It is a phenomenon of the modern world that you have highly global enterprises operating in multiple countries. So, when they are operating in multiple countries, if they are all subsidiaries of the same company, when they are buying a product from one country for the main parent company, the issue is, is the profit that is being generated from the activity in the first country actually being made available to tax, or is it all being shifted to the other country through basically transfer pricing?

I think this is a very important area and most countries worry about this. I think developing countries worry about it especially because there is a perception, and quite logical, that with globalisation, multinational companies based in the industrialised world, it makes sense for them to shift a lot of their production to developing countries which are more competitive. We actually welcome this and other developing countries do. So, we want them to locate their units in India. But you also want to be able to make sure that there is a reasonable profit taxation. So, the OECD has done some work and they will be making a presentation to the Summit on the conclusions of their work on base erosion and profit shifting.

There is also the issue of tax information transparency. That is, countries get a lot of information about people and transactions. Are they willing to share that? Our position on this has always been that we want tax jurisdictions should cooperate with each other in a symmetric way in the sense that we are willing to give them what they think is legitimate information and they should give us what we think is legitimate information just for processing the determination of tax liability. So, what is going to happen is that these initiatives are there. The OECD will put them forward and the leaders will consider that and sort of give their views, indicate the extent to which they support.

We are fully involved in this. I do not know what Mr. Chidambaram said to you but the Ministry of Finance is actually involved in the process by which these reports are being prepared. I think at various stages Mr. Chidambaram has said that, look being involved is not enough, you have also got to take account of our concerns that it should be a two-way process. And I think it is reasonably a two-way process.

I have to read what they are going to present. It is not as if the Summit is going to sort of put a seal of approval on specifics. This is more broad kind of framework. What it does is, if there is a set of principles that are agreed, then each country can devise its own taxation rules to take advantage of those principles. And when people complain about it, each country can say, look we are only doing what best practice is as defined by this OECD-G20 effort.

Q: My question is on Syria again. If the situation in Syria explodes, do not you think it will have serious consequences for economies like India and other developing countries? And do not you think you should raise this issue with your G20 partners and advise them not to take certain military steps which will destabilise West Asia? **Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission:** You are asking two hypothetical questions. One is a hypothetical question about something that may happen; and then there is the hypothetical question of since it is not on the agenda, in what manner it will be put on the agenda. Obviously, I cannot, I am hoping that we will not have any disruptive event. Obviously it is politically a very important issue, and for me to comment on it is sort of saying if it happens this is what we will do, would not be proper. I have no basis.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Prime Minister is free, but it is not appropriate for me to comment. So, I am not going to go beyond what the Prime Minister said.

Official Spokesperson: We will now go back to the question about the Rupee.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Okay, the question about the Rupee. Now that the G20 has been taken care of, we get back to more exciting things.

I do not have very much to add to what has already been said by the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister. We have had a lot of volatility in the currency in India. The Rupee has depreciated quite a bit. Very often in the Indian press the impression given is that the whole world is stable but the Rupee has depreciated. This is not the case. The truth of the matter is, there is a lot of currency volatility and there has been depreciation in the Brazilian Rial, in the Indonesian Rupiah, in the South

African Rand and all kinds of currencies. It is true that the Rupee has actually depreciated more than the others.

I think we have explained that because India had a somewhat high current account deficit, and this is not something that we were by the way ignoring. If you look at the Twelfth Plan which has been available on our website for quite sometime and even the hard copies are now available, we said quite categorically that in the first year of the Twelfth Plan, the current account deficit was too high, something like four per cent or so, and it should be brought down gradually. So, we knew it was a problem. Now, it turned out that in the first year - we were writing when only half the year's information was available - it was worst than the fourth in the sense that it ended up being 4.7 per cent of GDP not just about 4. A very important reason for that was a huge increase in gold imports which reflects all kinds of other factors I do not want to go into. But the Government has quite categorically recognized that we cannot be continuing with such a large current account deficit. I think Finance Minister in Parliament the other day sort of said that, look last year i.e. 2012-13 we had a current account deficit of \$88 billion, we are planning to bring it down to \$70 billion.

So, the first point that I want to make is that it is true that the current account deficit was high. What triggered the problem was, although it was high last year at \$88 billion, we actually were able to finance it with \$90 billion of inflow. So, reserves actually went up slightly. So, it did not look as if it is a big problem although we knew that it had to be brought down. Now the change is that when the Chairman of the Federal Reserve made this statement about withdrawing or reversing the QE3, that obviously shook markets around the world and affected India also, and money that was earlier coming in quite freely started stopping and to some extent even going back. Now, that obviously creates a serious financial problem and we have to address that problem. And that problem we are addressing by making sure that current account deficit for the year as a whole is actually going to be significantly lower.

I want to emphasis to you one thing and that is that you will not see that in the first quarter result for 2013-14 for the Balance of Payments. The reason for that is that it is in April-May that you had a big increase in gold imports. Since then gold imports have come down quite sharply. So, the

Finance Minister's prediction was that the current account deficit in the current year, 2013-14, will be approximately 3.7 per cent of GDP. It will be much higher than that in the first quarter. I do not know what it will be but I do not want you, when it comes out probably at the end of September, to say: you said 3.7, look it is much higher than the first quarter.

I am telling you now – it is not an official statement, it is my expectation - you will not see an improvement in the current account deficit until the second quarter results are available. Okay? But the Finance Minister is aware of all this. So when he said 3.7, he is talking about the year as a whole. I think that is possible. I think that is possible because gold imports will be sharply curtailed. We have, in fact, already because of the depreciation and the impact on imports, there is an improvement that is evident in the trade account. So, I expect that we will actually be able to reduce the current account deficit.

When you are trying to reduce the current account deficit in any country, you do a Economics 101 Exam and you say there is a country called whatever it is and it has a big current account deficit, what should it do? Well most people will say it should contain aggregate demand and it should allow the exchange rate to change. So, the first point is we have in fact seen quite a substantial change in the exchange rate. And that change is consistent with trying to reduce the current account deficit. So, a lot of people who keep saying, no, no, no, why do you let the Rupee depreciate, I mean the honest truth is that depreciation hurts some people but it helps a lot of other people. And this is a very important point.

I know that a lot of people think of depreciation as some question of national pride. But actually if you want to have sensible macroeconomic management and you want to bring down the current account deficit, basically you have to allow the exchange rate to change. And what it is doing is, it's putting our exporters in a very strong position because exporters now have a much more favourable position just about at a point when we think the global economy may be turning around. So that is good. Also the depreciation is going to make imports more expensive. And all the Indian producers who for a long time have been complaining that it is very difficult to compete against imports, imports are flooding in, imports are cheap, they will find it a lot easier to compete against imports because imports have become more expensive.

As far as aggregate demand is concerned, the Finance Minister has categorically said that he is going to maintain the fiscal deficit target, 4.8 per cent GDP. We have in fact communicated that target to the global community. I think the G20 know about it also. So, I think what the Finance Minister has said is that that is a red line. So, I think it is true that the exchange rate has depreciated; it is not true that it has only happened in India. You could say that part of it is due to the high current account deficit but actually it is due to the high current account deficit combined with a change in the financing capability. And we have reacted to that by, planning to reduce the deficit, and at the same time doing a lot of things that will stimulate inflows. Just in case any of you interview me after the first quarter numbers come out, please remember that you will not see that improvement in the April-June current account deficit.

Q: Should we expect the control in situation, whatever you are telling us, by April 2014? *I mean, this situation will stay until April 2014, or it will stabilize.*

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: *It is difficult to predict this; depends on the world conditions, what are the oil prices, I am trying to say there is some depreciation. It appears to me the rupee has over depreciated. That too is normal, we don't it, it goes by market flexibility. If it depreciates a little more, it can improve too. So that is the way to handle or look at it.*

Q: Sir, there seems to be a sort of veiled suggestion from your Government. that the responsibility for this current crisis lies with the economic policies of Pranab Mukherjee. Now this has also made the papers today. Very straight, Sir, does the UPA Government believe that Pranab Mukherjee's economic policies over three years when he was Finance Minister are responsible for the state of the economy today?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: We may be reading different papers, but I do not recall the particular news item and I do not respond to newspaper stories either. Look, I think to attribute anything to any one factor is not I think correct. I do not believe that any one has said that. Possibly people are interpreting different things in different ways. After all our view is that the present problem is in large part due to a change in global financing conditions. And that certainly cannot be attributed to whatever happened last year. Global financing conditions changed

dramatically only earlier this year. Please remember that in the year 2012-13, of which the first half was under the previous Finance Minister, in that period the inflows that came in to finance current account deficit were \$90 billion. So, I am not aware that that is a Government position. But if you are putting in different people's mouth, you should ask them.

Q: Sir, there is need for dollars in the country, we want more foreign investments, we should concentrate on this aspect, which will improve the fiscal situation. But the World Bank report on doing business places India at the 173rd position. What needs to be done in that direction so that the fiscal situation is put back on the rails, and more and more foreign direct investments are attracted?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: *The Doing Business report which you referred to is 2009 report and is based on the 2008 and 2007 data. This is true, but this was also true when the country was growing at 8 to 9 percent. Now growth has slowdown, and we should find out why? The ease of doing business is not that good, as it should be; and we should correct this situation. This is also stated in our twelfth Five-year Plan and this report is quoted there; To put is right we have to do many things; this ease of business is composed of 9—10 indicators; Half of them are in the Central Government domain and the other half in the state governments'. What falls under the state governments, the Centre cannot do anything. But what falls in the Central domain, there we must act, there is no doubt in my mind that we should do that.*

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this media interaction.

(The text in italics is free translation from Hindi text)



100. Statement by the Prime Minister prior to his departure for the St. Petersburg Summit.

New Delhi, September 4, 2013.

"I leave today for St. Petersburg, Russia, to attend the 8th G-20 Summit at the invitation of President Vladimir Putin.

The G-20 has emerged as the premier international forum for discussing global economic issues. Its 8th Summit will take place against the backdrop of persisting challenges and vulnerabilities in the global economy. Though there are encouraging signs of growth in industrialized countries, there is also a slowdown in emerging economies, which are facing the adverse impact of significant capital outflows. I will emphasize in St. Petersburg the need for an orderly exit from the unconventional monetary policies being pursued by the developed world for the last few years, so as to avoid damaging the growth prospects of the developing world.

It is also important that G-20 encourages and promotes policy coordination among major economies in a manner that provides for a broad-based and sustained global economic recovery and growth. India has been an active participant in this endeavour as co-Chair of the Working Group on the "Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth". At the Summit, I will once again emphasize that the G-20 should ensure primacy of the development dimension in its deliberations, focus on job creation, promote investment in infrastructure as a means of stimulating global growth and create potential in developing countries to sustain higher growth in the medium term. There is also an urgent need to reform institutions of global political and economic governance. I am happy that the Russian Presidency has paid special attention to these issues in the G-20 agenda this year, particularly through a new financing for investment initiative. I look forward to constructive discussions and decisions on these issues during the St. Petersburg Summit.

St. Petersburg is also the place where the idea of the BRIC grouping was born in July 2006. As per the practice during the last few G-20 Summits, an informal meeting of BRICS Leaders will be held on the margins of the G-20 meeting to exchange views on the agenda of the Summit. This will also provide an opportunity to review progress in the

implementation of important decisions taken at the Fifth BRICS Summit in Durban on 27 March 2013 and review global developments.

The Summit comes at a time when we in India have introduced several reform measures and taken steps to strengthen macro-economic stability, stabilize the Rupee and create a more investor-friendly environment. At the same time, a stable and supportive external economic environment is also required to revive economic growth. The G 20 Summit, therefore, is an important forum to seek an international climate that is beneficial for all countries.

I also look forward to bilateral meetings with other G-20 Leaders on the margins of the Summit.”



101. Media Interaction by Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs on Prime Minister’s Special Flight on way to St. Petersburg.

September 5, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good morning friends. We have here with us Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Dr. Arvind Mayaram who will speak to you on the G20 Summit.

What we will do is, as is usual I will request him to make a few opening remarks and then he is willing to answer questions on the G20. In case there are any questions on anything else, we will take them in the end. With that I will request Secretary DEA to make his opening remarks.

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (Shri Arvind Mayaram): Good morning to all of you.

In the G20 this year we are going to have four major areas over which the discussions will take place: (1) Growth and the Global Economy, (2) Growth and Inclusive Development, (3) Investing in Growth and Job Creation, and (4) Growth and Trade. There will be several subthemes under these four themes on which discussions will take place.

Under the Russian Presidency, the three overarching issues that they have identified are: Growth Through Quality Jobs and Investment, Growth Through Trust and Transparency, and Growth Through Effective Regulation.

On global outlook, it is interesting to note that whereas there has been a concern about the reduction in the estimation of the growth rates in India, in the last one year the global economy has been downgraded by the IMF three times. This is on account of the uncertainties that still remain relating to the recession in Eurozone and also of course the reduction in the emerging markets on consumption demand. The IMF for instance has reduced its forecast from 3.3 per cent in April to 3.1 per cent, and the World Bank similarly has also downgraded the world economic forecast.

We have concerns in terms of the impact of spillovers especially on account of the unconventional monetary policy which has been followed by some of the advanced economies. One of the areas on which India has laid emphasis is that there has to be a predictability regarding the withdrawal of the unconventional monetary policies which are followed as they have a spillover on the other economies, especially the emerging economies. We expect there would be some discussion on this during the Summit.

There is also a concern in regard to the lack of consensus on areas on which we have been laying emphasis such as infrastructure investment for providing impulses for growth in the global economy. There is a general consensus that the growth has to be sustainable, and on this account India is contributing through its own policy papers, etc.

One new area which is now being looked at relates to tax issues. OECD has a project on base erosion and profit shifting. And there is a resonance of India's position that there is a need for having new standards which are developed through consensus to keep pace with the larger economic integration across borders to ensure that the countries do not lose out on the tax that is due to them.

On trade related issues, one of the areas of great concern to India is the effort by some of the emerging countries to roll back the trade related agreements that have been reached especially in terms of the movement

of labour. Our position is that there should be no roll back from that position and the earlier regimes that permitted movement of labour for the purposes of providing services should be retained.

On infrastructure development and investment, India has prepared and circulated a paper in which we have laid emphasis not only on the development of capital markets especially the domestic capital markets but also in enhancing the resource base of multilateral development agencies and regional development agencies to provide much-needed capital for the developing countries.

Broadly, these are the areas on which the discussions will take place. I would be happy to take any questions that you would have on this account.

Q: Sir, you spoke about exit from the monetary stimulus by the West, that India is going to raise that issue. But most of our problems are domestic. Like on fiscal front the reforms are not happening. So, how are you going to convince the West about all those issues? It is not just the problem from the western markets. Also, the currency. The Government has said many a times that most of the currencies of the emerging markets have taken a beating. Why is Indian currency the worst hit of all the currencies?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I would like to answer the question in two parts. First, I do not believe it is a correct position that structural reforms have not taken place in the recent past. There is a large number of reforms that have been undertaken. Some path-breaking decisions have taken place a list of which I can provide to you any time. There is a long list of the reforms that have taken place. These have been seen by the investors. And, therefore, I would only indicate one indicator which perhaps would give you a flavour of why this perception may not be correct.

In the first quarter of this year India has received FDI worth nine billion dollars as against five billion dollars in the first quarter of the last year. This clearly shows that the foreign investors, especially the long-term investors, are beginning to find traction in the India's policy reforms that are taking place. So, whereas there is a case for greater reforms, there is a case for deepening the reforms. But I think there is no reason to believe that reforms are not taking place.

Second, as far as the easing of the monetary policy, or the roll back in the monetary policies which are unconventional monetary policies which have been followed, is concerned it is now globally accepted that the liquidity which was there in the markets initially created problems of excess for us. And now it is creating a problem where this capital is being pulled out of the emerging markets.

This problem is arising also from the fact that we are a globalised economy and we are an open economy, and that is why we do not have any controls on capital flows. So, when the emerging markets are pulling back on the liberal policies that they were following, there is an uncertainty in the market and, therefore, the money moves out of India and other emerging markets, and it has an impact on our currency *per se*.

Now to the question that you are asking – why Indian currency is being hit more than other currencies – the answer is quite obvious. India's current account deficit is the highest amongst all the economies if you look at them. In fact I have the numbers here. I can give you the numbers for each country where you would see there is a direct correlation between the level of current account deficit and the percentage of depreciation that has taken place, since May 20. So, the perception that current account deficit in India is very high is certainly contributing to the weakening of the Rupee.

But I must also state here very clearly and strongly that the Finance Minister's statement two weeks ago that we shall contain current account deficit at 3.7 per cent of the GDP this year is the red line that shall not be breached, and we are working towards that. We have a very credible programme which of course the Finance Minister had presented before the nation two weeks ago. We are working towards that and we will ensure that the current account deficit is not just 3.7 per cent but perhaps we might surprise you with a little lesser than 3.7 per cent.

Now the question is of transmission. This belief that it will happen has to be transmitted to the general markets. That transmission takes a little while. Last year when we were looking at fiscal deficit from a level which the Kelkar Committee had predicted of 6.4 per cent, we brought the fiscal deficit down to 4.9 per cent. Nobody ever believed it could happen. It happened. That time too the Finance Minister said there is a red line and

we will not breach that red line. So, let me assure you, this year we shall not breach the red line on current account deficit, and it shall not be higher than 3.7 per cent.

Q: When it comes to actual negotiations or discussions with the G20 leaders, particularly the US following QE3, what recourse does India have apart from moral suasion or persuasion in this? Does India reserve the right to insulate itself from the adverse consequences of any withdrawal? Having adopted globalization and if there is no interconnected network for stabilization of growth, does India reserve the option to take any suitable measures to stabilize its own economy? Is there a lever that we have at all in G20?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: Once again, the question has two parts. First is, do we have a lever in the G20? The position that India is taking is also the position that the other emerging markets are taking. For instance, China, Brazil, South Africa, are the countries who are very much on board and it is not simply India which is concerned with this. These are all the other emerging market countries which are also concerned with this.

Therefore, I do not believe that our voices are not heard. And this is a reason why even in the last meeting of the Finance Ministers of the G20 our concern found a mention in the declaration. Obviously, G20 is not a decision-making body. It is certainly a body which creates consensus, which creates a general awareness. And to the extent that our voices are strong and our voices are clear and our thinking is clear, it is heard and heard with respect.

The second part of your question is, do we have the right or do we reserve the right to protect ourselves? Certainly every country reserves the right to protect itself. But the question is, do we need to do something which will be drastic in nature? I do not believe we have that situation where that would be required. I think we are very much in control and I think we will be able to manage the situation without having to resort to any drastic measures.

Q: Sir, two small questions. When you say that developed world is following unconventional monetary policies what do you exactly mean by that? Second, in a recent report the European Commission has

accused India along with China and other emerging economies, of following abusive trade practices and turning their back from free trade. How do you react to that?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: The first part is, unconventional monetary policies are those which are against the conventional wisdom. The conventional wisdom always has been that if you are going to create too much of liquidity, you continue to create too much of a liquidity, it is going to create inflation or other kind of problems in countries. But where you have open borders, it also has spillover effect on other countries. If you look at Japan for instance, Japan is following a policy where they are not only doing quantitative easing but they are also saying we are going to inflate the economy, create some inflation in the economy.

Well, it is important that every country follows their own method of taking care of their own problems, there is no issue with that. Our point is only this that if you follow an unconventional monetary policy which has spillover effects, then it is important that these are deliberated upon and the measures which are taken are calibrated and are predictable. That is the only point that we make on this part.

As far as the European Union's statement is concerned, I do not believe we are following any trade practices which are against any of our international obligations. Of course there are non-trade barriers which are put up by the advanced economies as and when they need to protect their own trade or industry, and we believe that it is a retrograde step and we should not support any of those measures that they take, especially, as I had mentioned earlier in the case of movement of labour, in the services sector.

Q: *The Finance Minister recently said in the Rajya Sabha that the steps and decisions taken between 2009 and 2012 to a certain are responsible for the state of the economy. Would you like to say something on that? (free translation from Hindi text)*

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: *I would not comment on anything that the Minister said in the Parliament.*

Q: As we head into the G20, a couple of major headwinds in terms of the data. One, the crude is back at 112 dollars to the barrel. This is the

Indian basket which is what we buy at. And the second is, S&P comment yesterday which caused a lot of turmoil in the markets saying that India now stands close to a downgrade - not the exact words but effectively saying that - and that therefore, contradicting in some ways what the Indian Government has been doing and saying as far as restoring fiscal discipline is concerned. Your response on both these issues, Sir.

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: On the first issue, it is a matter of concern for us because when the oil prices go up, it increases our forex requirement and also it has an impact on the subsidies. So, it is a matter of concern for us. Therefore, you would have seen in the past couple of days there has been a major effort to bring some measures in to restrict the oil imports, and I believe that we will continue to work towards that.

What S&P said has to be carefully seen. They said two things. One, the chances of India getting a downgrade in the next three years has increased by 33 per cent. Now, I would be really interested in knowing why it is 33, not 32 and a half or 34 and one quarter. How 33 per cent, the mathematical model which gives you in next three years to be able to do crystal gazing and say that. So, to my mind it should be taken in the manner in which it has been stated.

I do not think we have any case for downgrade. We have raised this issue in the past. We have taken measures. We are taking measures which are, to the extent possible, stabilizing the economy despite the headwinds which are global in nature. Therefore, I do not believe there is any case for downgrade. Whether 33 per cent or 23 and a half per cent, I do not believe that there is any mathematical model which can tell you that in the next three years India is going to be downgraded.

Q: About ten days ago the Federal Reserve Governors and Economists in the US had a meeting where pressure was brought upon Mexico as well as IMF asking for not to taper down the quantitative easing programme. And their response which has been reported is that we are here to make policies for ourselves, and the third world emerging countries can take care of themselves, we are not bothered about it. You say that you are going to raise issues about monetary policies. Actually it does not matter to them whether you raise it or not.

On the other hand, by the same logic, we have this issue and your Oil Minister has written both to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister that we should step up our oil imports from Iran which seems to be very viable and it is backed by sufficient logic to go ahead for it and buy oil from Iran by paying in rupees. Are we seriously pursuing that option?

If their crisis and if their economic situation is in their interest and the policies are tailored to that, why do not we go ahead and do it? Why do we have to really oblige to US in not importing oil from Iran?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: On the first question about the response in the US to the demand that the quantitative easing should not be done in the manner in which it is being done, you would recall that the response that you have just mentioned came from the Chairmen of two State Federal Reserves. They belonged to two States. It was not the Federal Reserve of US which gave a statement of that nature. You would see that the United States is a democratic country like we are. In India also we have several opinions which are voiced, but what is the considered voice of the Government of India in international fora is determined at a different level. So, I believe that the issue that this is a major concern for emerging markets is very much understood and will be discussed in the G20; and I do believe that, as I mentioned earlier, our voice will be heard with respect.

The issue of oil from Iran, we know that there are certain international sanctions under which the global community operates. We intend to remain within those parameters which are laid down by the UN sanctions and within that whatever we have to do to protect the interest of the country in terms of our oil security, we are already taking those measures.

Q: On the base erosion and profit shifting issue at the G20, there is a view that it is not in the interest of the emerging markets to go after corporations in this manner because as it is there is a lot of global volatility and this is a matter that interests the advanced economies but we have nothing to gain by scaring off corporates at a time like this when we should actually be incentivising them to invest.

Secondly, I just wanted to come back to this S&P issue once again. For more than a year and a half now ever since the time when Pranab Mukherjee was Finance Minister we have had economic administrators

in Delhi assuring us that the rating agencies are wrong, or underplaying whatever downgrades or other predictions they have made. But the events of the past few months have actually proved that they have been right all along. Now S&P is saying that our sovereign rating might be reduced to junk status. Now you have again assured us that this is not something to be overly bothered by. But, if this happens, do not you think there will be greater flight of capital, and would it not contribute to a grave situation?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: What are the three big parameters that you would look at if you were going to do a rating of a country? First is growth. You would say our growth is slowing down. In my opening statement I told you that the global economic forecast has been reduced. So, is it only India which is facing this? This is a global phenomenon. So, if you want to downgrade the whole world, I have nothing to say. But obviously this is not something which is only intrinsic to us.

But then there are three factors in India which we have not seen and, therefore, we have become very worried about the first quarter numbers that we have seen. First is, that the first quarter of this financial year has an impact of the spillover of the last financial year's very sharp contraction in the deficit. In over a period of eight months, we contracted more than 120 basis points. No other country in the world has ever done such a sharp fiscal correction. Obviously, that fiscal correction has an impact and a price the country pays. And that comes right into the first quarter.

But in the first quarter the Government of India's expenditure levels if you see, the monies for the plan expenditure have been released in a very planned manner and very quickly. So, almost 48 per cent of the total expenditure on plan is now booked not because Government of India has spent it, but you would know plan is plan, money is spent by the State Governments. And the money has been released to the State Governments so that this expenditure begins to happen. The impact will be seen in the second quarter and the third quarter because this expenditure would pick up. That is the first factor.

The second factor is, there has been a nine per cent expansion in the sown area in agriculture this year over the last year. Therefore, the

agricultural production we expect is going to be bumper. If that happens, that would add, we believe, for the whole year at least close to one per cent to the GDP if the kind of agriculture we are expecting happens.

The third is, if you look at the investments in the projects since January up to June, the Cabinet Committee on Investment has given approvals to projects that total to 30 million dollars. These are very large projects. I have mentioned this in the past. The mobilization time from the time you get approval to actual investment beginning is almost six months. In the third and fourth quarters you will begin to see the investments coming in in these very large projects which have been provided approvals. And then there are large number of very path-breaking decisions which have been taken. Gas pricing is one. Providing coal linkages is another.

What I am explaining here is, you have three very major factors which are going to contribute to picking up of the growth in this year for the country. Growth comes looking at the global forecast if we are able to pick up and go beyond five per cent or close to 5.5 per cent in this year, then there is no case for us to say that we are going to be fit for downgrade.

The second is fiscal deficit. Again, Finance Minister has drawn a red line at 4.8 per cent this year. We have said that whatever it takes, that 4.8 per cent will be met. You have seen in the last year that we actually did so. We contracted the deficit by 120 points. So, there is no reason why you should not believe we will keep the fiscal deficit this year either. So, there is no case for downgrade on account of fiscal deficit.

On current account deficit, I have said there is a red line of 3.7 per cent, I am willing to say to you a whole list of things that we are doing and which is going to keep it at 3.7 per cent. There is no case for downgrade there. Now, tell me what is the case for downgrade after this? So, I do not believe that there is a case for downgrade and I have credible numbers to prove it.

Q: Base erosion question.

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: On the base erosion question, nobody goes after anybody. All we are saying is, pay your taxes. Why is it that Indian companies should pay taxes, MNCs should not pay taxes? We give national treatment to foreign investors: we do not give special treatment to foreign investors. We treat them as we

treat our own companies. So, if Indian companies pay taxes, they should pay taxes. Where is the question of going after anybody? I do not see that that should be a cause of concern for anybody.

Q: In your preliminary remarks you made a mention that there is a lack of consensus in the area of infrastructure investment which could give impetus to growth. Do you expect any progress in the current summit?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I could not understand the question.

Q: This is regarding your remark on a lack of consensus in the area of infrastructure investments. Do you expect any progress in this area at the current summit?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: We do expect some progress because the World Bank has been now mandated to prepare a paper. They are working on what they call a global infrastructure facility. The final contours are not known to us. But we believe that some draft may be presented during this G20, and we would like to see what they have to say on this.

Q: You have said in your opening remarks that you will be looking at, though the G20 is not a decision-making body, some kind of minimum kind of statement from the G20 especially on the spillover. You have listed your case for not to be downgraded, and no influx of funds going out from here. What will be the minimum statement that you feel will be acceptable for India at the G20 on this?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I think there should be a very strong statement on the G20 having a consensus on the concern about the spillover effects and also its determinations to work towards minimizing those spillover effects. I think if a strong statement is made on these two points, it will have a major calming impact on the markets in the emerging economies.

Q: *At the WTO in Bali there will be discussion about all types of tariff and non-tariff barriers. I had asked this question from Montek Singh Ahluwalia too. Is it desirable to discuss the Visa fee in the US immigration bill. This is equal to all the non-tariff barriers. Is there need to discuss it seriously on the platform of the G-20 or not? If there is need, how serious are we*

going to be? In the NCDEX or MSCL, do the Government of India need to have a fresh look at that? In the NCDEX there is default of 400 crores. Would the Government have a fresh look at that?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: *I can assure you that there will be no discussion in the G20 about these. About this non-tariff barrier like Visa etc., there are no country specific in the G20. About the broad principle, as I told you earlier, we will talk. There is also a labour track in that, we would use that track too to raise this issue. There should be no barriers like that. As far as MSCL is concerned, it is under investigation, and after this it will be taken up. (free translation from Hindi text)*

Official Spokesperson:

Thank you very much



102. Prime Minister's address at the St. Petersburg G-20 Summit.

St. Petersburg, September 05, 2013.

President Putin, other colleagues,

It is a pleasure to be here in this beautiful and historic city. I join other speakers in thanking President Putin for the excellent arrangements made and the warm welcome we have received.

We have a long agenda but I will restrict myself to commenting only on some major issues.

The world economy is not in good shape. There is some good news of a strengthening of growth in some industrialised countries, but it is not broad based. The prospects for the Eurozone as a whole remain uncertain. Unemployment in all industrialised countries is too high, with no early prospect of relief. Growth in emerging markets, which was strong until recently, and was a major force for global recovery, has slowed down significantly.

The G 20 is the premier international forum for discussing international economic issues. I think we need to reflect on why we are having less success in restoring global growth than we had hoped.

Fiscal consolidation was necessary but the initial targets were perhaps too ambitious. Combined with private sector de-leveraging, this produced a deficiency of demand which led to slow growth and high unemployment. The possibility of these negative effects was known, but they were supposed to be offset by strong structural reforms in industrialised countries that would enhance productivity and therefore private investment. This did not happen, or at least not as widely, or at the pace that was expected.

Faced with persistent demand deficiency, industrialised countries relied heavily on unconventional monetary expansion on an unprecedented scale. This did not emerge from the agreed policy coordination process. It emerged from internal decision making processes in the individual countries, reacting to their respective economic outcomes.

The policy of unconventional monetary expansion in advanced countries had some success but it also had spill over effects. When policy was being loosened, there was a surge in capital flows to emerging markets, which helped some countries finance their current account deficits while generating upward pressure on the currencies of other countries. With markets now anticipating a reversal, we are seeing a large outward flow from emerging markets. Since most emerging markets now operate with flexible exchange rates, they have experienced varying degrees of currency depreciation, posing problems in many cases.

The conventional view that capital volatility should not be a source of concern as long as exchange rates were flexible is now being questioned. Sudden increases in cross border flows not only affect the exchange rate, they also affect credit volumes and asset prices. Such flows led to excess leverage in the industrial countries before the global financial crisis. They are leading to stock market and exchange rate volatility in emerging markets today.

These problems suggest that the G20 policy co-ordination process needs to pay more attention to monetary policy than it has. I recognise this poses special challenges. Central Banks typically guard their

independence, and some also have narrow legal mandates focussed on domestic objectives. The impact of monetary policy on capital flows is also difficult to predict since it depends on how markets react, which cannot always be anticipated. However, if we accept the need for coordination of fiscal policy among the systemically important countries, there is an equally compelling case to cover monetary policy in the reserve currency countries. There is certainly room for more extensive consultation and more effective communication on this issue. Our Finance Ministers should find ways of strengthening the Mutual Assessment Process to achieve these objectives.

India has been affected by currency volatility in the past few weeks. One reason for this is that we had a high current account deficit of 4.8 percent of our GDP in 2012-13. This was easily financed when flows were ample. It became a problem when flows suddenly dried up. We have taken steps to reduce our current account deficit to 3.7 percent of GDP in 2013-14, and we intend to reduce it further to about 2.5 percent. Meanwhile, we are taking steps to finance this deficit by establishing a macro economic environment that is seen to be friendly to stable foreign flows.

We will continue to work within the framework of an open economy to restore growth to earlier levels. We have undertaken a number of reforms, and intend to do more in future. The reforms that lie ahead are the more difficult reforms, relating to control of subsidies, reform of the tax system and reform of the financial sector. We are working on all these areas. The new Governor of the Reserve Bank of India has indicated important changes in banking regulations that will accelerate the reform process.

Our efforts at restoring growth will be greatly helped if we have a stable external environment that is supportive of growth. The G 20 has a major role to play in this context. This Summit must send a clear signal of our collective commitment to work together for the revival of growth, which is the only way of ensuring a sustainable growth in quality jobs. We must focus especially on the need to restore robust growth in the emerging market countries, which will also contribute to global recovery.

Fiscal consolidation is important for many countries and must remain a key medium term objective. However, it must be pursued with realistic time paths, keeping in mind the current weaknesses in demand in many

countries. On our part, we are determined to ensure that the fiscal deficit will not exceed the target indicated.

A strategy for job creation in developing countries must include stronger efforts to impart employable skills to the labour force. We can learn from international experience in this area, including the experience of industrialised countries. We also need better functioning labour markets in both industrialised and developing countries.

International labour mobility in high end skills has become an important lubricant of global integration across countries. Pending the evolution of an international agreement on these issues, we must do whatever we can to avoid new restrictive measures in this area.

Let me now turn to the issue of reform of the financial system, which has been an important part of our agenda. I congratulate the Financial Stability Board for the very considerable progress that has been made in spelling out the details of improved capital requirements under Basel III, and getting commitments from countries to meet the new capital adequacy standards.

There are other areas that are more complex and on which work is ongoing. This includes development of guidelines for leverage ratios to supplement capital adequacy, regulation of the shadow banking system, and regulation of over the counter derivatives. We also need to develop a framework which can overcome the “too big to fail” problem. This involves identification and regulation of systemically important financial institutions, designing better systems of supervision of such institutions that operate across borders, and developing a cross border resolution mechanism. Good work has been done in all these areas, but it remains a work in progress. We must persevere towards its successful conclusion.

There is a note of caution I would like to insert from the perspective of developing countries. Regulations aimed at increasing the stability of the financial system should not operate to the disadvantage of developing countries. If we cannot moderate the volatility of total capital flows, let us at least avoid amplifying this volatility through the banking system.

As we work towards a better regulated financial system, we must also ensure financial inclusion. We in India, are currently engaged in a massive

exercise to enable the large population in rural areas to have access to banks. This is being achieved through the use of a bio-metric unique identification system which establishes identity and enables the individual to access her bank account through a network of banking correspondents using information technology and mobile connectivity. Thanks to modern technology and institutional innovation, we expect to add hundreds of millions of individuals as customers of banks in the short space of a few years.

The flow of credit to small and medium enterprises is an important aspect of financial inclusion. I note that several industrialised countries are taking government initiatives to encourage such credit flows. Many developing countries used to be criticised for such directed credit policies in the past on the grounds that they amounted to an interference in prudent banking. Now that there is greater appreciation of the need for such intervention, we need to share experience in this area. We have a common aim of ensuring financial inclusion consistent with prudential banking.

The reform of the international financial institutions has been a key part of our agenda. The Fourteenth Quota Review produced an agreement which would improve the voting share of the developing countries and achieve a better representation on the IMF Board. We had hoped to be able to welcome ratification of the quota increase in the St. Petersburg Summit, but that has not been possible. We must call for the earliest possible completion of the ratification process, so that the Fifteenth Quota Review can be completed in January 2014 as originally envisaged.

Let me now turn to the subject of development, which was added to our agenda in the Seoul Summit. Much useful work has been done under the various pillars, but most of it involves actions that countries have to take themselves. However, the G-20 can add the most value by pushing in areas where active international cooperation is needed.

The most important initiative in this context is the promotion of investment in infrastructure in developing countries. Larger investments in infrastructure in emerging markets will increase the potential of these countries to grow more rapidly in the medium run and will also contribute to much needed global demand in the short run.

At the Los Cabos summit we directed our Finance Ministers to explore how the G-20 can help, including through more active involvement of the multilateral development banks. We have not yet seen the results of their efforts, but there are several things we can do. The industrialised countries have shown that unconventional monetary policy can be used to great effect. We need to bring the same innovativeness in devising “unconventional development financing” also.

The World Bank and ADB could create a special window for ensuring finance in support of infrastructure development, including provision of finance for ongoing projects which face a sudden scarcity of funds owing to volatile capital flows. Access to this window should be beyond the normal country limits, which otherwise introduce inflexibility. The aim should be to create mechanisms which can increase the flow of infrastructure financing at times when other investments are slowing down.

The active involvement of international financial institutions in critical areas in developing countries can often leverage greater private investment flows to these areas. The IFC has done sterling work in many sectors, and a greater involvement of the IFC in infrastructure financing would help catalyse private sector flows into this sector.

Any significant involvement by the multilateral development banks, notably the World Bank, IFC and the ADB, to promote investment in infrastructure in emerging markets will involve additional capital. I hope the G 20 can give a signal that we are willing to provide the capital.

Another area where international action is vitally needed is in reinvigorating the Doha round. This was the first Round of Trade Negotiations that was explicitly called a Development Round. It has become a victim of the slowdown following the international financial crisis, and the preoccupation of industrialised countries with short term economic revival and reduction in unemployment. We need to get back to the negotiating table with the will to reach a conclusion.

India firmly believes that strengthening the WTO is critical for anchoring expectations about the continued commitment to an open world economy. We are willing to extend the standstill on protectionist measures, but I would urge that this must be part of a commitment to take credible steps to show progress on the Doha Round. We look forward to a positive

outcome in the Ministerial Meeting in Bali in the hope that it will encourage all countries to move ahead quickly on the main agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

I have not commented on many items in the agenda because of lack of time and because I feel that the text of the draft declaration that has emerged from our Sherpas' discussions adequately reflects our point of view.

I conclude by congratulating you and the Russian Presidency for the work that has been done to ensure that the St Petersburg Summit makes a substantive contribution to evolving a consensus on many difficult issues facing the world economy.

Thank you



103. Intervention of the Prime Minister in the Second Working Session of the St. Petersburg G-20 Summit.

St. Petersburg, September 6, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

We are all agreed that growth and job creation should be the central message of this summit. India is a nation of youth and our working age population is expected to expand. We are pursuing a massive skills development programme to ensure that our young people get gainful employment so that they can both contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth.

All developing countries must emphasize skill development. There is room for learning from international experience, including that of industrialized countries.

International labour mobility in high end skills has become an important aspect of global integration across countries. Pending the evolution of international agreements in this area, we must do whatever we can to avoid new restrictive measures, which can stifle a sector that can contribute to global growth in the years ahead.

Small and medium enterprises have a leading role to play in creating jobs. I recognise the importance of this sector and note that several industrialised countries are taking steps to increase the flow of credit to small and medium enterprises. Directed credit policies have been followed by many developing countries, and I recall we used to be criticised for them on the grounds that they interfered with prudent banking. With increased appreciation of such interventions, we need to share experience in this area.

Financial inclusion is essential for inclusive growth. We, in India, are currently engaged in a massive exercise to enable our large population in rural areas to have access to banks. This is being achieved through the use of a bio-metric unique identification system which establishes identity and enables the individual to access her bank account through a network of banking correspondents using information technology and mobile connectivity. In this way, modern technology and institutional innovation will help add hundreds of millions of individuals as customers of banks in the short space of a few years.

A key instrument for growth and job creation in developing countries is investment in infrastructure. At the Los Cabos summit, we had directed our Finance Ministers to consider ways in which the G-20 could help increase the flow of finance for infrastructure. Industrialised countries have shown that unconventional monetary policy can be used to great effect. We need to show the same innovativeness in devising unconventional development financing also.

The World Bank and ADB could create a special window for financing infrastructure development, including for ongoing projects that face a sudden scarcity of funds owing to volatile capital flows. The aim should be to create flexible mechanisms which not only maintain the flow of infrastructure financing at times when other investments are slowing down, but actually expand such investments to play a counter cyclical role.

International financial institutions can often leverage greater private flows to infrastructure. The IFC has done sterling work in many sectors, and a greater involvement of the IFC in infrastructure financing would help catalyse private sector flows into the sector.

All this will involve additional capital. I hope the G-20 can give a signal that we are willing to provide the necessary capital.

Thank You



104 Media Briefing by Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission at the G20 Leaders' Summit.

St. Petersburg, September 6, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good morning friends. We have here with us the Deputy Chairman Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia to brief you on G20 meeting on behalf of Prime Minister.

I will request the Deputy Chairman to make a few opening remarks and then he is available for a very short time for any questions that you may ask. Because there are bilateral meetings in the morning, we will have to leave early. I would request any of you who would be asking questions to be specific and ask just one question each.

With those opening remarks I would request Mr. Ahluwalia to make his opening remarks.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission (Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia): Thank you very much.

We are in the middle of the session. I believe the Prime Minister's speech has been distributed. He will...*(Inaudible)*...on two occasions based on the speech. The global economy and some of the international stuff he has already touched upon in the opening session yesterday. Basically the leaders are speaking in different groups. But he has said this and his speech is distributed. So, I can actually answer any question on the speech itself.

Most of the session on the economic side was taken up by the issues of the global economy, what we need to do, what steps can be taken and that sort of thing. Of course it is going to...*(Inaudible)*... today. I do not know if the declaration was going to be released today. So, you have not

yet seen that but based on the PM's speech I can give you a sense of what is happening.

Okay, questions.

Q: There is a paragraph in his speech yesterday where he says that in current global conditions flexibility in exchange rates need not necessarily act as a self-correcting mechanism and help calibrate capital flows and, therefore, growth. Can you elaborate on this? It seems that he is suggesting that some of the regular market forces, self-correcting market forces, are not working at this time given the unconventional monetary policy.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I do not think that issue is actually connected with unconventional monetary policy. That issue is really connected with the fact that if you are going to have surges of capital flows up and down - whatever is the reason, in this particular case we think it was triggered by market anticipation of the taper, there is a lot of thinking - PM was really referring to the fact that people are now beginning to question the proposition which used to be argued at one point that if you want capital mobility, and you want an independent monetary policy, then the trilemma is solved if you just allow the exchange rate to fluctuate.

That is perfectly all right if variations in capital flows are modest and actually reflects fundamentals. It just means that if for the next few years you are not going to get less capital and the market is signaling that, then you take whatever action is necessary and within that framework you keep the exchange rate flexible. But if markets are subject to very large flows as a result of a lot of liquidity sloshing around, a lot of which would then get moved not because of judgments of fundamentals but sometimes judgments of the dynamics of what is going to happen next week and next month, then many people in the academic world are questioning whether the old notion is okay. The limited point here is that you may, therefore, need to intervene at one point.

The other is, you may need to try to be sure that you do not exacerbate volatility. The extreme view of exchange rate flexibility was that you just do not intervene. Theoretically, the exchange rate flexibility people could actually argue that you do not need any reserves at all. I think it is

recognized now that that sort of view of exchange rate flexibility is not a valid view. But at the same time, I think the view is that you must have a flexible exchange rate but you have to keep judging when is it that the capital markets are overreacting.

The problem here is, it is all very well for you to judge that they are overreacting but the judgment is most effective if it is done in a coordinated manner, particularly when monetary policy changes are triggering the capital flows. That is what he was really trying to get at.

There is a very good article by a lady Professor - I forget her name, it is Elizabeth something - from the London Business School which is being talked about on everybody's blog and she has outlined all this.

Q: How do you...*(Inaudible)*... emerging economies coordinate? Are there some practical...*(Inaudible)*...?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I think this is the crux of it actually. A couple of points need to be made. The first point is, and I think the Prime Minister makes it in his speech, the resort to monetary policy was not part of the G20 coordination process. When the G20 originally got going, the initial consensus was, a fiscal stimulus is needed. There was some debate but they all agreed to that.

Then around about Toronto, I think in 2010 or so, there was a perception that in the developed countries, the fiscal expansion, the rise in debt had gone too far and they need to go back to fiscal consolidation. I think in Toronto the signal was very strongly that the time has come for fiscal consolidation. And actually the Prime Minister at that time had made this point that - do not you think at a point when private deleveraging is taking place and credit is also constrained, that if you go in for a very strong fiscal consolidation, it will lead to a short-term depression of economic activity. If you look at the Prime Minister's speech in Toronto, it is there.

There was a debate, there was a consensus, and we were in any case of the view that we must gradually taper down. The view of western countries at that time was that maybe the time for consolidation is very strong. Now, the negative effects of this demand compression were known. But at that time the expectation was that lot of structural reforms are going to be done, in Europe particularly, and those structural reforms

are going to transform the situation, they are going to lead to an increase in productivity, they will lead to a revival of private investment, etc. And I think in the PM's speech there is a sentence which says, 'without the expectation', but it did not happen. And so, monetary policy was resorted to.

We did not actually object to the easing of monetary policy. I think the Prime Minister has said that when monetary policy was loosened, it helped some countries to finance the deficit. That includes us. In other countries which did not want to run a big deficit like Brazil, it led to a huge currency appreciation. Mr. Mantega, the Finance Minister of Brazil, that is when he started using the term 'currency wars'. So, the loosening also had some problem.

First point is, Mr. Bernanke says we will have to wind this down. That is not a surprise. What is surprising is that the markets reacted the way they did. This is one of the problems with monetary policy coordination. No country locks itself into a monetary policy as a result of an international negotiation. But I can imagine, by the way most of us knew that this reversal will occur. One problem is that markets can suddenly overreact much beyond what anyone could think. And it is not very clear how you would handle that problem.

There are also technical problems which the Prime Minister has mentioned. Some central banks have legal mandates, and the legal mandate does not include looking at after-effects. The concern about after-effects is not purely what I would call a concern for well-being of others. It is also a concern for well-being of everybody including oneself. Because it is all very well to say why I should I care about the spillover effects of my policy, the point is that you are doing it in a coordinated way, so, you are going to coordinate other peoples' spillover effects. So, while you look as if you are disciplining yourself here, you may be benefiting elsewhere. That is why fiscal policy is being coordinated.

I think the Prime Minister recognized that this is so. I think this is also now well appreciated and we hope that the declaration will contain some acceptance I hope that this is an important point. But at the same time let us realize that when you are dealing with international economic management, between a strong dialogue and a little bit better

understanding and a predictability of what is going to happen is a big gap which is nobody's fault. But at least the dialogue will be a lot stronger.

Q: I want to ask you about the Prime Minister's mention on fiscal policy. The speech seems to suggest that if developed economies are entitled to unconventional monetary policies for whatever reasons, given the circumstances India is entitled to its own fiscal elbow room and, therefore...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: There are no entitlements here. Let us put it this way.

Q: Sovereign rights!

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: All countries, we have the sovereign right to consult amongst each other and come out with a mutually better situation. That is true for us: that is true for them also.

One of the newspaper stories gives, to my mind, a slightly over aggressive, sort of attacking the developed countries picture. I think the Prime Minister's speech actually is very carefully worded. I do not think he was attacking the developing countries, but he was kind of zeroing in on what is a complex problem, recognizing that there are a lot of technical difficulties and trying to create a consensus that, look let us see how we can move forward.

The key thing here is reserve currency. India's monetary policy is not going to have any impact on anybody other than India. I am sure they would be happy if Dr. Raghuram Rajan tells them in advance what he is going to do, but we are not a systemically important country from the monetary policy point of view. But the reserve currency countries are. Which really means that if you want to organize yourself, then certainly the Yen, the Euro and the Dollar - and I think increasingly the Renminbi because Renminbi is not yet a reserve currency because it is not a fully open capital account but it is the Chinese intention to make it more of an international currency. So, these are the currencies where monetary policy will affect economies, and it will have some spillover effects that people need to know about.

Q: We were told by the Finance Secretary that there will be a strong statement. You are now tapering it a little bit by saying that it will be reflected.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Sorry, what will be a strong statement?

Q: From the G20 about the spill over effects, especially ...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I do not want to prejudge what the G20, I mean we are very clear on what we have said and I am certainly hoping that there will be a reflection. Let us be clear. The purpose of the G20 is to enlarge the area of consensus. So, I am a little concerned that the Indian press says the Prime Minister is attacking the developing countries and then the next headline is developed countries succumbing to the attack. This is not the tone in which international negotiations are conducted. I believe by the way that the position that India is taking is very much supported by many other countries, not just developing. But there is the other side of the picture also and we have to keep that in mind.

Q: Since you are the Second Sherpa and you were there in that room, did Syria get reflected in any way because that is uppermost on most world leaders' mind?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Syria was not discussed during the main conference but it did come up at the dinner. Since this is a continuing matter, I am happy to clarify what our Prime Minister said, and since these discussions will continue bilaterally I would not comment on what others have said.

Essentially, President Putin asked the Secretary-General to speak on Syria. The Secretary-General used the opportunity to actually explain what was happening, that they have mobilized a scientific team which actually is operating in very difficult circumstances, collected a lot of evidence - this, from what I gathered, really relates to human tissue samples from either people who died in the attack or those who are affected but are not casualties yet - and these have been sent off to different laboratories in Europe. He did not mention where in which countries. He said that they are hoping to get results as quickly as possible.

I take it that what these results will establish is that there was use of chemical weapons. So, from the UN point of view that proposition will

get resolved based on evidence. Many people have asserted, that was there. But really if you are talking about legitimizing action, you do need to have some scientific evidence. Therefore, the UN stepping in is actually a very good idea. And he did say that he would make the findings known to the Security Council and to the membership generally. So, we will get information.

As far as Prime Minister's own statement is concerned, he made a number of points and I just want to make sure that I do not miss any. One is that we condemn the use of chemical weapons whether in Syria or anywhere. We do condemn them. That is point number one.

Second, we need to be certain of the facts particularly keeping in mind past experience. We should be certain of what has happened even if probabilities point in a certain direction. I took that to mean that we need to wait to see what the UN inspectors come up with. Hopefully they will come up relatively soon. Prime Minister also said that whatever action is taken should be under UN auspices and not outside the UN framework. He also said that we are not in favour of armed action that is aimed at regime change, but clearly if there is a violation of international law, then the Security Council should authorize whatever action is necessary.

These were the main points that the PM made. It is quite possible that discussions are actually continuing bilaterally and may even continue for the rest of the day. I do not know whether there will be any reference to that in the communiqué.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I think they must be having a briefing. So, why do not you ask them?

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I think that is not fair.

Q: Despite what the Prime Minister said really about the impact of global monetary policies on India's economy, global economy, just before the informal BRICS dialogue, the Russians and the Chinese both said, they went on record and it was reported by Reuters, that what is happening in India is really India's problem, and that they need to tackle their weak

fundamentals, and it is not really linked to what is happening elsewhere. Do we react to that yet?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I have not seen that statement. But let me say, the Indian position is not that we had no problem and then this happened. I think if you look at the Prime Minister's speech, he himself says that we have too large a current account deficit. Mind you, I will go into that in a second, domestically on any number of occasions I think what the Prime Minister has said is that there were domestic problems that need to be addressed. In any country it is never smooth sailing. Problems arise, you have to address them. So, that should not be a surprise.

But it is definitely our view that the exchange rate volatility that we faced, the sudden and sharp exchange rate volatility that we faced was actually triggered by the change in market expectations. In some sense you can say that had this not happened, had markets been totally stable, there would have been an India-specific reaction over a different period of time. But the extent of the overshooting of the rupee was not at all unconnected with the high volatility globally.

The Prime Minister may or may not have said but I think the Finance Minister has recently said and many of us have said that some depreciation was actually justifiable. There has been a lot of discussion on that. The problem is, when it is happening, government officials naturally do not want to say how much is justifiable. But in retrospect let me just share with you that I have seen a lot of studies on what is the depreciation that is justifiable. That basically depends on whenever your inflation rate is higher than that of your competitors, there is an element of real appreciation that is taking place.

If the current account deficit is not actually improving, then that is a problem and you need to address it. So, you calculate what is the correction factor. And that depends on what is your base level that you use, how many currencies you compare with, what is the price index you use both for yourself and other countries. Different estimates, therefore, come out differently. I have seen a number of estimates that vary from as low as Rs.59 to the dollar to something like Rs.65. The highest I had seen was Rs.65 to the dollar. When the Rupee went to 69

or something close to that, in my view that was clear overshooting. I think that overshooting would not have happened if we were not in the middle of a global sort of currency reaction.

Q: There are a couple of points that we would want you to clarify. One is, the entire issue as far as our currency swaps are concerned - and there has been some commentary about it including the 100 billion dollar currency reserve arrangement, and the fact that the BRICS statement said that it will be reviewed or tangible results will be had only by the time of next visit - how does it at all benefit India? Is there some sort of horizon that we have in mind for operationalising any of those aspects?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: That is a very good question and I just want to clarify my view on this. I have not checked this with the Finance Minister. I do not believe that the current currency swap discussions are meant to trigger putting something in place that will enable us to handle what is the current, actually the current problem seems to have stabilized already. But the purpose of currency sharing arrangement is really building long-term kind of safety nets. The present international consensus is that because of volatility you have got to have some safety nets.

By the way, the very fact that they say that means that they are not expecting that all problems will be taken care of by currency depreciation. If the exchange rate flexibility was a solution to all problems, you do not need any reserves at all except you have got to have some cash if somebody needs a little bit of money. The international view is that you do need reserves. So, the first safety net is your own reserves. I think we have a lot of them – 280 billion dollars.

Second safety net is regional currency arrangements. To my knowledge, the only one that we have in place is with Japan. The one that is now being discussed is the BRICS one. Hopefully they will agree, they have sort of agreed on the number and we more or less know. I saw news reports which I am not denying which give the right sort of numbers on how much is going to be contributed by different countries.

What is not yet known fully is what are the terms on which you can draw from the currency reserve. The usual terms are that up to a certain amount of your own, you do not actually make your contribution into a

fund. You keep it with you but you are obligated to deliver on that promise. You can draw a certain percentage of that without any question. Generally beyond that, at least that is what they have in the Chiang Mai arrangement, it is done in parallel with the IMF. So, the IMF arrangement gives some indication of a corrective policy and you go to the IMF with a little bit of strength because you say, we need so much money and this much we are getting from our currency arrangement and you give us the rest. So, that puts a little bit of pressure on the IMF that look you should be helpful, which is good.

We are not members of the Chiang Mai initiative. But when the BRICS one comes into play, which looks very likely now, we will be. But that is not meant to be, we are not counting on that to take care of the current problem at all. So, that is the important thing.

Q: Is there an interest payment involved in the swap arrangement?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I think when you draw you pay some interest. Again that is a matter of detail.

Q: I just want you to clarify this. PM's statement yesterday as articulated by Foreign Secretary says that he is very happy with the currency arrangement especially in the context of the current ...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Let me explain. Markets anticipate things. So, markets factor these things in.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Anything one does should be linked to some benefit. But what I am saying is, I do not expect. With 280 billion dollars of reserves I do not expect that we will be drawing on a currency swap arrangement unless there is a radical change in the situation. So, in the current situation this is like an extra buffer. And you know markets take note of it. That part is certainly good.

Q: That is a leverage point I think ...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Sure It is exactly the same effect as an increase in the IMF quota. If the IMF quota were doubled tomorrow, we would move some of our reserves into the reserve tranche of the IMF. So, our reserves remain the same. But our borrowing capacity

from the IMF suddenly shoots up. Not that we are going to use it, but it has a positive effect, calming impact shall we say.

Q: I would like you to come back to that dinner meeting where Syria was discussed.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I thought you would!

Q: Was there any timeline indicated by Secretary-General as to when report is expected? Secondly, was there any consensus among the leaders that till reports come US or anybody else should not launch any military action against Syria?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I do not want to speak for other leaders, that is not fair. But my impression was that virtually everybody appreciated and applauded what the Secretary-General is saying. The Secretary-General did not actually indicate timelines of when the reports would be available. But he did give the impression that it is a matter of days. So, if you were to ask me, is it five days or fifteen days, I would not know. But I certainly got the impression that it is somewhere in that range and not 180 days ...*(Inaudible)*... I do not remember anyone specifically saying that it is too long.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: That is the impression. What he said is, normally these things take several days and we are trying to get it done as quickly as possible. So, I got the impression that it is going to be a matter of a few days. That is it. I do not remember anyone, therefore, saying that they cannot wait for these results. But the issue is not the results alone. The issue is the UN process. That can be a different thing.

Q: When the Prime Minister suggested that the issue should be resolved under UN, were many countries were taken up with this idea?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Let me put it this way not wanting to comment on other leaders, this is not the unique Indian position. There were several who took the same view.

Q: Last week in Delhi, the Principal Advisor to Finance Ministry, Mr. Deepak Dasgupta, said that there was a plan under way and he said it

will be operationalised in a matter of days and not even weeks, to make a coordinated intervention in currency markets by emerging economies. Was there ever a plan of this sort? What was the shape of this plan? Did you hold discussions in this regard with other countries?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: My understanding is that it has been clarified by the Finance Ministry, perhaps Dasgupta was misreported which with all respect does happen every now and then, I am not aware of any plan nor do I think is such a thing feasible. But I do believe that maybe the then Chief Economic Advisor and now our central bank Governor, had said that he was never...*(Inaudible)*... That is what I know.

Official Spokesperson: Last question to you since you are the only lady with us.

Q: We already have a currency swap agreement with Japan of 15 billion. That is in place but there is a lot of confusion on this.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: That is already in place and my understanding is that it is about 15 billion dollars.

Q: So, we can draw down any time.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: That is what it means, having an arrangement.

Q: No, because there was talk yesterday there will be a further...*(Inaudible)*...Just a clarification.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I must assure you, I am not the right person to comment. It is really for the Finance Minister and the Reserve Bank Governor. I do not think that we are in a position where we are looking to see from where we can draw down because with 280 billion dollars in reserves, you only start drawing down currency swaps after you use quite a lot of your own resources.

You have a right to draw down. But drawing down a currency is simply deciding to pay an interest on a loan and keep collecting interest on your investments in the reserves. So, it is really not such a big deal. It is really in my view, given the present situation, looking ahead. I think it is important for us to build up this second line of defence. Now that internationally it

has become an established principle, we should have more of them and expand the ones that we have got.

Q: One clarification on India's contribution.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Ah! You are not the only lady, there are two. Welcome!

Q: India's contribution to this currency pool, where is it going to come from? Is it going to be the part of our ...

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: You mean the BRICS currency pool?

Q: Yes.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: This is called a reserve pooling arrangement. What it means is that the Reserve Bank of India, let us assume that the newspapers are right and that our contribution is whatever, 18 billion, ...

Q: We have got a release yesterday.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: Okay. I mean it is not yet done. I think the BRICS Summit will actually sanctify it. Eighteen billion - what does it mean? What it means is that the Reserve Bank undertakes that it becomes liable to the other currency pool people to allow up to 18 billion to be drawn.

Now every country in the reserve pool has a certain right to draw. As and when they trigger that right, if 18 billion is about 18 per cent of the total size, whenever a country draws 'x' billion, 18 per cent of that will be given by our Reserve Bank to the country. And then the country will repay it in dollars with whatever little interest rate that there will be. So, it is like a contingent liability on your own reserves. Obviously you do not expect every country to be making such a demand but you keep that in mind in your calculations. That is all.

Q: But you do not put that money aside in an escrow account?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: No. It stays with you. It is a mistaken notion that you have got a pool. For example, when we give money to the IMF, the hard currency contribution, there we do not have

the money, we give it to the IMF, we gain in the IMF reserve currency position which is included in our reserves. We have an absolute right to get all of this back plus a little more. And it is the IMF's job to manage the pool so that for countries that contributed money and need it back, there is enough liquidity to meet them. But that money is managed by them. This is not going to be the case in a currency reserve arrangement.

Q: I am the third lady on the floor!

Official Spokesperson: Certainly.

Q: I just wanted to get your general impression from last night's dinner. Did Syria issue dominate the dinner as opposed to economic issues?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: They had a broad ranging discussion. I think Angel Gurría, the Secretary-General of the OECD opened the discussion and talked about some of the economic issues that are before the Summit. And then the Secretary-General spoke on Syria. The dinner went on for a very long time. Actually I had to come back before it finished. So, I do not know what happened after that.

But you are right, the majority of the time perhaps, and it is understandable because all these other issues they are discussing in the plenary forum all the time. So that was the position.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event.



105. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary and Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs in St. Petersburg on G20 Leaders' Summit Outcome and Bilaterals.

September 6, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends. We have here with us Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Mr. Arvind Mayaram, and Foreign Secretary Mrs. Sujatha Singh.

I will request first Secretary DEA, to give you a round-up of the outcome of the G20. Subsequently Foreign Secretary will brief you on the bilaterals. And then we will take questions at the end. I will ask Secretary DEA to first make his remarks about the outcome of the G20.

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (Shri Arvind Mayaram): Good evening everyone.

Broadly the discussions went around the major themes of the conference. The general consensus that was reached was around achieving a strong recovery while ensuring fiscal sustainability.

There was also a discussion on unemployment and underemployment and there was an emphasis in creating employment opportunities. And, therefore, investment was linked with employment where the investment had to be of a nature where employment will be generated. So, for that purposes importance of long-term financing for investment, which included for infrastructure and SMEs, to boost economic growth and development was also emphasised.

There was some discussion on free and rules-based trade. Then there was a major understanding on cross-border tax evasion and avoidance which undermines the public finances. There was a broad consensus that more work should be done to create standards for automatic exchange of information between nations.

There was a general consensus around financial reforms that needed to be effected, especially for building more resilient financial institutions. There was also a discussion on developing cleaner energy.

As far as India is concerned, we agreed with the broad analysis that the main challenges to global economy continue to be weak growth and

persistently high unemployment. There is also a problem of slower growth in some emerging market economies reflecting in some cases the effect of volatile capital flows, tighter financial conditions, and commodity price volatility. In our case oil has been one of the areas of major concern.

There was also a discussion in terms of creating a much better format for long-term financing, especially on infrastructure. Our emphasis on infrastructure was accepted. There was also some detailed discussion on the manner in which joint action can be undertaken to create a favourable environment for capital flows for long-term investment from the global capital markets and also through private investments in infrastructure.

There is a growing concern, which we reiterated from our point of view, on the base erosion and profit shifting, especially in the case of multinational corporations. This is a matter of satisfaction for India that whereas in the past there has been a lot of concern expressed by developed countries on our taxation and the manner in which we ask the MNCs to pay their taxes. But it only now fully justifies our stand on recovering taxes which are due to the country as now other countries including OECD countries are having a great concern on this issue of tax erosion and non tax compliance.

On quota formula, once again we reiterated our position that the voice in the IMF must reflect the changed realities of the world. The emphasis that the 15th General Quota Review should be completed by January, 2014 was broadly accepted by all the members of the G20.

There is one interesting new area of discussion which is coming, which is on financial inclusion and also on food security. This is an area where the experience of India has been of great value to the participants. This was especially in terms of the financial inclusion. The Prime Minister did speak of the Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme that we are undertaking and also the food security that we are now going in for to provide this security for the vulnerable sections of the society.

There is a general acceptance that food security is important not only from the point of view of ensuring that there are no sections of the society which are left out from this cover but also on account of malnutrition which continues to be one of the major problems in the world.

This is basically broadly the understanding which has come in and our concerns were fully reflected in the discussions that took place.

Foreign Secretary (Shrimati Sujatha Singh): Let me give you a sense of the bilaterals that the Prime Minister had.

Yesterday he had brief pull-asides with Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Stephen Harper of Canada, before that Shinzo Abe of Japan. Today he met President Putin briefly. President Cristina Kirchner of Argentina met Prime Minister. As a matter of fact, it was here in this very room. Both of them had a good discussion on how to intensify bilateral economic relations.

As you are aware, President Kirchner visited India in October 2009 and both sides had agreed to develop a comprehensive dialogue towards a strategic partnership. We have various agreements in place relating to space, geological survey, science and technology, sports, trade promotion, hydrocarbons and civil nuclear energy. There is good investment from India in Argentina of about 800 million dollars in agrochemicals and pharmaceuticals; and we also cooperate in Antarctic cooperation and space sectors.

After that Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso came and they discussed increasing the swap from 15 to 50 billion dollars. We expressed our happiness at the forthcoming visit of Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and the increasing involvement of Japan in our infrastructure including the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor.

This in short were the bilaterals.

Official Spokesperson: Any questions? Maybe we could have first for Secretary DEA and then for Foreign Secretary.

Question: Prime Minister in his statement yesterday asked for a coordinated action from developed world on the monetary policy. The declaration which has been released today mentions about spillover effects but it is silent on any coordinated action on the monetary policy front. Can you just tell us a little bit about it?...*(Inaudible)*...

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I think it is not correct. In fact, the declaration very clearly says that there should be calibrated

effort and coordination between the nations should take place on these issues. It is there.

Q: The question really has to do with clause 14. If you read the first line it says very pointedly that monetary policy action will be determined by central banks with regard to their domestic situation. Further on the same para at the end clarifies on the unintended spillover effects. This is being read widely as a clear hint and this is obviously of particular concern to us that central banks all across the world will continue to do what is in their best domestic interest.

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: Actually if you see, the last line of para 14 says: "Our central banks have committed that future changes to monetary policy settings" - which obviously refers to for instance withdrawal of quantitative easing is a monetary policy setting - "will continue to be carefully calibrated and clearly communicated". They will calibrate means, they will calibrate amongst themselves the policies in a manner and communicate it in a manner that there is no uncertainty in the market.

Q: Sir, do you expect the United States, therefore, - and the crucial dates of 17th and 18th September that are coming up - that position to be at all influenced by the G20 outcome?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I do not believe any country would change its policy which will not be in its domestic interest. There is no question of that. I do not think we should even expect it. It is in fact unrealistic to expect. For instance, will India change any policy of its own if it was not in its own interest? Obviously not. But the question here is different.

The question is, when you say it is calibrated it means that you create a certain certainty in that issue. For instance a kind of a roadmap should be known how you will do it. Certainly the roadmap will be determined by their self interest. Any country's self interest determines what the roadmap should be. But that roadmap should be seen and known and understood so that the markets do not speculate, their speculation is reduced to the minimum. To that extent I do certainly believe that there is a general understanding that this is how it should move. And in our discourse with the officials from the US side, they have assured that they have no

intention of allowing a kind of a volatility which comes from speculation or uncertainty. So, we do believe that it is going to move in a calibrated manner.

Q: Sir, on the way here you said that if there is a strong statement from G20 on the need to calibrate the taper, it will have a soothing impact on the markets. Now that it has found a mention in the statement, what kind of impact do you reckon this will have on the markets? *Per se* on the Rupee do you think this will have an impact?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I do not know whether this will have an effect or not but certainly the policies of Government of India are having a good soothing effect on the Rupee because today it has ended very sharply I think at 65 or something. It is not a single statement which makes a difference. It has to be overall how the domestic policies and how the international environment is working on this. So, I would think that there should be less volatility.

Of course, let us see. There are other effects also. There are other developments that can take place. There are geopolitical developments that take place which can have an impact adversely. So, we do not know. But to the extent of the uncertainty relating to quantitative easing, I certainly believe that a much greater comfort will be there than it was before this statement.

Q: Behind the scenes, was there conflict on the need to include this? Which countries supported the inclusion of this particular spillover clause and which countries were opposed to it?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: There is no conflict. You talk on wordings, what wordings should come in or not come in, whether it should be calibrated or it should be some other word. Those are the discussions which happen. I do not think there is any conflict in these matters. Therefore, at the end of the day the consensus that emerges is more important.

Q: Do you believe that the consensus in the declaration takes note of India's concern and, therefore, could be seen as some kind of an affirmation or commitment that will help India in terms of ...?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I certainly believe so.

Q: On taxation, there is a clear para in the reference, in the declaration that profits should be taxed only in the country where the activity takes place and, therefore, in case of transfer pricing involving let us say software operations happening in India, do you think it really removes the ambiguity so that India gains on taxation? Is there any imperative or implications that you want to mention?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I would suggest let us not look at it in a very specific manner because obviously international discussions do not happen on specific clauses like transfer pricing. That is not how they operate. The principle that countries have a right to tax profits where they are made, that principle is being accepted. And, therefore, it only validates our position when we say that we are going to tax profits that are made in India and it is a valid aspiration of any country to do so. I think that has been accepted and that I think is an important landmark for a global understanding on this.

Q: You talked about financial inclusion, about the DBT and the Food Security Bill. Did Prime Minister hard sell these ideas to other countries or what exactly were you attempting, factoring was included in the statement itself?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: One, I never mentioned Bill. I spoke of food security. Food security has not come out of our statement. Food security is something which has come out of the general understanding in the global community that food security is a very important aspect now which cuts across all the countries of the world. Therefore, what I mentioned to you was that the statement which we are making is basically speaking of these issues which are now concerning the world. We are already addressing them to that extent. We mentioned that we are using DBT for financial inclusion of the people, and we also have a programme for food security.

Q: Basically you all are taking the lead there in telling the rest of the world that they should follow.

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I would also not claim that lofty a position. We are only stating that we are doing it and many countries actually came up after the Prime Minister's statement to find out and ask ...

Q: Or in a more humble way is it possible to say that any subsidy bill that India incurs on the ground of food security will be looked upon more benignly in the context of fiscal adjustment?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I think we will just leave it at this that food security is an issue which is now globally recognised and we are addressing it effectively.

Q: Sorry, you were saying that world leaders came across to the Prime Minister and asking.

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I did not say world leaders, I said many leaders from the countries were talking in the meeting, came to us. Not just to the Prime Minister they also talked to us about our experience on this issue. So, there is an interest in what we are doing. That is the point I was making.

Q: On Japan, on the swap apart from what has been agreed before, apart from the change in the amount, is there any other detail you can give us in terms of what are the terms, timeline or anything more than that change in amount?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: The broad principle of enhancing from 15 to 50 billion was agreed today. The details would be worked out separately. But because we already have a swap arrangement which is 15 billion dollars now, it is not going to be very much different from what we already have in place. Some minor details may be worked out but broadly it is on the same principles as before.

Qu: But how does this swap work? Say, if India needs 20 billion dollars, will you borrow from Japan that 20 billion at a certain interest rate returnable over a period of time? Is that how it works?

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: What happens is that the swap arrangement works in this manner. This facility is available to both countries. So, if Japan wants it India will have to provide the same. If we need it they will provide the same.

Q: But Japan is hugely current account surplus. They do not need it.

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: I was just explaining what swap arrangement is. I do not even believe we will need it. But it is just

an arrangement between the two countries. It is a reciprocal arrangement where any country which requires foreign exchange can call for this support and there is an interest rate which is predetermined, which is a concessional interest rate, which has to be paid for the period for which it is taken. It is like a programme. You take that money in a programmatic manner and then you return it in a particular manner. That is how broadly it functions.

Q: One related question. Montek in the morning was saying that this swap arrangement, you sort of resort to it only in times of need, a really dire need or something. He was suggesting that it is just a kind of comfort. It is out there. But in the context of Japan, you have so many infrastructure projects which Japanese are funding. So, do you think you might sort of use it to drive long-term infrastructure projects which is also a part of the long-term means for infrastructure etc., part of the understanding in the

...

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: Actually swap is never used in that manner. The instrument is not for that. The instrument is basically to take care of your balance of payment problem. It is specific for that. It is not a line of credit in that sense that you could use it for anything. For the projects the lines of credits are different. So, JICA gives a separate line of credit.

Q: If both India and Japan do not need it, where is the need for...*(Inaudible)*...

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs: It is a very good question. The problem today is not simply of reality but of perception, and markets behave on perception. Because of a huge amount of uncertainty, because of asymmetry of information, because it is difficult to predict what is in the future, if there is a negative sentiment which builds up in the market, it begins to speculate on the negatives. Therefore, as we have seen in the past 15, 20 days Rupee has come under pressure, etc., for the simple reason that they believe current account deficit is very large, the capital flows are not coming in, there is going to be a reverse flow of capital and, therefore, there is a speculation in the market.

We are confident, as the Finance Minister said earlier, that we can fully finance the current account deficit; that current account deficit would be

at 3.7 per cent and no more. We have done our math correctly and we know that this is going to happen. There is no question on that. But the market continues to have a kind of a fear of the unknown. When you have arrangements of this nature, it shores up the sentiment. It provides a sense that there is a wall which is available should there be a need in the most unprecedented circumstances.

So, as I mentioned earlier, we will never use it. We do not need to use it. We are fully equipped to deal with our balance of payment requirements. However, for the purposes of shoring up the sentiment it is a good instrument. And because Japan is a very friendly country, we have very longstanding economic relations with them, we believe that this also creates a much greater confidence amongst each other, between the investors of each country. And now that there is a greater interest on the Japanese investors, as was just mentioned by you, the Japanese investors also feel a little greater comfort when there is a strong economic relation between the two countries. So, we believe this also creates a better format for Japanese long-term investments to flow into projects in India. From that perspective I think it is a very good agreement that has been reached today.

Q: Madam, did the Prime Minister discuss Syria in any of the bilaterals with any other world leader?

Foreign Secretary: It was discussed with Argentina. As a matter of fact, President Christina raised it and both leaders agreed that a political solution was what we should all be trying for.

Q: In the morning they said that the UN should find out evidence ...

Foreign Secretary: That we should await the report of the inspectors and await their determination and thereafter think of a collective response. But the emphasis is on finding a political solution because the region is already troubled and we do not want to aggravate the situation there, or all the fault lines that cut across Syria, whether sectarian, ethnic. So, our attempt is to find a political solution.

Q: You say political solution. Yesterday Prime Minister when he intervened said we are not aimed at any regime change.

Foreign Secretary: Correct.

Q: He was quite focused that it should be done through the UN and we must wait for the UN inspectors, etc.

Foreign Secretary: Correct.

Q: If you want a political solution, it means it is long-term. It is not immediate because you know the Americans are rushing. They were of course outnumbered yesterday but the fact is that they believe that action should be taken.

Foreign Secretary: We would like the Geneva-2 process to start. We believe that all the parties should come to the negotiating table and there should be a political solution.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much.

(Concluded)

St. Petersburg

September 6, 2013



106. G20 LEADERS' DECLARATION Summit.

St. Petersburg, September 5-6, 2013.

Preamble

1. We, the Leaders of the G20, met in St Petersburg on 5-6 September 2013, united by our continued commitment to work together to strengthen the global economy.
2. Strengthening growth and creating jobs is our top priority and we are fully committed to taking decisive actions to return to a job-rich, strong, sustainable and balanced growth path.
3. In the five years since we first met, coordinated action by the G20 has been critical to tackling the financial crisis and putting the world economy on a path to recovery. But our work is not yet complete and we agreed that it remains critical for G20 countries to focus all our joint efforts on engineering a durable exit from the longest and most protracted crisis in modern history.

4. Our most urgent need is to increase the momentum of the global recovery, generate higher growth and better jobs, while strengthening the foundations for long-term growth and avoiding policies that could cause the recovery to falter or promote growth at other countries' expense.
5. We understand that sound and sustainable economic growth will be firmly based on increased and predictable investments, trust and transparency, as well as on effective regulation as part of the market policy and practice.
6. As Leaders of the world's largest economies, we share responsibility for reinforcing the open and rules-based global economic system. We are committed to working cooperatively to address key global economic challenges:
 - Achieving a stronger recovery while ensuring fiscal sustainability. We have today agreed the St Petersburg Action Plan, which sets out our strategies to achieve strong, sustainable and balanced growth.
 - Unemployment and underemployment, particularly among young people. We are united in the resolve to achieve better quality and more productive jobs. Coordinated and integrated public policies (macroeconomic, financial, fiscal, education, skills development, innovation, employment and social protection) are key to reach this goal. We today committed to continue our efforts to support inclusive labour markets, with the exchange of country-specific plans or sets of actions, developed as appropriate according to our different constitutional circumstances.
 - Importance of long-term financing for investment, including for infrastructure and SMEs to boost economic growth, job creation and development. Today we endorsed the work plan that helped us to assess factors affecting the availability and accessibility of long-term financing for investment and committed to identify and start to

implement a set of collective and country-specific measures that tangibly improve our domestic investment environments.

- Free and rules-based trade fosters economic opportunities. We stress the crucial importance of strong multilateral trading system and call on all the WTO members to show the necessary flexibility and reach a successful outcome in this year's multilateral trade negotiations. We extend our commitment to refrain from protectionist measures and aim at enhancing transparency in trade, including in regional trade agreements.
- Cross-border tax evasion and avoidance undermine our public finances and our people's trust in the fairness of the tax system. Today, we endorsed plans to address these problems and committed to take steps to change our rules to tackle tax avoidance, harmful practices, and aggressive tax planning.
- We have agreed and are implementing a broad range of financial reforms to address the major fault lines that caused the crisis. We are building more resilient financial institutions, making substantial progress towards ending too-big-to-fail, increasing transparency and market integrity, filling regulatory gaps and addressing the risks from shadow banking. We will pursue our work to build a safe, reliable financial system responsive to the needs of our citizens.
- G20 countries have a responsibility to ensure that all people have an opportunity to gain from strong, sustainable and balanced growth. We endorse the St Petersburg Development Outlook to focus our efforts on concrete steps to improve food security, financial inclusion, infrastructure, human resource development and domestic resource mobilization.

- Corruption impedes sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction, threatening financial stability and economy as a whole. We will hold ourselves to our commitment to implement the G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan, combating domestic and foreign bribery, tackling corruption in high-risk sectors, strengthening international cooperation and promoting public integrity and transparency in the fight against corruption. Recognizing the need for sustained and concerted efforts we endorse the St Petersburg Strategic Framework.
 - We share a common interest in developing cleaner, more efficient and reliable energy supplies, as well as more transparent physical and financial commodity markets. We commit to enhance energy cooperation, to make energy market data more accurate and available and to take steps to support the development of cleaner and more efficient energy technologies to enhance the efficiency of markets and shift towards a more sustainable energy future. We underscore our commitment to work together to address climate change and environment protection, which is a global problem that requires a global solution.
 - We will continue to develop comprehensive growth strategies to achieve stronger, more sustainable and balanced growth in the context of fiscal sustainability.
7. Too many of our citizens have yet to participate in the economic global recovery that is underway. The G20 must strive not only for strong, sustainable and balanced growth but also for a more inclusive pattern of growth that will better mobilize the talents of our entire populations.
8. Cooperation, Coordination and Confidence is what we will continue to strive for.

Global Economy and G20 Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth

9. We have taken a number of important policy actions that have helped to contain key tail risks, improve financial market conditions and sustain the recovery. Private demand has strengthened in the U.S. and growth has picked up in Japan and the U.K. There are signs of recovery in the euro area. While growth has continued in emerging market economies, it has slowed down in some of them. Global growth prospects for 2013 have been marked down repeatedly over the last year, global rebalancing is incomplete, regional growth disparities remain wide, and unemployment, particularly among youth, remains unacceptably high. Despite our actions, the recovery is too weak, and risks remain tilted to the downside. In the last months financial market volatility has increased.
10. We consider the main challenges to the global economy to be:
 - Weak growth and persistently high unemployment, particularly among youth, and the need for more inclusive growth in many economies;
 - Financial market fragmentation in Europe and the decisive implementation of banking union;
 - Slower growth in some emerging market economies, reflecting in some cases the effect of volatile capital flows, tighter financial conditions and commodity price volatility, as well as domestic structural challenges;
 - Insufficient levels of private investment in many countries, in part due to continuing market uncertainties, as well as internal rigidities;
 - High public debt and its sustainability in some countries that need to be addressed while properly supporting the recovery in the near-term, especially in countries with the highest actual and projected debt to GDP levels;
 - Volatility of capital flows as growth strengthens and there are expectations of eventual monetary policy recalibration in advanced economies;

- An incomplete rebalancing of global demand; and
 - Continued uncertainties about fiscal policy deliberations.
11. To address these challenges and to place the global economy on a stronger, more sustainable and balanced growth path, we have built on our previous actions with new measures as set out in the St Petersburg Action Plan (Annex). The Action Plan is designed to boost economic activity and job creation, support the recovery, and address near-term risks to the outlook, while strengthening the foundations for strong, sustainable and balanced growth through ambitious and well-targeted reforms. We will act together and implement all our commitments in a timely manner and rigorously monitor this process.
 12. Our immediate focus is on creating the conditions to increase growth and employment with timely actions that build on the signs of a recovery in advanced economies to make it durable to the benefit of the whole global economy.
 13. In this respect, the euro area commits to strengthen the foundations for economic and monetary union, including through further efforts to strengthen bank balance sheets, reduce financial fragmentation and moving ahead decisively and without delay toward a banking union. Advanced G20 countries agree to maintain a flexible approach in implementing their fiscal strategies, while remaining committed to sustainable public finances. Facing increased financial volatility, emerging markets agree to take the necessary actions to support growth and maintain stability, including efforts to improve fundamentals, increase resilience to external shocks and strengthen financial systems.
 14. Monetary policy will continue to be directed towards domestic price stability and supporting the economic recovery according to the respective mandates of central banks. We recognize the support that has been provided to the global economy in recent years from accommodative monetary policies, including unconventional monetary policies. We remain mindful of the risks and unintended negative side effects of extended periods of

monetary easing. We recognize that strengthened and sustained growth will be accompanied by an eventual transition toward the normalization of monetary policies. Our central banks have committed that future changes to monetary policy settings will continue to be carefully calibrated and clearly communicated.

15. We reiterate that excess volatility of financial flows and disorderly movements in exchange rates can have adverse implications for economic and financial stability, as observed recently in some emerging markets. Generally stronger policy frameworks in these countries allow them to better deal with these challenges. Sound macroeconomic policies, structural reforms and strong prudential frameworks will help address an increase in volatility. We will continue to monitor financial market conditions carefully.
16. We commit to cooperate to ensure that policies implemented to support domestic growth also support global growth and financial stability and to manage their spillovers on other countries.
17. We reiterate our commitments to move more rapidly toward more market-determined exchange rate systems and exchange rate flexibility to reflect underlying fundamentals, and avoid persistent exchange rate misalignments. We will refrain from competitive devaluation and will not target our exchange rates for competitive purposes. We will resist all forms of protectionism and keep our markets open.
18. We are also committed to strengthening the foundations for long-term growth through implementing ambitious and targeted reforms designed to ensure fiscal sustainability, boost investment, increase productivity and labor force participation, and address internal and external imbalances.
19. Achieving a stronger and sustainable recovery, while ensuring fiscal sustainability in advanced economies remains critical. As agreed, all advanced economies have developed credible, ambitious, and country-specific medium-term fiscal strategies. These strategies will be implemented flexibly to take into account near-term economic conditions, so as to support economic growth

and job creation, while putting debt as a share of GDP on a sustainable path. A number of emerging market economies have also laid out key elements of their strategies to promote fiscal sustainability.

20. Recognizing the need to push ahead more urgently with important structural reforms, we have reset our reform agenda along more relevant, concrete and well-targeted lines. Members have committed to a wide range of reforms to strengthen the foundations for strong, sustainable and balanced growth over the long term by boosting investment, addressing fundamental weaknesses, enhancing productivity and competitiveness, increasing labour force participation, improving financial stability and credit access, and addressing internal and external imbalances. These reforms are key to achieving a lasting improvement in potential growth, job creation and rebalancing demand.
21. We are determined to achieve more progress toward broad based rebalancing of global demand. While global current account imbalances have declined, reflecting in part important reforms in a number of countries, a substantial part of this progress has occurred due to demand compression. In order to ensure a durable improvement as global growth strengthens, we are determined to undertake further policy adjustments toward rebalancing global demand between surplus and deficit countries, as well as internal rebalancing. In this respect, it is essential to achieve stronger domestic demand growth in large surplus economies, increased savings and enhanced competitiveness in deficit economies and more flexible exchange rates. We are committed to actions in all these areas and will regularly assess progress.
22. The St Petersburg Action Plan sets forth our reforms for achieving strong, sustainable and balanced growth. Further, our Accountability Assessment describes the progress we have made on past commitments. We will identify the remaining key obstacles to be addressed and reforms needed to achieve

stronger, more sustainable and balanced growth in our economies. We ask our Finance Ministers to develop further the comprehensive growth strategies for presentation to the Brisbane Summit.

Growth through Quality Jobs

23. We remain united in our resolve to promote inclusive growth and more and better jobs.
24. Unemployment and underemployment in many countries, particularly among young people, remains one of the key challenges confronting the global economy and a top priority for the G20.
25. Creating more productive and better quality jobs is at the heart of our countries' policies aimed at achieving strong sustainable and balanced growth, poverty reduction and increasing social cohesion. We agree that strong and supportive macroeconomic, trade, investment, and labour market policies, sustainable public finance, a sound and well-regulated financial system, and resilient and effective social protection systems are the foundation for sustainable job-creating economic growth.
26. Policy reforms to support higher employment and facilitate job creation and better matching of skills with job opportunities are central in our growth strategies. We commit to take a broad-ranged action, tailored to national circumstances, to promote more and better jobs:
 - Improve business environment and stimulate the creation of formal, more productive and rewarding jobs, through pro-growth structural reforms in product and labour markets, including by promoting labour market adaptability and efficiency, ensuring adequate labour protection, as well as appropriate tax regimes and other government initiatives that may be required according to national circumstances.
 - Invest in our people's skills, quality education and life-

long learning programs to give them skill portability and better prospects, to facilitate mobility and enhance employability.

- Foster targeted investments to ensure that labour market infrastructure and effective labour activation policies are in place to help jobseekers find work and bring under-represented and vulnerable groups into the labour market and reduce informality.
 - Improve job quality, including through working conditions, wage bargaining frameworks, national wage-setting systems, and access to social protection.
 - Develop country-specific plans or sets of actions on employment and we will discuss the progress in Brisbane.
27. Coordinated and integrated public policies are crucial to achieving strong, sustainable, and balanced growth, and restoring confidence in the global economy. We endorse the recommendations of our Labour and Employment and Finance Ministers to mobilize, coordinate and integrate, our national policies (macroeconomic, financial, fiscal, education, skills development, innovation, employment, social protection) to promote the creation of quality jobs, while increasing productivity with full respect for Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, to ensure higher employment levels and a sustained decline in unemployment, underemployment and informal employment.
28. The joint meeting of our Labour and Employment and Finance Ministers, organized for the first time, was a welcome step towards coordination and integration of labour, employment and social policies with our macroeconomic and financial policies. We call upon our Ministers of Labour and Employment and our Ministers of Economy and Finance to continue to collaborate to promote quality job creation and job-rich and sustained growth. We encourage relevant international organizations including the ILO, the OECD, and the World Bank Group to analyze the recent experiences of the G20 countries and identify best practices that

have been most successful in creating more and better jobs, promoting labour formalization, reducing inequality, ensuring effective social protection and labour market adaptability, as inputs to future deliberations of the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers.

29. Promoting youth employment is a global priority. We are committed to quality apprenticeship and vocational training programmes, finding innovative ways to encourage firms to hire youth for example by, where appropriate, reducing non-wage labour costs, moving towards early intervention measures and effective job-search assistance for different groups of youth, and motivating youth entrepreneurship and business start-ups. Tailored strategies including youth guarantee approaches, developing school and university curricula that support entrepreneurship, and facilitating exchange of best practices among the G20 countries and the social partners are crucial in this respect.
30. We commit to increase our efforts to support inclusive labour markets, better labour market information and effective employment services, which will contribute to higher employment levels along with a sustained decline in unemployment, underemployment and informal employment. We agree that appropriate labour market and social policies can ensure better social cohesion, economic stabilization, support aggregate demand and medium to longer-term growth. Sound national social protection floors are needed, which are affordable, effective, efficient, and socially adequate. Our social protection policies should encourage employment and job-search, providing help if necessary. We commit to encourage the private sector, including small and medium sized enterprises as one of our most important partners, in fostering inclusive economic growth including for job creation and labour absorption. We encourage the IMF as well as other relevant international organizations to continue their research in the area of growth, employment and income distribution.
31. We recognize the importance of ensuring that underrepresented and vulnerable groups are given both incentives and support to

find productive and rewarding jobs. Special attention must be given to those groups facing the greatest barriers to finding or remaining in employment such as youth, women, long-term unemployed, low skilled workers, single parents, people with disabilities and older workers. We are committed therefore to develop and strengthen tailored activation strategies for these groups that combine income support for those out of work with measures to improve their employability through job search assistance, work experience, public employment programs, hiring subsidies, conditional transfers and training as well as reduced obstacles for employment as per country's circumstances. These measures should be linked to more general efforts to provide better opportunities to gain formal employment. We call upon our Ministers of Labour and Employment and Ministers of Finance to work together to exchange best practices and to deliver on implementation of this commitment with the support of the ILO, the OECD and the World Bank Group in identifying good practices and effective measures for more inclusive labour markets.

32. We confirm the importance of reporting progress in meeting our commitments and of sharing our experience of effective policies and measures. We consider the database prepared by the G20 Task Force on Employment as an important tool, which allows sharing best practices and ways to address labour market and employment challenges, and serves as an important source of information for the economic analyses and decision-making. This is particularly important for the employment and skills development of young people. We commit to continue to work and to broaden this approach including the scope of the database, to develop country owned and country specific monitoring methodologies, where necessary, and use the database when building upon our country owned and country specific policies.
33. We appreciate the contribution of the B20 and the L20 and acknowledge the crucial role of social dialogue as a means to achieve the G20 objectives of fostering growth, employment, and social cohesion.

34. We thank the G20 Task Force on Employment for its work, and extend its mandate for another year. We ask the G20 Task Force on Employment to continue exploring the issues related to economic and labour and employment policies, and to focus on strategies to address structural unemployment, especially among youth and the long-term unemployed, and on national social protection systems. This will build on the terms proposed by our Labour and Employment Ministers including for sharing of best practices and reviewing progress on the key elements identified on quality apprenticeships. We ask the Task Force to coordinate the exchange of country-specific plans or sets of actions on employment, developed as appropriate according to our different constitutional circumstances, working with the ILO, OECD and the World Bank Group. These reports should include information on the mix of policies and programs that will be used by participating G20 members to address their respective employment challenges. In addition, given the recurring loss to human life and assets across the world on account of unsafe working places, we direct the Task Force to partner with ILO in consultation with countries, and to consider how the G20 might contribute to safer workplaces. We encourage further cooperation and coordination between the Task Force on Employment and Framework and Development Working Groups on the activities related to the labour issues under the G20.

Financing for Investment

35. We recognize the key role of long-term investment for sustainable growth and job creation, as well as the importance of putting in place conditions that could promote long-term financing for investment, including in infrastructure and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), taking into consideration country-specific circumstances. In particular, we recognize the paramount importance of the investment climate in attracting long-term financing and will take a comprehensive approach to identifying and addressing impediments to the mobilization of private capital and improving underlying investment conditions and the efficiency of public investment.

36. To lift growth and create jobs by boosting investment, we commit to identify and start to implement by the Brisbane Summit a set of collective and country-specific actions that tangibly improve our domestic investment environments such that they are more favorable to long-term investment financing and can lead to an effective increase of implemented projects, particularly in infrastructure and for SMEs. These actions will be part of our country-growth strategies.
37. We endorse the Work plan prepared by the G20 Study Group on Financing for Investment (Annex). We call on our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors with input from relevant international organizations and in cooperation with other relevant G20 working groups to extend the analysis of the challenges associated with the availability of financing for long-term investment to drive well-founded, evidence-based policy initiatives. We look forward to the recommendations by our Finance Ministers at our next Summit informed by the reports of the relevant international organizations.
38. We agree in particular on the need for governments to promote policies that facilitate and encourage institutional investors to finance long-term investment consistent with their mandates and prudent risk-taking. We endorse the G20/OECD High-Level Principles of Long-Term Investment Financing by Institutional Investors (Annex) and ask our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to identify approaches to their implementation working with the OECD and other interested participants by the next Summit. We look forward to the FSB's ongoing monitoring of the impact of financial regulatory reforms on the supply of long-term investment financing.
39. We call on our Finance Ministers to identify measures by the next Summit to facilitate domestic capital market development and improve the intermediation of global savings for productive long-term investments, including in infrastructure, and to improve access to financing for SMEs. We ask Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to explore the ways in which private

financing and capital markets can be better mobilized. We also look forward to building on the ongoing work of the Multilateral Development Banks to develop new approaches in order to optimize the use of existing resources, including through leveraging private capital, and to strengthen their lending capacity. We take note of the work underway by the World Bank Group and Regional Development Banks to mobilize and catalyze additional financing for infrastructure investment, particularly in emerging markets and developing countries.

40. We recognize the importance of improving processes and transparency in the prioritization, planning, and funding of investment projects, especially in infrastructure, and in making better use of project preparation funds. Particular attention will also be given to ways to improve the design of and conditions for productive public-private partnership (PPP) arrangements.

Enhancing Multilateral Trade

41. Free trade and investment, and achieving the open, rules-based, transparent and non-discriminatory WTO-based trading system are crucial for restoring global growth. We underline the importance of trade as a key to economic growth, sustainable development and job creation globally and at national level.
42. We reaffirm the significance of the successful functioning of the multilateral trading system and its importance in ensuring proper rules enforcement. A successful outcome at the WTO Ministerial Conference (MC9) in Bali in December 2013 on trade facilitation, and some elements of agriculture and development issues, would be a stepping stone to further multilateral trade liberalization and progress in Doha Development Agenda negotiations, providing new confidence in successful post-Bali Doha round negotiations.
43. We call on all WTO members to show the necessary flexibilities in order to bridge existing gaps and deliver positive and balanced results at MC9. We stand ready to make significant contributions in these negotiations to achieve such results, delivering an early harvest at MC9 and demonstrating the credibility of the negotiating function of the WTO.

44. We recognize the risks of economic slowdown and trade weakening posed by protectionism. We extend until the end of 2016 our standstill commitment; being fully committed to further progress in removing barriers and impediments to global trade and investment, we reaffirm commitment to roll back new protectionist measures. With these commitments we stress the importance of further curbing protectionism through the WTO, and to this end we will endeavor to make MC9 successful as a step towards a successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round and as an impetus for negotiations on a roadmap to reach this goal.
45. We value monitoring of trade and investment restrictive/opening measures by the WTO, the OECD and the UNCTAD. We call on them to continue and reinforce this work consistent with their respective mandates so as to better resist protectionism and promote liberalization of global trade and investment. We welcome the WTO's public website providing transparency over these measures for the benefit of governments, private sector, and civil society.
46. Transparency is a cornerstone of the multilateral trading system. We are committed to timely complying with WTO notification requirements and enhancing transparency through the existing WTO rules.
47. We understand the importance of regional trade agreements (RTAs) and their contribution to trade and investment liberalization. We commit to ensure that RTAs support the multilateral trading system. Realizing that enhancing transparency in RTAs and understanding of RTAs and their effects on the further development of multilateral rules are of systemic interest to all G20 members, we are committed to continue our work on RTAs in the WTO, and share our approach for Advancing Transparency in Regional Trade Agreements (Annex).
48. We support the Transparency in Trade (TNT) Initiative, a partnership between the African Development Bank, the

International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Bank, which will provide for open use of the trade policy data and analysis system to identify new trade opportunities and facilitate trade flows. We also welcome the WTO's Integrated Trade Information Portal (I-TIP).

49. We recognize the importance of better understanding the rapid expansion of global value chains (GVCs) and impacts of participation in GVCs for growth, industrial structure, development and job creation. In this regard, we welcome the work done by the OECD, the WTO and the UNCTAD and ask them to seek the views of governments and continue their research on the impact of GVCs, particularly in relation to the influence of GVCs on trade, economic growth, development, job creation and distribution of value-added along GVCs. Identifying the opportunities and challenges of participation in GVCs and making available value-added trade statistics may help countries in due course to decide upon appropriate policymaking options to benefit from GVCs. . We call for the OECD in cooperation with the WTO and the UNCTAD to deliver a report in the first half of 2014.

Addressing Base Erosion and Profit Shifting, Tackling Tax Avoidance, and Promoting Tax Transparency and Automatic Exchange of Information

50. In a context of severe fiscal consolidation and social hardship, in many countries ensuring that all taxpayers pay their fair share of taxes is more than ever a priority. Tax avoidance, harmful practices and aggressive tax planning have to be tackled. The growth of the digital economy also poses challenges for international taxation. We fully endorse the ambitious and comprehensive Action Plan – originated in the OECD – aimed at addressing base erosion and profit shifting with mechanism to enrich the Plan as appropriate. We welcome the establishment of the G20/OECD BEPS project and we encourage all interested countries to participate. Profits should be taxed where economic activities deriving the profits are performed and where value is created. In

order to minimize BEPS, we call on member countries to examine how our own domestic laws contribute to BEPS and to ensure that international and our own tax rules do not allow or encourage multinational enterprises to reduce overall taxes paid by artificially shifting profits to low-tax jurisdictions. We acknowledge that effective taxation of mobile income is one of the key challenges. We look forward to regular reporting on the development of proposals and recommendations to tackle the 15 issues identified in the Action Plan and commit to take the necessary individual and collective action with the paradigm of sovereignty taken into consideration.

51. We commend the progress recently achieved in the area of tax transparency and we fully endorse the OECD proposal for a truly global model for multilateral and bilateral automatic exchange of information. Calling on all other jurisdictions to join us by the earliest possible date, we are committed to automatic exchange of information as the new global standard, which must ensure confidentiality and the proper use of information exchanged, and we fully support the OECD work with G20 countries aimed at presenting such a new single global standard for automatic exchange of information by February 2014 and to finalizing technical modalities of effective automatic exchange by mid-2014. In parallel, we expect to begin to exchange information automatically on tax matters among G20 members by the end of 2015. We call on all countries to join the Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters without further delay. We look forward to the practical and full implementation of the new standard on a global scale. We encourage the Global Forum to complete the allocation of comprehensive country ratings regarding the effective implementation of information exchange upon request and ensure that the implementation of the standards are monitored on a continuous basis. We urge all jurisdictions to address the Global Forum recommendations in particular those 14 that have not yet moved to Phase 2. We invite the Global Forum to draw on the work of the FATF with respect to beneficial ownership. We also ask the Global Forum to

establish a mechanism to monitor and review the implementation of the new global standard on automatic exchange of information.

52. Developing countries should be able to reap the benefits of a more transparent international tax system, and to enhance their revenue capacity, as mobilizing domestic resources is critical to financing development. We recognize the importance of all countries benefitting from greater tax information exchange. We are committed to make automatic exchange of information attainable by all countries, including LICs, and will seek to provide capacity building support to them. We call on the Development Working Group in conjunction with the Finance Track, to work with the OECD, the Global Forum and other IOs to develop a roadmap showing how developing countries can overcome obstacles to participation in the emerging new standard in automatic exchange of information, and to assist them in meeting the standard in accordance with the action envisaged in the St Petersburg Development Outlook. The Working Group should report back by our next meeting. Working with international organizations, we will continue to share our expertise, help build capacity, and engage in long-term partnership programmes to secure success. In this respect, we welcome the OECD Tax Inspectors without Borders initiative, which aims to share knowledge and increase domestic capacities in developing countries in the tax area. Finally, we are committed to continue to assist developing countries, including through the IOs, in identifying individual country needs and building capacity in the area of tax administration (in addition to automatic exchange of information) and encourage such support to be developing country led.

14 International Financial Architecture

53. Completing the ongoing reforms of IMF governance is indispensable for enhancing the Fund's credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness. For this reason, the ratification of the 2010 IMF Quota and Governance Reform is urgently needed. We continue to support the IMF Executive Board's decision to integrate the process of reaching a final agreement on a new quota formula

with the 15th General Review of Quotas. We remain committed, together with the whole IMF membership, to agree on the quota formula and complete the 15th General Quota Review by January 2014 as agreed at the Seoul Summit and reiterated in Cannes and Los Cabos. We attach high importance to securing continued progress in meeting this objective, including by the time of the October 2013 G20 Ministerial and IMFC meetings. We reaffirm our previous commitment that the distribution of quotas based on the formula should better reflect the relative weights of IMF members in the world economy, which have changed substantially in view of strong GDP growth in dynamic emerging market and developing countries. We reaffirm the need to protect the voice and representation of the IMF poorest members as part of this General Review of Quotas.

54. Recognizing the importance of effective global safety nets, in Los Cabos we welcomed the commitments to increase temporary resources available to the IMF by US\$ 461 billion made by a significant number of countries. Today we are pleased to announce that the vast majority of these committed resources have been made available to the IMF through bilateral loan or note purchase agreements. This broad cooperative effort demonstrates the international community's determination to enhance the IMF's role in crisis prevention and resolution and thus contribute to safeguarding global financial stability.
55. We also reiterate that Regional Financing Arrangements (RFAs) can play an important role in the existing global financial safety net. We reaffirm the common principles for cooperation between the IMF and RFAs that we adopted in Cannes, which emphasize the importance of cooperation while safeguarding the mandate and independence of the respective institutions. Recognizing recent work undertaken in this area by both the IMF and G20, we look forward to a flexible and voluntary dialogue between the IMF and RFAs on an ongoing basis through well-established communication channels. We take note of the importance of a dialogue among RFAs to foster an informal exchange of views and experiences in a flexible and voluntary way. In this context,

we ask our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to follow the developments and progress in the IMF-RFA cooperation, as well as the dialogue among RFAs.

56. Strengthening existing public debt management practices is important to achieve more resilient public finances. We welcome the ongoing work by the IMF and World Bank Group to review and update the “Guidelines for Public Debt Management” in light of recent experiences. We ask our Finance Ministers to consider, at their October meeting, progress in updating the Guidelines, and review the OECD’s interim report on updating its leading practices for raising, managing, and retiring public debt, including on state guarantees.
57. Events in recent years have shown the importance of debt sustainability for all. We, therefore, endorse continued attention to this issue by the IMF and the World Bank. We also support the implementation of the IMF-World Bank Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries and will take the Framework into consideration in order to better inform our practices and promote sustainable financing and sustainable growth and development through appropriate channels. We agree that further inclusive discussions with low-income countries are needed on these issues, including on the possibility of developing guidelines for sustainable financing. We ask the IMF and the World Bank to continue assisting low-income countries at their request in developing prudent medium-term debt management strategies and enhancing their debt management capacity.
58. We note the work undertaken by the IMF and BIS in developing indicators that reflect global liquidity conditions, looking both at price and quantity-based measures. We call on the Fund to carry out further research with a view to develop proposals on how to incorporate global liquidity indicators more broadly into the Fund’s surveillance work.
59. We reiterate that well developed local currency bond markets (LCBMs) play an important role in improving the resilience of the domestic economy and financial systems. We welcome the work

of the IMF, the World Bank Group, the EBRD OECD and other IOs to implement the G20 Action Plan on the Development of LCBMs, including through the creation of a Diagnostic Framework on LCBM. We encourage International Organizations, other technical assistance providers, and country authorities to consider the use of the Diagnostic Framework in identifying and setting reform and capacity building priorities in support of LCBM development.

60. We will fulfill our commitment to contribute to a successful International Development Association (IDA) 17 Replenishment, as well as African Development Fund (AfDF) 13 Replenishment.

Financial Regulation

Achievements to date and a road ahead

61. In the past five years, we have made substantial progress in implementing internationally consistent reforms to our financial systems. All major jurisdictions, in part or in full, have:
- implemented new global capital standards (Basel 3);
 - completed the necessary frameworks for OTC derivatives to be traded on exchanges or electronic trading platforms, centrally cleared, and reported;
 - identified global systemically important banks and insurers, and agreed to subject them to heightened prudential standards to mitigate the risks they pose;
 - implemented agreed tools and procedures for the orderly resolution of large, complex financial institutions without taxpayer loss; and
 - progressed in addressing potential systemic risks to financial stability emanating from the shadow-banking system.

The international coordination and commitment to the implementation of these reforms is unprecedented. But we have more work to do. We are committed to maintain the momentum of reform until the job is done.

Towards a financial system that supports strong, sustainable and balanced economic growth

62. Since our commitments in Washington in November 2008 we have agreed and are implementing a broad range of policy reforms that address the major fault lines that caused the crisis, and ensure that all financial institutions, markets and participants are regulated or subject to oversight appropriate to their circumstances in an internationally consistent and non-discriminatory way. Our work has advanced substantially, but is not yet complete. We are fully committed to tackling systemic risk. We are building more resilient financial institutions, making substantial progress towards ending too-big-to-fail, increasing transparency and market integrity, filling regulatory gaps and addressing the risks from shadow banking. We are promoting continuously functioning financial markets by making derivatives markets safer, strengthening market infrastructure and reforming credit rating agencies.
63. We are committed to fully realizing the benefits of an open, integrated and resilient global financial system. To this end, we will continue to take necessary actions in each of our jurisdictions to fully implement the agreed reforms in a consistent and non-discriminatory way. We will enhance cooperation and information sharing.
64. We are promoting financial regulatory reforms targeted at reducing moral hazard and systemic risk and fostering a stable financial system that supports sustainable and balanced economic growth. Thus, we welcome the establishment this year of the FSB as a legal entity with greater financial autonomy and enhanced capacity to coordinate the development and implementation of financial regulatory policies. We also welcome the FSB overall and narrative progress reports on financial regulatory reform, prepared for our Summit, and the substantial progress achieved to date. We support the FSB's intention to review the structure of its representation and ask the FSB to report on this review to our next Summit.

65. We commend the progress made by the FSB together with standard setting bodies and the IMF and the World Bank Group in monitoring the effects of evolving regulatory reforms on emerging markets and developing economies (EMDEs) with the view to address material unintended consequences without prejudice to our commitment to implement the agreed reforms. We ask the IMF, the World Bank Group and standard setting bodies to step up their monitoring, analysis and assistance in this area. Lastly, we encourage the FSB to continue to monitor, analyze and report on the effects of evolving regulatory reforms on EMDEs as a part of its overall implementation monitoring framework.
66. We are resolved to see the financial reform agenda through to its completion in a manner that avoids fragmenting the global financial system. We will continue to cooperate on all financial regulation issues and look forward to further progress by our Finance Ministers, Central Bank Governors and the FSB when we next meet. We will also continue to monitor and assess the impact of financial regulatory reforms on the robustness of the financial system, stability and on economic growth, and on the availability of long-term finance for investment.

Building resilient financial institutions and ending “too-big-to-fail”

67. We reiterate our commitment to implement Basel III according to internationally agreed timelines and welcome the progress that has been made since Los Cabos. It is imperative that the Basel III standards are consistently applied. We therefore welcome the work of the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) to assess the consistency of jurisdictions' rules with Basel III and their updated progress report on Basel III implementation. We also welcome the recent BCBS report on the regulatory consistency of risk-weighted assets. We look forward to the work by the BCBS to improve comparability of regulatory capital ratios. We expect the BCBS to finalize its proposals on the remaining components agreed to in the Basel III framework – the internationally harmonized leverage ratio and the net stable funding ratio - in line with agreed timelines and procedures.

68. We welcome the FSB report on the progress made and next steps towards ending "too big to fail". We renew our commitment to make any necessary reforms to implement fully the FSB's Key Attributes of Effective Resolution Regimes for all parts of the financial sector that could cause systemic problems. We will undertake the necessary actions to remove obstacles to cross-border resolution. We reaffirm our commitment to ensure that supervisors have strong mandates, adequate resources and independence to act. We call on the FSB, in consultation with standard setting bodies, to assess and develop proposals by end-2014 on the adequacy of global systemically important financial institutions' loss absorbing capacity when they fail. We recognize that structural banking reforms can facilitate resolvability and call on the FSB, in collaboration with the IMF and the OECD, to assess cross-border consistencies and global financial stability implications, taking into account country-specific circumstances, and report to our next Summit.
69. We welcome the publication of the initial list of global systemically important insurers (G-SIIs), to which resolution planning and enhanced group-wide supervision will initially apply. We look forward to its annual update and to the finalization of a straightforward, group-wide capital requirement by the International Association of Insurance Supervisors by the next G20 Summit in 2014 that will serve as a foundation for higher loss absorbency requirements for G-SIIs. In addition, we look forward to its further work to develop a comprehensive, group-wide supervisory and regulatory framework for internationally active insurance groups, including a quantitative capital standard.
70. We ask the FSB, in consultation with the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) and other standard setting bodies, to develop for public consultation methodologies for identifying global systemically important non-bank non-insurance financial institutions by end-2013. We call on the Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems and IOSCO to continue their work on systemically important market infrastructures.

Promoting transparent, continuously functioning financial markets

71. We welcome the FSB's report on progress in over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives reforms, including members' confirmed actions and committed timetables to put the agreed OTC derivatives reforms into practice. We also welcome the recent set of understandings by key regulators on cross-border issues related to OTC derivatives reforms, as a major constructive step forward for resolving remaining conflicts, inconsistencies, gaps and duplicative requirements globally, and look forward to speedy implementation of these understandings once regimes are in force and available for assessment. We agree that jurisdictions and regulators should be able to defer to each other when it is justified by the quality of their respective regulatory and enforcement regimes, based on similar outcomes, in a non-discriminatory way, paying due respect to home country regulation regimes. We call on regulators in cooperation with the FSB and the OTC Derivatives Regulators Group to report on their timeline to settle the remaining issues related to overlapping cross-border regulatory regimes, and regulatory arbitrage.
72. We note the outcomes of the G20 high-level seminar on benchmarks and credit rating agencies. We call on national authorities and standard setting bodies to accelerate progress in reducing reliance on credit rating agencies, in accordance with the FSB roadmap. We encourage further steps to enhance transparency and competition among credit rating agencies and look forward to IOSCO's review of its Code of Conduct for credit rating agencies. We support the establishment of the FSB's Official Sector Steering Group to coordinate work on the necessary reforms of financial benchmarks. We endorse IOSCO's Principles for Financial Benchmarks and look forward to reform as necessary of the benchmarks used internationally in the banking industry and financial markets, consistent with the IOSCO Principles.
73. We welcome the FSB's progress report on the implementation of the principles and standards for sound compensation practices. We reaffirm our commitment to ensure that these principles and

standards are implemented in a consistent manner and ask the FSB to continue its ongoing monitoring.

74. We underline the importance of continuing work on accounting standards convergence in order to enhance resilience of financial system. We urge the International Accounting Standards Board and the US Financial Accounting Standards Board to complete by the end of 2013 their work on key outstanding projects for achieving a single set of high-quality accounting standards. We encourage further efforts by the public and private sector to enhance financial institutions' disclosures of the risks they face, including the ongoing work of the Enhanced Disclosure Task Force.
75. We reiterate our call for further progress and encourage adherence to international cooperation and information exchange standards for financial supervision and regulation.

Addressing risks posed by the shadow banking

76. We welcome the progress achieved in developing policy recommendations for the oversight and regulation of the shadow banking system, as an important step in mitigating the potential systemic risks associated with this market while recognizing that nonbank financial intermediation can provide an alternative to banks in extending credit to support the economy. We will work towards timely implementation of the recommendations while taking into account country specific circumstances. We welcome the respective FSB reports and agreed on a straightforward roadmap (Annex) for work on relevant shadow banking entities and activities with clear deadlines and actions to progress rapidly towards strengthened and comprehensive oversight and regulation appropriate to the systemic risks posed.

Tackling money laundering and terrorism financing

77. We reiterate our commitment to FATF's work in fighting money laundering and terrorism financing and its key contribution into tackling other crimes such as tax crimes, corruption, terrorism, and drug trafficking. In particular, we support the identification

and monitoring of high-risk jurisdictions with strategic anti-money laundering (AML)/countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) deficiencies while recognizing the countries' positive progress in fulfilling the FATF's standards. We encourage all countries to tackle the risks raised by opacity of legal persons and legal arrangements, and we commit to take measures to ensure that we meet the FATF standards regarding the identification of the beneficial owners of companies and other legal arrangements such as trusts that are also relevant for tax purposes. We will ensure that this information is available in a timely fashion to law enforcement, tax collection agencies and other relevant authorities in accordance with the confidentiality legal requirements, for example through central registries or other appropriate mechanisms. We ask our Finance Ministers to update us by our next meeting on the steps taken to meet FATF standards regarding the beneficial ownership of companies and other legal arrangements such as trusts by G20 countries leading by example.

Financial Inclusion, Financial Education, Consumer Protection

78. We welcome the progress made by the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPFI) on advancing financial inclusion and integrating consumer empowerment and protection, particularly through the establishment of the GPFI subgroup focused on Financial Consumer Protection and Financial Literacy. We endorse the extension of the G20 Basic Set into a more holistic set of the G20 Financial Inclusion Indicators, thereby enabling more informed financial inclusion target setting and monitoring. We acknowledge the support from the implementing partners, including the Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI), Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), IFC, OECD and the World Bank. We endorse the recommendations laid out in the GPFI's report, annexed to this Declaration, and commit to further pursue these efforts under the Australian Presidency. We welcome the discussions of the AFI members to establish the organization as an independent international institution.

79. Recognizing the key role of small- and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) for promoting growth, job creation and poverty reduction, we welcome the progress made at the country level to address the specific challenges in access to finance faced by SMEs through the implementation of the SME Finance Challenge and the SME finance Initiative as well as the support for peer learning through the SME Finance Compact in cooperation with the Working Group on SME Finance of the AFI. As the SME finance gap remains large worldwide, we call upon the IFI/DFIs to further improve financial market infrastructure and to support the development of innovative tools to address the SMEs finance challenges and constraints.
80. We welcome practical tools to measure financial literacy and evaluate financial education programs, developed by the OECD/ International Network for Financial Education (INFE) and the World Bank Group, support their widespread use in countries along with instruments to measure youth financial literacy such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). We also look forward to the development of international core competencies frameworks for adults and youth on financial literacy by the OECD/INFE by our next Summit. We welcome progress reports on barriers for women and youth in financial inclusion and education prepared by the OECD/INFE and the World Bank Group and endorse the OECD/INFE policy guidance on addressing women and girls' needs for financial education. We endorse the recommendations of the progress report on women and finance, including that the GPFI, the OECD and the World Bank Group conduct a stocktaking of promising and successful initiatives to enhance women's financial inclusion. We welcome the G20 Russia's Presidency and the OECD publication on national strategies for financial education and look forward to the development by the OECD/INFE of a Policy Handbook on the Implementation of National Strategies for Financial Education by our next Summit. We support the work done by the G20/ OECD Task Force on Financial Consumer Protection on the first set of effective approaches to support the implementation of the

G20 High-Level Principles on Financial Consumer Protection and look forward to their report on other principles in 2014. We take note of the formalization process of the FinCoNet and look forward to its conclusion.

Promoting Development for All

81. Supporting strong, sustainable, inclusive and resilient growth and narrowing the development gap remain critical to our overall objective for jobs and growth. In this regard, we welcome the progress within the forum achieved this year, in particular on:

- Food Security: Support to the Secure Nutrition Knowledge Platform, exchange of best practices through the seminar on "Food Security through Social Safety Nets and Risk Management", and convening the second G20 Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists, along with its ongoing work to identify global research priorities and targets and support results-based agricultural research in 2014.
- Infrastructure: Completion of the Assessment of Project Preparation Facilities (PPFs) for Infrastructure in Africa; a toolkit on Urban Mass Transportation Infrastructure Projects in Medium and Large Cities by the World Bank and the ADB; and a public-private partnerships (PPP) sourcebook by the World Bank, IDB and ADB, and progress in implementing the recommendations of the High Level Panel on Infrastructure.
- Financial Inclusion: Enhanced coherence with the G20 finance track through the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPII) to pursue efforts to strengthen financial inclusion including work to further reducing the global average cost of transferring remittances to 5% including through innovative result-based mechanisms, to enhance financial literacy and consumer protection for the poor and to foster access to finance for investment, for SMEs for growth, job creation and poverty reduction; and together with the IFC launching the Women Finance Hub.

- Human Resource Development: Launch of a global public-private knowledge sharing platform on skills for employment and the development of national actions plans on skills for employment in LICs and of a database on skills indicators.
 - Inclusive Green Growth: Further development, dissemination and implementation of the non-prescriptive, voluntary toolkit of policy options for inclusive green growth in the context of sustainable development, including a workshop with developing countries, and initiation of the G20 Dialogue Platform on Inclusive Green Investments for sustainable development and poverty eradication.
 - Domestic Resource Mobilization: Continued work on strengthening tax administrations in developing countries, particularly LIC's, through both bilateral and multilateral programs, such as the work of the OECD and G20 members on BEPS, automatic exchange of information, the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes and "Tax Inspectors without Borders" and the expansion of the work of the World Bank Group and the IMF to support developing countries' ability to raise domestic resources.
82. We acknowledge that food security and nutrition will remain a top priority in our agenda. We recognize the importance of boosting agricultural productivity, investment and trade to strengthen the global food system to promote economic growth and job creation. We encourage all ongoing efforts in the agricultural sector to further reduce hunger, under-nutrition and malnutrition, through increased coordination in the G20 to promote the identification and implementation of effective actions in support of production and productivity growth as well as enhancement of food security and nutrition for vulnerable population through, among others, nutrition sensitive policies and comprehensive social protection systems, with particular emphasis on low income

countries. We support discussions in the WTO to respond to legitimate food security concerns, without distorting trade, including those related to carefully targeted policies to protect vulnerable populations. We recognize that the agricultural market situation needs closer attention and that the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) is generating better transparency and still needs more efforts to be fully implemented. We reaffirm our determination to implement all previous G20 commitments and existing initiatives including that stated in the Action Plan on Food Price Volatility and Agriculture which the G20 endorsed in 2011.

83. We welcome the Saint Petersburg Accountability Report on G20 Development Commitments, which sets out the progress achieved since we adopted the 2010 Seoul Multi-Year Action Plan on Development (MYAP) (Annex). This report demonstrates that many of our development commitments have now been implemented and identifies lessons learned and it highlights the successes achieved. The Accountability Report underlines the importance of continued monitoring and identifies areas where we must continue to work and opportunities to strengthen and streamline the G20 development agenda.
84. In this spirit, we endorse the Saint Petersburg Development Outlook, which states our core priorities, new initiatives and ongoing commitments (Annex). Building on the foundation of the 2010 Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth, the Outlook frames the approach to our future work. We ask the Development Working Group to focus on concrete actions under the core priorities of food security, financial inclusion and remittances, infrastructure, human resource development and domestic resource mobilization, and to deliver specific outcomes at the Brisbane summit. We commit to improve working practices for more effective outcomes by:
 - concentrating on fewer key areas where action and reform remain most critical to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth in developing countries;

- enhancing policy coordination across different G20 work streams in order to ensure greater impact on developing countries;
 - implementing a forward accountability process to improve monitoring and coordination, and ensure greater transparency of our work;
 - continuing to expand engagement and partnerships with stakeholders, including non-G20 countries (especially LICs), international organizations, the private sector and civil society;
 - ensuring flexible approaches to respond to new priorities and circumstances.
85. We welcome the substantial progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) since 2000 and the success in galvanizing global action to reach specific targets globally, as well as in individual countries, particularly in eradicating extreme poverty and promoting development. However, the prospects for achieving all of the MDGs differ sharply across and within countries and regions. We remain committed to accelerating progress towards achieving the MDGs, particularly through the implementation of our development agenda and our focus on promoting strong, sustainable, inclusive and resilient growth.
86. We support the ongoing efforts in the UN for the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. We commit to participate actively in this process and engage in the discussion on the direction of the new framework and its key principles and ideas and effectively contribute to the timely conclusion of the process. The final outcome will be determined through an intergovernmental process in which we will all participate, but much preparatory work is still underway. We welcome the contribution of the report prepared by the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which sets out some illustrative goals. We also welcome the ongoing

work of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing. We stress the crucial importance of collective action, including international development cooperation, based on the principles outlined in the Millennium Declaration, the 2012 Rio+20 outcome document "The Future We Want", the Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action of the Fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries and the outcomes of other relevant UN Conferences and Summits in the economic, social and environmental fields.

87. We call for an agreement on an integrated post-2015 development agenda with concise, implementable and measurable goals taking into account different national realities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities, focused both on the eradication of extreme poverty, promoting development and on balancing the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. We commit to ensure that G20 activities beyond 2015 are coherent with the new development framework.
88. To improve rapid and effective responses to the outbreak of new diseases that threaten human life and disrupt economic activity, we call on countries to strengthen compliance with the World Health Organization's International Health Regulations.
89. We acknowledge the progress already made by G20 members on duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) market access for the LDCs products.

Sustainable Energy Policy and Resilience of Global Commodity Markets

90. Access to energy is a key factor to achieve better quality of life and to improve global economic performance. Access to reliable and affordable energy is particularly critical to the development agenda, poverty eradication and social inclusion. Transparent, well-functioning, reliable energy markets and sufficient investment

are needed to boost economic growth, job creation and sustainable development.

91. To promote market transparency and efficiency, we commit to strengthen Joint Organizations Data Initiative (JODI) - Oil by ensuring greater visibility, more complete and comprehensive data, enhanced access and improved availability, and by maintaining support for capacity building. We look forward to the launch of JODI-Gas at earliest date possible. We note the second report prepared by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Energy Forum (IEF) and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in May 2013 on practical steps to increase transparency in international gas and coal markets. We ask the IEF to come back with a report on progress in these areas before the next G20 Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors meeting in October.
92. We welcome the Report on energy-related issues including on G20 work to facilitate better functioning of physical and financial commodity markets. We welcome Finance ministers' commitment to take actions on PRAs as set out in their Communique of July 20, 2013 with a view to improve their functioning through transparency and regulation as appropriate, and would welcome a further update in 2014. We also call on Finance ministers to monitor on a regular basis the proper implementation of IOSCO's principles for the regulation and supervision on commodity derivatives markets and encourage broader publishing and unrestricted access to aggregated open interest data.
93. We welcome efforts aimed at promoting sustainable development, energy efficiency, inclusive green growth and clean energy technologies and energy security for the long term prosperity and well being of current and future generations in our countries. We will continue in cooperation with international organisations sharing national experiences and case studies regarding sustainable development, clean energy, and energy efficiency as well as development, deployment and broader application of related technologies and will take forward work, on a voluntary

basis, on corresponding policy options and technologies. We take note of the new World Bank report 'Toward a Sustainable Energy Future for All', which aims to promote access to reliable and affordable energy in developing countries and recognise the importance of the sustainable and responsible production and use of modern bioenergy and the role played by the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP) in this regard.

94. We reaffirm our commitment to rationalise and phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption over the medium term while being conscious of necessity to provide targeted support for the poorest. We welcome the efforts underway in some G20 countries as described in the country progress reports. We welcome the development of a methodology for a voluntary peer review process and the initiation of country-owned peer reviews and we encourage broad voluntary participation in reviews as a valuable means of enhanced transparency and accountability. We ask Finance Ministers to report back by the next Summit on outcomes from the first rounds of voluntary peer reviews. Recognising the importance of providing those in need with essential energy services, we ask Finance Ministers to consider, in conjunction with the relevant international institutions, policy options for designing transitional policies including strengthening social safety nets to ensure access for the most vulnerable.
95. Sizable investment, including from private sources, will be needed in the G20 and other economies in energy infrastructure in the years ahead to support global growth and development. It is our common interest to assess existing obstacles and identify opportunities to facilitate more investment into more smart and low-carbon energy infrastructure, particularly in clean and sustainable electricity infrastructure where feasible. In this regard we encourage a closer engagement of private sector and multilateral development banks with the G20 Energy Sustainability Working Group (ESWG) and call for a dialogue to be launched on its basis in 2014 that will bring interested public sector, market players and international organizations together to discuss the

factors hindering energy investment, including in clean and energy efficient technologies and to scope possible measures needed to promote sustainable, affordable, efficient and secure energy supply.

96. Regulation among other policy levers can play an important role in creating a proper context for investment. Noting that regulatory roles differ from country to country and that regulation remains a country-led process, but in some cases is shared within regional integration space, we welcome the dialogue between interested G20 national power sector regulators supported by regulatory associations and international organisations, and take note of the statement they have provided on sound regulation and promoting investment in energy infrastructure agreed at the G20 Outreach Energy Regulators Round Table in Kazan. In the context of our efforts to promote investment in energy infrastructure, notably in clean, affordable and sustainable energy, and in order to engage all interested parties, we encourage interested regulators to continue their dialogue and ask the ESWG to take note of this dialogue.
97. Many countries are trying to improve their energy mix and use, such as by promoting renewable and/or nuclear energy. Nuclear power is a low-carbon option, but it is capital intensive and comes with responsibilities for nuclear safety, security and safeguards/nonproliferation. G20 countries, whether nascent or established nuclear power producers should strive for the highest possible level of nuclear safety, to foster robust nuclear safety and nuclear security cultures and, as called for in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, we encourage multilateral cooperation towards achieving a global nuclear liability regime.
98. We appreciate the progress achieved since the establishment of the G20 Global Marine Environment Protection (GMEP) Initiative and welcome the launch of the GMEP Initiative website as a key element of the GMEP Mechanism for the voluntary exchange of national best practices to protect the marine environment, in particular to prevent accidents related to offshore oil and gas

exploration and development, as well as marine transportation, and to deal with their consequences. We encourage participants to make full use of the website and share relevant information under the auspices of the G20 in cooperation with relevant international organizations in accordance with the GMEP mandates.

99. We recognize the value of multilateral cooperation and coordination in advancing the global energy security agenda through resilient energy markets and welcome the IEA's current efforts to deepen its engagement with non-members and will monitor progress in this regard.

Pursuing the Fight against Climate Change

100. Climate change will continue to have a significant impact on the world economy, and cost will be higher to the extent we delay additional actions. We reiterate our commitment to fight climate change and welcome the outcome of the 18th conference of the Parties to the UN climate change conferences. We are committed to a full implementation of the outcomes of Cancun, Durban and Doha and will work with Poland as the incoming presidency towards achieving a successful outcome at COP 19.
101. We are committed to support the full implementation of the agreed outcomes under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its ongoing negotiations. We strongly welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to mobilize political will through 2014 towards the successful adoption of a protocol, another legal instrument, or an agreed outcome with legal force under the convention applicable to all Parties by 2015, during COP-21 that France stands ready to host. We also support complementary initiatives, through multilateral approaches that include using the expertise and the institutions of the Montreal Protocol to phase down the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), based on the examination of economically viable and technically feasible alternatives. We will continue to include HFCs within the scope of UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol for accounting and reporting of emissions.

102. Taking note of the developments over the past year, we support the operationalization of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). We welcome the report of the G20 Climate Finance Study Group on G20 countries' experiences on ways to effectively mobilize climate finance taking into account the objectives, provisions, and principles of the UNFCCC. For the purpose of elaborating on the issues and identifying approaches to climate finance, we ask our Finance Ministers to continue the work building on the working group report and report back to us in one year.

Intensifying Fight Against Corruption

103. Corruption is a severe impediment to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction and can threaten financial stability and the economy as a whole. Corruption is corrosive, destroying public trust, distorting the allocation of resources and undermining the rule of law. To provide a better understanding of the factors constraining the economic potential of countries affected by corruption, we make available the Issues Paper on Anti-Corruption and Economic Growth and encourage the OECD, in collaboration with the World Bank to continue work in this area.
104. As a group of the world's largest economies, the G20 has the potential to create unstoppable momentum towards a global culture of intolerance towards corruption. We will redouble our efforts to achieve this goal, in particular by enhancing transparency and closing implementation and enforcement gaps. In this regard
105. We warmly welcome the ratification by Saudi Arabia of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). We will continue to encourage all G20 member-countries to ratify and implement the UNCAC, and encourage engagement with the OECD Working Group on Bribery with a view to explore possible adherence to the OECD Anti-bribery Convention as appropriate. We commit to lead by example by enhancing the transparency and inclusivity of our UNCAC reviews by making use on a voluntary basis of the options in the Terms of Reference to the UNCAC Review Mechanism.

106. We reiterate our determination to combat domestic and foreign bribery, as well as solicitation, and endorse the non-binding Guiding Principles on Enforcement of the Foreign Bribery Offence and the Guiding Principles to Combat Solicitation.
107. We will continue to develop and strengthen frameworks to facilitate cooperation among G20 member-countries in the fight against corruption. We have established a G20 network to share information and cooperate in order to deny entry to our countries by corrupt officials and those who corrupt them, in accordance with national laws and regulations. To enhance international collaboration in the investigation and prosecution of corruption offences, as well as in the recovery of proceeds of corruption, we endorse the High-Level Principles on Mutual Legal Assistance.
108. We renew our commitment to ensure the independence of the judiciary, as well as to share best practices and enforce legislation to protect whistleblowers, ensure the effectiveness of anti-corruption authorities free from any undue influence, and promote the integrity of public officials.
109. We also place a high value on implementing and raising awareness regarding effective anti-corruption education programs to build and reinforce a culture of intolerance towards corruption.
110. We express support for the FATF's ongoing work in the anti-corruption field. Leveraging anti-money laundering (AML)/countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) measures to fight corruption will remain a significant area of growing cooperation between anti-corruption experts of the G20 and FATF as well as increasing cooperation against tax crimes, addressing the risks posed by tax havens.
111. We will pay special attention to combating corruption in high-risk sectors. We commend the efforts to fight corruption in organization of sporting, cultural and other major international events and welcome the initiative to develop a Global Alliance for Integrity in Sports. We also commit to promote integrity in buy-and-sell relations between

the public and private sectors, including public procurement and privatization of state-owned property. We welcome initiatives aimed at increasing extractive transparency, including voluntary participation in the Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and take note of the progress. We ask the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group to further follow this issue.

112. We recognize that a culture of intolerance towards corruption will only be achieved if we work in partnership with business and civil society. We commit to maintain and build on the enhanced dialogue between the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group and the B20 and C20, and have taken note of the recommendations of these two groups. In particular, we welcome the business community's initiatives to enhance anti-corruption collective actions and to develop institutional arrangements to promote anti-corruption compliance in the private sector.
113. We welcome the progress which the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group is making to implement its 2013-14 Action Plan and commend its Progress Report which is annexed to this statement. Recognizing that the fight against corruption will require sustained, concerted effort, we endorse the St. Petersburg Strategic Framework to guide the work of the ACWG and provide a foundation for the Action Plans. In 2014, we will advance our existing commitments and consider further G20 actions on the global fight against corruption.

Conclusion

114. We thank Russia for its G20 Presidency and for hosting the successful Saint Petersburg Summit, and we look forward to our next meeting in Brisbane in November 2014 under the Australian Presidency.



107 Prime Minister's on-board briefing en route from St. Petersburg G20 Summit.

St. Petersburg, September 7, 2013.

Prime Minister of India (Dr. Manmohan Singh): Ladies and Gentlemen, the Group of 20 is on the international plane an essay in persuasion. In that context I believe we had a very successful G20 meeting. The Leaders' Declaration and the St. Petersburg Action Plan are in line with the position we had advocated in the meeting. You have seen the documents. So, I will not attempt to summarise their contents. But I would be happy to answer questions.

We also had a very useful BRICS meeting. The Leaders confirmed that agreement has been reached on the 100 billion dollar currency arrangement. There is also progress on the BRICS Bank which will lead to a concrete proposal by the next BRICS meeting.

On the sidelines of the Summit I had a brief discussion with the Prime Minister of Japan, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister of Japan, and we have agreed to raise the limit of the swap arrangement between our two countries from 15 billion dollars to 50 billion dollars. This is something by way of a second line of defence for our currency.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Questions now.

Q: Sir, what are the important takeaways for India from the G20?

Prime Minister: As I said, G20 is at the international level an essay in persuasion about good practices. The Leaders' Declaration and the Action Programme reflect our concerns that the world economy is not in good shape, that all countries who have influence in global affairs must work together to revive the growth process. In particular we have been arguing at Los Cabos that infrastructure development is a commodity which can contribute to revival of growth as well as acceleration of the development process. And that is reflected in the Action Programme and also in the statements that were made by the President of the World Bank that they are working on a world infrastructure financing facility. If that comes about, it will certainly help us greatly.

Q: Sir, what kind of a role do you see BRICS playing in the global economy and India's contribution to it as well?

Prime Minister: BRICS is an important factor in the world economy because China, Russia, South Africa, Brazil and India together command a significant proportion of the GDP and trade of the world and, therefore, whatever happens inside or to the development process in these countries has an influence all over the world. I mentioned that as concrete acts the BRICS countries have agreed to a 100 billion dollar currency reserve arrangement. There is also agreement to start a BRICS Bank with 50 billion dollars, and the concrete proposal is now being finalized and will be brought before the next Summit of the BRICS.

Q: Sir, do you think that the Japanese swap enhancement to 50 billion dollars and the 100 billion BRICS Contingency Reserve Fund together will have a calming effect on the markets, on Indian currency? And now what should be done domestically also to take care of the current account deficit?

Prime Minister: On the margins, certainly what we have agreed with Japan will help. But ultimately we have to get the fundamentals of our economy in robust health. The last week, Parliament has passed some important legislation, economic legislation. That will also help to revive confidence. And we have to work to ensure that the fiscal deficit does not exceed 4.8 per cent, and whatever we can to contain the current account deficit will be put in practice.

Q: Sir, this is a question on the point that you had raised on the unconventional monetary policies and how they should be tackled because of the impact. The final Declaration, clause 14, seems to suggest that Central Banks across the world in the advanced economies will continue to be dictated by domestic considerations including price stability. Was your point of view, therefore, a point that found resonance within the G20? What can we expect as far as the rollback of tapering is concerned?

Prime Minister: There was widespread appreciation of the point that I made about the unintended consequences of unorthodox monetary policies being pursued by countries like the United States and the Eurozone. But I also pointed out in my own speech that I do not see immediate concrete action because Central Banks are the creation of their domestic legislation. Some value their independence; some also

have a limited mandate. But overall there was general appreciation that when it comes to consultations on global economic policies, macroeconomic policies, for example in the mutual development process, the countries should be discussing how monetary policies are being shaped, what are the concerns, and how we can soften the impact on other countries. So, I would say that as a general idea there was widespread appreciation. In fact most developing countries' leaders made the same point that I made. And I expect that as an essay in persuasion it was a good idea, and good ideas are scarce in the world. I do believe that sooner or later it will catch attention.

Q: Sir, I need to know how the Indian economy and markets are going to benefit from your forthcoming visits to the United States, ASEAN, Russia, and China?

Prime Minister: I have important visits lined up later this month to the United States, then next month to Russia, and there are also visits planned to ASEAN and then to China. All these countries are important trading partners and, therefore, whatever we may do in these meetings, they create a climate conducive to accelerating the processes of cooperation. I, therefore, sincerely hope that my discussions in Washington, in Russia, in China, in Brunei, would certainly help to create at the margin a better environment for cooperation between us and these countries in matters relating to trade, in matters relating to investment. And certainly, I think, the visit to the United States, if we do the right things before going there, they will have an influence on the climate for capital flows from the United States to our country.

Q: Sir, exactly three weeks from now you will be in New York for the UNGA. The possibility of a meeting with your Pakistan counterpart has been a matter of intense speculation. What do you think are the prospects of such a meeting taking place, especially since there is a view in India that you should avoid meeting Mr. Sharif?

Prime Minister: I have always maintained that we can choose our friends but we have no choice with regard to our neighbours. Therefore, under normal conditions I would be happy to meet with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, whom I respect, who has said the right things about how relations between our two countries should evolve. But there are certain harsh

realities on the ground. If the terror acts do not stop, if those who voice terrorist thoughts move about freely, if there is no significant progress in bringing the culprits of the Mumbai massacre to book, that I have to factor in before arriving at a final decision.

Q: Sir, my question relates to the recent killing of a woman writer in Afghanistan. Do you think that this killing once again proves that Taliban is again raising its head particularly by killing a woman writer? And how is it that Afghanistan forces have not been able to contain these forces? I want your reaction on both these issues.

Prime Minister: I was very sad when I heard about the attack and killing of Sushmita Banerjee. It is a very sad development. She was living in Afghanistan for a long number of years. She was engaged in important social work. So, I feel very sad that such a noble person should have been the victim of the Taliban's wrath. Obviously, Afghanistan still is plagued by the Taliban menace. The Government and people of Afghanistan ultimately will have to make up their minds whether the Taliban philosophy, particularly with regard to the role of women in societies, is the theme which should decide their approach to life.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.



108 Speech of Finance Minister at the International Conference on 'Governance and Development: Views From G20 Countries' Organised by ICRIER.

New Delhi, September 18, 2013.

Chairperson Dr Isher Judge Ahluwalia,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you at this international conference on 'Governance and Development: Views from G20 Countries.' I understand that the conference has been organized around 6 broad thematic issues - global governance, food security, energy sustainability, long-term investment finance, trade and protectionism, and growth and employment. In each of these areas, the world is facing several challenges and these are the subject of ongoing discussions in the G20. I congratulate ICRIER and its partners for organizing this conference and bringing together eminent academicians and policymakers from G20 countries, to discuss and deliberate on these critical issues.

As you are aware, it was the 2008 global financial crisis that brought the G20 into the centre of global economic governance. G20 owes pre-eminence to its quick, effective and coordinated response to the financial crisis resulting in the designation of the G20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation among its members. In fact the G20 Leaders' process is one of the most significant developments in the history of global economic cooperation as it has led to a significant geopolitical shift regarding global economic governance. It has a different balance of power where both advanced and emerging countries come together as equal partners allowing for a more inclusive deliberation and more effective response to today's complex global challenges and opportunities.

Given its track record, G20 is now moving from a temporary crisis bailout mechanism towards a permanent organisation of global economic governance. Considering the range of complex issues confronting the world economy, and the persistent weak recovery, it is important for all countries that G20 continues to be successful. However, there are

inherent challenges facing the G20 going forward. I would like to highlight a few of them today and I would expect policymakers attending this conference to deliberate further during this conference on some of these issues.

Firstly, the agenda setting of G20 has had an advanced country perspective so far. This is highlighted by the emphasis given on financial regulation and on transparency whether it be in taxation or in the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI). As the crisis originated in the advanced countries, it is natural that higher capital requirements and asset quality have been stressed in the Basel norms for banking sector. Emerging markets have accepted these norms in a spirit of multilateralism. However in the context of a weak global recovery, we should be careful that the procyclical bias should not be a stumbling block in developing countries. Since growth in emerging markets is crucial to the strength of the global economy, it is critical that G20 find ways to develop strong links of coordination and cooperation and take up issues of importance to emerging economies as otherwise, G20 may evolve as a loose forum instead of a powerful steering wheel of global governance.

Secondly, there is a big challenge relating to mission creep. Many experts have expressed concern that the G20 agenda has been expanding too widely, covering far too many unrelated issues. The outreach process of subsequent Chairs of the G20 is partly to blame as this widening of agenda is encouraged mostly by outside players including civil societies, academics and international agencies who hope that high level discussion and endorsement by leaders will advance their various causes. I am not saying that the outreach programme is a bad idea; I am simply saying that interaction with various players should not result in the G20 losing its focus. I do believe that to be able to play a meaningful role in the global governance, the G20 agenda should be sharper, and focused only on those issues on which it can make a distinctive contribution particularly on economic and financial issues, as premier forum for international economic cooperation.

Thirdly, reforms of international financial institutions of global governance have been among the top priorities of G20. Indeed the G20 has initiated a considerable governance reforms in the pillars of global governance namely IMF, World Bank, and Financial Stability Board (FSB), as well

as in many of the Standard Setting bodies (SSBs). However, progress thus far has been extremely limited and far from satisfactory, and some members have not been able to adhere to the commitment on certain reforms by Leaders. Most advanced countries have now clearly indicated their unwillingness to move ahead on IFI governance and capital reforms. This has hampered credibility of the G20, and makes it difficult to, progress on other issues as well.

India and other emerging economies have repeatedly underscored the critical role that investment, particularly in infrastructure could play in sustaining the global recovery and rebalancing. The G20 Leaders had mandated the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors at their Los Cabos Summit in 2012 "to consider ways in which the G20 can foster investment in infrastructure and ensure the availability of sufficient funding for infrastructure projects, including Multilateral Development Banks' (MDBs) financing and technical support". The mandate had been taken up during this year, but by broadening the subject to cover financing for all kinds of investment, it resulted in the situation that one year later, in the 2013 Summit, they could only just endorse the work plan of the Study Group. This is surely an opportunity loss, and we hope that the matter would be taken up more meaningfully during the next Presidency of the G20.

In this regard, one issue that deserves priority is recycling global savings for infrastructure investment. Enhancing infrastructure investment in emerging economies and developing countries, would have positive implications for rebalancing global demand. At the same time, high savings would find productive use into areas where there is a need for real investment that results in tangible growth and development. The G20 is well placed to coordinate various stakeholders including governments, especially the ones that have large surpluses, the private sector, and multilateral development banks, for investment in developing economies. I hope the conference can suggest innovative ways to recycle global savings and develop viable strategies that overcome the presumed hurdle of 'lack of enabling environment' for infrastructure investment in emerging and developing countries.

Finally it is important to ensure that the decisions taken in G20 meetings are carried forward expeditiously. Leaders at St Petersburg committed

to remain mindful of the risks and unintended negative side effects of extended periods of monetary easing while carefully calibrating and communicating clearly, future changes to monetary policy settings and to cooperate to manage their spillovers on other countries. Similarly in the backdrop of the upcoming WTO Ministerial in Bali in December 2013, G20 Leaders have called on all the WTO members to show the necessary flexibility so as to achieve a successful outcome in Bali. I believe that such language of consensus and cooperation is very important for the interests of both the developed as well as the developing countries.

I see an important signal emerging from the St. Petersburg Leaders Declaration with regard to the manner in which development issues are being addressed in G20 forum and that is the clear recognition that the dimensions of development challenges vary from country to country and therefore any policy that is being recommended in an international forum has to be tailored to national circumstances. It is also welcoming to note that the G20 Leaders have taken a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges of unemployment and underemployment faced by advanced as well as developing countries. While emphasis has been placed on creation of more jobs, the G20 also focuses on generating quality jobs by addressing issues of skills portability, youth employment, labour flexibility and improvement of the labour market infrastructure. Under the upcoming Presidency of G20 under Australia, we must make use of the opportunity provided by the St. Petersburg Leaders Declaration to ensure that we study the complex issue of labour mobility as the free movement of capital with restraints on movement of the necessary skills does hamper productivity.

I am hopeful that the deliberations during this conference will provide an opportunity to discuss the possible approaches to dealing with global challenges at the current juncture in a spirit of cooperation. I would like to thank you for your kind attention and wish you all a very productive discussion. I look forward to the outcome of your deliberations which I hope can be a useful input to the incoming G20 Chair in 2014.

Thank you



HEART OF ASIA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

109 **Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson on the visit of External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid to Almaty for the "Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference".**

New Delhi, April 23, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming for this interaction. I have two announcements to make following which I will take any questions related to those announcements. Subsequently if you would like me to respond to any other question, I will try and respond to those.

The first announcement that I have to make is about the forthcoming visit of the External Affairs Minister to Almaty in Kazakhstan for the Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference within the framework of the Istanbul Process. For those of you who are following this, this is the third Ministerial Conference. The first was in Istanbul in 2011, I think in November; the second was in Kabul in June, 2012; and this is the third conference.

This brings together fourteen countries which are in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan. Along with them there are sixteen other countries which are not in the neighbourhood or the vicinity but which have extended support for this process. Then there are several other international and regional organizations which provide support to Afghanistan.

This conference basically has three elements. One is of course the political consultations at the Ministerial level. There will be an outcome document at the conclusion of these consultations. The second level is the various CBMs that were discussed at the Kabul Ministerial Conference and how we move forward in terms of those CBMs. For those of you who are interested, there are six confidence-building measures that were agreed to in Kabul last year. These relate to: counterterrorism, counter-narcotics, disaster management, trade, commerce and investment opportunities - and this is the CBM where we as India had taken the lead, and those of you who have been following this would recollect that we had an Investment Summit conference in Delhi last June. In addition there are two other CBMs. These deal with infrastructure and education.

These are the CBMs that we are likely to discuss and plans for these will be considered at the Conference.

Finally, the third element is coherence in terms of the actions of the regional organizations so that there is no overlap or duplication of the activities of these organizations.

The Ministerial Conference is scheduled to be held on 26th of April. It will be of course follow a Senior Officials Meeting on 25th April. Along with the External Affairs Minister we will have the Special Envoy to the Prime Minister for Afghanistan, Mr. S.K. Lambah, who will be attending the Conference. He will be assisted by senior officials of the Ministry of External Affairs, the Additional Secretary Mr. Yash Sinha, along with our Ambassador Designate to Afghanistan. That is item No.1 on my agenda.

Q. Also, could you tell us which are the participating countries in this conference?

As regards your question relating to the membership of the Istanbul Process, there are 14 members and 16 supporting members. The 14 members are: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and the UAE. If you would like to know who are the supporting members and the regional organizations, we can circulate that information because it is factual in nature.

At this stage the programme is still evolving and we will keep you informed once the final programme including the dates of travel and stay there are finalized. We are still finalizing that programme.

Thank you very much



110 Statement by External Affairs Minister at Istanbul Process meeting in Almaty.

Almaty, April 26, 2013.

Excellency, Mr. Erlan A. Idrissov, Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, Excellency, Dr. Zalmay Rassoul, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan,

Mr. Jan Kubis, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here today in the beautiful city of Almaty for the Ministerial Meeting of the Istanbul 'Heart of Asia' Process. I would like to thank the Government of Kazakhstan for the warm hospitality extended to me and to my delegation, and to the Afghan and Turkish governments for shepherding this important process since its inception in November, 2011 in Istanbul and bringing it to its present avatar, where it ranks as the most inclusive regional process that is centered on Afghanistan.

It is, indeed, a tribute to Afghanistan's leadership that we are gathered here today joined by our commitment to Afghanistan's stability and development and our faith in its future. It is also a testimony to the promise of regional confidence-building, cooperation and political consultations over Afghanistan exemplified by the Istanbul process. It therefore gives me great pleasure to join others in sharing the vision of the Declaration we shall be adopting today.

Afghanistan is a traditional friend and partner of India. It is a strategically important neighbor with whom our historical, cultural and economic ties go back to the dawn of history. India's vision of the Heart of Asia process is one of trade, transit, energy and communication routes criss-crossing and knitting the entire region from Turkey to India and other countries of South Asia, and between Eurasia and the Arabian Sea, with Afghanistan at its heart. But we do not see Afghanistan as merely a "bridge" or a "roundabout" connecting these regions contributing only as a transit route, but as a possible driver of economic growth in the region with development of its human resources; its natural endowment including minerals and hydrocarbon resources.

Excellencies,

It is with this long-term vision in mind that India has taken a number of initiatives starting with our Strategic Partnership Agreement with Afghanistan. Our focus has been on economic empowerment of Afghanistan- witness the elimination of basic customs duties on all Afghan products giving Afghanistan the benefit of preferential access to the 1.2 billion Indian market; our planned investment in the Hajigak iron ore mines with the intention of not only evacuating iron ore, but constructing Afghanistan's first steel plant; the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan of June, 2012, and a new thrust on bilateral and regional trade and investment.

India's leadership of the Trade, Commerce and Investment opportunities CBM within the Istanbul process is rooted in the belief that Afghanistan will experience lasting peace only if short-sighted perceptions of competition and strategic depth are replaced by collaboration and economic investment in Afghanistan by countries of the region and the rest of the world. India does not see Afghanistan as a zone of competitive influence and wants it to be an area of opportunity for regional cooperation.

While striving for realization of this vision, we however do not have any illusion that, we can ignore political and security issues that stand in the way. We have no doubt that the greatest challenge posed to vision of Afghanistan is the persistent threat of terrorism that emanates from beyond its borders. Other countries of the region, especially India, are not immune to this threat. An honest commitment to the principles enshrined in this declaration today will have to begin with an acknowledgment of the rising dangers posed by these forces of extremism and terrorism to the future of Afghanistan and the wider world as Afghanistan approaches critical transitions.

We recognize that the solution to Afghanistan's problems cannot be purely military but has to be rooted in a political approach that enjoys a democratic sanction. We are also glad to note that there is wide-spread agreement that an acceptable solution can only be one that comes from within Afghanistan and finds its sustenance from the respect for Afghan society and its institutions.

Excellencies,

The "Heart of Asia" process offers an invaluable opportunity to evolve a joint approach on issues of mutual concern through its pillar of political consultations. The process also offers us the opportunity to fulfill the promise of regional cooperation that was identified at Istanbul, Kabul and Delhi and further elaborated in the deliberations on the Implementation plan of the Trade, Commerce & Investment Opportunities CBM that India is leading. The endorsement of the Implementation plan today is an affirmation of that shared ideal.

Reflecting on progress since the last Ministerial on the Istanbul Process in Kabul ten months ago, we can be satisfied with some progress we have made. I look forward to further deliberations with all of you who are Afghanistan's friends from across the world today. I am also hopeful that we will be filled with an even greater sense of achievement when we meet a year later at the next Ministerial in 2014.

Thank you



IBSA

111 IBSA Statement on Middle East Peace Process. Joint Communiqué on the sidelines of 68th UNGA.

August 23, 2013.

Please see Document no. 367



**112 IBSA Joint Communiqué on the sidelines of 68th UNGA.
New York, September 25, 2013.**

1. The Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. Salman Khurshid, the Minister of External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, H.E. Ambassador Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado, and the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, H.E. Ms. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane met in New York on 25 September 2013, on the margins of 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.
2. Marking the tenth anniversary of formal launch of IBSA, the meeting was availed of by the three Ministers to exchange views on the contemporary global and regional issues of mutual interest as well as to review progress made by IBSA cooperation since its formalization through the Brasilia Declaration of June 2003.
3. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress on the consolidation of the IBSA Dialogue Forum. They underscored that IBSA has succeeded in laying strong foundation for multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral cooperation in a wide range of areas. They noted with satisfaction the positive results of IBSA coordination in various organizations and groupings, including: UN, WTO, WIPO, G20, G24, BRICS and BASIC. They recalled the important role played by IBSA members on the sustainable development agenda, having hosted in 2011-12 three major conferences, and also recalled the 16th BASIC Ministerial Meeting, recently held in Brazil, which reiterated the commitment to a successful outcome of the Warsaw Climate Conference.
4. They stressed that IBSA is an important framework that provides additional impetus to further contacts between developing countries of Asia, South America and Africa, as well as strengthens the spirit of South-South cooperation. Political dialogue among the three countries has positively contributed to the global discourse on issues of common interest. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment for further strengthening the trilateral cooperation and recognized the renewed relevance of IBSA.

5. The IBSA Fund for Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger has successfully demonstrated the relevance and viability of South-South cooperation through implementation of a number of projects in several developing countries to address developmental challenges. The Ministers stressed the need to explore widening the footprint of the IBSA Fund in regions which have been unattended so far and in countries that need immediate development assistance. They highlighted that the IBSA Fund has concluded 7 projects in Africa, the Middle East and in the Caribbean, and that 9 projects are under implementation in countries including Cape Verde, Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Palestine.
6. Calling for new models and approaches towards more equitable development, inclusive growth as well as reformed, more representative and democratic global political and economic governance reflecting the current politico-economic realities, the Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate towards enhancing the representation of developing countries in the decision-making bodies of the United Nations and other multilateral institutions. In particular, the Ministers underscored that the reform of IMF should also strengthen the voice and representation of the poorest members, including Sub-Saharan Africa.
7. The Ministers underscored that, almost 70 years after the creation of the United Nations and 10 years after the adoption of the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit, time has come for a decision on reforming the Security Council with the addition of new permanent and non-permanent members. Therefore, they stressed that it will be crucial to intensify efforts with the objective of translating by 2015, the existing agreement on the urgency for action into a final decision and a concrete outcome on this long overdue process. In this context, they reaffirmed their full support for each other's candidature for a permanent seat in a reformed UN Security Council. They agreed to have closer consultations amongst themselves and directed their Permanent Representatives in New York and Geneva to continue to have regular consultations on issues of mutual interest.

8. Recalling the IBSA initiative of August 2011 to send a joint delegation to Damascus to engage with the Syrian government, the Ministers maintained that the crisis in Syria should be resolved through an inclusive Syrian-led political process supported by the United Nations and the international community, in the interest of the Syrian people, the region and the world. They condemned the increasing violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law as a result of continued violence in Syria. They reiterated their call upon all parties to allow and facilitate immediate, safe, full and unimpeded access to humanitarian organizations to all in need of assistance.
9. The Ministers reaffirmed that there is no military solution to the conflict. They reiterated their support for the convening of Geneva-2 International Conference on Syria as soon as possible, under the auspices of United Nations with a view to facilitating negotiations between the Syrian parties on the implementation of the final Communiqué of the Action Group (Geneva-I). They stressed that any settlement of the crisis should meet the legitimate aspirations of all sections of Syrian society and respect for Syrian independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty.
10. They strongly condemned the use of chemical weapons in any circumstances. The Ministers noted the recent developments which offer an opportunity for the peaceful resolution of the Syrian conflict. They welcomed the decision of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the commitment of the Syrian authorities to provisionally apply the Convention prior to its entry into force. The Ministers highlighted the need to avoid further militarization of the conflict and to immediately stop the external supply of weapons to all sides.
11. Recalling their Declaration on Middle East Peace Process issued in August 2013, the Ministers reiterated that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains an urgent and key issue for the international community, the resolution of which is a prerequisite for building a sustainable and lasting peace in the Middle East region. They

welcomed the resumption of negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis. The Ministers called for the UN Security Council to remain seized of the matter and to provide support to the peace process until its satisfactory conclusion.

12. The Ministers stressed that peace and stability in Afghanistan is in the interest of both the country and the international community. It is crucial that the international community remain committed to Afghanistan in the form of development and security assistance during this period of transition and transformation. The Ministers recognized that the main threat to Afghanistan's security and stability is terrorism which also endangers regional and global peace and security. They emphasized the need for joint and concerted efforts to address the challenge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the dismantling of terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens beyond Afghanistan's borders, as well as disrupting all financial and tactical support for terrorism.
13. The Ministers expressed their concern over the unauthorized practices of illegal interception of communications and data from citizens, businesses and members of governments by foreign governments and businesses. They underlined that this constitutes serious violation of national sovereignty and individual rights, and is incompatible with the democratic coexistence between friendly countries. They also reaffirmed their willingness to discuss these issues openly and cooperate in relevant multilateral fora to secure the development of appropriate international governance on cyber security.
14. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 8th G20 Summit held under the Russian Presidency. They stressed the need for the G20 to remain focussed on the core issues of addressing coordination of macro-economic policies to deal with the evolving global economic and financial issues and also on reform of institutions of global economic governance. The Ministers noted that the G20 is not a substitute for the United Nations and other relevant international organizations.

15. The Ministers noted the significance and relevance of MDGs and the contribution it has made to the social and economic development of countries across the globe. While emphasizing the need to accelerate the implementation of MDGs, the Ministers underlined their commitment to the overarching goal of poverty alleviation and, in that context, expressed hope that the post-2015 Development Agenda will be focused on poverty eradication, economic growth, job creation, social inclusion and sustainable development. They emphasized that it should be applicable to both developed and developing countries and at the same time preserve the national policy space and priorities of developing countries. They reaffirmed that the Rio principles, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, must form the bedrock of the sustainable development agenda. The Ministers acknowledged that provision of additional financial resources, technology development and transfer as well as capacity building assistance from developed to developing countries are key components of any international compact for development cooperation. They recognized the need for launching of intergovernmental negotiations to finalize the post-2015 development agenda. In this context, the concerted actions by India, Brazil and South Africa, as vibrant democracies with large populations will be of extreme importance to build any new development agenda.
16. Recalling the 20th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action, the Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the promotion and protection of all human rights and called for further cooperation among them in this area, both within the IBSA framework and in multilateral fora.
17. The Ministers reiterated the need for Members to work with an open mind and show flexibility in the forthcoming 9th World Trade Organisation's Ministerial conference to be held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2013 and expressed hope that it will catalyse a successful and balanced conclusion of the Doha Round, in accordance with its development mandate benefitting the poorest and most vulnerable countries.

18. The Ministers looked forward to the 8th IBSA Trilateral Commission Meeting to be hosted by South Africa.



INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION

113 India-Mauritius Co-host IOR-ARC Economic and Business Conference on Economic and Business Conference.

New Delhi, July 4, 2013.

The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma today said that the Indian Ocean Rim region has exhibited healthy prospects for both international and intra-regional trade. Speaking in a session on "Enhancing Trade and Investment in the IOR-ARC Region" during the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) Economic and Business Conference in Port Louis today, Shri Sharma highlighted the fact that this region as a whole has managed to maintain a trade surplus in most years of the last decade even when the economies elsewhere were getting affected by the subdued global demands and contracting growth in the West. "We have identified the key areas and our business leaders are keen to take it forward," said Shri Sharma. But, at the same time, Shri Sharma voiced his concern that "despite the establishment of Working Group on Trade and Investment, not much progress has been made for achieving substantial outcomes based on the promise that this region holds out and the potential that has largely remained unharnessed."

As a result, Shri Sharma said that the need for this Conference is to initiate the process of deliberations and gather suggestions of the business leaders for chartering the future roadmap of engagement, focused on enhancing trade and investment as an engine of economic growth and prosperity with businesses driving the growth agenda as partners in progress.

Replying to a question from the audience, Shri Sharma said that visa regimes in the countries of the region need to be further liberalised. India is considering visa on arrival for many countries including Mauritius.

With many countries of the Ocean Region being part of several sub-regional groupings like ASEAN, SAARC, COMESA, GCC, SACU which assist in exploring institutionalised mechanisms for building regional cooperation for trade and investment, Shri Sharma said that "this experience as part of the sub-groupings should be gainfully utilised for consolidating our partnerships in this expanding Rim Region Association." He further added that "it is important to take forward the momentum of our pan-Indian ocean regional cooperation to the next logical level by creating an institutionalised mechanism for an interaction of our businesses by defining areas of cooperation."

Speaking during the inaugural session of the Conference themed "Deepening Economic Linkages For Balanced, Inclusive And Sustainable Growth", which was attended by Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius, Shri Sharma said that "there is an immense scope among IOR countries for diversifying the trade basket to value added products for achieving more balanced outcomes in trade both global and intra regional." Speaking on the utilisation of a special fund established by IOR-ARC five years ago for financing priority projects and programmes adopted by the Association, Shri Sharma said that "it is time to simplify procedures for utilisation of the Special Fund for effective implementation of projects in priority areas of this association."

Dr. Ramgoolam noted the leadership that India provided to IOR-ARC. "We acknowledge the tremendous efforts that India has made in last two years and also the significant contribution made to the fight against piracy. Under Mr. Sharma's stewardship, IOR-ARC displayed a remarkable degree of dynamism," said Dr. Ramgoolam.

As the IOR region is home to world's richest agricultural resources and with many countries emerging as major exporters of processed food making agro-industry, Shri Sharma said that "India welcomes equity and technology participation in the Agro and Food Processing Zones that are coming up in India, especially in setting up cold storage and logistic supply chains for reducing post harvest losses under the liberalised Foreign Direct Investment architecture in Multi-Brand Retailing." Shri Sharma also welcomed the participation by businesses in the region in India's infrastructure development.

Showcasing the importance of maritime cooperation, Shri Sharma stressed that "India can play a crucial role for enhanced regional trade through high seas which calls for concerted action on a common maritime enforcement regime that provides security and combats piracy without militarisation of the peaceful region." Shri Sharma also said that with the association evolving in the direction of building stronger economic linkages with willingness to cooperate in identified areas of priority as suggested by the Working Group on Trade and Investment, "it is opportune to institutionalise and consolidate our collective strengths to chart a new course in the global growth story and strengthen our prosperity as a region."

The inaugural session of the Conference was attended by Dr. Ramgoolam, Dr. Arvind Boolell, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration & International Trade, Mauritius, Mr. K. V. Bhagirath, Secretary General IOR-ARC, and Ministers, Dialogue Partners and leaders from the Indian Ocean Rim countries.



114 Press Communiqué on the IOR ARC Economic and Business Conference.

New Delhi, July 5, 2013.

1. We, the Ministers of Trade, Commerce and Industry of Member States and Dialogue Partners of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IORARC), met in the Republic of Mauritius, for the First Economic and Business Conference on July 4-5, 2013, under the theme of 'Deepening Economic Linkages for Balanced, Inclusive & Sustainable Growth'. The meeting was co-hosted by the Governments of Mauritius and India and brought together Ministers and business representatives from across the Indian Ocean Rim
2. We recognize that the First IOR-ARC Economic and Business Conference was in keeping with the decisions taken by the IOR Business Forum held in Gurgaon, India, during the IOR-ARC

Council of Ministers and Related Meetings in October-November 2012, which recommended that Business-to-Business meetings have an important role to play for expanding trade and commerce between Member States.

3. We are satisfied with the discussions which took place in the four panel sessions, namely, 'Unlocking the Potential of the Services Sector in the IOR-ARC (ICT, Tourism, Financial Services)'; 'Enhancing Trade and Investment in the IOR-ARC'; 'Creating Agri-business linkages, addressing Food Security and Sustainable Development'; and 'Ocean Economy/Blue Economy. We hope that the proposals and ideas raised and agreed to in these sessions can be taken forward by member states
4. We express concern at the weak global economic environment and observe that the low rates of growth in advanced economies have impacted developing economies through slower international trade and decreased FDI inflows. We stress that Member States should consider and adopt measures, consistent with their WTO obligations to stimulate growth and development in the Indian Ocean region.
5. We undertake to encourage the concept of 'Open Regionalism' and identify trade as an integral factor in promoting economic cooperation and development. We urge Member States to harmonise trade practices in line with international norms and take steps to minimize barriers to trade in the Indian Ocean region and emphasize the need to build on the complementarities of our economies and identify key growth sectors.
6. We propose that initiatives taken at this conference should facilitate interaction between trade and investment promotion bodies of Member States. We welcome the IOR-ARC Work Program in Trade Facilitation initiated by Member States and fully support efforts to implement this for boosting intra-IOR-ARC trade and commerce.
7. We noted that the study on "Trade and Investment Prospects of the IOR-ARC in the New Millennium" which was released in 2011

in the Council of Ministers Meeting in Bengaluru, has highlighted ten areas of cooperation namely trade cooperation, tariffs, food sector trade, standards cooperation, regional value chains, mining, pharmaceutical and traditional medicine, coordination among EXIM Banks, investment and trade facilitation. We hope that Member States cooperate further in these sectors and emerging ones such as the ocean economy.

8. We welcome the participation of business entities particularly in the small and medium size enterprises and entrepreneurs in the First IOR-ARC Economic and Business Conference, emphasise the critical role of the private sector in the success of this conference and call on the IOR Business Forum to turn the challenges into opportunities.
9. We recognise the Indian Ocean as a binding force of the Association and therefore think it is imperative that Member States identify areas of cooperation in harnessing the oceanic resources which could become a pillar to sustain our development efforts.
10. We recognize the value of ongoing dialogue among Ministers of Economy, Trade and Industries as an integral part of economic dialogue involving the National Chambers of Commerce and Industry.



115 Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson.**New Delhi, October 31, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. We have not met in this format for some time. Lest you think we have abandoned this format, I just thought we will jog your memory and tell you that it still exists.

I have three announcements to make, which I will make in terms of sequence of the dates on which these events are going to take place, following which the floor is open for you to ask any questions.

The first announcement that I have to make is about the travel of the External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid to Perth. Mr. Khurshid left last night. He will be participating in the Indian Ocean Region Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) meeting in Perth.

As many of you perhaps are aware, we were the Chair of this organisation for two years. EAM will hand over the baton to Australia who will be the Chair from November 1st onwards. Indonesia will take over as the Vice Chair from Australia. This is a 20-member organisation which has littoral countries of the Indian Ocean who are likely to discuss a range of issues. I will try and summarise for you some of those issues.

I understand that one of the things on the agenda is the name of this organisation. As some of you are aware, last year there was an initiative to try and shorten the name and this is on the agenda. Other issues are: cooperation with the UN and specialised agencies, how should we engage dialogue partners more, the secretariat of the organisation and mechanisms and ways to strengthen it, and also an initiative that we lay great store on and that is university mobility in the Indian Ocean region universities.

We expect that at the conclusion of this meeting in Perth there will be of course the usual communiqué. Also Australia is proposing a Declaration of Perth Principles for the Peaceful and Sustainable Use of the Indian Ocean and its Resources. We look forward to that meeting on the 1st, and the outcome of course will be shared with you.

The second announcement that I have to make is about the convening of the Fifth Heads of Mission Conference of all Indian Heads of Mission abroad. This is an annual feature. Usually it is held in August. This time it is proposed to be held in November. It will be held from the 4th to the 7th of November. We expect approximately 120 of Indian Ambassadors and High Commissioners to various countries to converge in Delhi for this annual feature.

This year we have a theme for this conference and that is "India's Place in Changing World Order: Where Do We See Ourselves? What Do We Wish to Achieve?" So, much of the discussion is going to be focused on this theme.

As is usual, the Heads of Mission will interact with the President, the Vice-President. The Prime Minister will address them. They will also be addressed by the External Affairs Minister, the Minister for Commerce, and the National Security Advisor.

Interestingly this year, in addition to the usual focus on neighbours and South Asia the effort is also to focus in a very specific regional manner. Therefore, we are having with CII and FICCI roundtables focused on different regions. These will be interactions between the Heads of Missions from various regions with leading Indian businessmen etc., who have interest in those regions.

Also within the Conference itself specific sessions are devoted to Africa, to Latin America, to Central Asia, to Europe, etc. In addition, there will also be sessions devoted to consular and passport issues which are assuming increasing importance.

Finally, Mr. Sam Pitroda will address the Ambassadors on "Innovations as Instruments of Foreign Policy". This is again a new venture that we are endeavouring.

The third announcement that I have is about the visit of the Prime Minister of Kuwait. At the invitation of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Prime Minister of Kuwait will be visiting India from the 7th to the 9th of November. This is the first visit of a Head of Government from Kuwait since they bifurcated the Crown Prince from the Head of Government. The last

visit of a Head of Government from India to Kuwait was in 1981 when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi visited Kuwait. Of course we have had other high-level visits both from India to Kuwait as well as from Kuwait to India.

Perhaps you are aware that Kuwait is amongst our largest suppliers of oil. We import something in the vicinity of 10 to 12 per cent of our oil imports. The total bilateral trade between Kuwait and India is in the vicinity of US\$ 17 billion of which US\$ 15 billion is oil. Our exports to Kuwait are in the vicinity of a little above US\$ 1 billion.

We have a very large Indian community in Kuwait. It is the largest expatriate community in Kuwait, and it is in the vicinity of 700,000.

So, we expect a full agenda between the visiting Prime Minister as well as our Prime Minister. We will separately in due course provide you a detailed briefing on that.

That is about what I have in terms of formal announcements. As is usual, I will open the floor for any questions that you may have first on the announcements that I made and after that on anything else that you may like to ask.

Q: Which sessions or any other things are open for the media of these Ambassadors who are coming?

Official Spokesperson: This is usually in the context of brainstorming. Therefore, none of the sessions are open. These are closed sessions where they exchange forthrightly their viewpoints. We have not in the past followed a practice of making them publicly available or open for the media, and that practice will continue.

Q: Is even the inaugural session not open for the media?

Official Spokesperson: Even that. However, if there are elements which would need to be highlighted, we will certainly, like in previous years, circulate to you the main points of any important issues which may be highlighted.

Q: Can you give some hints as to what would be the likely change in the name of the organisation? Is it Indian Ocean Dialogue or something? Any name being proposed by India?

Official Spokesperson: I think you have a valid question. There is no proposal by India on this. There was a proposal initiated by Australia last time, and this is to focus on a shorter name because they found that the way the name is now structured along with the short form, is fairly long. And they are thinking of a concise name which perhaps will be encapsulated in four alphabets rather than the number of the alphabets now. And it will still have Indian Ocean Region, but perhaps it will have one other alphabet. And you will know in a day's time.

If there are no more questions related to the announcements made, we will move on to other issues.

Q: This is about one of the reports in the papers today about the possibility of the Prime Minister going for the CHOGM conference in Colombo. Has a final decision been taken? What is the procedure?

Official Spokesperson: This is a question which is a rather high priority and perhaps what you are trying to find out right now is the level of Indian participation in the Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting which will be held in Colombo from the 15th of next month.

I can confirm to you that a process has been set in motion to arrive at a decision on this matter. We are taking into consideration all aspects of our national interest, our foreign policy priorities and our international obligations. I can also confirm to you that that process has not reached its culmination. There is still some way down the track on this. Once that process reached its culmination, we will certainly share the outcome with you, and perhaps that is where we are on that issue.

Q: It has also been reported that Chief Minister Vigneshwaran has written to the Prime Minister requesting him to visit Jaffna. Is there...(Inaudible)...?

Official Spokesperson: Without of course divulging what is a privileged communication between the Chief Minister of the Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka and our Prime Minister, I can confirm to you that he did receive a letter on the 28th of this month late in the evening. I will not get into the exact details of the letter, but again I can inform you that the letter basically indicates that he is grateful for Indian assistance in terms of ensuring that the elections were held and an elected body has taken its place. He does inform that he has now assumed charge and he is

grateful to India for that. Also, in the context that letter he has invited the Prime Minister to visit Jaffna. This of course is an input into the decision-making process and will be considered with a variety of other factors. Right now, as I said, the process is underway. So I cannot let you on to anything further apart from the details that I have shared with you

Q: Is it routine and usual for Chief Ministers of individual Provinces in foreign countries to approach our Prime Minister directly and vice-versa? Is it usual or is it accepted for Ministers of individual States in India to approach Presidents or Prime Ministers or Heads of State of other countries?

Official Spokesperson: The relationship between India and Sri Lanka should not be characterised as usual. It is a very strong relationship, it is a very close relationship, and it is a relationship where India has worked with Sri Lanka for a variety of issues including the welfare of the people in the northern areas who have been adversely impacted. So, let us not judge these things by the usual parameters of what you think is usual.

As for other relationships, each relationship each unique and our relationship with Sri Lanka is certainly unique and, therefore, our interaction is also in a way is distinct. And I think we should respect that distinctiveness and that is a distinctiveness that is reflected in our foreign policy and our approach towards Sri Lanka.

Q: Akbar, I am not asking you whether there is a change in India's Pakistan policy. What I am asking you is, are we seeing a new nuance in India's Pakistan policy, a new shift, sort of a subtle shift in view of these LOC flare-ups? Will it be a correct thing to say that MEA has given a completely free hand to MOD and it will be, so to say, Defence Ministry versus their forces or whatever as far as the LOC flare-up is concerned? And are we seeing any kind of forward movement diplomatically with Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: I think we need to go back to the last substantive diplomatic discussion between India and Pakistan and that was the discussion between the two Prime Ministers in New York. Let me recall for you what the common understanding as an outcome of that meeting was. The common understanding was that the precondition for a forward movement in the relationship, which both the Prime Ministers desire, is

an improvement of the situation on the Line of Control. That is a common understanding between our two countries and that is what guides our diplomatic interaction with Pakistan. I repeat, the precondition for a forward movement in the relationship is an improvement of the situation on the Line of Control. That is it.

Q: Could you throw some light on US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena's recent visit to India and what transpired in the meetings?

Official Spokesperson: We are not in the business of telling if an Ambassador of a certain country came to India and that Ambassador met middle level officials in South Block. This is not something which is unusual. We have regular interactions with various Ambassadors from various countries who are in India, because many of those countries see India as a leading player in South Asia and they would like to ascertain our views, and these are as a matter of normal diplomatic discourse shared with them.

Q: LOC has not reached a satisfactory situation. Will the EAM meet Sartaj Aziz when he comes to India?

Official Spokesperson: Perhaps you are aware that we are going to have a major biennial event called the ASEM. Minister's Conference. This is to be held on 11th and 12th of November. I understand that Mr. Sartaj Aziz, who is the Pakistani National Security and Foreign Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister is also participating in this event. Based on this we have received a request from them for a meeting with the External Affairs Minister on the margins of that event. We intend to have that meeting based on that request. As hosts, India is meeting several countries whose Foreign Ministers are participating in that meeting. I can confirm to you that includes Mr. Sartaj Aziz.

Q: Can you give us an update on the visit of the Pak Judicial Commission and also the condition of Indian prisoners in Pakistani Jails, the numbers?

Official Spokesperson: This is a normal feature between India and Pakistan. Despite the difficulties and differences that we have had, we view issues relating to prisoners as humanitarian issues. Therefore, you would recollect that even when the Composite Dialogue earlier this year was suspended or had not been resumed at that stage in April, an Indian Judicial Commission - two Judges - had visited along with a Pakistani

Judge. And this is a reciprocal visit. My understanding is that they will be submitting a report today. And this report will feature issues relating to Pakistani prisoners in Indian prisons. Also, my understanding is that as a follow-up to this there would be another visit later on early in the first half of next year of Indian members to Pakistan to follow up on the situation of Indian prisoners in Pakistan.

As regards Indian prisoners in Pakistan, my understanding is that there are approximately 400 or so Indians who are in Pakistani prisons. These are approximately 214 civilian prisoners and 186 fishermen. Of these, by our count, almost 90 have completed their sentences and should be released because according to the India-Pakistan bilateral agreement all prisoners who have completed their sentence should be released within one month. So, we would hope that this is abided by. My understanding is that earlier this year - in some cases in March and in most other cases in July - those 90 prisoners had completed their sentence terms and, therefore, they are entitled to return India. And we look forward to Pakistan releasing them, and welcoming them back home.

Q: Can you please tell us what India's stake on the present political stalemate going on in Bangladesh is?

Official Spokesperson: I am not here to comment on the internal affairs of any country. Therefore, I am not able to answer your question.

Q: Would the deliberations of the Heads of Missions be confined to India's role in the present international scenario or would they discuss the repeated ceasefire violations by Pakistan and developments in China on our borders?

Official Spokesperson: All the issues that you mentioned will be discussed, as will India's socioeconomic realities be discussed, as will areas about our development agenda and what we are doing to implement the global development agenda be discussed. So this is a holistic approach. It is for four days all through the day. We expect that all issues of interest to practitioners of Indian foreign policy will be covered in that discussion.

Q: What would be MEA's response to Infosys' visa fallout issue with the US Government? They have agreed to pay the penalty. Any comments you would like to make?

Official Spokesperson: This is a civil settlement between an Indian company and a US Government agency. Why would you like the Government of India to comment on a civil settlement when it is mutually agreed to between both the parties to arrive at that settlement?

Q: Sir, would India be participating in the IOR-ARC meeting starting on Friday? I missed out on the announcement.

Official Spokesperson: That was my first announcement. Mr. Salman Khurshid, the External Affairs Minister, is right now on his way to Perth. This will be held on the 1st. We will participate actively and hand over the baton as Chairman to Australia. I have provided other details of those discussions as well as our approach to that. These are available and I do not want to repeat since others have already taken them down. But I will pass them on to you.

Thank you very much



116 Declaration of the Indian Ocean Rim Association on the principles for peaceful, productive and sustainable use of the Indian Ocean and its resource.

Perth, November 6, 2013.

"Perth Principles"

WE, the Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Yemen, on the occasion of the thirteenth Council of Ministers' Meeting (COMM)

1. **REITERATING** that IORA is the apex pan-regional organisation for the Indian Ocean.
2. **RECALLING** the six priority areas of cooperation agreed at the eleventh COMM in Bengaluru, namely: Maritime Safety and Security; Trade and Investment Facilitation; Fisheries

Management; Disaster Risk Management; Academic and Science and Technology Cooperation; and Tourism and Cultural Exchanges.

3. **RECALLING ALSO** our desire to promote the sustainable growth and balanced development of the Indian Ocean region and IORA Member States, and to create common ground for regional economic cooperation.
4. **COMMITTED** to promoting cooperation and collaboration between IORA and other Indian Ocean regional stakeholders including Dialogue Partner States and other regional and international forums.
5. **REAFFIRMING** our commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, to the Charter of IORA, and to the applicable principles of international law.
6. **REAFFIRMING ALSO** our commitment to 'The Future We Want', as adopted at the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, and to the protection, restoration, health, productivity and resilience of the Indian Ocean and its resources.
7. **RECOGNISING** that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources and plays a vital role in maintaining peaceful cooperation and stability across the Indian Ocean.

HEREBY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

That the Member States of IORA are guided by the following principles for productive and sustainable use of the Indian Ocean and its resources:

1. Recognition of the importance of the Indian Ocean's biodiversity, including its marine life and ecosystems.
2. Commitment to the conservation and sustainable use of the Indian Ocean and its resources in accordance with international law, including fisheries stocks, water and seabed resources and other

- marine life; and commitment to deliver on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
3. Recognition of the important contribution of the conservation and sustainable use of the Indian Ocean and its resources to poverty eradication, sustained economic growth, food security and creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work.
 4. Recognition of the importance of building the capacity of countries to conserve, sustainably manage and realise the benefits of sustainable fisheries.
 5. Commitment to intensify efforts, individually and collectively, to take the measures necessary to maintain or restore all fish stocks to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield.
 6. Commitment to understand and address the main threats to the Indian Ocean and its resources, including illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, unsustainable fishing practices, loss of critical coastal ecosystems and the adverse impacts of pollution, ocean acidification, marine debris, and invasive species on the marine environment.
 7. Recognition of the importance of building the capacity of countries to understand, forecast and address marine, ocean and climate science issues in the Indian Ocean.

ADOPTED by the Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the Indian Ocean Rim Association on 1 November 2013 in Perth, Australia.



117 Perth Communiqué-13th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association.**Perth, November 6, 2013.**

We the Ministers of the Member States of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) met in Perth, Australia, for the 13th Meeting of the Council of Ministers on 1 November 2013. Our meeting was held in a spirit of collegiality and common endeavour.

1. We welcome the adoption of IORA as the new name for our organisation, known formerly as the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IORARC). This as an important step signifying our renewed resolve to strengthen our Association and its work.
2. Our discussion followed productive meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials, Working Group on Trade and Investment, IOR Business Forum and IOR Academic Group. We thank these groups for their valuable contributions, which shaped the direction of our dialogue.
3. We reaffirm our shared interest in the stability, security and prosperity of all countries of the Indian Ocean rim and our commitment to enhancing cooperation to deliver sustained economic growth and broad-based and balanced development in this strategically vital region.
4. IORA is the lead body for promoting regional collaboration across the Indian Ocean rim. We will take forward IORA's role in addressing the development, security, resource and environmental challenges that face our region through policy-oriented consideration of opportunities and risks and high-quality projects in the six priority areas we identified at our meeting in Bengaluru in 2011.
5. We wish to broaden and deepen efforts through IORA to bolster maritime security and safety, particularly in light of continued threats to maritime commerce, and freedom of the high seas, consistent with the UN Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS); as well as on the safety of sea farers. We look to the

upcoming Indian Ocean Dialogue in India to explore, inter-alia, concrete options to enhance counter-piracy cooperation, including through improved maritime information-sharing arrangements and stronger national legal capacity and laws.

6. We welcomed work through the Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control to develop stronger port state control measures in IORA Member States in order to enhance the safety of shipping across the Indian Ocean.
7. We encourage Member States to implement fully their obligations under the Safety of Life at Sea Convention and the annexed International Ship and Port Facility Security Code through domestic implementation of these instruments.
8. There is much potential for IORA to build cooperation among Member States and others in disaster response and risk management, including by drawing on 'best practice' models developed in other regions and through other organisations. This includes natural and other disasters especially in the maritime domain, particularly including tsunamis, as well as activities such as search and rescue and response to oil spills.
9. All IORA Member States have a stake as invited participants in the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). We consider it important that IORA's work on maritime security and safety and disaster management align with and complement possible IONS initiatives in these areas, including in information-sharing and other activities with both civilian and non-civilian dimensions.
10. We are focused on increasing trade and investment intra-regionally and further afield. This is central to IORA's purpose. Regional trade facilitation and customs simplification are important areas of ongoing cooperation. We encourage further such work among IORA Member States to promote economic integration and development in the Indian Ocean region.
11. We strongly encourage private sector involvement in IORA activities to enhance regional trade and investment, and commit to developing business-friendly initiatives to address issues

related to energy security, food security, tourism and infrastructure. We also recognise the opportunities offered by the ocean ('blue') economy.

12. We support work to address needs in fisheries management and aquaculture and artisanal fishing, and underscore the need to combat illegal fishing. We reaffirm our commitment to the peaceful, productive and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources, as outlined in our 'Perth Principles' Declaration, and aim for IORA to do more in this field.
13. More can also be done in IORA to foster collaboration and build capacity in areas of oceanic research. We endorse work undertaken in IORA to strengthen ocean monitoring and forecasting and seasonal climate forecasting capacities and knowledge of climate change adaptation practices.
14. The second International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE-2), planned for 2015 on the 50th anniversary of the original expedition, will be a unique opportunity for regional collaboration in research, training and capacity-building. We support this important scientific endeavour to enhance our understanding of the Indian Ocean.
15. We also support efforts to better connect existing academic and other research institutions in the Indian Ocean region, including through exchanges and joint projects. Through such efforts, IORA can help to foster nodes of excellence and understanding in areas of common interest.
16. We value the cooperative contributions of IORA's Fisheries Support Unit and Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer in developing and delivering proposals to the benefit of members in their respective areas of responsibility.
17. The Indian Ocean rim is marked by great diversity in cultures and societies. Closer people-to-people links, including through tourism, education and business, will contribute to greater cohesion and sense of regional identity. IORA should play a part in building these connections, for economic and wider benefit.

18. We will work together to ensure that the people of the Indian Ocean region have access to the best possible levels of education. The empowerment of women and girls in the region is a high priority for IORA.
19. We welcome the important contribution made by IORA Dialogue Partners, and invite their involvement across our six priority areas of activity, including the possibility of a formal post-meeting dialogue between IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners to strengthen awareness of opportunities for mutual engagement.
20. In addition, we agree on the value of extending IORA's ties with other international and regional bodies, to build synergies and maximise the prospects for capacity-building and exchange of experiences, and to avoid duplication of effort.
21. We will continue to refine IORA's working practices and meeting arrangements so that Member States work together as productively as possible at all levels; and that every opportunity is afforded for input by business and academia. We encourage thematic experts from Member States and Dialogue Partners to collaborate in IORA's six priority areas.
22. We will ensure IORA's work program is pitched strategically to focus on issues of interest across the membership. The IORA Special Fund must be better utilised to support projects that advance meaningful practical cooperation in the six priority areas. We encourage Member States to draw on the Fund to take forward initiatives that enjoy wide support and will deliver widespread benefit.
23. We recognise the strong contribution made by the Secretary-General and the Secretariat in advancing IORA's aims and activities. We invite all Member States to consider what more could be done to strengthen the Secretariat and enhance its capabilities.
24. We convey our deep appreciation for the leadership India has provided as Chair for the past two years and welcome Australia to the role. We affirm support for the new Chair and look forward

to continued leadership from the new troika of Australia, India and Indonesia.

25. We thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia for hosting the 13th Council of Ministers' Meeting and related meetings and extend our appreciation for the excellent hospitality and arrangements in Perth.



RIC

118 Joint Communiqué of the 12th Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Russia-India-China.

New Delhi, November 10, 2013.

The Foreign Ministers of the Republic of India, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China met in New Delhi on 10 November 2013 for their 12th Meeting. The meeting was held in an atmosphere marked with cordiality and warmth.

1. The Ministers reiterated the importance attached to the Russia-India-China Trilateral format as a platform to foster closer dialogue and practical cooperation in identified areas among the three countries. They stressed that this cooperation was not directed against any other country. They expressed their resolve to strengthen the trilateral dialogue for consultation and coordination on regional and global issues of mutual interest in the spirit of openness, solidarity, mutual understanding and trust.
2. The Meeting took place in the backdrop of evolving political scenario in the Middle East and North Africa, upcoming 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali, numerous challenges in putting the world economy back on growth track, concerns relating to terrorism, transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, natural and man-made disasters, food security and climate change. The Ministers agreed to continue to consult and coordinate with each other to contribute to addressing these

regional and global challenges in a responsible and constructive manner.

3. The Ministers expressed their condolences and sympathy to the people and the Government of the Republic of Philippines at the loss of lives following the typhoon that struck the country recently.
4. The Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China recalled successful outcomes of the recent bilateral visits of India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Russia and China.
5. The Ministers agreed that the world had entered a new era of establishing a multipolar international system in line with the realities and needs of the 21st century. The Ministers reiterated commitment to work together for a more stable, secure and fair system of international relations based on the rule of international law, equal partnerships between states and respect for the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. They agreed to remain engaged with each other with a view to strengthening the central role of the UN in maintaining international peace and security and ensuring steady social and economic development.
6. The Ministers welcomed the 12th Trilateral Academic Conference held in New Delhi on 20-22 November 2012. This marked the conclusion of the 4th round of trilateral exchanges commenced in 2001 amongst scholars from the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), Delhi; the Institute of Far Eastern Studies (IFES) Russian Academy of Sciences and China Institute of International Studies (CIIS).
7. The Ministers noted with satisfaction that the 5th Trilateral RIC experts meeting on Disaster Relief was held in Chengdu, China on 13-14 November 2012. The meeting agreed to further enhance the trilateral cooperation on information sharing, technology exchanges and personnel training in this area.
8. The Ministers reiterated that terrorism is a threat to international peace and security and a grave violation of human rights and a crime against humanity. They condemned terrorism in all its forms

and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever, and for whatever purposes. The Ministers affirmed the need for all States to join efforts in combating terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations, based on the UN Charter, the relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant principles and norms of international law. They condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attack in Beijing on 28 October 2013.

9. The Ministers agreed that there cannot be ideological, religious, political, racial, ethnic, or any other justification for acts of terrorism. They underlined the need to bring to justice perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of terrorist acts.
10. The Ministers expressed deep concern about the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Syria and condemned the increasing violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law as a result of continued violence. The Ministers welcomed the adoption of UNSC resolution which endorsed the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council decision calling on Syria to comply with all aspects of the OPCW decision. They further welcomed the framework agreement reached between Russia and the US on the time-bound safeguarding and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles and also the recent steps taken by Syria to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Ministers urged for early convening of International Conference on Syria (Geneva-II), to take forward the Geneva-I Communiqué adopted on 30 June 2012, which will bring all Syrian parties to the conflict to the negotiating table. Any settlement of the crisis should meet the legitimate aspirations of all sections of Syrian society and respect for Syrian independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. The Ministers reiterated that there is no military solution to the conflict.
11. The Ministers reaffirmed that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains an urgent and key issue for the international community, the resolution of which is a prerequisite for building a sustainable

and lasting peace in the Middle East region. The Ministers expressed support to the resumed Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and called on the international community to assist both Israel and Palestine to work towards a two-state solution resulting in a sovereign, democratic, independent, united and viable Palestinian state, with East Jerusalem as its capital, existing side by side in peace with Israel, within secure borders, on the basis of relevant UNSC resolutions, the Madrid Principles and the Arab Peace Initiative.

12. The Ministers discussed the evolving situation in Egypt. They viewed Egypt as a stabilising factor in the Middle East region and wished Egypt to promote national reconciliation as soon as possible to continue to play that role, contributing to peace and prosperity in the region.
13. The Ministers expressed deep concern over the continuing situation in Afghanistan and acknowledged that the main threat to Afghanistan's security, stability and prosperity is terrorism, radicalism and violent extremism. They stressed upon the need for joint and concerted efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including elimination of terrorist bases and safe havens and cutting off all financial and tactical support to terrorism.
14. The Ministers stressed the importance of the international community remaining engaged in Afghanistan and fulfilling its commitments on civilian and security assistance during the period of transition and through the decade of transformation in Afghanistan. In this context, they called upon developing the capability of Afghan National Security Forces so as to enable it to shoulder the responsibility for security of Afghanistan. The Ministers reaffirmed the imperative need for the international community to continue to actively support Afghanistan's peaceful reconstruction and help Afghanistan to achieve peace, stability and prosperity. They emphasized the importance of Afghanistan's regional integration through expanding its trade and transit networks as well as its regional connectivity.

15. The Ministers stressed the core coordinating role of the UN in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan. They reaffirmed readiness to closely interact on Afghanistan in the framework of the UN and within other international fora and regional initiatives, including the Istanbul Process, the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Russia and India welcomed and expressed full support to China for hosting the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Istanbul Process in 2014.
16. The Ministers held the view that the evolving situation in Afghanistan is closely linked with security of the region. They believed that achieving broad and inclusive reconciliation is the key to enduring peace and stability of Afghanistan. The Ministers reiterated that the national reconciliation in Afghanistan should be Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-driven, as laid out in the 20 July 2010 Kabul Conference Communiqué and further elaborated in the 5 December 2011 Bonn Conference Conclusions supported by the Government of Afghanistan and the international community.
17. The Ministers expressed concern about the scale of illicit drug production and trafficking in Afghanistan. They underlined that revenue from drug trafficking is one of the main sources of financing terrorist organizations. The Ministers emphasized the urgent need for the international community to counteract illicit production and trafficking of drugs of Afghan origin in line with the provisions of the Paris Pact and the SCO Anti-Drug Strategy.¹⁹ The Ministers reaffirmed that being responsible States that possess advanced nuclear technologies, Russia, India and China considered it as their common task to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons and contribute actively to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. They welcomed progress on nuclear security and underlined the importance of upholding and implementing the consensus

understandings reached at the 2010 Washington and 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summits.

18. The Ministers called for the early resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue through political and diplomatic means on the basis of a step-by-step approach and reciprocity to restore international confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. They recognized Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including for uranium enrichment under strict IAEA safeguards and consistent with its international obligations. The Ministers supported the intensification of the negotiation process to resolve this issue.
19. The Ministers expressed concern at the growing threat of the use of information and communication technologies for criminal and terrorist purposes, as well as for purposes that are inconsistent with the UN Charter. They reiterated that it is important to contribute to and participate in a peaceful, secure, and open cyberspace and emphasized that security in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) through universally accepted norms, standards and practices is of paramount importance.
20. The Ministers considered the UN to be the foremost multilateral forum entrusted with bringing about hope, peace and sustainable development to the world. They expressed strong commitment to multilateral diplomacy with the United Nations playing the leading role in dealing with global challenges and threats. In this context, they reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more effective, efficient and representative, so that it can deal with today's global challenges more successfully.
21. The Ministers reiterated the importance attached by their countries to cooperation within BRICS. In this context, they reaffirmed their determination to work together to further strengthen BRICS as a mechanism for consultation, coordination and cooperation on global and regional political and economic issues of mutual interests.

22. The Foreign Ministers of China and Russia supported India's active engagement with and positive contributions to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
23. The Ministers stressed the need to develop an open, inclusive and transparent security architecture in the Asia Pacific region based upon universally agreed principles of international law. They underscored the importance of the East Asia Summit as a forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia. They underlined the necessity to further strengthen coordination and cooperation in various regional fora such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defense Ministers Plus (ADMM-Plus), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD). India and Russia expressed their support to China for hosting the CICA Summit in 2014.
24. The Ministers noted the rising role of the Asia-Pacific region in international affairs and supported regional integration and cooperation. The Ministers recognized the important role played by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) towards creating conducive environment for promoting trade and investment as well as regional integration in the Asia-Pacific region. Foreign Ministers of China and Russia noted India's growing economic profile and its important role in the global economic growth and its significant economic and trade linkages with APEC members and supported the openness of APEC.
25. The Ministers recognized that the world economic growth was facing vulnerabilities and numerous challenges. They underlined the need to boost multilateral cooperation in order to tackle these challenges. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the G20 Saint Petersburg Summit held under the Russian Presidency. They stressed that the continuous implementation of its recommendations with respect to the decisions aimed at accelerating world economic growth, midterm fiscal consolidation,

higher employment, building an open world economy and promoting development will facilitate the resolution of the key global economic issues.

26. The Ministers stressed the need for the G20 to remain focused on the core issues of addressing coordination of macro-economic policies to deal with the evolving global economic and financial issues as well as the reform of institutions of global economic governance including the IMF quota and governance reforms.
27. The Ministers noted the significance and relevance of Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] and the contribution to the social and economic development of countries across the globe. Emphasizing the need to accelerate the implementation of MDGs, the Ministers reiterated their commitment to the overarching goal of poverty alleviation and, in that context, expressed hope that the post-2015 Development Agenda will be focused on poverty eradication, economic growth, job creation, social inclusion and sustainable development. They emphasized that it should be applicable to both developed and developing countries and at the same time preserve the national policy space and priorities of developing countries. They recalled all the principles of Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The Ministers underscored that provision of additional financial resources, technology development and transfer as well as capacity building assistance from developed to developing countries are key components of any international compact for development cooperation.
28. The Ministers reiterated the need for Members to work with an open mind and show flexibility to achieve successful outcomes at the forthcoming WTO Ministerial Conference (MC9) in Bali, in December 2013 which would be a stepping stone to future progress in the Doha Development Agenda negotiations, in accordance with its development mandate.
29. The Foreign Ministers of Russia and China appreciated India's active role and contribution to further the goals and objectives of

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and to provide a renewed relevance to ASEM by re-orienting its discussions towards tangible cooperation among ASEM partners in key areas of mutual interest. In this context, they congratulated and extended their full support to the External Affairs Minister of India for hosting the 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting (ASEM FMM11) in New Delhi on 11-12 November 2013.

30. The Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China extended their warm appreciation and sincere gratitude to the External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India for hosting and making excellent arrangements for the meeting in New Delhi.
31. The Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation and the External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India thanked the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China for his offer to host the next Trilateral meeting in 2014 and pledged their full support.



SCO

- 119 Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit.**
New Delhi, September 10, 2013.

The Official Spokesperson.....the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Salman Khurshid, will be traveling to Bishkek on the 12th of this month to attend the SCO Summit meeting. The SCO Summit meeting is to be held on the 13th in Bishkek.

Those of you who are following our participation in the SCO process are aware that it has usually been the External Affairs Minister who has been representing India at the SCO summits. While he is in Bishkek, it is expected that he will take the opportunity to have informal discussions with other leaders who will be present there during the Summit.

From Bishkek, he will then move on to Uzbekistan. On the 14th and 15th the External Affairs Minister will be in Uzbekistan where he will have discussions with his counterpart and also preside over the meeting of Indian regional Heads of Mission, who are meeting there, and he will interact with Heads of Mission from approximately ten countries in that area.

Those are the two announcements that I have to make. Maybe I will try and answer any questions you may have on this before I request my colleagues to talk to you on the more substantive aspects of our interaction on consular, passport and visa matters. If that is all right, I will begin with indicating my response to any question that you may have on these two things.

Q: Would EAM be meeting Mr. Sartaj Aziz in Bishkek?

Official Spokesperson: I have mentioned to you that while he is in Bishkek on 12th and 13th of this month he will also take the opportunity to interact informally with several leaders who will be present there depending on their schedules and mutually convenient timeslots. These are usually in the form of meetings which are informal conversations. There are no structured and full-fledged meetings that are planned during the SCO Summit because this is a short Summit level meeting.

As regards any specific meeting, we are still working on these things. Should we have a finality to this process, we will certainly let you know.

Q: What is the status of India's application to become a full member at the SCO?

Official Spokesperson: As you are aware, we have evinced interest in joining the SCO and have indicated our willingness to play a broader and larger role in the SCO. Having said that, it is also correct to state that the SCO members are working on the modalities to see how they would approach the entire issue of expansion. These modalities include various administrative, financial and legal issues. They are yet to come to a consensual decision on how to expand the SCO. Once they do come to that decision, they will indicate to us, and we will until then patiently continue our role as an Observer in the SCO.

Q: Akbar, Nawaz Sharif had nominated his Advisor Sartaj Aziz to attend the SCO Summit at Bishkek. But a few days back, Russia requested

Pakistan that Nawaz Sharif himself should attend the Summit, which is likely. The question is, when would India consider representing itself at the SCO Summit at the summit level considering that China is in favour of full membership for both India and Pakistan? And what is the timeframe you look at for India getting full membership?

Official Spokesperson: Rajiv, let me try and answer your question in terms of background history.

India has been previously represented at the summit level by our Head of Government. So, this is not new, we have had occasion before. Subsequently we have decided that it would be best if it is represented at External Affairs Minister level. You could have a look at the record. I think it was in 2009. Today there is an article on the website of the Ministry of External Affairs which lists out this position.

As regards your other question about who represents other countries, this is not for me to respond to. Who represents other countries is a choice those countries make.

You have very cleverly, as usual, put question within question. It is like the Matryoshka Doll, you open one and another comes out. That said, to answer your third question, it is for the member states to decide. We will take it as it comes. We see SCO as an important regional organization in our regional space. There are issues that the SCO considers, for example Afghanistan and the challenges posed by it. We see SCO as a useful regional forum which can address issues relating to Afghanistan. We also see SCO as a useful forum in terms of our antiterrorist stance in a regional context. I presume you are aware of RATS. This is an SCO antiterrorism mechanism and we participating through that.

The third thing is energy. As you are aware, we are interested in TAPI pipeline which is currently from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. These are again in the same common space. So, we see our links with the SCO as part of our extended neighbourhood and with countries where we have a civilisational and cultural linkage for years. Therefore, we hope that as and when there is a decision taken about expansion of the SCO, we will be ready to fully participate in it.



120 Media Interaction of the External Affairs Minister at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

Bishkek, (Kyrgyz Republic), September 12, 2013.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid):...(Inaudible)... any major bilaterals here. We are concentrating on the SCO. But since we are all going to be here and there is a lot of time, we will use it usefully, we will use it for anything that can be usefully exchanged, discussed, etc. I am told that we are all in the same building. So, we may have a chance informally to bump into each other, sit and talk. But the focus here has to be the SCO which is very important for us.

We are Observers here, which is a higher status than Dialogue Partners. Over the years there has been discussion about the role of Observers, how much they can be involved, and how much contribution they can make. I think this will continue this time as well. Our aspiration of course is to become a full member. They are working on rules for engagement and to take on new members. We are not sure of a timeline whether this time it will be possible for them to arrive at a document that can be the basis for this. But we have indicated that we are obviously interested, we would want.

I think my letter to all the present members had received a very good response. So, we will try and concentrate on that but I certainly would be happy to use an opportunity like this when we are all together to informally discuss anything of mutual interest that we may have with any of the other delegates that are present, and certainly delegates from Pakistan.

Mr. Sartaj Aziz is here. I am sure we will have a chance to come face to face and discuss informally. But we have not actually worked out anything specific in advance. Let us see how things go.

Q: Any ground work which you are trying to create with your counterpart for the, I mean our Prime Minister...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: Ground work has been done in Delhi. As you know, there were some contacts in Delhi as well. It is pretty clear, I do not think that there is rocket science in this. If you want a meeting at the highest level, there has to be an atmosphere for it; there has to be of course a desire on both sides to meet, which I can imagine is there. But it is the context, circumstances and prevailing conditions.

So, we have been saying repeatedly that it is important that those issues that we know are intractable issues perhaps on which some delivery, some satisfaction and some honest attempt to resolve them must be shown so that the atmospherics improve. And when the atmospherics improve, you can then think of the next stage and the next step.

We have really had an unfortunate situation at the Line of Control. I think you were reporting only two days ago there was firing on both sides now. It is not conducive, it is not the best of circumstances in which you want to proceed with something of a meaningful conversation, dialogue and outreach. So, let us see. Let us see how things happen. A week is a long time in politics on how things shape up, what is the mood, what is the sense. But the call finally has to be taken by the leadership on both sides.

Q: Sir, the Pakistani indications are that they released a lot of fishermen and they want that to be interpreted as a confidence-building measure. On India's demand that something to be done on the LoC, tangible measures with respect to LoC and with respect to Hafiz Saeed, they say that casualties on both sides of the border have been nearly equal, people have died in equal numbers and there has been firing. So, India to that says that the quality of Pakistani firing and Indian firing is vastly different. Indian is defensive to ward off infiltrators while Pakistani is aggressive in that extent.

External Affairs Minister: We are going around in circles. Stating the problem as a point of solution does not make sense. We all know there is this problem. Despite that problem there was repeatedly, over the years, not just our government but governments over the years have said, let us find a way of overcoming this problem. The problem is partly something that can be contained, partly something that will take a long time to resolve.

But despite that we had a composite dialogue, a dialogue for good reason. As you know, under very tragic circumstances this came to an end. Then there was a resumed dialogue and the resumed dialogue continues. But resumed dialogue at what level, at what speed, and with what content will obviously depend upon the prevailing conditions during which the dialogue is to be examined.

In the prevailing conditions nobody would say on either side, I do not think Pakistan, really if they are being honest, would say that the prevailing conditions were good for us to respond. Prevailing conditions were not good and have not been good. Therefore, we have been economical with our responses as we must be.

It is not just how the Government feels, it is how people feel, it is how various institutions assess as circumstances. That is not us alone, sports bodies, cultural institutions, everybody who has to organise visitors or exchange with their counterparts from Pakistan, take an independent view as well. We can advise them but they take an independent view also on the convenience and the security and the implications and complications that are involved.

So, I think it would not be correct for me to take up an individual item and say, that is the item which is causing the irritation. I think it is the overall atmospherics that are important. And how much can be done? As far as we are concerned, we can only say this that we are very sincere and we have given no reason for anyone to feel a grievance against us. We have a whole list of issues that frankly anyone would have a grievance about, and those grievances need to be addressed. Nobody is saying you address them all together and now. But certainly there must be a clear indication that there is intent to address them, and that can only be possible if you begin some delivery.

Now, if you isolate them, one delivery is that there should be some movement as far as the trials are concerned, prosecutors' appointment, the collection of evidence and giving evidence to court. And if they require cross-examination we have agreed that judicial commission can cross examine. But that should be done and that material should be placed before court. If the court begins to look at that material, accept that material, pass some orders, then one can say, yes, we are moving in the right direction.

But right now for me to say that enough has been done at least to begin the process all over again, would be difficult. As I said, time will tell whether we have enough. We have a positive attitude. And despite the caution that everyone is giving us in terms of public opinion, we have a positive attitude, but we do expect some delivery. And as I speak to you now, it

will be difficult for me to say that we have substantial delivery or delivery to the extent that we believe could be a starting point.

Q: Sir, there are media reports in today's papers in India that this time Pakistan has shown a proactive approach to meet, especially like Sartaj Aziz is very willing to meet you here.

External Affairs Minister: It is not an issue of being willing or being reluctant and needing to be persuaded. We do not disagree that good relations with Pakistan, and peaceful relations, tranquillity on the border and the Line of Control, is a high priority. It is for us. We do not want to score points against them. We do not want to appear difficult and rude and unapproachable. But we have a responsibility to the people. They must assess their own responsibility, and we assess our responsibility.

We would be willing to take risk about ourselves, but we cannot take a risk about the country and our people. So, there has to be satisfaction. What level of satisfaction, is something that can be worked out. But there must be some satisfaction. And it is not difficult to give signals that your intention is good. Frankly it is not a very welcome thought to say, I want to do something but I am unable to. None of us in public life can take up that sort of position and posture.

Q: Any specific agenda for the SCO meet?

External Affairs Minister: Frankly, Observers observe, they watch. But we will have a chance to meet everyone as I said. Informally we will all meet together this evening over dinner. Tomorrow again the Observers will be in a separate place before we actually participate. We will be together at the lunch. Altogether we will have some times for bilaterals.

As I have said, if you are at the same place you will bump into each other, sometime you get a chance to have a coffee together and talk about things. But there is not fixed agenda. The fixed agenda was that we had to meet with, time permitting, the President of Kyrgyzstan and the Foreign Minister. They were both very generous and kind. We had very good meetings today. A very very clear and strong indication has been given that they would like India to participate in the growth and development of Kyrgyzstan in a very big way, major way.

We have problems about connectivity. Of course they have an airline that works out at the time when students and tourism is on a peak. But

otherwise they discontinue that flight. So, we do not have a direct flight and that is a little bit of a problem. But, we are going to mount a business group.. FICCI will bring one later this year. I have invited the Foreign Minister to come to India. We can try and work out if there will be a higher level visit on either side in the few months that are left before the next elections.

Certainly as far as important flagship programmes are concerned, doing university here giving it perhaps greater spin of being a technical university, they are trying to fast-track that. We will also explore those areas that they have highlighted - investment and power is one such area. But we can do a great deal in the small-scale sector, we can do a great deal in collaboration in agriculture, pharmaceuticals. So, what we would like to do is to keep them in the loop and move a little fast. This can be a very important stepping stone for a much larger region. Their own absorptive capacity is obviously limited. It is a small population. But I think the opportunities here for using this as collaborative base along with them to reach out to a much larger region, I think are absolutely wonderful and we will have to take them seriously. Most of all, I think it is the special feel that they have for India and the very warm and positive outreach they indicated immediately. I think that is a very welcome thing.

Q: Sir, will political issues also come up for discussion?

External Affairs Minister: They do not have any major political issues to discuss with us frankly. They are looking at institution building. They are very excited about their Parliamentary system which they say they have taken inspiration from India for. They want us to work closer in using of the Parliamentary system and training of Parliamentary officers and also Members of Parliament. The Speaker will visit India in the near future. So, we talked about that. We talked also about India's role as an expanding, emerging economy. And in fact we did not have to persuade them that India needs to be here in the region a lot more. They said that you need to be here in the region a lot more which was a very welcome thing.

We did not really go into any other major issues because I think there will be a chance to talk about some of these things tomorrow, whatever is happening in the world. But certainly as far as the region is concerned, we were able to get a very good sense.

Q: Sir, when you were last here in this region - you were in Almaty and Tashkent - there was talk of Karkand field 8.33 per cent stake, there was talk of Yamal Peninsula. Both have now gone to the Chinese. So, what do you think about oil diplomacy in this region?

External Affairs Minister: That is not the end of the world. Let us face it. China has a significant presence here. They are in the neighbourhood. In many of the openings China also staked their claim long before we did. But I think there is a clear indication that there are many alternatives that are available, and it is for our experts and our stakeholders to pursue them. When you want something, you have to show eagerness and you have to invest in trying to get it. Nothing is going to come home.

I think in terms of political and emotional back up that anyone needs to do business, we are on a very very good wicket here. I would certainly advise my colleagues who are dealing with petroleum and commerce that we should take advantage of this.

There is a generational change taking place here. There is a huge amount of goodwill that we have because of the past. But there is a generational change taking place. New generation is coming. Fortunately, it is not a generation that has been completely weaned away from the past. But I think we need to connect with them. And since we have, as a matter of policy, already taken up Connect Central Asia as an important policy imperative for us, it is now only applications of that policy in specific instances is what we need to work on.

I think you do not get a relationship of substance without working on it. No free lunches. So, we need to at least work on this relationship. I think that we have no reason to worry about any unfair competition. I think there is enough going for us. We must be able to show that we are adequately equipped and interested.

Q: On the antiterrorism front, RATS has been one area where India has been interested even before they spoke of opening up the membership. So, how do you plan?

External Affairs Minister: I think one of the substantive issues of the meeting here is that there a meeting of minds on counterterrorism. I do not think that one gets so much convergence and congruence on this

issue easily elsewhere as you get here. Let us not forget that this is despite the presence of some other points of view in the region.

I think on this we are on a very very strong wicket. They are willing to work very closely with us, expand our cooperation with them, not just them but Uzbekistan and everybody. I think that this is something on which we can look forward to a satisfactory engagement.

Q: On Pakistan there is nothing.

External Affairs Minister: On Pakistan I told you, we will bump into each other, we will sit and talk. I am not going to say I would not look at you. But the thing is that I do not have a prepared speech for Pakistan and I hope that they do not have for me. I think it is important that sometimes you should take things as they come. You are all here. I am sure that you will see me, you will see Mr. Sartaj Aziz, you will pick up bits at coffee tables and so on. We will just let it be a natural - sit down, have a chance, talk. But it will only be an informal conversation that will help in atmospherics, if it is the right kind of conversation.

I think but it is neither an imperative nor a dipstick, nor a test. It is just that we naturally come across each other, sit down and have a chat. If something comes off it that we can factor back into our decision making in Delhi, we will do it. If we do not get anything out of it, we will just leave it at that.

Q: Sir, you tried a lot for a political consensus on the land boundary agreement with Bangladesh.

External Affairs Minister: I have not given up!

Q: Is there another chance now?

External Affairs Minister: Of course. There is always a chance and there will be a chance and we are working on it.

The decision to show consensus could not be taken. But in fairness to the BJP, there has been, at least up to this stage, consensus with BJP. Despite their own perceived or real difficulties, there has been consensus. Problem came from a very small group of MPs from Trinamool. But then they are more affected because they believe it concerns them immediately. And I think although it was very irksome for us not to be able to do it...(Inaudible)...agreeing to talk rather than agreeing to agree.

So, we are agreeing to talk and I think that in a democracy that is a very important part of decision making. So, I am not dejected, disappointed or distressed. I think that process is on and I will be very happy to meet with the CM. I offered to meet her. The MPs said it is not necessary, we will sit and talk about it and if there is an opportunity, you can even talk to her. I have spoken to her before once and I will be happy. I know her very well. She has been a colleague and a good friend. We will talk. No problem.

Q: Sir, you have done so much of background work on this LBA. You prepared documents, background papers, everything. Where is the rub? Whether it is exclaves and enclaves, or the 6.5 kilometre of the boundary?

External Affairs Minister: The rub is that there is an imaginary loss that somebody feels. It is like that someone who is to agonise now over partition and say it should not have happened. There is not much I can do except to say that this is a historical fact and we all have to live with it.

It is not like an alternative. Nobody is saying, do not do it this way, this is the way it can be done. Nobody is saying that. Nobody is saying that this will never be done. Someone is saying next session, someone is saying next Parliament, somebody is saying next year. Therefore, we are not in disagreement. It is just putting it together and again atmospherics. So, we must get the right atmospherics, and hopefully next session if you are lucky and all works, we can bring it.

Q: So, why is not your government getting atmospherics right or wrong?

External Affairs Minister: Atmospherics of what?

Q: Bangladesh and also Sri Lanka.

External Affairs Minister: Is not this atmospherics that I am saying publicly that I will talk to the Chief Minister instead of hiding it from you that I will go quietly, clandestinely I will say I did not go, she came to me. I will go to her. There is no problem. She is a Chief Minister. She is concerned and I think we should address that concern.

I have clear indications from the Prime Minister that whatever we do must get people on board, we should have them engaged and involved.

So, we are not going to bulldoze anything. We could have done it that day, we could have bulldozed. We may have lost half ...(Inaudible)...

Q: Yes, you backed away.

External Affairs Minister: No, but I was clear that we would take the responsibility on our shoulders rather than push it through and create distress on the other side. So, I think this is what atmospherics are about.

Q: There is more problem from the BJP, not from the RSS. Do you think that the BJP can get rid of the RSS pressure? Their stand is not to give up an inch of territory. Rhetoric like this.....(inaudible)

External Affairs Minister: Rhetoric is a small thing; we are not worried about that, BJP has made a prudent suggestion. Their worry is the impact that it would make on the cadres, from the election angle. I believe it is not going to have any impact on the elections. What you don't have would not be with you. What impact can this have on the elections? If this is the worry, we should at least make efforts to remove them.

Q: Sir, how are your preparations for the US trip?

External Affairs Minister: Preparation is going on. I think the crucial thing there is a low hanging fruit. I think it is important for you and it is important for us that there is no rescheduling of everything. And we are attempting that at least those things that were flagged during the Vice-President's visit and Secretary Kerry's visit do get delivered when we go there.

We are also keen that some of the things that are creating an issue for our industry at least get addressed. We may not finally find a solution immediately but at least get addressed. But I think that understanding is very clearly there with the US. And if we both take up issues that have some problem for us, if we even address them, we will be moving forward.

So, I think it is going to be a good visit, an important visit and it will be a landmark visit because it will come after so many things have happened in the world on which the important thing is that the worst that one had imagined did not happen. So, in that sense the conversation continues along the same lines that we had when the Vice-President, and Kerry came to India and we will continue along that. Let us keep our fingers crossed.

I think Mr. Lavrov will come today evening. So, we will have a better idea of what is happening on the Syria front. So, we will have a better idea. But from what one gathers from the media, I think at least as a breather and people have a chance to look at things afresh and perhaps find some way out of this very very unfortunate situation.

So, if there is any chance meeting, if we bump into each other, you can ask me what happened, I will say he said this and I said that, or you can ask him.

Thank you



121 Statement by the External Affairs Minister at the SCO Summit- 2013.

Bishkek, September 13 2013.

Your Excellency, President Almazbek Atambayev,

Distinguished Heads of State

Secretary General of the SCO,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- It is an honour for me to represent India at this important Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. I bring with me the good wishes of the President, the Prime Minister and the people of India to our friends here today. I also wish to thank the Government and the people of the Kyrgyz Republic for the gracious hospitality and warm welcome.
- This SCO Summit is taking place in politically and economically turbulent times. The world economy is troubled. In times of globalization, we know that growth can be restored only with collective efforts by creating more jobs, bringing in financial reforms and creating a conducive environment for business. We commend

Russia's lead in organizing a successful G20 Summit in St. Petersburg recently, where G20 leaders deliberated, discussed and agreed on measures that are needed for global economic recovery.

- But this is more an occasion for us to celebrate the milestones which the SCO has crossed over the years, in addressing the security and developmental challenges of our common region. The SCO, we feel, would need to continuously adapt to a changing world and reorient its objectives without necessarily diluting its original vision. We have no doubt that the SCO members will guide the destiny of the organization with a strong sense of history.
- On its part, India has been associated with the SCO as an observer since 2005. During this period, we have discovered a great degree of convergence with the SCO in underlying values, working principles and strategic ethos. India strongly believes in the philosophical principles guiding the SCO, like progress through consensus, decisions by constructive dialogue and strengthening mutual confidence, friendship and good neighbourly relations. India is guided in its approach by the mantra or principle of multilateralism, that the common good of all has primacy over any bilateral differences. Given this fundamental approach, given India's emergence as a vibrant economy and a vast market; our repository of human, scientific & technological knowledge; and our development and security related experience of over six decades, we believe that India can make deeper contributions to enrich the SCO process and contribute to its success.
- India is civilisationally linked to the ancient networks of the Silk Route which traversed the landmass occupied by the modern day SCO. These networks stimulated trans-continental development at the time, and also catalysed cultural linkages, clear evidence of which exist

till today. We therefore feel that SCO, among its other endeavours, should also focus on creating well-connected trade and investment corridors within the SCO region - with India, as in earlier times, adding value and content. These connections between our countries, whether rails, roads or pipelines, will help re-energise our economies and bring our people closer together.

Excellencies

- India has long been a victim of terrorism and we are acutely aware of the threat that its perpetrators pose to our people. We are of the firm view that only multilateral efforts and integrated actions can help effectively counter these negative forces including the related evils of drug trafficking and small arms proliferation. We are keen to deepen our security-related cooperation with the SCO in general and with the Regional Anti Terrorism Structure, in particular. We look forward to the signing of the Model Protocol of Intent in the near future as a demonstration of our willingness and commitment.
- India is increasingly concerned about the security challenges which may emanate from the developing situation in Afghanistan. India strongly believes that Afghanistan can successfully complete the security, political and economic transitions in coming years and regain its historical place as a hub for regional trade and transit routes. However, this presupposes fulfillment of pledges made by the international community for security and civilian assistance to Afghanistan and non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs. We see SCO as an important body that can offer a credible alternative regional platform to discuss the challenges related to Afghanistan.
- This Summit of the SCO is taking place at a crucial juncture in global politics, with many nations seared by violence and conflict. We have today the opportunity to

reflect on events of deep geo-political significance in our neighbourhood. India is deeply concerned at the ongoing conflict in Syria and is closely watching the fast paced developments. We have consistently called upon all sides to abjure violence so that conditions can be created for an inclusive political dialogue leading to a comprehensive political solution, taking into account the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. At the same time, any external military intervention in Syria's affairs should be excluded. We are encouraged by the current proposal, steered by Russia, that is aimed at bringing the Syrian chemical stockpile under international control. This proposal is in alignment with India's own consistent stance of supporting the complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapons worldwide. India sees any move in this direction, within the framework of the UN, as a positive development. We are hopeful that this development will reinvigorate the peace efforts towards a political solution to the Syrian conflict, including the early holding of the proposed 'International Conference on Syria' (Geneva-II), bringing all parties to the conflict to the negotiating table.

- In conclusion, let me reiterate that India stands ready to play a larger role in the SCO as a full member, once the organization reaches consensus on the expansion process. It is our conviction that an expanded SCO will be a more effective body to address the numerous security and developmental challenges that our region faces.
- I once again, thank the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for guiding the SCO this year and for organizing this Summit.



122 Foreign Secretary Smt. Sujatha Singh leads Indian Delegation at the SCO Heads of Government Summit.

Tashkent, November 29, 2013.

1. Foreign Secretary, Smt Sujatha Singh, led the Indian delegation to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Heads of Government Council in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on 29 November. Addressing the Council, Smt Singh emphasized the role of the SCO in promoting rapid economic development and connectivity in the region, as also in countering terrorism and promoting peace. She called for a greater SCO role in the rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan
2. On the sidelines of the SCO meeting, the Foreign Secretary held bilateral meetings with Mr Murad Askarov, the Deputy Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan; Mr Mohammadrezo Nematzade, the Trade, Mines and Industry Minister of Uzbekistan; Mr Mohammad Karim Khalili, the Second Vice-President of Afghanistan and Mr Dmitry Mezentsev, the Secretary General of the SCO.
3. India has been an observer country in the SCO since 2005. The six-member organization now plans to expand its membership.



123 Statement by Foreign Secretary at the SCO - Council of Heads of Government Meeting at Tashkent.

November 29, 2013

Your Excellency Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyayev,

Distinguished Heads of Government of the Members and Observers of the SCO, Special invitees, Dialogue Partners,

Secretary General of the SCO,

Excellencies, Gentlemen, Ladies

1. It is an honour for me to represent my Prime Minister and my country at this important meeting of the Council of Heads of Governments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. I bring with me good wishes from my Prime Minister and from the people of India to our friends in the SCO region. At the outset, let me thank the Government and the friendly people of Uzbekistan for their gracious hospitality and warm welcome. It is appropriate that this meeting is taking place in Tashkent, the very heart of Central Asia, at an important time of transition for the region. Tashkent sits at the crossroads of history and is a wonderful symbol of not just the glorious heritage of Central Asia but also of a bright future.
2. India has been proactively participating since 2005, in various SCO fora open to the observer countries. India has also been following closely the evolution of the SCO, learning much in the process, as also sharing our experiences in development and security. The SCO has played a constructive and valuable role in bringing peace and prosperity to our region. We are impressed that the SCO has emerged as an important regional forum focussing on issues of regional importance that are relevant and contemporary. We believe that the SCO is poised to play a much larger role in the future, both for the security and stability of our region.

Excellencies,

3. The SCO region is one of the fastest growing of the world. The rapid pace of economic development in our common region is

closely linked with our common concern for environmental conservation. India is engaged with the SCO in its various conservation initiatives and this year, we participated in the Global Snow Leopard Conservation Forum in Bishkek. Our habitat is our common heritage and therefore in areas like disaster management and ecological conservation, we can benefit through sharing our experiences and best practices.

4. We are brought together by a common vision and approach for rapid economic development of our nations and peoples. An improved transportation and communication network would help strengthen regional cooperation in our common space, in critical areas like energy, finance, infrastructure and telecommunications. It would also boost trade and investment in the region. The SCO's role in achieving these objectives is crucial. In this connection, India welcomes the SCO initiative for the creation of the Energy Club of SCO member states, observers and dialogue partners. We will participate in the meeting in Moscow next week to work out a common document to guide our work.
5. India is already engaged with several SCO member states in diverse areas such as capacity building and human resource development, information technology, pharmaceuticals and health care, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurship development. We would specifically like to share our experience in economic areas like banking, capital markets and micro-finance. India has articulated a 'Connect-Central Asia' policy in recent years, to further our vision of a region connected closely by its common aspiration for a better life for its people.
6. In the security sphere we would like to see all states under the SCO umbrella vanquish terrorism from their territories and areas under their sovereign control.
7. In the same vein, we are cognizant of terrorism as the major threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan. We believe that a long term solution can be achieved by supporting the efforts made by Afghanistan itself to begin an Afghan-led dialogue on reconciliation with the armed opposition forces, provided that

these groups respect the principles adopted by the international community.

8. On its part, India remains committed to Afghanistan's institutional and socio-economic development, and the overall social upliftment of its people. We are of the opinion that the SCO should step up its engagement in the rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan, through common projects and financial commitments. We support the efforts by Russia to craft common SCO positions on Afghanistan and will be happy to join the specialised meetings to focus on this issue.

Excellencies,

9. India recognizes the inalienable right of all states to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with universally agreed international norms, conventions and obligations. In this context, we are encouraged by the recent tidings about the multilateral dialogue in Geneva to explore a comprehensive settlement of the Iranian nuclear question, through political and diplomatic means. The positive resolution of this issue can lead to multiple and far-reaching benefits across the region, including in the SCO space.
10. As an Observer, India has always endeavoured to play a constructive role in the SCO both on security and developmental issues. With our experience and institutional capabilities, we feel that we can add value and share best practices in areas which may be of interest to the SCO - disaster management, food security and agricultural techniques, public administration, youth exchanges, information technology, telecommunications and pharmaceuticals, to name only a few. On the expansion of the SCO, we patiently await the beginning of the formal process. Our External Affairs Minister has already written to all his counterparts in SCO member States, conveying our interest in membership of the organisation. We stand ready to formally apply for full membership once the SCO announces the application modalities.

11. In conclusion, Mr Chairman, I once again thank the Government of Uzbekistan for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements.



INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-III

CIVIL NUCLEAR ENERGY

124. Press Interaction of Foreign Secretary and DG, IAEA.**New Delhi, March 13, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson: Good Afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming for this media interaction. As is usual, we will begin with brief opening remarks by the Foreign Secretary followed by the Director General, IAEA. Following that they have agreed to respond to a few questions. I will then begin by asking Foreign Secretary to make his opening remarks.

Foreign Secretary:

Excellency Dr Yukiya Amano

Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency,

It gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to Dr Amano, Director General of the IAEA on his second visit to India in three years. We are also privileged that Dr Amano has chosen to visit India soon after the IAEA BOG had approved by acclamation earlier this month his second term as Director General of the Agency.

Dr Amano has had meetings for the past two days in Mumbai with the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and has visited BARC and other nuclear facilities. During his stay in Delhi he will be meeting the National Security Advisor and will be calling on the Prime Minister.

During our meeting today, I conveyed to Dr Amano our appreciation for his support for further consolidating the very productive relations that so happily exist between India and the Agency.

Dr Amano has been briefed on plans for major expansion of our nuclear programme in which international cooperation is an important component. We have concluded nuclear cooperation agreements with a number of major nuclear industry countries.

India views nuclear energy as an essential element of its national energy basket and is committed to taking forward its three stage nuclear programme based on a closed fuel cycle. There are also enormous benefits from other peaceful applications of nuclear energy in the fields of health, industry and agriculture.

As we mark the second anniversary of the Fukushima Accident, we express our solidarity with the Japanese people in the face of the grave tragedy resulting from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Dr Amano has led the Agency's admirable efforts to address nuclear safety issues after Fukushima thus reinforcing its central role in international efforts to strengthen nuclear safety standards worldwide. Our Prime Minister has underscored that safety of our nuclear plants is a matter of the highest priority. The Government has undertaken a number of measures in this regard, which were discussed in our meetings with Dr Amano. Dr Amano has been able to see some of these features himself when he visited TAPS in Mumbai.

Our nuclear safety track record has been impeccable. India is committed to continuous improvement and innovation in our nuclear safety standards and practices to maintain public confidence in nuclear power as a clean and safe energy source.

We have cooperated closely on nuclear security issues, including through the NSS, our Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnerships and Agency participation in the NSS Sherpa meeting and 1540 Workshop held in New Delhi last year. EAM will be representing India at the Ministerial Meeting on Nuclear Security being hosted by the DG in Vienna in July this year.

India has longstanding constructive relations with the IAEA on safeguards implementation. After the conclusion of the India-Specific Safeguards Agreement in 2008, twelve nuclear power plant units and 7 other facilities have been offered for safeguards under the India Specific Safeguards Agreement.

We are at an advanced stage of consultations with the Agency relating to our Additional Protocol and India will ratify once these discussions are concluded.

The IAEA and its statute are a vital component of the international framework for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The IAEA is an indispensable international institution and should have the necessary resources to fulfill its mandate in accordance with its Statute.

We underline the continuing importance of an effective IAEA Safeguards system, with relevant safeguard agreements and the Additional Protocol as the verification norm, and the full implementation by member states of their respective safeguards agreements with the Agency. We will remain engaged on various proposals for securing sensitive materials and technologies.

As a major nuclear industry country with the capability to produce all items for a complete nuclear fuel cycle, India is committed to maintaining the highest export control standards. I am happy to announce that the national SCOMET list has been updated to be on par with the current NSG and MTCR lists. In some respects, our controls are more stringent than those practiced by the NSG and MTCR.

As a like-minded country, India has demonstrated responsible non-proliferation and export control practices and has shown the ability and willingness to contribute substantially to global non-proliferation objectives and is engaged with the multilateral regimes with a view to joining these groups as a full member.

I would like to convey our appreciation to Dr Amano for his leadership of the IAEA at a challenging time and in enhancing public confidence in nuclear energy as a clean, affordable, safe and secure source of energy, vital to meeting global energy demands especially in developing countries.

We welcome your visit as an important opportunity to further strengthen the longstanding cooperative relations between India and the IAEA.

I would like to invite you to make your remarks.

Thank you.

DG, IAEA:

Good Afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Now I am visiting India. Yesterday I moved from Mumbai to New Delhi. I already had an occasion to visit the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and Tarapore Nuclear Power Plant site. The reason why I am visiting India is simple. India is an extremely important partner for the IAEA. It has an extensive nuclear programme, very much advanced in the nuclear

application for peaceful purposes, helping other countries and a good record of non-proliferation and safety. So, this time I wanted to meet with the policy makers and also visit the sites and discuss with the engineers, researchers and scientists to better understand India's activities. This is a two way dialogue. I want to learn more from India and my visit would be on occasion to share my views of the activities of IAEA. I visited India in January 2011, two months before the Fukushima accident. Things have changed a lot and I had to work a lot to address this Fukushima accident. There are things that have not changed. The use of nuclear power for the generation of electricity continues to be a very important option. There is a misunderstanding that the Fukushima accident should mean the end of nuclear power or should mean the decline of the use of nuclear power. According to the latest IAEA estimates by 2013, there would be minimum 23% increase of electricity production by using nuclear power. That is the minimum estimate. According to our high estimate, there would be 100% increase. So double the present. The reason is very clear. The basic situations or conditions like the need to mitigate global warming effect, ensuring energy security, or mitigate the effect of volatile fossil fuel price and in many countries they need to stay economically competitive or need to secure energy for development.

So, I keep on saying that despite Fukushima accident nuclear continues to be an important option for many countries. Of course it is up to State to decide whether or not to use but IAEA's role is to help them if they decide to use nuclear power and one important thing that has changed after Fukushima is the pronounced emphasis on safety. Safety must come first. Fukushima accident was a big wake up call for every country, everyone on the importance of safety. I visited Tarapur site and witnessed the serious efforts, enthusiasm by the operators, engineers to further improve, further enhance the level of safety. Mobile generators were added after Fukushima. The outside hookup to cool down the power plant in case of blackout was added. These are some of the examples of improvements, enhancement of safety at the site of Tarapur. This is very important information for us. Also I first had information on the activities of your country in the fight against cancer or use of nuclear techniques for the increase of agriculture products or water management or water desalination. The nuclear techniques are very useful to promote the global development agenda and your country is using this technology

for the development of your country but also helping other countries and I am very grateful for the contribution that India is extending to other countries. India is also a very important partner in nuclear security, nuclear security means to prevent fissile material and radio active material falling into the hands of terrorists and on the initiative of the Prime Minister you have established GC&P. I am very glad that India would be represented at the IAEA Nuclear Security Ministerial level conference that we would hold in July this year at Vienna. Your country's participation at a high level will add political weight to this conference and to this important issue. The implementation of India Specific Safeguard Agreement is being implemented very smoothly and we have had meetings between your experts and other experts to bring into force of additional protocol and some other issues. I am very confident that the implementation of this agreement India Specific Safeguard Agreement will be very smooth. There were other issues but I think that it is better to stop here and rather take your questions.

Q: My question is to Dr. Amano, Dr. Amano, you are known in the international community as an honest broker as the DG of IAEA, but the question is whenever it comes to Iran, there is always doubt whenever there is a meeting happening between P5+1 or whether it is the last week meeting which was with the 35 members. Can you please throw light really what is the positive or constructive outcome of all these talks?

DG, IAEA: Iran nuclear issue is very complicated one but the essential element is very simple. All the countries including Iran have to fully implement the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement if they are non-nuclear weapon states and other relevant obligations if there are any. In case of Iran, Iran has a comprehensive agreement with IAEA and Iran is subject to UN Security Council resolutions which are legally binding. This is the standard. In light of this standard, I can say that declared activities and material of Iran are staying in peaceful purposes, but as Iran is not implementing UN Security Council resolutions and the part of the Safeguard Agreement, we cannot give assurance that everything is for peaceful purposes. Then what should be done? I firmly believe that the solution should be through diplomatic means and dialogue. The IAEA and Iran have been intensifying dialogue since November 2011 and tried to clarify the issues through dialogue and agreement. Unfortunately to

make the long story short, as of today, we have not yet reached agreement and as a consequence no concrete result has been achieved. This is not a good situation. So before the March Board of Governors meeting of the IAEA, we have thought and I stated in the Board of Governors meeting in Vienna that we have to work on this issue with a sense of urgency and the agreement must be in accordance with the effective verification practice and I repeated that the IAEA is committed to solve this issue through dialogue. I will continue the dialogue with Iran and hope that we can report positive results through our next meeting in June.

Q: Mr. Amano, Are you seeking any changes in India's nuclear liability norm?

DG, IAEA: I think this is a matter that India is addressing now. India has signed the CSC agreement. India has some domestic law to implement it. For us, we would like to promote the entry into force of CSC but for that it is not only India but other countries need to ratify. I leave it for India to address the domestic law to implement the CSC.

Q: Mr. Amano, after the North Korean recent tests, there were initial assessments that the technology may have come from Pakistan. What is your view ? Have you conducted an assessment ?

DG, IAEA: On DPRK nuclear tests, I can say that it is deeply regrettable that North Korea conducted its third nuclear test. This is clearly against the UN Security Council resolution and it gives negative impact to the Northeast Asian region and beyond. North Korea has the obligation under the UN Security Council resolutions to discontinue the nuclear activities and abandon nuclear weapons. I sincerely hope that North Korea abides by and implements all the UN Security Council resolutions. On the part of the IAEA, we are prepared to play a role. As the only multi-lateral verification organization, in the de-nuclearization of the Korean peninsula, it is necessary that the IAEA plays its role verification. For now, it may be difficult but we will like to send back our staff to North Korea to monitor their activities and play a role in this regard.

Q: My question is to Mr. Mathai. Sir, in view of the breach of assurance by Italy which has been described by PM as violation of every rule of diplomatic discourse is New Delhi planning to give marching orders?

FS: I think we have made our position very clear. As I mentioned yesterday after summoned the Ambassador of Italy, we have conveyed to the Government of Italy that the contents of their note are completely unacceptable to us. We are waiting for their response. And as soon as their response is received, we will take a decision on what to do.

Official Spokesperson:

Thank you



125. Statement by Dr. R.K. Sinha, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, and Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Atomic Energy, at the 2013 IAEA International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century.

St. Petersburg, June 27-29, 2013.

Mr. Chairman, India joins the previous speakers in complimenting the IAEA and the Government of Russian Federation and OECD/NEA for organising this important Ministerial Conference in this beautiful and historic city of St. Petersburg. Mr. Chairman, Following the Fukushima-Daiichi (F-D) accident in Japan, the two very important considerations for nuclear power, namely, nuclear safety and radiological safety, have occupied centre stage in many a forum. In India, the utility (NPCIL), and the regulatory agency, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), independently conducted extensive safety reviews, pursuant to which necessary measures to further augment safety of our operating nuclear power plants (NPPs), under extreme external events, have been taken. India will continue to contribute to the IAEA efforts in enhancing international cooperation in nuclear safety matters, especially through the various activities under the IAEA Action Plan for Nuclear Safety.

I wish to draw attention to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) report released in February 2013 on the studies carried out on the health risk assessment, and which is based on preliminary radiation dose estimation

in the areas affected by the release of radioactivity from the Fukushima-Daiichi reactors. To avoid an under-estimation of risks, the WHO Expert Group adopted the Linear-No-Threshold (LNT) model in their assessment and they also made certain assumptions, which reflect a high degree of conservatism. In spite of this conservative approach, the WHO Report concludes that the possible impact of Fukushima accident on the health of the population in the affected regions is practically insignificant. More recently, following the 60th Session of the Vienna-based United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effect of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) held in the last week of May 2013, there was a Press Release from the UN Information Service. It cites the conclusion of the Session, I quote, "Radiation exposure following the nuclear accident at Fukushima-Daiichi did not cause any immediate health effects. It is unlikely to be able to attribute any health effects in the future among the general public and the vast majority of workers". It is further reported there, that, "On the whole, the exposure of the Japanese population was low, or very low, leading to correspondingly low risks of health effects in later life". The final report of UNSCEAR to be submitted to the UN General Assembly later this year may further help allay the public concerns. In this context, it may be reiterated that it is absolutely essential that the extremely large margins of safety, inherent in the prescribed permissible radiation dose limits, are adequately explained to members of the public, as well as to decision makers. I am sure, an an outcome of these and other ongoing studies, a more rational, science-based criteria for post-accident evaluation, and restrictions on land use in contaminated areas, will emerge. The above-mentioned international findings go to also endorse the view that India articulated at the IAEA General Conference in September 2012, when we said that 'it is essential to project credible and authentic scientific information on the effects of nuclear radiation on human health to dispel misconceptions about nuclear power'. Coming from international peer groups, the WHO and UNSCEAR findings would be extremely important to policy makers and other stakeholders, including the IAEA and this Conference. The Conference may give careful consideration to these findings, even as we all need to continue to attach the highest importance to nuclear and radiological safety.

Mr. Chairman, The Prime Minister of India said during an event in January 2013, "As we pursue our national growth objectives to meet the rising

aspirations of our people, the supply of affordable clean energy will be one of our foremost national challenges and a key priority for our government. Nuclear energy will remain an essential and increasingly important element of our energy mix. We are in the process of expanding our indigenous nuclear power programme.” He also reiterated that ‘we will continue to ensure that nuclear power remains wholly safe’. India’s continued progress in the industrial front, as well as in enhancing the quality of life of its very large population, depends strongly on assured and sustainable growth in the installed power generation capacity and adequate power availability on the grid at all times, in every part of the vast country. The constraint of depleting reserves of fossil fuels, leave alone the sheer enormity of the quantities of coal required, taken along with the need to shift to low carbon energy sources for addressing the global warming related concerns, would drive the options that could meet the Indian energy needs in future. It is here, that nuclear energy becomes a very important option. There is no shift in the policy on nuclear power in India that is based on the utilisation of India’s nuclear resources of modest uranium and abundant thorium, through the closed fuel cycle option, and the 3-stage programme, aimed at large-scale deployment of Thorium in the long-term.

With regard to current nuclear power projects, the construction of four indigenously designed 700 MWe Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs), two each at existing sites of Kakrapar in Gujarat and Rawatbhata in Rajasthan, is in progress. In addition, sixteen more PHWRs of 700 MWe capacity will be progressively taken up for construction (twin units or quadruple units) at five different inland sites already identified. India is also planning to set up PWRs of indigenous design by mid 2020s. Thanks to the long-standing nuclear co-operation between India and the Russian Federation (the erstwhile USSR), two Light Water Reactors (LWRs) of Russian design, each of 1000 MWe capacity, are currently being set up in Kudankulam. The unit-1 of Kudankulam NPP is in an advanced stage of commissioning, following multi-tier safety reviews. The 2nd unit is envisaged to follow suit about six months thereafter. Under the international civil nuclear co-operation agreement, additional options for expanding installed capacity through import of Light Water Reactors have been envisaged, and related discussions are underway with identified vendors, for setting up these

reactors at designated coastal sites, including Kudankulam. The first commercial fast breeder reactor of India - PFBR of 500 MWe capacity - is at an advanced stage of completion of construction at Kalpakkam. All the major equipment of PFBR have been erected and the loading of dummy fuel bundles at peripheral locations is in progress. Indigenously developed mixed oxide type fuel pins for the first core of the PFBR are under manufacture and progressive delivery. Mr. Chairman, The safety of nuclear power plants (NPPs) in India is regulated by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). The regulatory practices followed and the standards developed by AERB are in line with IAEA Safety Standards and international best practices. With over three decades of experience and established plan for augmentation of regulatory resources, AERB will be able to meet the future regulatory demands for reactors based on several different designs and technologies, and their associated fuel cycle facilities.

The IAEA Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) Mission for review of Rajasthan Atomic Power Station 3&4 took place from October 29 to November 14, 2012.

The OSART Mission team reported a series of good practices and made recommendations and suggestions to further reinforce safety practices. The Indian Government has decided to declassify the report of the OSART mission. India, as one of the leaders in nuclear technology, remains committed to the highest levels of safety in its NPPs and in the associated fuel cycle facilities. Mr. Chairman, Energy is one of the main drivers for the growth of human civilisation and it is imperative to achieve sustainable means to meet the developmental aspirations of the global mankind, without affecting the environment. Nuclear energy is an important component of an energy mix for sustainable long-term energy security. The IAEA - INPRO projection of the growth of nuclear energy cites an installed nuclear capacity of 1250 GWe (moderate growth) and 1875 GWe (high growth) by 2050. In order to facilitate the enhancement of the global reach of nuclear energy, while at the same time addressing the proliferation concerns, judicious choice of 'safeguards-friendly technological options of fuel cycle and advanced reactor technologies' would become increasingly necessary. In this context, the utilisation of thorium based fuel cycle offers attractive pathways. It is heartening to

note that the fourth and final Panel Session of this Conference is devoted to the topic, 'Drivers for deployment of sustainable and innovative technology', and which includes due emphasis on thorium utilisation among the topics to be discussed. To conclude, Mr. Chairman, let us remind ourselves that the nuclear power era is nearly 60 years old, and that the current global nuclear competencies are capable of meeting the challenges to expand the nuclear power horizon for the greater benefit of the mankind.

Thank you Mr Chairman.



126. Press Release on meeting between India and the Nuclear Suppliers Group(NSG) Troika.

Vienna, July 1, 2013.

An outreach meeting between India and the Nuclear Suppliers Group(NSG) Troika was held in Vienna on 28 June 2013. The Indian delegation led by Foreign Secretary included representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Department of Atomic Energy. The NSG delegation was led by its current chair - Ambassador Veronika Smigolova of the Czech Republic.

The meeting was in continuation of the regular outreach meetings between India and the NSG. The NSG provided an update on its activities following the Prague Plenary. India expressed continued interest in enhanced engagement with the NSG with a view to securing full membership. India's SCOMET list updated in March 2103 is on par with the current NSG control lists.

Foreign Secretary also attended the Sherpa meeting of the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit which was held in Vienna on 28 June 2013.



127. International Atomic Energy Agency 57th General Conference, Vienna,

18 September 2013

Statement by Dr. Ratan Kumar Sinha, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and Leader of the Indian Delegation Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election as the President of the 57th General Conference. Under your able leadership, I am sure the current General Conference will accomplish all the tasks before it.

India congratulates His Excellency Mr. Yukia Amano on his unanimous election for a second term as Director General of the IAEA. I am sure that the Agency and the international community will benefit from his experience and foresight.

India welcomes the new Members to the IAEA and I take this opportunity to congratulate Brunei Darussalam and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on the occasion of their joining the IAEA family.

Mr. President,

We are meeting now after two important meetings related to nuclear energy, namely, the Fukushima Ministerial Conference in Japan during December 15-17, 2012, and the IAEA International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century in the Russian Federation during June 27-29, 2013. Both these meetings have underscored the role that nuclear energy continues to play in the energy mix of various countries for achieving energy security and sustainable development goals in the 21st century for their respective populations. The international community has learned its lessons from the Fukushima Daiichi accident and come out with new guidelines for further enhanced levels of safety of nuclear reactors against beyond- design-basis accident scenarios.

India is committed to implement the highest standards for the safety of Indian nuclear power plants and the associated fuel cycle facilities. India will continue to participate and assist the IAEA Secretariat in its endeavour to enhance nuclear safety through the cluster of measures it has

formulated in the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. In this connection, I wish to inform you that the first IAEA Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) mission to India for Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS) units - 3&4, took place during October 29 to November 14, 2012. A follow-up OSART mission is planned in 2014. Preparation and planning for inviting IAEA's Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) for peer review of our regulatory system is also in progress, and India will approach the Agency in due course with a request to undertake this mission.

Further, as I had informed last year, India, along with the IAEA, organised an International Workshop on "Safety of Multi-Unit Nuclear Power Plant Sites against External Natural Hazards" at Mumbai, during October 17-19 2012. The Workshop addressed the complex task of safety evaluation of a multi-unit site with respect to multiple hazards, such as earthquake, tsunami and fire. The Workshop was attended by experts from regulatory authorities and plant operators from different countries as well as the IAEA. Actions taken by Member States and International Organisations following Fukushima Accident were also discussed.

Mr. President,

I now turn to updating on India's progress in the three-stage nuclear power programme, formulated under the visionary leadership of Dr. Homi Jehangir Bhabha. India has adopted the policy of a closed nuclear fuel cycle in order to extract the maximum energy from the limited uranium resources, to ensure sustainable nuclear waste management, and above all, to achieve sustainable, long-term energy security through utilisation of thorium.

The performance of the Indian nuclear power plants (NPPs), as well as of the several fuel cycle facilities, reached their highest levels last year. This includes NPPs registering 80% capacity factor, PHWR fuel production of 812 MT (an increase of 8% over the previous year), and the highest ever production of heavy water with the lowest specific energy consumption.

The average annual availability of the Indian NPPs has remained at 90%. Six of the nineteen reactors, currently under operation in the country, have logged continuous operation of more than 300 days during the year.

The Indian nuclear power sector has registered over 379 reactor years of safe operation. In this connection, I would like to once again reiterate that the Indian Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) offer a highly competitive capital cost per MWe and a low unit energy cost.

I am happy to inform you that the first unit of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant achieved its first criticality on July 13, 2013, and is expected to begin commercial operation shortly. This plant has been built in cooperation with the Russian Federation. The second unit is also in an advanced stage of commissioning.

The construction of four indigenously designed 700 MWe PHWRs, two each at existing sites of Kakrapar in Gujarat and Rawatbhata in Rajasthan, is progressing on schedule, and India is planning to construct sixteen more PHWRs of 700 MWe at five different inland sites.

The construction of the 500 MWe Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) is nearing completion at Kalpakkam. The critical erection of all permanent in-core components has been completed. Filling of sodium in the secondary sodium loop is planned shortly, and PFBR is expected to achieve first criticality in about a year from now.

A co-located Fast Reactor Fuel Cycle Facility (FRFCF), to reprocess and re-fabricate the fuel from PFBR, is being set up at Kalpakkam. Necessary site infrastructure has already been created and preparations for launching the Project are being taken up.

The Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR), fuelled with unique mixed carbide fuel, located at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) has been performing well with high availability factor, providing valuable operating experience, as well as technical inputs to India's fast reactor programme. Irradiation of indigenously fabricated sodium bonded metallic fuel pins has been initiated in this reactor.

India continues to carry forward intense development of Thorium fuel cycle based technologies for demonstration in its AHWR programme. It is heartening to note that one of the Panel Sessions at the IAEA International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century held at St. Petersburg was devoted to the topic 'Drivers for deployment of sustainable and innovative technology'. In this Session, I had the opportunity to share India's rich experience in the development and

implementation of Thorium utilisation programme. Thorium-based fuel cycles and technologies present opportunities for enhanced passive safety features, utilisation of the larger natural resources of Thorium, and inherent proliferation resistance. International collaboration under the IAEA would help provide a much wider resource base for future nuclear technology development in this direction.

Mr. President,

India has continued to make good progress in finding new uranium resources in the country through extensive exploration work using multiple technologies. As a result of the use of advanced techniques, we have been able to identify new resources of Uranium. Last year, our reserves have registered an increase of about five percent.

The Nuclear Fuel Complex has developed a new process route, based on adopting radial forging for extrusion of blanks, to manufacture pressure tubes with improved metallurgical properties leading to better creep performance.

Considering India's domestic strength in nuclear power and non-power applications, India continues to host events in support of many programmes of the IAEA. An IAEA Technical meeting on Advanced Fuel Cycles for PHWR was held in India during April 8-11, 2013. In this Meeting, twenty one papers were presented covering the areas of new fuel cycle, fuel design, performance, post irradiation examination and accident modeling. An IAEA Inter-regional training course on "Uranium exploration and processing techniques" was hosted by the Uranium Corporation of India Limited at Jamshedpur. Delegates from twenty three countries participated in this Course.

India, as a founder Member of IAEA's International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), appreciates the significant progress made by INPRO over the years. The INPRO methodology for assessment of innovative nuclear reactors and fuel cycles provides a broad framework for developing specific goals and acceptance criteria for new designs. India continues to support INPRO, and will be making a voluntary contribution of US \$50,000 later this year.

Mr. President,

The impact of nuclear power in addressing climate change concerns needs to be emphasised, since nuclear power involves low greenhouse gas emissions. In this direction, the decision of the Director General to organise the Scientific Forum on the theme of Nuclear Applications for a Sustainable Marine Environment during this session of the General Conference, is quite relevant.

India is developing technologies for high temperature reactors and hydrogen production processes. The current R&D activities target technologies for high temperature nuclear reactors, capable of supplying process heat up to 1000°C, and high efficiency hydrogen production processes, such as thermo-chemical processes and high temperature steam electrolysis. In addition, India is also developing hydrogen storage materials, as well as fuel cells for applications in transport and power generation sectors. As a contribution to the IAEA activities related to nuclear hydrogen production, a software tool for Hydrogen Economic Evaluation Programme (HEEP) has been developed by an Indian team under a contract with the IAEA. This tool is being used for economic analysis of nuclear hydrogen production so as to compare various options.

Non-power applications of nuclear and radiation technologies in the area of health-care, water, industry and environmental protection are extremely important. We have been a strong supporter and contributor to the Regional Cooperation Agreement (RCA) initiatives right from its inception, and India is the RCA Lead Country in the area of industrial applications and cancer treatment for the past several years.

The Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), an autonomous institution under the Indian Department of Atomic Energy, continues to play a major role in developing cost-effective methods for cancer diagnosis and treatment. TMC has developed a low-cost screening method for cervical cancer using acetic acid. In a recently published study carried out over twelve years covering 150000 women, it has been shown that the use of this technique has resulted in reducing mortality by 31%.

The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has developed a Digital Radiotherapy Simulator (DRS) "Imagin" as a vital supplement to the indigenous teletherapy system, Bhabhatron. One of the three DRS Units

installed at TMC was inaugurated remotely by the DG, IAEA during his visit to India in March this year. The technology of DRS has been transferred to private industry for its wider deployment.

India is highly appreciative of the IAEA's efforts in cancer management, and in particular the Programme on Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT).

India has been offering education and training programmes for physicians and technologists in the field of nuclear medicine. The Radiation Medicine Centre (RMC) of BARC in Mumbai leads these efforts, including those under various IAEA programmes. In early September this year, the RMC completed fifty years of sustained service in the field of nuclear medicine. RMC-trained specialists are not only serving in centres all over India, but also in several other countries.

Mr. President,

In addition to the various core activities related to nuclear energy and non-power applications, India is engaged in the development of high technologies in several other areas, including nuclear fusion and particle accelerators.

India has an active programme in nuclear fusion. The Steady State Superconducting Tokamak (SST-1) at the Institute for Plasma Research (IPR) has been successfully commissioned with the first plasma obtained on June 20, 2013. With this achievement, India has joined the select group of countries where research in 'Superconducting Tokamak' is currently being carried out. As a partner in the ITER Project, India is also working on the development of the concepts for Test Blanket Module (TBM). The Indian Lead-Lithium Ceramic Breeder Test Blanket Module will be tested in the ITER machine. The Indian TBM team is involved in the indigenous development of tritium breeder material by solid state reaction and solution combustion methods, as well as in the characterisation of these materials.

The Indus-2 Synchrotron Radiation Source at Indore operated at an enhanced current of 158 mA at 2.5 GeV using indigenously developed solid state Radio-Frequency amplifier modules. An indigenously designed and developed Radio Frequency Quadrupole (RFQ) has been commissioned at BARC and a proton beam was successfully accelerated to 200 keV through the RFQ. This is part of the R&D for India's roadmap

of Accelerator Driven Systems (ADS). As a part of our accelerator development programme, and also as Indian contribution under an international collaboration initiative, a prototype non-invasive Beam Position Monitor for use in GANIL accelerator facility in France, has been developed and tested in France.

Mr. President,

India actively participated in the IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security at Vienna during July 1-5, 2013.

India has signed an Arrangement with the IAEA concerning its voluntary contribution to the Nuclear Security Fund. During the last year, we have identified activities to be taken up with the IAEA and look forward to holding the first activity - "Review of Guiding Principles on applying Computer Security Controls to Instrumentation & Control Systems at Nuclear Facilities" during September 23-27, 2013. This activity will be held under the aegis of the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP), being established near Delhi. Off-campus activities of GCNEP are taking place, involving organisation of different training programmes. Recently, a National Programme on Prevention and Response to Radiological Threats was organized during August 26-30, 2013 at GCNEP. During the current year, two other programmes, one on Food Irradiation, and the second on Radiological Safety, were organised.

Mr. President,

To conclude, I would like to look ahead at the world energy scenario beyond 2050. By then the accessibility and affordability, if not the global availability, of the fossil fuels will decline. Other energy sources, including nuclear, will need to bridge this deficiency so as to ensure clean and sustainable energy supply for different sectors, and at various scales. This would, in turn, necessitate a more rational approach and strategy, seeking a well-balanced use of all the energy resources available to us. Apart from electricity, nuclear will need to address the large-scale energy needs for industrial use and transport as well. In this context, ten years ago, the IAEA Scientific Forum had discussed the rising hydrogen economy, including the fuel's future production by advanced next generation nuclear power plants. The IAEA's latest Nuclear Technology Review is now carrying a feature article on, 'Nuclear Hydrogen Production Technology'.

Considering the long gestation period for deployment of new technologies in the nuclear field, it is essential to further strengthen the role of the Agency for facilitating pooling of international knowledge resources, to achieve sustainable energy security at the global level, looking at the challenges of the future.

Thank you, Mr. President.



128. Statement issued by Department of Atomic Energy in response to media reports on Nuclear Power Projects.

New Delhi, September 19, 2013.

“We have seen media reports on the ongoing negotiations for commercial contracts between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL) and its potential foreign suppliers.

The Government has repeatedly affirmed that these contracts will be subject to Indian law. Foreign suppliers as well as domestic vendors have raised a number of queries with regard to the manner in which the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act 2010 and its associated rules will apply to their contracts. Since these queries involve questions of law, Department of Atomic Energy sought the opinion of the Ministry of Law and Justice on these issues. This will be examined by the Department of Atomic Energy and NPCIL.

The contracts, which will have to be approved by the competent authority of the Government, will be fully consistent with Indian law. There is no question of Indian law being violated or diluted. The projects will have to meet the highest standards of safety and the power generated will have to be competitive with other sources of nuclear as well as alternative forms of power. This will apply to our projects with Russia, France and the United States.

While NPCIL’s negotiations with Russia’s ASE for further reactors at Kudankulam are at an advanced stage and preliminary agreement has been signed with AREVA of France, NPCIL is currently negotiating a preliminary contract with Westinghouse. The proposed contract with

Westinghouse is for a limited range of pre-project services. NPCIL will enter into this preliminary contract only with the approval of Atomic Energy Commission and the Government of India. This contract, if approved, will not bind NPCIL to enter into a contract with Westinghouse for the supply of reactors without establishing safety and techno-commercial viability.”



* Since the parties supplying the nuclear power equipment had certain reservations with regard to the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act 2010, media reports suspected that the Government was thinking of tweaking the law to accommodate the objections of the suppliers. A report on September 19th said that under sustained pressure, the Indian government was looking to use the opinion of the Attorney- General to effectively neutralise a key provision of India's nuclear liability law that held the reactor suppliers liable in the event of an accident caused by faulty or defective equipment. In the opinion to the Department of Atomic Energy, which referred the matter to the AG on September 4, Goolam Vahanvati reportedly said it was for the operator of a nuclear plant in India to decide whether it wished to exercise the 'right of recourse' provided to it by section 17 of the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act. The media report added that AG's opinion effectively paved the way for the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd, which would operate any nuclear plant using imported reactors, to repudiate a right that Parliament explicitly wrote into section 17(b) of the law to ensure that foreign suppliers did not get away scot-free if a nuclear accident was traced back to "equipment or material with patent or latent defects or sub standard services." American nuclear vendors Westinghouse and GE were reported to have lobbied hard with Washington and Delhi to have this provision amended or removed. Though India stuck to the line that dilution of this provision was not possible, Mr. Vahanvati's view opened a window for the government to accommodate the U.S. suppliers' demand. External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid however said that the government did not want to sign any nuclear contract with the U.S. that was against national interest. Reacting to a report in *The Hindu* about the Attorney General's opinion, he said, "Laws are framed by Parliament and nobody can overrule it. This is impossible. The government will act according to the law of the land and not take any decision which is against the nation's interest."

India's Civil Liability for Nuclear Damages Act, 2010 was considered a watershed in international nuclear liability jurisprudence because of the unique way in which it dealt with supplier liability. Up till now, all liability in relation to a nuclear power plant was channelled exclusively to the operator. The only two situations in which an operator could claim a subsequent right of recourse against a supplier under international liability law as well as under domestic law of other countries were i) where the nuclear incident arose out of an act or omission by the supplier with an intent to cause damage (which is covered under Section 17(c) of the Act); and ii) a contractual right of recourse (which is covered under Section 17(a) of the Act). The Act however, also introduced a novel concept of supplier liability in Section 17(b) by which the operator would have the ability to reclaim any compensation it may pay, from a supplier, if the product supplied had patent or latent defects or the service provided was substandard.

129. Statement by External Affairs Minister at the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament.

New York, September 26, 2013.

His Excellency, President of the General Assembly,

His Excellency the Secretary General of the United Nations,

Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen

It is an honour to address this high level gathering on Nuclear Disarmament. We associate ourselves with the statement made by the NAM.

Mr. President, from the days of our freedom struggle, we have been consistent in our support for the global elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our nation, was moved by the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki but remained unshaken in his belief in non-violence. He wrote that he regarded the employment of the atom bomb for the wholesale destruction of men, women and children as the most diabolical use of science. More than six decades later, it remains our collective challenge to craft a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order.

India remains convinced that its security would be strengthened in a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order. This conviction is based both on principle as well as pragmatism. We believe that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. Progressive steps are needed for the de-legitimization of nuclear weapons paving the way for their complete elimination.

In 1988, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi presented to the UN General a comprehensive Action Plan for a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order, which if implemented would have rid the world of nuclear weapons by 2008. India's subsequent proposals in the General Assembly

and the Conference on Disarmament are testimony to our consistent support for nuclear disarmament based on the key principles of the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan for achieving nuclear disarmament in a time bound manner.

As a responsible nuclear power, we have a credible minimum deterrence policy and a posture of no-first use. We refuse to participate in an arms race, including a nuclear arms race. We are prepared to negotiate a global No-First-Use treaty and our proposal for a Convention banning the use of nuclear weapons remains on the table. As we see no contradiction between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, we are also committed to working with the international community to advance our common objectives of non-proliferation, including through strong export controls and membership of the multilateral export regimes.

Mr. President, the Non-Aligned Movement, of which India is a proud founding member, has proposed today the early commencement of negotiations in the CD on nuclear disarmament. We support this call. Without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, we also support the negotiation in the CD of a non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty banning the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that meets India's national security interests. It should be our collective endeavour to return the CD, which remains the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, to substantive work as early as possible.

Mr. President, this meeting is proof that the international community remains concerned about the catastrophic consequences of nuclear war and the lack of progress in moving toward global nuclear disarmament. In recent years, many initiatives both official and non-governmental have been launched in order to make the vision of a nuclear weapon free world a reality. Simultaneously, there has been a welcome and well-deserved focus on preventing access by non-state actors, in particular terrorists, to weapons of mass destruction and related materials. The recent use of chemical weapons in Syria point to an urgent need for the international community to strengthen restraints on use of weapons of mass destruction and in particular preventing their access to non state actors and terrorists. We hope that our discussions today would galvanize

political will and help channel our collective efforts towards the noble goal of ridding the world of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. To that end, Mr. President, we pledge to you our full support and cooperation.

I thank you.



INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-IV

ASIA

- (i) South Asia
- (ii) Southeast, East Asia & Pacific
- (iii) West & Central Asia

(i) South Asia

AFGHANISTAN**130. Second India-Afghanistan-United States Trilateral Dialogue.
New Delhi, February 18, 2013.**

1. The second India-Afghanistan-US trilateral dialogue will be held in New Delhi on February 19, 2013. The Afghan delegation will be led by Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Jawed Ludin, with Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Mr. Robert O. Blake, Jr. leading the U.S. delegation. Additional Secretary (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) Shri Y. K. Sinha will lead the Indian delegation.
2. It may be recalled that the first trilateral dialogue was held in New York on September 25, 2012.

**131. Second India-Afghanistan-United States Trilateral Dialogue: Chairman's Statement.
New Delhi, February 19, 2013.**

1. Today India hosted the second meeting of India-Afghanistan-US trilateral dialogue in New Delhi. The Afghan delegation was led by Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Jawed Ludin, with Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Mr. Robert O. Blake, Jr. leading the U.S. delegation. Additional Secretary (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) Shri Y. K. Sinha led the Indian delegation. Later the three delegations jointly called on Foreign Secretary Shri Ranjan Mathai.
2. India has strategic partnerships with both Afghanistan and the US, and jointly they share a vision of a secure, peaceful, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan. The second trilateral dialogue provided a platform for in-depth consultations on issues ranging from political and security spheres to trade, commerce and investment, and other areas of mutual interest. The three

sides agreed to continue this trilateral process as a vehicle for achieving the shared goal of peace, security and development of Afghanistan.

3. It may be recalled that the first trilateral dialogue was hosted by Afghanistan in New York on September 25, 2012.



132. Question in the Lok Sabha on the 'Agreement with Russia on Afghanistan'.

New Delhi, March 20, 2013.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India has signed any pact with Russia regarding Afghanistan; (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken diplomatic steps to safeguard India's interests in Afghanistan; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR)

(a) & (b) No specific agreements regarding Afghanistan have been signed with the Russian Federation.

However, the situation in Afghanistan is a matter of constant deliberation between the Governments of India and the Russian Federation. The subject is discussed and views exchanged at the highest political level. It is also periodically reviewed at the level of the respective Ministries of External/Foreign Affairs as well as between the security agencies.

India and the Russian Federation share a high degree of convergence and commonality of views regarding the situation in Afghanistan. During the recent visit of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir

Putin to New Delhi (Dec 24, 2012), the two sides concluded a Joint Statement that elaborates on the mutually agreed positions of both the sides on Afghanistan.

In the Joint Statement, the two sides recognised terrorism as the main threat to Afghanistan's security and stability. The two countries also recognised the regional dimensions of terrorism and extremism, emphasizing the need for joint and concerted efforts and cooperation among the regional countries to address this challenge in all its forms and manifestations.

The Joint Statement also recalled the holding of the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan in June 2012 to promote investments into Afghanistan.

(c) & (d) Government is closely monitoring the evolving situation in Afghanistan and is in touch with various stakeholders, including the Government of Afghanistan, its regional and international partners on developments pertaining to Afghanistan. India is also part of various international efforts to bring about peace and stability in that country. Government will take all necessary measures to safeguard India's interests in this regard. India believes that a peaceful, stable, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan is the best guarantee for securing Indian interests in that country. India has, accordingly, signed a comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement with Afghanistan in October 2011 aimed at stepping up political, economic, security, social and cultural ties with Afghanistan. In addition to ongoing assistance, India organized the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan in June 2012 in an effort to encourage Indian and foreign investment into Afghanistan.



133. Press Release issued by the President's Secretariat on the call by Afghan President on President Pranab Mukherjee.

New Delhi, May 21, 2013.

Mr. Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan called on President Pranab Mukherjee at Rashtrapati Bhavan today (May 21, 2013).

The President said India would stand by the Government and the people of Afghanistan in the critical period of transition, development and nation-building. India is proud to partner the Government and people of Afghanistan in their efforts towards reconstruction and development of Afghanistan.

The President said we should strengthen and deepen India-Afghanistan relations in all areas as prescribed in the Strategic Partnership Agreement. India is prepared to increase bilateral contribution to institution-building, training and equipment to the extent India can.

The Afghan President warmly reciprocated the President's words and said India is amongst the closest of countries to Afghanistan and according to many surveys the country most liked by the Afghan people. India-Afghan relations stand today on solid cemented grounds. Our relations are greater than any time before.



134. Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson on some aspects of relations with Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia.

New Delhi, May 22, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Ladies and gentlemen, I am ready now for what you have to ask me on anything other than what we had the briefing on.

Q: Sir, could you give us some sense of the meeting between Afghan President and the Prime Minister, and reaction about his so-called wish list?

Official Spokesperson: Yes, I have been plagued with these requests. Some call it a wish list and others say a shopping list but I do not want to get into an approach of say a fly on the wall because that is what you would like to know. I certainly was not a fly on the wall there. Otherwise I would have been swatted and would not be here. So, I will try and give you a different perspective and that is what were the broad areas that were the fulcrum of this visit and how we see this visit in the context of our relations. And I think you will get a feel despite not being there and despite not getting the ingredients of this dream wish that you have to know about it. I will try and give you some information which will perhaps try and satisfy you about the contours of President Karzai's engagements in India.

President Karzai was on a two-day visit to India. This was his third visit in the last three years to India. He came here for the Strategic Partnership Agreement following which he also came here last year for a state visit, and this was his third visit. Of course if you take the visit of our Prime Minister, that was four visits during the course of three plus years, etc. That said, this was his third visit. You have seen how laudatory he was in terms of his responses to India's development assistance to Afghanistan during his convocation address at the Lovely Professional University in Punjab.

Subsequent to that he did come to Delhi and he had meetings with both the President and the Prime Minister. In addition he also had meetings with the BJP leader Mr. Lal Krishna Advani and several CEOs of Indian companies. Our assessment is that such visits and regular consultations strengthen our bilateral relations. The current visit has in our assessment

further strengthened the strategic partnership between India and Afghanistan which have historic and civilisational ties going back several millennia. Our assessment is that this was a visit which did enhance our strategic partnership.

As Afghanistan moves towards its critical security, political and economic transitions, which are also marked by a drawdown of the NATO forces and scheduled Presidential elections in 2014, we feel that the strategic partnership between Afghanistan and India can play an important and crucial role in providing security and stability to Afghanistan. India is ready to stand by Afghanistan as a close and friendly as well as historic neighbour through this transition and will play a due and responsible role in this regard.

During the meetings it was also agreed India and Afghanistan will work together and will do all within their means to promote stability and security in Afghanistan. That broadly covers the security-related issues. But then our relationship is not limited to safety and security while this is an important factor. There was also an occasion for both the sides at the meeting to review Indian-assisted projects in Afghanistan.

Let me try and tell you, during the last two weeks there have been some developments on these projects. One is that the Vice-President of Tata Consultancy Services Mr. Ramadurai had visited Afghanistan and explored the prospects of Indian investments in skill building in Afghanistan, skill building specifically related to computer software.

Separately, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, who is the founder of the Swaminathan Foundation and has been designated as the Chairman of a task force constituted to establish a National Agricultural University in Kabul, did visit. The idea is to try and realize the potential of Afghanistan's agricultural development. These were two examples of Indian industry and expertise trying to contribute to Afghanistan's development. Both the leaders felt that these were positive developments, these were in accordance with our core capabilities in this regard.

Finally there was a discussion on the Salma dam and the new Parliament building, and these projects were reviewed. And it was agreed to expedite and complete the work on the new Parliament building so that it is completed in the first half of next year. That is the timeline on which we are working.

If I may try and sum up, there was a discussion on political and security issues, there was also a discussion on development and economic issues. That is the sum and substance of President Karzai's discussions with the President and the Prime Minister.

Q: Is there any pointed help that they have sought with regards to security?

Official Spokesperson: I think I did mention that I was not a fly on the wall. You can either come and try and see is there pointed or not pointed; or as I said, we stand ready and will do everything within our means to promote stability and security of Afghanistan.

Q: You mentioned the word critical and you also pointed out that.

Official Spokesperson: I said critical security, economic and political transition.

Q: The way you said it sounded as if you were apprehending something. Can you please tell us what are India's fears in Afghanistan? We hear a lot about what Afghanistan is moving towards but we do not understand what are India's fears in Afghanistan. What might happen in that country that might be bad for India? Can you please spell it out?

Official Spokesperson: I think you need not worry about fears. I do not think I ever said fear. We have to understand that our interests in Afghanistan are neither transitional nor transitory. We are there and we will be there in Afghanistan for all times because we are neighbours. Neighbours cannot transit in and transit out. Let us be very clear that as far as India is concerned, our engagement with Afghanistan is neither transitory nor in transition. It is an engagement which will continue.

But we do understand that 2014, and I have indicated to you the issues in 2014, they are in a transition, a political transition which means they are going to have Presidential elections next year. They are in an economic transition which means that they will increasingly have options of economic assistance in terms of investment etc., from a period where they have had a lot of assistance because of the security situation, and security of course because now it is going to be the Afghan national armed forces who are in a transition to take over. So, there are three types of transitions. And we are ready to provide and work with Afghanistan in all these areas. I do not think there is any concern as such. But as a neighbour we do understand that there is need to be engaged in all these fields.

Q: Around this time last year we hosted an investment summit in New Delhi. Was there any discussion to look at the tangible outcomes of that summit in terms of how it has boosted Indian investments in Afghanistan? Have Indian businessmen felt more encouraged to invest in Afghanistan?

Official Spokesperson: The very fact that amongst President Karzai's important meetings in Delhi were meetings with CEOs indicates Indian interest as well as Afghanistan's interest in economic engagement. The very fact that we opted to have a summit of a kind, which was unprecedented as far as we were concerned, a summit for investment in a third country in India, this is the first time we have ever done it, shows our interest and our keenness to push forward on the economic engagement.

I just wanted to go back to some of the things that Kalol indicated. I think I need to explain that as far as we are concerned we respect the choices and the decision of the people and the government of Afghanistan. We also recognize that there is a political process under way. All we seek from that is that it should be Afghan-led, inclusive, transparent and it adheres to the red lines which have been agreed to between the Afghan Government itself and the international community. As long as these issues are met, we have no major concerns because these are agreed-to parameters and frameworks for transition in Afghanistan.

Q: Afghan army officers are trained in academies here. Is there any proposal to expand their quota? I understand we cannot put boots on the ground.

Official Spokesperson: Our capabilities in terms of training are modest, and within those modest capabilities we are trying to do our best. We are engaged in a regular dialogue with Afghanistan about their needs, and we will take it from there as regards our training. But while it is modest, it is not insignificant that we are providing that assistance.

Q: Among the things that India must be weighing up regarding expanding its security cooperation with Afghanistan is the very stability of the Afghan army. Is that something prior to 2014 that has been taken into consideration, the risk that if you do increase the supply of equipment to the army it ends up falling into the wrong hands? And when will we know more about the decision on whether or not to respond to Mr. Karzai's request?

Official Spokesperson: As you are aware, I did mention that we will have a meeting of the Strategic Partnership Council a little later during the year. I have also indicated to you previously that under that there is a subgroup which deals with political and security consultations. These are all mechanisms that we have to continue this dialogue. The very fact that we meet at very high levels and also at other levels is testimony to the extremely regular exchange of information that we have. For example, from the beginning of the year we have had a visit by the National Security Advisor to Afghanistan, we have also had a meeting between the External Affairs Minister and his counterpart in Almaty, and we have had a visit of President Karzai, all within the space of say five months. We have a regular schedule of interactions. And it is also normal that some of our leaders meet on the sidelines. While President Karzai was last here in November, prior to that he met Prime Minister in Tehran at the NAM Summit. So, they are virtually meeting at very short intervals, exchanging information, and we have no problems in terms of our channels of communication being active all the time.

Q: Sir, of the subgroups of the Strategic Partnership Council, how many have met so far?

Official Spokesperson: I think we have explained this previously. One has met. We have just constituted the three others along with who are going to head these groups. We intend that they meet shortly. If you want the details of those, I will provide them to you as to who heads each of those subgroups from our side.

Q: Sir, the Chinese Premier has left India but the Chinese flags are still flying on Rajpath. Is there any particular reason for that?

Official Spokesperson: I would suggest that what we always do is we keep the flags till the day of the dignitaries leaving India. His visit is from 19th to 22nd. These, I can assure you, will be taken off. You do not have any concerns on that.

Q: There are some reports that the Japanese Government is ready to resume nuclear talks with India. Do you expect that both Governments will agree on the resumption of nuclear talks on the occasion of the Prime Minister's visit?

Official Spokesperson: I can answer it in several ways. You, like other Japanese media, are scheduled to meet the Prime Minister, you can

ask that question. Secondly, we also have a briefing on that shortly. However, if you would like to understand our wish list, since today is the day of wish list, of course nuclear is an important component of our energy mix. Therefore, we see and have interest in engagement on nuclear matters with several countries including Japan. We have started that dialogue. That dialogue is under way. And if what you say is correct, obviously India will be ready for that.

Q: On 25th, External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid is to visit Saudi Arabia. In that visit, what are your hopes to solve the issue which relates to the new rule Nitaqat?

Official Spokesperson: I think we have to understand that the Nitaqat law is a domestic Saudi issue. It does not apply only to Indians, it applies to all nationalities. Our focus has always been to try and see if the law and its implementation has an impact on Indian nationals in Saudi Arabia. Then we would like to ensure that it is done in a humane way, in a dignified way and which meets the interests of our nationals. My understanding is that they have given a three-month period in which the Saudi Government has told all those who are irregular in Saudi Arabia to either regularize their stay there or to leave the country with dignity. We are in that process.

As far as the External Affairs Minister's visit is concerned, he is visiting on a bilateral invitation from his counterpart Prince Saud Al-Faisal who is the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia. This was originally scheduled earlier this year but for various reasons it had to be rescheduled and he goes now. This of course will be an important matter in terms of the discussions. But the discussions are to cover a variety of other issues. Those issues are matters of energy, matters of cooperation, antiterrorism cooperation, issues relating to the Arab world.

We have two major declarations between India and Saudi Arabia. Those are the Riyadh Declaration which was issued when Prime Minister Singh went to Riyadh in 2010, and the Delhi Declaration which goes back to the visit of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah when he came to Delhi in 2006. This is to review the implementation of those declarations and how far we have proceeded on that. So, on the table is a large menu of issues including of course the Nitaqat.

Thank you very much



135. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of Afghan President Karzai.

New Delhi, May 23, 2013.

The President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, paid a two day working visit to India from May 20-22 during the course of which he was conferred an Doctoris Honoris Causa for Letters by the Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, on May 20, and met Prime Minister and President separately on May 21. Prime Minister also hosted a dinner for President Karzai and his delegation on May 21. President Karzai also met senior BJP leader, Shri L.K. Advani and a delegation of CEOs from the CII amongst others while in Delhi.

The visit of President Karzai was his third to India in the last three years after Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh's landmark visit to Afghanistan in May 2011, following visits in October 2011 in which Prime Minister and President Karzai signed the historic Strategic Partnership Agreement between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and India, and his subsequent State Visit to India in November 2012 which reinforced this partnership with a new business dimension. Earlier, in May 2012, the Partnership Council headed by the Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan and India met in Delhi in May 2012 to review and advance this relationship. This was followed by the Delhi Investment Summit organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry in June 2012 just before the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan where the international community pledged continued development support for Afghanistan post 2014 under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. The current visit further enhanced the strategic partnership between the two countries which have historic and civilizational ties going back several millennia. As Afghanistan moves towards its critical security, political and economic transitions marked by the drawdown of NATO forces and the Presidential elections in 2014, the strategic partnership between Afghanistan and India can play an important/crucial role in providing security and stability to Afghanistan. India is ready to stand by Afghanistan as close, friendly and historic neighbour through these transitions and play a due and responsible role in this regard.

President Karzai's visit was also an occasion to review the status of ongoing Indian-assisted development projects in and for Afghanistan. At

his address in Lovely Professional University, Punjab, President Karzai paid fulsome tribute to India's development assistance for Afghanistan and the role that India was playing in educating Afghanistan's youth in Indian universities. Over the last two weeks, Shri S. Ramadorai, Vice President of Tata Consultancy Services and Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, founder of the M.S. Swaminathan Foundation and Chairman of a Task Force constituted to establish the National Agricultural University of Afghanistan, have visited Kabul separately to explore the prospects of Indian investments in skill-building in Afghanistan and the Afghan economy and help realize the potential of Afghanistan's agricultural development respectively, areas where Indian industry and expertise can contribute. The progress of work on the Salma Dam and the new Parliament building was also reviewed. It was agreed to expedite and complete the work on the new Parliament building in the first half of the year.

President Karzai left Delhi for Kabul after his working visit in the forenoon of May 22



* Media reports said that India had reservations on Afghanistan's request for supply of lethal weapons, saying it was neither in a position nor willing to contribute lethal weapons right now, Afghan President Hamid Karzai raised the issue with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. "We are going to help with non-lethal equipment but I don't think we are either in the position to or willing to contribute lethal weapons right now," External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid said. Noting that India already supplies important elements of supporting equipment, transportation, which includes helicopters, the minister said "...we think it is not advisable to go beyond that. It is a fragile area, there are stakeholders, there are other people. We don't want to become part of the problem."

Reports said that during his recent visit to India, Mr. Karzai had handed a "wish list" to Indian leadership seeking greater military and civilian support in the wake of proposed withdrawal of US-led forces from Afghanistan in 2014. Mr. Khurshid, in an interview to *Straits Times*, said there were lots of people who have perceptions about the future of Afghanistan and "if we can help Afghanistan without creating further problems for them, I think that would be a preferred way to do it." He said, "We are in touch with them constantly, and we are committed and have said very categorically... We are not looking at exit routes for ourselves which means we are there to stay for a long term. We are very comforted by the fact that Afghans have confidence in us. We won't let them down."

136. Statement by Official Spokesperson in response to a question on the opening of the Taliban Office in Qatar.

New Delhi, June 21, 2013.

“We have followed developments relating to the opening of an office of the Taliban in Qatar and statements made by the representatives of that office and others. These statements reflect some confusion about the name of the Qatar office, its structure, its political and legal status, and its objectives. We have also seen the reaction of the Government of Afghanistan to these developments.

Our position is clear. Government of India has always called for a broad-based Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled reconciliation process, within the framework of the Afghan Constitution and the internationally accepted red lines. Such a process would necessarily recognise the centrality of the Government of Afghanistan in the process, and involve all sections of the Afghan society, as also the insurgent groups, including the Taliban, who wish to join the mainstream.

The reconciliation process should not seek to create equivalence between an internationally recognised Government of Afghanistan and insurgent groups, confer legitimacy to insurgent groups or convey the impression of two competing state authorities for Afghanistan, which could undermine the legitimate Afghan State, Afghan Government and the political, social and economic progress witnessed in Afghanistan over the past decade, to which the international community itself has contributed in great measure.

India remains committed to supporting the Government and the people of Afghanistan, in accordance with the India-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement, and a reconciliation process that has the support of the Government and the people of Afghanistan.”



137. Official Spokesperson's response to a media query about the visit of the Minister of Education of Afghanistan.

New Delhi, June 27, 2013.

1. H.E. Dr. Ghulam Farooq Wardak, Minister of Education of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan met the External Affairs Minister on June 27, 2013 and discussed issues of mutual interests. Both sides pledged to enhance their bilateral cooperation across various sectors particularly, in the field of education. India is currently one of the largest providers of education scholarships to Afghan youth under ICCR, ITEC and various other programmes.
2. The Afghan Minister is also attending the World Education Congress in Mumbai on June 28-29



138. Response of the Official Spokesperson to a question on the attack on the Consulate General of India in Jalalabad.

New Delhi, August 3, 2013.

"The suicide attacks against the Indian Consulate General in Jalalabad, which has led to the injuries and deaths of several valiant Afghan Police personnel as well as deaths of several innocent Afghan civilians including children, must be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

This attack has once again highlighted that the main threat to Afghanistan's security and stability stems from terrorism and the terror machine that continues to operate from beyond its borders.

India will not be deterred from its commitment to assist Afghanistan in its reconstruction and development effort; this was clearly an attack not just against India but an attack against the efforts to help the Afghan people overcome the tragic hardships they have endured due to several decades of war.

We wish to express our deep gratitude to the valiant Afghan security personnel who laid down their lives while protecting the Indian Consulate.

We wish to express our grief and condolences to the families of the innocent Afghan civilians who also lost their lives during this attack.”



139. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of President of Afghanistan to India.

New Delhi, December 12-15, 2013.

At the invitation of the Government of India, His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, is on a Working Visit to India from 12-15 December 2013. During the Delhi leg of his visit, President Hamid Karzai met with His Excellency Pranab Mukherjee, President of India and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid and National Security Advisor, Shivshankar Menon called on President Hamid Karzai.

During the bilateral talks, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed great pleasure at the strong and broad-based strategic partnership between India and Afghanistan and exchanged views on regional and global environment.

The two leaders spoke with warmth and satisfaction at the state of bilateral relations and, in particular, the progress in the implementation of the Strategic Partnership Agreement.

President Karzai briefed Prime Minister on the political, security, and economic situation in Afghanistan, including the ongoing security transition in the country and Afghanistan's relations with other countries. Prime Minister conveyed India's confidence in the ability of the people and the government of Afghanistan to build a strong, united, stable, peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan that also contributes to regional peace and prosperity. He reiterated India's commitment to support Afghanistan through the transition and beyond. The two leaders also agreed to work on further strengthening regional cooperation with the aim of regional integration and development, including through the Heart of Asia process. India is hosting the next meeting of the Senior Officials of Heart of Asia on 18 January 2014.

Consistent with their shared vision of Afghanistan and peace and security in the region, Prime Minister and President Karzai affirmed their commitment to further intensify their partnership in all areas, in accordance with their Strategic Partnership Agreement. Prime Minister conveyed India's continuing support for all-round socio-economic development of Afghanistan through promotion of business links, educational scholarships, and implementation of Indian assisted development and reconstruction projects. The two leaders also agreed to work with the Islamic Republic of Iran for development of new trade routes to facilitate trade and transit to Afghanistan and beyond.

The two leaders also agreed on deepening defence and security cooperation, including through enhancement in training and meeting the equipment and infrastructure needs of Afghanistan National Security and Defence Forces that would increase their operational capabilities and mobility. The two leaders also agreed to expand opportunities for higher military education in India for Afghan officers.

Prime Minister thanked President Karzai for the support extended by the Government of Afghanistan in safeguarding Indian Missions and personnel in Afghanistan. He conveyed deep gratitude to the Afghan security forces for thwarting the suicide attack against Indian Consulate in Jalalabad in August 2013. The two leaders reiterated their resolve to work together as well as with the international community to counter the

* According to media reports Afghanistan gave a wish list of military equipment as well as sought greater cooperation in building up a battle-capable Afghan National Defence Force and police. Mr. Karzai said it was up to India to determine the schedule and type of equipment it can transfer to Afghanistan. Besides defence and security, the two leaders also agreed to work with Iran for development of new trade routes to facilitate trade and transit to Afghanistan and beyond. One of these is a land route beginning from the Iranian port of Iran and entering Zaranj on the Afghan border from where India has built a road that feeds into the garland highway connecting the country's major cities. A spur takes the route over the Afghan border in the north to Central Asia, thus opening up further prospects for India's trade and economic drive in non-traditional markets.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Syed Akbaruddin had given an 'idea about India's thinking' on the proposed US-Afghanistan Bilateral Security Arrangement by stating that it was against attempts to pressurise and would support any stand taken by Mr. Karzai. The Prime Minister conveyed India's confidence in Afghanistan's ability to build a strong nation that also contributes to regional peace and prosperity. India, in the meantime sided with Afghanistan in its ongoing dispute over a security pact that would allow a smaller contingent of U.S. troops to stay back after the bulk of western forces withdraws from the country in 2014. "He [President Karzai] will do whatever is best for

forces of terrorism and extremism that have been affecting the two countries and threatening the entire region.

President Pranab Mukherjee hosted President Karzai to a private dinner, where the two leaders discussed bilateral, regional and international issues of common concern. President Mukherjee fondly recalled his visit to Afghanistan to inaugurate the Zaranj-Delaram Highway. President Karzai extended an invitation to President Mukherjee to visit Afghanistan.

President Karzai is accompanied by a high level delegation comprising Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Zarar Ahmad Osmani, National Security Advisor Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Acting Minister of Commerce & Industries, Mr. Shaker Kargar and other senior officials.



the people of Afghanistan and, in accordance with India's approach to Afghanistan, we will support it," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Syed Akbaruddin told newsmen after a meeting between Mr. Karzai and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

"Yes, it was discussed because India and Afghanistan both see the Bilateral Security Agreement as important for the security and stability of Afghanistan. Our approach has always been one of not being prescriptive, intrusive or judgemental. And therefore this is the paradigm through which we approach this matter. We are confident that President Karzai is a wise and sagacious leader. As a close and steadfast friend of Afghanistan and in accordance with the Indian approach to Afghanistan, we will support it," said Mr. Akbaruddin.

Media reports said both the Afghan President and U.S. officials had exchanged strong words over the timing of signing the BSA. Mr. Karzai wanted it inked by his successor after next year's elections, in which he would not be eligible to contest, while the U.S. had threatened to walk out if it is not done immediately. "Aggressive rhetoric won't work. We are not a nation that is known for giving into intimidation. If they have not recognised this, they should; it will be good for them to recognise. We will sign it when we feel sure that our signature will bring peace and security," Mr. Karzai told the NDTV in an interview. U.S. Special Representative on Afghanistan and Pakistan James Dobbins told a Senate Committee that he hoped India would help persuade Mr. Karzai to ink the agreement. But the Indian response appears to have belied those hopes. Mr. Karzai also met businessmen and all three chambers of commerce and industry in Pune after holding a news conference and a meeting with think tanks in New Delhi. India was planning a major game-changing project in Afghanistan which would start taking shape once its Parliament approved new mining laws. Mr. Karzai felt Indian businessmen were shy and did not come forward like Chinese traders. "Even South Africa has invested in Afghanistan. I would again request, rather urge our Indian partners in business to come forward and invest," Mr. Karzai told NDTV. The major investment planned by India was in Hajigak mines, said to be Asia's biggest untapped deposits of iron ore. "India has to just come forward and get the deal through," Mr. Karzai said. According to Afghanistan Ambassador Shaida Abdali, Mr. Karzai's focus was on three issues — the state of play on the BSA, the peace process and then the transition process and discuss the way ahead.

BANGLADESH

140. Foreign Secretary's Remarks to Media. Dhaka, February 10, 2013.

I am happy to be in Bangladesh at a time when our two democracies are moving ahead with a spirit of cooperation which is at its best.

India attaches the highest importance to its relations with Bangladesh, our close and friendly neighbour. Our regular and intensive engagement over the previous three years has led to significant progress in our bilateral cooperation encompassing a wide range of areas. The vision for such accelerated cooperation, based on the principles of equality, partnership and mutual benefit, has undoubtedly come from the landmark visits of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India in January 2010 and the Prime Minister of India to Bangladesh in September 2011.

We have just concluded a very productive round of discussions in a very warm and cordial atmosphere covering the entire gamut of bilateral relations and other issues of mutual interest. The meeting today provided us the opportunity to prepare for the 2nd meeting of the Joint Consultative Commission at the level of the Foreign Ministers.

Foreign Secretary Md. Shahidul Haque and I have today signed an MOU on Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of India and the Foreign Service Academy of Bangladesh. I have no doubt that this would facilitate exchanges between the diplomatic services of our two countries. More importantly, it will enable recent entrants into the diplomatic services of India and Bangladesh to meet, exchange ideas and even learn from each other.

I am greatly honoured by the call I will be making shortly on Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. I have called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs and am also scheduled to call on Ministers of Finance and Local Government and Rural Development of Bangladesh.

Let me conclude by saying that our two countries share similar values of democracy, free and open societies and systems. The unique cultural and historical linkages with similarities in developmental challenges call

upon us to intensify our bilateral cooperation and work for the betterment and development of our two neighbouring countries.



141. Joint Press Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Foreign Minister of Bangladesh in Dhaka.

Dhaka, February 16, 2013.

Q: I have one question with two parts, one is land boundary agreement. We understand that your Indian Cabinet have adopted the draft constitution amendment bill but BJP, the Opposition, is opposing the bill. So in this situation how far you are hopeful about the passing of the Constitution Amendment Bill by the Lok Sabha and the second question is about the Teesta water sharing agreement. Last time, it did not happen because of strong opposition by Paschimbanga Chief Minister.....

External Affairs Minister: Thank you very much. And I am not quite sure that your information is correct. What we are doing on the Land Boundary Agreement and what we are doing on Teesta Water Agreement is a collective aspiration of India and our most valuable friends of Bangladesh. And these are decisions that we are taking in the mutual interests of both sides and these are win-win decisions for both sides in partnership and with the vision of our great leaders who saw these as steps of consolidating and bonding between us from generation to generation. I think both sides have shown the utmost sensitivity to the requirements, concerns and aspirations of the other side. So I think that you shouldn't jump to any conclusions about any major group in India opposing anything, but people have a right to ask questions in democracy as indeed they ask questions here and it is upon us to ensure that we persuade them with the right answers. We are moving forward with full consultations and full involvement of all stakeholders and it will be of course my duty to ensure that it gets passed in the Parliament with cooperation of all parties including the main Opposition, the BJP.

As far as the Teesta river water sharing is concerned, that's a matter which again you know that many of our Chief Ministers have very

generously accommodated and supported and stood by a decision that once again is a collective decision of the people of India. We are only there to ensure that it is implemented. Because Teesta is a water issue and is directly associated with our state of West Bengal, we, therefore, have to ensure that West Bengal is fully on board with us and that's a matter that will be attended to once in the land boundary matter is through. I can assure you that I have great regard for the Chief Minister of Bengal. I believe she is a good friend of Bangladesh and she is conscious of her responsibilities and the responsibilities on her shoulders are very great but I can assure you that there is no lack of good will and sense of friendship towards Bangladesh and that is what will prevail. I can say this to you categorically that we are committed to ensuring that both the agreements go through.

Q: *When would this commitment about Land Boundary Agreement.....*

External Affairs Minister: Land boundary is to come by way of constitutional amendment which requires 2/3rd majority in the House. We are bringing it to Parliament in the coming Session which begins around the last week of this month and we hope that this will be actually passed during the Session itself. That is why I had it passed by Cabinet even before I came here. When I go back, I will do the work that is necessary to bring it before the House and if all goes well, we will be able to get it passed during the Parliament Session.

Q: *Can I ask a question on the present scenario in Dhaka on banning of Jamaat. I want to ask both of you whether government of Bangladesh is trying to ban Jamaat or not and also what government of India thinks about it as it is not only a domestic issue but an issue of security in the South East Asian region and all this is linked with fundamentalist forces. What the government of India thinks about this? Is government of India in favour of banning Jamaat or not?*

External Affairs Minister: I will first answer the part that I should be answering and then Hon'ble Minister will answer the part that I believe she has to answer. Let me just say this to you if I may say so that it is always wonderful to see young people engage in any democratic process, when the new generation stirs to express its dreams, it gives you a tremendous high about democracy and it revives your strongest feelings and faith in democracy. Young people of every country have their

respective dreams and I hope that part of dreams include global dreams. But they have their own dreams and I think, we must not only respect them, but applaud those dreams. Of course, the Hon'ble Minister will respondbut the fact that they show their concerns and their involvement and aspirations is what I can hear and see and I applaud and admire. As far as the issues that you have raised, are issues of unwholesome behavior by people described as terrorism, described as extremism and I must say that we have deep appreciation for the cooperation and the extent to which assistance has been given by the government of Bangladesh and we are tremendously grateful and this has not been done in easy circumstances. I do know that there are always conflicting opinions in a free society and, therefore, acting with conviction on principles particularly if you do so in terms of your friendship and your commitment to international peace and security is something that needs to be applauded. We acknowledge it and we express our gratitude and solidarity.

Foreign Minister of Bangladesh: Thank you. As we all know that Bangladesh was formed with the ideals of secularism. Given our history, we wanted to be a secular country at that time. Our first constitution, because of the involvement of some political parties, we fought crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide; religion based politics was banned under the constitution. But that ban was withdrawn after the father of nation was assassinated and when power was captured unconstitutionally by usurpers. Now that the young generation has raised this demand and people from all walks of life are supporting this movement and supporting this demand and obviously as a people's demand of a democratic country and as a government of a democratic country, we are considering it as demand of people and definitely Election Commission also has a role and this will be seen from that perspective.

Q: During the meeting what was discussion on Teesta?

Foreign Minister of Bangladesh: We have talked about it because we have talked about all issues. We have bilateral relations, we have talked about transit and we have a joint working group which will have meetings, we hope soon, to consider issues like we have meetings joint working groups on sub-regional cooperation. So, we have all these joint working group meetings coming up in the next few months. Thank you.

External Affairs Minister: May I just say that the journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step you take. We are travellers together – Bangladesh and India. We are travelers together for a long journey for our destination and there will be many milestones on the path. But we walk steadily step by step and we know the direction that we have to go and I am pleased to say that we are today reaching an important milestone and look forward to crossing many more in the future.



142. External Affairs Minister's media statement following the 2nd meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission.

Dhaka, February 16, 2013.

Your Excellency Dr Dipu Moni, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh,
Friends from the media,

My friend and colleague Foreign Affairs Minister Her Excellency Dr Dipu Moni and I have just concluded very comprehensive and constructive discussions under the auspices of the India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission (JCC).

The scope and range of our discussions are a manifestation of the qualitative and quantitative transformation that relations between India and Bangladesh have witnessed in the recent years. Our efforts are now aimed at harnessing every possible area of cooperation for the mutual benefit of the people of our two countries.

The Foreign Minister of Bangladesh and I have reviewed progress made in the entire gamut of our bilateral cooperation, including power, water resources, security, border management, people-to-people exchanges, trade, connectivity, culture, development cooperation, environment and education.

The vision for such unprecedented cooperation, based on the principles of equality, partnership and mutual growth, has undoubtedly emanated from the landmark visits of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India in

January 2010 and the Prime Minister of India to Bangladesh in September 2011.

We are extremely pleased that our mutual cooperation has resulted in a number of remarkable achievements in recent months. These include,

- Signing of the landmark Extradition Treaty, Revised Travel Arrangements liberalizing visa regime between our two countries;
- Conclusion of MoUs in the fields of Health and Medical Services; on cooperation between the Foreign Service Institutes; and establishment of India-Bangladesh Foundation;
- Signing of the MOU on the Akhaura-Agartala Railway link and India-Bangladesh boundary Strip Maps.

We noted the success of Border Haats in Meghalaya. Foreign Minister Dr. Dipu Moni has assured me that a quick decision would be taken in Bangladesh to our proposal to open more Haats along the International Border in the States of Tripura and Mizoram.

We were happy to note that work on power inter-grid connectivity is proceeding satisfactory, with 500 MW of power expected to flow from India to Bangladesh this summer. We have been promised that necessary clearances for the speedy setting up of the 1320 MW coal based joint venture power plant will be expedited. We welcome the participation of Bangladesh in power projects in India, particularly in the North-Eastern states of India.

Dr. Dipu Moni and I are satisfied at the pace of utilization of the Line of Credit extended by India. The entire consignment of buses has been delivered to Bangladesh. Deliveries of railway rolling stock will commence in the coming days. I am happy to announce that we are ready to release the first tranche of US \$50 million of the total grant of US\$ 200 million soon for projects of priority to Bangladesh.

On the trade and investment front, new opportunities are being actively developed by our corporate and business entities. I understand there has been a significant increase of textile exports from Bangladesh to India following the facility of duty free exports extended by India in

September 2011. We are jointly working on ways and means to introduce balance in our trade relationship.

We are encouraged by the positive response received from the visit of 100 member youth delegation from Bangladesh to India last year. I am glad to announce that we are ready to organize a similar visit later this year.

I am happy that we have today exchanged all the signed Strip Maps of the land boundary as part of the implementation of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and its 2011 Protocol. I have informed Her Excellency the Foreign Minister that the Indian Cabinet has already approved the Constitution Amendment Bill to pave the way for full implementation of the Agreement. It will now be considered by the Indian Parliament.

I would like to reassure you that India remains committed to an early resolution of the issue of sharing of Teesta waters. Consultations are on amongst stakeholders in India. India and Bangladesh have already exchanged data on the flow of Teesta at Dalia and Gazaldoba at the Joint Technical Meeting held in Kolkata. On the Tipaimukh project, I reiterate our Prime Minister's proposal for joint participation and invite you to take a stake in the project. We are also happy to note that the second meeting of the Sub Group on Tipaimukh was held in Dhaka early this month.

Friends, India and Bangladesh share a unique position in the world with our historical and cultural linkages as well as common perspectives with regard to open societies, democracy, value systems and ethics. I earnestly believe that our destinies are not only interlinked but that the cost of non-cooperation is too high.

I take this opportunity to reiterate that India attaches the highest importance to our relations with Bangladesh. Her Excellency Dr. Dipu Moni and I fully concur that full potential of our geographic and economic complementarities must be realized to mutual benefit. We shall continue our endeavour to move forward in a spirit of trust, understanding, accommodation, friendship and respect for each other.

Thank you



143. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH FOR DEVELOPMENT OF RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE TO ESTABLISH RAIL LINK BETWEEN AGARTALA (INDIA) AND AKHAURA (BANGLADESH).

Government of the Republic of India (hereinafter referred to as GOI) and Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (hereinafter referred to as GOB); Bearing in mind the friendly relations existing between the two countries and their peoples;

In pursuance of the Joint Communiqué issued in January 2010, where the two Prime Ministers agreed on the need to operationalize various areas of cooperation including transportation and connectivity for mutual benefit;

Desirous of cooperating and strengthening the development of transport sector in Bangladesh; Noting the need to establish railway link between Akhaura and Agartala; Have reached the following understanding.

ARTICLE-I

GOI and GOB shall cooperate in the development of necessary railway infrastructure between Agartala (India) and Akhaura (Bangladesh) for which the Joint Committee constituted by GOI and GOB and under the Joint Communiqué agreed on the alignment, design, and cost of the railway link (hereinafter referred to as "Project"). The details of the alignment and preliminary estimated cost of the Project approved by the two governments is annexed hereto and forms part of this Memorandum of Understanding.

ARTICLE - II

The Project shall be implemented with complete financial and technical assistance from the GOI - i.e. by grants from GOI - based on the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) model. Indian Railway shall be responsible for the construction of the Indian portion and Bangladesh Railway shall be responsible for the construction of the Bangladesh portion of the project.

ARTICLE-III

GOB shall appoint a Project Director at the functional level from Bangladesh Railway. The Project Director shall keep the Ministry of Railways, GOB, and the Project Steering Committee (PSC) informed of the progress of work and problems which require intervention at a high level.

ARTICLE - IV

1. There shall be Project Steering Committee (hereinafter referred to as "PSC") with the following composition, to monitor, supervise and give policy guidelines in the implementation of the Project.
 - a) One representative of Ministry of Railways, GOB.
 - b) One representative of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, GOB.
 - c) Project Director, Bangladesh Railway, GOB.
 - d) Deputy Commissioner, Brahmanbaria, GOB.
 - e) One representative of Economic Relations Division (ERD), Ministry of Finance, GOB.
 - f) One representative of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Maldives (BSM) Division, Ministry of External Affairs, GOI.
 - g) One representative of Development Partnership Administration (DPA) Division, Ministry of External Affairs, GOI.
 - h) Officer-in-Charge of Railway Wing of the High Commission of India, Dhaka.
 - i) One representative of the State Government of Tripura.
 - j) Chief Engineer (Construction), Northeast Frontier (NF) Railway, Ministry of Railways, GOI.
2. The PSC may co-opt additional members with the approval of respective Government.

3. The PSC shall meet alternately in Dhaka and Agartala with regular periodicity to ensure constant reviewing of the progress and address bottlenecks affecting the pace of Project's implementation. The timing of meetings shall be decided as and when required. The PSC shall however, meet at least twice a year until the completion of the project.

ARTICLE - V

For the part of Project within the territory of Bangladesh, GOB shall make available necessary land and ancillary facilities, etc., to the implementing firm. GOB shall make arrangements to provide land free from all encroachments and encumbrances and make necessary arrangement for the implementing firm and their teams' entry and access to the land and property, including private land and property for the purpose of implementation of the Project. Rent for temporary use of land shall be borne by appointed contractor.

ARTICLE - VI

The recruitment of labour, administrative, technical and other personnel for the project shall be confined to the nationals of India and Bangladesh only. Bangladesh Railway shall facilitate issuance of work permit for the Indian nationals as required under law.

ARTICLE - VII

1. Taxes, levies, VAT, etc related to the project and royalty of any kind shall be governed as per existing laws, rules and regulations.
2. Temporary import of machinery with a view to re-exporting at the end of the Project shall be exempted from customs duties in accordance with the Customs Act, 1969 and rules thereunder. However, if such material, machinery or equipment is not reexported and sold by the implementing firm in Bangladesh, all taxes or duties as applicable shall be recovered in accordance with the customs law/prevaling rules.
3. The Income Tax will be imposed on any Indian National or Indian Firm in accordance with the existing agreements between India and Bangladesh on Income Tax.

4. Project vehicle, plant and machinery of any Indian firm and their team, if applicable, related to Project shall be allowed to move freely without payment of duties/levies/taxes of Local Government. Project vehicle, plant and machinery of the Indian firms, if applicable, which need license for operation or movement including driving license, shall be issued temporary license in accordance with the prevailing law in Bangladesh, on the basis of valid license issued by the competent authority of India and certified by the High Commission of India in Dhaka. Bangladesh Railway shall facilitate expeditious issuance by the competent authority in Bangladesh.

ARTICLE - VIII

- (i) GOB will assist to arrange space for appropriate office / residential accommodations at or near the site(s) of the project execution. Rent of the said office or residential accommodations including furnishing and telecommunications shall be borne by the user or users.
- (ii) Security required for ensuring an environment conducive for execution of the project for the implementing firms and their teams and at related project sites shall be provided by GOB without any cost chargeable to estimate of the project.
- (iii) The cost of electricity, power, water, for the project, shall be borne by the users. Bangladesh Railway shall assist in obtaining supply of electricity / power and water for implementation of the Project.
- (iv) GOB shall make available free of cost necessary topographical, geological and geotechnical data of the project area available with GOB. Arrangement of necessary survey and drilling machineries, other machineries/equipments shall be the responsibilities of the implementing firm of the project.
- (v) Bangladesh Railway shall expeditiously arrange all administrative, environmental, legal, technical and other clearances before commencement of construction and

- (vi) Bangladesh Railway shall make provision, free of cost, of all reference documents including maps etc. for the execution of the project, through the Project Director of Bangladesh Railway to the implementing firm.

ARTICLE-IX

The Indian personnel of GOI or the firms and their team, if applicable, working on the project in Bangladesh, shall at all times, respect the laws of Bangladesh. However, no suit, prosecution or legal proceedings shall be instituted against any such person or anything done or purported to be done in good faith for the successful and expeditious implementation of the Project except for such acts as constitute gross negligence, willful misconduct, crimes under the laws of India as well as the laws of Bangladesh

ARTICLE-X

Indian Railway and the Bangladesh Railway will facilitate expeditious entry into or exit from India and Bangladesh of the project related personnel including appointed firms and their teams, as and when required, in the course of the Project's implementation. Applications for multiple entry visas for the above persons shall be considered only if submitted through GOI to Bangladesh High Commission, Delhi, and GOB to Indian High Commission, Dhaka respectively.

ARTICLE-XI

All such assistance and facilities as committed above by GOI and GOB shall be provided in a timely and prompt manner for smooth implementation of the project.

ARTICLE-XII

Assets created by the project in the territory of Bangladesh shall be vested in Bangladesh Railway, which shall be responsible for its operation and safeguard.

ARTICLE- XIII

Any differences regarding the interpretation or application of any provision of this MOU shall be resolved through mutual discussions.

ARTICLE- XIV

This MOU may be amended or modified from time to time by mutual consent

ARTICLE-XV

Laws of Bangladesh shall apply to that part of the project which is executed within the territory of Bangladesh.

ARTICLE- XVI

The MOU shall come into force from the date of its signing and shall remain in force till the completion and commissioning of the Project.

On commissioning of the railway link a separate MOU shall be entered into between Northeast Frontier Railway (Indian Railway) and Bangladesh Railway for Train Operations and Maintenance of Rolling Stock.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments have signed this MOU.

Signed on this Sixteenth day of February Two Thousand Thirteen at Dhaka in two originals in English language.

For the Government of the
Republic of India

(Pankaj Saran)
High Commissioner of
India to Bangladesh

For the Government of the
People's Republic of Bangladesh

(Md. Abul Kalam Azad)
Secretary, Economic Relations
Division, Ministry of Finance

Annexure

The following are the brief of the Project :

I. Alignment

Sl. No.	Stations From	To	Approx Length(Km)	Remarks
1	Agartala (India)	Transshipment Yard (India)	4.700 (BG)	Extension of Single Broad Gauge (BG) Line

2	Transshipment Yard (India)	Gangasagar (Bangladesh)	5.700 (MG)	Extension of Meter Gauge (MG) Single Line
3	Gangasagar (Bangladesh)	Akhaura (Bangladesh)	4.600 (MG)	Doubling of existing Meter Gauge (MG) single Line
4	Transshipment Yard (India)	Transshipment Yard (India)	5.200 (MG) 2.000 (BG)	4 MG new loop lines 2 BG new loop lines
5	Gangasagar (Bangladesh)	Gangasagar (Bangladesh)	2.750 (MG)	3 additional Loop Lines (MG)
6	Imambari (Bangladesh)	Imambari (Bangladesh)	1.500 (MG)	2 additional loop Lines (MG)
TOTAL			26.450 Km	19.750 Km (MG) 6.700 Km (BG)

II. Cost of the Project

The Project will include development of such infrastructure as, among others, boundary wall and fencing, railway tracks, bridges/ culverts, goods sheds, transshipment points, signaling and telecommunication system, buildings for the IBH (Intermediate Block Hut), customs and immigration points, offices, including acquisition of land etc. and provision of other amenities, sanitation, drinking water and drainage etc. All facilities required for the smooth operation of passenger and goods traffic on this line will be chargeable to the project. Abstract estimated cost of the project to be financed from the grant of GOI is given below:

(Figure in US Dollars)

Sl.	Description of Item	Indian Portion	Bangladesh Portion	Total
1	Preliminary, Final Location Survey & Detail Engineering Survey	441,601.35	514,060.05	955,661.40
2	Land	7,059,933.84	4,785,644.09	11,845,577.92
3	Structural Engineering works (Formation)	4,684,019.55	6,102,458.26	10,786,477.81
4	Structural Engineering Works (P.Way)	7,101,071.90	6,855,704.58	13,956,776.48

5	Structural Engineering Works (Bridges)	7,657,483.21	3,286,337.36	10,943,820.56
6	Structural Engineering Works (Building)	654,334.09	0.00	654,334.09
7	Electrical, Installation, Equipment, Plants & Machineries	451,467.27	383,747.18	835,214.45
8	Signaling & Telecommunication	1,611,625.62	3,136,798.51	4,748,424.13
9	Engineering Facilities	0.00	677,200.90	677,200.90
10	General Charges (Establishment)	2,372,922.93	2,059,356.07	4,432,279.01
11	General Charges (other than Establishment)	296,615.37	250,647.49	547,262.87
	Grand Total	32,331,075.12	28,051,954.49	60,383,029.62



143-A PROTOCOL AMENDING THE CONVENTION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF DOUBLE TAXATION AND THE PREVENTION OF FISCAL EVASION WITH RESPECT TO TAXES ON INCOME.

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,

Desiring to amend the Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income signed at New Delhi on the 27th day of August 1991 (in this Protocol referred to as "the Convention"),

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

The Convention is amended by omitting Article 21 and substituting:

“Article 21 - STUDENTS

1. A student who is or was a resident of one of the Contracting States immediately before visiting the other Contracting State and who is present in that other Contracting State solely for the purpose of his education or training, shall be exempt from tax in that other State on:
 - (a) grants, allowances, scholarships or awards; or
 - (b) payments made to him by persons residing outside that other State for the purposes of his maintenance, education or training; or
 - (c) remuneration which he derives from an employment which he exercises in the other Contracting State if the employment is directly related to his studies.
2. The benefits of this Article shall extend only for such period of time as may be reasonable or customarily required to complete the education or training undertaken, but in no event shall any individual have the benefits of this Article, for more than six consecutive years from the date of his first arrival in that other State for the purpose of his education or training.”

Article 2

The Convention is amended by omitting Article 28 and substituting:

“Article 28 - EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

1. The competent authorities of the Contracting States shall exchange such information (including documents and certified copies thereof) as is foreseeably relevant for carrying out the provisions of this Convention or to the administration or enforcement of the domestic laws concerning taxes of every kind and description imposed on behalf of the Contracting States, or of their political subdivisions or local authorities, insofar as the taxation there under is not contrary to the Convention. The exchange of information is not restricted by Articles 1 and 2.

2. Any information received under paragraph 1 by a Contracting State shall be treated as secret in the same manner as information obtained under the domestic laws of that State and shall be disclosed only to persons or authorities (including courts and administrative bodies) concerned with the assessment or collection of, the enforcement or prosecution in respect of, the determination of appeals in relation to the taxes referred to in paragraph 1, or the oversight of the above. Such persons or authorities shall use the information only for such purposes and may disclose the information in public court proceedings or in judicial decisions. The information may not be disclosed to any other authority or enforcement agency of the requesting Contracting State without the express written consent of the competent authority of the requested Contracting State.
3. In no case shall the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 be construed so as to impose on a Contracting State the obligation:
 - (a) to carry out administrative measures at variance with the laws and administrative practice of that or of the other Contracting State;
 - (b) to supply information (including documents and certified copies thereof) which is not obtainable under the laws or in the normal course of the administration of that or of the other Contracting State;
 - (c) to supply information which would disclose any trade, business, industrial, commercial or professional secret or trade process, or information the disclosure of which would be contrary to public policy (*ordre public*).
4. If information is requested by a Contracting State in accordance with this Article, the other Contracting State shall use its information gathering measures to obtain the requested information, even though that other State may not need such information for its own tax purposes. The obligation contained in the preceding sentence is subject to the limitations of paragraph 3 but in no case shall such limitations be construed to permit a

Contracting State to decline to supply information solely because it has no domestic interest in such information.

5. In no case shall the provisions of paragraph 3 be construed to permit a Contracting State to decline to supply information solely because the information is held by a bank, other financial institution, nominee or person acting in an agency or a fiduciary capacity or because it relates to ownership interests in a person.”

Article 3

ENTRY INTO FORCE

The Contracting States shall notify each other in writing through diplomatic channel of the completion of their domestic requirements for the entry into force of this Protocol. The Protocol, which shall form an integral part of the Convention, shall enter into force on the date of the last notification, and thereupon shall have effect from the date of entry into force of this Protocol.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly authorised, have signed this Protocol.

DONE in duplicate at Dhaka, Bangladesh this 16th day of February, 2013, in the Hindi, Bengali and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In the case of divergence of interpretation the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of the
Republic of India

(Pankaj Saran)
High Commissioner of
India to Bangladesh

For the Government of the
People's Republic of Bangladesh

(Md. Ghulam Hussain)
Secretary,
Internal Resources Division and
Chairman, National Board of Revenue



143-B Memorandum of Understanding Between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the Establishment of the India-Bangladesh Foundation.

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (hereinafter referred to as the "Parties")

Desiring to further provide mutual understanding and cooperation between the peoples of India and Bangladesh by a wider appreciation and greater sharing of knowledge of India-Bangladesh relations in all its aspects and the exchange of professional talent through academic and technical contacts between the two countries,

HAVE REACHED the following understanding:

ARTICLE I

There shall be established a foundation, to be known as the India-Bangladesh Foundation (hereinafter referred to as "Foundation"), with the objective of fostering India-Bangladesh relations, particularly through the enhancement of economic, scientific, educational, technical and cultural co-operation between India- Bangladesh and the promotion of greater understanding between the peoples of the two countries. The Foundation shall function under the forms of this Memorandum of Understanding and shall implement programmes aimed at achieving the goals thereof (hereinafter referred to as the "Memorandum")

ARTICLE II

The Foundation shall be financed through revenues from a Trust Fund to be set up through grants made by the Parties. The Principal of the Trust Fund shall comprise a sum, contribution to which will be on an equitable basis to be mutually agreed upon. The said principal may be augmented through mutual consultation and confirmed through an exchange of Diplomatic Notes between the Parties.

ARTICLE III

The revenues from the Trust Fund, within the conditions and limitations hereinafter set forth, shall be used by the Foundation for the purpose of:

- i) Financing higher studies, research and other educational activities and in-service training for citizens of India and Bangladesh at institutions of learning located in India and Bangladesh;
- ii) Financing visit and exchanges between India and Bangladesh of scholars, academics, professionals, artists and experts in the fields of referred to in Article-I and such other fields as may be agreed upon by the Board of the Foundation;
- iii) Financing other related programmes and activities such as seminars, symposia, colloquia and workshops on subjects of common interests;
- iv) Contributing towards the publication of standard works on India-Bangladesh relation in specific fields as may be determined by the Foundation;
- v) Encouraging the translation of standard works of literature of Bangladesh into Indian languages and vice-versa and arranging for their publication;
- vi) Adopting any other measure which may be considered necessary for the fulfillment of the objectives of the Foundation;
- vii) As far as applicable, there will be equal participation of representatives from India and Bangladesh in the activities funded by the Foundation.

ARTICLE IV

The following shall be among the thrust areas of the activities to be carried out by the Foundation:

Education and Culture; Archaeological Studies; Agricultural Research; Science and Technology; Health; Technical Training; Development Studies and Women's Studies.

ARTICLE V

In furtherance of the aforementioned purposes, the Foundation may, subject to the provision of this Memorandum, exercise all the powers necessary for carrying the purposes of this Memorandum including the following:

- 1) Receive funds from mutually agreed sources, in addition to the initial contribution of the Parties;
- 2) Open and operate bank accounts in India and Bangladesh in the name of the Foundation;
- 3) Disburse funds and make grants and advance of funds to meet the objectives of the Foundation;
- 4) Plan, adapt and carry out programmes in accordance with the purposes of this Memorandum;
- 5) Recommend / nominate to educational institutions in India and Bangladesh trainees, professors, research scholars, leaders and professionals resident in India or Bangladesh for various programmes / courses in such institutions;
- 6) Provide for periodic audit of the accounts of the Foundation in such frequency as may be decided from time to time by either Government, by auditors nominated separately by the Parties.

ARTICLE VI

The management and direction of the affairs of the Foundation shall be vested in a Board of Directors consisting of 6 Directors (hereinafter designated as "The Board"). The High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh and the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India shall be the co-Chairpersons of the Board. For this purpose, in the absence of either High Commissioner, the respective Acting High Commissioners would serve as co-Chairpersons ad interim. With regard to the balance, the Parties shall each nominate two other members to the Board, both of whom shall be of recognized competence and who have distinguished themselves in fields relevant to the activities of the Foundation and who will hold office in their personal capacity. Respective High Commission

officials designated by concerned co-Chairpersons shall act jointly as cosecretaries of the Foundation.

ARTICLE VII

All commitments, obligations and expenditures by the Foundation shall be made pursuant to an annual budget to be approved by the Board. The Board may, however, frame such rules as would permit the Board to incur expenditure up to specific monetary ceilings on specific projects / schemes not otherwise budgeted for. The Board will also make recommendations for necessary funding to replenish the Trust Fund.

ARTICLE VIII

The Board shall adopt such by-laws and appoint such committees as it shall deem necessary for the conduct of the affairs of the Foundation.

ARTICLE IX

A report on the activities of the Foundation shall be prepared annually by the Board and two copies shall be presented to each of the Governments through the nodal authorities.

ARTICLE X

The co-Chairpersons of the Board shall be responsible for the direction and supervision of the Board's programmes and activities in accordance with the Board's resolution and directives with the provisions of the Memorandum.

ARTICLE XI

Meetings of the Board shall be held once a year alternately in India and Bangladesh. However, the Board may, if it so desires, call for additional meetings as necessary.

ARTICLE XII

The nodal authorities responsible for the implementation of the present MOU shall be respective Foreign Secretaries of the two Governments.

ARTICLE XIII

The present Memorandum may be amended on terms mutually agreed upon through an exchange of Diplomatic Notes between the Parties.

ARTICLE XIV

The Parties shall make every effort to facilitate the task of the Foundation and assist in the resolution of such problems which may arise in the operation thereof through bilateral discussions.

ARTICLE XV

The implementation of the present Memorandum will be without prejudice to the activities under the Programmes of Cultural Cooperation Agreement concluded between the two Governments. The Parties will endeavor to ensure to the extent feasible, that, there is no overlap of activities under the present Memorandum and the aforesaid Programme.

ARTICLE XVI

This Memorandum shall come into force upon the date of its signature and will continue to remain valid for 10 years from the date of signing. In case for any reason it is not possible to renew the Memorandum before the validity period, it will continue to be valid till a new MOU is signed or the existing one renewed. Either Party may terminate the MOU by giving at least 6 (six) months notice in advance of its intention to terminate the MOU. Termination of this Memorandum shall not affect the validity or duration of any implementing arrangement/project executed and commenced thereunder and the activities in progress shall continue until completed.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Memorandum of Understanding.

Signed at Dhaka on this Sixteenth day of February 2013, in two originals, each in Hindi, Bangla and English languages. In case of doubt in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of the
Republic of India
(Salman Khurshid)
External Affairs Minister

For the Government of the People's
Republic of Bangladesh
(Dr. Dipu Moni)
Minister for Foreign Affairs



144. Joint Statement on the Second meeting of the Joint Consultative Commission between Bangladesh and India.

Dhaka, February 16, 2013.

1. The second meeting of the Bangladesh-India Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) was held in Dhaka on 16 February 2013. The Bangladesh delegation was led by Foreign Minister Dr. Dipu Moni, while the Indian delegation was led by External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid.
2. The Ministers reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction at the significant forward movement in implementation of the decisions taken by the two sides, including during the first JCC meeting. This has widened the scope of bilateral cooperation and relations have become truly multifaceted, encompassing a wide range of areas including trade and investment, security, connectivity, border management, water, power, shipping, renewable energy, development cooperation, art and culture, people to people exchanges, human resource development, among others.
3. Both sides welcomed regular exchanges, both political and official, which had helped create goodwill between the two countries. The Ministers noted with satisfaction that the Foreign Secretaries had met twice and Director General/Joint Secretary of the concerned Division of the Ministries of Foreign/External Affairs had met in Dhaka for formal consultations since the 1st JCC.
4. The two Ministers expressed satisfaction about the recent meetings on security cooperation at different levels viz. Home Ministers, Home Secretaries, JWG on Security and Directors-General of the BGB and BSF. They welcomed the signing of the Extradition Treaty during the recent visit of Home Minister of India to Dhaka and hoped that this would further facilitate cooperation on security related matters between the two countries. The External Affairs Minister of India reiterated the appreciation of the government of India for the cooperation extended by Bangladesh in the security related matters. Both Ministers

reiterated their commitment to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

5. The two Ministers welcomed the signing of the Revised Travel Arrangements during the Indian Home Ministers visit and its notification by both sides. They expressed confidence that this liberalized visa regime would have a significant impact on further enhancing bilateral relations by facilitating people-to-people contact.
6. The two Ministers stressed on effective implementation of the Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP), including regular coordination and exchange between the nodal officers at different levels for better border management to prevent cross border criminal activities, illegal movement incidents of violence and loss of lives and early completion of fencing of vulnerable patches along the border.
7. The Ministers noted that the signing of the Protocol to the Land Boundary Agreement had paved the way for settlement of all remaining land boundary issues. They agreed on the need for ratification of the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) 1974 and its Protocol at the earliest to resolve all pending boundary related issues including exchange of enclaves and areas in adverse possession. They noted with satisfaction that all the signed strip maps were exchanged between the two sides during the visit.
8. The two sides noted that signing of the Protocol amending the Convention for Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income would enhance bilateral cooperation for effective exchange of information
9. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the various measures taken for enhancement of trade and investment between the two countries. They stressed the urgent need for upgradation of infrastructure of the Land Customs Stations (LCSs)/Land Ports and Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) and for completion of the upgradation works at the identified LCS/ICPs on schedule. The

External Affairs Minister of India conveyed India's concurrence for the development works proposed to be undertaken by Bangladesh side for Land Custom Stations at nine sites within 150 yards of the International Boundary. Both sides agreed to put in place necessary infrastructure for operationalising the LCS at Thegamukh–Demagiri and Sabroom–Ramgarh at an early date. They also underscored the need for removal of non-tariff barriers on both sides. Both sides agreed to hold the next meeting of the Joint Working Group on Trade at the earliest. The two Ministers noted with appreciation the positive response received from the users of Border Haats. Welcoming the understanding reached on opening of the two new Border Haats along the Bangladesh-Tripura border the two sides agreed to consider new proposals for setting up border haats along Bangladesh-India border that would contribute to the income generation and well-being of the people of those areas. They agreed on the need to convene a meeting of the Joint Committee on Border Haat to review their operations and make further recommendations for their management. The Ministers noted the need for harmonization of standards and mutual recognition of certificates as an important element of trade facilitation between the two countries. They expressed hope that Agreement on Cooperation between the Bureau of Indian Standards and the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institute (BSTI) would be signed at the earliest. The External Affairs Minister conveyed the approval of the Government of India for inclusion of proposal for upgradation of BSTI under the US\$ 800 million Line of Credit.

10. Referring to the connectivity between the two countries through waterways, railways, roadways and air, the Bangladesh Foreign Minister stated that Bangladesh had formed a Working Group under the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for evolving a comprehensive framework with a view to facilitate movement of goods between the two countries. They agreed on the need to extend the validity of the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade to make it co-terminus with the Bilateral Trade Agreement. They expressed hope that the forthcoming Shipping

Secretary level talks scheduled to be held from 27 February 2013 would enable the two sides to identify ways to further enhance cooperation under the framework of the Protocol. They hoped that the concerned agencies would complete the feasibility study under Indian grant for upgradation of Ashuganj Inland Port with a view to its full utilization as a transshipment point at an early date. They expressed satisfaction that the two sides had met to explore the possibilities and prospects of Coastal Shipping between the two countries. They welcomed the signing of the MoU on establishing rail link between Akhaura and Agartala and expressed hope that the ongoing work for establishing rail linkages between Shahbazpur-Mahishashan and Chilahati-Haldibari would also be completed at the earliest. The two Ministers hoped that the Empowered Group set up to examine the ways and means of popularizing the Maitree Express would be submitting their report at an early date to ease the travel of the passengers. Bangladesh side assured that it would be conveying its views on the draft Motor Vehicle Agreement soon.

11. The two Ministers reiterated their commitment for early finalization of the Interim Agreement for sharing of the waters of the Teesta and Feni rivers. They also noted with satisfaction that the Sub-Group of JRC for Tipaimukh hydro-electric project had held two productive meetings over the last few months. They further noted that the river bank protection works were being implemented in phases to save valuable land and properties on both sides. The Indian side reiterated its earlier commitment that it would not take any unilateral decision on the Himalayan component of the proposed River-Interlinking project which may adversely affect Bangladesh.
12. Both the Ministers expressed satisfaction at the progress of cooperation in the power sector overall. They appreciated that the work on grid inter-connection between Bheramara-Baharampur was expected to be completed by June/July 2013. They also took note of the progress of work of setting up the 1320 MW Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company at Rampal, Bagerhat, Khulna and expressed hope that the related

issues would be resolved soon. The two sides noted that Bangladesh was in the process of finalizing purchase of additional 250MW power from the open market of India. The External Affairs Minister of India welcomed the Bangladesh participation in power projects in India, particularly in the Northeastern States of India. The two Ministers also agreed that there remains much scope for cooperation in the renewable energy sector. In this connection, they expressed satisfaction at the holding of the 1st meeting of the JWG on Renewable Energy Cooperation where both sides identified some priority areas for mutual cooperation and it was agreed that the next meeting of the JWG would be held shortly.

13. The Ministers reviewed the status of implementation of projects under the \$ 800 Million Indian Line of Credit. They noted that projects amounting to US \$ 785.45 million were being processed and were at various stages of implementation. They stressed the need to expedite early completion of all formalities of the new projects so that the benefits could reach the people.
14. Foreign Minister of Bangladesh reiterated the appreciation of the government for conversion of US\$ 200 Million of the LOC into grant. The External Affairs Minister of India stated that the first tranche of the grant would be released to Bangladesh shortly for utilization for projects that were of priority to Bangladesh.
15. Both the Ministers agreed on the need to move forward on the decision to explore possibilities of cooperation in power/ hydropower, water, connectivity and transit in the sub-regional context. Foreign Minister of Bangladesh reiterated her invitation to host meetings of both the Joint Working Groups in March 2013 between Bangladesh-India-Bhutan and Bangladesh-India-Nepal for exploratory discussions.
16. Both the Ministers noted with great satisfaction the successful hosting of the year-long programme for joint celebration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore and the joint celebration of the 90th anniversary of Bidrohi by Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. They also expressed satisfaction that the 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was jointly celebrated by

both the countries and noted that these initiatives had encouraged interaction among the people and helped foster greater understanding and goodwill between the peoples of the two countries. Both sides agreed to conclude a new Cultural Exchange Programme at the earliest.

17. The two Ministers noted with satisfaction the level of cooperation in the education sector and human resources development. They noted that the signing of the MoU on Cooperation between the Foreign Service Academy of Bangladesh (FSA) and the Foreign Service Institute of India (FSI) would facilitate understanding between the diplomatic services of the two countries. They also agreed to explore further avenues of cooperation including more training programmes, exchanges of delegations/trainees and hosting of officials of various training institutes in this regard. They also expressed confidence that signing of the MoU on Bangladesh-India Foundation would further promote friendly exchanges between the two countries.
18. Both the Ministers also noted that with the signing of the MoU on Cooperation in the fields of Health and Medical Sciences, medical professionals of both countries would get the benefits of exchange of scientific materials and information and joint collaboration in research in medical science.
19. The two Ministers expressed hope that the JWG on Conservation of Royal Bengal Tigers at the Sundarbans would be meeting soon to explore the possibilities of mutual cooperation in this sector.
20. The Ministers expressed satisfaction that the JWG on Fisheries would be meeting very soon and hoped that there both the sides would be able to agree on ways and means for optimal utilization of the fishing resources to the benefit of the two peoples. The Ministers further expressed hope that the JWG on would also be meeting soon to intensify cooperation in the field of agriculture.
21. Both sides agreed to enhance telecommunication connectivity between the two countries.

22. The two sides signed the following documents:
- MoU for Establishment of Bangladesh-India Foundation
 - MoU on establishment of Akhaura Agartala Rail link
 - Protocol amending the Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.
23. The External Affairs Minister will call on the Hon'ble Prime Minister and will also meet the Hon'ble Minister for Home Affairs and Hon'ble Minister for Water Resources of Bangladesh during his visit to Dhaka.
24. Both sides agreed to hold the next meeting of the Joint Consultative Commission in New Delhi at a mutually convenient date to be decided through diplomatic channels.



145. Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister in Dhaka.

Dhaka, February 18, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good evening friends. Thank you very much for being very patient and waiting, and I apologise for the slight delay. It was due to prior commitments and then the engagements went a little beyond schedule.

Let me introduce myself. My name is Syed Akbaruddin. I am the Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi.

We have here with us our External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid. We have about twenty or so minutes for this interaction. I would request the Hon. Minister to make his opening remarks. Following that you can ask any question that you may like to.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I must apologise. As Mr. Akbaruddin said, we have had very full two days and your traffic is not exactly the sort of traffic in which

you go from one place to another in a jiffy. But we have had excellent arrangements made and I compliment the escorts that were conducting us. So we were able to just about get everywhere with a few minutes delay here. And then of course we have the cherry on the cake, this final dinner after which I will depart for Delhi.

You have all been very enthusiastic and very kind to us in the coverage that you provided. And I must say that I am deeply impressed with the nuances that I had hoped that I would be able to convey during this important visit, and that you have got those nuances and have very generously put them out so that what message we wanted to carry to our friendly people in Bangladesh could accurately be represented to them.

It has been an outstanding visit. It has been very successful visit. Everything that I had hoped, we have been able to accomplish. The quality of discussions and exchanges has been absolutely outstanding. I do believe that we have been able to lay the appropriate foundations, we prepared the ground for the visit of our President - who again is extremely well-known to all of you, who has been a very good friend of Bangladesh from the time of its birth and who looks forward as his first visit outside India after taking the oath as President of our country. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee looks forward to his trip early in March. On the 3rd of March his trip will begin. I think I can go back and report to him that we are in full readiness of having him received here.

We also look forward thereafter to a lot of work that we need to do before Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Bangladesh arrives in our country sometime in September. But between now and then, as I said, we have a lot of work to do and primarily the two things that you have already widely covered. The Land Boundary Agreement ratification which actually will take place through a Constitutional amendment at home in India has been cleared by the Cabinet and we will bring it before Parliament during this coming session, the Budget Session that begins in a few days' time. And I hope that if all goes well, we will actually have it passed during the Budget Session itself and one very major milestone would have been achieved.

I will meanwhile continue to work on the agreement on sharing of Teesta waters, which is less cumbersome for me because there is not legislation

involved and therefore we are not tied down to any schedules at that end but on which I will work to have cooperation and support of the Chief Minister of Bengal because that is largely the State that is affected by the sharing of waters. I do sincerely hope that that is another thing that we will be able to accomplish over the next few weeks giving it very high priority. I do realize that in public mind that carries a very important place.

We have already issued a very positive Joint Statement which will be available to you. I would not go through all the details of each of the items that we have actually discussed, reviewed, and on which we are preparing further steps that we will take. That would take a very long time. I would rather give more time to you for your questions.

With these few words, I would be very happy to attempt answering your questions.

Q: Mr. Minister, there are two parts to my question. Despite the joint efforts to keep a peaceful a border, sometimes we are hearing of killing of innocent civilians by the Border Security Force. What is your comment about that? What is the direction from your highest level on how to keep a peaceful border without killing civilians? Secondly, on the river issue, India has started discussion with Bangladesh on Tipaimukh Project. But what we are hearing is that India is also constructing several dams upstream of our country. What we are hearing from ABP report that more than ... (Inaudible)... Do you have a similar initiative to talk with the ... (Inaudible)... as you have expressed concern for the Chinese dams in the upstream of Brahmaputra.

External Affairs Minister: I take the second part of your question firstly. Extremely complicated as it looks in terms of your geographical coverage but in terms of my answer to you is straightforward, transparent and simple. We are neither building any dams, nor will we take up any project without full involvement, cooperation and ensuring that no adverse impact takes place on downstream citizens of Bangladesh. You can be absolutely clear, our commitment is complete and total; no qualifications to that commitment at all.

I want to say to you that on Tipaimukh we have not only found the mechanism by which complete transparency in sharing of data is taking place and such data as is thought is being made available. I do not know

the technical details but I do believe that there is no reason there for anyone to complain. We also have made an offer that the Government of Bangladesh should consider seriously taking a stake in the Tipaimukh Project, as indeed they should be looking at similar stakes in any other project that comes up because ownership is the best way of control. We would like Bangladesh to have ownership and participation so that there is not any problem. So I can assure you fully, completely that there is no cause of concern. We have already an agreement on sharing of six other rivers beyond Teesta. And it is our view and position that we should continue working on such arrangements that we need to make on those rivers even while the Teesta issue is taken to its final conclusion.

As far as China's position is concerned, I have been Water Resources Minister of India in the past, this issue arose then. I think if you are familiar with a famous play called "The Phantom of the Opera" – I think you might have seen the movie as well – I think there is a phantom in this opera who continues to talk about dams that do not exist. China has assured us then and reassured us now that it will do nothing that affects adversely interests of downstream countries including India. The information that is available with us is that these dams that are being constructed are run-of-the-river dams, and therefore it will not impact on the quantity of water that flows down. We are keeping a close watch. China has, as I said to you, reassured us. And I think for the present that is all that we need to do. If some further developments happen any time in the future, we will address them at that time. There is no cause for any concern at present.

As regards your first question, I told you, you asked a complicated geographical question that one can lose sight of where one was going. As far as the border is concerned, this is a matter of immense importance to both of us and concern. I do not want to go into numbers. I think that when you are talking about something of a humanitarian nature between friends, numbers do not count.

One casualty on either side is one casualty too many. There was an unfortunate incident last week on our side. There has been sadly an unfortunate incident while I am here. I know that the previous Home Minister, who is now the Finance Minister had in my presence held several meetings to alert and to sensitize the Border Security Force, the

paramilitary forces on our side. I know that the matter has been taken up at the highest level on both sides. The Home Minister Mr. Shinde when he came here, who acknowledges with tremendous gratitude the help given by the Home Minister of country in arriving at what were difficult agreements including the agreement on extradition.

We also have in place an arrangement for joint management of the border. And we had hoped that many of the steps that have been taken including the coordination between the District Magistrates and Commissioners on the two sides and such other steps that we have taken to improve border management would conclusively address this issue which is an extremely tragic issue.

But I do believe that, as I said, even one casualty is one too many, and some of them have been very very tragic. So, when I get back we will consult with the Home Minister once again and whatever needs to be done will be done and addressed. And this is exactly how we have discussed here with my counterpart. I hope that concrete adequate steps will be taken to put this thing behind us completely. We all know that there is a backdrop to this. That backdrop also needs to be addressed why people should need to resort to the kind of crossings that they do. I think we need to address those things as well.

And we have taken on board a decision that an overall look at the causes that lead to movements that become in some way calls for further incidents of this nature should be addressed. Why does this kind of border transports take place of either equipment or of bovines? Why do people stray across the border? What can we do both in terms of professional handling of the management of the border as well as the public nature of an outreach? We will consider all these.

For the present I can only say, it is a very sad thing, both of us are extremely concerned, and we can address it collectively. It is not something that we will succeed in doing unilaterally. But whatever we can do on our side, of course you will not find us wanting.

Q: Mr. Minister, you met the Leader of the Opposition. What talks did you have with her? What topics did you discuss with her?

External Affairs Minister: This was in fact in a sense a courtesy call on the Leader of Opposition and in a sense my reciprocating the meeting

that we had in Delhi. We did not actually necessarily go over every point that we had discussed in Delhi. I think the issue of cooperation from the Bangladesh side as far as our concerns on the border were enumerated. It is being taken care of adequately with all the cooperation and assistance that we could have expected.

We have reasons to be satisfied with the progress that is being made on this. Of course it is not something that can magically overnight be completely transformed. But I think we have made very satisfactory progress and this is something that had been endorsed by the Leader of Opposition when she was in Delhi. There was not any new information that needed further discussion. But the broad issues that are issues of concern to Bangladesh and which have constantly been highlighted, including the two agreements that we have already discussed.

We certainly talked about how much progress had been made on that and she talked broadly about the situation that exists today in the country here, as we always do when we meet with leaders from the countries that we visit. We get briefing about their perceptions, understanding of both the economics and the political and sociological situation. So we did a broad conversation about many issues of that nature. It was a very pleasant meeting, it was a very cordial meeting.

Q: Mr. Khurshid, would your visit ...(Inaudible)... in Indo-Bangladesh relations which had taken a turn for the worse over Teesta ...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: I do not know if your description of relationship having taken a turn for the worse is necessarily accurate. I think it is an important issue for Bangladesh and we understand that and realize that. It is also I think an issue both of politics, morality and humanity. We have a very strong commitment and we are very satisfied that Bangladesh recognizes that commitment is an honest, sincere, meaningful commitment. And they also understand that there have been local considerations and conditions because of which we perhaps could not move as fast as we all had hoped on both sides that we would move.

But this is an ongoing relationship. And in ongoing relationships there are moments of joy, there are moments of concern, there are moments of advice, there are moments of expectation, there are moments of delivery, and there are moments of dreams. I think that at any given

moment to say that this represents the entire relationship, it would be unfair. A long and a valued, cherished relationship that began in the fateful days of 1971 and which will continue to times immemorial is for us, simply to say, a very very important, significant and a very satisfying relationship. I certainly felt that it was the same attitude that welcomed us in Bangladesh and therefore I go back very pleased with this visit and look forward to much more meaningful contacts between us.

Q: Hon. Minister, I am honoured to be here. I work for an English Daily. I also would like to refer to your visit to our Leader of Opposition once again. I understand that you have told her what you have told us that Teesta Agreement is going to happen and LBA is going to happen in the coming session of the Parliament. Has she expressed her happiness over the prospect of a solution to these two problems because many ... (Inaudible)... believe that the solution to this particular problem will give you ... (Inaudible)... chance of election ... on this.

External Affairs Minister: I do not think that is what we are thinking and I am grateful to the leadership of Bangladesh that they have certainly expressed the same understanding and perception that this is something between the people of India and people of Bangladesh and not between political parties and Governments alone. I think that is the perspective in which both the Government as well as the leader of opposition have treated this matter and that is how we are approaching it. If you are asking me specifically of the Leader of Opposition, I think she has a very gracious way of expressing her pleasure, and I think she certainly smiled and showed satisfaction that any graceful lady can show.

But I know that the delivery is what is important. Promises are only half way. Full delivery is what is important. Therefore, I have given myself the task of ensuring that we push the Land Boundary Agreement during the coming session of Parliament. We cleared it, therefore, before my coming here in Cabinet and my Prime Minister has given me very very strict instructions that we must have everybody on board and outreach to all Members of Parliament and all political parties should be effective and urgent, and that we should show that the decision that we are taking is a decision that is unanimously supported by everybody in India because that is the relationship that we want with Bangladesh.

Q: Sir, in the Joint Statement you have mentioned that both Bangladesh and India are likely to set up a JWG that was coterminous with the trade agreement. Can you elaborate what you mean by this particular term 'coterminous' in the bilateral terms? Secondly, do you feel that this ...(Inaudible)... helped you to ...(Inaudible)... Indian security ...(Inaudible)...quell the Northeastern Indian ...(Inaudible)... So do you feel that if political situation changes, that sort of cooperation ...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: I have no reason to believe that the movement forward and the journey completed between two countries would be in any way reversed. The march of history takes you forward. And whatever may be at any given moment the steps or initiatives taken by any particular section of leadership, ultimately it all gets subsumed in the relationship between the people of two countries and the shared history and destiny of the two countries. So I think that we have moved forward. And I have not seen any signs of disagreement or dissent or departure or divergence of views as far as this dimension and aspect of our relationship between India and Bangladesh is concerned. So, yes, I am optimistic, I believe that this march forward in history will continue.

We are doing whatever we need to do as responsible Government at our end to ensure that there is less cause for such things to happen. And we are grateful and acknowledge with gratitude what the Government of Bangladesh has done to cooperate with us to ensure that our security is not compromised because of the people using Bangladesh territory to undermine our security. So I have really no reason to be in any doubt that this is something that will stand the test of time and it is permanent in nature.

Q: Regarding the ...(Inaudible)... What do you mean by the term 'coterminous' with the bilateral ...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: I understand that trade and investment agreements are essentially long-term arrangements, and the idea of double taxation is to back those agreements and provide them with the adequate incentive that is needed. Double taxation agreements can be standalone agreements as well, but frankly, they really work in tandem with and in supplement of trade and investment agreements. So it is a

package of arrangement between us for trade and investment. I hope that that is what is meant and I believe that that is how it will work.

Q: ...(Inaudible)... As you said, Mr. Minister, during the talks with the Opposition leader, ...(Inaudible)...the upcoming election ...(Inaudible)... Secondly, as the Prime Minister is going to visit India again, do you have any plans to invite Opposition leader ...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: We would welcome any visit by any leader. It is my opinion that between Bangladesh and India as indeed between India and other neighbours we should follow the example of leaders in Europe who meet without the formality and without the protocol that requires a lot of preparation. They meet periodically, they fly across to each other's country, they spend half a day or one day in order to ensure that these relationships remain strong and the bonds remain very strong. I hope that it is the same thing that we see between our two countries, not only between people who man institutions outside governments, civil society, media and scholars and people in the field of culture, but also people in public life. They should be meeting more extensively and more often and sharing views. I think that collective vision of our region, SAARC region, is something which will be much stronger if we spend more time with each other.

There are some meetings and some visits already scheduled. But if some more have to be scheduled, we will be happy to do that. As you know, calendar between national leaders tends to be very tight and to find suitable dates where you can give appropriate attention and show the courtesies that are called for. So a little bit of programming becomes necessary. But we have only announced the schedules that are already available with us. One is the visit of our President and one is the return visit of the Prime Minister. But, as I said, I would welcome as many leaders from this country coming to India, coming to Delhi. A lot of leaders travel to Bengal, travel to Kolkata and come back. But I hope more people will come to Delhi as well.

When I said that we discussed the broad spectrum of the situation here, I do not mean to say that I made any questions about the specifics of internal nature of politics but the broad pattern of what is happening. I certainly enquired about the situation of the coming elections, on which I

do believe that there is not much progress since we last met in Delhi. There is I think a kind of divergence of views on the actual election process and how it will be held. I have not got any more substantive details about that. But I am sure that all the political parties will now as the clock begins to run towards an election, will presumably find their own ways of communication and preparing themselves for the election.

As far as the concern or issue about these young people protesting in the streets is concerned, I think to tell you honestly, nobody has a very clear idea how much this is a permanent change in the politics of Bangladesh, how much of this is a passing phase, how much of it is a limited concern, how much of it will grow and engage into larger concern about issues of governance, I think it is too early for anyone to give a very comprehensive view. But certainly I think most people are trying to analyse it and trying to understand it. Hopefully, reading what you write and talking to my friends who come on the media with us, debriefing them and engaging with them, I will have a better idea.

Sadly, my appointments here were back to back so tight that I did not really get the time to talk to any of these young people who are in the streets. Some of them I saw in the hotel lobby and I exchanged one or two sentences with them. But I did see a lot of idealism on their faces and I have seen the slogans and I have seen the flags that are being flown all around. But I think this is too quick a trip for me to be able to make a sociological study. I am sure that your writings will educate me.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: I certainly think that I see no reason to believe that on the issue of India there is divergence of opinion that is perceptible or noticeable. That certainly for me is a very welcome position. With friends of longstanding, as between India and Bangladesh, I think it should not be important that a particular government or another government is in power in any of our countries. I think our fundamentals and the foundations of our relationship should be such that there may be issues about priority and the speed at which we build further upon a relationship. But the foundation should remain solid and acceptable and sustainable to everyone. And I certainly see that sense prevailing in Bangladesh, and I hope that we are able to show a similar sense prevailing in India.

Q: About two years back, a young girl named ...(Inaudible)... was killed by BSF. Do you have any knowledge of what is happening on that case?

External Affairs Minister: I cannot give you any details. The very picture of a young girl losing her life is a very sad picture. I do not think that you should think of her as a Bangladeshi girl. I think you should think of her as a young child, a daughter, and a sister to all of us on both sides of the border. There is, I understand, an inquiry in progress as there would be for any event that leads to any such tragic outcome. I cannot say to you that I am in possession of any details about the findings, but I can assure you that in any such matter the internal inquiries that we do are done with utmost sincerity and a sense of urgency. I am sad that such a thing happened, as indeed said for many many other incidents that caused loss of life on both sides. But I hope that we can together find a method by which and a management by which we would go beyond such sad tragedies and look forward to a more happier and a safer life.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much friends. With that we come to the end of this interaction.

(Concluded)



146. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary on the President's Visit to Bangladesh.

New Delhi, March 1, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming for this interaction. I would like to welcome you to this new facility that we are using for the first time with the media. I do hope you will like it. It is part of our unveiling all the facilities that we have in this building. Some of you have been here in Conference Room 1. Previously also we had the BRICS NSAs meeting and so there was a small media event there, and now we have decided that we will check the facilities here so that they are all ready. In due course we will have regular briefings here.

With that I would like to welcome Foreign Secretary who is here actually for the briefing today on the visit of the President to Bangladesh. Along with the Foreign Secretary we have on his right Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla who is Joint Secretary (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Myanmar). On my left is Mr. Venu Rajamony who is Press Secretary to the President.

As usual, I will request Foreign Secretary to make his opening remarks and then the floor is open for questions related to what he has spoken and that is on the visit to Bangladesh. At the end of it if we have some more time available, he is willing to answer a couple of more questions on other issues. With that I would request Foreign Secretary to make his opening remarks.

Foreign Secretary (Shri Ranjan Mathai): This is a new experience for me also. Let me just say that usually I sit in Shastri Bhavan with all of you sitting at a height and looking down at me. The situation now seems to have got reversed. But that is certainly not the intention. I am happy to have this occasion. This is part, as Akbar said, of our new facilities in this building. It has taken a long time mainly because there are many finishing touches for the professional use of this building. There are many finishing touches in the facilities here which we are working on so that we have a completely ready building and clearly this microphone not being as effective as the one you have in Shastri Bhavan shows that we still have a way to go. Thank you very much.

Rashtrapatiiji will pay a state visit to Bangladesh from March 3 to 5 this year at the invitation of the President of Bangladesh. This is Rashtrapatiiji's first visit abroad after his assumption of the Office of President of India. The choice is reflective of the fact that India attaches the highest importance to its relations with Bangladesh and seeks a deeper and stronger partnership with that country. The President will be accompanied by the Minister of State for Railways and four Members of Parliament.

In terms of the programme, as has been reflected in the press release we issued yesterday, Rashtrapatiiji will call on the President of Bangladesh, Mr. Mohammed Zillur Rahman and receive from him the Bangladesh Liberation War Honour Award. The President will also meet the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina. The leader of the

opposition and the Chairperson of the BNP Begum Khaleda Ziya, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh Dr. Dipu Moni, the Finance Minister Mr. M.A. Muhith of Bangladesh, the Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, and the Chairperson of the Jatiya Party Gen. Ershad are also expected to call on Rashtrapatiji.

The President will receive an honorary Doctorate of Law from the University of Dhaka at a formal convocation ceremony. He will attend a reception to meet members of the Indian community in Bangladesh. During his stay in Bangladesh Rashtrapatiji along with the Prime Minister of Bangladesh would also flag off a freight train from the Dhaka Cantonment railway station that is comprised of the tank wagons and locomotives being supplied from India under our \$800 million line of credit.

As you know, with Bangladesh we share not only a common history of the struggle for freedom and liberation but also enduring feelings of both fraternal and familial ties. Shared history and common heritage, linguistic and cultural ties, the passion for music, literature and arts are some of the factors that unite the people of India and Bangladesh. In this context you would note that Rashtrapatiji would pay a visit to the home of Rabindranath Tagore in Shilaidaha in Kushtiya District. It may be recalled that India and Bangladesh had jointly celebrated the year long celebrations of the 150th birth anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. Rashtrapatiji had in fact, in his capacity at that time as the Finance Minister of India, participated in the closing ceremony of that event which was held in May 2012 in Dhaka.

During this visit the President and the first lady will also travel out of Dhaka to Bhadrabila in the Narail District of Bangladesh where he would visit old family relations of the first lady. Rashtrapatiji would also visit Kumudini Welfare Trust in Mirzapur in Bangladesh.

I would like to emphasise here that the visit of the Rashtrapatiji comes at a time when the relations between India and Bangladesh are among the most diversified and productive on account of the pragmatic and forward looking steps taken on both sides. As you would recall, just a few weeks ago the External Affairs Minister had visited Bangladesh for the work we do together in the Joint Committee.

Several initiatives that emanated from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India in January 2010 and the visit of our Prime Minister to

Bangladesh in September 2011 are now under advanced stages of implementation. I referred to the recent visit of the External Affairs Minister for the Second Joint Consultative Commission where many of these projects and ideas were further discussed.

We also had the visit of our Home Minister to Bangladesh in January of this year, which has provided further momentum in bilateral relations particularly with reference to the extradition agreement which was signed at that time. We now have an MoU on Akhaura-Agartala and the revised travel arrangements which have also been concluded.

The endeavour on both sides over the past few years has been to establish a comprehensive framework of development cooperation between the two countries. Considerable progress has been achieved on issues that have eluded solutions for decades. We have broken fresh ground in areas such as trade, power, connectivity, people-to-people exchanges, and security cooperation. The visit of Rashtrapatiiji would provide an opportunity to take bilateral relations to new heights and contribute to enhancing friendship and mutual understanding, and help in realizing the full potential of our relations.

Thank you

Official Spokesperson: We will first focus on questions relating to the visit.

Q: You have said that this visit ... (*Inaudible*)...our bilateral relations to a new high. We know about the current engagement between with Bangladesh and India. But whether... (*Inaudible*)... or take forward the unresolved issues which are still pending between Bangladesh and India?

Foreign Secretary: This visit is not designed to engage in political negotiations. We are very conscious of the need for forward movement on the unresolved issues. And I think what the President will do is to underline the Government's commitment here to work on those and to achieve the resolution of those unresolved issues in as short a time frame as is feasible.

Q: Sir, just ahead of the President's visit to Dhaka there has been the violence that we have seen, as a result of the verdicts of the tribunal. How does India look at these developments? Is this a concern that the President will also talk about in his discussions with the leadership there?

How do we look at what is going on there right now?

Foreign Secretary: Right now we are looking at the situation which has arisen out of a tribunal's decision in Bangladesh, which is a judicial process; and it would not be appropriate for me to comment on that. In general our position regarding the upsurge which has taken place in Bangladesh has already been spelt out in our statements by the External Affairs Minister when he was in that country, and again I had also visited Dhaka a few weeks ago. The situation as we understand now is that the overall security situation at least in Dhaka is completely calm. We are in touch with the authorities there and we are looking forward to a very productive visit.

Q: Mr. Mathai, will it be prudent for the President to visit Bangladesh at this point of time particularly when almost 20 per cent of the Bangladeshi territory is violence hit? Has the thought crossed the Rashtrapati Bhavan's mind so far? Also could you say something about whether some rough edges had been noticed in India's line of credit to Bangladesh, whether these rough edges have been smoothed out?

Foreign Secretary: We have done a lot of preparation for the President's visit including the visits of advanced teams which have gone to Bangladesh, in the normal manner in which we prepare for visits. And certainly the overall situation in that country has been carefully examined. We feel that it would be appropriate for the President to carry out his first visit abroad to Bangladesh, and so this visit is going ahead.

As far as the rough edges in the line of credit are concerned, let me say two things. We find now we had a period when there was a lot of discussions going on between the two Governments about the manner in which the line of credit had to be actually utilized. I believe that we now have a much clearer understanding of how to make fast progress. In fact the flagging off of the locomotives - and if you have been to Dhaka recently you would have seen the presence of Indian double-decker buses on the roads - I think is demonstrative of the fact that we are now making very rapid progress on the actual signing of contracts under the LoC.

You would also recall that from the original one-billion-dollar line of credit, 200 million was decided to be delinked and made into a grant. Of that

200 million, the first tranche of 50 million dollars was actually handed over when the External Affairs Minister visited Dhaka a few days ago. So I think we have made a very steady and very rapid progress on that. We hope to get another tranche of that once the Supplementaries in the current budget are finalized. So I think we will make very rapid progress. Certainly if you look at the areas in which the LoC is being used, these are for transport, for connectivity and those kinds of issues where I think there is now a better understanding of our procedures and their procedures and how to actually undertake.

We have, as I mentioned in one of my earlier briefings, created a separate body within this Ministry, which is in fact in this building, called our Development Partnership Administration, and they have a separate group of people who are now concentrating on the lines of credit, their utilization in a more centralized fashion. So I think we will make very rapid progress. On their side also now they understand our procedures and the way in which contracts have to be finalized.

Q: Sir, you said that this visit is not designed to engage in political negotiations. Apart from ceremonials, what substantive outcome can we expect from this visit?

Foreign Secretary: When I was saying it was not designed, obviously the visit of as high an authority as our President, who is the highest authority in our country, is concerned, the symbolism of it is first of all the political importance that we attach to this relationship. Rashtrapatiji has himself in his earlier capacities has been to Bangladesh before, and we know that we have a large number of negotiations still to be concluded. What I meant was that the visit itself will not see any negotiations, but clearly the political symbolism, the determination of our Government to build firm bridges with the people of Bangladesh, with the Government of Bangladesh will be underlined. And we believe this will have an important effect on the overall bilateral relationship.

Q: There were many proposals from big industrial houses like Tatas for heavy investments, so do you think those proposals will be revived again taking advantage of the visit?

Foreign Secretary: I would not like to comment on the business plans of individual business houses. What we have been told by the Indian

trade and industry in our engagement with them is that they continue to see Bangladesh as a very very important partner, and they would certainly like to take forward plans for investment, for trade and for joint ventures. There are requirements of course of energy, of understanding their investment policies better, and understanding the market access which has now become virtually a non-issue after all the liberalizations. So we would certainly encourage Indian business houses, Indian industry and Indian trade to engage much more actively with Bangladesh. I will ask my colleague, if he would like to add something on this.

Joint Secretary (BSM)(Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla): There is a significant increase in outward investments from India, and there is also talk of Special Economic Zones which are being set up along the India-Bangladesh border to facilitate more such investments. And there have been some significant big investments from India including Bharti Airtel and very large investments in the readymade garments sector. All of this seems to be set to expand exponentially given the market access that the Foreign Secretary spoke about and given Bangladesh's own access to international markets through GSP and other benefits. So I think there is a distinct possibility of our being able to increase the outward flow of investments towards Bangladesh. And the sense we have got from the Bangladesh Government is that they would do what it takes to attract Indian investments and give them a climate conducive to their commercial success.

Foreign Secretary: I would just add one thing to it and that is the number of business partners who have engaged with us in MEA, the Indian industry and so on, are also aware that Bangladesh itself is a fast-growing economy. They have recorded something like six per cent consistently. It is a large market, 150 million, with a very growing middle class. So Bangladesh itself, apart from the export opportunities or the opportunities of access to India, presents a number of opportunities.

Joint Secretary (BSM): If I can add just one thing, just in terms of figures, in the last six months or so there were 38 Indian investments registered with the Board of Investments in Bangladesh for about 183 million dollars. Major Indian companies such as Bharti Airtel, I have already mentioned that, TATA Motors, Sun Pharma, Asian Paints, Marico, Godrej, Venky's Hatcheries, Parle Products, Forbes, Marshall etc., lots of companies

have really actually invested there in the recent past. And of course there are also plans for companies such as CEAT, which is the tyre manufacturer, to invest a very significant amount. This is all in the pipeline it seems. Also manufacture of commercial vehicles, two-wheelers, etc., are in the pipeline. Aditya Birla Group's Ultratech Cement and BFRL, which has signed a joint venture for 20 million dollars for garment manufacturing - this is just a sense of Indian investments that are going in now.

And of course Bangladesh investments in India are also significantly set to increase because we have removed some of the hurdles and roadblocks that were there earlier. And of course now FIPB clearance is required which is much faster. And I think 100 per cent FDI is going to be allowed in a number of sectors through the automatic route. And a number of Bangladesh companies Pran Agro Foods etc., have already applied to FIPB for clearances, and we expect to see Bangladesh investments in India as well. So two-way flow of trade and investments is very encouraging.

Q: Mr. Foreign Secretary, the exploration of oil and gas in the offshore is common between the countries. Is there any strategy by India in dealing with this joint venture, especially at the time of rising of the extremism in the region?

Foreign Secretary: I do not know whether oil and gas has anything to do with extremism, but I think your question is a very important one. I think the potential for hydrocarbons both in Bangladesh and offshore is certainly quite significant. We have our oil companies who would be interested in joining in the international bidding, which the Bangladesh would be engaged in on its offshore blocks in particular. Certainly we would want to participate in that very actively.

There are also some blocks which both from our perspective and Bangladesh perspective straddle a maritime boundary line which has not been finally settled. We are hopeful that the arbitration process, which is on in regard to that maritime boundary line, once it is concluded in about a year should be able to open up new blocks for exploration. But certainly we are working with Bangladesh in the power sector in general. We are working with them to set up a 1300 MW coal-based power plant in Khulna, and we hope to conclude that before too long.

Similarly the potential for gas is certainly something which we will keep in mind. We are aware that in Tripura, on the eastern side, we have had some successes in gas exploration. Certainly there is potential in Bangladesh. But, as I said, the offshore blocks is where there is a lot of international interest.

Q: The practical roadblock between India and Bangladesh is the illegal immigration, and sometimes it echoed in Indian Parliament also. The short point I am trying to make is whether we have any space or scope in Indira-Mujib pact of 1971 so that we can have free visa regime between India and Bangladesh like India and Nepal. Are there any chances in the near future for the relationship to come to this extent?

Foreign Secretary: Let me just say on the subject of illegal immigration that this is an issue which has been discussed between us as Governments for many years now. We have developed institutional mechanisms to deal with that, particularly those in the Home Ministry and in the relationship between the BSF and the Border Guard of Bangladesh. There are mechanisms worked out to deal with the matter of illegal immigration.

As regards travel between the two countries, we have just signed, as I said, revised travel arrangements, a new system to make issue of visas easier particularly for categories like those who want to come for medical treatment, those who want to come for business, students, and people like that. So I think that is the direction in which we are heading, to make visas a lot easier for legitimate travel.

Q: Sir, I wanted to ask you about the land boundary agreement. Have discussions begun with political parties on this agreement on which legislation is to be introduced in Parliament? And who are the four MPs accompanying the President?

Foreign Secretary: The discussions on the land boundary have in fact been going on for some months now. We in MEA have done an outreach to many of the political parties, individual Members of Parliament, and others to discuss the land boundary agreement and explain it in its full ramifications. We are hopeful that in this current session, we do not have a date yet, we will be able to introduce it and get the support of all those whom we have briefed.

I have four names of Members of Rajya Sabha with me. They are: Shri Sitaram Yechury, Dr. Chandan Mitra, Shri Mukul Roy and Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita. They are the four MPs accompanying the President. The Minister of State for Railways, Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, is the Minister accompanying the President.

Official Spokesperson: I understand there are no further questions on this. So, Foreign Secretary will take a couple of questions.

Foreign Secretary: I would like to ask whether the Press Secretary to the President would like to say something on this.

Press Secretary to the President (Shri Venu Rajamony): The Foreign Secretary has given a very comprehensive briefing. On behalf of the President let me just say that the Hon. President is extremely excited and keenly looking forward to this visit not just because it is his first visit or because it is Bangladesh, but also because it is our immediate neighbourhood and one of the most important countries to India.

Bangladesh is a country with which he has had a long association. He virtually knows all the important leaders in Bangladesh, and we are told that when he arrives at the airport almost all of them would be there to greet him in the ceremonial reception. Since he assumed office he has also had a large number of Ministers and senior officials of the Bangladesh Government come and call on him. Also Begum Khaleda Zia the opposition leader as well as Gen. Ershad had also come and called on him.

So, he looks forward to this opportunity to, as Foreign Secretary said, reiterate the importance that Bangladesh has for India and to try and take the relationship forward through intensive interaction with the entire spectrum of leadership in Bangladesh.

Question: Sir, David Cameron was here quite a few days ago. While he was here he said he would help out India as far as Westland was concerned. Now he has gone back. Has the MEA got any documents or any form of help from the British Government on Westland so far? Also, a few days ago Vijay Singh, who was then Defence Secretary, has said on record that top members of the British High Commission came to meet him a few years ago when this deal was about to be done, and they

really pushed very hard for it. He has said on record that these top officials were extra conscious about the Westland deal. Now that we know that it could be a dubious deal, is there any move to check with the British High Commission why they were extra conscious?

Foreign Secretary: Let me say that I do not have information as of today. What I do know is that a team had gone to Italy, and the procedure was that they would first finish their examination in Italy. What the British had said earlier to us was that they would follow on after that investigation.

As regards the comments of Shri Vijay Singh, I am not familiar with the context in which these were made. But anyone who has dealt with High Commissions and Embassies around the world knows that officials do promote the interests of their country and their individual companies on a regular basis. That is fairly normal.

Q: Can you provide us an update on the situation in Maldives? What is this deal which everybody has been talking about which we seem to have struck with their Government for Mr. Nasheed's walking out from the High Commission?

Foreign Secretary: What we had done is to go there and engage with the Government of the Maldives, with the former President, and all the stakeholders in that country. Through all these discussions, we believe we have created some kind of a window of opportunity for what we had earlier mentioned as our main objective, which is a free, fair and inclusive election in the Maldives. But there are legal processes; there are political issues and so on. But this window of opportunity which has been created for solving those problems is not necessarily a very big one. But it is there and we hope it will be taken by all concerned.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event.

(Concluded)



147. President Pranab Mukherjee's interview to *The Independent* on the eve of his State visit to Bangladesh.

New Delhi, March 3, 2013.

Q 1. Ahead of assuming the highest office of the Rashtrapati Bhavan - Pranab Mukherjee was regarded as a pioneer in promoting Bangladesh-India relations for decades. How you want to describe your current role in regard to the bilateral relations as the Indian President?

Answer: As you know, this is my first overseas visit after taking over as President. Over the years, my association with Bangladesh has become deeper. The cause of promoting closer and deeper ties between the peoples of the two countries has always been very dear to my heart.

India is fully committed to developing the best possible relationship with Bangladesh. If you reflect on many of the initiatives that have been taken in the last few years, and which are in the pipeline, you will realize that we have made progress on issues that have eluded solution for decades.

Moreover, we have broken fresh ground in areas such as trade, power, people to people exchanges and security cooperation. There is certainly much more that can and should be done. We are committed to it.

Q 2. You are aware that your installation at the Rashtrapati Bhavan as the first Bengali President of India was widely celebrated in Bangladesh also. What message you want to deliver for the people of Bangladesh from the highest office of your country?

Answer: I wish to thank all those who sent me congratulatory messages on my election as President. I have great respect for the people of Bangladesh and their sense of patriotism, courage and independence. Above all, they have shown their belief in democracy and participative politics.

We have recently seen a reawakening of the youth who recall the extraordinary sacrifices that led to the birth of the Nation.

The youth of this country will determine its future.

I wish the people of Bangladesh well in the strengthening of their democracy, maintaining peace and stability and upholding the rule of

law and human rights. With these fundamentals in place; the dynamic growth of the economy should help create a real 'Sonar Bangla'.

Q 3. The People of India stood by Bangladesh at the time of its most crucial need during its 1971 Liberation War. Bangladesh is set to acknowledge formally your personal role in promoting the cause of Bengalis as a relatively young politician at that time. Could I please ask you to recall your memories of that time for new generation?

Answer: I was already in active politics at that time, and a Member of the Rajya Sabha. At a personal level I remember the events leading to the Liberation of Bangladesh. I distinctly remember the profound impact events in the then East Bengal had on us in India, and particularly in West Bengal and other states of India bordering East Bengal.

We did whatever we could to support the refugees, provide them food and shelter, and create awareness in the world about the terrible atrocities being committed against the people of what is today Bangladesh. That our contribution is remembered today is really a matter of great satisfaction.

Q 4. As one of the senior most politicians of the South Asia region, you witnessed several critical or crucial junctures of history having impacts on bilateral or multilateral ties among the neighbouring nations. What you think about the prospect of regional integrity in the near future?

Answer: The compelling logic of geography dictates that South Asian countries find new paradigms of cooperation to deal with the common challenges of development.

Bangladesh will realise its full potential when economic integration, geographical connectivity and more people to people contacts unleash the dynamism within. History tells us that this region was one of the great manufacturers and trading regions of an earlier era. By working together in a regional framework we can find common solutions which are a win-win for everybody and create a new era of prosperity.

Q 5. What issues you think need to be addressed to remove the barriers of integration by the countries in the region for mutual benefit? What you think the countries should do to remove the "trust deficit", which is widely believed to have stood on the way to regional integration.

Answer: I do not think there is a trust deficit. There is already a lot happening between India and Bangladesh. In general, it is certainly necessary to have more contacts at all levels.

There is no other way but dialogue to build a durable and mutually beneficial relationship, especially among neighbours who are as close to each other as India and Bangladesh.

While our borders are a sovereign reality, the attempt should be to make them enabling frontiers of cooperation and opportunity.

Individual countries in the South Asian region cannot hope to be secluded islands of growth and prosperity while others continue to grapple with challenges like terrorism and extremism, poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, environmental degradation or poor infrastructure.

We should move towards a more enlightened and cooperative approach, and perhaps learn from the successes of other regional organizations.

Q 6. Being the biggest country of the region with its huge resources and fast expanding economy, what role could India play to meet expectations of its neighbours?

Answer: Being located in South Asia which is located between West Asia and East Asia and by virtue of being at the cross-roads of the Indian Ocean, India is aware of its responsibilities towards this region. We are willing to be a catalyst for development based on the principles of equality, partnership and mutual benefit.

India has experienced reasonable economic growth in the last twenty years. We can help by ensuring that the opportunities created by its growth and transformation are available to its immediate and wider neighbourhood.

We have already taken several steps in this direction, such as the opening of our market to our LDC neighbours, and we are ready to take more steps as best as we can. I have no doubt that India cannot prosper alone. Our destinies are inter-linked, and we have to grow and prosper together.

Q 7. Anything else what you want to tell Bangladesh media ahead of your planned and maiden Dhaka visit as the Indian Head of State.

Answer: I am eagerly looking forward to my visit. This is a special moment in my life, and a rare occurrence in the history of relations between our two countries. I do hope that my visit to Bangladesh will contribute to enhancing friendship and mutual understanding between us and help in realizing the full potential of our relations.



148. Speech of President Pranab Mukherjee accepting the Bangladesh “Liberation War Honour” and his speech at the Banquet hosted in his honour by the Bangladesh President.

Dhaka, March 4, 2013.

Your Excellency Mr. Mohammad Zillur Rahman,
President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh,
Your Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh,
Your Excellency Dr. Dipu Moni, Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Your Excellency Capt. A.B. Tajul Islam, Minister of State for Liberation War Affairs,
Distinguished Members of the Cabinet of the Government of Bangladesh,
Your Excellency Mr. Muhammad Musharraf Hussain Bhuiyan,
Cabinet Secretary,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for your warm words. I am delighted to be here and am grateful for the affection with which I have been received. This is my first State Visit abroad since I assumed the office of the President the Republic of India.

As I stand here tonight I am filled with memories of the events of 1971. I was 36 years old and a Member of Parliament when the people of

Bangladesh engaged themselves in their liberation struggle. Many of us were passionately concerned about the events that were unfolding then. 24-hour television channels did not exist in those days – and it was the Free Bangladesh Radio and All India Radio that gave us reports of the heroic struggle of our brothers and sisters in Bangladesh. These bulletins were keenly followed by us in India - as the minds and hearts of all Indians were with the people of Bangladesh. The plight of millions of homeless people crossing the border, seeking refuge in the neighbouring States of India stirred the hearts of our people as they felt the anguish of that hapless multitude. They came forward wholeheartedly to succour and any assistance they could provide to their brethren from Bangladesh in their hour of need. The images of the proud people of Bangladesh and their brave fight for justice and dignity were etched in every Indian's consciousness.

I recall that, on June 15, 1971, I had the privilege to initiate a discussion on the floor of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament, when I suggested that India should accord diplomatic recognition to the Government of Bangladesh in exile in Mujibnagar. My words are on the record in proceedings of Rajya Sabha. When a Member sought my suggestion on how to tackle the problem, I responded by saying: "I am talking of a political solution which means categorically recognising the sovereign democratic Government of Bangladesh. Political solution means giving material help to the democratic, sovereign Government of Bangladesh.....". I reminded the House of the many instances in world history when intervention on similar grounds had taken place in past.

We may recall that as early as 1949 Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India stated that "where freedom is menaced, or justice threatened or where aggression takes place, we cannot be and shall not be neutral."

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman recognized what had to be done and did not lose time in courageously taking the lead and achieving the cherished dream of independence for the proud people of Bangladesh.

Shrimati Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India without any hesitation translated the vision of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru into action by extending the support to the people of Bangladesh.

I feel humbled as I receive this prestigious award, the “Bangladesh Liberation War Honour” as I feel that my contribution was very modest.

As a Member of Indian Delegation in the 59th Conference of Inter Parliamentary Union in Paris (France) in 1971 from 2nd to 10th September, we took the opportunity of the presence of large number of Members of Parliaments of different countries to explain the situation in Bangladesh and urged them to prevail upon their Governments to speak out against the violation of human rights in Bangladesh. I also had the privilege of visiting the United Kingdom and the then Federal Republic of Germany as a Member of the Goodwill Parliamentary Delegation in the same visit. I was mandated to brief the Members of the Parliaments and to the leaders of those countries about the situation. Late Shri H.D. Malviya, former Member of Parliament and activist of the World Peace Council had accompanied me in this mission. Later I was given the responsibility of visiting the refugee camps in the neighbouring States of India – including Tripura, Assam and Meghalaya and coordinating with the local Governments on making them functional and comfortable.

As I recall those days, I cannot help the feeling that my effort was almost peripheral compared to the enormous responsibilities shouldered by many others during the struggle – not only in Bangladesh but also in India. Therefore, I accept this distinction conferred on me with the greatest humility. A few lines from a poem written by Annadashankar at that time will epitomise the sentiments we had about the liberation struggle of Bangladesh. The author wrote and I am quoting in Bengali:

* * * *

Your Excellency, I would like to thank you and the Government of Bangladesh for your gracious gesture in conferring on me the Bangladesh Liberation War Honour. I thank you for remembering, in this manner, the contribution of the Indian brothers and sisters who were by your side, who stood shoulder to shoulder with you and even sacrificed their lives for your liberation. The number of proud Indian citizens that have been honoured and accorded your hospitality in the last year is a tribute to our close friendship. I thank you on their behalf and on behalf of India.

Today, I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the innocent men, women and children who gave their lives for the freedom of the future

generations - whose memory is cast in stone at the Savar Memorial and the Shaheed Minar. They showed us how even the weakest can triumph when the cause is righteous. Your Government has redeemed its pledge with history. Today, the children of the mukti joddhas are proud in the knowledge that the blood of their forefathers was not spilled in vain. It is with pride that Bangladesh engages in the task of building a modern, progressive and prosperous nation. As in 1971, so in 2013, the people of India stand beside the people of Bangladesh. We will walk with you as equal partners, shoulder to shoulder, arm in arm. We are both inheritors of an undivided civilizational legacy. It is no wonder that India and her people share a special connection with Bangladesh. We have an abiding interest in the all-round development of Bangladesh. However, the full potential of our cooperation is yet to be tapped. My discussions during this visit have been extremely rewarding. Our Governments have established a comprehensive framework for cooperation. Our endeavour will be to see how our bilateral cooperation can bring sustained benefits to our people and improve the quality of their lives. This will be the litmus test of the success of our relationship.

Excellency, ladies and gentlemen,

We, in India are happy to see the tremendous strides made by Bangladesh. The impressive and path-breaking manner in which Bangladesh has faced the challenges of eradication of poverty is worthy of emulation. I pay tribute to the people of Bangladesh, its farmers, entrepreneurs, doctors, teachers, scientists and many others who represent the creative genius of its people.

Excellency, I, personally, have a deep attachment with this land. My wife has family roots here, as she spent a very early and happy part of her childhood here. I am touched by your warm gesture. I see in this award, a strong message of enduring friendship and brotherhood between India and Bangladesh. I fully reciprocate this sentiment as I accept this honour bestowed on me with the deepest gratitude.

With these words, once again I thank Your Excellency President Zillur Rahman, Her Excellency, the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the people of Bangladesh who have received me and my wife and members of my delegation with a warmth and affection that has touched us deeply.

We sincerely wish to see India-Bangladesh bilateral relations prosper in all spheres for the progress and prosperity of both our peoples.

Jai Hind

Joy Bangla.



* In a historic recognition Bangladesh awards to its 'foreign friends' who played a crucial role for her independence 42 years ago. In the seventh and last phase of recognition, the country later in the year in October honoured more than 60 foreign dignitaries and organisations, including 44 from India. The process began on July 25, 2011. In all a total of 338 foreign nationals and organisations, mostly from India, were felicitated for supporting the nation's liberation war against Pakistan. The former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was the first among prominent foreign friends who was given posthumously the highest state honour — Bangladesh Freedom Honour. V.K. Krishna Menon was one of the prominent recipients of the 'Bangladesh Liberation War Honour' for his contribution to the country's independence as the Defence Minister of India. The State accolades were given in two categories — 'Bangladesh Liberation War Honour' and 'Friends of Liberation War Honour. These friends extended all possible help to Bangladesh refugees and freedom fighters providing them food, humanitarian relief, medical facilities, military training, access to global media, generation of public opinion and mobilisation of financial assistance. Ms. Hasina sought global support to accomplish the war crimes trial, to try those who had perpetrated crimes against humanity as cohorts of the Pakistani Army. The prominent Indian nationals who received "Friends of Liberation War Honour" in the concluding phase were, among others, Air Vice Marshal Swaroop Krishna Kaul, Maj. Gen. Lachhman Singh Lehl, film actor Waheeda Rehman, Zainal Abedin, Biswajit R. Chatterjee, Gouri Ghosh, Shakti Chattapadhaya, Pannalal Dasgupta, Shaheed Capt. Manmohan Sagor Duggal, Asghar Ali, Snehangshu Kanta Acharyya, Somnath Hore, Maulana Syed Asad Madni, Suchitra Mitra, Kulwant Singh Pannu, Kishore Parekh, Subhash Mukhopadhaya, Samar Sen, Shaheed Subedar Mailkiat Singh, Sukhdev Singh Sanhu and Tapishwar Narain Raina. One of the award recipients, Swaroop Krishna Kaul, a retired Indian Air Chief Marshal, led a fleet of aircraft which bombed the Government House in Dhaka on December 15, 1971, where Pakistani General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi was holding a meeting with his officials. The surprise attack played an important role leading to the historic surrender of the Pakistani forces to the India-Bangladesh Joint Command on December 16, 1971.

149. Convocation Address and Acceptance Speech of President Pranab Mukherjee at the ceremony conferring the Doctor of Law *Honoris Causa* on him by the University of Dhaka. Dhaka, March 4, 2013.

1. I am delighted to be here today in your midst at this historic venue. You have given me an extraordinary welcome. I am overwhelmed by the love and affection you have showered on me, and by this magnificent reception.
2. Bangladesh is the first country that I am visiting as President of India. The last visit by an Indian President to Bangladesh was almost forty years ago by President V.V. Giri in 1974.
3. For me personally, this is an emotional journey. I have my roots in the soil of Bengal, and have imbibed its language, traditions and culture. My wife was born in Narail and started her education here. I have grown up reading the compositions of the same poets as you, listening to the same songs which both our people love and walked along the banks of the same rivers which inspire the songs that make us all similarly wistful. When I was a child I never dreamt that one day I would come here as the President of my country.
4. I was overwhelmed by the spontaneous outpouring of support and goodwill that I received from the people of Bangladesh when I became the President of India. I received many congratulatory messages from people from all walks of life and all parts of this country. I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the people of Bangladesh for their good wishes on that day.
5. Today, I stand on hallowed ground at this great University of Dhaka which will soon celebrate its centenary. It has been a century of accomplishment and on this occasion of its convocation ceremony, I felicitate all the students of this University who have successfully graduated in their respective academic disciplines. Dhaka University is the oldest and largest public University in Bangladesh. Today, as we recall its old reputation

as the “Oxford of the East”, we note with pride its place among the top institutions of contemporary Asia. Students who graduate today are following in the footsteps of the great alumni who passed through these portals in the generations before you. The names of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Tajuddin Ahmed, Satyendranath Bose, R.C. Majumdar, Humayun Ahmed, Buddhadeb Basu and Shamsur Rahman come to mind. They include many of the brightest minds of the last century – who distinguished themselves through their academic achievements.

6. No one who comes here can forget how uniquely this University is identified with your nationhood. The halls of this great institution were the crucible and the *Karma bhoomi* of the creation of Bangladesh. Numberless architects of the Liberation War sacrificed their lives in this campus. And before them there were the pioneers. Who can forget the day of February 21, 1952 when the students of Dhaka University defied the banning of public rallies by the then Government? The sacrifices made by the martyrs of the language movement have now been recognized by the United Nations, which has declared February 21 as the “International Mother Language Day”.
7. It was again the students of Dhaka University who heroically resisted the brutal attack on the night of March 25, 1971 that killed more than three hundred of their colleagues, faculty members and intelligentsia. They along with many others had been a bulwark against the intolerance and hatred which had descended on this land – and who, in the years after Liberation, took forward the socio-political transformation of the country.
8. Today, when Bangladesh is free and liberated and is happily engaged in its own development, the sacrifices of its martyrs are vindicated. It is because of them that the youth of Bangladesh are today able to call this land their own. Young men and women like you are the engine of socio-economic development of our region. The future of Bangladesh is in your hands. You should know that you have a past which is steeped in glory, and a future that is full of promise. I have been deeply impressed by the

maturity, awareness and involvement of the youth of Bangladesh in the task of nation building. It is a labour of love - that is how the Father of this nation – Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman described his inspiration: “As a man, what concerns mankind concerns me. As a Bengalee I am deeply involved in all that concerns Bengalees. This abiding involvement is born and nourished by love, enduring love, which gives meaning to my politics and to my very being.”

9. It is this extraordinary spirit of humanity and confidence that has been instrumental in the advancement of Bangladesh by leaps and bounds. Bangladesh has emerged as one of the fastest growing economies in South Asia. This is laudable. I would compliment the government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the people of Bangladesh for their achievements in all aspects of human development. In many social indicators, Bangladesh has acquitted itself in an exemplary manner. It is seen that the literacy rate amongst youth in Bangladesh - in the age bracket of 15 to 24 years – is now 77 percent while life expectancy at birth is now about 69 years. You have made good progress and set new benchmarks in the amelioration of poverty, eradication of hunger and universalization of education. The school text book programme of Bangladesh is known to be one of the largest in the world – and the gross enrollment ratio at the secondary school level is now about 51 percent. While the poverty ratio in Bangladesh is about 31 percent, you have world class achievements on which the edifice of a prosperous and developed Bangladesh will be built. I am sure that you, the youth of Bangladesh, will carry forward this great task with dedication.
10. If, today, Bangladesh has embraced democracy, it is largely due to the values and principles which its people held dear when they fought for their independence in 1971. You have been steadfast. You, better than anyone else, know that democracy means the ability to respect differences and allow the will of the people to prevail for the common good. You know that it means respect for the rule of law and building of strong institutions along with free speech and a vibrant media. I am confident that

democratic traditions in Bangladesh will grow stronger with time and that you will preserve democracy with your constant vigil.

11. India and Bangladesh are interlinked like no other nations on earth. Our destinies are interwoven just like our history and our geography. Within our resources, India remains committed to supporting the comprehensive development of Bangladesh and the aspirations of its people. We believe that India and Bangladesh must develop and grow together, ensuring that our growth provides more opportunities to both our peoples. We both face common challenges and, as Her Excellency, Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina has said, we have the same enemy – poverty. We need to work together to maximize the potential of our economic cooperation. Bangladesh is uniquely placed to exploit its natural and human resources to emerge as a fast growing, modern economy. Apart from the potential of its resources on land and sea, the geographical location of Bangladesh is an advantage that must be fully explored and exploited. Bangladesh lies at the cross-roads of South and South-East Asia. The idea of South Asian regional cooperation was born in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has once again taken the leadership in moving towards sub-regional cooperation. This will lead to practical results in terms of better water management, more electricity and grid connectivity, more trade and more cross-country movement of goods and people. India and Bangladesh can lead the way towards greater integration within our region and beyond in South East Asia.
12. Bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh have received a major boost following the visit of Her Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India in January 2010 and our Prime Minister's visit to Bangladesh in September 2011. We now have a "Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development" that lays down the roadmap for our work together in the years to come. I am happy to note that both countries have made considerable progress in the implementation of the far-reaching decisions taken during these historic Visits. I assure you that India remains committed to implementing the decisions that have been taken.

13. India and Bangladesh have vast opportunities to increase our bilateral trade and commerce. Government of India has taken the first step by removing quota and duty restrictions from all categories of imports from Bangladesh except twenty five tariff lines. Bangladesh now has duty-free access to our large market. I invite Bangladesh's industry to make full use of this opportunity. We are working with the Government of Bangladesh to remove the remaining non-tariff barriers, open more border haats and harmonise our respective standards.
14. The recently signed Revised Travel Arrangements between India and Bangladesh will lead to the liberalisation of visa arrangements between our countries. These will particularly help businessmen, students, journalists, tourists and those travelling for medical treatment. Greater people-to-people contacts and exchanges are the best way to bring our two countries even closer together.
15. I am happy with the progress made in the implementation of the Line of Credit extended by my Government to the Government of Bangladesh. Several development projects, especially those pertaining to the railways sector, are now beginning to take off. I was happy to see double decker buses purchased under the Line of Credit plying on the roads. Many new Indian locomotives and wagons will soon be on the rail lines of Bangladesh. We have offered a grant of 200 million US Dollars to Bangladesh for utilization in projects of priority to Bangladesh. The first tranche - of 50 million US Dollars of this grant - was handed over a few weeks ago.
16. Our countries have also made considerable progress in our co-operation in the power sector. The power grids of our countries will, for the first time in our post-independence history, be connected by the middle of this year. This will allow the flow of 500 MW of power from India to Bangladesh. The India-Bangladesh Friendship Power Company is setting up an ultra-modern super thermal 1320 MW power station at Rampal near Mongla to meet the energy needs of Bangladesh.

17. My Government proposes to introduce a Constitutional Amendment Bill in Parliament to give effect to the provisions of the Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh and its 2011 Protocol. We are committed to working closely with Bangladesh to avoid any untoward incidents on our border. We can together make it a gateway of peace and mutually beneficial cooperation.
18. The sharing of the waters of our common rivers is a high priority for us. We have successfully forged agreements in the past and are hopeful of arriving at an early accord on the sharing of the Teesta waters.
19. Meanwhile, there are areas where we must substantially increase our cooperation, such as in information technology, skill development, agricultural research, environment protection, climate change, and in protecting the Sunderbans and harnessing energies, both traditional as well as new and renewable sources of energy.
20. We must invest more in the field of education. There must be more exchanges of students, faculty, research scholars and academics between us. Government of India offers a large number of scholarships for students and professionals from Bangladesh. Many more students from Bangladesh are coming to India at their own cost to pursue higher studies. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations has established a Tagore Chair and a Hindi Chair at Dhaka University. These have contributed to greater academic exchanges between India and Bangladesh.
21. I was delighted to meet a 100-strong youth delegation, the first ever from Bangladesh, last year. Many of the students were from the Dhaka University. I am happy to note that a similar delegation will again visit India this year.
22. There are few countries in the world where music, poetry, art and drama are as deeply ingrained in a nation's conscience as in Bangladesh. There is a lot that we, in India, can learn from you. I have the pleasure to announce that the Visva Bharati University at Santi Niketan will provide land within its campus to Bangladesh

for the construction of 'Bangladesh Bhaban'. This will serve as a focal point for research and documentation under the 'Bangladesh Studies Programme' of Visva Bharati.

23. Looking at you, I am convinced that the future of Bangladesh is bright. I wish you all every success in making the dream of Sonar Bangla a reality. India will stand by your side as you shape the destiny of your country.
24. With these words, I accept, with utmost humility, the award of the Doctor of Laws *Honoris Causa* from Dhaka University.
25. I once again thank the Dhaka University for inviting me to be among you all today. I take this opportunity of conveying, through you, the greetings of the people of India to the friendly people of Bangladesh.

Long live India-Bangladesh friendship.

Thank You



150. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary in Dhaka on the ongoing State Visit of President to Bangladesh.

Dhaka, March 4, 2013.

Press Secretary to President (Shri Venu Rajamony): Good evening friends and apologies for the delay. There was a one-to-one between the Hon'ble President and Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina which we had to wait for it to finish before we came over.

As all of you know, today the most important meeting was the meeting between the Hon'ble President and the Hon'ble Prime Minister. Hon'ble Foreign Minister Dipu Moni and Hon'ble Finance Minister Muhith also called on the Hon'ble President. That was preceded by the President going to the War Memorial where he placed a wreath. The Foreign Secretary will make his initial statement and then we shall continue with the press briefing.

Foreign Secretary (Shri Ranjan Mathai): Thank you, Venu. Thank you all for joining this press briefing. I have just rushed here from the last meeting and I was told that all of you are in fact going to be having a dinner shortly. I am happy to join you in filing your stories before you go for dinner. Mr. Rajamony has been good enough to tell you about a couple of the meetings which took place today. I will start with the statement and then we will take questions.

To my right is Mr. Deepak Mittal, Director in the BSM Division, which is Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Myanmar Division, of the Ministry of External Affairs. Of course Venu is an old friend of all of yours, so I do not have to introduce him.

As you all know Rashtrapatiji arrived earlier today on his first visit to a foreign country and that was in Bangladesh, where he was accorded a ceremonial welcome. He visited the National Martyr Memorial at Savar where he laid a wreath in honour of the liberation of Bangladesh and also planted a mango sapling over there. While over there, he also looked at a sapling which had been planted in 1985 by the former Prime Minister of India Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi.

As Mr. Rajamony mentioned, Rashtrapatiji has just concluded his meeting with the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. He met her first in a delegation-level discussion which was followed by a restricted meeting limited to only the Hon'ble President and the Hon'ble Prime Minister. Subsequently, a cultural function and a dinner is being hosted by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in honour of Rashtrapatiji. The cultural function is going on even as we speak.

At these meetings, Rashtrapatiji was accompanied by the Minister of State for Railways Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, and four Members of Parliament – Shri Sitaram Yechury, Dr. Chandan Mitra, Shri Mukul Roy and Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita, and senior officials. Before the meeting with the Hon'ble Prime Minister, the Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Bangladesh Dr. Dipu Moni, and the Hon'ble Finance Minister Dr. M.A. Muhith also called on Rashtrapatiji.

In these talks Rashtrapatiji thanked the Government of Bangladesh for the warm welcome extended to him since his arrival. He expressed appreciation for the recognition that the Government of Bangladesh has

accorded to the Indian people for their support to the movement for the liberation of Bangladesh. He reiterated the importance that India attaches to its overall relations with this country.

It was noted that bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh have undergone significant transformation over the past few years. This has been made possible by the vision of mutually beneficial and prosperous progress together which was provided by the leadership on both sides. The Hon'ble President also felicitated the Bangladesh Government on their significant achievements in economic growth and more importantly in achieving development goals particularly in the social sector and on human resource development.

To take you back to an issue of bilateral significance, the US\$ 800 million Line of Credit Agreement, which was signed in May 2010 during the visit of Rashtrapatiji in his capacity at that time as the External Affairs Minister, has seen steady implementation. Fourteen projects worth nearly US\$ 736 million out of 800 million have been approved. These include 11 projects valued at about US\$ 630 million in the railways sector for supply of locomotives, tank wagons, flat wagons and brake wagons. A freight train consisting of 20 tank wagons and a brake van and locomotives supplied from India is scheduled to be flagged off day after tomorrow by the Hon'ble President. The supply of buses is in an advanced stage with the delivery of 290 double-decker buses having been completed in November last year. I do not know if any of you saw the double-decker buses on the streets. The supply of 100 remaining single-decker buses is expected to be completed by the middle of 2013. Some of them are already plying on the Dhaka roads and other cities in Chittagong and Bogra.

As you are aware, in keeping with the commitment made by Rashtrapatiji during, when he was the Finance Minister, in May 2012, US\$ 200 million of the Line of Credit has been converted into grant, US\$ 50 million was handed over in February 2013 during the visit of the External Affairs Minister. The second installment of US\$ 50 million is expected to be released after the approval of supplementary grants for MEA by the Indian Parliament during March.

The President's visit is a State visit and on occasions such as State visits, negotiations on bilateral matters are not held. But as you are all

aware, Rashtrapatiji has long experience in having dealt with India-Bangladesh relations in his different capacities, as External Affairs Minister, as Defence Minister, as Finance Minister. As Hon'ble President, he conveyed the commitment of the Government of India to work towards the early ratification of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and the protocol which we concluded in 2011. In this context he noted that the Government was in the process of introducing a Constitution (Amendment) Bill in Parliament shortly.

Rashtrapatiji also conveyed to his interlocutors the Government of India's commitment to work towards early conclusion of an agreement on sharing of waters of the Teesta river based on fair and equitable basis that protects the interest of all stakeholders.

Noting that significant progress has been achieved in furthering relations in the areas of power, security - in security just recall that we signed an Extradition Agreement during the visit of the Hon'ble Home Minister here in January - trade and investment – if I can quote a figure, since 2012 while Bangladesh exports have not shown dramatic increase because of the jute factor – in the area of garments, Bangladesh exports have gone up by something like 65 per cent, garments and textiles put together. Also, border management, development cooperation, culture, human resource development, capacity building, the two sides agreed on the need for enhancing bilateral cooperation, including through restoration of connectivities that existed between the people of the two countries.

People-to-people relations have also been stressed by both Governments during our discussions today. The Revised Travel Arrangement has produced a visa regime which liberalises the visa system. Youth exchanges have been held. One hundred Bangladesh youth had come to India last year on an exchange visit. We are expecting another group in a few months' time.

Tomorrow Rashtrapatiji has a busy day. During the day he would visit the Dhaka University where he would receive an honorary Doctorate of Law at a formal convocation ceremony. I would request the Press Secretary to President to add to my remarks, to brief you on what is going to happen tomorrow.

Press Secretary to President: Thank you, Sir. I think I will just give you a few of the lighter elements of the interaction between the President

and the Prime Minister as well as the other Ministers and then we will go to the programme.

First of all the President said that he was extremely happy that Bangladesh was the first country he was visiting among all foreign countries after assuming office. He said that there were many visitors from Bangladesh after he assumed office and some of them told him of how Bangladeshi newspapers have been describing him as a 'son in law' of Bangladesh, and of how happy they are that he has become the President of India. And he said that really touched him. And he received a large number of congratulations letters, telephone calls and messages from a large cross-section of people in Bangladesh on assumption of office.

He was a little taken back when he first got the proposal that he was to be given an award for his contribution to the liberation of Bangladesh. But in particular he felt that there are many more Indians who have contributed much more than him and he was not very sure that he was worthy of that honour. However, he recognized an important fact that while Indian soldiers have fought for many foreign countries across the world in World War I and World War II, Bangladesh is one country which has recognized the contribution of Indian soldiers in a manner much better than any other country in an absolutely special and unique manner. So, he felt he had to come to Bangladesh. He also recollected that he said when he received news of this honour, he went back to the days of 1971 and it was like he was reliving the events of 1971. It was not just Indian soldiers or Indian political leaders, but lawyers, intellectuals, writers, the whole of India was involved in Bangladesh's liberation in a way. It was like something which touched the lives of Indian people. There were a large number of refugees who came. They were given shelter. There were family connections which were established between those who gave shelter and those who caught refuge etc.

The Hon'ble President remembered that there is a large number of bilateral visits which have taken place in recent times. The Minister of Power, the Home Minister, the Minorities, the Corporate Affairs Minister and EAM have been here recently and that reflects the depth and wide canvas of cooperation. He complimented the Hon'ble Prime Minister and Bangladesh for conceptualizing the regional cooperation and trilateral cooperation in particular India-Nepal-Bhutan cooperation and India. He

said that the credit goes to Bangladesh for being the first to think of this, and now the challenge is to put it into operation.

He complimented Bangladesh for its economic achievements in particular the fact that when there were a population of 7 crore they have to import food. But now there are a population of 16 crore and they are self-sufficient in food.

He said the mighty economies of the world including the Indian economy is suffering in many ways because of the 2008 financial crisis as well as the Euro crisis. But Bangladesh's economy has been consistently doing well. He conveyed the regards of the Hon'ble Prime Minister and said that the Hon'ble Prime Minister wanted him to assure that India stands by all its commitments to Bangladesh.

The last point that I would just mentioned is that the Hon'ble President also talked about India-Bangladesh relations being an essential element in India's Look East Policy, and that the enhancing connectivity between the sub-region, between Bangladesh would contribute in an enormous manner to the growth and prosperity of the region as a whole.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister said that honouring the Hon'ble President is honouring Bangladesh itself, Bangladeshi's itself. It may be late but the Bangladesh people and the Government strongly feel that those who supported Bangladesh in its liberation struggle should be encouraged. The Bangladesh Prime Minister as well as the other Ministers - Hon'ble Finance Minister and the Hon'ble Foreign Minister – emphasize the importance of improving connectivity. The Bangladesh Prime Minister has said that the common challenge which India and Bangladesh raise, which the region raises, is poverty, and this needs to be addressed jointly by both the countries.

She also said that the people of India sacrificed a lot for the liberation of Bangladesh. This is something which Bangladesh cannot forget and the new generation of Bangladesh should know what happened in 1971 and who stood by Bangladesh and who supported to Bangladesh.

The programme we could go into later after you ask your questions.

Q: Mr. Foreign Secretary, what is the reason why Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia has cancelled her meeting with the President, and what do you have to say to that? Your comments!

Foreign Secretary: Let me just say that we have fixed a time for Begum Khaleda Zia to call on our President well in advance, and this had been in our programme for some time. The President was in fact looking forward to meeting Begum Khaleda Zia.

As you would recall, our External Affairs Minister had met Begum Khaleda Zia on the 17th of February. Begum Khaleda Zia was also in India at the end of October, early November, and on that occasion she had called on Rashtrapati ji at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. In his earlier capacity both as the External Affairs Minister and as Finance Minister, during his visits to Bangladesh Shri Pranab Mukherjee had actually met Dr. Khaleda Zia. The programme was accepted and, as I said, we were looking forward to this meeting. The reason given in an e-mail to the High Commissioner of India was that there is a *hartal* between 3rd and 5th of March, and experience shows that such *hartals* often turn violent thereby causing security and safety concerns on the movement of people. And it is precisely on these concerns that the proposed timetable for the meeting with President would not be suitable. That is what we have been told. I do not wish to comment further on that.

Q: What progress has been made on Teesta because there is a lot of speculation in the media that - there is a Trinamool Congress in the Delegation of the President – there is a softening of stand of Mamata Banerjee on Teesta and perhaps India is going to move faster on Teesta Agreement?

Foreign Secretary: Let me just say that this visit, as I said in Delhi before we set out, is not designed for negotiations on specific issues. What the Hon. President conveyed to his Bangladesh interlocutors was that the Government of India is committed to finding a fair and reasonable solution to the issue of the sharing of the waters of the Teesta between our two countries. You are aware, as everyone is aware, that in a federal system we have to have an agreement with all stakeholders including the State Government of Paschim Banga, West Bengal. That process will continue, and the President underlined the commitment of the Government to seek this kind of a solution as I said in as early a timeframe as is possible. But there was no specific negotiation on the agreement itself.

Q: Did the current political situation in Bangladesh come up during the talks?

Foreign Secretary: The current political situation, beyond what Venu has already told you, did not come up in the talks. The situation in our bilateral relationship was really the main focus of those talks.

Q: Has the President expressed concern about the current political situation? Since he has visited Dhaka so often, he has a very close relationship with the people here, is he concerned about it?

Foreign Secretary: I think he is concerned about the fact that India-Bangladesh relations are in a very good state, and that we seek the best of relations with the people of Bangladesh. I think to that extent we did have a discussion on the need for a broad-based relationship between our two countries. But in the context of the very specific internal situation, that was not discussed.

Press Secretary to President: If I could just add, we have been repeatedly saying that the President is extremely happy to be here, he has been looking forward to be here, and that itself is a statement in itself, and second thing you have been circulated copies of interviews which he had given to some of the Bangladesh media where there was a question on the political situation and there is an answer. That will also give you material on what you are seeking.

Foreign Secretary: There was I think a question which was put to him by the Bangladesh media which has been answered and that has been circulated.

Q: Sir, apart from ... how long was the restricted meeting? Secondly, could you give us a sense of delegation-level talks? What was the nature of the delegation? Were all other members interacting amongst themselves? What was the subject of that ... *(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: The restricted talks took a little over half an hour. When I say restricted, they were really restricted because I was not present. They were basically between the Prime Minister and the President. During the delegation-level talks, yes certainly there was a considerable degree of interaction. There was a recognition that our relationship is one which involves all parties, all stakeholders who have

an interest in the kind of issues which are under discussion between us. There was also considerable discussion on the historical background.

As I said, the discussion started with a recollection of India's role in the early years in 1971, in the Liberation Struggle, which had already started in this country. I think Venu has some anecdotes which he might be able to share with you from that period too. President certainly asked all the accompanying members of his delegation which included the Minister of State for Railways and four Members of Parliament, all of who are by the way Bengali speaking, to add to that conversation.

And I think the general sense was that there is an acceptance that the India-Bangladesh relationship is founded on a basic commonality of interest between our people, and that there is a nonpartisan understanding that these need to be taken forward. I think that is what I would take away from that delegation-level talks.

Of course we spoke about the specifics which come into our bilateral relations. As I said, President referred to the fact that we would be moving an Amendment Bill in Parliament for the Land Boundary Agreement, that he would be asking the Government to work towards finalizing the Teesta accord, that the lines of credit are now moving forward and this is very positive, and that on all relations whether it is cultural and all other areas of our relationship, this is not a relationship which is founded on a Government-to-Government basis. It really involves the people of both countries.

Press Secretary to President: If I can just add to what the Foreign Secretary has already mentioned, first of all I would say that from what happened in the delegation-level talks it was very evident that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was very happy that there was a Parliamentary delegation, there was a Minister there, there were representatives of various parties. The President underlined the fact that though they come from different parties, almost all of them are Bengali-speaking and are very familiar with Bangladesh and India-Bangladesh relations. And Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina effectively said that we need the support of the whole Parliament for the progress of India-Bangladesh relations.

Q: Just two Supplementaries, Sir. Did the four MPs accompanying Hon. President speak at all during the discussion? If so, what was their version, perspective?

Foreign Secretary: I am sure you will have an opportunity to meet them tomorrow and you will get their version. But they did certainly participate very actively in the discussion with Sheikh Hasina and also they were all present during the meeting with the Foreign Minister and with the Finance Minister. They are going to be present in the meetings tomorrow, which I thought he was going to brief you about, and I hope he still will. Yes, they participated very actively and the sense they conveyed, if I can put it this way, is that what the Hon. President said is that there is a general consensus in India that the relationship between our two countries is very very important in Indian foreign policy, in the making of India's regional economic cooperation in the eastern part of India, also bringing in other countries, and in the entire Look East Policy. So, both from a domestic and a foreign policy point of view, the participation of members of all shades of political opinion in our Parliament is very important. I think this was underlined, and I think it came through quite strongly. As I said, the additional dimension which Dr. Rajamony mentioned, that they could all speak Bengali definitely added to the flavor of the occasion.

Press Secretary to President: Let me just add, it was not structured, it was not that each person was asked to speak, but it was an informal discussion wherein whoever wanted to contribute, contributed to the discussions. But please speak to the MPs themselves, they are the best people who can brief you on whatever they wanted to say or they wish to say.

Q: A meeting with the leader of the opposition is normally a part of the state visit. We do it in our country. After first agreeing to such a meeting it was cancelled. Would you call it a breach of diplomatic propriety?

Foreign Secretary: As I explained, we had arranged this meeting well in advance and we were looking forward to it because this is an interaction which we have always had. We had as recently as two weeks ago when the External Affairs Minister was here and called on the Leader of Opposition. Beyond that it was not for me to comment. This is an issue which I think the Spokesperson of Begum Khaleda would be in a better position to speak.

Q: Sir, specifically to the issue of the four MPs participating, did Dr. Chandan Mitra also mention about how as an opposition member team

visited areas earlier relating to land boundary issue and then prepared a report for his own party?

Foreign Secretary: I do not think this was mentioned during the discussions. It did not come up.

Q: Did he refer to anything about how his party is going to ...

Press Secretary to President: I think you should ask the Member of Parliament Dr. Chandan Mitra. Do not ask the Foreign Office to speak on what Dr. Mitra said.

Foreign Secretary: Let me just say that during the discussions there was a considerable amount of exchanges between the two sides, but this was not mentioned. Whether it came up in any other format, you could ask the Hon. Member of Parliament himself.

Q: Has there been any flavoured language?

Press Secretary to President: I was just about to mention that there was lot of discussions on the first Bengali PM I think much of which went over Foreign Secretary and my head. But please speak to Mr. Sitaram Yechury and you will get a flavor of what the discussions were.

Foreign Secretary: That is what I was trying to hint at. There was a free-flowing conversation about the first Bengali President and why we did not have a first Bengali Prime Minister. That was a light-hearted historical diversion, shall I call it?

Press Secretary to President: Which was equally participated in by both the sides.

Thank you.

(Concluded)



**151. Remarks by President of India during his visit to Kumudini*.
Dhaka, March 5, 2013.**

*(*The President spoke in Bengali. English transcript of his remarks is given below)*

Shri Rajiv Prasad Shaha, Managing Director, Kumudini Welfare Trust
Shrimati Shaha,

Miss Pratibha Mutsuddy, Director of Bharateshwari Home

Trustees and Staff Members of Kumudini Welfare Trust,

My dear students,

I am delighted to be here with you at Kumudini and the Bharateshwari Home for Girls. You have put up an extraordinary performance which combines beauty with elegance, discipline and physical fitness. I am truly impressed and overwhelmed by your talent and hard work.

Looking at all of you I can see that Bangladesh has a very bright future. Each of you will one day go forth into the outside world. The training and education that you are receiving here will equip you to become proud and productive citizens of your motherland. You will be the makers of a new Bangladesh. To everybody you are the representatives of the youth who aspire to see a beautiful future. Our greetings to you, the youth of Bangladesh. In the last speech of my visit to this wonderful country, I am quoting a few verses from a poem by Gurudev Rabindranath:

Where the world is without fear and the head is held high

Where knowledge is free

Where the world has not been broken up

By narrow domestic walls.....

Bangladesh has taken rapid strides in the field of education and women's empowerment. A growing number of girls are now attending school. I congratulate the Government of Bangladesh for taking far reaching initiatives in the field of education such as compulsory primary education, free education for girls up to class ten, stipends for female students and distribution of free text books.

Women's education is an essential pre-requisite for building a healthy and safe society. This however cannot be done by governments alone, and I am therefore glad that the Kumudini Trust has joined the national effort to impart quality education to girls in Bangladesh.

I take this opportunity to remember, with profound respect, Shri Ranada Prasad Shaha, one of the greatest philanthropists of this country. He and his family had dedicated themselves to the service of the suffering and the needy. One of Shri Ranada Prasad's priorities was to establish a hospital for the poor so that they, especially women, could receive free treatment. To spread female education, he established schools that were dedicated to girls, giving them a well - rounded education and moulding them into socially responsible women. It is sad that not only Shri Ranada Prasad Shaha but also his family suffered considerably in the days before the creation of Bangladesh. We respect them for their bravery and pay homage to their memory. It is a tribute to him that the Kumudini Trust and its affiliated bodies have grown from strength to strength, and have served the nation so well. The Kumudini hospital and medical college have been carrying out charitable work for the most needy and destitute. You are fortunate to be studying in an institution which symbolizes the highest values of selfless service.

As a small token of support of the Government of India for your efforts, I am happy to announce that we will fund the upgradation of the sewerage system of your Complex which, I understand, has been a long pending need. In addition, we will also fund the construction of an advanced waste water treatment plant system. I am happy to be informed that the project will significantly change the landscape of the Complex and that the land saved from the installation of the waste water treatment system will be gainfully used for agriculture and other productive purposes.

I recall that some of you had met me as part of a Youth Delegation that visited Delhi last year. Today, I am happy to be here to meet you and to see, for myself, this remarkable institution.

I am deeply impressed by what I have seen and have no doubt that you will be outstanding citizens of Bangladesh.

I wish each one of you the best of success and a bright future.



152. On board Media Interaction of President en route from Dhaka.

March 6, 2013.

Hon. President of India (Shri Pranab Mukherjee): First of all I hope you have enjoyed your stay there. I could not meet you there, but I hope our people and their people have taken care of you and you did not have to face any uncomfortable situation.

I have concluded my first visit abroad as President to friendly neighbour in Bangladesh. I am fully satisfied by my visit which was fruitful and productive. I was received with exceptional warmth and friendship, and wish to thank the Government of Bangladesh once again for the excellent arrangements they made.

I was touched by the gesture of the Government of Bangladesh to recognize my modest contribution to their Liberation War. As I said in my acceptance speech yesterday, the honour goes to India as a whole and the large number of Indians who actively supported the birth of Bangladesh.

My visit has served to reinforce the special importance that the Government and people of India attach to developing the best possible relations with an important and large neighbour like Bangladesh. We believe that a strong, stable and rapidly developing Bangladesh is in the interest of not only its people but in the interest of the entire region. I, therefore, assured the Government and people of Bangladesh that India will be a willing long-term development partner.

I underlined our commitment to resolving all outstanding issues in our bilateral relations. I was happy to see that the line of credit extended by India is being used effectively to enhance transport facilities and development projects in the country.

I am happy that Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Minister of State for Railways, and four hon'ble Members of Parliament - Shri Sitaram Yechury, Dr. Chandan Mitra, Shri Mukul Roy and Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita - from leading political parties in India could accompany me to meetings with Bangladesh leaders. Their presence is reflective of the broad-based support in India, cutting across party lines, to developing strong and friendly relations with Bangladesh.

I was impressed by the vibrancy of the people of Bangladesh. Like India, they have a large population of youth. They are committed to democracy, tolerance, an inclusive social order, free media, and building a modern and progressive state. They seek to consolidate the institutions of democracy and keep alive the spirit of their liberation struggle. We wish them well in this great endeavour.

It is important for us to enable better people-to-people exchanges which will benefit both countries. I made it clear that we wish to grow together with Bangladesh because our destinies are interlinked. Apart from bilateral cooperation, we are now preparing to expand our cooperation at the sub-regional level. This holds great promise for the security, growth and connectivity that can transform the entire region.

I had excellent discussions with the leadership of Bangladesh and also had the opportunity to meet a cross section of society. A democratic, secular and progressive Bangladesh is clearly in India's interest. In this context, we conveyed to all our interlocutors the need for an inclusive political process and the maintenance of communal peace and harmony. We are hopeful that internal political differences can be resolved through dialogue, and that the rights of all communities could be fully respected. I am returning with the hope and confidence that India and Bangladesh can together build a better future for our people and that our relations can serve as an example for the rest of South Asia.

Thank you

Q: ...(Inaudible)... unprecedented reception at Dhaka University. ...(Inaudible)...

Hon. President: Perhaps one thing is I am told but the facts are to be fully verified that in the history of the 92 years of the existence of Dhaka University, mine was the first all Bengali convocation speech. Earlier to me, Professor Amartya Sen delivered the convocation speech some years ago. But it was a mixture of English and Bengali. Mine was a prepared text of convocation address fully in Bengali language. And you know the commitment of the Dhaka University to furthering the cause of their language and culture. It is well-known. Secondly, as I mentioned umpteen number of times that in my life I have seen that I have received much more than I have given to others. That could be the difference.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Hon. President: These are essentially the internal political issues which are to be resolved by the political parties of the countries concerned. In a multiparty democratic system, there would be divergences of the view on issues. But at the same time the beauty of the multiparty democratic system is that it is resolved in the way which is acceptable to the participants.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Hon. President: We had the joint celebration of the 150th birth anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. The 100th year of Gitanjali was observed by Bangladesh artistes. Indian artistes also participated in the complex of the Silaidaha ...(Inaudible)... And what I saw there I am quite impressed. It has been developed into a beautiful tourist heritage centre. The articles used by Tagore are maintained very carefully. The place is neat and clean. Bangladesh Government and people of Bangladesh are maintaining it very well. Though I had very little time, I was running one hour late, but I fully enjoyed it.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Hon. President: I have already said in my statement that all outstanding issues will be resolved through dialogue.

Q: How did you feel during your visit to Narail?

Hon. President: It is exclusively personal, but I can share with you that it was the first time I was visiting my in-laws' house. And that too, I have married in 1957, more than half a century ago. But my visit to my in-laws' house is for the first time. And except one, whom I saw very young, I did not know anybody. I told him to introduce the others who are supposed to be my relatives.

Q: What did they gift you?

Hon. President: They treated me exactly the same way when a new bridegroom is received in the house, at this age of 78. Question: In Bengali it is called Dwiragaman.

Hon. President: Dwiragaman hoi nai, because the first time I did not go.

During the marriage, the groom goes for the first time. And when he goes second time, then it is called Dwiragaman, that is coming twice. In my case it was not even the first time.

Q: What about Jamai Shashti?

Hon. President: There is a system in Bengal that on that particular day they send some gifts to the bridegroom's house. Prime Minister Hasina was telling me that this year I shall have to think of sending some gift to you on that occasion. It was just a joke.

Q: Sir, the entire trip was good but there was some little bit pinch of salt in between because the Leader of Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia had cancelled her meeting with you at the last moment. What is your reaction about that?

Hon. President: I think Foreign Secretary has already briefed you on that.

Thank you

(Concluded)



153. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting on the meeting between the Ministers of Information and Broadcasting of India and Bangladesh.

New Delhi, April 11, 2013.

Minister of Information & Broadcasting, Shri Manish Tewari today met the Bangladesh Minister for Information & Broadcasting Mr. Hasanul Haq Inu and had extensive discussions on critical issues related to Information and Broadcasting Sector. During the discussions, both the Ministers agreed to consider a joint collaboration for production of a mega film depicting the "War of Liberation". In this context, it was agreed to work towards a roadmap to finalize the proposal shortly. In this context, the Information Minister of Bangladesh also requested that the Government of India could consider providing the names of the soldiers who had laid down their lives during the War of Liberation. He reiterated

that the Government of Bangladesh would like to recognize their contribution made during this historical event.

During the discussions, both the Ministers also agreed to explore the possibility of setting up of a Joint Working Group on the critical sectors of the Information and Broadcasting domain. The Working Group would provide a roadmap for future collaborations between the two countries. The Bangladesh Information Minister also requested the Minister for Information and Broadcasting to facilitate the downlinking of Bangladesh TV Channels through the private distribution network. Both Ministers also agreed to intensify the collaboration between Prasar Bharti and Bangladesh State Television in view of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two entities in 2011. The MoU had focused on mutual cooperation in the broadcast of television programmes between the two broadcasters. It was also mentioned that both countries could consider exchange of programmes and also explore the possibility of executive TV co-production. Both Shri Tewari and Shri Hasanul Haq Inu discussed the possibility of strengthening collaboration as far as training and capacity building was concerned between institutions of mutual interests.

During the discussions, both Ministers also agreed to facilitate the exchange of archival material between the two countries. In this context, Shri Tewari highlighted the major policy initiatives undertaken by the Ministry that had enabled the sector to grow exponentially. Specific reference was made to the initiatives undertaken by the Ministry to commemorate 100 years of Indian Cinema, the Digitization programme and the policies that were introduced to promote inclusive growth in the country. Both the Ministers were assisted by senior officials of the Ministries of Information and Broadcasting of India and Bangladesh.



154. Official Spokesperson's response to question on explosion near High Commissioner's vehicle in Bangladesh.

New Delhi, April 13, 2013.

Q: Sir, yesterday there was an attack in Bangladesh on High Commissioner's vehicle. That was bomb attack and in that attack, the driver was also wounded. What is your reaction on this attack and how much of it is a matter of concern for the security of Indians in Bangladesh especially officials and diplomats?

Answer: As per our information, yesterday while the High Commissioner was attending a function in Khulna, there were crude bomb explosions approximately 20 meters away from where his car was parked. As per our information, nobody involved with the High Commission was either injured nor was the car damaged in any form. I may also clarify that this was not the High Commission's vehicle. This was a local car hired by the High Commission. That said the High Commissioner has continued his engagements in Khulna. Today he is in Jessore visiting the Ramakrishna Mission there and he will fly back to Dhaka in accordance with his pre-scheduled programme.

Since those explosions, High Commissioner has received a large number of calls conveying concern to him and assuring him that all security will be provided to him and all High Commission officials. So, we have no cause for concern there.

Our High Commission is in touch with Bangladeshi authorities who are investigating the case and let us wait for the outcome of those investigations before jumping to any conclusion whether this was even an attack related to the High Commission at all.



155. Joint Communiqué issued at the end of the 14th meeting of the Home Secretaries of India and Bangladesh.

New Delhi, July 22, 2013.

“The 14th meeting of the Home Secretaries of India and Bangladesh was held in New Delhi from July 19th to July 22nd, 2013. The Indian delegation was led by Mr. Anil Goswami, Union Home Secretary, Government of India. The Bangladesh delegation was led by Mr. C. Q. K. Mustaq Ahmed, Senior Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of Bangladesh.

The two Home Secretaries recalled the excellent and friendly bilateral relations existing between India and Bangladesh and reiterated their commitment to further take these relations forward. They noted that the exchange of visits by the Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and India in January 2010 and September 2011 respectively and by the Home Minister of Bangladesh to India in February and December 2012 and the Home Minister of India to Bangladesh in July 2011 and January 2013 has infused a new dynamism in the bilateral relations in general and security cooperation in particular. They also noted that the bilateral cooperation in the field of security and border management has been strengthened with the signing of four agreements pertaining to security cooperation including the Extradition Treaty*.

They took note of the outcome of the 13th JWG meeting on Security issues held on 18 July 2013, wherein the two sides discussed issues such as security, border management, incidents of deaths due to firing on the border, implementation of agreements, ratification of the land boundary agreement, visa and consular related matters, capacity building etc.

The Indian Home Secretary conveyed the appreciation of Government of India to Government of Bangladesh for extending cooperation for addressing the security concerns of India. The two Home Secretaries reaffirmed their commitment not to allow the territory of either country to be used for any activity inimical to each other's interests. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the smooth operation of Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) and agreed to increase the frequency of coordinated patrolling with a view to curbing criminal activities along the border.

They noted with satisfaction that the implementation of the CBMP has resulted in reduced number of border incidents. Agreeing that it is a joint responsibility, both Home Secretaries expressed confidence that increased number of coordinated patrolling would enhance cooperation between the border guarding forces of the two countries, and enable them to prevent the movement of criminals and manage the identified vulnerable areas with a view to prevent criminal activities, acts of violence and loss of lives along the border areas. As an additional measure for better border management, both sides welcomed the recent DC-DM conference between Brahmanbaria district of Bangladesh and West Tripura district of India. They agreed to have regular consultations between the DMs-DCs of border districts for resolving local issues. Both the sides also agreed to sensitize the media about ground realities of border management.

Both sides agreed to further intensify the activities of the different nodal points in different areas of cooperation such as human trafficking, drugs, INTERPOL, etc. They expressed satisfaction at the regular interaction of different bilateral mechanisms, including BGB-BSF DG level meetings, Narcotics DG level meetings, JWG on Security issues etc. and noted that these regular exchanges helped to enhance understanding and resolve issues to mutual satisfaction.

Both sides agreed to extend cooperation for apprehension of wanted criminals and fugitives. The Bangladesh Home Secretary urged for immediate tracking, arresting, and handing over the killers of Bangabandhu, the Father of the nation of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Indian Home Secretary assured that India will continue to extend all possible assistance in this regard.

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the level of cooperation in the seizure and prevention of trafficking of drugs. Bangladesh side also appreciated the decision of the Indian Government to invoke the provisions of the NDPS Act to contain the trafficking of Codeine based syrups like Phensedyl. It was also agreed to expand and strengthen further cooperation in sharing actionable intelligence in real time.

Both sides noted that the implementation of three agreements (Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons and Combating Terrorism, organized crime and illicit

drug trafficking) signed during the visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India in 2010 has been satisfactory.

Both the Home Secretaries reviewed the measures taken to expedite the verification and repatriation of prisoners who have completed their sentences. Both sides welcomed the recent setting up of procedures for transfer of sentenced prisoners and agreed to expedite the process so that nationals who are in each other's jails could serve remaining period of their sentence in their native country.

Both sides discussed the ratification of the LBA-1974 and the protocol signed in 2011 and noted that early ratification of the same would pave the way for implementation of the provisions of the agreement and lay the long pending boundary related issues at rest.

Both sides welcomed that the Joint Task Force on Fake Currency Notes has been set up and agreed that the first meeting may be convened soon to develop a mechanism to deal with the menace.

Both sides agreed that there should be greater number of goodwill visits and increased cooperation in training on subjects like Cyber Crime, ICT, Forensic Sciences etc. The Indian side reiterated its offer of training courses for law enforcement agencies of Bangladesh in Indian Institutions.

The Home Secretary of Bangladesh invited the Home Secretary of India for the 15th Home Secretary level talks at a mutually convenient time in Bangladesh.”



* The extradition treaty between Bangladesh and India which was signed on January 28, 2013 by the Home Ministers of the two countries came into effect on 23rd October, 2013 with the handing over of the instruments of ratification of the pact. This enables the two countries to exchange convicts or under-trials as and when required. Bangladesh Home Secretary C.Q.K. Mostak Ahmed and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pankaj Saran signed the documents. The treaty allows exchange of convicts sentenced for more than a year in prison but not be applicable to political prisoners and asylum seekers. Both sides have the option to cancel the treaty in six-month notice. India can now take back ULFA leader Anup Chetia, who had been lodged in prison for many years, from Bangladesh. Dhaka too can bring back fugitive crime lords such as Subrata Bain and Sazzad Hossain and put them on trial. “With the signature of the ratification instruments and the exchange, we are now in a position to bring the treaty into effect,” Mr. Pankaj Saran said. He hoped that the treaty would strengthen the security of the two countries.

156. Remarks by Prime Minister at the Inauguration of India-Bangladesh Grid Interconnection, Bheramara & Laying of Foundation Stone of Thermal Power Project, Rampal, Bangladesh (The inauguration was performed through video conferencing from New Delhi).

New Delhi, October 5, 2013.

Your Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Distinguished Ministers of the Government of Bangladesh, Dr. Farooq Abdullah sahib, Minister of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India Distinguished Guests Let me begin by saying how delighted I am to see Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Bangladesh once again following our meeting last week in New York. Madam Prime Minister, I thank you for your kind words this morning and for inviting me to join you and the people of Bangladesh at this historic moment, when we embark on a new partnership for prosperity between our two countries.

Madam Prime Minister, the initiative we took during your historic visit to India in January 2010 is being realized today. The transmission line and the HVDC station in Bheramara provide a safe and reliable interconnection of the power grids of our two countries, which will enable supply of 500 MW of power from India to Bangladesh. A shared aspiration of our people has been translated into a concrete outcome. I would therefore like to congratulate you, your colleagues and the people of Bangladesh for this extraordinary accomplishment. I also wish to thank my ministerial colleagues, our technical personnel and officials at the Centre and in the State Government of West Bengal for implementing this landmark project in South Asia in such a short span of time.

Today, we are also laying the foundation stone for the 1320 MW Maitri Thermal Power Project being developed by the Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company, which is a joint venture of India's NTPC Ltd and the Bangladesh Power Development Board. I extend my best wishes to the project and call upon the project authorities to observe the highest environmental standards in its execution, given that the Sunderbans are our common heritage.

The initiatives being undertaken today strengthen the bonds of friendship between India and Bangladesh and add a rich new dimension to our

bilateral relations. Economic development is the biggest challenge for all countries in South Asia. Our destinies are inter-linked and so must our economies be. I have always believed – and I believe Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina shares my conviction – that the prospects for economic development in South Asia will be substantially enhanced through a partnership for shared prosperity between the countries of the region. The key to shared prosperity is greater trade and investment in our region and improved connectivity through transport, road, rail, telecom, cyber and energy links. Today's inauguration represents an important milestone in connecting our two countries and the broader region through a growing web of cross-border energy links and trade.

Madam Prime Minister, we applaud the significant progress that Bangladesh has made under your distinguished leadership, including in the area of energy security. Bangladesh is one of the fastest growing economies in South Asia and its achievements in meeting the Millennium Development Goals stand as an example for the rest of the world. India wishes to see a strong and prosperous Bangladesh. I assure you that India will remain a steadfast and long-term partner in your development efforts.

* This marked the beginning of energy cooperation between the two collaborative power projects. The projects are a transmission line for exporting 500 MW from West Bengal and a 1,320-MW thermal power project in Bangladesh. The Maitri thermal power project was developed by Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company, a joint venture between NTPC and Bangladesh Power Development Board.

On the Bangladesh side, India's Minister for New and Renewable Energy Minister Farooq Abdullah was present along with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, at Bheramara, 240 km from Dhaka. "The inter-grid connectivity is part of an immediate solution which would go a long way to alleviate the power deficit in Bangladesh," Hasina said. Such cooperation would allow the two sides to embark on more ambitious projects, she added. The formal opening of the transmission line came a week after India launched a test transmission of electricity. The inauguration began with the supply of 175 MW to Bangladesh's National Grid. Bangladesh will import 250 MW from the Indian government's "unallocated quota" and another 250 MW will be supplied by a private firm. The Bangladesh government said modern technology used in the plant would ensure the protection of the forest and a lot of money would be spent on environmental management to prevent any adverse impact of the project on the Sunderbans. State-run Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) will purchase electricity from India under a deal

I also wish to thank you, Madam Prime Minister, for strengthening mutually beneficial relations between our two countries. The Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development that we signed in Dhaka in 2011 provides the template for our cooperation in the future. In the past few years, our cooperation has made rapid progress in many areas. We do recognize that we have to make progress in other areas. We are committed to completing the tasks we had agreed upon in a manner that responds to the mutual aspirations of both our peoples. Madam Prime Minister

The people of India and Bangladesh have always been good neighbours. In recent years, we have shown that we can pursue cooperative endeavours to harness the boundless economic potential of our relationship based on the principles of equality, sovereignty and mutual prosperity. I look forward with confidence to a future of deeper cooperation in energy and all other dimensions of our relationship. And I convey to you, Madam Prime Minister and, through you, to the people of Bangladesh my best wishes for success in all your endeavours for national development and prosperity.

Thank you



signed in February 2012 with NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd (NVVN), a subsidiary of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC). This was Bangladesh's first-ever deal for importing electricity from any country. The average power tariff is Taka 6 under the 25-year agreement while BPDB would pay an additional Tk 0.80 per unit as wheeling charge to the power distribution firm. In June last year, BPDB also inked a deal with NTPC to set up Bangladesh's biggest coal-based power plant at Rampal at a cost of USD 1.5 billion. A joint venture company would run the project, and implemented by PDB and NTPC on a 50:50 equity basis. Of the total project cost, 70 per cent was arranged through loan and the remainder equally shared by PDB and NTPC.

157. Statement by Foreign Secretary at the meeting with Editors in Dhaka.

Dhaka, December 4, 2013.

I am delighted to be here, and to have the opportunity to meet the leading Editors of the media in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi media has a well earned reputation for its fierce independence, diversity of opinion and professionalism. So, as much as I speak to you this evening, I also look forward to hearing from you.

This is my first visit to Bangladesh as Foreign Secretary. I am deeply impressed by the progress Bangladesh has made in all spheres. In many areas, we have a lot to learn from Bangladesh's achievements and development model. Dhaka is a modern and vibrant city, and a reminder of the historical links between our two countries.

I have had a very fruitful set of meetings. This morning I called on His Excellency Foreign Minister AH Mahmud Ali following which I had the opportunity of calling on Her Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. In the afternoon, I called on the Leader of the Opposition and Chairperson of the BNP Her Excellency Begum Khaleda Zia and Chairperson of the Jatiya Party General Ershad. I am scheduled to meet my counterpart, Foreign Secretary M. Shahidul Haque, later this evening.

I conveyed to the Prime Minister the high importance which India attaches to having good relations with Bangladesh and to peace and stability in Bangladesh. Both these are essential elements for ensuring the larger good of our region. This is a region which is connected by history, culture and civilisational ties. We share not just common borders but common challenges. The welfare, prosperity and security of our people are organically linked.

We therefore cannot remain indifferent to or unaffected by developments in each other's countries. India's consistent view has been that a strong, stable, independent and well developed Bangladesh is in the interests not only of the people of Bangladesh but also in the interests of the people of the region.

We proceed with our relations with Bangladesh on the principles of mutual respect, mutual benefit, non-interference and respect for each other's

sovereignty. Based on this, we have made concrete progress in our relations in the last few years. This includes cooperation in the areas of political understanding, security, trade and economic relations, economic development, energy and people to people exchanges. Substantial progress has been made in the following areas:

- Energy (500 MW intergrid connectivity and commencement of work on a 1320 MW power plant in Rampal);
- Sub-regional cooperation in power and water and trade and connectivity;
- Development assistance (US\$ 800 million credit line well on its way to implementation and US\$ 200 million untied grants-in-aid)
- Trade (Unilateral zero duty quota free access to all Bangladeshi products except 25 tariff lines that has led to significant increases in Bangladesh's exports to India, particularly in garments);
- Border Haats;
- Cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges;
- Security (for which we are most grateful to Bangladesh);
- Border Management; and
- Border infrastructure (ICP at Akhaura-Agartala)

We want to build upon these successes.

My meetings with the Leader of Opposition and Chairperson of the Jatiya Party were part of our ongoing dialogue with major political parties in Bangladesh. The opposition has an important role to play in any democracy, and Bangladesh is no different. We want our relations with Bangladesh to be broad based and inclusive. The test of our success is when the partnership between our two countries benefits all sections of society and translates into results on the ground, making it is durable and sustainable over the long term.

This is an important time for Bangladesh. Elections are an intrinsic part of the democratic process. The people of Bangladesh, like anywhere in the world, deserve the right to choose their elected representatives freely and fairly. Political parties are the pillars of democracy. As a fellow democracy, India hopes that the forthcoming elections will strengthen democratic institutions, practices and processes in Bangladesh. We hope that the forthcoming elections will respond to the aspirations of the people of Bangladesh and that they will be free, fair, impartial and peaceful and find wide acceptability.

Democracy also means the ability to resolve differences through dialogue and peaceful means, without recourse to violence. We are concerned by the ongoing violence and we hope that wisdom and maturity will prevail. Experience has shown that violence impacts most on the vulnerable sections of society. This is in no one's interest.

In conclusion, let me say we have deep respect for the wisdom and achievements of the people of Bangladesh. Theirs has been a history of sacrifice, courage and pride. We wish Bangladesh well at this time. India will remain an honest and enduring partner in your nation building efforts.

I thank you. I would now be happy to listen to your views.



158. Interaction of Foreign Secretary with Bangladesh Media in Dhaka.

Dhaka, December 5, 2013.

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh (Shri Pankaj Saran): Good evening ladies and gentlemen and dear friends. Firstly our apologies to keep you waiting this evening. It was because we were running behind schedule in the meetings in the afternoon. So, I apologise for keeping you waiting. I also thank you very much for coming here this evening to meet with the Foreign Secretary.

Madam, we are very honoured to have you here, and thank you for agreeing to meet some of the Editors in Bangladesh who represent a

diversity of opinion in Bangladesh. They are senior columnists, editors, writers and opinion makers. With your permission, I would quickly ask them to briefly introduce themselves.

Thereafter I would request the Foreign Secretary to make a few opening remarks, and thereafter we could enter into a discussion, a question-answer session. Please note that this is not exactly a press conference but it is an opportunity for you to interact with the Foreign Secretary. Since we have a limitation of time, we will be very conservative with the number of questions that we take.

(Introduction of Bangladeshi media representatives)

High Commissioner: Madam Foreign Secretary, could I please request you to make your opening remarks?

Foreign Secretary (Shrimati Sujatha Singh): Thank you, High Commissioner.

Let me start by saying how I delighted I am to be here and to have the opportunity to meet the leading Editors of the media in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi media has a well-earned reputation for its fierce independence, diversity of opinion and professionalism. So, as much as I am here to speak to you this evening, I also look forward to hearing from you.

This is my first visit to Bangladesh as Foreign Secretary. I am deeply impressed by the progress that Bangladesh has made in all its spheres. In many areas, we have a lot to learn from Bangladesh's achievements and development model. Dhaka is a modern and vibrant city, and a reminder of the historical links between our two countries.

I have had a very fruitful set of meetings. This morning I called on His Excellency Foreign Minister Mahmud Ali, following which I had the opportunity of calling on Her Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. In the afternoon I called on the Leader of the Opposition and Chairperson of the BNP Her Excellency Begum Khaleda Zia, and Chairperson of the Jatiya Party General Ershad. I am scheduled to meet my counterpart Foreign Secretary M. Shahidul Haque later this evening.

I conveyed to the Prime Minister the high importance which India attaches to its relations with Bangladesh, to having good relations, and to peace

and stability in Bangladesh. Both these are essential elements for ensuring the larger good of our region. This is a region which is connected by history, culture and civilisational ties. We share not just common borders but common challenges. The welfare, prosperity and security of our people are organically linked.

We, therefore, cannot remain indifferent to or unaffected by developments in each other's countries. India's consistent view has been that a strong, stable, independent and well developed Bangladesh is in the interests not only of the people of Bangladesh but also in the interests of the people in the entire region.

We proceed with our relations with Bangladesh on the principles of mutual respect, mutual benefit, non-interference and respect for each other's sovereignty. Based on this we have made concrete progress in our relations in the last few years. This includes cooperation in the areas of political understanding, security, trade and economic relations, economic development, energy and people-to-people exchanges.

Substantial progress has been made in the following areas:

1. In energy where I am sure you all know about the 500 MW intergrid connectivity and the commencement of work on the 1320 MW power plant in Rampal.
2. Sub-regional cooperation in power and water and trade and connectivity.
3. Development assistance.
4. Trade - Unilateral zero-duty quota-free access to all Bangladeshi products except 25 tariff lines that has led to significant increases in Bangladesh's exports to India, particularly in garments.
5. Border Haats.
6. Cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges.
7. Security, for which we are most grateful to Bangladesh.
8. Border Management.
9. Border infrastructure.

We want to build even further on these successes.

My meetings with the Leader of the Opposition and Chairperson of the Jatiya Party were part of our ongoing dialogue with major political parties in Bangladesh. The opposition has an important role to play in any democracy, and Bangladesh is no different. We want our relations with Bangladesh to be broad based and inclusive. The test of our success is when the partnership between our two countries benefits all sections of society and translates into relations on the ground, making it durable and sustainable over the long term.

This is an important time for Bangladesh. Elections are an intrinsic part of any democratic process. The people of Bangladesh, like anywhere in the world, deserve the right to choose their elected representatives freely and fairly. Political parties are the pillars of any democracy. As a fellow democracy, India hopes that the forthcoming elections will strengthen democratic institutions, practices and processes in Bangladesh. We hope that the forthcoming elections will respond to the aspirations of the people in Bangladesh and that they will be free, fair, impartial and peaceful, and find wide acceptability.

Democracy also means the ability to resolve differences through dialogue and peaceful means without recourse to violence. We are concerned by the ongoing violence, and we hope that wisdom and maturity will prevail. Experience has shown that violence impacts most on the vulnerable sections of society. This is in no one's interest.

In conclusion let me say that we have deep respect for the wisdom and achievements of the people of Bangladesh. Theirs has been a history of sacrifice, of courage and of pride. We wish Bangladesh well at this time. India will remain an honest and enduring partner in your nation-building efforts.

I thank you. I would now be happy to listen to you.

Q: Hon. Foreign Secretary, you have met the President, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, and General Ershad. What message have you extended with regard to upcoming election and about participatory or inclusive election without intimidation and violence?

Foreign Secretary: As I have already mentioned, in my meetings I have stressed on the importance that India attaches to a stable, peaceful and

prosperous Bangladesh, and to the successful completion of the democratic processes.

Q: You have also said that the differences can be resolved through dialogue. Did you see any intention among the leaders that they would engage in a productive dialogue to sort out the present political imbroglio?

Foreign Secretary: This is an ongoing process. This is an ongoing process for the leaders themselves to resolve and to decide.

Q: Did you find any hopeful sign that they will be engaged in a dialogue?

Foreign Secretary: Let me just say that I do not want to comment on something that is up to the leaders of Bangladesh to decide for themselves. I do not want to prejudge, I do not want to indicate something right now. You will see as time goes by as to what the leaders decide to do.

Q: Excellency, ...*(Inaudible)*... you need to know your neighbour. But given the political scenario of Bangladesh ...*(Inaudible)*... may I just ask you as to whether during the meeting with our leaders like the hon. Prime Minister, hon. Leader of Opposition, did you deliver any special message ...*(Inaudible)*...?

Foreign Secretary: The message that I delivered is contained in my opening statement. It is a message of support, it is a message of solidarity, of India with Bangladesh. I do not wish to go into further details. I am sure you will understand.

Q: Madam, this is your first visit and you are here at a time when Bangladesh is experiencing a political turmoil and a ...*(Inaudible)*... What perception are you taking back with you about the forthcoming election? Do you perceive any sort of ...*(Inaudible)*... participation in the election?

Foreign Secretary: The perception I take back is of a very vibrant democracy. Democratic processes, they have their twists they have their turns, and it is no neat set of linear solutions. So, this is what you would find in any democratic process and this is what I see happening in Bangladesh.

Q: The hon. High Commissioner in his introductory remarks to the programme spoke about ...*(Inaudible)*... the tight time schedule and said

that we will get a little time for a few questions. But I find that you are actually very conservative about things because you are not elaborating almost anything. You are giving very short, very cryptic answers. You did not say so far one word ...*(Inaudible)*...whether we are going forward towards an inclusive election where major parties are ...*(Inaudible)*...What did you feel? And also Indian interest, we have heard from Indian leaders that India believes in a relationship with both Opposition and the party in position. This time we do not hear that thing. Is this just because of shortage of time or do you really not want to mention both the parties?

Foreign Secretary: You have seen from my schedule of meetings that I have met the leaders of all the three major political parties. That in itself will give you an indication as to what India's approach is. What is India's interest? India's interest is in supporting the democratic process in Bangladesh. India's interest is in a stable and prosperous Bangladesh. These are the broad parameters of what our interest is. And further than this, I do not want to go into details.

Q: Madam, you have seen the present ...*(Inaudible)*... situation in Bangladesh is really conducive for ...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: It is a bit of a chicken and egg situation. Unless you have elections, how do you build the traditions of a democratic process? You have to have the elections in order to build the institutions of democracy.

Q: There should be an inclusive election to support that.

Foreign Secretary: Yes. Any election that is held should have the participation of the maximum number of parties.

Q: Or the major opposition. That is the recognised definition in the United Nations. An election is inclusive when the major opposition participates in it.

Foreign Secretary: Do not try and pin me down to UN definitions or Oxford definitions or Websters' definitions. You have democracies and democracies. There are different kinds of democracies in different countries of the world. There are democracies that have to adapt themselves to local conditions, to local situations. No democracy is

exactly like the other. So, what the quality of the democracy in Bangladesh is for the people of Bangladesh to decide.

Q: Do you have any special effort ...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: We would like to see an election where, as I said, as many parties as possible participate; and we would like to see an election where the people have a chance to exercise their franchise freely and fairly; and we would like to see an election result that is accepted by the people. It is for the people of Bangladesh to decide.

Q: Hon. Foreign Secretary, the line between politics and diplomacy is very thin. From that perspective, you must be realising the importance that is being attached to your visit here, happening at a time in the foreground of the UN Under Secretary-General coming to Dhaka and set against the backdrop of EU and other representatives of European countries sort of calling for participatory, free and fair election, etc. They emphasise mostly on a complete renunciation of violence. Did you see any hint that there will be a remission in the ...*(Inaudible)*...?

Foreign Secretary: Let me just say that I am not here on a mission of mediation. This is not a task that India will appropriate for itself. I have taken over as Foreign Secretary just about four months ago and it is my mission to visit all the neighbouring countries, and Bangladesh is one of our most important neighbours. It is to come here to convey a message of solidarity and goodwill and our support to the democratic process. And in this democratic process you mentioned about violence. I think that all right-thinking people will appreciate the fact that violence has no part in a democratic process. You cannot use violent means to achieve your ends.

And as regards people who are coming here, ultimately I think that it is for each country to find its own path. Just as we in India do what we think is right for us, I am sure that you in Bangladesh will listen to everybody and then go ahead and do what you think is right for your country and right by your people. This is the privilege of every country.

Q: Did you not see some points of fluctuation on either side? Or did you sense any reconciliatory mood on either side a little bit?

Foreign Secretary: I must compliment you on your efforts to draw me out. But I must with all respect say that what I discussed with your leaders

is a matter between your leaders and us, and I would not like to share details of it with the media. You will understand my position on this. And of course we favour dialogue between all the sides, but let us not get into the details.

Q: Madam, I would like to ask about something else, say the Land Boundary Agreement. Did you bring any goodwill for us about the agreement with Bangladesh?

Foreign Secretary: There is a lot of goodwill for Bangladesh. And you know that we have tried to introduce the Land Boundary Agreement Bill in Parliament in the past two sessions. So, let us see how it goes in the upcoming session.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: I think that your dates have been notified by the Election Commission. Is it?

Q: Earlier in November we saw a report in newspapers that President Obama asked his Administration to hold consultations with Indian officials on the Bangladesh issue. What kind of consultations did you have with the United States? The High Commissioner also indicated that they were holding discussions with the Administration of the United States about the crisis in Bangladesh. Any development in this regard?

Hon. Prime Minister also indicated that there will be other contacts with other countries. ...*(Inaudible)*... So, we would like to know how India feels. ...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: As you know, India has many strategic partners, and as part of our ongoing dialogue process with our strategic partners, we discuss issues of mutual interest. The eyes of the world are on Bangladesh at this point of time. Your elections are due. And this is one of the areas that we do discuss with our strategic partners, with the United States, with the European Union, with Germany, with the United Kingdom. So, we discuss it, we discuss what developments are, and all of us are interested in peace and stability in Bangladesh. I do not want to go into further details beyond that.

Q: We saw a report that you brokered a deal in Nepal ...*(Inaudible)*... to hold the elections. Did you ...*(Inaudible)*... in Bangladesh? There was a media report.

Foreign Secretary: You are the media, you will know. But I do not broker any deals, I do not mediate. That was a goodwill visit to Nepal, exactly as this is a goodwill visit to Bangladesh. And as I said, I am a very new Foreign Secretary, I have just taken over four months ago. So, I went to meet the Government, to meet the leaders, the political leaders, to introduce myself, and to say that we look forward to working together. That was it. Nothing more than that.

Q: Madam, India is the largest democracy in the world. From your democratic experience do you see that holding elections under a caretaker government is a very model process to run a democracy?

Foreign Secretary: Like I said, every country has its own democratic process and its own democratic model. In India, like in Bangladesh, there is an Election Commission. Once the elections are declared, the Election Commission makes sure that all the rules of the elections are followed by all the parties, and that includes the government. So, there is really no question of the government giving way to a caretaker government in India. I am sure you know that, and it has worked pretty well for us.

High Commissioner: Maybe we can take the last two, three questions because the Foreign Secretary has a meeting in a short while.

Q: Just a supplementary to that question. I know that India does not ... *(Inaudible)*... caretaker government and in Bangladesh and in Nepal and in Pakistan also there is a model of the caretaker government. Just from your mature democratic position, do you see any role of a caretaker government to hold election, to run the democratic process?

Foreign Secretary: From my mature democratic point of view I feel that it is for each democracy to determine its own rules of democratic processes. I do not think there is one-size-fits-all. I think each country has to develop its own model based on free and fair elections, the right of every person to vote in an atmosphere free of violence and intimidation.

Q: So, you would appreciate that Bangladeshi people would ... *(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: That is for the Bangladeshi people to decide.

Q: The United Nations representative is coming to Bangladesh. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, has telephoned public leaders in Bangladesh.

You are very much aware of this move. Do you feel that the UN move is backed by India also?

Foreign Secretary: What the United Nations envoy will say or do is something that we will know when he comes over here. So, I cannot back something that has not happened as yet. I think we are all trying to work towards a process whereby you have elections taking place in Bangladesh, and then people have a chance to fulfil their democratic aspirations. I think we will leave it at that.

High Commissioner: Thank you. I think with this we would like to end. Once again, everyone, thank you so much. I know this is a busy time and all of you have taken time out from your offices to come here and be present here today and listen to the Foreign Secretary. On behalf of the High Commission I want to thank you and I hope that we will continue our engagement with all of you on behalf of the High Commission in the period ahead. What we will do is to put the Foreign Secretary's remarks on website so that you can have a copy of that electronically.

Thank you



BHUTAN

159. Interview of Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai to Bhutanese Daily *Kuensel*.

New Delhi, February 3, 2013.

(During His Majesty's recent state visit to India, Kuensel's Rinzin Wangchuk seized a moment to speak with foreign secretary of Indian external affairs, Ranjan Mathai on Indo-Bhutan relationship and issues concerning the two nations.)

Kuensel: How do you see India's role in Bhutan's future?

Mathai: India's role in Bhutan's future is really for people of Bhutan to decide.

But what we are encouraged about is that we have had a continuous relation with Bhutan for decades since the mid 1960s when the plan

process of the development of Bhutan started with His Majesty the Third King, His Majesty the fourth King and His Majesty himself.

This process of planned development has continued and India has been able to play its part in assisting this plan process. We are also very happy that with the elected government, we have been able to continue the same development assistance.

So what is happening is, we are in fact indispensable to each other because we have common interests, we are in a very important part of Asia, and our economic development, energy security, security perceptions are all tied together. So we feel that we are two countries, which are very closely bound by geography, history and culture.

Kuensel: As Bhutan's biggest development partner, what are the future areas of cooperation between the two countries?

Mathai: India's role in the development plans of Bhutan has been increasing in total numbers but decreasing as a percentage of the total plan because Bhutan's own development and resources are now contributing to the plan process. That is the way we want to do it.

The second thing is, we have built a lot of emphasis on capacity building and I think this is where a lot of focus is going to be in future. There is a very large number of Bhutanese students, who come to India for training and we are assisting in establishing new educational institutions and new skills development centres within Bhutan.

Of course, hydropower and its development remains another strong pillar of our relationship that will also continue. But if we look at some of the new areas, which have been developed, like IT skills, medical skills, business development, these are the future areas where you will see a lot of support coming from India for development in Bhutan.

Kuensel: Are there plans to allow free access and movement of Bhutan's products and open trade routes that were not included in the transit agreement?

Mathai: Restrictions arise because there are some areas in our common border region and region from there to the ports and others, and there are some security restrictions from our side, which apply even to our own people.

But we will certainly be happy to look at new possibilities, new routes so that Bhutan has many more options available to it. We have also ways and means to discuss in the context of regional cooperation between India, Bangladesh and Bhutan on new routes, new possibilities of trade and development of common development objectives.

Kuensel: Because of restriction on third country trade, orange exporters in Kalikhola (Lhamoizingkha) had to transport their products to Jaigoan to declare at the customs instead of taking directly to Bangladesh...

Mathai: I will ask our ambassador in Bhutan to look into this subject to see what is the practical solution for this kind of problems.

Kuensel: Now Bhutan has also started domestic air service, would India support Bhutan's move to manage its own air space?

Mathai: Yes, we would very much support it. But there are issues relating to which air space you are referring to. If it is the same air space, which all civil aviation is using, there should not be a problem. When it comes to Gelephu domestic air service, I am not aware of this specific point you are mentioning but I'm sure we can find some practical solution to ensure that air services are not hindered by any of our rules and regulations.

Kuensel: Bhutan has become a strategic location for both India and China. What are India's concerns on Bhutan-China relation?

Mathai: I don't know if it would be right for me to discuss what is Bhutan's relationship with china because these are other countries.

I will put it this way, if you look at the traditional, historical roots of trade and communication then in fact, India is and has been closest partner and there is no doubt about that. Also we have strong cultural and religious links.

The issue of how Bhutan builds its relationship with other countries or rest of the world is a matter for Bhutanese people to decide. It is not right for India to come and try and tell you how it could be done.

Kuensel: Did the way in which Indian media reported on Bhutanese Prime Minister meeting the Chinese Premier in Brazil last year reflect the Indian government's sentiment?

Mathai: The media are always writing very interesting stories and may be you should ask them.

As far as we are concerned, it is the Bhutanese people's choice. Bhutanese people's direction is something we had always respected. What we are very conscious of was that we have a very strong traditional relationship and we would like to preserve it.



160. Message of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to the Bhutan PDP leaders on the success of their party in the Bhutan's general elections.

New Delhi, July 14, 2013.

"It gives me great pleasure to felicitate Your Excellency on the success of the people's Democratic Party, as well as your own election to the National Assembly in the historic second democratic election in Bhutan.

I would like to avail of this opportunity to assure you of the steadfast and unflinching support of India and its citizens for the steady steps that Bhutan is taking to further strengthen democratic processes and institutions. India is a privileged partner of Bhutan and it's people in their socio-economic progress and development. Our bilateral ties are anchored in a strong foundation of trust, mutual confidence and understanding. I wish to reiterate India's undiminished commitment to Bhutan in preserving these unique and special traditional ties. India is, and will remain, sensitive to Bhutan and its interests.

I would also like to emphasize that India- Bhutan relations, which are indeed exemplary, have been carefully nurtured and fostered over many decades with the guidance and vision of Their Majesties the Druk Gyalpos of Bhutan and the constructive cooperation of our governments. Our endeavour would be to strengthen these ties further. We look forward to working with you and your colleague to further enhance our cooperation for the benefit of the people of both our countries. I have therefore already instructed officials of my Government to prepare for the discussions on our plan assistance to Bhutan.

I also look forward to an early opportunity of welcoming you in India.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my very best wishes and the assurances of my highest consideration."



161. Extract relevant to Bhutan from the Media briefing by Official Spokesperson.

New Delhi, July 15, 2013.

Q: Sir, there is a regime change in Bhutan. Do you think that there is something going from Indian side to Bhutan now?

Official Spokesperson: I do not know whether the word that you use is the appropriate word for consolidation of democracy in a nascent or young democracy. As far as we see it, this is consolidation of democracy in Bhutan as this was the second democratic election there and, therefore, we welcome that.

As you are aware, India and Bhutan have special and unique relations and, therefore, our Prime Minister has yesterday written to the leader of the party which won a majority in the Bhutanese elections. My understanding is that there are another eight days which are given for any of the candidates to lodge any complaints or any other petitions against these results following which a government will be in place in Bhutan. And we expect to take the matter up because we have, as you are aware, extremely close relationship. The Prime Minister in fact has invited the leader of the majority party to visit India. But even otherwise we expect intensive consultations with Bhutan as soon as the government is in office there.

Q: ...(Inaudible)... the subsidy component that was taken away from Bhutan. So, can we see any forward movement on that?

Official Spokesperson: I am grateful that you clarified your question. I think we need to understand that the issue of subsidy relates to the delivery mechanisms of India's development partnership with Bhutan. It has no political or other implications or intentions. That said, we will

certainly engage with Bhutan on this. And we have previously said that it is not the intention of India to in any way adversely impact on the poor in Bhutan or on people in Bhutan in any manner. That is the broad parameters under which we work. We look forward to engaging on this matter as soon as possible. I hope that clarifies the issue.



162. Information supplied to the Lok Sabha on Bilateral Relations with Bhutan in answer to a question.

New Delhi, August 7, 2013.

India has supported the steady steps that Bhutan has taken to further strengthen its democratic processes and institutions. India is committed to preserve its unique and special traditional ties with Bhutan and will continue to do so.

Following the successful conduct of elections in July 2013, a delegation of the National Council (Upper House) of Bhutan visited India from July 24-August 1, 2013. Government of India is in regular contact with the Bhutanese authorities. High level exchanges, as well as discussions on our plan assistance to Bhutan are being scheduled.

As a committed developmental partner in the socio-economic progress of Bhutan, Government of India is providing subsidy on petroleum products to Bhutan.



163. Joint Press Statement on the Visit of Prime Minister of Bhutan to India.

New Delhi, August 31, 2013.

1. The Prime Minister of Bhutan, His Excellency Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay is on an official visit to India from August 30 to September 4, 2013. He is accompanied by Aum Tashi Doma, His Excellency Lyonpo Rinzin Dorje, Foreign Minister and senior officials from

the Royal Government of Bhutan. This is the first overseas visit by Prime Minister Tobgay after being elected Prime Minister, following the second democratic elections in Bhutan in July 2013. The visit is in conformity with the tradition of regular exchange of visits at the highest levels between India and Bhutan, and adds momentum to our time-tested and enduring relations.

2. During his visit, H.E. Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay met with the President, Vice President, and the Prime Minister. His programme also includes meetings with the Chairperson UPA, Finance Minister, Home Minister, External Affairs Minister, Minister of State for Power and Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, besides a joint business meeting with ASSOCHAM, FICCI and CII. In his talks with the Prime Minister of India, all areas of mutual interest and cooperation were covered. The meetings were held in a warm and friendly atmosphere, reflecting the spirit of mutual confidence, cooperation and understanding that characterize the unique and special nature of relations between the two countries.
3. The main outcomes of the discussions were:
 - I. Government of India reiterated its commitment to Bhutan's socio-economic development. The two countries agreed to work together to further strengthen bilateral relations. Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay thanked India for the support extended for Bhutan's development and expressed keenness to strengthen people-to-people links.
 - II. Government of India's Assistance Package for Bhutan's 11th Five Year Plan for the period July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2018, was agreed upon. At Bhutan's request, India will contribute Rs 4500 Crores towards Bhutan's 11th Plan, as well as Rs. 500 Crores towards an Economic Stimulus Package.
 - III. The importance of continued cooperation in developing hydroelectric projects in Bhutan was also agreed upon. India reiterated its commitment to install an additional 10,000 MW of generating capacity. The two sides

expressed satisfaction at the progress in the three ongoing projects.

- IV. India expressed its satisfaction at being a privileged partner of Bhutan in its socio-economic development, and reassured the Bhutanese Prime Minister of its commitment to capacity building in Bhutan.
- V. The two sides reaffirmed the trust and confidence between the two countries and their mutual security interests. They agreed to continue their close coordination and cooperation with each other on issues relating to their national interest.

Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay will be visiting Hyderabad, where he will call on the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, visit an IT Park and Green Business Centre.

The visit of the Prime Minister of Bhutan to India will further strengthen the close bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.



MALDIVES

164. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence on cooperation in Defence between India and Maldives.

New Delhi, April 15, 2013.

The Minister of Defence and National Security of the Republic of Maldives, Mr. Mohamed Nazim had a one hour long meeting with the Defence Minister Shri AK Antony at South Block on Monday, 15 April, 2013, followed by a meeting with the Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee and CAS and the Vice Chiefs of Army and Navy and DG, Coast Guard. The Maldivian Minister is on a 4 day official visit to India during which he would be visiting military establishments in various parts of the country.

During the meeting with Shri Antony on 15 April, the Maldivian Minister was accompanied by the High Commissioner of Maldives in India and

other senior officers of the Maldivian National Defence Forces. On the Indian side, Defence Secretary, DGAFMS, the Indian High Commissioner in Male and senior officers of the Armed Forces and from the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs were present. The official meeting was preceded by the Maldivian Defence Minister's visit and laying of a wreath at the Amar Jawan Jyoti and a ceremonial tri-Service Guard of Honour at South Block.

During the meeting, both sides noted that defence cooperation between India and Maldives has been growing over the years, to the mutual benefit of both sides. As close neighbours sharing common security concerns, there is scope to further develop the relationship in mutually agreed areas. Shri Antony conveyed that India stands committed to enhance the ongoing defence and security partnership with Maldives. Ongoing exchanges between the Armed Forces of both sides in areas of training, exercises and strengthening of infrastructure and capabilities were reviewed by both Ministers. It was decided to take measures to further enhance such exchanges. Both sides also agreed that there is a need for India and Maldives to continue to work together to tackle security concerns, in the interests of peace and stability in the region.



165. Press Release on the visit of External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid to Nepal and Fact Sheet on Nepal.

New Delhi, July 9, 2013.

India's External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid, visited Nepal on 9th July 2013 at the invitation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal, Hon'ble Mr. Madhav Prasad Ghimire. Both the Ministers held official talks covering all aspects of bilateral relations and issues of mutual interests. The talks were held in an atmosphere of utmost cordiality and warmth.

During his visit, the Minister of External Affairs of India called on Rt. Hon. Dr. Ram Baran Yadav, President of Nepal and Rt. Hon. Mr. Khil Raj Regmi, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Nepal.

External Affairs Minister of India reiterated the fact that, as a close friend, India remains strongly committed to the success of Nepal's peace

process and institutionalisation of democracy in Nepal in a constitutional and multi-party framework. India is supportive of the successful conduct of free and fair election for the Constituent Assembly-cum-Parliament on 19th November 2013.

The visit afforded both Ministers the opportunity to review the current progress of India-Nepal partnership, some of the highlights of which are as follows:

Logistics for Constituent Assembly-cum-Parliamentary Election

Government of India has agreed to provide all the logistical support for the security agencies and Election Commission of Nepal as requested by the Government of Nepal. This comprises 764 different types of vehicles costing approximately NRs 800 million. The vehicles will be delivered to the Government of Nepal by October 2013. The two sides exchanged Letters to this effect.

Water resources

The Ministers reviewed the joint efforts against flood-related disasters, including the repair and maintenance works at major border rivers, especially Kosi and Gandak. Besides activating all the existing bilateral consultative mechanisms and maintaining the embankments of Kosi and Gandak under the respective bilateral agreements, India has provided grant assistance of NRS 2.543 billion during the past three years for protection works on the Kamala, Lalbakya, Khando and Bagmati rivers. For the current year, an amount of NRS 256.94 million has been released for this purpose, and a further amount of NRs 374.47 million will be made available later in the year. In addition, India has committed grant assistance of NRS 181.37 million under the bilateral Small Development Projects for flood protection works along Trijuga, Lkahndehi, Sunsari, Kankai, and Kaligandaki rivers and NRs 95.2 million along Gagan river.

Augmenting electricity supply

To augment electricity supply from India to Nepal, particularly during the lean season, India has already implemented short-term grid connectivity projects (grant assistance of NRs 124.6 million), resulting in Nepal importing an additional 80 MWs of electricity through 14 different upgraded exchange points in the last lean season. A further medium-term grid upgradation project (amounting to grant assistance of NRs 464 million)

has been tendered. This will enable a further drawing of between 120 – 175 MWs of electricity from India, whenever required. To supplement financing of the long-term cross-border grid connectivity from Muzaffarpur to Dhalkebar, India's Eximbank is contributing U.S. \$13.2 million.

Exim Bank Line of Credit

Specific approvals have been obtained last month for Phase II of the Rahughat Hydroelectric Project, 220 KV Kosi Corridor Transmission Line Project, 132 KV Solu Corridor Transmission Live Project, and the 132 KV Modi Leknath Transmission Line Project, for utilising \$175 million or NRs 15.8 billion out of the existing \$250 million Exim bank's Line of Credit for Nepal. Approvals for utilisation of the balance amount, for the construction of roads within Nepal, are in the pipeline.

Trade and economic cooperation

India accounts for nearly two-thirds of Nepal's foreign trade, 70% of Nepal's exports, and almost half of its foreign direct investments. The Ministers felt the need to continue consultations on measures to promote trade bilaterally and with third countries to optimize opportunities for Nepal's economic growth, including on finalising legal and administrative arrangements for additional transit routes, revision of the Rail Services Agreement to enable the implementation of the long-standing Nepalese request for the movement of open box wagons and transit of bulk cargo movement on flat wagons, finalisation of the Motor Vehicles Agreement, energy banking and power trading, currency conversion facilitation, new routes for increased air-connectivity, and strengthening Nepal's capacity for certification for food and agriculture products exports by establishing testing and lab facilities along the India-Nepal border.

Defence cooperation

India-Nepal defence ties include military educational exchanges, joint exercises, and supplies of military stores and equipment, as required by Nepal. Following the successful completion of integration of former Maoists combatants into the Nepal Army (NA) and the decision of the Government of Nepal to resume imports of stores and equipment for NA, these materials, identified in the Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues, will be supplied to Nepal over the coming months (the immediate supplies sought are valued at NRs 1.76 billion)

Development partnership

The Ministers reviewed progress of the bilateral development partnership programme, which includes large, cross-border connectivity and infrastructure projects, as well as community and grass-roots oriented Small Development Projects (SDPs) in the key areas of education, health and rural infrastructure. The infrastructure projects include construction of four Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) for trade promotion and facilitation, 1450 kms of Terai Roads, and cross-border rail links at five locations. In the first phase, works have been taken up in two of the four ICPs (grant assistance of NRs 4.32 billion for the segment falling in Nepal), six segments of Terai Roads Project (totalling 605 kms entailing grant assistance of NRs 11 billion) and two of the five rail connections (grant assistance of NRs 10.4 billion). Under SDPs, of the 425 projects undertaken, 218 have been completed. The current year's outlay for these development projects is NRs 6.08 billion.

India partners Nepal in capacity building and human resource development. This year, the number of scholarships offered to Nepalese students has nearly doubled to 3,000. The number of training programmes under India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) & Colombo Plan has also gone up to 230 from 100 last year.



166. Press statement on the situation in Maldives.

New Delhi, February 13, 2013.

Following the arrest warrant issued against him by the Hulhumale Magistrate Court, the former Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed, who is a candidate for the Presidential elections in Maldives scheduled for September 2013, is in the Indian High Commission and has sought India's assistance. We are in touch with the relevant Maldivian authorities to resolve the situation.

As a close and friendly neighbour, India has expressed concern over the ongoing political instability in Maldives and called upon the Government and all political parties to adhere strictly to democratic principles and the rule of law, thereby paving the way for free, fair, credible and inclusive

elections. Now that the President of the Election Commission of Maldives has announced that Presidential elections would be held on 7 September 2013, it is necessary that the Presidential nominees of recognized political parties be free to participate in the elections without any hindrance. Prevention of participation by political leaders in the contest would call into question the integrity of the electoral process, thereby perpetuating the current political instability in Maldives. This is not in the interest of Maldives or the region. India would call upon the Government and all political parties in Maldives to avoid any actions that would vitiate the political atmosphere in the Maldives.



167. External Affairs Minister's telephonic discussion with the Foreign Minister of Maldives.

New Delhi, February 15, 2013.

In response to a question, the Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs said:

“The Minister of External Affairs Mr. Salman Khurshid had a telephonic discussion with the Foreign Minister of Maldives yesterday. It was recalled that India has traditional and age old ties of friendship and cooperation with Maldives. India has been working with the Government and other relevant authorities in Maldives to strengthen the democratic framework in that country.

As part of its commitment to multi-party democracy, India has broad based contacts with all political parties and democratic institutions in Maldives without interfering in the internal affairs of that country.

India has also stressed in the past that it would like to see free, fair, credible and inclusive elections leading up to a stable, peaceful and prosperous Maldives. India would be happy to work with the Government and all political parties in the facilitation of this objective.

The Maldives Foreign Minister assured the External Affairs Minister that the Maldivian Government would do its utmost to prevent any precipitate

act that adversely affects the atmosphere for a free and fair democratic process and rule of law.”



168. Official Spokesperson’s response on former President Nasheed leaving the Indian High Commission in Male.

New Delhi, February 23, 2013.

In response to a question, the Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs stated the following:

“Mr. Mohamed Nasheed, former President of Maldives, had left the premises of the High Commission of India, Male at 1615 hrs (IST) today. It will be recalled that the former President had entered the Indian Mission in Male on 13 February 2013 on his own volition and had similarly decided to leave on his own. It is hoped that with this development the former President will again resume his social and political life. The visiting Indian delegation led by Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and the High Commissioner of India to Maldives had held a series of meeting with the officials of the Government of Maldives and other stake holders in this context. The Government of India wishes to thank all those who have cooperated in these efforts.

India has been working closely with the Government and other relevant stakeholders in Maldives to strengthen the democratic framework of the country. India has maintained broad based contacts with all political parties and democratic institutions in Maldives without interfering in its internal affairs. The Government of India urges all parties to maintain peace and calm and hopes to continue its positive engagement in the spirit of the close and friendly relations between the two countries.

The Minister of External Affairs Shri Salman Khurshid has conveyed to his Maldivian counterpart that India has traditional and age old ties of friendship and cooperation with Maldives. India would be happy to support all efforts to create favourable conditions for free, fair, credible and inclusive Presidential elections in September 2013 that can contribute to durable peace, stability and prosperity in Maldives and the region.”



169. Response of Official Spokesperson to the arrest of the former President of Maldives.

New Delhi, March 5, 2013.

In response to a query on the arrest of the former President of Maldives, the Official Spokesperson said:

“We have received information that former President Nasheed was taken into (Police) custody following an order issued by the Hulhumale Magistrate Court to produce him at 1600 hrs on March 6, 2013;

India expects due process and the Rule of Law would be followed; We would urge all concerned to exercise caution and restraint and not to resort to any violence or extra-constitutional means and steps which would weaken the democratic system;

We have been informed that former President Nasheed's lawyers and family are going to meet him now as allowed by the authorities;

We are monitoring the situation closely.”



170. Response of the Official Spokesperson to a question in connection with the Presidential Elections in Maldives.

New Delhi, August 30, 2013.

“India welcomes the holding of Presidential elections in the Maldives on 7 September 2013. We attach importance to the holding of free, fair and credible elections in a peaceful environment followed by a smooth transition.

India has been engaged with all Presidential candidates and political leaders in Maldives in its efforts to facilitate a smooth political process leading up to Presidential elections. Several Maldivian political leaders have visited India including President Dr. Mohamed Waheed in May 2012; former President Mr. Mohamed Nasheed in August 2013; former President Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom in June 2013; and Mr. Abdulla Yameen in August 2013. In addition, India had also received in 2013,

delegations led by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maldives Mr. Ahmed Faiz Hussain in June; Speaker of People's Majlis Mr. Abdulla Shahid in May; and Defence Minister Mr. Mohamed Nazim in April.

India is committed to strengthening the institutions of democracy in the Maldives. In this context, the Election Commission of India is working closely with the Elections Commission of Maldives to further strengthen its capacity. India is also arranging for the training of Maldivian Judges in India.

In response to an invitation from the Elections Commission of Maldives, the Government of India proposes to send a high-level team of observers for the Presidential elections in Maldives consisting of former Chief Election Commissioners of India, Mr. J.M. Lyngdoh, Mr. B.B. Tandon and Mr. N. Gopala Swami, and former High Commissioner of India to Maldives, Mr. S.M. Gavai. The observers are scheduled to reach Male on 1st September 2013 and would undertake visits to a number of polling stations in different islands.

India attaches the highest importance to its relations with Maldives, a close and friendly neighbour, and desires to see a peaceful, stable and prosperous Maldives.



171. Response of the Official Spokesperson to a question on Presidential Elections in Maldives.

New Delhi, September 9, 2013.

“We congratulate the people of Maldives for the peaceful conclusion of the first round of Presidential elections held on September 7, 2013. The exceptionally high turnout of 88.44% was indicative of the high commitment attached by the people of Maldives towards a consolidation of democracy in the country.

The high-level delegation of Indian Observers had noted that polling was “orderly and unblemished by any notable incident”. The six teams of Indian Observers covered 158 polling booths (33.6% of total booths) across the country. They appreciated the competence, industry and cheerfulness of the election staff; mutual trust between the candidates’ representatives and counting personnel; and above all the discipline, patience and dignity of the Maldivian voters.

India encourages the people and all concerned in Maldives to ensure an environment conducive to a peaceful and transparent second round of Presidential elections on September 28, 2013.

India reiterates its commitment to strengthening the institutions of democracy in the Maldives and expresses the conviction that the candidates would accept the verdict of the people and work together for a peaceful transition.”



* The Spokesperson was referring to the recently concluded first round of Presidential elections in Maldives. The ousted President Nasheed though secured a high percentage of votes yet fell short of 50 percent of the electorate, thus necessitating a second round of voting between the two candidates who secured the highest number of votes.

172. Official Spokesperson's response to media queries regarding the recent developments related to the Presidential elections in Maldives.

September 18, 2013.

In response to media queries regarding the recent developments related to the Presidential elections in Maldives, the official spokesperson said:

“We have seen reports on developments in the aftermath of the first round of the Presidential elections in Maldives, held on September 7, 2013. We once again commend the people and Government of Maldives for successfully conducting the first round of Presidential elections in a peaceful and organised manner.

The exceptionally high turnout of voters as well as smooth conduct of elections in an orderly fashion unblemished by any notable incident demonstrated the high commitment reposed by the people of Maldives in democratic process and in consolidation of democracy in the country. The high-level delegation of Indian Observers as well as international observers from the UN and Commonwealth have all noted that polling was fair, transparent and orderly.

It is important that all sides respect the verdict and aspirations of the people of Maldives. We hope that the second round of Presidential elections will be held as scheduled on September 28, 2013 in a similar transparent, organised and peaceful manner.

As a long-standing friend of Maldives committed to strengthening the institutions of democracy in the country, India believes that it is of utmost importance that the electoral process is allowed to proceed unhindered so that the second round is conducted according to schedule and the will of the people of Maldives is fully recognised.”



173. Official Spokesperson's response to queries regarding recent developments related to Presidential elections in Maldives.

New Delhi, September 24, 2014.

"It would be recalled that India has consistently conveyed its support for the democratic process in Maldives. It was in this regard that India had called for free, fair and credible Presidential elections in meeting the aspirations of the people of Maldives. The first round of Presidential elections was held on 7 September 2013 in a transparent, organised and peaceful manner. This was acknowledged by domestic and international observers, including those from India.

We have seen recent reports that the Supreme Court of Maldives has postponed the second round of Presidential elections scheduled to be held on 28 September 2013. This development has resulted in uncertainty concerning the second round, which may have an impact on peace, stability and security in the country.

We, therefore, call upon all concerned in the Maldives to address the current situation at the earliest so that the electoral process could be resumed in a manner that respects the will of the Maldivian people. In this context, it is important that the second round of the Presidential elections is held as scheduled and the candidate elected by the people of Maldives assumes the Presidency on 11th November 2013 as mandated by the Constitution."



* In the mean time the Elections Commission of Maldives (ECM) announced that it was continuing preparatory work to hold the second round of polls as scheduled on September 28. "While awaiting for the Supreme Court verdict on this matter we are continuing the preparation work to hold the election on the previously scheduled date 28th September 2013 so that in case, if the Supreme Court issues a ruling on this matter before the scheduled date of this election we would be able to hold the second round of Presidential Election as previously planned," it said in a communication. Noting that the Elections Commission of Maldives was ordered by the Maldivian Supreme Court to postpone the second round of Presidential Elections till it reached a verdict on a case filed by a political party that competed in the first round but did not reach the second round, the ECM said that it was going ahead with preparations. Hectic parleys continued among political parties and government officials in the wake of the Indian statement on the elections. India wants the polls to go ahead as scheduled. Meanwhile, the Australian Government, in a statement, noted that "it is important that the results of the democratic process are respected." It welcomed "the positive findings of international observers, including the Commonwealth Observer Group, on the conduct of the recent first round of Presidential Elections in the Maldives. These elections are an important step in entrenching democracy following the disputed transfer of power there in February 2012.

174. Declaration of Verdict on Presidential Election by the Supreme Court of Maldives.

New Delhi, October 10, 2013.

We have noted the Supreme Court verdict announced on 7 October 2013 annulling the first round of the Presidential elections held on 7 September 2013 and announcing a fresh schedule of elections.

As a close friend and neighbour, India has consistently supported the strengthening of democratic processes and institutions in Maldives. We believe that it is important that the stalled electoral process is put back on track. India strongly urges that the fresh elections dates stipulated in the verdict are adhered to so that a new President is elected in accordance with the wishes and democratic aspirations of the people of Maldives.

We deplore the recent incidents of political violence and appeal to all sides to maintain peace and calm and to refrain from extra-constitutional measures.

We encourage all concerned in Maldives to work for free, fair, inclusive and credible elections in a peaceful environment followed by a smooth transition on 11 November 2013, as stipulated by the Constitution of Maldives. In this regard, we welcome the statement issued by the Maldives' President today afternoon condemning efforts to stop former President Mohamed Nasheed from running for office of President of Maldives.

India continues to stand by its commitment to work with the Government of Maldives and its state institutions for success of elections.



175. Press Statement of the Government of India on the Presidential elections in Maldives.

New Delhi, October 19, 2013.

India is deeply disappointed that the repeat first round of the Presidential elections was not held as scheduled today, October 19 and that the Elections Commission was not allowed to proceed with holding elections as per its Constitutional mandate.

India and the international community have been closely watching the developments in Maldives and are seriously concerned at the attempts to stall the democratic process. It is for the people of Maldives to decide their future, and their strong desire to elect a new president is evident from the turnout of 88% in the first round of elections held on September 7, 2013, which was considered free and fair by the large contingent of international and domestic observers present.

Keeping in mind the wishes and aspirations of the people of Maldives, who have so far shown admirable patience and restraint, it is important

* India expressed "deep concern" over the fact that the rescheduled first round of polls to be held on October 19, were being put off. In a release issued in Male on October 18 night, the Indian High Commission in Male said: "We call upon all political parties to show a spirit of understanding, cooperation and accommodation by supporting the efforts for holding elections as scheduled, including accepting of the voters' register. Holding free, fair and credible elections without further delay is essential without further delay is essential for fulfilling the political aspirations of the people of Maldives." Earlier the Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh who was in Male asked all Maldivian leaders to accept the outcome of the elections so that there was a "smooth transfer of power". Media reports said she had expressed the hope and expectation that the electoral process would proceed as scheduled with the first round to be held on October 19, and if required, the second round before November 3 so that a new President was sworn in on November 11 as stipulated by the constitution of Maldives. She said she "strongly conveyed" to all parties to accept the results of elections to enable a smooth transfer of power and reconciliation post elections. New Delhi was disappointed that the elections had to be postponed for technical reasons.

Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh had rushed to the Maldives to discuss the prevailing political situation in the Maldives. During her stay, she called on incumbent President Mohamed Waheed, met with Defence Minister Mohamed Nazim, former President Abdul Gayoom and presidential candidates — former President Mohamed Nasheed and Gasim Ibrahim. Media quoted sources in Maldives to suggest that during her meetings, she conveyed that as a "close-friend and a strategic partner" of Maldives, India had always supported the efforts for a peaceful, prosperous and stable Maldives and the strengthening of its democratic process and institutions.

that the electoral process is put back on track immediately with a definite timeline so that a new president is elected and sworn in on November 11, 2013 as mandated by the constitution.

India calls upon the Government of Maldives and all parties concerned to fulfil their responsibility towards the people of Maldives by playing a constructive role in the elections process and fully assisting the Elections Commission in holding the Presidential elections without further delay. India also calls upon all parties to abjure violence and maintain calm.



176. Prime Minister congratulates Mr Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, newly elected President of the Republic of Maldives.

November 18, 2013.

Excellency,

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you my heartiest congratulations on your victory in the presidential elections. Your success is also a triumph for the forces of democratic pluralism in the Maldives. I am confident that, under your stewardship, Maldives will move further ahead on the path of stability, peace, progress and development.

India and Maldives are bound together by historical, cultural and civilizational ties. Our geographical proximity has provided a strong foundation for the close and friendly relations that have been built between our two countries. I would like to reiterate what I had the occasion to mention to Your Excellency when we met in Delhi earlier this year, namely, that India attaches the highest importance to its relationship

* Newly-elected President of Maldives Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has assured Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that he prioritised relations with India and was keen on finding ways to enhance the longstanding close friendly ties between the two countries if Dr. Singh decides to visit Male.

Replying to a congratulatory message sent out by Dr. Singh on November 17 after he won the elections defeating the former President, Mohd. Nasheed, Mr. Yameen pointed out that his first formal appointment with a foreign dignitary was with Indian High Commissioner Rajiv Sahare.

with Maldives. As you prepare to take office, I wish you a successful tenure and assure you of India's full support in your endeavour to provide a peaceful and prosperous future for the people of Maldives.

Pl accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Mammohan Singh)



177. Press Release of the Ministry of Defence on strengthening the Defence relations with Maldives.

New Delhi, December 12, 2013.

Defence Minister Shri AK Antony has reiterated India's commitment to continue to strengthen bilateral defence relations with Maldives. Meeting with Maldivian Minister of Defence and National Security H.E. Mohamed Nazim here today, Shri Antony conveyed continued support to the strengthening of medical facilities and expertise for the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF). During the meeting, training of Maldivian medical specialists in India, deputation of Indian Armed Forces medical specialists to Maldives and strengthening of medical infrastructure in Maldives were among the proposals discussed. Shri Antony also announced that all MNDF personnel will henceforth be eligible for treatment in Armed Forces medical institutions in India for major surgeries and for treatment of major and serious illnesses. The Maldivian Defence Minister conveyed his appreciation of the assistance being provided by India in this regard.

Both Ministers also discussed and agreed to pursue measures to enhance interactions between the Armed Forces of both countries. The continued conduct of bilateral exercise was discussed and it was agreed that the next joint exercise between both sides will be held in 2014.

During the one hour long meeting, both Defence Ministers discussed a number of issues relating to regional security and matters pertaining to bilateral defence cooperation between both countries. The Maldivian Defence Minister was accompanied by the Maldivian High Commissioner to India and senior officers of the Maldivian National Defence Force (MNDF). From the Indian side, Defence Secretary, Vice Chief of Naval

Staff and senior officers of the Armed Forces, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of External Affairs were present at the meeting.

Earlier, the Maldivian Defence Minister laid a wreath at Amar JawanJyoti and was accorded a ceremonial Guard of Honour.

The visiting dignitary will also be visiting Kochi on 14 December, 2013 and would be visiting naval facilities under the Southern Naval Command. During the visit, an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) manufactured by HAL will also be symbolically handed over to the MNDF in the presence of the Minister. The ALH is expected to be positioned in Male by early 2014 and would be the second ALH to be provided to Maldives.



* The Helicopter referred to in the last paragraph above was handed over to Maldives on 14th December 2013. This is the second naval Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), Dhruv, to the Maldives in a gesture that was described by Maldivian Minister for Defence Mohamed Nazim as “paving the way for further strengthening of ties between both countries.” A brand new, Mark-III (the latest) variant of the India-made multi-role helicopter in Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) colours was unveiled at a simple ceremony attended by Mr. Nazim, Vice-Admiral Satish Soni, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of India’s Southern Naval Command, and MNDF Brigadier General Ali Zuhair besides senior formations from both sides, officials from the Ministry of External Affairs and representatives of the helicopter manufacturer, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, at naval air station Garuda in Kochi. On the last leg of his visit to India Mr. Nazim said the Maldives maintained a friendly and cordial relation with its neighbours, especially India, which stood by the nation whenever it needed support. Defence cooperation between both countries grew drastically over the past few years with Indian armed forces, particularly the Navy, contributing greatly to MNDF’s capacity-building. He said the ‘gift’ would help the island nation’s Coast Guard carry out search and rescue and medical evacuation from its far-flung territories. Vice-Admiral Soni said India shared long-standing ties with Maldives. While Indian Navy trained MNDF personnel and despatched its ships and aircraft to patrol the Maldivian exclusive economic zone, the Maldives contributed to security in the Indian Ocean region by enhanced surveillance and anti-piracy patrol. The nation also actively participated in forums such as the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and the biennial exercise Milan. Vice-Admiral Soni told the media later that provisioning the ALH, the face of India’s aviation industry, was indicative of the importance India attached to its relationship with the island nation. While the ALH already in operation with the Maldivian Coast Guard was based at the southern Maldivian island of Addu, the more advanced, second helicopter — which also sports a weather radar— would operate from the northern Hannimadhoo Island, primarily on medical evacuation duty. The helicopter would be initially manned and maintained by an all-Indian crew.

NEPAL**178. Prime Minister congratulates Chairman Regmi of Nepal.
New Delhi, March 14, 2013.**

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has congratulated Chairman Khil Raj Regmi on his assumption of office as Head of the Interim Election Government of Nepal. In his message the Prime Minister commended the people of Nepal on reaching an agreement that is an important step in consolidating Nepal's democratic gains and institutionalizing multi party democracy.

The text of the Prime Minister's message is as follows:

"Please accept our felicitations on assuming the office of the Chairman of the Cabinet of the Interim Election Government of Nepal. I commend the people and political parties of Nepal on reaching the agreement, which represents an important step in taking forward the political process in Nepal for consolidating the democratic gains and institutionalizing multi-party democracy in the country.

I have the greatest pleasure in conveying to you the best wishes of the Government and the people of India as you prepare to undertake the critical task of holding early elections for the Constituent Assembly-cum-Parliament of Nepal. India stands ready to provide any assistance required for the successful conduct of the elections.

India remains steadfast in its support to the people of Nepal in their effort to build a stable, democratic and prosperous Nepal."



179. Press Statement on behalf of the Government of India on formation of new Interim Election Government in Nepal.

New Delhi, March 14, 2013.

Government welcomes the formation today of the Interim Election Government led by the Chief Justice of Nepal, Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Khil Raj Regmi. We commend the people of Nepal and the political parties representing them for finding a way out of the impasse of the past few months.

The formation of the Interim Election Government in Nepal comes at a critical juncture in Nepal's quest to hold Constituent Assembly-cum-Parliament Elections, which is essential to consolidate the democratic gains made by its people and institutionalise a strong multi-party democracy in Nepal. We hope that the Interim Election Government, with the support of all the political parties and the people of Nepal, will move forward in the spirit of the political agreements reached, including with regard to the election.

India stands behind the people of Nepal in their efforts to build a stable, democratic and prosperous Nepal and will continue to extend all possible cooperation to the people and Government of Nepal in accordance with their aspirations and priorities.



180. Government of India's Statement on the successful conduct of free and fair elections in Nepal.

New Delhi, November 19, 2013.

The successful conduct of free and fair elections today in Nepal for the Constituent Assembly-cum-Parliament is an important step towards realising Nepal's goal of a democratic and prosperous future. The people of Nepal, political parties, Government and security forces and the Election Commission of Nepal deserve to be congratulated for this achievement. The impressive turnout reflects the faith that the people of Nepal have reposed in the democratic process.

Government of India was happy to extend necessary logistical support for the smooth conduct of elections, in accordance with the request of the Government of Nepal.

India believes that the early promulgation of a new Constitution reflecting the aspirations of the people of Nepal together with progress on the development agenda would contribute to peace, prosperity and stability in Nepal. As a close friend and neighbour, India stands ready to support the Government and people of Nepal in their historic endeavours.



PAKISTAN

181. Cease fire violation across the Line of Control.

New Delhi, January 8, 2013.

In response to a question on violation of cease fire across the Line of Control, the Official Spokesperson stated:

“We deny that Indian troops had crossed the Line of Control in the Rampur sector, or had violated the cease fire.

The fact is that in the early hours of January 6, Pakistan troops in the sector commenced unprovoked firing on Indian troops. The roof of a civilian house in Churunda village was damaged in the Pak mortar fire. Indian troops undertook controlled retaliation in response.

India is strongly committed to the sanctity of the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir, which is the most important Confidence Building Measure between the two countries. The cease fire along the Line of Control, which has largely held since 2003, is an important element of this Confidence Building Measure. The Director Generals for Military Operations (DGsMO) of both sides have spoken to each other on the incident.

We call upon the Pakistani authorities to ensure that the sanctity of the Line of Control is upheld at all times, and to ensure that such incidents of unprovoked firing across the LoC do not recur.”



182. India summons Pakistan High Commissioner and lodges a strong protest on the actions of Pakistan army.

New Delhi, January 9, 2013.

Foreign Secretary Shri Ranjan Mathai summoned Pakistan High Commissioner to the Ministry of External Affairs today and lodged a strong protest on the actions of the Pakistan army on January 8, 2013. Regular Pakistani troops crossed the Line of Control at Mendhar sector and engaged the Indian troops who were patrolling this sector. Two Indian soldiers were killed in the attack and their bodies subjected to barbaric and inhuman mutilation. The Government of Pakistan was asked to immediately investigate these actions that are in contravention of all norms of international conduct and ensure that these do not recur. Foreign Secretary recalled that the experts of both countries had met in New Delhi on December 27, 2012 to discuss conventional CBMs, wherein maintaining the sanctity of the LOC, one of the most important CBMs between the two countries, was emphasized.



183. Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister responding to a crisis across the Line of Control.

New Delhi, January 9, 2013.

Q: Sir, Yesterday the barbaric manner in which two of our Indian soldiers were killed and the head of one of them was taken away by them, how have the Government of India protested? Will there be an immediate action in this that at least they return the head of the Indian soldier?

External Affairs Minister: *Whatever has happened is very sad. And any amount of its condemnation is not enough. The entire country has felt sad at this unfortunate incident. We have condemned it in the strongest term. The Pakistan envoy was called to the ministry and told that he should convey our message to his government urgently.*

There are two issues. One is that the ceasefire line and LOC has been violated. This is itself a mistake and its impact would be unfortunate. This will impact our efforts in recent months to improve the relations, normalise

the relations. This incident that has happened I agree that on the question of human rights, and whatever action is required will be taken. We have in clear terms told Pakistan and we will see what more action can be taken on this, or what will be their reaction from their side.

Q: Sir, you said that we must not allow the situation to escalate, and that if this is not contained it could adversely affect our efforts to normalize ties. Is the onus on India or on Pakistan at this moment to ensure that this does not happen?

External Affairs Minister: Frankly, I think that whatever we do with Pakistan is in mutual interest of both countries and indeed for the entire region and the world. It is more than clear now at this time as to who is responsible for violation and also who is responsible for an act which is inhuman and cannot possibly be accepted. Therefore, the onus obviously flows from that. Having said that, I think it is important that we take a responsible position. Our sense of hurt and our sense of indignation are very obvious and we have emphasized this in no uncertain terms. But I still think that we have to be careful that forces that are attempting to derail all the good work that has been done towards normalization should not be successful.

Q: Sir, *That question that also came up in the case of Surabh Kali, this is also violation of international norms; you have also expressed your concern on this and expressed anger too. Will India like to raise this issue at international fora? Would you take this up at the UN Human Rights Commission?*

External Affairs Minister: *it cannot be answered immediately. The reason being it has a particular aspect. Earlier also similar issue was raised in another connection at the international level, we regard it a bilateral issue between the two countries, and there should be no outside intervention; it is not desirable or possible to do so. It is an issue which has to be considered seriously and then come to some actionable measure, It do not think it is the right time to tell you about this aspect.*

Q: what about the families? Aur jo parivar hai,...

External Affairs Minister: *for the martyrs, from our side and Defence Ministry side whatever can be done will be done. The Defence Ministry*

after due consideration on this issue will take necessary action. At this time we want to send a clear message to the Pakistan Government. We want their clear reaction should be available to us. We want to settle this matter here itself. Let us see what happens.

Q: Sir, you say you are expecting the response of the Pakistani side. They have already said, their ISPR said that their soldiers have not done it. So, their response is clear.

External Affairs Minister: We have summoned the High Commissioner. We have given a very clear message to the High Commissioner. We expect we will get a response back.

Q: Sir, is it time that India reviews its policy towards Pakistan and redefines its engagement with Pakistan?

External Affairs Minister: I do not think that we need to go into a dramatic review. These are factors that are constantly taken in to account as we move forward. We are careful about ensuring that we do not move too soon, too fast, and then leave ground uncovered. Therefore, whenever there are positive or negative developments that take place, they are factored into our plans. They are factored into the roadmap. And I am sure that that will happen in this case as well.

Q: Sir, there is a public sentiment that the nation should honour those who are defending our troubled frontiers, it should look after their honour especially in this context, and that it should be reflected in the dialogue process with Pakistan.

External Affairs Minister: The gratitude that we owe, and I think it is a gratitude the whole nation owes, to the young men and women who fight at the borders and who protect and provide security to all of us on the borders in peace time or in times of war is something that can never be overstated. I think that the nation joins the family in deep sorrow and determination that this is something that we must make sure does not get repeated. But having said that, I cannot specifically today indicate what the impact of any one or a series of events has on policy that we finally decide in terms of an overall perspective. That is obviously something that will become apparent as we go forward. But I can tell you this much that any such event inevitably gets factored into our policy making.

Q: *the road map you prepared for peace with Pakistan and gave permission for Pakistani cricket team to visit India, do you think after this incident, it will impact the road map for peace with Pakistan? Can that be delayed after this incident?*

External Affairs Minister: *I wont be able to tell you. I believe if proper steps are taken, it can help in moving forward, as against that it can also impeded the progress. What is our goal and what we have to do to achieve it. If we look at this incident I agree it is regress step. This incident cannot help us to go ahead. When any thing like this happens, we have to carefully think and then proceed further. I agree what we have to do and what is expected of us, we have acted like that. If there is any other consideration we would let you know.*

Q: Sir, do you consider this a war crime?

External Affairs Minister: I am not here actually to define the nature of the event that has happened except to say that it is completely unacceptable; it is very sad; it is very hurtful; and I think extremely counterproductive in terms of what we need to achieve and what we were determined to do as late as 27th of December when we met to review the confidence building measures. So, obviously it is counterproductive. And I can just express both my sorrow and to an extent my indignation. We have already done that. We have conveyed the message to the High Commissioner and, as I said, we hope that there will be an adequate and reasonable response.

Thank you very much

(Concluded)

Text in italics is unofficial translation of Hindi transliteration of the original)



184. Official Spokesperson's briefing.**New Delhi, January 11, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson: I think with that we come to the end of this element. If you have any questions on anything else, I will be willing to answer them.

Q: Sir, what is our response to the demarche by Pakistan Foreign Office to Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad over the reported killing of one Pakistani soldier by Indian army?

Official Spokesperson: You are right that the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad was called to the Pakistani Foreign Office today afternoon. He met the Pakistani Foreign Secretary Mr. Jilani. At the meeting he was handed a note verbale regarding an incident that is said to have occurred at the Hotspring Sector on the LoC on 10th January, 2013. This is said to have led to the death of a Pakistani soldier. Those are the contents of that note verbale.

The High Commissioner in his response stated that as we understand it there has been unprovoked firing from the Pakistani side in the afternoon yesterday, 10th January, 2013, in the Mendhar sector and there was a controlled response from our side. The High Commissioner also emphasized the sanctity of the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir established after the Simla Agreement of 1972. And he said this was the most important confidence-building measure between India and Pakistan.

Q: *Pakistan has held up 25 of our trucks loaded with Indian good for trade. There is also news that they have stopped our bus also. What you propose to do from your side?*

Official Spokesperson: You are right that as per information received yesterday, that in one of the sector for local reasons, neither any truck nor any bus could come. Our officials are discussing the issue. We shall let you know its outcome.

Q: Has Pakistan also stopped the cross LoC bus service?

Official Spokesperson: I think he was referring to the same issue. There is only one issue there. My understanding is that because of local circumstances, yesterday the gates could not be opened on the Pakistani

side on one route which has led to both the trucks and the bus not being able to go. At this stage, there will be a discussion with the concerned authorities and we will let you know the outcome of this.

Q: Sir, we heard the National Security Advisor yesterday pretty much dismissing any mandate the UN Military Observers Group might have in terms of investigating ceasefire violations. But again we have heard from Pakistan's Foreign Minister following the NSA's clarification. What do you make of this public sparring on this particular issue? What is India's position? Do they have a mandate? What is their presence in India all about?

Official Spokesperson: You know it is well-known that following the signing of the Simla Agreement in January 1972 and the establishment of the Line of Control, the UNMOGIP has no relevance or role to play whatsoever. The Simla Agreement commits both countries to resolve all issues through bilateral negotiations.

Many of you have raised this question time and again. I would just like to mention to all of you that we are in 2013. Let us not look at instrumentalities which were last used more than forty years ago to try and solve problems of today and to avoid any future problems. India and Pakistan have a mechanism for trying to resolve these issues bilaterally. The DGMOs have been in touch. We have regular interactions at the diplomatic level. And we are fully capable of handling all these matters without any reference whatsoever to either what you mentioned to or to any other third party. I hope I have made that very very clear.

Q: Sir, the Pakistan Foreign Office summoned the Indian Deputy High Commissioner and then the High Commissioner today in a space of less than five days basically to protest ceasefire violation according to them. There were 117 ceasefire violations reported by India last year. For any of the ceasefire violations which happened from either side, did the Pakistanis summon India's High Commissioner or Deputy High Commissioner in Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: You would have known that before if they had, like you knew of the last instance. Question: Mr. Menon has met today his counterpart from China. Could you please tell us about the outcome of the meeting? Official Spokesperson: I am afraid I do not have a full readout of that. But based on our understanding the idea was Mr. Dai

Bingo, the Special Representative from the Chinese side, is here for a multilateral event, the meeting of BRICS National Security Advisors or the High Representatives for National Security. This was sort of a meeting on the sidelines of that. I do not have a full readout of that meeting but my understanding is that it was to cover all issues of bilateral interest. Also, this is likely to be Mr. Dai Bingo's last visit to India, and so, a sort of summary of what has been the interaction so far. But I do not have a specific readout of all issues that were covered.

Q: Sir, despite leaders meeting on both the sides for de-escalation of violence ... (Inaudible)... Where do you think does the solution lie?

Official Spokesperson: I think we have mentioned that the DGMOs are in contact and the solutions, as required, are being sorted out bilaterally.

Q: *Pakistan denies every time that there is some thing happening on their side. When you provide the proof, they don't accept. They repeat innocence. Despite this you go on saying that we have to sit down and talk. They are not violating Simla agreement for the first time. They have done it before also. When Musharraf came, even then he did not accept that there was any issue. We only show large heartedness. Our people ask, it is not that we are saying, why should we extend our hand of friendship? How many time are we to be betrayed?*

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much for that enlightened discourse on India-Pakistan relations. But this has been an established policy of all our leadership that ultimately we have to work out our problems with our neighbours. Neighbours are not going to go away. Therefore, it is in the interest of India and Pakistan both to work out a relationship which will ensure peace and security for both our people. I understand your concern. It is those concerns which are reflected in Government meetings. So, please do not think that concerns that you have espoused just now are not reflected. These are reflected and are reflected very strongly including in the last meeting that the Foreign Secretary had with the Pakistani High Commissioner here.

Thank you very much

Text in italics is free translation of the Hindi transcription



185. Statement by External Affairs Minister on the killing of two Indian soldiers in the Mendhar sector of LoC.

New Delhi, January 15, 2013.

The recent incident of the killing of two Indian soldiers in the Mendhar sector and the barbaric mutilation of their bodies has been condemned in the strongest possible terms. Government has deplored this grave provocation and repugnant act of the Pakistan army and called on the Government of Pakistan to carry out a proper investigation of this unacceptable action and ensure that this does not recur. This was immediately conveyed by our Director General Military Operations to his Pakistani counterpart after this incident and reiterated during the Brigadier level Flag Meeting held at Chakan da Bagh yesterday. Foreign Secretary had summoned the Pakistan High Commissioner on January 09, a day after this heinous incident and lodged a strong protest on the actions of the Pakistan army.

It should not be felt that the brazen denial and the lack of a proper response from the Government of Pakistan to our repeated demarches on this incident will be ignored and that bilateral relations could be unaffected or that there will be business as usual. Such actions by the Pakistan army, which are in contravention of all norms of international conduct, not only constitute a grave provocation but lead us to draw appropriate conclusions about Pakistan's seriousness in pursuing normalisation of relations with India.



186. Media briefing by External Affairs Minister.**New Delhi, January 15, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson: Good afternoon friends. Thank you very much for coming here at short notice. We have here with us the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid. The idea is that the External Affairs Minister will make a statement and after that, since he has another meeting to attend to, he will take only a couple of questions. With that background I would now request the External Affairs Minister to make his statement.

External Affairs Minister: Thank you very much and good evening. Sorry, we have called you at such a short notice. But, it was largely to do with the sense of urgency that we all have felt about this matter and the enormous curiosity that you have expressed, quite rightly so. This was a matter on which we have reflected very carefully and closely and we believe that at the present juncture it is important that we state this on behalf of the Government very clearly and precisely. And this is what we have to say.

The recent incident of the killing of two Indian soldiers in the Mendhar sector and the barbaric mutilation of their bodies has been condemned in the strongest possible terms. Government has deplored this grave provocation and repugnant act of the Pakistan army and called on the Government of Pakistan to carry out a proper investigation of this unacceptable action and ensure that this does not recur. This was immediately conveyed by our Director General Military Operations to his Pakistani counterpart after this incident and reiterated during the Brigadier level Flag Meeting held at Chakan da Bagh yesterday. Foreign Secretary had summoned the Pakistan High Commissioner on January 09, a day after this heinous incident and lodged a strong protest on the actions of the Pakistan army.

It should not be felt that the brazen denial and the lack of a proper response from the Government of Pakistan to our repeated demarches on this incident will be ignored and that bilateral relations could be unaffected or that there will be business as usual. Such actions by the Pakistan army, which are in contravention of all norms of international conduct, not only constitute a grave provocation but lead us to draw appropriate conclusions about Pakistan's seriousness in pursuing normalisation of relations with India. thank you.

Official Spokesperson: Wait a minute. These are two question , first in English and then in Hindi. Please ask first in Hindi.

Q: *The way the incident has happened, but there is no reaction from Pakistan. The Government has lodged so many protests, but Pakistan's higher authorities have show no reaction. They continue to maintain that it is only Indian propaganda.*

Answer: *We have represented to the Pakistan authorities in very clear terms, we are placing these facts before you because we understand our duty. I agree that we have to face this situation with determination and prudently, that is why we have placed this fact before you. How the situation change in future, we shall see and keep you informed.*

Official Spokesperson: One question in English please.

Q: You said that it is not going to be business as usual. What tangibles is the Government talking about?

Answer: We leave at this point. I thing specifics of what might be necessary or found useful are decisions that will be taken as we move forward. At present, we feel that its important that a convergent single point of view on behalf of the Government which reflects a large section of our public opinion should be made clear and let it be known to everyone here as well as across the border that we are extremely determined and serious in this concern of ours and we have taken resort to all such instruments and all such methods that are available to us at this time.

Official Spokesperson: The Minister has replied. At this stage we will bring this event to an end. And also I would request you please that after this we will not be issuing any further statements. So, you have this on the record and we will also put it on our website in 5 minutes. Thank you very much.

External Affairs Minister: Thank you very much. We will talk later.

(Concluded)



187. Interview of the External Affairs Minister with the *Asian Age*.

New Delhi, January 20, 2013.

“We’ll do what’s appropriate with regard to the soldiers’ killings”

External affairs minister Salman Khurshid says, ‘Nobody should feel that we are not serious about what has happened (on the LoC recently).’ He tells Parul Chandra that India’s dialogue with Pakistan is influenced by the level of satisfaction we get with regard to the Mumbai attacks.

Will the dialogue process with Pakistan be impacted after the recent macabre incident on the Line of Control?

The dialogue process is faster when things look good and not so fast when things are not so good. The dialogue must address issues such as ceasefire violations, peace and accountability. It is inherent in the dialogue to cater to circumstances around it. So as the situation evolves, we will do whatever is appropriate. What is our duty, we will do.

What made India’s stance suddenly look more hardline?

There is no change in our stand. All this is part of an evolving situation. We’re still in the process of assessing what happened with regard to the soldiers’ killings. Nobody should feel that we are not serious about what has happened. We’re committed to the ceasefire. At the same time, we feel there should be a response. Our stand is consistent. We’ve not indicated any items at all on our agenda. We believe that as the situation evolves we will do whatever is appropriate and is our duty.

Trade, cultural and sporting ties between the two countries are already hit. Where do they go from here?

Unless we take a decision and announce it, things will remain as they are.

Pakistan foreign minister Hina Rabbani Khar, while responding to corruption charges against Prime Minister Raja Parvez Ashraf, said that even Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had faced corruption charges. What do you make of this?

The kind of language they use while commenting on their domestic politics is not something that we're going to respond to.

Is India satisfied with what Pakistan has done so far to bring the masterminds of 26/11 to book?

No, we're not. We haven't found our level of satisfaction vis-à-vis the Mumbai attacks. The Pakistani response has not met our expectations. Our dialogue with Pakistan is influenced by the level of satisfaction we get with regard to the Mumbai attacks.

With the US and Nato forces leaving Afghanistan by 2014, the Taliban are being assiduously wooed by Pakistan. Does this worry India?

I wouldn't use the word "worry", but we've not been as enthusiastic or willing to get into any kind of a conversation with the Taliban, good or bad. We have adhered to, and believe everyone should adhere to, the red lines that have been drawn. We're conscious that the combat forces are being withdrawn on the understanding that there will be a political settlement. It's part of the political settlement that the Americans have gone along with those elements in the Taliban they can engage with. Afghanistan, too, has proceeded with the engagement. Since we're not directly involved in any such initiative or enterprise, we don't have to take a call right away though we're watching carefully.

How is India looking at Afghanistan as the endgame nears, particularly when the US appears to be veering towards Pakistan, keeping India out?

Nobody's keeping India out. That's more than clear. If anything, there are a lot of invites for India. But India itself is taking steps very carefully because we want to be part of the solution, not the problem. Despite Kabul's willingness, and Kabul nudging us, we've said, "Let it be done in a manner that's comforting and acceptable to all stakeholders in the region." What happens after 2014, nobody knows. Kabul is yet to come out clearly with its own perception of things beyond 2014.

Despite Pakistan's fears about Indian influence in Afghanistan, shouldn't New Delhi be playing a more pro-active role at this stage?

I think we have evolved a style that is careful and cautious and we believe it is good for Afghanistan. Moving slowly but surely is more important

than moving hastily. We're reasonably sure-footed about the manner in which we're proceeding.

There's a perception that India is not "serious" about its relations with the US — that after signing the civilian nuclear deal, matters remain stuck on issues of suppliers' liability.

Certainly, some of the companies have reservations. We have indicated that it's not possible for us to rework the legislation and rules within which there is adequate addressing of their concerns. We'll be opening a Pandora's box if we try to tinker with it. We also have Canada, Australia, France dealing with us on this. If something is safe and secure for one major nuclear country, there is no reason why others should have problems.

The US would like India as a "pivot in Asia" in rebalancing its forces. Your view?

If it's something that complements or supplements India's "Look East" policy, then we're on the same page. However, we haven't ever responded to or encouraged anything that looks like a containment or an attempt to create another pole of influence and power vis-à-vis anybody else in Asia. It can be a larger collaboration but not by way of directing it against anyone.

What is the state of boundary talks with China?

The talks have proceeded at a snail's pace but always proceeded in the right direction. China's new leadership has indicated it is positive about moving forward.

India has close bilateral ties with Israel but appears cagey about being overt about it.

It's a good thing that Israel understands that our commitment to Palestine is undiluted. Israel didn't want us to go with Palestine when it was trying for UN membership, but we did. We've found the right sort of balance between our legitimate concerns about Palestine and our growing relationship with Israel. It's important that we keep in mind popular perceptions in the country that, historically, we have been strongly in favour of Palestine. The relationship with Israel is steady, firm and moving in the right



188. Resolution moved in Lok Sabha rejects the resolution passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan.

New Delhi, March 15, 2013.

This House totally rejects the Resolution passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan on March 14, 2013. The House notes that Pakistan has committed that it would not allow its territory to be used for terrorism against India and only fulfillment of this commitment can be the basis for peaceful relations with Pakistan. The House rejects interference in the internal affairs of India and calls upon the National Assembly of Pakistan to desist from such acts of support for extremist and terrorist elements.

The House reiterates that the entire State of Jammu & Kashmir including the territory under illegal occupation of Pakistan is and shall always be an integral part of India. Any attempt from any quarter to interfere in the internal affairs of India will be met resolutely and with complete unity of our nations.



189. Award of the Court of Arbitration at the Hague on Kishenganga Hydro-Electric Project.

New Delhi, February 18, 2013.

In response to question on Award of the Court of Arbitration at the Hague on Kishenganga Hydro-Electric Project, the Official Spokesperson said:

“The award of the Court of Arbitration at the Hague today reaffirms the validity of India’s position regarding the Kishenganga Hydro-electric project (KHEP) by allowing diversion of water from the KHEP as envisaged by India. It highlights once again that India is adhering to all the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty.

The details of the award are being studied.”



190. Interview of External Affairs Minister to the TV channel CNN-IBN.

New Delhi, January 17, 2013.

Q (Paarull Malhotra): Mr. Khurshid the atmospherics seem to have improved suddenly. Now you are hearing that the Pakistani Foreign Minister actually reach out to you for talks with you to defuse tensions. Would you be willing to take up the offer at this moment?

Answer: Well, if your impression is that atmospherics are improving and I think we should be relieved. It's something that we should welcome. These are, you know, straws in the wind you ...(inaudible).. judging yourself about what's the next best move. I think it's clearly a positive step that what we have always maintained. India has always maintained that if there is a problem we have to resolve amongst ourselves, between India and Pakistan, and we cannot be hoping and working towards finding some players to step to resolve our problems. So if we remain on that bilateral track, I think that's a time tested successful way of dealing with our problems. And I think that's the best way to move forward. But having said that, I think it's not just one statement or one response that works. You have to take up the whole structure with you and it's certainly something that you noted and started to look at very carefully. And let's see what's the next step will be.

Q: Am I understating correctly in that, the fact is that there has been no investigation ordered into the incident which is incidentally is the demand that was put forward by the Prime Minister himself. Till that happens there can be no direct talks between you and your counterpart?

Answer: Direct talks between counterparts don't just come in a jiffy; you sort of work up gradually or work towards something. We, for instance, when we come in contact at our level, that becomes a base for the contact between Heads of Government to come together. So there is lot of work that you need to do. You can't these days particularly, with everything in the media focus, you can't get into a meeting ill prepared and then walk out of the meeting, and then everybody tells the world that the whole thing has collapsed. You cant do that, you have to work towards these things. You have to be clear what your agenda is, you have to be clear how you will achieve it and you have to be clear about what your

expectations are, both the minimum and the maximum. But having said that, I think it is important that we shouldn't give an impression that whatever was said earlier is something that was said only for effect and it was not said because we substantively believed in something as an obligation and as something that you believe is very necessary. So, we obviously stand by the content and the substance of what we believe is critical and crucial to what went wrong. And therefore obviously, addressing that will be a move towards putting it right. But, we can remove a lot of words and phrases that have been thrown around by various people, not necessarily by the Foreign Ministry or the Government, and those phrases can lead to a different impression, you can sort off those phrases. The content, the substance of what we believe is our duty to expect and demand and what our analysis is, is relevant to improving the situation and returning back to normal and that is what is stated and that remains.

Q: Good news is that the Pakistani Army has finally assured the Indian Army that they are willing to respect the ceasefire. Do you actually expect the Line of Control to actually cool down now?

Answer: I think that's a very positive development. I think it's something that could have come earlier but it's a very positive development. But it's something that is within the domain of the armed forces on both sides. We created that structure but it's something that they handle at their own level. It's a good thing that they handle it at their own level and if it is contained at their own level then it doesn't create a larger political issue at the higher level. And the signs that we have, certainly from yesterday, are good signs and welcome signs. I think that when something good is done and happens you should encourage it by praising it and appreciating it because we have been complaining a lot about things going wrong. I think if something was right we should put in a word of appreciation.

Q: Very quickly I will put a follow up - You encourage the positive dynamics at the movement by, for instance categorically issuing visas for Pakistani women cricketers who want to play the world cup.

Answer: We haven't. I don't believe that we have done anything that was exclusively negative but even the atmospherics play their own role. You may not actually specifically be focusing on an event or a decision

that sort of falls by the way because people are not talking to each other or things are not normal etc.,. That should not be counted as a conscious effort to stall things. It should just be taken in one's stride. But yes, when you feel it's important that a message be clear and that your priority and your intensity of your feelings be conveyed, I think it's important that this should be conveyed in that manner which is what we tried to do. I don't think that we have added to any negativity and we wouldn't want to add any negativity. If there is something positive on the horizon, we should welcome it.

Q: But you are not in a position to assure Pakistani cricketers that they will in fact play the world cup here.

Answer: Let's just take it one step at a time. I think we shouldn't jump to either negatives or positives in a hurry. Let's just take it one step at a time. If the situation normalises, if the situation is peaceful and normal, then many of these questions will disappear by themselves. But frankly if that doesn't happen then many questions will arise and then we will have to deal with each question as we go along.

Q: Finally, very briefly final question. Are the two commerce ministers expected to actually meet later this month? Fact is trade liberalization was not just Pakistani Government's heart but also the Indian Government's heart. It would be an important message that if the Indian Minister actually met the Pakistani minister.

Answer: It is true that we were looking forward to MFN for a long time and we have had a deadline and a date also fixed for it. It didn't happen then which obviously was a little disappointing but both sides were working on it and it would culminate obviously in the meeting of the two ministers. I don't have any information right now of any meetings being called off but it's obviously also something that we will be reflected upon on both sides and then you will know that. Today, as I speak to you, I have no such information. Let us see. We take it one day at a time, one step at a time.

Thank you very much



191. Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister.**New Delhi, January 22, 2013.**

Q: *The statement given by Shushil Kumar Shinde about Hafiz Saeed who is involved in many case of terrorist attack in Mumbai, hopefully Indian position has not been compromised by this statement?*

External Affairs Minister: *We cannot have a peaceful settlement by this controversial approach. It is our utmost effort, that our expectations from our neighbours and particularly our expectations from Pakistan, we have in clear words explained and expressed. All the ministers in the government are aware of or stand and accept it too. It is hoped our stated position, which we have authoritatively stated, we stand firmly by that. You should also make it firm. The media will also help and every body will give full cooperation. This is national issue, in this we believe, every body speaks with one voice.*

Q: Mr. Khurshid, do you concede that your Home Minister has given a handle for anti-India propoganda in Pakistan with his comments on Hindu terror and saffron terror?

External Affairs Minister: Let me just say this to you very clearly that our stated position that is shared fully by the Home Minister and the past Home Minister is based entirely on facts as the investigative agencies have made available to the Government. The attempt to divert attention and to push it in a particular premeditated direction by some people was obviously repudiated by the information that was available with the Home Ministry. That is the context in which all these statements are made. I think that we should not be looking at finer notions of what should be and can be said at any given time. I think the core understanding is that there are elements who want to use some cover of pretense and some cover of allegations against other groups to continue on their nefarious and unwholesome activities.

We have categorically said, not once but many times over, that any form of violence that is propogated by extremists of any kind irrespective of religion is what is dangerous for our country. Terror does not have religion; this we have said very clearly. And religion should not be associated with colour; this we have said very clearly. It is terror that we have to fight and terror directed against India that we are fighting. Those are the

facts available to the Home Ministry on which we have been consistently taking this statement. I think we should not get distracted by a phrase here or a phrase there frankly. The intention, the commitment, the determination is what really matters. I would urge media and people as a whole to support us in our fight against unwholesome terror.

Q: *Hina Rabani has said in an interview that the two foreign minister could meet. The Pakistan High Commissioner has also conveyed this through diplomatic channels, Is there a chance for talks either between foreign ministers or foreign secretaries?*

External Affairs Minister: *The most important thing is about the atmosphere; recently there was indication of bad atmosphere. We believe that until all this come a stop and the atmosphere does not change, we should not be in a hurry. We have made clear our expectations, and our problems made it clear to them. We want peace in our region; this has been made clear by our government and all the governments, we want peace in our regions which should not be fragile. This is our expectations and this is what we want.*

Q: Are you willing to take up Pakistan's offer for talks now that it has come through official channel?

External Affairs Minister: As you know, the situation had unfortunately because of certain unacceptable incidents come under a severe question mark. The atmospherics were deteriorating considerably. Therefore, it was important for us that we first ensure that the atmospherics return to normal or near normal; that the expectation that we have in context of the unfortunate incidents that took place be honoured and responded to; and that in totality the situation becomes more amenable and acceptable in terms of public perceptions and the general support that one needs to build when one takes these strong decisions and important decisions. Only then we will be able to take these decisions. We would advisedly not want to do anything in haste that would not lead to a constructive and creative outcome. So, it is a situation in which we have to be careful. We have to watch and analyse before we take any steps in the direction that would be a meaningful one.

Q: Sir, you had a very long interaction, very detailed discussions with Sri Lankan Foreign Minister. During the discussions at any point of time,

was any reference made regarding the more than 300 worship places including mosques and temples which were demolished by the Sri Lankan Government in Sri Lanka? Also they have changed the names of more than 16 Tamilian Provinces. For example, Killinochi which was well known has been renamed after Singhalas ... (Inaudible)... In those places instead of Tamilians, the Singhalas have been forced to settle. Has the Government of India taken serious note of it or any point of discussion which was brought into the discussion today?

External Affairs Minister: We have discussed the broad principles of rehabilitation, reconstruction and reparation. We have looked at the speed and the creativity with which attempts have been made to ensure that there is both equity and justice in a pervasive way. I think that the entire landscape is not possible to review in every minute detail as far as two governments are concerned. But obviously, as and when anything comes that should be put on the table for discussions, we would always be willing to do so.

There are obviously some decisions that are of local nature, decisions that need to be taken in a consensual manner and acceptable manner by Sri Lankan Government in terms of expectations of all their citizens. I think that is something they will do. We are hopeful that there are steps being taken towards rehabilitation and reconciliation which are very significant and important and in which we certainly give our full support to Sri Lankan Government.

I cannot actually talk about every specific detail which needs to be addressed and attended to by the Sri Lankan Government. But as and when issues come to our notice which we should get involved in and that we should be able to bring that into the broad framework of any dialogue or conversation we have with a friendly country like Sri Lanka, we would certainly do so.

Q: ... (Inaudible)... On the issue of Hafiz Saeed and the likes, Shinde's comments ... (Inaudible)... I was just trying to understand, are you supporting Mr. Shinde while cautioning that the Home Minister. what he said was based on information ...

External Affairs Minister: I am simply saying that the Home Ministry as well as any other Ministry makes its position in public and addresses

public opinion based on facts that we believe are correct and true. And that is what would have been done. I am only urging and requesting you not to be distracted by commentary that comes from elsewhere which must be a self-serving commentary. What is important for us to do is to be clear about our position. And our position I think does not call for any further questions in one form or the other. I think our position is very clear. Working on around one phrase or another does not change our position. Position is clear, concise and based on facts as we know them.

Thank you

Text in italics is free translation of Hindi transliteration



192. External Affairs Minister's interview to Outlook.

New Delhi, January 26, 2013.

(Outlook/by Pranay Sharma)

Is the Indo-Pak peace process back on tracks?

Fortunately, the peace process was not entirely derailed. There were hiccups that appeared to be very serious but the peace process itself was never derailed. May be it was an issue of both substance and perception. As we know perception can vacillate and it is more malleable, while substance is somewhat more solid. We didn't get to the point where the substance could be damaged substantially. We were able to arrest it in good time. But there is a lot of repair that is necessary in order to get the perception back n place. So the substance was relatively intact, it was the perception that was affected.

But Pakistani hockey players were asked to go back...

Every organization had its own reaction and response. The fact that Pakistani players were to be sent back was not the decision of the government of India. The Pakistani players talked to the organizers who felt that things were getting difficult and what otherwise would have been a peaceful and enjoyable exercise would become very tense and unpredictable. They took a consensual decision to go away. This is just

as someone who decides not to come, like Javed Miandad decided not to come though he was given a visa.

What about the visa regime was that not put on hold?

Yes, as far as the visa regime is concerned, it is a far-reaching visa regime and we were all keen to push it forward. But there were some queries that the agencies had. Now the queries—may be contextually something happens and therefore, they arise, or it could be that the queries were already there in the pipeline and they could not be handled because of the short deadline. I wouldn't put it beyond coincidence. But anything can affect perception and perception can affect anything. However, it was not a conscious decision like we had taken that here are 10 switches and we are going to switch off eight of them and dim the lights in the room. Fortunately that's not the stage we had reached. So if you want to retrieve the situation—as we all want to do—it is much easier. I will admit that perceptions were affected and they got further exaggerated and amplified because of media interface of people who have very strong opinion. Now whether because of ideological or historical reasons, strong opinions were being expressed. That kept feeding negative perceptions. But in the last few days, particularly because the LoC is quiet and the DGMOs had met, I think we are steadily moving towards better perceptions.

The DGMOs mechanism was set up by the two countries to deal with possible tension along the LoC. Why did it take so long to activate it?

The idea of this process and procedures is that before things go into the public, the first people to notice something that can cause concern is the military itself who then immediately try to sort it out amongst themselves. This time before that could be done it got into the public space. Why and how etc are another matter. But because it got into the public space the whole process got reversed. The issue in the public became: Should the DGMOs meet? And this reversed the whole process and it took a few days' time. The flag meet which takes place before the DGMOs was not very successful this time. But fortunately the dialogue and conversation between the DGMOs was far more meaningful and positive in nature and that reversed the perception process.

Looking back how do you see the war hysteria and the hawkish line that had gripped sections in India?

Well it surprises me. I respect feelings of somebody who thinks we have been let down, not once but many times and the sense of hurt because of betrayal. Here lot of things had combined to give much greater traction and greater level of noise than there should have been. But this is a matter that touches the core of our patriotic sense and sense of betrayal. We have fought wars and we have then gone back and talked peace. No matter how terrible an incident may make you feel, it can't be worse than massive destruction of life and property caused by war. We have learnt to return to the peace table every time that we have suffered a war. So it's important that while one feels deeply sympathetic and responsible to these feelings—and they were very raw feelings of the aggrieved families because of the terrible incident—we will also have to think of all the men and women who have lost their lives in armed conflicts with our neighbours. We don't want to see a repeat of that happen in our generation. We don't want to deprive more families of their cherished dear ones simply because we are angry with something that someone has done to us.

But we all know cross-border firing happen often, so why did it reach such heights? Was it because of the beheading?

I think it was the matter getting into the public domain before adequate preparations were done to put things in perspective and also to seek adequate response and preparation from the other side. If that had become apparent and clear that the process for getting an appropriate response has already begun, it may have been seen in a different light. But here the process appears to begin after it became public and therefore the process also became difficult. It is unfortunate that it panned out in this manner and extremely unfortunate that it happened. Cruelty, both in times of war and at other times, cruelty of this nature and inhuman treatment of men in uniform is unacceptable. I don't think anyone publicly in Pakistan can say this is something you will have to accept. Our argument with them was that responsibility must be taken and what follows from that, I don't think our argument was to say whether this is okay during times of tension or is it okay to do to each other. I don't think this was the issue and I don't think they disagree on this.

Could they have taken the responsibility after it became an issue in the public domain?

I know, perhaps it becomes difficult. But you have to have broad shoulders. People have taken responsibility in the past for things having gone wrong under their command and supervision. You have to be tall and broad enough to take such responsibility.

Does it apply to both sides because many feel that armies of both sides in the past have engaged in beheading of each other's soldiers?

There are rules of engagement and there are basic human expectations that you don't do this. In fact you give full honour even to your enemy once he is incapacitated or killed. You provide the best of health facility to an injured enemy, we all know that. But we also know that in the battle fields or in conflict zones things happen that are very, very difficult to explain. But that is why every time something like this happens we have to put some accountability on ourselves—you do it yourself vis-à-vis your own armed forces and you expect it from the others if it happens from the other side.

Do you see any major breakthrough in Indo-Pak relations or more of a "holding operations" since both countries are getting into the election mode?

I don't think this is necessarily what we should be doing. We shouldn't lose time since your practical sense tells you your window is getting narrow and narrower because of elections and preoccupations at home. But I think the time has come for us as countries to conduct our affairs so that we don't lose critical moments and critical times simply because we are preoccupied with democratic processes etc. It is important that some use must be made of whatever time there is. If political people are not available then the civil service continues and a lot of ground work needs to be done for political people to come and put their stamp of endorsement on it.

How do you see Hina Rabbani's suggestion for a meeting of the two foreign ministers to sort out things?

I don't think you should see it as an offer; rather it should be seen as a suggestion that this is one way that it can be sorted out. It is a positive

suggestion. We were concerned because there were constant signals about getting someone else to investigate and decide and adjudicate. That is not acceptable to us. Therefore, this suggestion is welcome and a positive one. But it's not an actual offer, like an invitation. But it was a publicly made suggestion, a good suggestion and I have also said so publicly. But it is not as if over a cup of coffee we will be able to sort something that has been going on for over 50 years. However, it calls for preparations at the different levels. At least get the routine things back in place and ensure the perceptions are repaired. And to repair that some content delivery on some of things that we have raised including how these fallen soldiers were treated. There must be some extent to which these things must be addressed because that will help perceptions. And if the perceptions and the atmospherics are good then I think we can move forward.

How you do see Mr Shinde's comments on "saffron terror" panning out? What is its likely diplomatic fallout since even the militant outfits in Pakistan have welcomed them?

These are people who have their own little game to play. The minister said what he said based on specific briefings that he has access to. I think something has also been said by the previous home minister, Mr Chidambaram. The point is that it is not their intention to pinpoint a religion or a political party. But there are certain facts available that indicate either complicity, or encouragement or some kind of collaboration with organizations that in common parlance or in short hand often get expressed by one or another expression. If people have problem with an expression, we can use another expression. But as far as the unwholesome groups across the borders are concerned, they are just wasting their time. Simply because we find a particular group of people are involved in an incident in India doesn't mean that many more incidents—and may be even this—has not been promoted by these unwholesome elements from across the borders. There is no way of condoning what they do, excusing them for what they do or even to think that we have given them a clean chit. There is no such question. It is unfair to say look Mr Home Minister someone from across the border is using your statement and taking advantage. By saying such a thing we are actually giving advantage to such people. This is too important and too significant a matter to be lost in a debate about linguistics. It is the core that matters

and people who are concerned should answer the core issues that the home minister has raised.



193. Official Spokesperson's response to a query on the statement by Foreign Minister of Pakistan at OIC.

New Delhi, February 8, 2013.

In response to a question regarding the statement made by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan at the recently concluded OIC Contact Group meeting on Jammu & Kashmir held in Cairo the Official Spokesperson stated:

"The OIC has no locus standi on matters concerning the internal affairs of India or the recent incidents on the LoC. We have already clarified that UMOGIP has no relevance in regard to the latter. The propagandist suggestions made in the Foreign Minister's statement are neither new nor helpful"



194. External Affairs Minister's media byte after meeting the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Ajmer, March 9, 2013.

External Affairs Minister: *Thanks very much for your presence here. As you know, Pakistan Prime Minister came on a pilgrimage to Ajmer Sharif, He has left for Ajmer now. According to protocol and keeping in mind his position, we received him here. We had lunch and wished him wished good luck for his journey. I will now go to the airport and leave for Delhi.*

Question: *What did you talk particularly?*

External Affairs Minister: *When some body comes for pilgrimage, then we talk about what is his expectations from pilgrimage are? It is important part of sufi thinking which is connected with Ajmer Sharif. People from all over the world come to Ajmer Sharif. Those who have faith in Ajmer*

Sharif, they come with complete faith in Khwaja Garib Nawaz. Many pilgrims from Pakistan come too from time to time. They come otherwise too. Our people come from all parts of the country. The Pakistan Prime Minister, as you know has also come on pilgrimage.

Question: Were India's concern regarding terrorism conveyed to him?

External Affairs Minister: *it is not such an occasion, I had no reason to talk to him about issues. At appropriate time we have been raising issues and will continue to raise them.*

Question: Opposition and also particularly BJP has said that why was the need to actually invite him and call him for lunch.

External Affairs Minister: They just have to look at their history and they will know why.

Thank you very much



195. Extract relevant to Pakistan from the Interview of External Affairs Minister with *The Tribune*.

New Delhi, March 25, 2013.

(The Tribune/by Raj Chengappa)

You had lunch with the Pakistani Prime Minister recently in Jaipur when he came to India. Why didn't the Indian Prime Minister invite him to Delhi for lunch?

Look at the kind of reactions to my having lunch with him – it would have been much worse if the Prime Minister had had lunch with him. He was on a private visit and not on official visit. There was a minimalist time required for him to go and pay obeisance at the Ajmer Dargah. We took a call that it would be appropriate for the Foreign Minister to go. So I went there, had lunch with him and came back.

Did you discuss relations between India and Pakistan?

We kept mostly to general topics. We talked about Sufism, we talked about music, we talked about food. But I did ask the Prime Minister if he

had a vision for the relationship between India and Pakistan. We didn't go into specifics. I just asked him about a broad vision as anyone would over a meal. He then expanded on that. He talked a lot about it. Then I asked him what he was saying, which was obviously very positive in articulation, was only a position of his party or was it acceptable across the board in Pakistan politics. He said everyone shares it and that Pakistan was changing, particularly the younger generation.

Did you raise any of India's concerns with him?

No, this was a spiritual visit and I made it very clear that we didn't want to raise the issues we had. Words are not the only things that you require to convey feelings. These things are understood instinctively by people at that level. You don't have to take him through the alphabets all over again. I had made it clear that we were extending a courtesy for the spiritual visit. Therefore, my discussions hovered over spiritual issues more than politics.

So India's dialogue with Pakistan is almost dead?

I would not say it is dead or in a coma. I will say it has gone very sleepy.

When a new government in Pakistan takes charge in May, what does India expect it to do?

One, we have to go beyond the irritants as they serve little purpose. The irritant on the LoC, for instance, I don't think it served any purpose. If someone thinks it served an electoral purpose, they were probably barking up the wrong tree. Two, we still do not know whether it is lack of conviction on their part whoever is in the civilian government or lack of capacity to deliver on all those things that we want them to deliver in terms of the safety and security of our citizens. The bottomline is this that these mosquito bites must stop.

You would call the attacks mosquito bites?

Well, I think we are too powerful a country. We should not undermine our own strength and our own stature by reducing ourselves to that. I don't think it is more than very itchy mosquito bites. India is not going to be pushed and shoved by a mosquito bite. I think it is important that we get beyond the pranks and tricks of the past and make a serious effort to take forward the investment that both countries have made in the peace initiative.

Do we expect any changes in our relationship with China with a new leadership taking over?

The signals they have given us are very good. So far we have not had any eyeball-to-eyeball contact. But our Prime Minister developed a very good working relationship with the previous Chinese government. We have been given to understand that there is going to be continuity and enhancement of the relationship. We are very happy with that and we will reciprocate it. The good thing is the fundamental understanding that difficult issues will not keep us away from moving forward on areas of convergence. It is already articulated by them, by us and by the new Government in China and we reiterate that as well.

**196. Prime Minister condoles the loss of lives in the earthquake in Pakistan.**

New Delhi, April 17, 2013.

The Prime Minister has condoled the loss of lives and destruction in the earthquake in Pakistan. He has sent his condolence message to President Zardari of Pakistan

Excerpt of the Prime Minister's message is as follows:

"I was deeply saddened to learn of the damage and loss of life caused in Pakistan following the earthquake that struck the eastern region of Iran yesterday. While the reported magnitude of the earthquake is large, it is our sincere hope that its impact has been minimal. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have lost their dear ones, sustained injuries or suffered damage to their property. I am confident that under your leadership, your government and the people of Pakistan will come together to respond quickly and effectively to the natural disaster and help people rebuild their lives."



197. Joint Statement on Sixth meeting of the India-Pakistan Judicial Committee on Prisoners to Pakistan.

Lahore, April 30, 2013.

1. Members of the India-Pakistan Judicial Committee on Prisoners visited Pakistani Jails in Karachi, Rawalpindi and Lahore from April 26-May 1, 2013. The members of the Committee, Justice (Retd.) Mr A.S Gill and Justice (Retd) Mr. M.A Khan from the Indian side and Justice (Retd) Abdul Qadir Chaudhry, Justice (Retd.) Mr. Nasir Aslam Zahid and Justice (Retd.) Mian Muhammad Ajmal from Pakistan side visited the Jails.
2. A total number of 535 Indian prisoners including 483 fishermen (including 11 juveniles) and 8 civil prisoners, believed to be Indian nationals at District Jail Malir, Karachi, 8 Prisoners, believed to be Indian nationals at Adiyala Jail, Rawalpindi and 36 Prisoners, believed to be Indian nationals at Kot Lakhpat Jail, Lahore were presented before the Committee.
3. The Committee also visited Jinnah Hospital, Lahore and saw Indian prisoner Sarabjit Singh, who was admitted in the Intensive Care Unit of the Hospital on April 26, 2013 following an assault on him by few other inmates in the prison and is in a state of coma. The Committee interacted with the doctors about the prognosis of the case. The Committee noted the unfortunate incident of violent attacks on two Indian prisoners at Kot Lakhpat Jail, Lahore and recommended that Jail authorities to ensure adequate security for all Indian prisoners to avoid any such incident in the future; and would review the arrangements during its next visit to Kot Lakhpat Jail, Lahore. The Committee also recommended that detailed report of the official inquiry conducted by relevant Pakistani authorities on the assault on Sarabjit Singh on April 26, 2013 be shared with the members of the Committee at the earliest.
4. The Committee was also informed about escape of one under-trial Indian fisherman from District Jail, Malir, Karachi on February 11, 2013 and detention of the crew of the two Indian wooden vessels along with its cargo, off Pasni, Pakistan on April 18/19

by Pakistan authorities and requested Pakistan side to apprise about these two incidents to Indian side at the earliest.

5. The Committee noted with satisfaction that as per the Agreement on Consular Access signed on 21st May 2008 between the two countries, the list of prisoners was exchanged on 1st January 2013. The Committee appreciated the release of 684 Indian fishermen and 30 Indian civil prisoners by Pakistani authorities and 96 Pakistani fisherman and 59 Pakistani civil prisoners by Indian authorities since January 2012 till date.
6. On the conclusion of the visit, the Committee made the following recommendations:
 - a) The “Consular Access Agreement” of May 2008 signed between two governments be implemented in letter and spirit and consular access must be provided within three months of the arrest and not after completion of the prisoners’ prison term. Complete details of charges on the prisoners and a copy of court’s judgment of the sentence be shared in each case. The prisoners must be repatriated within one month of confirmation of national status and completion of sentences; it was noticed that in District Jail Malir, Karachi, there were 29 Indian prisoners who had completed their sentence more than a month ago; it was recommended that they be released and repatriated before May 17, 2013 and the two Governments should make all efforts that the time schedule is complied with strictly.
 - b) Consular access must be provided immediately to all those prisoners who have not been given consular access so far and the process of nationality confirmation should start immediately after consular access is provided; it was found that there were 459 fishermen and 10 such civil prisoners in the three jails for whom consular access was not provided. The Committee recommended providing consular access to all such prisoners and fishermen before May 17 and the Pakistani side agreed for the same.

- c) Consular access be provided to all prisoners/fishermen who are believed to be Indian, in Pakistani jails and vice versa, every year, at least four times, namely in the first week of February, first week of May, first week of August, and first week of November.
- d) The Committee noted that several names of prisoners had been dropped from the successive lists of prisoners, believed to be Indian, which were shared by Pakistan side twice every year. It is recommended that Pakistan side provide a formal verification to Indian side and vice versa if any names were left out from the previous list of prisoners, so that each side could follow up on each case and discrepancy in list maintained by each side reduced.
- e) A mechanism should be developed for compassionate and humanitarian consideration to be given to women, juvenile, mentally challenged, old aged and all those prisoners suffering from serious illness/permanent physical disability; Indian prisoners (like Pakistani prisoners in Karachi jail) should be allowed to make phone calls to their relatives in India at least once a month. The Indian prisoners appreciated the provision of basic necessities to them by the Prison and further demanded that they should be given some additional facilities. It is recommended that the existing facilities be continued and additional facilities required be provided by the Prison Authorities. Further, High Commission of India is allowed to supplementing any such requests for Indian prisoners.
- f) It was also recommended that serious/terminally ill, mentally challenged and deaf and mute prisoners must be kept in appropriate hospitals/special institutions irrespective of confirmation of their national status and offence; it would noticed that 1 prisoner in District Jail, Malir, Karachi, 2 prisoners in Adiyala Jail, Rawalpindi and 20 prisoners in Kot Lakhpat Jail, Lahore were mentally challenged; additionally, copies of the FIR, medical report

and photograph at the time of their detention, to be shared with the High Commission of India, so that renewed efforts could be made to confirm their nationality; moreover, effort should also be made to rule out that these prisoners are not Pakistani nationals.

- g) While noting that mortal remains of Mr Chambail Singh, Indian prisoner at Kot Lakhpat Jail, was repatriated to India after a lapse of nearly 2 months after his death on January 15, 2013, the copy of the post mortem report has not yet been shared with Indian side. It was recommended that post mortem report of Mr Chambail Singh be shared with the Indian side without any further delay.
- h) Prisoners involved in minor offences like violation of Foreigners' Act, visa violation and inadvertent border crossing deserve compassion from both the sides.
- i) The Committee noted that the respective courts must be requested for expeditious trial of all "under trial" prisoners. Respective High Commissions should create a panel of good repute lawyers/firms to pursue the cases of their prisoners in the local courts to locate, identify and defend such prisoners at all stages of their cases, if the prisoner(s) so wishes.
- j) The Committee also endorsed the recommendations of the Home/Interior Secretary level talks held on 28-29 March 2011 at New Delhi to task the Pakistani Maritime Security Agency and Coast Guard of India to work on setting up a mechanism for release of inadvertent crossers (fishermen) and their boats, on the same lines as the inadvertent crossers on land; It was recommended that the fishermen should be repatriated by sea lanes along with their boats; a delegation of boat owners could visit Pakistan within the next 3 months to inspect all the Indian fishing boats detained in Pakistan so that decision could be taken regarding their return to India or sale in Pakistan,

in consultation with concerned authorities and the same action be taken for return of Pakistani fishing vessels detained in India.

- k) It was suggested that, subject to the confirmation of dates by both the sides through diplomatic channels, the next visit of the Committee to Indian jails will be arranged during the second half of September 2013 for at least 7- 9 days to ensure that the Committee is able to see each case in detail.
- l) The Committee will review the action taken report on the earlier recommendations when the Committee meets next in India.

Justice (Retd.) Mr A.S Gill

Justice (Retired) Abdul Qadir Chaudhry

Justice (Retd.) Mr. M.A. Khan

Justice (Retired) Mr. Nasir Aslam Zahid



**198. Passing away of Sarabjit Singh in Lahore Jail.
Official Spokesperson's response to question on Shri Sarabjit Singh.**

New Delhi, May 1, 2013.

We are concerned at the condition of Shri Sarabjit Singh indicated by reports made available by doctors treating him in Jinnah Hospital.

Our High Commissioner has met the Pakistan Foreign Secretary and urged the Government of Pakistan to immediately release Shri Sarabjit Singh on humanitarian and sympathetic grounds so that he can benefit from the best available treatment in India.

Alternatively we have also proposed that Shri Sarabjit Singh should be sent to a third country for proper medical treatment.

This is not the time for invoking legal and bureaucratic reasons for not taking the right steps to save a human life. We believe that every endeavour should be made to save his life.

On May 2, the Ministry of External Affairs issued another press release on learning the demise of Sarabjit Singh.

We express great anguish at the demise of Shri Sarabjit Singh who succumbed to injuries after the brutal attack on him in Kot Lakhpat jail. This was, put simply, the killing of our citizen while in the custody of Pakistan jail authorities. We demand that the Government of Pakistan conducts a thorough investigation to identify those who were responsible, and ensure that they are punished.

We share the pain and sorrow of Sarabjit Singh's family. We have asked the Pakistani authorities to release the body of Sarabjit Singh so that he can be given a funeral in India and among his own people.

The shocking attack on Shri Sarabjit Singh highlights the need for concerted action by Pakistan to safeguard Indians in Pakistani jails.

On the same day (May 2) the Spokesperson of the MEA held a press briefing on the sad demise of Sarabjit Singh:

Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson - May 2, 2013

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin):

Q: Can you please throw some light on these things. Has the aircraft with Sarabjit Singh's body taken off from Lahore for Amritsar? Were the Indian officials there during the autopsy? By when do we expect the autopsy report to be shared and the proceedings thereon?

Official Spokesperson: Let me confirm to you that an aircraft has taken off from Delhi at 3:46 p.m. The flying time to Lahore approximately is an hour. So, we expect that aircraft to reach there in about 45 minutes time. As of now there are no passengers except for the crew on that aircraft. It is an Air India aircraft.

As regards its return flight, it is expected that the aircraft will fly from Lahore to Amritsar and on that flight will be two officials of the Indian High Commission there, Counsellor Dr. Acquino Vimal and Mr. Dasgupta who is the Attache there. It is expected that the aircraft will be received

on arrival there by the Minister of State for External Affairs Ms Preet Kaur.

As regards other issues that you raised in terms of the autopsy and whether there was anybody from the Indian Mission there, as all of you are aware, an autopsy is a medical procedure and only medically-qualified personnel can attend that and can discern what is happening. So, obviously we do not have anybody there. As and when the autopsy report is received, we will of course communicate it to the family members. At this stage I do not have information on how long the timeline would be for receiving that report.

Q: Did Pakistan consult with India before taking Sarabjit off the life-support systems, and had India asked for being informed before the life-support systems were taken off?

Official Spokesperson: I think I resent the question that you ask us that we would ever be consulted on such a matter and we would ever be party to such a decision. Please understand that all of us have been toiling to try and ensure that an Indian citizen's life is saved. And do you think that this sort of an issue will ever be raised with the Indian High Commission? I think this issue is just off the table. Never was this an issue. Nobody raised it with us. We did not expect this to be raised because our idea was to ensure that he lives as long as possible and not to turn off his life-support systems. So, I totally resent even an allusion to that.

Q: Is there any thinking within the Government to take up Sarabjit's case politically? So far we have seen diplomats talk with diplomats. Politically will the Government take up Sarabjit's case from here on?

Official Spokesperson: At this stage our primary focus is to ensure that the body of Shri Sarabjit Singh comes back to India as early as possible and he is given a funeral among his near and dear. That is the primary focus and we have had interactions at various levels on this. We have had the Foreign Secretary talk to his counterpart. We have had the Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan talk to the Chief Minister of Punjab. We have had our Deputy High Commissioner talk there with various officials in Islamabad. We have had our officials dealing with Pakistan in touch with officials of the Pakistani High Commission. So, let me assure you that everything possible is being done at all levels.

If there is a requirement of anything else that requires a further initiative at any level, I am certain there would not be any hesitation in any segment of the Indian state to provide assistance or to ensure that our goals are met in this context.

Q: Obviously this has a long history, goes back 23 years. Has the Indian Government ever expressed an official position on where it stands, on whether or not Mr. Singh was guilty of the allegations that were levelled at him by Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: This is not a new story, we have raised it at every level. And if we did not think that this was a case deserving of humanitarian and sympathetic consideration, we would not have raised it even at the level of the Prime Minister of India in his summit level meeting as far back as in 2005 with President Musharraf. Since then we have raised it on numerous occasions at all levels - at the level of the Foreign Minister, at the level of the Home Minister, at the level of the Foreign Secretary, at the level of our High Commission there. And in each of these cases we have reiterated the need to deal with this sympathetically and in a humanitarian manner. If we were not convinced of that, we would not have done that.

Q: You have made clear your belief that the case should be treated humanely. But has the Government ever stated whether or not it believes he is guilty or innocent of the allegations that were levelled at him by Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: If he was considered guilty, we would not have pursued his case ever.

Q: Do you think that the Pakistani Government or the jail authorities did enough to provide Sarabjit Singh security while he was in prison?

Official Spokesperson: It is the norm worldwide that ensuring the safety and security of prisoners, and this includes Sarabjit Singh, when they are incarcerated in prisons is the responsibility of the state authorities. Therefore, there cannot be two arguments in terms of the responsibility of the authorities in this matter. We have taken this up previously. In fact when we had concerns about the safety and security on this issue following the death of another Indian prisoner, Chamel Singh, in January, we had triggered what is known as the Judicial Committee. This is a

mechanism of retired Justices of the Indian and Pakistani courts who visit prisons to see about the conditions of prisoners in the country concerned.

Despite not having talks at the official level or at the political level, we pursued with this following the incident in the case of Shri Chamel Singh and finally were able to convince the Pakistani authorities to accept the visit of the Judicial Commission. Alas, we must confess that by the time they reached Lahore, Sarabjit Singh was in hospital. And I understand a couple of days ago they did visit him. So, the point that I would like to make is that we have raised this issue of safety and security in the context of the Judicial Committee, and that is the mechanism available to us.

Q: How many Indian prisoners are there in Pakistani jails? Would we also be taking up their cases?

Official Spokesperson: We exchange lists of prisoners on the 1st of January every year. As per that lists, since then there has been addition, there were 215 Indian fishermen in Pakistani prisons. Also according to the list that the Pakistani authorities gave us, 215 fishermen, and 55 Indian nationals other than fishermen were in prison. So, that is the list. However, since then there has been an accretion in these categories but this is a work in progress. If you take the baseline as 1st of January, that is where it is.

Q: Do you propose to take this issue to some international forum?

Official Spokesperson: India and Pakistan are wedded to bilateralism. You are all aware of our long-stated position on that. We know each other well, we understand each other well, and we will continue to follow the pattern that has governed our relationship in the past.



199. Response of the Official Spokesperson to query on the incident involving a Pakistani prisoner.

New Delhi, May 3, 2013.

“We are aware of the regrettable incident involving a Pakistani prisoner, Sanaullah Ranjay, who was injured today during an altercation with another inmate of a jail in Jammu.

The matter is being investigated and the guilty will be punished. As you are aware an advisory had been issued to strengthen security for Pakistani prisoners in Indian jails. Safety and security of prisoners in custody lies with the jail authorities and necessary action is being taken.

We are in touch with the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi on the matter. The injured is receiving medical treatment and once the medical arrangements are in place consular access will be provided.

There are 535 Indian prisoners (including 483 fishermen) in Pakistani jails and a total of 272 Pakistani prisoners in Indian jails.

We had requested the joint Judicial Committee to visit jails in Pakistan. This was the Committee’s sixth meeting and they have made some recommendations.

In view of the tragic events that include the killing of two Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails and the incident involving a Pakistani prisoner in a jail in Jammu today there is a need to take stock of the current measures in place to ensure the safety, security and humane treatment of Indian and Pakistani prisoners in each others jails. For this, we are proposing a meeting of the concerned authorities of both countries to study the recommendations and identify and put in place further measures to avoid such tragic incidents in future.”



200. Official Spokesperson's response to a query on the demise of Pakistani prisoner Sanaullah Ranjay.

New Delhi, May 9, 2013.

(This response was in continuation of what the Spokesman had said on May 3., 2013 about the demise of Sanaullah Ranjay)

“Sanaullah Ranjay, a Pakistani prisoner undergoing imprisonment in a terrorism related case at the Kot Bhalawal Jail Jammu, died today. The Pakistani prisoner, who was injured on May 3, had been airlifted to PGI Chandigarh and has been receiving the best possible medical treatment. Unfortunately he succumbed to his injuries. The body will be handed over to the Pakistan High Commission officials who are presently in Chandigarh along with two members of the prisoner's family. All facilities will be extended to facilitate the repatriation of the body.

In view of the recent tragic incidents that have involved the killing of two Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails, there is an urgent need to examine the recommendations that have been submitted by the India-Pakistan Joint Judicial Committee that visited Pakistani jails from April 26 to May 1, 2013. Both sides also need to take stock of the measures currently in place for ensuring safety, security and humane treatment of prisoners in each other's jails.

We would like to reiterate the offer made by us on May 3, calling for a meeting with the relevant Pakistani authorities to take immediate steps to enhance the safety, security and humane treatment of Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails.”



201. Felicitations of Prime Minister on the victory of Nawaz Sharif in Pakistan's elections.

New Delhi, May 12, 2013.

(Prime Minister extended his congratulations to Mr. Nawaz Sharif and his party for their emphatic victory in Pakistan's elections. He conveyed India's desire to work with the new government of Pakistan in charting a new course for the relationship between the two countries and invited Mr. Sharif to visit India at a mutually convenient time.)

Text of Prime Minister's congratulatory message:

"Dear Mian Saheb,

I am writing to extend to you my heartiest congratulations on your emphatic victory in the general elections in Pakistan. You have received a strong mandate to lead Pakistan towards a stable, peaceful and prosperous future. I wish you all success in meeting the hopes and expectations of your people as you prepare to assume your new responsibilities.

This historic election is also significant victory for democracy in Pakistan. The people of India have watched with admiration the people of Pakistan braving violence and strife and turning out in large numbers to affirm their democratic rights. The Pakistani people and the political parties in Pakistan deserve all credit for strengthening the framework of democracy in their country by participating in these elections despite facing enormous challenges.

The people of India also welcome your publicly articulated commitment to a relationship between India and Pakistan that is defined by peace, friendship and cooperation. I look forward to working with you and your government to chart a new course and pursue a new destiny in the relations between our countries. I would also like to extend an invitation to you to visit India at a mutually convenient time.

My wife joins me in extending to you and Begum Saheba our best wishes.

With warm regards"



202. Press Release issued by the Prime Minister's Office on the meeting of Prime Minister's Special Envoy with the Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

New Delhi, May 27, 2013.

As a follow up to the conversation between Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mian Nawaz Sharif, President, Pakistan Muslim League – N on 12 May 2013, Prime Minister's Special Envoy Satinder K. Lambah visited Lahore on Monday, 27 May 2013. Special Envoy Lambah conveyed to Mian Nawaz Sharif Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's greetings and good wishes for his tenure as Prime Minister of Pakistan. Mian Nawaz Sharif conveyed his deep appreciation for Prime Minister Singh's message. They took the opportunity to discuss ways to take the dialogue process forward to address all issues of concern to the two countries and to advance peace, friendship and cooperation between the two South Asian neighbours.



* Satinder Lambah was High Commissioner to Pakistan between 1992 and 1995 and his tenure partly coincided with Sharif's first term as PM (1990-93). He has been involved in back-channel talks for the last 10 years. On May 12, Prime Minister Manohan Singh had conveyed India's desire to work with Sharif to chart "a new course" in Indo-Pak relations. He had also invited Sharif to India at a mutually-convenient time.

203. Response of the Official Spokesperson to a question on the Visit of Pakistan Prime Minister's Special Envoy Ambassador Shahryar Khan.

New Delhi, July 5, 2013.

"Pakistan Prime Minister's Special Envoy, Ambassador Shahryar Khan, is on a visit from 4-6 July 2013. He called on Prime Minister on 5 July at 7 RCR. The Special Envoy carried a letter from the Pakistan Prime Minister addressed to Prime Minister.

During this visit to India, Ambassador Shahryar Khan also called on External Affairs Minister and National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister and met Prime Minister's Special Envoy Shri Satinder Lambah and Foreign Secretary."



* The Special envoy arrived in New Delhi when the Defence Minister A. K. Antony was in Beijing and Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif too was in that city. According to media reports Mr. Khan held discussions with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon, the Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh and Dr. Singh's Special Envoy Satinder Lambah who had visited Pakistan in May. Media quoting High-level sources, said it would not be accurate to call the meetings back channel or Track Two negotiations. "It only signals reinforced engagement, consonant with the imperatives of better relations."

204. Su Moto Statement in Parliament by Defence Minister A.K. Antony on the ambush incident on the Line of Control in J&K.

New Delhi, August 6, 2013.

A patrol of Indian Army comprising of one Non Commissioned Officer and five Other Ranks was ambushed on our side of Line of Control in Punch Sector of J&K early morning on August 6, 2013. In the ensuing firefight, five Indian soldiers were martyred and one soldier was injured. The ambush was carried out by approximately 20 heavily armed terrorists along with persons dressed in Pakistan Army uniforms.

The numbers of infiltration attempts have doubled this year in comparison to the corresponding period(1 Jan- 5 Aug) of 2012. There has also been 57 Cease Fire Violations this year which is 80% more than the violations last year during the same corresponding period. The Indian Army successfully eliminated 19 hardcore terrorists in the recent months of July and August along the Line of Control and in the hinterland in J&K. The effective counter infiltration grid on the Line of Control has ensured that 17 infiltration bids were foiled this year.

* The ambush on a group of Indian soldiers in Poonch had triggered a national outrage and a demand by the opposition for the government to abandon plans for talks with Pakistan. However, there were conflicting statements on who killed the Indians, adding a worrying dimension to the debate. The press release of the Ministry of Defence from Jammu said: "A patrol of Indian Army comprising of one Non Commissioned Officer and five Other Ranks was ambushed by a Pak Border Action Team close to the Line of Control in Punch Sector of J&K early morning on 6 August 2013. In the ensuing fire fighting, five Indian soldiers were martyred. The ambush was carried out by approximately 20 heavily armed terrorists along with soldiers of Pak Army." The Pakistan army however denied the charge.

The Jammu press communiqué was issued after collecting details from the Northern Army Command which was tasked to protect entire Jammu and Kashmir. Both India and Pakistan have Border Action Teams (BAT) which function as crack special forces often used as quick reaction teams to address emergencies at the border. The two differing reports created some misunderstanding in the public mind. In Parliament, Arun Jaitley, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, said that by attributing the attack to men dressed in Pakistani uniforms, the Defence Minister had let Islamabad off the hook. "Isn't the Government giving Pakistan a way out" he asked the minister. Later in the day, Defence Ministry withdrew the press release that conflicted with Mr Antony's version and said that it "regretted" releasing the statement. Media quoted senior officials to suggest that it well might be a way of keeping the dialogue process on with Pakistan. It may be recalled that the killing of two soldiers and beheading of one

We strongly condemn this unprovoked incident. Government of India has lodged strong protest with Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels. I assure the House that our Army is fully ready to take all necessary steps to uphold the sanctity of LoC. Government of India conveys its condolences to the families of the martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.



on January 8, 2013 just 40 kilometres away from the present attack had led to a suspension of dialogue between the two countries. However, with a new Government under Nawaz Sharif in Pakistan, India was looking to restart the dialogue process. Meanwhile Pakistan's Deputy High Commissioner Mansoor Ahmed Khan was called in by Rudrendra Tandon, Joint Secretary heading the MEA's Pakistan desk, and handed over to him a note *verbale*. External affairs minister Salman Khurshid said defence minister AK Antony's statement on the killing of five Indian soldiers by Pakistani troops was a "carefully thought out statement based on facts provided by the army" and there was no attempt to "let off Pakistan". Khurshid said the statement made by Antony in parliament by the Defence Minister was not contradictory and there was no scope of controversy. "See the corrected version of the Indian Army press release and match it with what the defence minister says, it is exactly the same. I don't think the statement is contradictory," said Khurshid.

205. Second Suo Moto Statement in the Lok Sabha by Defence Minister on Unprovoked attack on our Troops on our Side of Line of Control.

New Delhi,. August 8, 2013.

The brutal and unprovoked attack on an Indian patrol on our side of Line of Control (LC) on August 6, 2013 outraged us all. When I reported the incident to the House, it was Government's obligation to report the facts as we knew them at that point of time, and my statement was based on the available information.

Since then the Chief of the Army Staff has visited the area and gone into the details of the matter. It is now clear that the specialist troops of Pakistan Army were involved in this attack when a group from the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) side crossed the LC and killed our brave jawans. We all know that nothing happens from Pakistan side of the Line of Control without support, assistance, facilitation and often, direct involvement of the Pakistan Army.

Those in Pakistan who are responsible for this tragedy and the brutal killing of two soldiers earlier this year should not go unpunished. Pakistan should also show determined action to dismantle the terrorist networks, organizations and infrastructure and show tangible movement on bringing those responsible for the Mumbai terrorist attack in November 2008 to justice quickly.

* Earlier on the same day, Syed Akbaruddin, Spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry, called on Pakistan to abide by its Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's "publicly-articulated commitment" to seek a relationship of peace, friendship and cooperation with India. It must not allow its territory to be used for anti-India activities. The problem was the frequent instances of "unprovoked firing" from across the border whereas India feels upholding the sanctity of the LoC was the most important confidence building measure between the two countries, Mr. Akbaruddin told newsmen at an official briefing. "For peaceful dialogue to proceed, we need an environment free of violence and terror. And certainly what has happened last week doesn't fit into that. That said there was no timeline [for holding of talks]... We are considering these things and have factored in all subsequent developments also. We will take a call in due time," he said. He added Pakistan had suggested dates for Secretary-level talks on two of the outstanding issues. These would have preceded a proposed meeting between the two Prime Ministers towards the end of next month. While India was committed to resolving all outstanding issues through dialogue, "in the current context and the events of last week, we see that the upholding of the sanctity of the LoC is vital," he said.

Naturally, this incident will have consequences on our behaviour on the Line of Control and for our relations with Pakistan. Our restraint should not be taken for granted; nor should the capacity of our Armed Forces and resolve of the Government to uphold the sanctity of the LC ever be doubted.



206. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson.

New Delhi, August 13, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. I must say I am delighted by the sort of response that I got for not being able to meet you last week. It indicates that you were really missing out on meeting me. So, I am grateful to you all for the heartfelt desires that you have communicated both orally and also sometimes in print. I would like to assure you that we will always be there to try and communicate with you in various ways and will try and be available at your beck and call.

That said let us come down to more rudimentary business. I have a couple of announcements to make following which I am willing to answer any questions that you may have on those announcements or on anything else that you may like to ask other than those announcements.

For the Visit of Chadian Foreign Minister Please see Document No.....

(For the announcement of the visit of Special Envoy of the President of South Sudan please see Document No.....)

Q: My question is surprisingly on Pakistan! Nawaz Sharif has apparently once again reiterated that he wants talks with India to resolve all issues. While he is saying that, we have also seen an escalation of tensions along the Line of Control and the International Border with these repeated ceasefire violations. We are saying they are doing it, they are saying we are doing it. How do we respond to that?

Official Spokesperson: I will try and respond to this multiple question by answering once.

We welcome the publicly articulated commitment by the newly elected Prime Minister of Pakistan to seek a relationship with India that is defined by peace, friendship and cooperation. For our part, India is committed to resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan through a peaceful bilateral dialogue in an environment free from violence and terror. In the current context and the events of the last week, we see that the upholding of the sanctity of the LOC is vital. It is to us one of the most important CBMs between the two countries. For us it is vital to uphold the sanctity of the LOC.

Unprovoked incidents on the LOC naturally have consequences for bilateral relations. We expect Pakistan to abide by its publicly stated commitment not to allow its territory or territories under its control to be used for terrorism and violence against India. We also look forward to determined action being undertaken to dismantle the terrorist networks and infrastructure as well as tangible movement on bringing to justice quickly those involved in the Mumbai terrorist attacks of November 2008.

I think I have answered all the points that you raised.

Q: *As regular ceasefire violations are taking place on the Line of Control, what could be the reason for that? Is this in some way connected with the retirement of Gen. Kiani? His tour of duty is about to end on 28th November 2013. Is it connected with his retirement, that the army is creating such a situation? (free translation from Hindi text)*

Official Spokesperson: *What is your question?*

Q: What are the reasons that the number of ceasefire violation cases are increasing continuously?

Official Spokesperson: I think this question needs to be answered by those who are involved in that. We have already said that these are unprovoked violations of the Line of Control. We have already just now said that for us this is the most important CBM. Therefore, anyone who violates it, your question should be directed to them.

Q: Akbar, despite a 10 million dollar bounty on his head, Hafiz Sayeed led the Eid prayers at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. Have you taken up the issue with Pakistan and more importantly with Americans? Also, can you talk about the Secretary-level talks which were to be taking place towards the month end, and also Nawaz Sharif and PM meeting? Possibly, if you are indulgent.

Official Spokesperson: Since you have asked three questions, I will choose the question that I want to answer. You asked more questions than one at your own peril and I will answer them. Let me take the easiest of the questions that you have asked, the Secretary-level dialogue.

First of all, my understanding is that we did receive, perhaps last month, proposals for some Secretary-level dialogue meetings which were to be hosted by Pakistan. Since then I have just told you that for a peaceful dialogue to proceed, we need an environment free of violence and terror. And certainly what has happened last week does not fit into that. But that said, there was no timeline of the type you are mentioning about that being held definitely by the date that you indicated. We are considering these things and have factored all subsequent developments also. We will take a call on this in due time and well ahead of what is required to be responded to.

Q: I wanted to ask the Hafiz Sayeed question. Does the Ministry of External Affairs have a view on Hafiz Sayeed leading a large prayer on Eid in Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: I think our view has been articulated on several occasions. We see him as the mastermind behind Mumbai 2008. We see him as somebody who we would like to bring to justice, and we will not rest until we fulfill that. Therefore, from that follows our clear view on anything that he does. Fugitives from justice need to be brought to justice.

Q: About the MFN status, Pakistan once again refused to give it to India.

Official Spokesperson: Why do I think that this is a sort of *déjà vu*? We have been on this path before. I do not think you should be surprised about the situation there. And let me clarify, as far as MFN is concerned, this is a commitment for States who joined the WTO to abide by. All States who are members of the WTO are expected to abide by it. What you have asked, we have seen this before and we have gone down this path. We will continue to address this issue as and when it is required.

Q: MEA and Foreign Ministry of Pakistan were trying hard as we heard for a meeting between Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Do you think still that working hard is going on or there is some slackness?

Official Spokesperson: Dr. Akhilesh, you have been covering us for a long time. You also are aware that announcements of meetings take

place very few days before these happen. I just announced a meeting which happened earlier this morning. Following that track record that I would like to abide by, I would counsel all of you to be patient. The days that you are mentioning are quite some distance away. Between now and then let us see what developments take place. Let us be patient rather than jump the gun on this and before we announce it draw any conclusions.

Q: *Pakistan has registered its complaints with the Indian High Commission and the MEA that protests are being made outside their High Commission and there is danger outside of it. What is Indian response to that? Is it desired to call of cultural engagements between the two countries? Some cultural engagements were cancelled recently. Programmes of some Pakistani singer has recently been cancelled?*

Official Spokesperson: *If you permit I shall like to answer the question in English. Thanks.*

There has been information conveyed by the Pakistani High Commission to us about concerns about safety and security for both the High Commission and its building as well as the PIA and its offices. We have assured them that we will take all necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of Pakistani personnel in their diplomatic missions as well as the premises of the PIA here and in Mumbai.

As regards your other question about cultural events, these are private choices made by private individuals and I presume that it is best that you address those questions to them.

Q: *As the Madam said, the artists, Sikh groups, Hindu groups who want to come here are being denied visa and their applications are mostly rejected. Is this due to cease fire violations? Or is it the policy of the government to deny them the visa? (free translations from Hindi text)*

Official Spokesperson: I think that is a valid question and I will answer on a specific issue.

When requests for visa come to us, we take a holistic view of this. We did receive requests for visas recently for zaerin to visit New Delhi for the Nizamuddin Urs. In this case we have carefully considered the issue, and as a matter of abundant precaution and caution we have advised

that those zaerin defer their visit to New Delhi in the current circumstances.

Q: Circumstances like security concerns? Local security ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I think we just preceded that question with her question about safety and security of personnel and premises in New Delhi and Mumbai, and my answer to that was quite clear. When I say abundant caution and precaution in terms of safety and security, zaerin was the focus.

Q: Sir, there is a cricket team that has applied for a visa. And, as you probably know, what has happened is that the Board has said that we will follow the instructions of the MEA and the Indian Government. This is for the team that was supposed to come for the Champions League. What has the Government decided on it? Will the Government ask the Pakistani team to come or will it not allow it to come?

Official Spokesperson: It is true that we have been approached for visas for a team from Pakistan to participate in the Champions League T20 Tournament. But my understanding is that that tournament does not start for more than a month. Now that we have received this request, we will carefully examine it and consider all aspects before we take a decision. Once we take that decision, we will communicate it both to those who have requested us as well as to all of you since you are always on the ball and know information of what is happening on a minute-to-minute basis.

Q: Akbar, our High Commission officials have been summoned in Islamabad at least a couple of times in the last few days. What is the burden of their song, what are they protesting against? In our view are those protests valid? Are their contentions valid?

Official Spokesperson: I think I have answered this before you came here about safety, security, etc. I think the answers are available on the record.

Thank you very much



207. Text of the Resolution passed by the Parliament against Pakistan on LoC killings.

New Delhi, August 14, 2013.

(Indian Parliament on Wednesday took a strong stand against Pakistan and passed a resolution against it over the recent killings of Indian *jawans* along the LoC by Pakistani troops. In a strongly-worded resolution, India warned Pakistan that, "Our restraint should not be taken for granted nor should the capacity of our armed forces to ensure the territorial integrity of our nation." Following is the full text of the resolution)

Honourable members,

This House rejects and deplores the resolution passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan on August 13, 2013 and the provincial Assembly of Punjab, which make absolutely baseless and unfounded allegations against Indian Army and the people of India. There should be absolutely no doubt in anyone's mind including members of the Pakistan National Assembly that it was the Pakistan Army that was involved in the unprovoked attack on an Indian Army patrol on our side of the LoC, on August 6, 2013.

It is unfortunate that Pakistan chose to indulge in such unprovoked attacks at a time when efforts were being made to establish a long-lasting framework of peaceful, friendly and co-operative ties so that both countries may hence forward devote their resources and energies to the pressing task of advancing the welfare of their people.

India is not a threat to Pakistan or the people of Pakistan. It is the terrorist groups that have been nurtured by Pakistan to target India and have become the biggest threat in the region. This House also strongly condemns the action of the Pakistan Army and reiterate once again that the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir including the territory forcibly and illegally occupied by Pakistan is an integral part of India and will always remain so.

India upholds the sanctity of the Line of Control and calls upon the government of Pakistan to abide by the ceasefire commitment of 2003 along the International Border and Line of Control both in letter and spirit. This House pays tribute to the courage and valour of the Indian armed

force personnel who laid down their lives while upholding the sanctity of the Line of Control. Our restraint should not be taken for granted nor should the capacity of our armed forces to ensure the territorial integrity of our nation.



* The Resolution passed by the Pakistan National Assembly on August 13 against India read:

“This House unanimously condemns the unprovoked aggression by Indian military forces across the LoC in recent days. The House also condemns the attacks on the Pakistan High Commission and the demonstrations outside the PIA offices in New Delhi, and the efforts to prevent the Friendship Bus from proceeding to Pakistan. It deplores the unjustified public vilification of Pakistan in the Indian media.

“This house endorses the prime minister’s forceful statement urging effective steps to ensure the ceasefire on the LoC; not to allow the situation to drift and to take steps to improve atmosphere by engaging constructively with a view to building trust and confidence. This House accordingly calls upon the government to clearly convey to the government of India the necessity to respect and uphold the Ceasefire Agreement 2003 in letter and spirit.

“This House forcefully reiterates that while Pakistan is committed to working for peace with its neighbours, it remains steadfast in its resolve to fully defend its sovereignty, territorial borders and national interests.

“This House also reiterates that Pakistan shall continue to extend diplomatic, political and moral support for the just and legitimate struggle of the Kashmiri people for the realisation of their right to self-determination, as enshrined in the UN Security Council resolutions.

“This House forcefully reiterates that while Pakistan is committed to working for peace with its neighbours, it remains steadfast in its resolve to fully defend its sovereignty, territorial borders and national interests. It salutes its brave and valiant Armed Forces and assures them of its fullest support in achieving this objective.”

The resolution, moved by Science and Technology Minister *Zahid Hamid*, a senior leader of the ruling PML-N, endorsed Sharif’s “forceful statement” for effective steps to ensure the ceasefire on the Line of Control and to improve the atmosphere by engaging constructively to build trust and confidence.

208. Information supplied to the Rajya Sabha by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry on India's trade with Pakistan.

New Delhi, August 14, 2013.

Bilateral trade between India and Pakistan is conducted mostly through Mumbai-Karachi sea route and Attari-Wagha land route. The year-wise and item-wise details of commodities of the total trade with Pakistan for last three financial years are given in **Annexure**.

The details of the trade in terms of value between India and Pakistan during last 3 financial years are given below:

(in US\$ million)

Year	Exports	Imports	Total Trade
2010-11	2039.61	332.51	2372.12
2011-12	1541.57	401.19	1942.76
2013-13	1837.86	513.23	2351.09

Source: DGCIS, Kolkata

Incidents on the Line of Control in the past few months have not affected bilateral trade between India and Pakistan.

Bilateral trade dialogue with Pakistan was re-initiated with the 5th round of India-Pakistan Commerce Secretary level talks held at Islamabad in April 2011. This was followed by further rounds of talks held in November 2011 at Delhi and September, 2012 at Islamabad. Three Ministerial level dialogues were also held in September 2011, February 2012 and April 2012. The first ever bilateral visit of Commerce Minister of India to Pakistan was undertaken in February 2012.

Both sides have made considerable progress in improving bilateral trade ties. Pakistan has moved from a Positive List regime to a Negative List regime, which substantially increases the tradable items with India. India has similarly liberalized its earlier restrictions on inward/outward investment flows to Pakistan. Both sides also agreed on a detailed roadmap for Preferential Trading Arrangements under the SAFTA (South Asia Free Trade Area) process.

First India/Pakistan Joint Business Forum meeting was held in June 2013 in Islamabad. This forum also had very productive meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister for further improving bilateral trade ties.



209. Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister on his informal meeting with Sartaj Aziz, Advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on National Security and Foreign Affairs.

New Delhi, September 13, 2013.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): *He will assure us of his assessment.*

Q: *You had an informal chat, what has been talked and what can be expected?*

External Affairs Minister: *We are staying together here. We had an informal chat. We were together at the same table at the dinner too, it was a good conversation. I drew his attention to the concerns in the country, about which the Prime Minister also spoke to you, when there is crisis looming on that issue, on that concern, When ever a high level discussion takes place, there is an effort for a better environment; whenever some incident takes place which creates concerns, then there is a need to correct the situation. If it works out well then the talks proceed further. If this does not happen, a lot of problem has to be faced. There is better understanding between us; our prime minister and it for them to decide, their prime minister could meet face to face. Understanding is important, only then we could proceed forward, the talks should be meaningful from both sides.*

Another point has come up and we welcome that. The Bombay terror attack was a painful one, On that there should be farsighted and expeditious action, there is legal involvement too, the proceedings are on in the court; there is no prosecutor and he should be appointed, we want to know if the prosecutor has been appointed. Another point is that the court has not admitted the evidence, because cross examination of the people on our side, who are prisoners is still pending; the Judicial

Commission is expected on 23rd to take the evidence. The evidence was taken last time also, and cross examination was also performed; then it can be before the court, this is a constructive step, and we welcome it. This is the way the atmosphere can be improved, a positive direction need to be given. I placed this before him.

Q: *You feel that the atmosphere is becoming congenial again?*

External Affairs Minister: *It is not possible just to say this. What is understood is important; if they take constructive steps the atmosphere can change; and good will come out. In that atmosphere talks can move forward; With change of atmosphere I think it is not possible to take the talks further nor it is desirable.*

Q: Did you also raise the issue of cross-border firing because last two, three months have been very... *(Inaudible)*...

External Affairs Minister: That is also part of the atmosphere. If there is no peace and tranquillity on the border and Line of Control, then all our efforts go waste frankly. That is the most critical confidence building and that is the most critical commitment that has been made by both countries together and both have to live up to it, which is that there must be peace on the Line of Control and peace on the border. The ceasefire is the basic fundamental ingredient of confidence between our two nations; and that ceasefire must be respected, the Line of Control must be respected.

Of course we talked about what is that can be done. I have emphasised that the mechanism in place, and there is a mechanism in place, should be used more effectively. Let us see beyond that how one can examine and how things will shape up. We still have a few days.

Q: Could you please repeat that 23rd thing in English?

External Affairs Minister: One emphasis that I think we have legitimately given to is public sentiment that expects some movement forward on issues that are very critical for us. And the Mumbai incident is, as you know, a very very very tragic and hurtful incident, and we want accountability for it. The process of accountability involves court proceedings.

We expected and hoped that the prosecutor would be soon appointed - the previous prosecutor was assassinated – and also that the evidence

that was collected by the Judicial Commission can be made available to trial court. Because cross-examination had not been done, that evidence was not accepted by court. So, now a Judicial Commission will come again we have been told on the 23rd, which is the date that we had given. We welcome that and we welcome the appointment of the prosecutor. And we genuinely, honestly hope that now things can proceed faster and that we would see through court proceedings something substantive happening.

Q: Sir, if you do not mind, could you say something on Kyrgyzstan bilateral.

External Affairs Minister: Do not mind? I will be excited, I will be very happy! Thank God!

I had a very good meeting with the Foreign Minister, who I had earlier met in Almaty, and of course the Deputy Prime Minister. First Deputy Prime Minister had visited us in India and I had a good opportunity to talk to him then. He is a very very likeable person, and all of them are very positive for India. And then I had a very good meeting...*(Inaudible)*...



**210. Prime Minister Condemns Terrorist Attack in Peshawar.
New Delhi, September 22, 2013.**

The horrific suicide attack at a Church in Peshawar today is yet another deeply disturbing manifestation of the evil forces of terror. That the attack took place at a place of worship and claimed the lives of dozens of innocent worshipers makes this senseless act of violence even more tragic. Such barbaric acts are against the tenets of every religion. India condemns the terrorist attack in Peshawar in the strongest terms. We convey our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and wish speedy recovery to the injured.



* According to the media reports 70 people were killed in the terrorist attack on September 21, 2013.

211. Statement by Prime Minister condemning the terrorist attack on Hiranagar Police Station and the Army camp at Samba in Jammu and Kashmir.

New Delhi, September 26, 2013.

No words are strong enough to condemn the heinous terrorist attack on Hiranagar Police Station and the Army camp at Samba in Jammu and Kashmir this morning. I convey my heartfelt condolences to the families of the brave army and police officers, as well as the innocent civilians martyred in this cowardly attack. This is one more in a series of provocations and barbaric actions by the enemies of peace. We are firmly resolved to combat and defeat the terrorist menace that continues to receive encouragement and reinforcement from across the border. Such attacks will not deter us and will not succeed in derailing our efforts to find a resolution to all problems through a process of dialogue.



* A police station in Kathua in Jammu & Kashmir was attacked by militants dressed in Army uniform. Six policemen and one civilian were killed in this attack on Hiranagar police station in Kathua district. Militants also launched another attack on an Army camp in Samba sector and one policeman has been reported killed. These militant attacks have come barely three days ahead of the meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif in New York on the sidelines of the UN general assembly meet.

212. Media Briefing by National Security Advisor on Meeting between Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan.

New York, September 29, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good morning friends and thank you for being here this morning and for waiting for our media interaction.

I have here with me on my right the National Security Advisor Mr. Shivshankar Menon, and on his right is the Foreign Secretary of India Mrs. Sujatha Singh.

The meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has just ended and we have requested the National Security Advisor to brief you. So, I will ask the National Security Advisor to make his opening remarks.

National Security Advisor (Shri Shivshankar Menon): Thank you Akbar.

As you know, the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met for a little over an hour just now. They reviewed the state of the relationship between India and Pakistan, and discussed what steps are necessary as we go forward.

They were both agreed that the precondition for a forward movement in the relationship, which they both desire, is really an improvement of the situation on the LOC where there have been repeated ceasefire violations and incidents. This was discussed at some length and they decided to task the DGMOs to suggest effective means to restore the ceasefire and a way forward to ensure that that remains in force and in place.

They also discussed various other aspects of the relationship. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of course mentioned terrorism and the need for effective action on bringing the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks to book. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that that was indeed Pakistan's intention, and now that the Judicial Commission has just returned to Pakistan after gathering depositions and evidence in India that there would be further progress on that.

There was also some discussion on the other aspects of the relationship, on the need to see that earlier understandings on trade, economic and

other relations. But the basic understanding emerging from the meeting was that all that would be possible once we have dealt with the immediate issues and the immediate situation that we face today.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif also mentioned other issues like Siachen and Sir Creek. All those I think are issues which are well-known.

Our overall impression from the meeting was that it was useful because it provided an occasion for high-level contact and discussion on the issues which are troubling the relationship, and this was necessary at this time. We will now see how both sides take it forward over the next few months.

I think I will stop there and maybe open this up to questions from your side.

Q: Any possibility of a concrete mechanism like a new Committee of DGMO and the Foreign Secretary or something like that?

National Security Advisor: What I said to you was the decision was to task DGMOs to come up with a clear plan to restore the ceasefire and to make sure that it is enforced and stays in place.

Q: *You said that it was made clear that an end to terrorism is a prerequisite for any dialogue. What was his reaction to this requirement, did he give some suggestion to end terrorism?*

National Security Advisor: I think it was clear from what I just said to you earlier that the issue of action on perpetrators of Mumbai, the issue of terrorism as a whole was mentioned. On the Pakistani's side, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif mentioned the incidents of terrorism that Pakistan is also suffering from. But he also said that there would be action on the Mumbai cases and now that the Judicial Commission has been in India and has gathered depositions and evidence which they could use.

Q: You said the first thing that the Prime Minister agreed was to enforce ceasefire along the LOC in Kashmir. Was there any discussion towards restoring the peace process in its entirety? And was there a discussion to a commitment towards resolving the underlying cause of tension between the two nations?

National Security Advisor: My understanding is that both sides wish to see a better India-Pakistan relationship than we have today, and that

in this meeting it was also clear that for both of us precondition is really to address the immediate issues that we have, which is to restore peace and tranquillity along the Line of Control. From our point of view an issue that is very important is to address the terrorism issue and we are making progress on that. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif mentioned many issues from the Pakistani point of view as well. But I think right now our effort is focused on making it possible to move towards a broader dialogue, and that stage has not come yet.

Q: *It was a good meeting from our angle. We are happy that we are going to re-establish the relations. We have shown accommodation that we are prepared to go ahead. Our President (Pakistani) want to go ahead, if you taper off your anger, show flexibility, show accommodation. The journey will restart. What would you like to say? (a question from a Pakistani journalist)*

National Security Advisor: *flexibility!*

That is your interpretation. What I am saying to you is the sense that I came away from the meeting. I am not going to comment on what you have said.

Q: There was a lot of ice on this meeting in terms of questioning what it can achieve and whether it can take even the composite dialogue, which has been stalled for many years, forward. While you have talked about terrorism and the discussion on it, what steps do you... *(Inaudible)*... how Pakistan and India could really get back on track to that higher level? And is that likely at all in the next one or two years?

National Security Advisor: As I said, I think both sides want a much better relationship, and the composite dialogue was one of the means towards that. But in order to get there I think today we are at the stage where we need to address the issues that we face today. We have incidents on the Line, we have ceasefire violations, we need to deal with those. We have terrorism related issues also, we need to address those. And then we hope to move it forward. But I am not an astrologer. I cannot tell you the future whether it will happen in a year, two years or quicker. But the desire was clearly there on both sides to have a better relationship than we have it today.

Q: You described the meeting to be useful and necessary at this point. Would you say that assurances you have got Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on terrorism were satisfactory? Did they address specific Indian concerns especially with groups like the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Hafiz Saeed? And is there any agreement on when to meet again?

National Security Advisor: There was no decision on another meeting at this stage. As for how useful and how productive the meeting was, I think the only proof will be in the months to come.

Q: You mentioned that for talks to progress between India and Pakistan terrorism needs to be tackled first. Could you please elaborately specifically what steps bringing the culprits responsible for the Mumbai attacks, and what actions need to be taken for us to see talks progressing?

National Security Advisor: I do not think we are going to negotiate this in public through the media. I think both sides know what the issues are. We also know what we have to do, each of us. I think India and Pakistan know each other well enough that I am not going to go through giving you a list of steps that must be done, must not be done, and so on.

Q: Did Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif extend an invitation to Prime Minister Singh?

National Security Advisor: He did.

Q: When will the meeting take place?

National Security Advisor: I think he invited Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to visit Pakistan. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also invited Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to visit India. They both accepted the invitations. No dates have been set yet.

Q: Were there any takeaways at all? What specific takeaways for India?

National Security Advisor: I thought I have given you all the takeaways.

Q: Like what? The specifics.

National Security Advisor: A common understanding that we will address the specific issues that we have today in order to be able to move forward on the dialogue and to improve the relationship.

Q: When the Prime Minister met with US President Obama, the specific issue of the funding of the Jamaat-ud-Dawa by the Punjab Government, something Mr. Sharif's party actually runs, was brought out. Was that specific issue brought up when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh spoke to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif?

National Security Advisor: It did come up in the course of the conversation.

Q: *It is being said that in their talks, there was influence of their internal issues; particularly on the Indian prime minister; When the BJP is opposing this meeting and created difficulty for the prime minister, under these circumstances, in which the talks were held, you could perceive the influence of that from both the sides, particularly on the Indian prime minister? Did the Baluchistan problem come up for discussion, the proof of which (interference) was given at Sharm-al-Sheikh by the then prime minister*

National Security Advisor: I think we are two sovereign states dealing with each other. And the principle on which we at least act is not to interfere in each other's internal affairs. We are neighbours. And as the Prime Minister has said, you can choose your friends, you cannot choose your neighbours. You have to deal with these issues that we face in the relationship, and we will continue to do so.

Balochistan was mentioned. I think Prime Minister has made it clear in the meeting and also in other contexts that there is no question of India interfering in Pakistan's internal affairs in any way. If there is any evidence of this, we have not seen it. We will be happy to look into it if it were given to us.

Q: Given all the questions that were raised over the meeting by the terrorism, Pakistan also having some reservations, both Prime Ministers said that there is going to be a movement forward with it, as you have just mentioned. But how many steps can they take? Can they take more steps than what it is now? Or can they go backwards?

National Security Advisor: As I said, my impression of the meeting was it was useful, it was constructive, but you need to deal with the issues as we face them, and we need to fix what we have right now and then move on to see. But there was clearly desire on both sides for a

much better relationship. And that goal I do not think is in question. So, I am not sure that we can talk of it going backward. I think what we need to do is to do the hard work on the relationship in the next few months.

Q: Did the situation in Afghanistan figure in the dialogue? If it did, what specific issues were discussed?

National Security Advisor: Only in passing.

Q: You have mentioned the unfinished agenda of trade earlier. Was that issue taken up? Was there discussion on granting India MFN status finally which they had promised last September and moving forward on other issues of trade?

National Security Advisor: There was some discussion of the MFN issue, of the opening up of the border to increase trade. There was a roadmap which had been agreed earlier, you remember, which has been paused as it were. And there was some talk of how we could hope to move towards that. But no timetable set now.

Q: *(since the answer is incomplete it is difficult to translate the answer) Mera saval yeh hai ki, aap vahan bhi rahe hain jaante hai, is dauran-e-muzakrat kisi bhi ... (Inaudible)... par Indian Prime Minister Mr. Manmohan Singh ne Pakistan ke Vazir-e-Azam Nawaz Sharif ko appreciate kiya, ... (Inaudible)... unhon ne stand diya hua hai, kyunke isi stand par, misaal joh hai Pakistan mein Vazir-e-Azam joh hai phasi ke ... (Inaudible)... pahunchaaye gaye hain yaa overthrow kiye gaye hain, kahin in muzakrat mein defense budget rejection ki baat ayi toh Prime Minister kehte rahe hain pichhle teen dinon se, Pakistani Prime Minister.*

National Security Advisor: There was not any mention in this meeting of the defence budget. But it is clear that both Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif spoke of their desire for a better relationship, but they also were very conscious of the difficulties and the issues that stand in the way of realizing that. And that was discussed in some detail during the meeting.

Q: How long did the meeting take place? And Prime Minister Singh talked about the epicentre of terror in Pakistan. There are many people in Pakistan who would have serious concerns about the epicentre of terror in India. Is there any way India can address the concerns of both people of Pakistan?

National Security Advisor: I certainly have not heard of any of such concern. If somebody has any evidence, we will be happy to look at it. I have said this before. But there is no proof. There is absolutely no proof of any export of terror from India. I wish I could say the same in reverse.

Q: You said in your opening statement, you talked about the cross-border violations, You said that DGMO level talks would be strengthened. I would like to know,inaudible.....
Inaudible)... the tension in relations has been caused by the LoC violations, were the Indian soldiers killed?. Defence Minister referred to the role of the Pakistan army, Did the PM said like this? Has the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif accepted it? Did he assured of some additional steps or some other action?

National Security Advisor: I think I started the briefing by saying exactly that that was discussed, that both sides agreed that they need to deal with that issue first, that peace and tranquility on the LOC is a precondition for further movement in the relationship. Both agreed on this and both have tasked the DGMOs to do so, to restore the ceasefire and to prevent incidents and to suggest how we do that.

Q: Is there any timeline set for the two DGMOs to come out with suggestions for effective measures?

National Security Advisor: No. But we would like it as soon as possible.

Q: *before this dialogue, Nawaz Sharif has said that there can be talks, What is Indian reaction? Would he accept it as a new beginning?*

National Security Advisor: I think the meeting itself, as I described the results to you, shows that we have had a high level exchange. We have actually achieved a new stage. We now have some understanding of how we can move forward. And I think that in itself is an advance on where we were one-and-a-half hours ago.

Q: Do you see Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as a good partner to work with for peace?

National Security Advisor: As I said, both sides wanted a much better relationship and I am not going to get into characterising the Prime Minister of a neighbouring country.

Q: *There is agreement or there is only offer of meeting between the DGMOs? Nawaz Sharif had offered UN investigation on the attacks on the LoC, the violations by India on Paksitan territory. Inaudible.....*

National Security Advisor: As I said, we need to find a way to prevent incidents. There is no question that today we have these incidents happening, we have ceasefire violations. Let them come up with a way of stopping this. Let both the DGMOs meet and find a way of doing this.

Q: Following up with what Ashish just asked you, did you all come away with the impression that Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, actually has control over his army?

National Security Advisor: I... *(Inaudible)*... with Pakistan, as I said to another question, about their internal affairs. We do not interfere in their internal affairs.

As... *(Inaudible)*... said, there is no awkward questions, there would not be awkward answers. And you are not going to get one back.

Q: Both countries have signed... *(Inaudible)*... in December. People-to-people contacts are really important to bring the two countries together. Did they discuss an open-visa regime?

National Security Advisor: I think we have liberalised the visa regime within the last six months actually. In fact we have taken steps and both sides have done some things unilaterally and some things I think we have agreed between ourselves. But today that did not come up.

Q: Do you think that this particular meeting was very heavily influenced by the act of Mr. Rahul Gandhi trailing upon that Ordinance and plus the international election campaign of both the parties in India and due to that Pakistan has been made a punching bag of all these extremist statements?

National Security Advisor: Short answer: No.

Question: *You are witness to the fact that the our Prime Minister had been talking to Pakistan Prime Minister for many years; My question is: is this meeting different from other meetings? Do you have hope that something will come out of this meeting?*

National Security Advisor: I think each such meeting is different. It is not only because the context is different but because the state of the relationship is different. Each one of these meetings that we have seen, and you have been at many of these, I think in each of them it is different. Today's meeting dealt with the situation that we face today in the relationship and the condition of the relationship as it is today. The common factor of course is that the idea is to get out of the unsatisfactory relationship that we have and to try and find a way forward. That is true of all meetings. But what exactly we agree on, what we do, how it works out, has bearing from meeting to meeting. Today I think we have naturally to deal with the overwhelming issue of what is happening on the Line of Control, on issues like terrorism. Pakistan raised some of their issues. I think but we have dealt with the immediate task of actually getting these up and going. That is what we are concentrating on.

Q: In the Indo-US joint statement there was a mention of dismantling terror infrastructure in Pakistan. Did you get any assurances in terms of a timeline or a roadmap how Mr. Nawaz Sharif plans to do that?

National Security Advisor: In a one-hour meeting!

Q: I am just wondering, so close to the elections can this Indian Government deliver something or is it... (*Inaudible*)...practical for both sides to actually wait until the elections to see how to go forward?

* Media analysing the meeting said the outcome of the meeting, which had been in the works for several weeks, was surely a modest one. But Indian officials said it was also realistic, noting that the increasingly brittle situation on the LoC had become a source of enormous concern. Speaking on background, a senior Indian official told *The Hindu* that the proposal to have the DGMOs sort out violations of LoC came about after India rejected several ideas floated by the Pakistani side, including one to have the two foreign secretaries meet and another involving "neutral" monitoring by a third party such as the UN. Other issues also arose, such as trade, Siachen and Sir Creek. But both leaders agreed that progress would be possible only if the immediate problem along the LoC was sorted out. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who met Nawaz Sharif here despite strong criticism from opposition back home, wants to "trust" the new Pakistan Prime Minister and give him a chance to "walk the talk" on stopping ceasefire violations and terror activities against India. Stating this, External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid underlined that while "seeking to trust" Mr. Sharif, India will "verify" the actions on the ground before taking any step further on resuming the stalled dialogue process. In an interview to PTI here, Mr. Khurshid said the "bacteria" of anti-India terrorism rooted in Pakistan must be eliminated whether "it is state-sponsored, state-controlled,

National Security Advisor: I do not think that is really a factor. When Prime Minister Vajpayee went to Islamabad for instance, it was how many months before an election? It was three months before an election and less than a month before the campaign started. I do not think that is a factor. The fact is that we are neighbours; that is not going to change. We have a relationship: that is not going to change. And that is something we have to deal with. So, I think we have dealt with it in good times and bad, and we will go on doing that. So, we will make the effort certainly.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.

(Text in italics is free translation from Hindi Text)



state-mandated or state-encouraged" and should not be allowed to grow and destroy the "sapling" of "creative constructive relationship." "Our Prime Minister wants to give him (Sharif) a chance, wants to trust him. But as he (Singh) has said we have to verify," said Mr. Khurshid while defending Singh's meeting with Mr. Sharif despite opposition BJP contending that it was not the right time as Pakistan was engaging in ceasefire violations. Noting that Mr. Sharif has taken over as Prime Minister of Pakistan recently, he said there is a "reasonable element of hope that this discussion will not go waste and it will lead to some improvement and something concrete in the future." At the hour-long meeting with Sharif on Sunday on the sidelines of UNGA, Mr. Singh made it clear that ending ceasefire violations on the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir is a precondition for resumption of bilateral dialogue. Mr. Khurshid, who was part of the Indian delegation, said Mr. Singh had "free, frank and friendly discussion" with Sharif and flagged every issue of concern, including Mumbai attack, Jamaat-ud-Dawa and its chief Hafiz Saeed, and LoC firing during the meeting.

Despite these talks and DGMO meetings, a month later on October 29 Defence Minister A.K. Antony voiced "serious concern" over an "unusual increase" in ceasefire violations on the border with Pakistan, which he said cannot take place without the "tacit support" of the Pakistani establishment. Addressing reporters on the sidelines of an event, Mr. Antony said. "The ceasefire violations are still continuing, but this year there is unusual developments taking place ... unusual sudden series of ceasefire violations on the International Border, which is more a matter of concern... And I am confident our security forces are capable of meeting any challenges and are handling the situation very efficiently," the defence minister said in an answer to a question. He also said that India has repeatedly said that it wants to improve relations with Pakistan. "And if (Pakistan) is serious about improving relations, how can the infiltrations and ceasefire violations increase?" he asked.

213. Official Spokesperson's response to Pakistan Foreign Office Statement that Pakistan requires evidence in 26/11 case.

New Delhi, October 26, 2013.

Responding to Pakistan Foreign Office statement that Pakistan requires evidence in 26/11 case, the Official Spokesperson said:

“The entire planning of the dastardly Mumbai terrorist attack was hatched in Pakistan, the training of the terrorists who launched that attack was undertaken in Pakistan, the financing of the conspiracy was in Pakistan. It therefore follows that 99% of the evidence will be available in Pakistan. It is incumbent on the authorities there to present that evidence in order to bring to book the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks.

On our part, we have fully cooperated with the Judicial Commission which visited India in end Sept 2013 and all information that they wanted was handed over to the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi on 14-15th October. It now devolves on Pakistani authorities to ensure that justice is done in the Mumbai attack case in accordance with their own assurances.”



214. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting of External Affairs Minister with Foreign Affairs and National Security Adviser of Pakistan Mr. Sartaj Aziz on the sidelines of ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

Delhi-NCR, November 12, 2013.

Official Spokesperson: Good evening friends and thank you very much for being here. I will try and give you a flavour of the External Affairs Minister's last bilateral engagement on the margins of the ASEM with Mr. Sartaj Aziz, the Foreign Affairs and National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

As you are aware, External Affairs Minister had a series of bilateral engagements on the margins and this was his 20th meeting in the last two and a half days. Given that it was on the margins of the ASEM, it

started with a sort of a review of what both of them felt regarding the outcomes of the ASEM meeting and subsequently, it went into bilateral issues.

It was for approximately 30 minutes and the principal focus of that meeting was to try and take on from where the last diplomatic engagement between India and Pakistan ended and that was the two Prime Ministers meeting in New York and the agreement between the two Prime Ministers that the pre condition for movement forward between India and Pakistan would be peace and tranquillity on the line of control. And therefore, there was a discussion on that matter and both agreed that it was important that the DGMOs should meet at an early date because that is what can take this further.

In addition, there were also discussions about other issues that we have raised on the agenda and these relate to the Mumbai trial.

Following this meeting Mr. Aziz also has another meeting planned and we will now take it from there based on the outcomes of what the two Ministers discuss of what would be the next steps. The DGMOs are in touch and we hope that they will take this process forward based on mutual discussions between the two country's DGMOs.

I will open the floor if you would like to ask any questions.

Q: You mentioned that other meetings are planned, Mr. Aziz's. What meetings are you referring to?

Answer: I don't know whether I used the word plural. I think he is right now also having a meeting with his counterpart, the National Security Adviser, because Mr. Aziz handles both Foreign Affairs and National Security.

Q: Will he also have a meeting with Prime Minister later.

Answer: I am not aware of that.

Q: Is there any date for the DGMOs to meet.

Answer: What was discussed was ultimately the DGMOs report to the Army Chiefs and it's for them to workout that, whenever they talk. They need to try and workout what would be the modalities of meeting at an early date.

Q: Sir, you said, you have reiterated that peace and tranquillity on the LOC is the precondition for the forward movement yet for the last 10 days there has been no firing on the line of control. Is this a positive thing that India would have considered?

Answer: The understanding is that the 2003 ceasefire should hold and that peace and tranquillity on the line of control is one of the most important CBMs both for India and for Pakistan. And if that holds, and the DGMOs concur with that and they meet and confirm that we will proceed further.

Q: Sorry to ask the same question again, was there any reason given in the conversation about why it's been six weeks since the Prime Ministers actually said that DGMOs should meet. Why is it necessary for the Foreign Ministers to meet six weeks later and repeat that. Is there any reason for the non movement on that.

Answer: You know what happens on the border is best articulated by the sentinels of the border. They are in touch and I would suggest that this issue is posed to them. What I can articulate for you is what was discussed at the diplomatic level.

Q: What exactly did they discuss about the Mumbai trials?

Answer: Well, our view has been and we have indicated previously and this the External Affairs Minister did articulate again that as far as we were concerned, all the evidence that was required by the Judicial Commission was provided including transcripts etc., and this was acknowledged by the Pakistani side that they had received everything that they had asked for from us and now they are proceeding with the trial.

Question: Was the issue of Hafiz Saed and his speeches being raised by India.

Answer: Well this was half an hour meeting and all the list of issues on the agenda between India and Pakistan could be listed but the possibilities of discussing every issue may not arise and so we focused on those issues which followed from the last bilateral dialogue with Pakistan or subsequent developments like we have provided the information relating to the Mumbai trials and the transcripts etc. So these were the primary areas of focus.

Q: Sir, did the External Affairs Minister raise the issue of the Pakistan China Economic Corridor from Xinjiang to Gwadar because it runs through the POK.

Answer: Srinjoy, our position on this is well articulated. We have reiterated this on several times. We have raised it with both the parties previously and the last time I recollect raising with the Chinese was during the visit of Premier Li Keqiang to India. Our position is that the entire area of Jammu and Kashmir is Indian territory and therefore we hold a view on that which is well known and articulated very well previously.

Q: Did Mr. Khurshid raise this Hurriyat leaders meeting with Mr. Sartar Aziz.

Answer: Yes, he did raise this issue with his Pakistani counterpart and you have yourself heard what his views are on this and has himself provided the situational and contextual basis on this. He articulated a similar approach during his discussions with his Pakistani counterpart.

Thank you very much



215. Official Spokesperson's response to a question on Resolutions adopted during the 40th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of OIC.

New Delhi, December 13, 2013.

In response to a question on Resolutions adopted during the 40th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea from December 9-11, 2013, the Official Spokesperson said:

"We note with regret that the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has once again made factually incorrect and misleading references to matters internal to India, including the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India. We reject all such references/resolutions. The OIC has no locus standi on matters concerning the internal affairs of India or the recent incidents on the LoC".



216. Press Release of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on the meeting of Commerce Minister Anand Sharma with the Chief Minister of Punjab (Pakistan) Shahbaz Sharif.

New Delhi, December 13, 2013.

The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma today met Mr. Shahbaz Sharif, Chief Minister of Punjab Province of Pakistan who was accompanied by Pakistan's Minister of State for Commerce, Textile and Privatization Mr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, Mr. Salman Bashir, High Commissioner of Pakistan to India and Pakistani businessman Mr. Mian Muhammad Mansha along with other senior officials from Pakistan.

Shri Sharma conveyed to the Pakistan side that India stands committed to the roadmap for bilateral trade normalization as was worked out in September 2012 between Commerce Secretaries of India and Pakistan. Essentially this involves Pakistan side removing its restrictions on trade by the land route (Attari, Wagah ICP), as also imparting full non-discriminatory trade access by removing its balance 1209 tariff lines of its current negative list of items importable from India. On the basis of these agreed steps to be taken, Shri Sharma reiterated that India would give enhanced preferential trade access to Pakistan by bringing down its SAFTA sensitive list from 614 tariff lines to 100 tariff lines. The Pakistan side would also in a phased manner over five years be reducing its SAFTA sensitive list for India to 100 tariff lines.

It was also agreed that with the growing volume of trade by the land route the working hours at Attari/ Wagah can be further enhanced and even contemplated for 24/7 operating conditions, the details of which would need to be discussed at an appropriate time between the Commerce Secretaries of both countries.

Shri Sharma offered that to debottleneck congestion at Attari / Wagah, containerized traffic could be accepted with appropriate security arrangements at customs bonded warehouses at Amritsar on the Indian side and Lahore on the Pakistan side. This suggestion was welcomed by both Mr. Sharif and Mr. Dastgir.



SRILANKA

217. **Joint Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Sri Lankan Minister of External Affairs.**

New Delhi, January 22, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen of the media. I welcome you to this event. As usual we will begin with opening remarks by the two Ministers. I request the hon'ble External Affairs Minister of India Shri Salman Khurshid to make his opening remarks.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Hon'ble Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs of Sri Lanka, friends from the media:

I have just concluded very useful and productive discussions with the Hon. Minister on the entire gamut of our bilateral relations. Prof. Peiris and I have also co-chaired the eighth session of the Joint Commission Meeting.

We have noted that bilateral cooperation during the past three years has seen significant expansion covering all areas of mutual interest. The signing today of two agreements relating to Combating International Terrorism and Illicit Drug Trafficking and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, has further strengthened the framework of our close cooperation.

During the Joint Commission, we comprehensively reviewed bilateral relations, including trade, investment and services, development cooperation, science and technology, power, agriculture, health, people-to-people contacts, connectivity, tourism, culture and education. We have noted with satisfaction that India is Sri Lanka's largest trade partner and Sri Lanka is India's largest trade partner in South Asia. India is the largest foreign direct investor in Sri Lanka, and also contributes to the largest number of tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka. Sri Lankans also make up a significant proportion of tourists and pilgrims visiting India every year.

Given the vast untapped potential, we have stressed the need for intensive consultations towards a comprehensive framework for economic cooperation and building of a special economic partnership.

We are working on setting up of a Special Economic Zone in Trincomalee and a pharmaceutical and a textiles cluster elsewhere in Sri Lanka.

I have conveyed India's readiness to support Sri Lanka's endeavor in capacity building in science and technology, agriculture, ICT, education and health sectors. We agreed to enhance cooperation in the energy sector. We are already discussing finalization of major mutually beneficial projects in power and oil and gas Sectors. We look forward to enhanced cooperation in new and renewable energy, civil nuclear energy and space technology in the future.

India and Sri Lanka enjoy a growing defence relationship built on extensive training and Service-to-Service linkages. We have today reviewed our mutual strategic interests, in view of the commonality of concerns, including with respect to the safety and security of sea lanes of communication. We agreed to promote dialogue on security and defence issues of relevance in bilateral as well as in regional context. We noted that successful exposition of the sacred Kapilavastu relics and the celebration of 150 years of Guru Rabindranath Tagore's anniversary in Sri Lanka have both significantly enriched our bilateral cultural relations.

The Joint Commission Meeting agreed on the need to extend humane treatment and abjure violence against fishermen of our two countries. We welcomed the decisions of two meetings of Joint Working Group on Fishing held in 2011 and 2012, and also the outcomes of meetings between representatives of fishermen's associations, and the work towards concluding an MoU on Development and Cooperation in the Field of Fisheries. The need for both sides to adhere to Practical Arrangements on Fishing of 2008, which had helped to decrease incidents on the International Maritime Boundary Line, has been duly noted. Both sides have placed great emphasis on the safety of fishermen and the need to continue to ensure that violence is not resorted to under any circumstances.

I have conveyed India's commitment to the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Sri Lanka. We have made good progress in implementing comprehensive bilateral agenda set out by our Prime Minister and the President of Sri Lanka in June 2010. Projects of bilateral development assistance have progressed

well, including construction of 50,000 houses for IDPs, with the fullest cooperation of the Government of Sri Lanka. Our livelihood generation and reconstruction efforts in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka have had a positive impact on the ground.

In my separate discussions with the Foreign Minister, I have referred to the need for continued dialogue between the Government of Sri Lanka and the representatives of the Sri Lankan Tamil community, with a view towards ensuring a future for the Tamil community that is marked by equality, dignity, justice and self-respect, all of which are respected by Sri Lanka. We hope that there will be early progress on a meaningful devolution building upon the 13th Amendment and leading to national reconciliation.

I am confident that given our geographical proximity and millennial links, a much closer and more comprehensive relationship beckons us. The visit of Minister Peiris and our discussions today have opened avenues for taking full and further advantage of opportunities that are open to us.

Thank you very much.

Official Spokesperson: I request the External Affairs Minister of Sri Lanka to make his opening remarks.

Sri Lankan Minister of External Affairs (Prof. G.L. Peiris): Your Excellency Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs of India, and friends from the media:

As my distinguished colleague told you, we had some very productive and constructive discussions. We concluded the Eighth Joint Commission between India and Sri Lanka. It is taking place at a particularly propitious moment marking the end of one era in Sri Lanka and the commencement of a very exciting but challenging period in our country's history. We leave behind us the pain and the conflict of a 30-year conflict. And President Mahinda Rajapaksa and his government are today engaged in the endeavour to revive the country's economy and move the island forward in a variety of sectors.

What strikes me about the deliberations that we have just concluded is the depth and the range of the relationship between our two countries. The agreed minutes demonstrate beyond any shadow of doubt that the

relationship touches every sector of public policy. The main areas were identified by His Excellency Salman Khurshid. I would be content to say that this is an appropriate moment to stand back to take stock of the situation and to explore practical ways and means of elevating the already robust relationship to a new and a higher plane. And I would say that that is exactly what we have been able to accomplish in these discussions.

We have identified for ourselves where more intense collaboration would yield results which are beneficial to both countries at this moment. And, there are many things that strike me as significant. One of these is the fact that this is no longer a one-way relationship. Take for example the very significant contribution that the private sector of Sri Lanka is making to the development of the economy of India. We are partners and participants in that process. And I would say that the quality of this relationship makes one thing very clear. Whatever problems, issues may arise from time to time, and that is inevitable in any bilateral relationship, the tremendous reservoir of goodwill and understanding that exists between our two countries makes it possible for us through dialogue and discussion to arrive at acceptable and pragmatic solutions to the challenges that we face.

This has no doubt facilitated certain other elements of the relationship one of which is that it is no longer confined to government-to-government relations. One of the strongest components of this relationship I would say is the vigorous people-to-people relations. This was nowhere demonstrated more clearly than by the enthusiasm with which, as His Excellency the Minister of External Affairs of India indicated, the people of Sri Lanka, no fewer than three million people in our country, had the opportunity of venerating the sacred Kapilavastu relics. In fact, Excellency, as you would recall, we had to make a special request to the Prime Minister of India through your High Commissioner His Excellency Ashok Kantha to have the period extended by one week, which the Government of India graciously acceded to. Apart from that, I think about 200,000 pilgrims from Sri Lanka visit Bodh Gaya, Sanchi, Saranath. So, people-to-people contact is definitely a strong, durable mainstay of our relationship. That is one of the bonds that unite us.

So, there is every reason for optimism and confidence with regard to the future of this relationship. What we have concluded today is a significant

milestone in that relationship. It is a constantly continuing and evolving relationship. And I do not have a shadow of doubt that it will go from strength to strength in the months and years to come.

I thank you very much.

Official Spokesperson: The two External Affairs Ministers have agreed to take a few questions.

Q: My question is to both the Ministers, first to Mr. Peiris. What is the Sri Lankan Government's current stand on the 13th Amendment and devolution of powers given that certain Ministers of the Sri Lankan Government have made remarks suggesting that the 13th Amendment should be repealed?

My question to Mr. Khurshid is, is India satisfied with the pace and progress of devolution of powers in Sri Lanka?

Sri Lankan Minister of External Affairs: The 13th Amendment is an integral part of the country's Constitution. In recent times we have had the expression of different views with regard to the future of the 13th Amendment by people in the Government. We have had a variety of opinions, not just one opinion. One view has been that it should be done away with. At the other end of the spectrum, there are other members of the Government who have suggested that far from repealing the 13th Amendment, we should strengthen it. That point of view has also been expressed. And there is a middle view that the 13th Amendment is defective in the sense that it has shortcomings, which is not surprising, and that those deficiencies need to be addressed and the content of the 13th Amendment improved. So, that has been a third school of thought.

Now this is to be expected because you are aware that the Government of Sri Lanka is a coalition government. It consists of different strands of thought, different perceptions, insights, all of which is very healthy in a vibrant democracy. So, there is encouragement for the expression of different points of view. And that is what you have been reading about in the media in recent weeks. So, it is for the Government of Sri Lanka to take into account all these expressions of opinion and to arrive at decisions with regard to future course of action. But what you have been reading about are not decisions, but simply expressions of opinion by various political parties, various segments of the Government. I would

regard that as something promising and encouraging - the free expression of different points of view with regard to a matter that is of fundamental importance to public policy in Sri Lanka.

External Affairs Minister: Thank you for your question. Frankly, my reply will just flow from His Excellency the Foreign Minister's explanation about the context in which we must see this. Sri Lanka has been through an extremely painful experience. And to reconstruct and rehabilitate all your citizens after such a painful experience is obviously a very challenging task. We have discussed the contours of the efforts that are being made. Many of those efforts have borne fruit, are productive. Many more of course are in the pipeline, in the process. And a lot more needs to be done. I think at best we can as friends provide our understanding and our perception of how things are going and be willing to help in every which way.

I do believe that ultimately it is the elected government that decides what it can manage at what speed and in what direction. I think the broad contours of what we discussed, there is no reason for us to express any dissatisfaction. Obviously it is an enormous challenge, it is a difficult challenge. It has to be met consistently step-by-step and steadily. I would imagine that we would want to see reconciliation and reconstruction continue unabated. And that is the impression and those are the details that have been conveyed to us. And we wish Sri Lanka well. Our best wishes are with them for completion of what is essentially a very very difficult task.

Q: This is for the visiting Sri Lankan Foreign Minister. Sir, could you explain the rationale behind increasing duty on Indian automobile exports, especially as sections of Indian industry feel that this is a political decision which has been taken to increase imports from our immediate northern neighbor?

Sri Lankan External Affairs Minister: No, no, I can tell you categorically that that is not the case. It is not a political decision nor is it discriminatory in any sense whatsoever. It is based on a purely objective criterion – engine capacity. Engine capacity is not a political criterion. It is something objective and ascertainable. So, there has been some misunderstanding on this matter. But that assumption on which the question is based, I can assure you, is not correct.

India is a very strong trading partner of Sri Lanka. Look at the volumes of trade today which, as I said, have grown seven-folds since the FTA was entered into. Whether it is investment or trade or tourism, it is a very strong relationship which we are seeking to nurture and develop. So, it is certainly not the intention of the Government of Sri Lanka to do something to inhibit. On the contrary, the intention is very much to expand and to strengthen. So, that is not correct. It is a criterion based on engine capacity applicable across the board, no matter what the source or the origin of the vehicle. It is in no sense a discriminatory decision intended to have a political impact.

Q: Your Excellency, my question is to G.L. Peiris. Why Indian fishermen are being tortured quite often by the Sri Lankan forces? What steps are you taking?

Sri Lankan External Affairs Minister: On this matter, very clear instructions have been given by the Government of Sri Lanka to the Sri Lankan Navy – no violence - and those instructions are being scrupulously observed. It is a human problem which requires a response founded upon humanitarian values which both Governments subscribe to without reservation.

But I must also point out that the numbers of fishing boats coming into these waters are very large from South India. And that has an impact on the livelihoods of the Tamil fishermen living in the North who are trying to rebuild their lives after, as his Excellency pointed out, a very painful period during which their livelihoods were totally destroyed, and they are trying to pick up the pieces and move forward. So, in that situation I think it is important to take some measures in a suitable way to address this problem. We have been talking to the Government of India about it and Government of India has been forthcoming, responsive.

I think the method that we have chosen to begin these discussions at the level of the fishermen societies, their voluntary societies, their communities, as a starting point, a point of departure, that I think is a very practical way of addressing that problem. It is something that has a great deal to commend it. And starting from that point onwards we are confident that we have to move these discussions forward and arrive at solutions which are mutually satisfying.

Q: Question for EAM. How valid is the Pakistani assertion that UN troops be used in Jammu and Kashmir? Why do you think is Pakistan doing this? Is this a way of denying the Simla Agreement?

External Affairs Minister: I think we did hear some statements about giving access to third parties in this affair, but I think we moved away from that. In recent days there is a clear reaffirmation of a bilateral process. I think that the contacts between the DGMOs on both sides have indicated that the bilateral process remains in a sustained and steady manner still available and effective. We have not heard anything more about statements that obviously were not acceptable to us. We do reiterate our position that these are bilateral issues and they should be settled bilaterally. We have a history of being able to work bilaterally and we would want to maintain that and contain this matter within the bilateral purview.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.

(Concluded)



**218. External Affairs Minister's remarks to media at the 8th Session of India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission Meeting.
New Delhi, January 22, 2013.**

Hon'ble Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs of Sri Lanka,
Friends from the Media,

I have just concluded very useful and productive discussions with Minister Prof. Peiris on the entire gamut of bilateral relations. Prof. Peiris and I have also co-Chaired the 8th session of the Joint Commission Meeting.

We have noted that bilateral cooperation during the past three years has seen significant expansion covering all areas of mutual interest. The signing today of two Agreements relating to Combating International Terrorism and Illicit Drug Trafficking.

During the Joint Commission, we comprehensively reviewed bilateral relations, including trade, investment and services, development cooperation, science and technology, power, agriculture, health, people-to-people contacts, connectivity, tourism, culture and education.

We noted with satisfaction that India is Sri Lanka's largest trade partner and Sri Lanka is India's largest trade partner in South Asia. India is the largest foreign direct investor in Sri Lanka, and also contributes to the largest number of tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka. Sri Lankans also make up a significant proportion of tourists and pilgrims visiting India.

Given the vast untapped potential, we have stressed the need for intensive consultations towards a more comprehensive framework for economic cooperation and building of a special economic partnership. We are working on setting up of a Special Economic Zone in Trincomalee and a pharmaceutical and a textiles cluster elsewhere in Sri Lanka.

I have conveyed India's readiness to support Sri Lanka's endeavor in capacity building in Science & Technology, Agriculture, ICT, education and health sector. We agreed to enhance cooperation in the energy sector. We are already discussing finalization of major mutually beneficial projects in power and oil & gas Sectors. We look forward to enhanced cooperation in new and renewable energy, civil nuclear energy and space technology in future.

India and Sri Lanka enjoy a growing defence relationship built on extensive training and Service-to-Service linkages. We have today reviewed our mutual strategic interests, in view of the commonality of concerns, including with respect to the safety and security of sea lanes of communication. We agreed to promote dialogue on security and defence issues of relevance in bilateral as well as in regional context.

We noted that the successful exposition of the sacred Kapilavastu relics and the celebrations of 150 years of Guru Rabindranath Tagore's anniversary in Sri Lanka have significantly enriched our bilateral cultural relations.

The JCM agreed on the need to extend humane treatment and abjure violence against fishermen of our two countries. We welcomed the decisions of two meetings of Joint Working Group on Fishing held in

2011 and 2012, and also the outcomes of meetings between representatives of Fishermen's Associations, and the work towards concluding a MoU on Development and Cooperation in the Field of Fisheries.

The need for both sides to adhere to the Practical Arrangements on Fishing of 2008, which had helped to decrease incidents on the International Maritime Boundary Line, has been duly noted. Both sides have placed great emphasis on the safety of our fishermen and the need to continue to ensure that violence is not resorted to under any circumstances.

I have conveyed India's commitment to the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Sri Lanka. We have made good progress in implementing comprehensive bilateral agenda set out by our Prime Minister and the President of Sri Lanka in June 2010. Projects of bilateral development assistance have progressed well, including construction of 50,000 houses for IDPs, with the fullest cooperation of the Government of Sri Lanka. Our livelihood generation and reconstruction efforts in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka have had a positive impact on the ground.

In my separate discussions with Foreign Minister Peiris, I have referred to the need for continued dialogue between the Government of Sri Lanka and the representatives of the Sri Lankan Tamil community, with a view towards ensuring a future for the Tamil community that is marked by equality, dignity, justice and self-respect all of which are respected by Sri Lanka. We hope that there will be early progress on meaningful devolution building upon the 13th Amendment and leading to national reconciliation.

I am confident that given our geographical proximity and millennial links, a much closer and more comprehensive relationship beckons us. The visit of Minister Peiris and our discussions today have opened avenues for taking full and further advantage of the opportunities open before us.

Thank you



219. List of agreements signed at the Eight India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission Meeting.

New Delhi, January 22, 2013.

List of agreements signed at the Eight India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission Meeting

S.No.	Name of the Agreement	Sri Lankan Signatory	Indian Signatory
1	Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income	Hon'ble Prof. G.L. Peiris External	Shri Salman Khurshid External Affairs Minister
2	Agreement on Combating International Terrorism and Illicit Drug Trafficking	Hon'ble Prof. G.L. Peiris External Affairs Minister	Shri Salman Khurshid External Affairs Minister

New Delhi

January 22, 2013



220. Statement in Rajya Sabha by External Affairs Minister, in response to Calling Attention Notice tabled by Dr. V. Maitreyan, MP, Rajya Sabha and others regarding "Plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka".

New Delhi, February 27, 2013.

1. I rise to respond to the House on the Calling Attention Notice regarding the "Plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka".
2. At the outset, I would like to reiterate to this august House that the Government fully shares the sentiments of the Hon'ble Members of Parliament regarding the welfare of the Sri Lankan Tamil community.
3. Since the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka in May 2009, which left around 3,00,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in

camps in Northern Sri Lanka and general devastation of infrastructure, the focus and highest and most immediate priority for the Government of India has been on the welfare and well being of the Tamils citizens of Sri Lanka, their relief and rehabilitation and the reconstruction of infrastructure in the affected areas.

4. As the Hon'ble Members of the Parliament are aware, the Prime Minister announced in June 2009 a grant of Rs. 500 crores for relief, rehabilitation and resettlement work in Sri Lanka. Since then, the Government has expended Rs. 68.96 crores in the financial year 2009-10, Rs. 93.86 crores in 2010-11 and Rs 181.94 crores in 2011-12. In the Current Financial Year (2012-13), an amount of Rs. 290 crores has been allocated for this purpose.
5. The initial phase of Indian assistance involved massive humanitarian relief efforts for IDPs in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. This included the dispatch of 2.5 lakh family relief packs; deployment of an emergency field hospital; dispatch of consignments of medicines; gifting of more than 10,400 metric tons of shelter material and 4 lakh cement bags; deployment of de-mining teams in Northern Sri Lanka; and holding of artificial limb fitment camps in Jaffna and Vavuniya in Northern Sri Lanka. I am happy to convey to the House that according to information available to us, all the 3,00,000 IDPs have been resettled and the last IDP camp, Menik Farms, was formally closed in September last year. It is important that IDPs be allowed to return to their original homes.
6. Subsequently, the Government took up various projects for the rehabilitation of IDPs and reconstruction of the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. To revive the agricultural activities in Northern Sri Lanka, India gifted 95,000 agricultural starter packs, seeds and 500 tractors for the use of IDPs. Government gifted 55 buses to Northern, Eastern and Central Provinces of Sri Lanka. Projects related to the development of rail and port infrastructure, connectivity and transportation, education, public health, housing, vocational training and economic revival were taken up.

7. The project for the construction of 50,000 houses in Sri Lanka, mainly for IDPs, was announced in June 2010. This is one of the largest grant assistance projects implemented by the Government outside India. I am happy to inform this August House that the Pilot Project for the construction of 1000 houses that started in April 2011 was completed in August 2012. It may be noted that these houses were required to be constructed in largely inaccessible areas in the aftermath of a violent conflict. In many cases, the sites had to be freed of mines and other unexploded ordinance. An MoU on the modalities for the remaining 49,000 houses (based on Cabinet approval accorded in December 2011) was signed in January 2012. The project was launched on the ground on 2nd October 2012, and since then 8039 beneficiaries under the 'owner driven model' have already received the first installment of payments. The reconstruction/repair of 4000 out of the 6000 houses under the "Agency Driven' Model' has been initiated. The phase of remaining 2,000 houses under "Agency-Driven" model in Northern and Eastern Provinces is to be implemented during 2013-14.
8. In addition, the Government has extended a Line of Credit of about US \$ 800 million for the restoration of Northern Railway Lines. Projects in this regard are progressing as per schedule and expected to be completed by December 2013. India is also assisting in the rehabilitation of the Kanakesanthurai (KKS) harbour, restoration of Duraiappa stadium and construction of a Cultural Centre at Jaffna. Two vocational training centres at Batticaloa and Nuwara Eliya have already been established with Indian assistance.
9. It may kindly be recalled that a 12-member Joint Parliamentary delegation, led by the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, visited Sri Lanka from 16-21 April 2012. The delegation had an extensive programme involving visits to different parts of Sri Lanka, including Vavuniya, Mullaitivu, Jaffna, Kankesanthurai, Kalutara and Batticaloa, where projects are being implemented under Government of India assistance. At their request, the delegation also visited the camp for Internally Displaced Persons

(IDPs) at the Menik Farms where they interacted with IDPs and the local administration. They were also able to discuss the resettlement and rehabilitation of IDPs and efforts towards national reconciliation and political devolution in Sri Lanka at meetings with the President and Ministers of the Sri Lankan Government. During the visit, houses for IDPs, built with Indian assistance, were handed over to the beneficiaries. The delegation also gifted bicycles and participated in formal ceremonies for the handing over of hospitals, schools and vocational training centres rehabilitated under Government of India assistance.

10. I would like to underline that our constructive engagement with the Government of Sri Lanka and considerable assistance programme has contributed to the reconstruction and development of the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka.

Hon'ble Chairman,

11. Regarding the issue of a political solution in Sri Lanka, Government is of the view that the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka provided a unique opportunity to pursue a lasting political settlement within the framework of a united Sri Lanka, acceptable to all communities in Sri Lanka, including Tamils. It has to, however, be kept in mind that this is a long standing issue and that Sri Lanka is going through its internal processes. The sooner Sri Lanka can come to a political arrangement within which all the communities feel comfortable, and which works for all of them, the better. Government will do whatever it can to support this process.
12. Our emphasis, in this context, has been to persuade the Sri Lankan Government to take forward the process of broader dialogue with all parties, including the Tamil National Alliance, and show concrete movement towards a meaningful devolution of powers, including the implementation of the 13th Amendment and beyond. India has conveyed to Sri Lanka on a number of occasions the urgent and imperative need for expeditious steps towards genuine national reconciliation, including investigations into allegation of human rights violations, restoration of normalcy

in affected areas, reduction of 'high security zones', accountability for the list of missing persons and the redress of humanitarian concerns of affected families.

13. During discussions at the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) in Geneva in November, 2012, the Government called upon Sri Lanka to fulfill its commitments made to the international community during the UPR 2008 and on subsequent occasions for the implementation of the 13th Amendment and building upon it so as to achieve a meaningful devolution package; urged expeditious action to take forward the political process for early political settlement; urged that elections to the Northern Provincial Council be held as early as feasible; called for effective and time bound implementation of the constructive recommendations contained in the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) report; and for independent and credible investigations to be conducted in respect of allegations of Human Rights violations and incidents involving loss of civilian life brought out in the LLRC Report.
14. Hon'ble Members of Parliament would recall that the Government voted in favour of a Resolution entitled 'Promotion, Reconciliation and Accountability in Sri Lanka' tabled by the United States at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva in March 2012. I would like to inform the august House that we understand that a follow up procedural Resolution on Sri Lanka is likely to be proposed by USA for consideration at the forthcoming session of the UNHRC in Geneva in March 2013. At this juncture, we would encourage the United States and Sri Lanka to directly engage on the draft resolution and aim for a mutually acceptable outcome. Needless to add, our decision on a potential resolution in the forthcoming meeting of the Human Rights Council will await the outcome of these efforts and would depend on the substance of the resolution finally tabled. Government will continue to remain engaged with the Government of Sri Lanka to advance its objective, namely, the achievement of a future for the Tamil community in Sri Lanka marked by equality, dignity, justice and self-respect.

Hon'ble Chairman,

15. Some Members have expressed concern over incidents of attack and apprehension of India fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy in waters between India and Sri Lanka. Allow me to reiterate, at the outset, that the welfare, safety and security of our fishermen have always received the highest priority by Government.
16. In response to reports of incidents of attacks on Indian fishermen, the Government, through diplomatic channels, immediately takes up the matter of their expeditious release and repatriation with the Sri Lankan authorities. As a result of these efforts, presently, there are no Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan custody on fisheries related charges. However, some Indian nationals have been arrested in Sri Lankan waters on charges of smuggling narcotics and contraband. These include the five fishermen detained on 29 November 2011. Officials from our High Commission in Colombo and Consulate in Jaffna are in regular touch with the detained Indian nationals and are extending all possible consular assistance to them.
17. During my meeting with the External Affairs Minister of Sri Lanka on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Rim - Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) Council of Ministers Meeting in November 2012 and the India Sri Lanka Joint Commission Meeting in January 2013, I reiterated our position that the use of force could not be justified under any circumstances and that all fishermen should be treated in a humane manner.
18. At the same time, the need for creating greater awareness among our fishermen to avoid crossing over into Sri Lankan waters for their own safety and security has been felt. We remain engaged with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that fishermen on both sides can continue to pursue their livelihood in a safe, secure and sustainable manner.

Hon'ble Chairman,

19. On the occasion of the 8th India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission Meeting in New Delhi in January 2013, I highlighted the need for

continued dialogue between the Government of Sri Lanka and the representatives of the Sri Lankan Tamil community and expressed the hope that there would be early progress on meaningful devolution building upon the 13th Amendment and leading to national reconciliation.

20. The Government remains engaged with Government of Sri Lanka to take forward the process of national reconciliation, and in a spirit of partnership, to arrive at a solution that meets substantially the aspiration of the Tamil community for equality, justice, peace and dignity.

Thank you



221. Suo-Moto Statement by External Affairs Minister in Lok Sabha on the apprehension of Indian Fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy.

New Delhi, March 14, 2013.

Madam Speaker,

I notice that concern has been expressed by some Members of the House on the recent incidents of attack and apprehension of Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy in waters between India and Sri Lanka.

At the outset, I would like to reiterate that the Government attaches the highest priority to the welfare, safety and security of our fishermen. I would like to apprise this August House on the steps taken by the Government with regard to recent incidents involving Indian fishermen.

On 3 March 2013, 16 Indian fishermen with three boats were apprehended by the Sri Lanka Navy. On 04 March 2013, they were remanded to judicial custody for 14 days on charges of fishing in Sri Lankan waters. We had immediately taken up the matter with the Sri Lankan Government seeking their immediate release and repatriation. Our Mission officials secured consular access and were in constant touch with these fishermen to ensure their safety and well being. Pursuant to our efforts they were

released on 11 March 2013. Our High Commission in Sri Lanka arranged for their safe custody, 330 litres of diesel for boats and in coordination with the Indian Coast Guards arranged their safe return to India on March 12, 2013.

An incident of firing on Indian fishermen allegedly by the Sri Lankan Navy was reported in the early hours of 07 March 2013 in which one Indian fisherman was injured. We had, through diplomatic channels, lodged a strong protest with the Sri Lankan Government the same day. The Sri Lankan Navy has, however, denied having fired at any fishing craft.

According to available information 19 Indian fishermen with 04 boats were apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy at 2030 hrs on 13 March 2013; and 34 Indian Fishermen with five fishing boats were apprehended at 0530 hrs earlier today. Officials from the Consulate General in Jaffna have sought consular access to these fishermen.

In the absence of Sri Lankan High Commissioner to India (who is out of New Delhi), the Sri Lankan Deputy High Commissioner to India was called in today and a strong protest was lodged at these incidents of apprehensions of Indian fishermen. We have called for immediate release and repatriation of the apprehended Indian fishermen. We have emphasized on the need for the Sri Lankan Navy to exercise restraint, extend humane treatment and not to resort to violence under any circumstances.

We are also aware of the case of some Indian nationals have been arrested in Sri Lankan waters on charges of smuggling narcotics and contraband. These include the five fishermen detained on 29 November 2011. Officials from our High Commission in Colombo and Consulate in Jaffna are in regular touch with the detained Indian nationals and are extending all possible consular assistance to them.

I would like to reiterate that we remain engaged with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the fishermen on both sides can continue to pursue their livelihood in a safe, secure and sustainable manner.

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2011. Officials from our High Commission in Colombo and Consulate in Jaffna are in regular touch with the detained Indian nationals and are extending all possible consular assistance to them.

I would like to reiterate that we remain engaged with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the fishermen on both sides can continue to pursue their livelihood in a safe, secure and sustainable manner.



222. External Affairs Minister's Statement in Rajya Sabha on Agitation by Students in Tamil Nadu.

New Delhi, March 15, 2013.

"We have had a discussion in the House earlier and anxieties have been expressed because students' bodies of various colleges and universities in Tamil Nadu are in the streets agitating over the Sri Lankan issue. I want to share with the House that the process for deciding on the Resolution, which is a procedural Resolution, a follow-up on the last year's Resolution, is now underway. We are engaging all other Member-countries. We are, absolutely, committed to what we tried to do last year which was to ensure that there must be accountability, there must be fair participation, there must be sanctions which must be imposed, where they are to be found after adjudication, and a life of dignity and a life of equality must be ensured to all the Tamil citizens of Sri Lanka. This was the objective of supporting the Resolution last year. The objective remains important, and we are constantly in pursuit of that objective. Whatever steps are necessary towards the pursuit of that objective, they will be taken by the Government of India. We are in the process of finalizing our position and posture. We are in touch with all other stakeholders. And as soon as the final view is taken, we will come back to the House and we will inform the House of the latest position.

I share the sentiment of the Hon'ble Member and the investigation must be impartial, transparent and independent. This is something that has been reiterated repeatedly, and we remain committed to this objective."



223. Statement on recent incidents involving Sri Lankans in Tamil Nadu.

New Delhi, March 19, 2013.

In response to questions, the official spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs stated:

“We have noted with concern recent incidents involving Sri Lankan citizens, especially monks, in Tamil Nadu. The state government of Tamil Nadu has taken immediate action to identify and prosecute the miscreants, in respect of the recent incidents. The Government of India, in consultation with the concerned state governments, has taken and will continue to take all measures to ensure the safety, security and well-being of Sri Lankan visitors to India, including to Tamil Nadu.”



224. Intervention in the United Nations Human Rights Council under Agenda Item: 2 on the Resolution on Promoting Reconciliation and Accountability in Sri Lanka.

Geneva, March 21, 2013.

Mr. President,

Allow me to make a few remarks on the resolution under discussion “Promoting Reconciliation and Accountability in Sri Lanka”.

India believes that the report of the LLRC and its findings and recommendation provides a window of opportunity to forge a consensual way forward towards a lasting political settlement through genuine national reconciliation and the full enjoyment of human rights by all its citizens. We note with concern the inadequate progress by Sri Lanka in fulfilling its commitment to this Council in 2009. Further, we call on Sri Lanka to move forward on its public commitments, including on the devolution of political authority through full implementation of the 13th Amendment and building upon it.

India has always been of the view that the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka provided a unique opportunity to pursue a lasting political settlement,

acceptable to all communities in Sri Lanka, including the Tamils. We call for effective and timely implementation of all the constructive recommendations contained in the LLRC report, including those pertaining to missing persons, detainees, disappearances and abductions, reduction of 'high security zones', return of private lands by the military and withdrawal of the security forces from the civilian domain in the Northern Province. We reiterate our call for an independent and credible investigation into allegations of human rights violations and loss of civilian lives. We urge Sri Lanka to take forward measures to ensure accountability. We expect these measures to be to the satisfaction of the international community.

As Sri Lanka's closest neighbour, India remains engaged in a substantial way in the relief, resettlement, rehabilitation and reconstruction process in that country. Our efforts have contributed to the resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons and the rebuilding of infrastructure and development, especially in the Northern and the Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka.

While noting the commitment of Sri Lanka to hold elections to the Northern Provincial Council in September 2013, it is our expectation that the people of the province can exercise their democratic rights freely and without delay as guaranteed to them by the Sri Lankan Constitution.

We note the invitation extended by Sri Lanka to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and urge her to undertake the visit at an early date. We hope that the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and UN Special Procedures continue their engagement in accordance with their mandate.

We encourage the Government of Sri Lanka to expedite the process of a broad-based, inclusive and meaningful reconciliation and political settlement that ensures that all communities live in dignity with equal rights and equal protection of the laws. As a neighbour with thousands of years of relations with Sri Lanka, we cannot remain untouched by developments in that country and will continue to remain engaged in this matter.



225. Information supplied by the Ministry of Defence to Lok Sabha in reply to a question on the attacks on Indian fishermen by the Sri Lanka Navy.

New Delhi, April 22, 2013.

From time to time there are reports of incidents of attack on Indian fishermen, allegedly by the Sri Lankan Navy. Government has been consistently taking up such issues with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the Sri Lankan Navy acts with restraint and our fishermen found near International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) are treated in a humane manner. In order to avoid recurrence of incidents involving our fishermen and keeping in mind the humanitarian and livelihood dimensions of fishermen issues, Government has reached an understanding with the Government of Sri Lanka in October, 2008, to put in place practical arrangements to deal with bonafide Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). As part of these arrangements, it has been agreed that there would be no firing on Indian fishing vessels and that Indian fishing vessels would not enter the sensitive areas designated by the Government of Sri Lanka along its coastline. Following are the details of the number of fishermen died, captured and imprisoned in Sri Lanka during the last three years:

Year	Died	Detained
2010	01	32
2011	02	203*
2012	Nil	202
2013	Nil	125 (till date)

* 10 Indian nationals including 05 fishermen arrested in November 2011, are in custody on charges of smuggling narcotics and contraband.

Indian Coast Guard provides assistance to Indian fishermen at sea while they are in distress through regular patrolling. It also conducts Community Interactions Programmes to educate fishermen among other issues, on the perils of cross border fishing. Under operation Tasha', Indian Navy and Coast Guard ships are deployed continuously (24X7) in Palk Bay area to prevent any illegal activities and also to protect the fishermen from any attacks, while they are fishing in Indian waters.



226. Response of official Spokesperson to a question on the visit of delegation from Tamil National Alliance (TNA), Sri Lanka to India.

New Delhi, June 18, 2013.

“A six-member delegation of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), Sri Lanka is visiting India from 16-19 June 2013. The delegation is led by Mr. R. Sampanthan, MP, and consists of Mr. Mavai S. Senathirajah, (MP), Mr. K. (Suresh) Premachandran (MP), Mr. P. Selvarajah (MP), Mr. Selvam Adaikkalanathan (MP) and Mr. M.A. Sumanthiran (MP). A TNA delegation had also visited India in October 2012.

The TNA delegation called on the Prime Minister today. They had earlier called on the External Affairs Minister and the National Security Adviser.

The Prime Minister conveyed to the TNA delegation that he was dismayed by reports suggesting that the Government of Sri Lanka planned to dilute certain key provisions of the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution ahead of elections to the Northern Provincial Council. It was noted that the proposed changes raised doubts about the commitments made by the Sri Lankan Government to India and the international community, including the United Nations, on a political settlement in Sri Lanka that would go beyond the 13th Amendment. The changes would also be incompatible with the recommendation of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), set up by the Government of

* Later on July 4 Prime Minister in a letter replying to the Tamilnadu Chief Minister J.Jayalalithaa informed her that there was no change in India's stand on the issue of reconciliation and devolution of political powers to ethnic Tamils in Sri Lanka, and New Delhi would work towards ensuring that Tamils are “masters of their own destiny within framework of a united Sri Lanka”. “We have long advocated the creation of an environment in Sri Lanka in which all communities, particularly the Sri Lankan Tamils, are masters of their own destiny within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. We will continue to work towards this end”. Ms. Jayalalitha had written to the Prime Minister strongly urging New Delhi to pressure the Sri Lankan Government not to take any steps to repeal or dilute the 13th Amendment of the Sri Lankan Constitution in any manner. It may be recalled that the 13th Amendment is part of the 1987 Indo-Lanka accord which seeks to give more powers to the provinces. There are reports that the Lankan government wants to repeal it despite India's concerns. Ms. Jayalalithaa had called upon the Centre to take a decisive and bold stand in support of the Tamils, besides asking India to ensure that the process of democratic decentralisation was in no way jeopardised.

Sri Lanka, calling for a political settlement based on the devolution of power to the provinces.

The Prime Minister stated that he was deeply concerned about the welfare and wellbeing of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka. He stressed on the expectation that the Sri Lankan Tamil community would lead a life of dignity, as equal citizens, and reiterated that India would make every effort to ensure the achievement of a future for the community marked by equality, justice and self-respect.”



227. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of National Security Adviser to Sri Lanka.

New Delhi, July 9, 2013.

Mr. Shivshankar Menon, National Security Adviser of India, visited Colombo on 8-9 July 2013 to participate in the 2nd NSA-Level Meeting on Trilateral Cooperation on Maritime Security between India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

Governments of India, Sri Lanka and Maldives have been engaged in trilateral discussions to address the common maritime challenges in the Indian Ocean region. Following the meeting on 8 July, the three-side agreed on a roadmap for future cooperation in maritime security. In this context, they signed an Outcome Document outlining further collaborative measures in the areas of inter alia Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA); strengthening coordination of maritime Search and Rescue (SAR); promoting marine oil pollution response cooperation; expanding 'DOSTI' (friendship) exercises; sharing of information on illegal maritime activities; and piracy. The text of the Outcome Document is enclosed.

The next NSA-Level Meeting on Trilateral Cooperation on Maritime Security between India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives will take place in New Delhi at a mutually convenient time.

During his visit, the National Security Adviser called on H. E. the President of Sri Lanka and also held bilateral meetings with Minister for Economic Development Mr. Basil Rajapaksa and Defence Secretary

Mr. Gotabaya Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka. In these meetings, both sides reviewed the progress in bilateral cooperation and exchanged views on areas of common concern. They expressed satisfaction on the progress in implementation of the Indian-assisted projects for relief, rehabilitation and resettlement of IDPs, including the Housing Project, as well as projects relating to the development of railway infrastructure in the Northern and Southern Provinces. They also discussed the fishermen issue and agreed on the need to deal with it in a humane manner without resorting to violence under any circumstances. They agreed that fishermen's associations on both sides, which had met in the past and reached some understandings, needed to meet again to work on developing this further. This could then serve as the basis for finding a solution to this humanitarian issue.

The National Security Adviser conveyed to the Sri Lankan leadership the Government of India's views on the recent political developments and called for early political settlement and national reconciliation through the meaningful devolution of power so to ensure that all citizens of Sri Lanka, including the Sri Lankan Tamil community, would lead a life marked by equality, justice, dignity and self-respect. In this context, he also emphasized the need for adhering to the commitments made by the Sri Lankan Government to India and the International Community on a political settlement in Sri Lanka that would go beyond the 13th Amendment. He also expressed the hope that elections to the Northern Provincial Council would be held in a free, fair and credible manner.

The National Security Adviser also met with other political leaders, including Leader of the Opposition and Chairperson of UNP Mr. Ranil Wikremesinghe, Chairperson of SLMC and Minister of Justice Mr. Rauff Hakeem, and a delegation of Tamil National Alliance led by Mr. R. Sampanthan.



228. Outcome Document of the Second NSA-Level Meeting on Trilateral Cooperation on Maritime Security between India, the Maldives and Sri Lanka.

Colombo, July 9, 2013

1. The Second NSA-level Meeting on Trilateral Cooperation on Maritime Security between India, the Maldives and Sri Lanka (hereinafter referred to as the 'Trilateral Meeting') took place in Colombo on 8, July 2013. The Indian side was led by H E Shivshankar Menon, National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister, Republic of India, the Maldivian side by Hon Mohamed Nazim, Minister of Defence and National Security of the Republic of Maldives and the Sri Lanka side by Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Secretary, Ministry of Defence and Urban Development of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (hereinafter referred to as the 'three sides').
2. Following the First NSA-level Trilateral Meeting in Male on 1 October 2011, four meetings were held at the senior official and technical level between the three sides. This preparatory work has been useful in framing the outcomes of the Second NSA-level Trilateral Meeting.
3. During the Second NSA-level Trilateral Meeting, the three sides discussed a wide range of topics including enhancing cooperation in Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) through provision of Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) services, MDA training and Merchant Ship Information System (MSIS) software by India, sharing of Automatic Identification System (AIS) data; strengthening coordination of maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) including SAR training; promoting marine oil pollution response cooperation; expanding bilateral 'DOSTI' (friendship) exercises through holding of table top exercises; further enhancing sharing of the information on illegal maritime activities through existing points of contact; and forming a trilateral sub-group focused on policy and legal issues related to piracy. The roadmap for future cooperation in all these areas was confirmed and is outlined below:

- I. obtain the facility of the Indian Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) Data Centre by Sri Lanka and Maldives in order to monitor and track Maldives and Sri Lanka flagged merchant vessels owned by them. Sri Lanka and Maldives are to provide required details as per International Maritime Organisation (IMO) regulations through diplomatic channels;
- II. utilisation of the Merchant Ship Information System (MSIS) for exchange of unclassified information on white shipping;
- III. sharing Automatic Identification System (AIS) data in a trilateral format over the MSIS platform;
- IV. undertaking Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) training in India;
- V. strengthening maritime linkages in the field of Search and Rescue (SAR) including through SAR operations, providing expertise and technical assistance by India in setting up Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs) in Sri Lanka and Maldives, coordination in relaying and receiving distress alerts and safety messages, and, conduct of SAR training in India;
- VI. strengthening mechanisms for Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) surveillance and providing additional support and assets on a case by case basis;
- VII. maintaining lines of communication on illegal maritime activities between identified Points of Contact and exchanging messages on a regular basis;
- VIII. strengthening marine pollution response cooperation through conduct of IMO Level I and Level II courses in India, formulating Contingency Plans for pollution response, capacity building, and participating in India's National Pollution Response Exercise (NATPOLREX), as observers;

- IX. strengthening the biennial trilateral exercise 'DOSTI' by conducting table top exercises and seminars on maritime issues in every alternate year;
- X. passing Tsunami warnings simultaneously to agreed Points of Contact in addition to the designated National Tsunami Warning Centres;
- XI. setting up a trilateral sub-group focused on legal and policy issues related to piracy.

The three sides agreed that in the current maritime security environment in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), it was important to raise the level of maritime cooperation between India, the Maldives and Sri Lanka. In this context, it was also agreed to explore the possibility of expanding the scope of the trilateral initiative to include other Indian Ocean littoral countries.

The three sides agreed that the Third NSA-level Trilateral Meeting will be convened at a mutually convenient date in 2014 to review the progress made in implementing the areas of cooperation agreed upon as well as identifying new areas of cooperation. They also agreed that prior to the Third NSA-level Trilateral Meeting, the Working Group would meet to implement the consensus and decisions agreed to by the three sides at the Second NSA-level Trilateral Meeting.

Done at Colombo on 8, July 2013 in three originals.

Shivshankar Menon
National Security Advisor
For the Republic of India

Mohamad Nazim
Minister of Defence
& National Security
Advisor,
For the Republic of
Maldives

Gatabaya Rajapaksa
Secretary of Defence &
Urban Development
For the Socialist
Republic of
Sri Lanka.



229. Extract relevant to Nuclear cooperation between India and Sri Lanka from the Media briefing by Official Spokesperson.

New delhi, July 15, 2013.

Q: Yesterday the Hindustan Times ran a report saying that Sri Lanka was offered a comprehensive nuclear pact by India and one round of negotiations has taken place, but there has not been a comeback from Colombo since then, and the report suggests that they are looking at a similar kind of agreement from Pakistan. Are you in a position to say anything about that?

Official Spokesperson: I can certainly tell about our nuclear cooperation pact or discussions with Sri Lanka. I do not know about any other aspect. But the point is, our approach to this entire issue is in terms of nuclear safety, and nuclear safety is not exclusive, it is an inclusive concept. Therefore, if there are agreements between a country and another country on nuclear safety issues, it is all to the good. As far as our agreement is there, it is on the table, there have been discussions with Sri Lanka on this.

Let me also tell you that nuclear is a sophisticated technology which requires enormous infrastructure. This sort of starting from scratch and then going up to speed on nuclear takes in several places at least a decade. So, we will have to understand that the sort of things that a nuclear arrangement entails are not only in terms of cooperation in physical terms but also legal issues. It also means training. It means understanding of global legal norms, liability, etc. So, it comes with the paraphernalia which is fairly comprehensive. It requires immense cooperation globally. Ultimately the nuclear value chain is global in nature. Therefore, any country which endeavours to move on the nuclear path does cooperate with a variety of suppliers and those who can assist and cooperate in that endeavour. So, we need to understand this in that broader paradigm rather than in terms of a competitive arrangement of any sort. These are not exclusive arrangements that any one country has with the other.

Q: Is there any update on the Pakistani response to the calendar for the resumption of the dialogue?

Official Spokesperson: My understanding is that when the Special Envoy of the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr. Shahryar Khan, came here, we exchanged views. He has gone back with an understanding of our views on this. And we will now take it up when we receive a response from Pakistan on that. As you are aware, the third round of the resumed dialogue started sometime in September with the meeting of the Commerce Secretaries. Another meeting was scheduled I think for the Wular Barrage; that did not happen. That is the meeting which needs to be taken forward along with various other meetings in the resumed dialogue format. We are in discussions through diplomatic channels for those.



**230. Government of India Statement on release of Fishermen.
New Delhi, August 7, 2013.**

From time to time, Government receives reports of apprehension of Indian fishermen by our neighbouring countries for alleged violations of their territorial waters.

As on date there are 437 fishermen believed to be Indian in Pakistan's custody belonging to Andhra Pradesh (2 persons), Bihar (2 persons), Dadar & Nagar Haveli (3 persons), Daman & Diu (17 persons), Gujarat (391 persons), Maharashtra (17 persons), Uttar Pradesh (4 persons) and West Bengal (1 person). Pakistan authorities have provided Consular Access to all 437 fishermen; nationality status has been confirmed for 378 fishermen for whom official requests for early release and repatriation have been made. There are also over 740 Indian fishing boats in the custody of Pakistani, but no boats have been returned in the last five years.

As per available information there are presently, 114 Indian fishermen, along with 21 vessels in the custody of Sri Lanka. There are no Indian fishermen in the custody of Bangladesh.

Government attaches the highest priority to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. Government has been consistently taking up the issue concerning the release of all Indian fishermen and their boats in Pakistani custody with the Government of Pakistan at all appropriate levels. Our High Commission in Islamabad is in regular touch with the concerned Pakistani authorities for securing immediate Consular Access (CA) when any information is received about arrest of an Indian fisherman. Concerned Pakistani authorities are also reminded regularly for release of all fishermen who have completed their prison terms. Necessary travel documents are provided promptly by the High Commission to facilitate repatriation of fisherman as and when they are released by Pakistan authorities.

As soon as reports of apprehensions of Indian fishermen are received Government through diplomatic channels, immediately and consistently takes up the matter with the Government of Sri Lanka to secure an early release and repatriation of apprehended Indian fishermen.

The Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries) is the nodal agency for payment of compensation to the fishermen lodged in Pakistani jails and the scheme –“Soft Loan Package for Replacement of Fishing vessels held in captivity in Pakistan” is being implemented by Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA). The Minister of External Affairs Shri Salman Khurshid gave this information in a statement in Lok Sabha today.



231. Statement in Rajya Sabha by Salman Khurshid Minister of External Affairs regarding "Repeated Attacks on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy".

New Delhi, August 22, 2013.

(Statement in Rajya Sabha by Shri Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs, in response to Calling Attention Notice tabled by Dr. V. Maitreyan, MP, Rajya Sabha and others regarding "Repeated Attacks on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy")

"I rise to respond to the House on the Calling Attention Notice regarding the "Repeated Attacks on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy".

At the outset, I would like to reiterate to this august House that the Government attaches the highest importance to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen.

In response to reports of incidents of attacks on Indian fishermen, the Government, through diplomatic channels, immediately takes up the matter issues relating to incidents of firing on or apprehension of our fishermen with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the Sri Lankan Navy acts with restraint and our fishermen are treated in a humane and pragmatic manner.

Hon'ble Members would recall that to avoid recurrence of incidents involving our fishermen and keeping in mind the humanitarian and livelihood dimensions of the fishermen's issue, the Government had reached an understanding through a Joint Statement with the Sri Lankan Government on 26th October 2008 to put in place practical arrangements to deal with bonafide Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line. As part of these practical arrangements, it was agreed that there would be no firing on Indian fishing vessels and Indian fishing vessels would not tread into sensitive areas designated by the Government of Sri Lanka along its coastline.

Following the October 2008 understanding, the incidents of attack and apprehension of Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan authorities have come down. The Sri Lankan side has, however, denied the involvement of their Navy in any incidents of harassment or intimidation or attack of Indian fishermen and has stated that none of the alleged attacks have taken place in Indian waters.

Hon'ble Chairman,

I would like to inform this August House that at the 4th meeting of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group on Fisheries, held from 13-14 January 2012 in Colombo, both sides reiterated the highest priority accorded by their respective Governments to the well being, safety and security of fishermen from the two countries. Both countries agreed that the use of force could not be justified under any circumstances, and reiterated in this regard the importance of extending humane treatment to all fishermen. Acknowledging that fisheries involved the socio-economic and livelihood dimensions of the fishermen living in coastal areas in India and Sri Lanka, the two sides agreed to enhance cooperation that would allow both countries to pursue their fishing activity in a safe, secure and sustainable manner. They also discussed measures for the expeditious release of bonafide fishermen from both countries. It was also agreed to hold meeting of the fishermen communities from the two countries at an early date.

I would like to inform this august House that during my meeting with External Affairs Minister of Sri Lanka on 19 August, 2013, I have strongly taken up the issue of expeditious release of fishermen. During my meeting with the External Affairs Minister of Sri Lanka on the sidelines of the 12th meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim- Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) Council of Ministers on 2 November 2012, both sides agreed that the use of force could not be justified under any circumstances and reiterated in this regard the importance of continuing to extend humane treatment to all fishermen. During the 8th India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission Meeting, it was noted that both sides are committed to decrease incidents pertaining to fishing on the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). The matter has also been raised with the Sri Lankan Government during NSA's visit to Sri Lanka on July 8-9, 2013.

The Sri Lankan High Commissioner was issued a demarche by the Ministry of External Affairs for the expeditious release of Indian fishermen in the custody of Sri Lanka on 7 August, 2013.

The need for creating greater awareness among our fishermen to avoid crossing over into Sri Lankan waters for their own safety and security has been felt. In this context, the Government is working with the

concerned State Governments on the need to sensitize Indian fishermen to respect the International Maritime Boundary Line. The Government has also requested the Government of Tamil Nadu to finalise the dates for a proposed meeting of the representatives of Fishermen's Associations from India and Sri Lanka at the earliest.

Government continues to remain engaged with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that fishermen on both sides can continue to pursue their livelihood in a safe, secure and sustainable manner.”



232. Gocverment of India Statement on the elections to the Northern Provincial Elections in Sri Lanka.

New Delhi, September 24, 2013.

The Government of India welcomes the successful culmination of elections to three Provincial Councils, including the Northern Provincial Council, on September 21, 2013. The high voter turnout and the enthusiastic participation of various political parties demonstrate the continuing commitment of the people of Sri Lanka to democratic values and elections for representative bodies at various levels, including the Provincial Councils. We have taken note of the observations made by election observers from the Forum of South Asian Election Management Bodies and also the Commonwealth. Overall, it has been acknowledged that the will of the people has been reflected at these elections.

2. The Government of Sri Lanka has honoured its commitment to the international community to hold elections to the Northern Provincial Council. We look forward to the implementation by Government of Sri Lanka of other important commitments made to the international community, including the full implementation of the 13th Amendment and going beyond it.
3. We have noted the positive statements made by the TNA and the Government of Sri Lanka. It is indeed a matter of satisfaction that they have expressed willingness to work with each other for the progress of the people of the Northern Province. We would

urge both sides to engage constructively, in a spirit of partnership and mutual accommodation, so that the urgent needs of the people of the Northern Province, which has recently emerged from the throes of a thirty-year long armed conflict, are addressed with a sense of urgency and purpose. Only such a cooperative approach will pave the way for genuine reconciliation between the communities involved.

4. The Government of India is committed to working with both the sides to further this process, so that all communities in Sri Lanka, including the minorities, can feel that they are equal stakeholders in a united Sri Lanka and can look forward to a future marked by equality, justice, dignity and self-respect.



233. Media Statement by External Affairs Minister and Joint Media Interaction with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister.

Colombo, October 7, 2013.

Hon'ble Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs,
Distinguished Representatives of the Media,

1. I am pleased to be in Sri Lanka, which we consider India's closest neighbour, and with whom we share a relationship that goes back to the very beginning of recorded history in the subcontinent. At the outset, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Hon'ble Minister Prof. Peiris and the Sri Lankan Government for the warm hospitality extended to me and to my delegation.
2. This afternoon, I had excellent discussions with my host and friend Prof. G. L. Peiris on all issues of bilateral, regional and international concern. We had the opportunity to review progress in various areas, including trade, investment, development cooperation, culture and education.

3. We looked at the progress made in implementation of the Indian assisted projects for IDPs, particularly the Housing Project, as well as projects relating to the development of railway infrastructure in the North and the South. We also discussed the fishermen's issue and agreed on the need to deal with it in a humane manner without resorting to violence under any circumstances. In this regard, we agreed to encourage fishermen's associations on both sides, which had met in the past and reached some understandings, to meet again to work on developing this further.
4. I am happy to note that our development cooperation projects, including the housing and railway projects, are progressing well and are expected to be completed on schedule. As you are aware, our development assistance projects are entirely based on the priorities set by the government and the people of Sri Lanka. The main themes are connectivity, housing, health, education, livelihood restoration and economic revival.
5. Minister Peiris and I will be witnessing signing of agreements (8 agreements) relating to the Sampur Thermal Power Project and an MoU for Technical Assistance in support of the 10-year National Plan for a Trilingual Sri Lanka at the Presidential Secretariat soon after this media interaction. With the conclusion of the Sampur project related agreements today, we hope we will be able to commence work on the ground and pick up pace for completion by 2016, as agreed earlier. I am also hopeful that, through the MoU for implementation of the Trilingual Plan, we will be able to contribute to this important initiative, thereby aiding national reconciliation and promoting harmony between the various linguistic communities in Sri Lanka.
6. I am happy that our bilateral trade in goods has expanded significantly in recent years, to reach the USD 5 billion mark. I am also happy to note the significant contribution of India in the area of investments and tourist arrivals. To sustain this positive momentum in our trade and economic relations and take it to the next level, I feel it will be important to finalize a more comprehensive framework of economic cooperation.

7. I would be calling on His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa tomorrow morning. Later, I would be visiting Jaffna to review our development assistance projects. I will also be meeting the Governor and the Chief Minister of Northern Provincial Council.
8. We hope that successful culmination of elections to the Northern Province will usher a new beginning towards a better future for the people in the North. India has been consistent in calling for an early political settlement and national reconciliation through meaningful devolution of powers, so to ensure that all citizens of Sri Lanka, including the Sri Lankan Tamil community, would lead a life marked by equality, justice, dignity and self-respect.
9. India is committed to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. It is our hope that the vision and leadership that resulted in an end to armed conflict and holding of elections to the Northern Province, will now be employed to work for genuine reconciliation. The Government of Sri Lanka has on many occasions conveyed to us and to the international community, its commitment to move towards a political settlement based on the full implementation of the 13th Amendment, and building on it. We look forward to an early resumption of the dialogue process, in order to address this issue in a timely manner. We will continue to work with the Government of Sri Lanka, and help in whatever way we can, to take this process forward, in a spirit of partnership and cooperation.
10. Friends, India and Sri Lanka are bound by ties of history, geography and culture. Our partnership must therefore progress in the spirit of being the closest of neighbours and friends, whose destinies are intertwined .Thank you.

Q&A at the Joint Media Interaction

Officer: The two Hon. Ministers will take four questions, as I said earlier. We have to bear in mind the strict time limitation because they both have to proceed to the Presidential Secretariat for the signing ceremony.

Q (Sri Lankan Media): Your Excellency, with all the positive comments about the ...*(Inaudible)*... situation between Sri Lanka and India, I would like to know whether your Prime Minister is participating in the CHOGM Summit.

Indian External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): You know that our commitment to the Commonwealth is complete and profound. CHOGM events are very important for the growth and the sustenance of this very important movement in world governance. At an appropriate stage, looking at the prevailing conditions, looking at the importance of our relationship, and looking at conditions for which our Prime Minister has to give his attention and time, he will make an announcement.

The announcement of course is an announcement that will come from the Prime Minister's Office. I am in touch with the Hon. Minister, and we will keep Sri Lanka posted. I will myself obviously come as part of the delegation as Foreign Minister. But rest of the announcement has to come from the Prime Minister's Office. We will let you know as soon as we are ready.

Q (Sri Lankan Media): Could you specify what you mean by meaningful devolution? Could you elaborate on that? You said you want meaningful devolution in Sri Lanka. Could you elaborate on that?

Indian External Affairs Minister: I am not a Sri Lankan government official nor am I a Constitutional expert. All I can say is that whatever you do in a democracy comes by way of consensus. And consensus is arrived at through dialogue, and dialogue is based in a democracy, in a practical consideration through an exchange of opinions between representatives.

Today you have an elected representative Government in the Northern Province. I hope that they will work closely with the Central Government and together the Governments and the people will arrive at a working arrangement that empowers and gives a sense of participation and satisfaction to everybody. To me it will be meaningful. If you do not get that, it is not meaningful. So, it is really for a democratic decision within the framework of your Constitution and the aspirations of all people of Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan Minister of External Affairs (Prof. Gamini Lakshman Peiris): I just want to add a short comment to what my distinguished colleague says. The ceremony this morning at which the newly-elected Chief Minister of the Northern Province took his oath in the presence of His Excellency the President. That is a very happy augury for the future because ...*(Inaudible)*... we would like to work with the newly-formed Northern Province ...*(Inaudible)*...

As for the second part of the question, His Excellency pointed out that consensus is what is important with regard to Constitutional changes. Constitutional changes if they have to be meaningful, must be based upon consensus, as His Excellency Salman Khurshid said. Now the only way to arrive at a consensus in a Constitutional setting is of course through a Parliamentary Select Committee because Constitutional reform is essentially a matter for the legislature. So, that Parliamentary Select Committee has been formed. It is doing its work. It is addressing all these issues. And that encapsulates the consensus which His Excellency the External Affairs Minister of India referred.

Q (Indian Media): Sir, there has been a lot of talk about political devolution for the last several years. Is there a timeframe that the Indian Government wants from the Sri Lankan Government on the devolution? And has it sought any assurance that it will be done in the next two years, or four years, or five years?

Indian External Affairs Minister: I think you should understand that relationship between two sovereign governments and two sovereign countries is not a relationship in which you put timeframes to things. They are aspirations that you can indicate. We have had a long history of dialogue with Sri Lankan Government when conflict resolution was a priority for Sri Lankan Government, and certainly that was something that was endorsed by India and supported by India, conflict resolution. Certain steps were taken towards conflict resolution including Constitutional Amendments such as the Thirteenth Amendment.

Now the Constitution is to be taken forward. One important step that has taken place is the election. I think that election is the core of a representative democracy. An election that has taken place successfully is an election that should be treated as a very important and a very significant step towards political settlement. Different dimensions of the political settlement are to be conducted through an internal democratic

dialogue. We can only be of assistance and help. Of course when you share certain thoughts, and you share certain aspirations, and you share certain hopes and expectations, those remain between you. How much of those, when they can be fulfilled, in which manner they can be fulfilled, where you have to move forward fast, and where you have to move forward with care, are things that have to be taken into account by the Government in Sri Lanka. We cannot decide for them; they have to decide. But we remain in constant consultations. They know that we are available for advice, we are available for help and assistance; and to the extent that we can be of help, we will always remain of help.

Q (Indian Media): Sir, has there been any sort of an assurance given by the Sri Lankan side on the Indian fishermen who are under custody, who were held recently ...*(Inaudible)*...

Indian External Affairs Minister: But there is something better than an assurance. They have released most of our Indian fishermen. I think actually acting in a compassionate and humanitarian way to release the fishermen that they took into custody believing that they have the right to take them into custody. We urged that it is important because this is a livelihood issue, and not to insist on technicalities but on a humanitarian ground they should be released. And I think the release of most of those fishermen is something that we express our gratitude and appreciation for.

Beyond this, we have agreed that fishermen on both sides, the representatives of fishermen and fishermen associations, should meet very quickly so that whatever governments had put in place in 2008 can be more effectively implemented, fortified or some other working methods can be arrived at through consultation between fishermen on both sides, it would be good for everyone. So, we will encourage that meeting to take place and facilitate that meeting to take place at the earliest.

Sri Lankan Minister of External Affairs: Sri Lankan Government is in entire agreement with that. We would like the discussions to begin at that point so that a solution can emerge from the discussions that will take place among the fishermen on the two sides. At the same time, the Government of Sri Lanka has consistently emphasised the need for some concrete action to review substantially the numbers of boats and fishermen coming into Sri Lanka's territorial waters because it has to do with the livelihoods of the fishermen in the North. People have been

deprived of their livelihood for a very long period because of the activities of the sea tigers. Now life is returning to normal. And we have consistently emphasised the need for concrete action to prevent large numbers from coming into Sri Lanka's territorial waters in order to take away these resources.

Officer: I thank the two Hon. Ministers for participating.



234. Remarks by External Affairs Minister at the Ceremony for Distribution of Certificates to Beneficiaries of the Indian Housing Project and Small Business Enterprises in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka.

Jaffna, October 8, 2013.

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is my first visit to Jaffna. I am particularly happy that my visit coincides with the historic occasion of the successful culmination of the first provincial elections in over 25 years and the formation of the Northern Provincial Council. It also gives me a lot of pleasure to be part of this ceremony to handover certificates to a small number of beneficiaries of our Housing Project, and to those of our project to provide assistance to owners of micro and small enterprises, whose business premises were damaged during the armed conflict.

After decades of armed conflict, when the people of Sri Lanka are staking a claim to a peaceful future, the Government and the people of India remain committed to assisting them in their endeavours for rehabilitation and reconstruction. Our assistance to the Sri Lankan people, appreciated for its timeliness and phased approach, has evolved taking into account the ground situation and the immediate needs of the people at any given time.

Earlier today I had visited Tellipalai, one of the villages where beneficiaries are reconstructing their houses themselves, with the help of funds provided by the Government of India. I was happy to inaugurate two

houses that had just been completed, among many others in the area. Our Housing Project is truly the flagship project of India's development assistance to Sri Lanka and I am happy to note that this is the largest grant assistance project undertaken by the Government of India in any part of the world. Having completed 1000 houses under the Pilot Project, nearly 16,000 houses are under various stages of construction in the 2ndPhase of the Indian Housing Project. It is expected that our commitment to construct all the 50,000 houses would be fulfilled before the end of 2015.

The reconstruction project for the Northern Railway line, under Indian lines of credit, is progressing smoothly. The Medawachchiya-Madhu Road section was inaugurated in April 2013 and the Kilinochchi-Omanthai section was inaugurated in September 2013. The full project is expected to be completed by April 2014, ahead of schedule. Our vision is to see the Yaal Devi Express, which used to ply on this route, restart its services in 2014. Complementing our assistance in the railways sector, we have helped remove wrecks from the Kankesanthurai Harbour and have completed the process of dredging the port. We have offered a line of credit for upgrading the infrastructure and developing it into a commercial port. Our efforts would also be to enhance sea-side connectivity by restarting the ferry service between Rameswaram and Talaimannar. For this purpose, we are helping reconstruct the pier at Talaimannar. In addition, we have also offered assistance to rehabilitate Palaly and develop it into a full-fledged civilian airport, with regional connectivity. Our belief is that these initiatives will provide a substantial fillip to the local economies on both sides.

Under our Small Development Project Scheme, we have successfully completed a number of other projects and continue to expand our portfolio of projects in diverse sectors such as health, education, agriculture, fishing, livelihood restoration, community empowerment, and culture.

Another important project of ours is the construction of the Jaffna Cultural Centre at a location next to the Jaffna Public Library. We are in the process of concluding the MOU with the Government of Sri Lanka for implementation of the project. I am confident that this Centre, when completed, will emerge as a cultural landmark in Jaffna, if not the entire Northern Province.

Friends,

India and Sri Lanka share a dynamic and multi-faceted relationship which is rooted in civilisation of ties of history, language, culture, religion and trade. An important aspect of this is the special relationship between the people of the Northern Province and those of Southern India. Over centuries, Jaffa has stood at the crossroads of history, culture and religion, apart from trade, arts, dance and literature.

India remains committed to uplifting the lives of the people of the Northern Province through its efforts to restore the social, educational, economic and cultural infrastructure, which were devastated by the armed conflict.

Yesterday, I witnessed the signing of a number of agreements marking the conclusion of negotiations for the Sampur Thermal Power Project. We can now proceed with the implementation of the project on the ground. We are hopeful that this project, apart from adding 500 MW to the national grid, will have a beneficial effect on the local economy in the East. We have also signed an MoU to provide technical assistance to support the 10-year National Plan for a Trilingual Sri Lanka. We believe this is an important initiative to promote harmony and national reconciliation between the various linguistic communities in Sri Lanka.

Friends,

I would like to assure the people of the Northern Province that India will work closely with the Government of Sri Lanka and the Northern Provincial Council, to ensure that a constructive and cooperative relationship is established, with the overall objective of rebuilding peoples' lives devastated by the three decades of armed conflict.

India is committed to pursuing the full implementation of the 13th Amendment, and building upon it, to achieve a meaningful devolution of powers. Our objective is to enable lasting political settlement which will ensure that all communities, including the Sri Lankan Tamil community, are able to lead a life marked by equality, justice, dignity and self-respect. In this regard, India will do everything possible to work with the Government of Sri Lanka to take this process forward in a spirit of partnership and cooperation.

Thank you



235. List of agreements signed during the visit of External Affairs Minister to Sri Lanka (October 7-8, 2013).

New Delhi, October 7, 2013.

S. No	Name of Agreement	Name of Signatory from India side	Name of Signatory from Sri Lanka side	Remarks
A	Memorandum of Understanding(MoU) for Technical Assistance in support of the 10 year National Plan for a Trilingual Sri Lanka	H.E. YK Sinha, High Commissioner of India	Mr. Lalith Weeratunga, Secretary to H.E. the President of Sri Lanka	MoU envisages assistance in development of Trilingual (Sinhala, Tamil, English) training skills and expertise in Sri Lanka under which GOI would provide 180 man days of expert services per year in teaching technique and extend training to 45 Sri Lankan Master Trainers/ year for three years starting from 2013
B	Sampur Power Project			
i)	Extension Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)	Dr. AR Choudhury, CMD, NTPC	CEB representative	The eight agreements pertain to various aspects of power project to set up a coal fired power project of 500 MW capacity, through a 50:50 Joint Venture between NTPC Ltd and the Ceylon Electricity Board of Sri Lanka (CEB)
ii)	Extension Joint Venture Agreement (JVA)	Dr. AR Choudhury, CMD, NTPC	CEB representative	

iii)	Deed of Adherence	Mr. Ajit Kumar, ED (BD)	CEB representative
iv)	BOI Agreement	Mr. Atul Srivastava, MD, TPCL	Dr. Laxman Jayaweera, Chairman BOI/Mr. MC Wicramadekara, Director, TPCL
v)	Implementation Agreement (IA)	Mr. Atul Srivastava, MD, TPCL	Dr. PB Jayasundara, Secretary, M/Fin & PI/Mr. MC Wicramadekara, Director, TPCL
vi)	Coal Supply Agreement (CSA)	Mr. Atul Srivastava, MD, TPCL	Mr. MC Wicramadekara, Director, TPCL/Mr. MUW Liyanage, Ch/MD-Lanka Coal Company/Mr. WB Ganegala, Board Director LCC
vii)	Land Lease Agreement (LLA)	Mr. Atul Srivastava, MD, TPCL	Land Commissioner General-GoSL/Mr. MC Wicramasekara, Director, TPCL
viii)	Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)	Mr. Atul Srivastava, MD, TPCL	CEB representative



236. Interview of External Affairs Minister to NDTV on board his special flight en-route to Sri Lanka to participate in CHOGM 2013.

November 13, 2013.

Q: I want to ask you, the Tamil Nadu political parties had talked about boycott of Commonwealth, the PM took time to make a decision on whether he was going to go or not, we have seen the reasons about the election campaign response that he has given for not attending the commonwealth. Nonetheless, in public perception it seems that that he is caved in to political pressure from Tamil Nadu parties and not going himself. Do you agree with this perception?

External Affairs Minister: Well there are many ways one would look at it, I think it would be wrong for us to say that we were not conscious and sensitive to the position of the Tamil Nadu people represented by their Assembly and the Government and their opposition took on this matter. But we have said very clearly that there are several issues that were under consideration. This was not the only thing, there are very important preoccupations also at home and then this is not the first time that it is happening that the Prime Minister is unable to go. Last time the PM didn't go. Now what those who are asking for a boycott can make of this, after all I'm going. So there is no boycott. We are engaged with Commonwealth in the manner in which we have been in engagement with Commonwealth in the past. Our aspiration is that we should be represented at the level of the Head of Government or at a high level but it's not always possible. There is nothing that will confine us to any part of the agenda, the entire agenda that we have for the commonwealth we will engage in a meaningful way and in an enthusiastic way.

Q: So here, what we saw happen here, was the cross over between multilateral consideration for India and a bilateral relationship with Sri Lanka which is often maybe being held hostage, as a strong word, has often had taken into consideration the views of parties in Tamil Nadu. How much do you think domestic politics should actually impact and influence what goes on? You are the Minister of External Affairs, how much does it get in the way of your work?

External Affairs Minister: Well, it's obviously difficult if you don't have support from within the country for something which is in enlighten way,

you believe, is good for the country which you do something outside. It's not as though what we do is detrimental to the country. What we do by way of foreign policy is for the good of the country and the good of the country is the aggregate of the entire country in which the strong expectation in any part of the country, any state or any section of the country remains important and that's how you work here for foreign policy. Foreign policy is enlightened self interest. The issue is not the disagreement between an enlightened self interest and foreign policy and some local domestic policy. It's not that. It is the failure for somebody to understand what the enlightened self interest is. If that failure comes in the way then obviously it becomes an impediment, it slows down but people who are committed to enlightened self interest know that in the long run that this is what will prevail and not a more myopic and short sighted way of looking at it.

Q: So in this case the enlightened self interest would be engagement with Sri Lanka on the Tamil cause with the Government as you were just pointing out to ensure that the rehabilitation process goes on, the reconciliation process in Sri Lanka with the Tamils goes on. Does the Tamil parties interested in the human rights violation would be raise by the Govt levels and engagement as well. You have that Chief Minister of Jaffna, Mr Vigneshwar inviting the PM as well to Jaffna and Tamil parties in Sri Lanka saying we want the Indian Head of State to come visit. Why are they speaking on our behalf?

External Affairs Minister: Well, let me just say a simple thing. If there is an invitation to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to go to Jaffna will she go? And if she does go how will she explain why she does not want the Prime Minister to go. Are we saying that in future nobody will travel to Sri Lanka? Are we saying that? I believe that is not going to be the case and certainly I think as two responsible countries we cannot say that when we travel to another country we will insist that we will go to only one part of the country and not the another part of the country. So if there are politicians from our side in important positions who are being invited and I imagine they have been invited and if I get a chance I would certainly tell XXXX on the other side including Jaffna why don't you invite people from India to come and see what is happening here. From the main opposition the BJP, from Congress from other parties Parliamentarians

have been there and I have seen the outstanding work India has done. We haven't done this kind of work anywhere in this world. The size of the housing systems that we are providing, it's not even been thought of anywhere in this world and I think India should proudly go and see and then we have important investments in Sri Lanka, they have investments in India. I haven't heard telling that we should withdraw our investments. I haven't heard someone telling that we should not build some more power plants. I haven't heard telling me that the rest of the 40,000 houses should not be build and that I am not going to be able to build those houses without going there and even on political issues how do I speak to Sri Lanka if I don't go there. So I frankly don't know what the parties that have objected or people have objected to our going there or felt that we should not go there. What plan they have? Are they saying this is the end of history or they are saying that there are some conditionalities without fulfillment of those conditionalities we can't do something with Sri Lanka or can't do anything with Sri Lanka. These are big questions. So I think it's been blown out of proportion. Unfortunately these kinds of things happen and I do sincerely hope that our colleagues in Sri Lanka are able to see this in a perspective that the best or worst anyone could do about our relationship with Sri Lanka is being done and from this very moment we begin the story afresh. We move on. We do more. We continue to do our work that we have to do.

Q: Are you apprehensive with the meeting with your Sri Lankan counterparts, this is something to iron out with them. It's going to be a tricky situation to explain in one way and also when you look at Sri Lanka you look at the way they talk about attracting Chinese investments for example. India raised concerns about that. They could be used as lever somehow perhaps by them to sort of push further with India to back off with their plans for Tamils within.

External Affairs Minister: See, I am not concerned about their dealing with any country. They are a sovereign country. They have the right to deal with any country. Something that offers more than us, more attracting and better opportunities why should we be the dog in the manger. I think we must have the confidence that we have enough going between us and Sri Lanka, enough possibilities in historical context for them to remain engaged with us and for us to remain engaged with them. I think it's

important we talk, we say this to each other and we explain this to each other. I am hardly going to say I am not going to talk to you, I am sorry I have come here; I am not going to come back. Nobody has asked me to say this and I don't think that's what I am going for but the focus of course is multilateral not bilateral engagement. But in multilateral meetings, on sidelines you have an opportunity to talk about some bilateral issues we may have. Because I am there for five days and if I need to reach out to them in any way I will of course because as far as I am concerned my engagement with Sri Lanka is 100 percent. Who are we doing a lot for? We are doing a lot for not for Tamil Nadu but we are doing for Tamils of Northern province and therefore I am little perplexed that what we are doing for the Tamils of Northern province I am being told can be done better if I don't go. I find that logic somewhat confusing.

Q: ... (interjection) and you can deal with the Tamil parties once you get back then after I suppose.

External Affairs Minister: That's not my job. My job is to as I said represent India and India's enlightened self interest across the globe and certainly amongst our neighbours. I hope that these little things will not keep us from fulfillment of our ambitions to see our entire region come together and bound together more meaningfully.



237. Media interaction of External Affairs Minister onboard his special flight to Colombo to attend the CHOGM and other issues.

November 13, 2013.

On Tamil Nadu Assembly resolution to boycott CHOGM

"Well truthfully I haven't seen anything about the assembly resolution. It happened sometime yesterday. I was, throughout the day, in the ASEM meeting. But, I have heard about it and I would say that I find it curious because last night I had a large delegation of Tamil Nadu, important Tamil Nadu politicians and concerned people, who came to ask me to use my good offices to get the Sri Lankan government not only to release

the fishermen who are with them, but also to be generous and release the boats because these are very important livelihood matters. And they also urged that I should persuade Sri Lanka to move forward on a date for having the fishermen representatives of the two sides to meet in India or in Sri Lanka as early as possible. I find that a bit curious that people who don't want us to go and want us to boycott are also saying while you are there, can you please talk to them and arrange something which is for us a desirable outcome.

“They were led by MLAs, but they were people who are the former fishermen's organisations that are recognised; they are the people who claimed they also have a right. I wasn't going to argue with them about...this is not the right time to say such things because as far as I am concerned, this is a normal expectation that we have from Sri Lanka and I am sure they have from us and I will continue to do so. Business is usual. I am not going there to argue with them. I am going there because this is a multilateral meeting taking place in the region close to India. They are committed to Commonwealth and that's what we are going for. I think if we have a bilateral issue with them, we have bilateral meetings in which we can take up those issues but because I will be there on this sidelines and I have an opportunity, whatever we have been saying to them throughout, we will. I think it is very important in this context we do not forget that India has done some outstanding work for the Tamils of the Northern Province. 50,000 houses we are building and 5,000 of them are ready and they are going to be handed over at this time. If we had an opportunity, our leader, Prime Minister, could have gone to Jaffna. We have been building roads, we have been building infrastructure for them, community centres, we also engaged in giving Sri Lanka major power plant in Sampur at the railway line. I have not been told by anybody that this should not be done, that we should boycott these or we should not do anything for Sri Lanka, particularly for the Northern Province. And I am very proud that today the Northern Province has an elected government and we have been advocating that and that's being successfully done. I think it's our duty to give whatever support we can continue to give for the success of the Northern Province, both economically and politically. And we remain committed to that and we expect the Sri Lankan government will also appreciate this is just as much their success as it is ours.”

On devolution of powers by Sri Lanka to the Provincial government in the North

“Well ofcourse we have a duty to push them to devolve powers but they are not the only ones. In India people are asking for devolution of powers. We devolve powers by introducing constitutional amendments for giving more power to the Panchayat Raj institutions. So to say to somebody that you have to devolve powers is ofcourse a sensible thing. We have a Indo-Sri Lanka accord and I think that the accord gives us the entitlement to continue to persuade them, I can't understand how we would say please devolve if we were not there.”



(ii) Southeast, East Asia & Pacific

238. Transcript of the Joint Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Australian Foreign Minister.

New Delhi, January 21, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming for this event. As is usual, we will begin with opening statements by the two Ministers. Following that they have agreed to respond to a few questions.

I will now request the External Affairs Minister of India Shri Salman Khurshid to make his opening remarks.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Your Excellency Senator Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and friends from the media:

I have just had a very useful round of discussions with Senator Bob Carr, Foreign Minister of Australia. We held the eighth round of the Framework Dialogue between our two countries. The dialogue is an integral component of the strategic partnership between our countries which was agreed by our Prime Ministers in 2009.

We have reviewed the entire range of our bilateral relations as well as regional and global issues. We are pleased that our strategic partnership has grown in strength and expanded in scope. We also recognize that there are tremendous opportunities for much greater cooperation. We shall strive to attain all of them.

Our relations are based on shared interests and mutual benefit in political and security areas, our expanding economic and trade ties, our cooperation in the energy and resources sectors which is extremely important for India, collaboration in science and technology and research, and our meaningfully growing people-to-people links.

The State visit of the Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard to India last year was a landmark in our strategic partnership during which a number of agreements were signed and several new initiatives were launched. Senator Carr and I have reviewed the progress in the implementation of those decisions. We are satisfied with the scope and extent of progress made in various areas. We have strengthened our collaborative endeavours in several sectors and have opened up new areas of cooperation.

We held the first Ministerial level Energy Dialogue led by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission and the Australian Minister for Energy in December 2012. We shall be commencing negotiations on a civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement, led by our Ministry of External Affairs and the Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in March 2013 in New Delhi. Our cooperation in water resources has expanded, and the Water Technology Partnership will take concrete shape at the next Joint Working Group in April 2013. And negotiations for the transfer of sentenced persons will commence shortly.

High level Ministerial level exchanges have taken place in several areas. We shall soon be hosting the Joint Commission between our Minister for Commerce and Industries and the Australian Trade Minister which will give impetus to our trade relations, currently at 21 billion Australian dollars.

Our trade negotiators have been engaged in broadening understanding towards a mutually beneficial CECA. Our investments in Australia have grown significantly in recent years, particularly in the resources sector. We have welcomed the Australian side to invest in the opportunities in India. Our Defence Minister will be visiting Australia soon for further discussions on cooperation in defence and security.

We highly value our cooperation in science and technology. Our scientists have been working together on research projects that address the needs of the people as well as the frontier areas of science. We are pleased with our cooperation in the education sector, which has been expanded by the inclusion of specific programmes on vocational skills. And establishment of such centres in India has also been given a stronger structure through close collaboration between the governments in addressing the needs of the student community in Australia both in terms of curriculum quality as well as safety issues.

On the regional and global issues, we have strengthened our cooperation and consultation. We recognize the importance of regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR-ARC) which has acquired a new momentum during our Chairmanship will continue the positive movement as Australia assumes the Chair for the next two years.

We have collaborated closely on our cooperative agenda with ASEAN and in East Asia Summit. We look forward to working closely with Brunei, the new ASEAN Chair in this effort. Similar cooperation has also furthered our objectives in ASEM and in G20. Australia will host the G20 Summit in 2014 and we look forward to close collaboration and consultation on global economic issues. We welcome Australia's role at the UNSC.

Our people-to-people exchanges have been intensified through closer cooperation on cultural, academic, sporting and other links, which have broadened our relationship and deepened our understanding of each other. I wish to congratulate Australia for hosting the Ozfest which has brought our people closer.

Our bilateral relations have shown steady progress over time with consolidation of our strategic partnership through expansion and deepening of cooperation in various sectors. We will continue to build upon these and also in new areas of cooperation. We shall play our due role in the transformations taking place in our region and be responsible partners in the emerging regional architecture.

I thank the Minister for a very very meaningful interaction. Australian Foreign Minister (Mr. Bob Carr): Thank you, Minister. It is a great honour to be here.

The focus of our talks, as you said, was on maintaining the momentum in the relationship between Australia and India following the successful visit to India by Prime Minister Gillard in October last year.

India is a key part of Australia's future. And our recent strategic document, Australia in the Asian Century, identified the relationship with India as being of crucial importance to Australia. I said to the Minister this is supported by Australian public opinion. Australian public opinion wants to see India and Australia get closer. This is underpinned by our common values, democracy, secular government, strong judicial systems, a robust freedom of expression, and shared interest in cricket. This is part of the dialogue between our countries that worked so well that we want to add momentum to the progress signaled by our Prime Minister's visit in October last year.

In that spirit, I am pleased that the announcement we are able to make today on the opening of talks on civil nuclear cooperation can be done. I

am delighted to say the first round of negotiations on that cooperation agreement will take place in Delhi in March. I am pleased that we have been able to agree to work together on shared security challenges including joint efforts to combat terrorism, with Australia hosting the next meeting of the Joint Working Group we have on combating terrorism.

We agreed on an expanded bilateral dialogue on cyber policy. We discussed maritime security in the Indian Ocean. I welcome the forthcoming visit to Australia by Defence Minister of Antony which would be the first ever by an Indian Defence Minister to Australia. Again that is confirmation of how we are working more closely than ever in the past.

As two leading democracies in the region we want to do more to encourage engagement between our elected representatives. We have agreed to revitalize engagement between our Parliaments. As a first step, Australia will host a goodwill delegation of Indian MPs in February this year.

I am delighted to announce first phase of the Water Technology Partnership today with Australia committing a total of 12 billion dollars over four years. As a first step, we will pilot an Australian Water Management Tool in three States in eastern India, but also help improve flood warning systems and flood management in the Kosi river basin, and host a delegation to Australia to study our systems in the Murray Darling basin.

We are a nation that suffers drought. We have an erratic rainfall pattern of necessity. We have to learn some expertise in border management. We want to share what we have learnt.

We have already affirmed our mutual commitment to strengthen the East Asia Summit, and we agreed we would continue to cooperate closely in the G20, particularly in the lead up to Australia's chairmanship in 2014. Australia will host the next IOR-ARC Council of Minister's meeting in Perth in November when we take over its chair from India.

Our Minister for Trade will visit India later this month to advance our Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement negotiations. We agreed to work towards a date in 2013 for the next round of negotiations on social security agreement.

So, our discussions were broad and are fruitful. We reaffirmed that our interest whether economic and strategic are converging in a way they have never done before. Australia and India are getting closer as strategic partners. Minister, thank you.

Official Spokesperson: The two Ministers have agreed to take a few questions.

Q (Indian Media): My question is addressed to the Indian Foreign Minister. Sir, you said that civil nuclear negotiations will begin in March this year. Have you set any timeframe for the talks to conclude?

External Affairs Minister: The sense of urgency and commitment between us is very clear. I think that these are very important negotiations. Of course we have done negotiations with other countries successfully on this. So, there is a backdrop available and there are models available. But Australia has had a very significant contribution to make in the field of nuclear energy and on non-proliferation. I think, therefore, when we speak on a matter of such high import, to actually put an artificial deadline and say we must complete it as quickly as within this period, would not be appropriate. But obviously a sense of urgency and purpose will be there. And hopefully we will move quite swiftly.

Q (Australian Media): This is to both Ministers. I am interested in the potential resumption of the trilateral or quadrilateral talks. There was some mention of that by the Japanese Prime Minister some weeks ago that he was the architect of those talks a while ago between America, Japan, India and Australia. You mentioned that your talks today touched on regional issues, Indo-Pacific, South China Sea issues. Is there a chance that Australia and India will participate once again in quadrilaterals or trilaterals that will deal specifically with these regional security issues?

Australian Foreign Minister: I met my counterpart the Japanese Foreign Minister, Minister Kishida, in Sydney the weekend before last, and he did not raise this idea. When it comes to the trilateral involving Japan, India and Australia, it remains hypothetical. We would welcome separate discussions with Japan. But there is no formal proposal for a trilateral on issues we discussed today. So, that remains a hypothetical possibility. The quadrilateral it is probably fair to say is even more ambitious than that. Again, it is clearly hypothetical.

External Affairs Minister: I would have given you the same answer. I think that Australia and India are on the same page. Every time you move beyond bilateral to something that is trilateral, quadrilateral or multilateral, you look at many implications, and you look at the content and the context, and then you take a decision as you move. But the issues that you mention are already being looked at in various fora. And a stated position of freedom of navigation on open seas is the same between Australia and ourselves that the law of the sea must prevail. And I think this has been reiterated many times over. But wherever there are specific agenda issues, they are being handled there I believe adequately. Today we were not called upon to move this any further. But broadly speaking we are both on the same page.

Q (Australian Media): Sir, this is regarding an issue going on elsewhere. What is your advice to Australians in Algeria? What is the risk for Australians working in the mining industry in Africa? And would Australia consider deploying any assistance if extremists threatened any Australian mining interests in Algeria?

Australian Foreign Minister: Australia has huge mining interests in Africa. I think the figure is about 50 million dollars in investment in the ground or being planned. In fact, we have an annual conference called Africa Down Under held in Perth every year with the mining Ministers and mining officials from Africa come to Australia to talk about collaboration on mining. Clearly we are concerned following what happened in Algeria for the safety of Australian personnel in mines, in Mali where there is at least one, and elsewhere in the Sahel.

When I went to Algeria last year, I was able to talk about the prospect of more mining collaborations with Algeria. It is good for them, it is good for us. What we are seeing here is the mining boom in Australia creating opportunities for Australian expertise, and Australian capital in Africa bringing jobs and investment to countries that desperately need it, and bringing opportunities for Australian based companies. The Australian mining boom is spilling over into Africa. So, naturally we are very concerned at the prospect of extremist threats in the Sahel or in West Africa that could considerably target Australian investments.

I will speak to our French colleagues; I will speak further to our British friends about the how ... (Inaudible)... is the threat to the mining interests

in that part of the world, and will consider further what advice can be given to Australians.

Q (Indian Media): My question is for Mr. Salman Khurshid. Sir, the Pakistan High Commissioner to India has described the beheading of the Indian soldier as India's domestic issue. He has also criticized Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement that there can be no business as usual with Pakistan under the circumstances. What is your view on this? Also, have you taken a view on the offer of talks at the Foreign Ministers' level?

External Affairs Minister: This cannot be described as an offer. I think there were suggestions on how to move forward and the possibility that it could be done in one way or the other. Of course, that is a suggestion that came through the media. We have already said that we believe moving from any attempt to suggest a third party intervention to bilateral interface is a positive signal. The fact that things have been quiet on the Line of Control, the fact that our DGMOs have been in touch in a meaningful way, I would believe that this all signifies a welcome shift in the right direction. But these are matters where the entire atmospherics and the entire context needs to be carefully studied, analysed from time to time before any further steps are taken.

I would just simply say that we should not necessarily react to every statement. I do not think that every statement made in domestic context should necessarily be treated as the last word. It is important that we let a little time go by so that the dust as it were settles, and then in a sensible and a calibrated manner one can move forward. For the present I believe the situation looks a lot better than it did a few days ago.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event.



AUSTRALIA

239. Joint Statement Issued on the Visit of Defence Minister A.K Antony to Australia.

Canberra, June 5, 2013.

The Defence Minister Mr. A K Antony and the Australian Minister for Defence Mr. Stephen Smith met in Perth yesterday and Canberra today to discuss shared strategic and security interests, including maritime security and bilateral defence cooperation.

The Ministers exchanged ideas concerning regional and international security as well as defence cooperation and exchanges between Australia and India. The Defence Ministers acknowledged deepening strategic and defence cooperation between Australia and India. They agreed to continue to contribute to the peace, stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region and to promote cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.

The two Ministers took note of the progress made in defence cooperation, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Cooperation concluded in 2006, the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation issued during the visit of the Australian Prime Minister to India in 2009 and the Joint Statement issued during Australian Prime Minister Ms. Julia Gillard's visit to India in 2012.

They agreed that interactions held between the defence establishments of both sides in a variety of fields and at various levels have been mutually beneficial. Both sides were pleased with the bilateral architecture established for pursuing defence cooperation and agreed that consultations have helped in deepening mutual trust and understanding between the defence establishments.

The Ministers took note of the growing cooperation between the Navies of both countries. The Defence Minister Mr. Antony accepted Mr. Smith's invitation for Indian naval ship participation in the International Fleet Review to be held in Sydney in October 2013.

Both sides acknowledged that maritime security and freedom of navigation in accordance with principles of international law is critical for the growth and prosperity of the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.

They agreed to continue consultations and cooperation on issues concerning the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions both bilaterally and multilaterally, including through the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC). The Ministers noted both countries are already cooperating through the IONS, which Australia will Chair next year, along with hosting the IONS Conclave of Chiefs in Perth in March 2014, and the IOR-ARC of which India is currently Chair and Australia the next Chair.

Both sides recalled the contributions made by the Indian and ANZAC forces during the Gallipoli campaign and agreed to commemorate their contributions by launching a publication during the Gallipoli Centenary celebrations in 2015.

The Ministers agreed that efforts to promote cooperation between the defence establishments should continue. In this regard, both Ministers agreed to the following activities:

- i. to continue to have regular bilateral Defence Ministers' Meetings;
- ii. to promote exchanges between the defence establishments and the Armed Forces of both sides, including through the regular conduct of the Defence Policy Dialogue, Armed Forces Staff Talks and professional military exchanges;
- iii. to continue ongoing bilateral Naval exchanges to build confidence and familiarity between our Navies and work towards a bilateral maritime exercise in 2015;
- iv. to continue to cooperate in the Asia-Pacific region bilaterally and through various multilateral fora including the EAS, ARF and ADMM-Plus;
- v. to enhance Indian Ocean cooperation, including through the framework and priorities of the IONS and the IOR-ARC; and

- vi. to promote the sharing and exchange of professional knowledge and experiences through participation in training courses in each other's military training institutions.

Both the Ministers looked forward to implementing these defence cooperation initiatives to further strengthen the strategic partnership between Australia and India.

Mr. A K Antony thanked the Australian Defence Minister Mr. Stephen Smith for the friendly hospitality extended during his visit to Australia. Mr. Antony invited Mr. Smith to visit India at a convenient time.

A day earlier when the Defence Minister arrived in Perth, he was received by the Australian Defence Minister Stephen Smith. This was the first ever official visit to Australia by an Indian Defence Minister. Speaking at a reception hosted in his honour at Perth, Mr Antony said the defence cooperation between India and Australia had increased substantially in the last few years. He said India valued its strategic partnership with Australia and was committed to further strengthen our bilateral relations in various areas including defence. Referring to the Indian Ocean Region, Mr Antony said it was critical to our maritime interests. He said India's economic development was dependent on maritime trade. The security of shipping along with sea-lanes is of vital interest to us, he said. Speaking on the occasion, Mr Smith said the Indian Defence Minister's historic visit was indicative of the increasing importance and depth of the Australia India bilateral relationship, including Defence-to-Defence and Military-to-Military cooperation. The reception was attended by prominent members of Western Australian and Indian academic, business and community organisations. Mr Smith had added that the 2013 Australian Defence White Paper outlined the profound strategic changes that were occurring as economic, strategic and military weight shifted to our part of the world, the Indo-Pacific region. He said 'India and Australia have a shared interest in helping to address these strategic changes, including through Defence collaboration'. Mr Smith referred to Perth as Australia's 'Indian Ocean capital'.



240. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence regarding the Indo-Australian Joint Naval Exercise.

New Delhi, August 5, 2013.

India and Australia have agreed to continue bilateral Naval exchanges between Navies of both countries, including working towards a bilateral naval exercise in 2015 in order to build confidence and familiarity between both Navies. Such exercises are planned as per felt need and mutual convenience of both sides.

The government also proposes to hold joint exercises with countries with whom it has relevant agreements.

This information was given by Defence Minister Shri AK Antony in a written reply to Shri P Kumar in Lok Sabha today.



241. Documents signed during the visit of Foreign Minister of Australia to India.

November 18, 2013.

List of documents signed during the visit of Foreign Minister of Australia to India

S. No	Document	Australian Signatory	Indian Signatory	Remarks
1	Amendments on MoU between the Central Board of Excise & Customs of the Republic of India and	Mr. Patrick Suckling Australian High Commissioner to India	Ms. Praveen Mahajan Chairperson, of Excise and Customs	The amendments allow both parties to establish Joint Working Group for the effective implementation of the MOU
2	Statement of Intent between of the Government of Australia and Nalanda University to Progress a three year arrangement towards a chair of Ecology and Environment Studies at the University	Mr. Patrick Suckling Australian High Commissioner to India	Dr. Gopa Sabharwal vice Chancellor, Nalanda University	Both sides agree to work towards establishment of Chair of Ecology & Environment Studies at the University.

New Delhi

November 18, 2013



242. Joint Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Australian Foreign Minister.

New Delhi, November 19, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Hon. Ministers, members of the delegation and friends from the media, we will now have a brief media event.

We will begin with a few initial remarks by the two Ministers following which the Ministers have agreed to answer a couple of questions. I now request the External Affairs Minister of India to make his opening remarks.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Allow me to welcome Ms. Julie Bishop, the newly elected Member of Parliament and the Foreign Minister of Australia who I had the privilege to meet in Perth on the 31st of October this year for our Framework Dialogue where we discussed the entire range of bilateral issues.

Of course we had already met previously in New York during the UN General Assembly, and then subsequently in Perth for the IORA meeting, which is the renamed IOR-ARC Association that we are both members of. We have handed over the chair to Australia. We continue to work as part of the troika with Australia and Indonesia who will in due course succeed Australia.

We again met at CHOGM, which was in the last three days in Sri Lanka, where again I think we were able to work very closely together in the spirit of the Commonwealth looking at a host of issues that concern the world and certainly the Commonwealth.

I also had the privilege to meet with the new Prime Minister of Australia, Prime Minister Tony Abbott, who had a very good meeting with our Prime Minister in Brunei on the margins of the East Asia Summit. We are looking

forward to Australian Prime Minister's visit to our country. We are greatly, greatly impressed, and indeed grateful that he thought of an early visit to India. Perhaps we could have found a slot at this time but for a large number of visits that were already stated. Therefore, we are looking at a very early slot next year. Both of us have agreed that we will work on that slot. It is very important that we get the Australian Prime Minister to come here in response of his very very generous indication that he wants to begin a very fruitful tenure with a visit to India.

We have a host of things which are on the landscape for us now. Civil nuclear energy cooperation talks, I think the Hon. Minister will tell you more about this, is on the 26th and 27th of November. We have both worked hard and, as I said, Minister will tell you more about it. We are scheduling the Energy Dialogue early in 2014 when Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia will visit Australia.

We welcome the positive investment regime for Indian investments in energy and resources sector. We already have, I think, an impressive footprint on the Australian soil, and I hope that a larger number of Indian companies will look forward to investing in Australia. The CEOs' forum will meet very soon, and this will be the necessary combined effort of the private sector cooperation to complement and supplement what we can do as Governments together.

My colleague Mr. Pallam Raju has been to Australia recently and he is very very keen on the growing knowledge and skills sector cooperation that we have. I want to share with you that our interactions in ASEAN, the East Asia Summit, IORA which I just mentioned, and of course G20 where Australia will now take the chair, we hope that in G20 Australia's stewardship will help many of the ideas that we are working on together to find root in the attempts that we are making at influencing the world.

I am very grateful to the Australian Government and I want to thank the Foreign Minister for a very successful Pravasi Bharatiya Divas that we have just concluded in Sydney. This was on the 10th and 12th of November.

And of course for those of you who are encouraged by our conversation here in our press conference want to travel directly to Australia, I can recommend to you Air India which has now opened direct flights to

Sydney and Melbourne. That is not to say that the Australian airlines are any less. But it is an important signal that I believe we have given to our friends that we believe that we have an extremely fruitful, growing relationship and that must be rewarded both symbolically and substantively by both public and private sector of our country.

I look forward to many more discussions and our working together in various fora. I am sorry that the Minister could be only for a few hours here in Delhi but I am sure she will tell you about the exciting visit to Mumbai. And I hope that whatever she has not been able to do this time, she will come back soon and then we will have more time to present Delhi and other parts of India in a more fruitful way.

Thank you very much.

Australian Foreign Minister (Ms Julie Bishop): Thank you, Foreign Minister Khurshid for your very warm welcome on this my first visit to India as Australia's Foreign Minister. I have been here before but I wanted to ensure that I was able to visit India very early on in my tenure as Australia's Foreign Minister to underscore the significance that we attach to the Australia-India relationship.

As Foreign Minister Khurshid has indicated, Australia and India's economic and security and strategic interests are converging in unprecedented ways. The signing of these two agreements is just an indication of the breadth of the deeper engagement that we want to see between Australia and India.

When we met in Perth at the Indian Ocean Rim Association Meeting, at the dialogue on the day before and then at the IORA Meeting, we found that there are so many areas where Australia and India are working closely together. In the economic field we see a significant increase in investment from Indian businesses in Australia and we very much welcome the around US\$ 10 billion worth of Indian investment in the Australian economy particularly in the mineral and resources sector.

We also encourage Australian businesses to invest in India. During my meetings here in Delhi and also in Mumbai I was struck by the enthusiasm that Australian businesses have for investing in India and doing business here. We hope that Australia and India would be able to conclude a closer economic cooperation agreement or a free trade agreement. I think both

the governments can be ambitious yet pragmatic in approaching the negotiations for such an agreement and ensure that it will be in the interests of both countries, mutually economically beneficial for our two countries.

In the area of security cooperation, we see a deeper engagement between our Navies. They will begin joint exercises in 2015. We are also working closely together on maritime security not only through IORA but bilaterally on counterterrorism, on cyber, and these are issues where we can support each other, share information, share ideas and have a deeper and closer engagement.

We see great opportunities for Australia to be a trusted and reliable supplier of energy and resources for India's needs, and we recognise India's need for energy security. Not only are we supplying coal, hopefully LNG, for Australia is a significant exporter of LNG.

We also hope to conclude a civil nuclear cooperation agreement for the supply of Australian uranium. It has been the consistent position of the coalition in Australia that we should supply Australian uranium to India. In the context of that and consistent with our desire to conclude such an agreement, the Australian Government has decided that we will support India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. And I have informed Foreign Minister Khurshid tonight of the Australian Government's decision. We have given a detailed consideration since we came into office, and we believe that it is appropriate, given India's strategic importance in our region and globally, given India's record on non-proliferation, we think it is appropriate that they should have membership of this Group and so Australia will lend its support.

We hope that the civil nuclear cooperation agreement can be concluded. The negotiations will continue for the third round on the 26th of November, and both sides will continue to negotiate in good faith, and I feel sure that we will be able to conclude an agreement that suits both sides.

There are so many other areas of engagement that we have hardly touched this evening but have been the subject of detailed discussions between us at the meetings that number about three or four at this stage, including in the agricultural area, in education particularly as we welcome so many Indian students to Australia in the higher education sector, and in our ...*(Inaudible)*... sector.

The Abbott Government has also announced that we intend to introduce what is called Australia's New Colombo Plan which will be a government-backed programme to provide young Australian undergraduates with the opportunity to undertake some of their studies at a university in the region. And while undertaking those studies they will also have the opportunity for an internship with a business operating in the host country, either an Australian or a host country business.

We have a pilot programme to commence this rather grand initiative because we are talking about thousands of students over time in 2014, and we hope that shortly thereafter India will come on board as one of their partners in Australia's New Colombo Plan so that we will see a generation of young Australians going the other way, coming to India to study in your higher educational institutions.

We have also talked about the water partnership that Australia and India have, and it is going to its second phase. There have been a whole range of issues where we are cooperating and extremely well.

A trilateral arrangement with Australia-India-Indonesia born out of the Indian Ocean Rim Association will also see us spending a lot of time discussing matters of mutual interest, whether it is maritime security, trade and investment, disaster-relief management and the like.

So, I look forward to a broader, deeper and more diversified level of engagement with India, and I truly believe that as the Prime Minister makes arrangements to come here early next year we will see even greater cooperation between our two countries. And I am confident that the best days of the Australia-India relationship still lie ahead of us.

Thank you.

Q (Ms Parul Chandra, The Asian Age): Good evening to both of you. There is a perception that the civil nuclear negotiations between India and Australia are getting delayed because of Australia's insistence on IAEA Plus guarantees, which India is reluctant to commit to. Did this issue come up for discussions today, and have the two sides been able to agree on any kind of timeframe by when the negotiations will be completed and an agreement signed?

Australian Foreign Minister: I do not see any delay in the negotiations. In fact, they are reaching the third round on the 26th of November and I

believe that those negotiations are going ahead. I am sure our negotiators are preparing to be here on the 26th of November. So, I do not see any delay at all.

There is no specific timeframe because we want to get the agreement right. But I will not go into the details of negotiations because of course I do not want to pre-empt our negotiators. But I feel sure and I am confident that we will be able to reach agreement and conclude such an agreement.

As far as Australia's attitude towards selling uranium to India is concerned, we have long held the view that our country should be supplying uranium to India, and I think our announcement tonight that we support India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group indicates the level of support that we have for India, its record of non-proliferation, and its strategic importance.

Q (Ms Stefanie March, ABC): Minister Bishop, today the Indonesia has recalled its Ambassador to Australia following revelations that the Australian Government has been spying on the Indonesian President, his wife, and senior Ministers. The Indonesian Government has asked for an apology and an explanation. China has also asked for an explanation. How concerned are you about the damage done to the relationship and what are you going to do to repair it?

Australian Foreign Minister: I certainly take on board the concerns expressed by the Indonesian Government. We note their deep concerns. But as I have indicated on a previous occasion, it is not the practice of any Australian Government to comment on intelligence matters, and I intend to maintain that practice and that principle.

Q (Ms Stefanie March, ABC): This is going beyond intelligence matters though. It has become a massive diplomatic incident. What are you going to do? Have you spoken to Marty Natalegawa? I understand she has been trying to call you this evening.

Australian Foreign Minister: I am not going to give a running commentary on this matter, but I can assure that I am aware of Minister Natalegawa's concerns, I am aware of the concerns of the Indonesian Government, I take them seriously, the Prime Minister takes them seriously. As we have said on other occasions, we value the relationship with Indonesia, and the Abbott Government will work very hard to ensure

that that relationship continues to be strong. It is in the interest of both nations I suggest that we continue to cooperate as much as we can across a whole range of areas, and we are determined to ensure that the relationship continues to flourish. We are aware of their concerns and we take them exceedingly seriously. But I am not going to comment on intelligence matters.

Q (Ms Stefanie March, ABC): And Minister Khurshid, how do you feel about the revelations that Australia has been spying on the leaders of its friendly neighbours? Are you concerned that Australia may be spying on India's leaders? And would you also like an explanation from the Australian Government about these revelations?

External Affairs Minister: We are really looking at a positive relationship; we are looking at signing an agreement on the nuclear matters, on civil nuclear cooperation. That is not something that happens between nations that do not trust each other. We have trust, we have a very wholesome working relationship. I do understand that periodically between nations issues arise, sometimes blown out of proportions, sometimes based on some act of individual, sometimes systemic failures. But these issues arise and it is for nations between themselves bilaterally to settle these issues. We know each other, Foreign Ministers know each other just for this to work together for a better destiny and future for their respective people and indeed to be able to address anything that happens which may cause an impediment or a derailment or a slowing down of relationship.

So, I think that I can say this with confidence that I am sure that two friendly nations like Indonesia and Australia, if there is an issue amongst them they will be able to find appropriate solutions and appropriate ways to address them.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event.



CHINA

243. Press Release on the Third Annual India – China Defence Dialogue.

Beijing, January 14, 2013.

The Third India-China Annual Defence Dialogue took place in Beijing today. Defence Secretary Shri Shashikant Sharma led the Indian side and the Chinese Deputy Chief of General Staff General Qi Jianguo led the Chinese side. The discussion took place in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere and in a forward looking manner. The two sides discussed bilateral, regional and international issues of common interests including the situation in the Asia-Pacific region and in the India-China border areas.

Both sides agreed to expand and enhance bilateral exchanges covering the Army, Navy and Air Force of both countries.

The two sides agreed to advance mutual strategic trust and also enhance mutually beneficial practical cooperation.

The two sides reviewed the ongoing measures to maintain peace and tranquility on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The two sides agreed upon a plan of bilateral military exchanges for 2013 which includes conduct of the next joint military exercise.

Shri Sharma also called on General XuQiliang, Vice Chairman of China's Central Military Commission. During the discussion, General Xu called for enhancement of mutual trust between the two countries and he said that consultations need to be held between the two sides to focus on commonalities which are more important than the differences between the two countries. He said good relations between India and China is important for both countries as well as for world peace and security.



244. Response of Official Spokesperson to a question on the Brahmaputra River.

New Delhi, January 31, 2013.

Government of India carefully monitors all developments on the Brahmaputra River. As a lower riparian State with considerable established user rights to the waters of the River, India has conveyed its views and concerns to the Chinese authorities, including at the highest levels of the Government of the People's Republic of China. India urges China to ensure that the interests of downstream States are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas.



245. Question in the Lok Sabha on "Construction of new Dams by China".

New Delhi, February 27, 2013.

Will the Minister of **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether China has reportedly approved construction of three more dams on the Brahmaputra in Tibet in addition to the one being built;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and its likely impact on the interests of India;
- (c) whether the Government has taken up the issue with China;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of China thereto; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to safeguard the interests of the country in the matter?

ANSWER**THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****(SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID)**

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 47 REGARDING “CONSTRUCTION OF NEW DAMS BY CHINA” FOR ANSWER ON 27.02.2013

(a) to (e) The recently released ‘Outline of the 12th Five Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People’s Republic of China’ indicates that three more hydropower projects on the main stream of the Brahmaputra River in Tibet Autonomous Region have been approved for implementation by the Chinese authorities. Government carefully monitors all developments on the Brahmaputra River. As a lower riparian state with considerable established user rights to the waters of the River, India has conveyed its views and concerns to the Chinese authorities, including at the highest levels of the Government of the People’s Republic of China. India has urged China to ensure that the interests of downstream States are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas.



246. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence on the information given to Lok Sabha on India-China Joint Military Exercises.

New Delhi, March 11, 2013.

During the fifth Defence Dialogue held between India and China in January 2013, both sides have agreed to conduct defence exchanges between the Armed Forces of both countries, including the conduct of a joint exercise at a time and location to be mutually decided by both sides. Defence exchanges, including the conduct of joint exercises, are useful to build mutual trust and confidence between the Armed Forces of both sides.



247. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence on the talks between the Chinese and Indian officials on Defence Cooperation.

New Delhi, March 22, 2013.

The Deputy Chief of General Staff (Dy CGS) of the Chinese PLA Lt. Gen. Qi Jianguo met Defence Secretary Shri Shashi Kant Sharma and called on the Defence Minister Shri AK Antony here today. The Dy CGS was accompanied by an eight member delegation.

The two day visit of Lt Gen Qi to India is a follow-up to the meeting between Defence Secretary and Gen Qi in Beijing in January 2013 during the Annual Defence Dialogue of which both are co-chairs.

During the meeting both sides agreed to finalise the plan of bilateral exchanges between the Armed Forces of India and China. It has been decided that exchanges will be conducted between the Armies, Navies and Air Forces on both sides. Both sides also discussed preparations for the 3rd Joint Army exercise, which is scheduled to be conducted in China this year. It was agreed that the strengthening of exchanges between the Armed Forces should be carried out as a way of building

mutual trust and confidence and consistent with the overall bilateral relationship between both countries.

The implementation of measures to ensure continued peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) was also discussed. Shri Sharma and Lt Gen Qi also discussed issues relating to the regional security situation.

During the call on Shri Antony, Lt Gen Qi conveyed that the new leadership in China attaches high priority to consolidate cooperative relations with India in all spheres.



248. Extract relevant to the reported Chinese intrusion into Indian territory in Ladakh from the Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson.

New Delhi, April 23, 2013.

Q: Akbar, the External Affairs Minister this morning said that India is addressing the issue of incursion by China 'in an appropriate manner' and that 'we do not want any departure from proportionality'. Could you please define proportionality? Is incursion of a platoon strength contingent of the Chinese army or indeed any foreign army inside 10 kilometres of the territory proportionately speaking a small matter? What is proportionality in this case?

Official Spokesperson: Your question addresses the military aspects but let me try and address what we have done so far and how we pursue this incident because I think that would be more appropriate for me as the Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs to answer, and I think you will have a reasonably good idea of how we are approaching this entire issue.

The ongoing incident that you have mentioned refers to an incident in the Depsang area of the Western Sector of the India-China boundary. We see this as a face-to-face situation between border personnel of the two sides due to differences on the alignment of the Line of Actual Control.

We have, therefore, asked the Chinese side to maintain status quo in this sector, and by status quo I mean status quo prior to this incident.

The term face-to-face situation is not something that we have conjured up. It is something that is referred to in the 2005 Protocol for the Implementation of CBMs in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas. Let me just refer to the specific article in this. It is article 4 of that protocol and it reads as follows: "If the border personnel of the two sides come to a face-to-face situation due to differences on the Line of Actual Control, they shall exercise self-restraint and take all necessary steps to avoid an escalation of the situation". Then there is a whole listing of procedures that need to be followed. Therefore, when we say face-to-face situation this is what we are referring to.

Now, the ongoing incident in the Depsang area of the Western Sector of the India-China Boundary is a localized event. This is a sector in which there are differing perceptions of the Line of Actual Control. That is why we have, since 1996 been maintaining that there is a need for both sides to work together in clarifying and confirming the Line of Actual Control.

What steps have been taken since this incident occurred? Those of you who have been following this are aware that this came to note on 15th April. On 16th April morning, Mr. Gautam Bambawale, Joint Secretary (East Asia), who chairs the working mechanism for consultation and coordination on India-China border affairs, spoke to his counterpart who is the Director-General Border Affairs of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was on 16th morning. Subsequently, perhaps you are all aware, on 18th morning there was a flag meeting. Following that, on 18th evening the Foreign Secretary expressed the concerns of the Government of India to the Ambassador of China in Delhi.

This morning there is a flag meeting which is still underway by last account. I do not have a read-out. Let us wait for that. I hope you are able to understand what the situation in technical terms is and what we have done. Let me also try and clarify that overall, the India-China border areas continue to remain peaceful. We believe that this ongoing incident can be handled on the basis of agreements between the two countries and through mechanisms established under those agreements to resolve such situations peacefully.

I hope I have clarified to a large extent without getting into the technical details because I do not think I am competent to respond to the technical details of situations on the border.

Q: Has India sent any additional troops to the area to meet any eventuality?

Official Spokesperson: I just mentioned to you I am not the right person to handle questions relating to operational details on the border. I suggest you or your colleagues address such questions to people who are appropriately qualified to answer that. What I have explained to you is what action we have taken to try and have this matter resolved peacefully. It has been our experience that similar incidents in the past have been resolved peacefully and we hope to resolve this incident too peacefully. So, please, on issues relating to other than peaceful means, you may like to address other appropriate organs which deal with this.

Q: When Mr. Bambawale spoke with his counterpart on the 16th, what kind of a response did he get? You have told us what we have been doing. What have their responses been please?

Official Spokesperson: This was followed on the 18th by a border meeting, flag meeting. So, I suppose there was some movement during those talks which led to the flag meeting.

Q: Sir, since this is the first opportunity for an on-the-record statement, there have been differing reports, can we have a factual narration of what has happened, how deep inside are the Chinese troops, what are the numbers of the Chinese troops, and what sort of structures/tentage they have raised there in that place?

Official Spokesperson: Again as I said, my job is to interact and discuss this at a diplomatic level. There are others in Government of India, who you are well aware of, who may be able to provide you that information. But please understand, irrespective of where we are coming from I have explained to you how we in the Ministry of External Affairs have taken this up, have conveyed the concerns, and what has been the outcome of those concerns. So, my suggestion is, please wait on. If there is a read-out at the end of the flag meeting today, that would be an appropriate time to ask these questions and seek responses from those who are involved in that process. I am not involved in that process, as you would see.

Q: The Chinese Foreign Ministry said yesterday that they had not trespassed into Indian territory. This morning we spoke to the Chinese Embassy and they said that they stand by that statement. How would you respond to that? Also, is there any effort to look at this politically and reach out to them at a political level and not just at the diplomatic level?

Official Spokesperson: As I said, I think we need to go through very carefully the mechanisms and agreements that we have on this issue bilaterally. Let me try and put to you one of the agreements which will indicate about differing perceptions. This is article 10 of the 1996 agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas. Article 10 states as follows: 'The two sides agree to speed up the process of clarification and confirmation of the Line of Actual Control'. As an initial step in this process, they are clarifying the alignment of the Line of Actual Control in those segments where they have different perceptions. This is a written document which should be available publicly. All we are saying is that in our perception or in our view or in our approach, we see this as a situation of differing perceptions; this is based on agreements and mechanisms that we have established; we have activated those mechanisms based on our understanding of what the situation is and what the agreements between the two countries provide for.

Q: Since you have referred to previous incidents - there have been other similar incidents you said - should we understand that your Government does not believe this one to be a particularly provocative act?

Official Spokesperson: I will not get into a description of the incident. All I would like to say is that we have resolved all previous incidents peacefully and it is our hope that we will resolve this incident too peacefully. I would appreciate if all of you help us in this and extend some space and time for us to work this out, because ultimately for such situations to work out you require both time and space, and I would be grateful to all of you to provide us with that.

Q: Sir, we have got reports that Chinese have also done another violation of water space this time in Pangong Lake. There are at least 20 Chinese boats coming into the Indian waters.

Official Spokesperson: I would be grateful if you can pass that information up to me, and we will then take it up and see where we are on this. At this moment, I must confess, this is the first I have heard about this issue. Because all of you have been asking me since this morning or last evening about the ongoing incident in the Depsang area, I did come prepared with a lot of homework on that issue.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: Unfortunately, I do not have that pleasure of being able to talk to my principals the way you can.

Q: Any change in the programme of the visit of Chinese Premier to India next month?

Official Spokesperson: Let me put it this way. Both India and China are committed to having high-level visits. There is a commitment both by our Prime Minister to visit China and an invitation from our Prime Minister for the Chinese Prime Minister to visit India. We are still working on these issues and once they are finalized we will certainly share it with you on when those commitments which we have agreed to will materialize. At this stage I just announced a visit of the External Affairs Minister two days from today. The visit beyond that, I restricted it to situation which is evolving when he asked me questions on that. So, going by my track record you would appreciate that anything beyond the end of this month is like beyond the horizon as far as I am concerned. I know you are much better organized and I appreciate that. But given my limited organizational capacities, I focus on the here and now.

Q: I would like to know whether in recent times this is the real face-to-face situation?

Official Spokesperson: I do not know what you are asking but I have explained to you what this situation is and how we describe it. You should have asked and found out about a situation when it happened then how we had described it. Since I took over this is the first situation. But those who have been here longer are aware of these situations developing previously and differing perceptions being part of our vocabulary going back to more than a decade or so on these issues. I just related to you how this notion of differing perceptions figures in documents going back to 1996. So I am certain they may have been but I do not think it would

be proper for me to account for it. They may have been in the past, face-to-face situations and your colleagues would be able to answer that better. And I am certain there would have been such situations previously, and let me assure you we have resolved all of them peacefully.

Q: On China, on 18th we had a flag meeting.

Official Spokesperson: In the morning of the 18th.

Q: Right. So, is it safe to conclude that the two sides do not agree and that is why we are having a second flag meeting? And between these two flag meetings is there something new that is on the table?

Official Spokesperson: Between the two flag meetings was the meeting of the Foreign Secretary with the Ambassador of China.

On May 2 the Official Spokesperson answering several question on the this issue which are as under:

Q: The Foreign Minister was quoted as saying that the Chinese incursion is like acne. Senior sources in the Indian Army have actually described it on various television channels as more like an epidemic or a rash. So, they think the actual ground situation is much more serious. What signs is the Indian Foreign Ministry, the Government of India going to give to Beijing? There must be a Plan-B. For instance, what would be the worst case scenario? Would the impending visit of the Foreign Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid scheduled on May 9th be postponed or cancelled, and also the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister on the 20th?

Official Spokesperson: Let me tell you that since I was able to share some information with you last week there has been continuing diplomatic contact, and this contact has been at various levels and in different locations. So, diplomatic contact between India and China on this issue is, if I may say, ongoing.

We have been able to communicate our concerns to the Chinese and I think there is no doubt on this matter that this is a matter of concern for the entire country. Having said that, you have used various words, I have used various words, others have used various words, but the point I think that we have made previously is and the nub of what we would like to communicate is that this is an incident which is limited in geographical scope. That is the goal that we are trying to indicate. Perhaps

some use a metaphor and others use other metaphors. But that this incident is limited, localized in geographical and spatial terms is what we would like to convey. Having said that, we have conveyed this and our goal has been, as I said last time, the objective of all our diplomatic contacts has been that we return to status quo as it was in that limited spatial geographical area prior to April 15.

As regards your question on the visits, I would not like to speculate because diplomacy like all good things in life requires time and space. We are working on this. I have said this previously that we require time and space to work this through. Channels are active, a variety of channels are in play and they are all active.

As regards speculation, I think the External Affairs Minister himself has said this that he intends to go to Beijing and that is the last word on this. As regards the visit of the Chinese Premier, when this question was asked last time I did answer that we are in discussions working out an appropriate date and the visit of the Chinese Premier to India is in an advanced stage in terms of discussions and planning for that. Once we finalise that, we will certainly let you know the dates of that.

Q: On China again, do you have a read-out of the flag meetings because you guys are the nodal agencies apparently to even talks about what is happening in the borders. They are being seen as failed flag meetings. What is the Government's interpretation?

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much for exalting us to important positions. But the reality is, and I have always said this before, as far as non-diplomatic issues are concerned, we are not the right people to respond to it. And I am afraid what happens in a flag meeting where no diplomats are involved, I would not be the right person to respond to that. And we have repeated it and I would like to reiterate that again. Having said that, I have explained to you what is happening at the diplomatic level. And I would suggest that there are competent authorities available in other organizations who can perhaps give you a read-out of what is happening in flag meetings.

Q: There was a report yesterday in the Times of India saying that MHA and MEA split on case against Italian Marines. Can you elaborate?

Official Spokesperson: Maria, you have been following us very regularly. You also know that I never respond to this sort of inter-Ministerial reports. My understanding of the situation is that what is clearly specified in the court order and is what we have placed on record. The External Affairs Minister has talked to an ANSA correspondent and I am certain you have the entire script available with you. I would suggest that that is the final word on this matter because it is based on consultations among all concerned Government organizations. I would suggest that you go by that rather than any other sporadic report on this matter.

Q: Sir, several days after the 15th of the month when the Chinese intrusion happened, three Indian army officers led by a Brigadier visited Beijing for several days to discuss joint exercises between India and China.

Official Spokesperson: You know my answer.

Q: Was the MEA consulted on this and what was the MEA's view on it?

Official Spokesperson: I have answered this before and I will answer it again that the Government of India has finally one view. Like all normal governments they seek views of various Ministries and they respond to that. I have indicated to you previously that it is not my intention to use this pulpit to exhibit my entrails and indicate what view we took on one matter or another. So, please, may I request you again on these issues of inter-Ministerial consultations it is normal in any Government to have those consultations and we do not comment on inter-Ministerial consultations.



249. Extract relevant to China from the media briefing by the official spokesperson.

New Delhi, May 2, 2013.

Q: The Foreign Minister was quoted as saying that the Chinese incursion is like acne. Senior sources in the Indian Army have actually described it on various television channels as more like an epidemic or a rash. So, they think the actual ground situation is much more serious. What signs is the Indian Foreign Ministry, the Government of India going to give to Beijing? There must be a Plan-B. For instance, what would be the worst case scenario? Would the impending visit of the Foreign Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid scheduled on May 9th be postponed or cancelled, and also the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister on the 20th?

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250. Extracts relevant to Chinese intrusions from the Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson:

Beijing, May 2, 2013

Q: Sir, several days after the 15th of the month when the Chinese intrusion happened, three Indian army officers led by a Brigadier visited Beijing for several days to discuss joint exercises between India and China.

Official Spokesperson: You know my answer.

Q: Was the MEA consulted on this and what was the MEA's view on it?

Official Spokesperson: I have answered this before and I will answer it again that the Government of India has finally one view. Like all normal governments they seek views of various Ministries and they respond to that. I have indicated to you previously that it is not my intention to use this pulpit to exhibit my entrails and indicate what view we took on one matter or another. So, please, may I request you again on these issues of inter-Ministerial consultations it is normal in any Government to have those consultations and we do not comment on inter-Ministerial consultations.

Q: This is regarding the denial of the foreign journalists to attend the court hearings on the cases of rape in Delhi. It happened once and it happened twice, and three times. Can you just clarify to us are we allowed in or are there any norms or regulations we should follow?

Official Spokesperson: Dr. Awad, you are the President of the Foreign Correspondents Association and I understand your need to have a response for that, and I also am aware of this situation. Having said that, this is a matter which is sub judice. My understanding is that this matter was raised in the court and there was a view taken in the court. If there is a contrary view to that, I would suggest appeal in the court because once a matter is sub judice, you know very well the executive stands back.

Thank you very much



251. Official Spokesperson's response to a query on situation on Line of Actual Control between India and China.

New Delhi, May 6, 2013.

In response to a query on situation on Line of Actual Control between India and China, the Official Spokesperson said:

"The Governments of India and China have agreed to restore status quo ante along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Western Sector of the India-China boundary as it existed prior to 15 April, 2013.

Flag meetings have been held to work out the modalities and to confirm the arrangements."



* In this connection the External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid said there was still "no clarity" on the reasons behind the April 15 incursion by the People's Liberation Army in Ladakh, but added that he did not seek an explanation from the Chinese during talks here. Mr. Khurshid, who held talks with his counterpart Wang Yi over three hours on May 9, said both sides had expressed "satisfaction" over the fact that the stand-off in Ladakh was resolved peacefully through existing mechanisms. Asked if he had sought clarity on the reasons behind the PLA's move to set up tents on the Depsang plains — a move that Indian officials described as an unexpected provocation that broke with established patrolling patterns followed by both sides in disputed areas — Mr. Khurshid told reporters, "I did not look for [clarity]. We are not even ready with our analysis of why it happened." "It is not clear why it happened," he added. "I think they were not offering us that background, and we were not asking for that background... There was a tremendous sense of satisfaction that it was resolved in the manner it was resolved."

Mr. Wang told Mr. Khurshid his visit to Beijing was "hugely important" to pave the way for the Chinese Premier Li Keqiang's May 19 visit to India — his first overseas trip after he took over in March. That the Chinese side have framed his visit as heralding a new chapter in ties has made the April 15 incident all the more puzzling, officials acknowledge. Mr. Khurshid, however, said "it is not very helpful at this stage to apportion blame between them and us, and it will only take away from the sense of relief and satisfaction that it was resolved in time not to upset the apple cart of what is going on, which is far more important". The External Affairs Minister said he did not think the incursion was related to ongoing talks between India and China over a border defence cooperation agreement. The Chinese side submitted a draft to India on May 4, which India is currently studying. "I don't think this incident should be seen or indicated as part of flagging or a reminder as a nudge or push to solve the border issue," he said. He said both sides had a "shared conclusion" that existing systems were working. Mr. Khurshid said the 16th round of talks between the Special Representatives on the boundary

question will take place in the next two months. He said China had appointed the former Foreign Minister and top diplomat Yang Jiechi as the new SR to succeed recently retired former State Councillor Dai Bingguo, who chaired the previous round with National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon. That meeting would provide a platform for both sides to discuss in greater depth what led to the stand-off. Indian officials will on Friday speak with Chinese officials handling boundary affairs and may also speak with officials from the PLA on Saturday. "We only urge them not to allow anybody to use their relationship with them to India's detriment," he said. "I was not there to make him accountable to NSG requirements. Those are multilateral agreements to which I am sure they know their responsibility... and I am sure they will take the appropriate position." He also raised China's plans to build three new dams on the Brahmaputra, with India suggesting that existing mechanisms to share hydrological data be expanded to address concerns. He said he received a "positive" response from the Chinese, although no commitment as yet. On trade, Mr. Khurshid said he raised the fast-widening trade imbalance, with China expressing interest in "major investment" in India and supporting liberalising the visa regime to offset the deficit. China, he added, had responded positively to India's concerns over the cases involving two traders in Yiwu, Deepak Raheja and Shyamsunder Aggarwal, who were sentenced last year, and six diamond merchants. He said China had granted the two Yiwu traders a concession. "They have been released and gone back home," he said.

252. External Affairs Minister's interview to Chinese Media in India ahead of his visit to China from May 9-10, 2013.

New Delhi,, May 9, 2013.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Good morning. This is a good opportunity to talk to all of you together. We do not always get this opportunity but on the eve of my first trip as Foreign Minister to China it is a very good opportunity for us to be able to talk about things, both those that pertain to this visit and also those that are of general interest to you being resident correspondents for your respective agencies and newspapers.

Allow me to welcome you warmly. I hope that you are enjoying your beat, you are enjoying your assignment here in our country, and living with us in exciting times. I do not know if you and your newspapers and channels use the same high pitch that we have in our media. But it is a challenging thing and interesting part of modern times both conventional media as well as the social media that we now have to encounter in a growing way. So, once again welcome. I will be happy to answer your questions and see where we go.

Chinese Media: Mr. Minister, what do you expect of your forthcoming visit to China and what would be the impact for the development of relations between our two countries during your visit and also the nearby visit by the Chinese Premier?

External Affairs Minister: Two things. One is that it is part of the business of handling foreign relations with friendly countries, with our neighbourhood, and this very special relationship that we have with China. That is part of my job. Therefore, I am just doing my job.

Having said that, there are special features. This is my first visit as External Affairs Minister to China. We have been hoping to do this visit for some time but there were very important changes, historic changes, on the Chinese side with the new leadership taking over from the old leadership that had over the last decade developed a very sound and a very good relationship with our leadership. And we were given the message both by the outgoing leadership of China as well as new leadership at various levels and in the meetings that took place at

multilateral summits that it is the intention of the new leadership of China to not only continue with this excellent relationship but also look at the possibility of enhancing it and helping it grow. That is a very welcome signal that we receive with not only a great satisfaction but we reciprocate it with the same depth and the same commitment with which it has been made.

Having said that, words are not enough in any relationship. You need to work to fulfill the words that are said at important meetings and that is the job that we have to do at different levels, at the level of the Foreign Minister, at the level of the Foreign Secretary, at the level of other officials of the Foreign Ministries and also people-to-people, plus at different Departments, different levels. To lay that out in a sense of a map for how we proceed and how we improve and how we further develop our relationship.

To take stock of that I think the new Foreign Minister, and it so happens that there are new Foreign Ministers on both sides, had to come together and work out a plan, work out a scheme, work out priorities, look at and take stock and see there is something that needs to be given a push, need to see whether there is something that needs to be reviewed, re-examined, some things on which we need further consultations. So, this is one major part of my visit.

The other one of course will be for both sides to work out the steps that need to be taken for the Chinese Premier's visit here which is only ten days after I visit China. Of course, the background work has already been done. But it is good to take a look at it, refresh our memory, and look at what any further work needs to be done, prioritise and examine the content that will finally be placed before the leaders during the delegation-level meetings in Delhi and their own private meetings in Delhi. So, preparation for the writing of a new chapter by our respective leaders, writing of a new chapter in the relationship which is both valuable, important, not just to the two of us but also to Asia and to the world, so, really to check out the work that needs to be done for the beginning of the new chapter in our relationship.

Chinese Media: Mr. Khurshid, my question is also related to your upcoming visit to China. What is your main concern and expectation from Indian side for your visit?

External Affairs Minister: I do not know how you translate the word concern. Concern is an interesting English word that can be used in many ways. One is, concern can be used as what is your priority or concern that I want to first do this'. Concern can also be 'I am worried'. Concern can also be 'I must do something to address this problem'. Therefore, I will refrain from using the word concern but I would say that my priority is how to develop a very good working relationship with the Foreign Minister.

In international relations, in foreign policy, a great deal has to do with historical circumstances, a great deal has to do with the sense and perception of people. Governments follow their people. A great deal has to do with the vision of the leadership of governments. They have a vision and they translate that to their people and to their counterparts in other countries. A great deal has to do with personal equations, personal chemistry. You can fulfill and achieve a great deal if you get along well as individuals, as people, as persons.

I think that it is also very important for Foreign Ministers to develop a personal chemistry and relationship which can help you overcome many challenges that arise in the normal course of doing business with neighbouring countries or with countries across the globe. And it would be my effort – it is a short time, two days is a very short time to build up a relationship but sometimes it can happen very quickly, sometimes you have to work very hard on it. I am hoping. I am hoping that we will strike the right chord in our meeting. I think the historical circumstances are favourable, and we have a huge, huge obligation on us in respect to the expectations of our people and of our leadership. And I will try to see that we can strike a chord and be good friends so that we will find it easy to transmit and translate the vision of our leaders towards a more meaningful and valuable relationship between India and China.

Chinese Media: You have been saying that what improved the relationship between China and India so as a Foreign Minister, what is your plan? What exactly ... (Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: There are some objective things and there are some subjective things. Objective things are we need to work together- and both of us know that, we need to work together - on addressing the trade deficit, not because we are being more concerned

about ourselves or being selfish. But to be sustainable, a trade relationship has to be a balanced one. If there is an insurmountable difficulty of being able to address in the short run the issue of trade, of balancing trade, then you can set it off against investment. So, it is possible that you have investment flows from one country to the country that has trade surplus so that an overall economic balance between the two countries is established. This is what we are working together to do between India and China, looking at how we can balance our trade but also that in the short run to offset an imbalance of trade through investment.

But investment standalone itself is important because in today's world there are two important ways how you get people to come together, not just governments but people to come together. One is by having cultural exchanges – in culture I include sort of education and soft culture like tourism and so on - and the other one is by investment.

If you have a Chinese company investing in India, producing in India, and have a huge number of Indians working for the Chinese company, that is a stronger bond than you can provide by opening an Embassy because you are dealing with people's immediate aspirations which is a job, food, employment security and learning to work together, what they call work culture. I think that it is our aspiration that there should be some really conspicuous big Chinese investment projects in our country, as indeed we are encouraging our companies to go to China. Some of our business organizations have established offices for outreach in China. A lot of our businessmen are now exploring opportunities in China. There are joint projects and collaborations that are taking place in areas such as steel. But we must always keep in mind that we are both partners and competitors.

There will be market places where goods from both countries will be on the shelves and we will have to compete. Maybe you would get an upper hand in certain goods and we will get an upper hand in certain goods. In certain cases, you will just have to have a greater choice to give choice on a menu which gives both the Chinese product and the Indian product. In some cases we will have to collaborate. But these are things that the market will partly decide and partly because we both believe in planning in our economy, at least to some extent. To some extent our planners will decide which means how do you incentivise, how do you de-incentivise,

how do you regulate, how do you control. But at the same time, the same selection process will continue in the market place as well where you have some strengths and we have some strengths. But, as our Prime Minister has said, the world is a large enough place to allow India and China both to work and to live in very comfortably, sometimes holding hands, sometimes walking together, sometimes racing each other, sometimes as competitors and sometimes as collaborators and partners.

So, these are very important dimensions and features of our relationship and each dimension and each aspect has to be worked upon, either encouraged or actually physically and intellectually worked upon to ensure that we get the best for our people.

Chinese Media: Your Excellency, as the Minister of External Affairs what is your understanding about China's importance within India's foreign policy in the background of global pictures?

External Affairs Minister: China's place in the world, both historic as well as in terms of an economic power, is well known. At the same time, China has arrived late in certain places. In WTO for instance, China has just arrived in WTO. Therefore, you have to make your mark in WTO. Now you have many complementarities with us as far as WTO is concerned and we vigorously supported your presence in WTO. Russia again is new to WTO and Russian industry will be in a sense adjusting and accommodating to WTO. But both Russia and China still have to I think pick up domain knowledge of WTO and begin to contribute more substantially and more effectively to WTO. But, we are working, China and Russia, we are working in BRICS together. And I think that in a sense is an ideal situation for us to harmonise and to converge on positions that we take multilaterally or positions that we take on important issues such as restructuring and reform of the international financial architecture also of the United Nations etc.

I do not think that we can say that immediately, instantly we have to agree on everything. It is a process of dialogue by which we learn from each other's experiences and factor in each other's aspirations. So, this is for us very important and, therefore, you can see that while we want friendships across the globe and China has friends across the globe, and not all of our very fast friends are your fast friends, and not all of

your very fast friends are our fast friends. But there are many that we have in friendship in common.

We cannot be absolutely completely alike because our circumstances are different, our aspirations are different, our historical experiences are different. But the effort has to be while working together bilaterally or in organizations like BRICS or for instance working in the United Nations, the effort has to be if we can bring our positions and align our positions to make them much closer and effective. I hope that what I am saying about China, I hope you will hear from the Chinese leadership about India as well because we are proud to be able to say that we have made remarkable strides as far as economic growth and development are concerned.

Of course in many ways China is far ahead of us because despite having a strong socialist system, China went into the economic reform at least a decade before us. We came a decade later. And China is on a faster track of reform than we are. Our reform requires consensus building all the time. In China, you are led from the front, you are led from the top and you are able to show the advantage of reform very quickly to the people, so get an endorsement from the people for reform. Because our reform goes slow, it takes much longer to show the advantage to the people. Therefore, to get the endorsement also takes time. So, it is a kind of a chicken and egg story.

But we hope that the importance that we think China has in the scheme of things as we plan our view of the world, I hope is also if not entirely substantially also felt by the Chinese leadership about India. And as I said, our historic experiences could be different, and therefore, we may have to put in more effort to align our future aspirations. If your past is different, your future to be aligned requires greater effort. If your past is similar, then your future is easier to align. But this is something that both sides know and we have worked towards this and periodically we will go fast, periodically we will slow down depending on circumstances that prevail in the world. But I think the direction is very clear. India and China collaborating to give substance to people's belief that the 21st century is the Asian century, is an imperative. India and China have to collaborate for the Asian century.

Chinese Media: ...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: That is why I said to him concern word is an English word that translates badly both for our Indian media and for you. So, we will not use the word concern, we will use the word attention.

Chinese Media: What would be your view towards China-India relationship under the new circumstances?

External Affairs Minister: I am very optimistic. I have very positive aspirations. I think it is a very great opportunity. I think the first signals that have come from the new Chinese leadership are extremely welcome, positive, and will be reciprocated in full substance from us. We are looking forward to a meaningful decade with working with the new leadership.

Chinese Media: Mr. Minister, I have another question. In China we have a saying that bad things can turn into good things. The recent incident in Ladakh, both countries handled it very well and peacefully resolved the dispute. Can I say that this means that the Sino-Indian relation is getting more matured and at the same time can this way of handling set a precedent, example for the future similar incidents?

External Affairs Minister: To be honest with you, I personally think we have shown tremendous maturity but also more than maturity we have shown tremendous understanding of each other. In these matters if you do not have fundamental understanding of each other, you can misunderstand such gestures. But to keep them at a proportionate level and contain them as limited or localized and not necessarily part of a larger scheme things, it is important to have a fundamental understanding of each other. I think we have developed that over the years and that is a wonderful thing. But what we have as Governments, I think a lot of people who pass off as scholars of India-China relations have also to develop that understanding. There is an impatience in them. You cannot dictate timelines on everything that happens between friends. Timelines and pushing people and making people take hasty decisions can cause them to make mistakes.

Both India and China are ancient civilizations and I do not think that we can work towards instant solutions. We have to savour even the process of resolving anything that might appear to be a disagreement. We have to savour the moment and to show patience and understanding. I feel a

sense of comfort that in our dealings with China in the recent weeks I found that that was exhibited by both sides in a very great measure, and that I find an extremely, extremely comforting and satisfying feeling.

Thank you



253. External Affairs Minister's media briefing on his visit to China.

New Delhi, May 11, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming on this holiday for most of you in the afternoon, at short notice. The External Affairs Minister has just returned this afternoon from China on what many of you thought was an important visit and we thought since none of you could travel with him, I had requested the External Affairs Minister if it was possible to brief you about the visit and the outcomes from that visit. He has kindly agreed and that was why we had this short notice because it was only this afternoon that he came back and he immediately agreed to this media interaction. That is the primary focus of this interaction. If any of you would like to ask questions after that on any other things, we will try and allow a couple of other questions.

With that I will request the External Affairs Minister to first make a few opening remarks and then we will leave the floor open.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Good afternoon friends and thank you for coming here. First of all I must tell you we sorely missed you all in Beijing, a good place to report from. Some of your colleagues were there but not enough.

I will begin with sharing some good news with you. Almost on an impulse I mentioned to Premier Li - with whom I had an outstanding meeting, a very friendly, a very open and a very enjoyable meeting - that I felt that the media in our two countries must have a chance to interact a lot more with each other and to discover experiences that each other have of the

other country, and that this would perhaps contribute to better people-to-people understanding and indeed facilitate the grand future that India and China can build together provided we align our positions, we understand each other better and there is a higher level of cooperation in every field - social, political, economic.

He immediately and promptly thought it was a very good idea, that we should create some mechanism by which Indian media can on a regular basis interact with the media in China. So, this I hope will happen. We have left it to officials to work out and we will certainly consult you on this as to how best we can go about it, perhaps step by step as we discover which is the most creative way of taking this forward. We will study also if there are any other models available either for them or for us. So, that is the news that concerns you directly and I thought I will give it s high billing and say that to you first.

Of course the primary purpose of the visit this time was to prepare for Premier's Li's visit beginning 19th of this month. It is something they emphasized and we acknowledged with gratitude and appreciation that this would be his first foreign visit after becoming Premier of China, and the first stop will be in India both in Delhi and Mumbai. The words that were used in our conversation were that this was very deliberately and very consciously after careful thought this decision that was taken giving India a very high priority.

I think that that was the general theme that one found in our conversations at different levels which included my meeting twice with Foreign Minister Wang Yi – twice I say because our formal meetings were fixed at 5, 5:30 in the afternoon going on to delegation talks and then finally dinner. But he chose to come to the hotel soon after I checked in and spend about 20 minutes with me to greet me as a very special gesture. I believe that that set the tone frankly to everything else that we did thereafter, as I said, at the delegation-level meeting in the evening followed by dinner.

Next day I had a very good meeting with the Special Representative who was Foreign Minister till recently and I had spoken to him on phone when he was Foreign Minister which again he recalled very fondly, Special Representative Yang Jiechi who will now in the near future be working with our Special Representative Mr. Shivshankar Menon to take forward their Special Representatives' interaction, Round 16 that will now take place hopefully in the next couple of months.

Thereafter of course I called on Premier Li who again was extremely friendly, very warm, extremely welcoming in his demeanor and his words and the time that he gave to me. Essentially we were looking at of course the lay of the land for the visit. I assured the Chinese leadership that the visit was going to be a very significant one and a very successful one as we saw it. They felt and we agreed that the joint statement that is to be issued after the meeting of the two Prime Ministers and the delegations should be a strong message to our respective people, to the rest of Asia and to the world. This is a very very repeatedly emphasized, greatly emphasized point that they made. We have certainly responded in equally enthusiastic terms. But in order to make that into a strong statement sending strong messages of India and China's intention to work closely together, they had laid out many points, agreement, MoUs that we could work on, and we in turn had indicated some on which there had been movement forward.

The Joint Secretary Gautam Bambawale stayed back because we thought it would require another day's or perhaps two days' work so that we can have as much done and not leave it to the last two, three days before the Premier's arrival in India. I think that the convergence that we have on issues that actually flow from the intent to have extensive engagement on several fields - and I think these flow from the strategic, economic dialogue that is held regularly between us - we are actually ready with and we have brought it to their notice that we are ready with agreement on micro irrigation, on waste water management. We will possibly be ready also with the translation of classic and contemporary works.

They have responded very positively on the visa simplification and liberalization MoU which may or may not be ready in time for signing during this visit. But as we agreed, on their suggestion, that whatever we have in the pipeline we can indicate strongly our political agreement and commitment and the signing can then be done on our Prime Minister's visit later this year to China. I think since 1954 possibly, this is the first time when there will be two-way Prime Ministers' visits between India and China taking place. Therefore, I think this Year of the Snake will be a significant year as we see it.

We have in principle agreed that the Foreign Ministries will exchange an MoU on sister cities and sister provinces which we hope can be aligned

with one major point on which there was prompt agreement and that was on Chinese investment, a Chinese industrial park in India for which we have promised the representatives of Ministry of Commerce can visit India soon and they can look around to see which point other than places they have already identified in the past for engagement could be suitable for a Chinese industrial park.

But that will be seen in conjunction with the attempts that we are making to balance our existing trade that is looking up, is growing very fast but where our concerns about balance remains. And they were agreeable that we have to very specifically address the issue of balance in our trade to make it sustainable. But to see it in conjunction with investment flows that can at least in the short-term address the issue of imbalance of trade but investment flows being both ways.

I had the opportunity to see and meet with officials of various private sector companies that are particularly in the IT sector, which are already doing good work in China and we hope that during the Prime Minister's interaction we will be able to enhance that to a higher level.

There are two important matters on which we have agreed that we require more work, something on which more inputs are necessary at our end from other Ministries and indeed in bilateral terms with other countries that are involved. One is the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, something that in principle we also as our Look East Policy and connectivity with ASEAN are looking forward to being able to establish but on which some bilateral I think engagements are still called for particularly with Bangladesh. And that is an area we said we will continue to work, and it could at some stage involve all the countries working together. But certainly in principle an attractive idea, something that we would have worked on ourselves and are working on ourselves, but that we will be happy to engage with them once everybody is on board.

The other issue on which we have if you like taken a little bit of a pause for the present is the regional trading arrangement that they have suggested. That again goes back to the trade imbalance. We said that let the trade imbalance be addressed upfront as an urgent priority, and then of course we can move to the next stage which is the regional trading arrangement.

We did not actually specifically discuss this but because during the officials meeting that will take place today I can share with you that Chinese side had given us a border defence cooperation agreement some weeks ago which essentially consolidates and brings together many of the agreements and protocols and the arrangements and the mechanisms that we have in place, brings those together, rationalizes them and takes them forward somewhat. We also have some suggestions there based on our experience of the past few years, and we have in turn given them some suggestions, indicated certain points in the draft that need to be reworked upon. Hopefully this will be in their hands today and, therefore, this is something on which we can work. But this was not part of the discussion that I had had, or on the agenda specifically.

One important, modest but significant move that we have seen is our discussions on the trans-border rivers. The good thing was that the Chinese side at the highest level reaffirmed their intent to ensure that India's downstream interests are not affected adversely in any way. They have heard us out very carefully about either enhancing the mandate of the existing arrangement that allows for sharing of flood time hydrological information, expanding that in order to cover some of our concerns, or look at a separate mechanism that would address our concerns.

The movement forward we have now is a clear indication from them that this is something that they are committed to, that they are going to be ever so careful about India's interest and that this requires in some manner either an enhanced mandate or an alternative way in which our concerns can be addressed. I think this is the first time that we have actually specifically face-to-face been able to move forward on this particular thing.

We both took note of a very interesting dimension in our relationship which is the movement forward on multilateral and matters concerning security in our region. We both agreed that our first dialogue on Afghanistan was a very good one, a successful one; and that we would be working more closely together with them as they move towards the next Istanbul Process meeting that will take place in China. I think that our understanding is converged. Largely there are areas in which we need really to discover more as to what our positions can be. But both

on Afghanistan as well as on Syria there were vast areas of convergence and articulation and I hope that we can work further on some of these issues, particularly since many fast changing movements are taking place. On a humanitarian front the Chinese were very good to have told us that they have released two Indian nationals who were in custody in Yiwu and that had become a little bit of a humanitarian concern. We felt that they had suffered enough. For personal reasons both of them had been allowed to travel to India and then went back. But the Chinese were generous and good. As a gesture of goodwill, they shared with us that they have released the two nationals who are now on their way back home.

Because of this I thought that I would go a little further and I requested them to consider whether the same could be done for all or for some at least of the six Indian diamond merchants who are also incarcerated in southern China. The immediate reaction that we got was that they would look at it in as positive a term as possible and get back to us. We had hoped that this could be done before Premier Li's visit to our country.

The most critical and important thing is of course the manner in which we were able to discuss our recent problem on the Line of Control. I think we were on the same page, China and India, completely in saying with a degree of satisfaction that the mechanisms in place for dealing with such issues and such episodes or incidents have worked, that we both have the confidence that they will work, and that they did work was a matter of considerable satisfaction.

It was also very clear that we both believe that our vision and our commitment is to the larger picture between China and ourselves, and that we are both equally determined that such an incident should not be allowed to stand in the way and to obstruct a very meaningful growth in our relationship, signals of which and indications of which are there for all of us to see both in terms of growing investment, trade and much greater contact between our people over the last ten years.

I did say to the Chinese side and I shared this with the Premier also that we felt it was important to analyze our respective systems to work out why such things happen or indeed why the most recent incident happened. We would in a sense be able to take some lessons from the manner in which it was satisfactorily resolved. We should also take some

lessons about why it happened, how we should ensure that such things do not get repeated, do not happen, and if at all despite best efforts something of this nature happens that we are able to address it with greater urgency and with less passage of time than we had to suffer this time, which was three weeks.

I think that my intention was to be clear, to let our Chinese friends know that this is something that was extremely important because it does not just remain as a statistic, it becomes part of perceptions about our people and I assume about their people, about us. We were not doing a post mortem and we were not apportioning blame. But we had certainly felt that it was important keeping the larger interest of our two countries in mind that something that caused enormous concern to our public opinion should be addressed, of course taking advantage of the mechanisms that we have in place.

I did leave it to them to have this matter reflected upon in greater detail when the Special Representatives meet because the entire background and the context in which this discussion has to take place is familiar to them and they have the domain knowledge to be able to deal with it more specifically.

All in all I believe it was a very successful trip. I think we have prepared well. We can look forward to a very meaningful visit of Premier Li ten days from now.

Thank you very much

Official Spokesperson: The floor is now open for any questions that you may have.

Q: Your talks in Beijing have raised the bar for a very successful visit by Premier Li. Looking ahead, what do you think are some of the contentious issues on which there are still differences and what is the way ahead on those issues? Also, did you discuss the need to intensify strategic communication?

External Affairs Minister: I can clearly say that we do not have any prickly issues, major issues of significant difference that could be seen as obstacles. Wherever we are still not ready on both sides, still not ready on articulating an agreement, we are certainly ready to indicate that is our objective and that is our aspiration. The important thing is that

this was understood by them and from their point of view understood by us, that some things are done and ready, some things will need to be clearly indicated as our objectives for Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to China later in the year, and there are some things on which in principle agreement must be indicated although we all know that it will take some time.

And the Premier said to me that the Chinese saying that journey of a thousand miles begins with one step I think indicates how they see every step forward as being significant and important although we both realize that we have a long journey to make.

Q: You said that India has made certain suggestions on the border defence cooperation agreement. Could you share with us what those suggestions were? Does it mean that the previous mechanisms in place to solve such incidents as happened recently are not delivering?

External Affairs Minister: I think the idea is to develop and to work beyond the success of those mechanisms and the experience of the success of those mechanisms to perhaps raise the bar of ambition for working more extensively, more effectively and taking it much further than we have in the past. As I have read the draft, it does not appear to be replacing everything that is already there, but as periodically we have had the 1993, 1996, 2005 etc, moving up based on experience of the past and really in the direction that was given by those protocols and agreements.

There is of course something that I believe easily would be appropriate to consider when we look at any new agreement, is to see if there have been some points at which our level of satisfaction could have been greater. So, if we emphasize those dimensions, we would obviously be better off. But there is not a sense that there is a disappointment or a failure of the mechanism we have in place. It is indeed our sense of satisfaction that our mechanisms have worked, have brought us thus far and now it is a question of going even further.

Q: In the context of the recent standoff and the change in the leadership in China, do you think that the boundary issue has remained in the background on a track all by itself and the relationship has gone ahead on economic, trade and other track; and that this will change or at least slow down and the boundary issue will once again come to the fore?

External Affairs Minister: That is not my impression. I think that the two track approach - if one can describe it as a two-track approach one not impeding the other but obviously helping each other if you go along and if you are moving in the right direction because the gravitational pull of the success of one will inevitably be felt on the aspiration of the other. I do not think there is any reversal in that process. I do not think there is any indication of a slowdown from either side. If at all there is something, there is an expression by the new Chinese leadership that we need to move faster. That is the reason perhaps why they have given us that agreement.

But faster must also be read with surer, steady and sure if you want to speed up what you are trying to do. It must again fall back on the experience of what we have done. Therefore, the 16th round of SRs meeting would be able to reflect on this and assess and judge it a lot better than you can in normal conversations.

Q: You have mentioned about trade and a delegation coming down to look at investments in various sectors. Will the Indian government allow unhindered investment opportunities to the Chinese in India?

External Affairs Minister: I do not know what you mean by unhindered. The extent to which we allow investment from anywhere else, there is no exception for China. But obviously trade must come with travel and that is the reason why liberalization of visa regime is important because business travel must become easier. You can always pitch for journalistic travel becoming easier and I would be very happy to support you on that, but I have to admit right now it was not a priority. Business travel is a priority. I think if that begins and the investments begin, we would get a very special stride forward.

Q: There are certain sectors where India feels that investment should not come from the Chinese.

External Affairs Minister: Those are areas where between Finance and Home they have special concerns not relating to China alone but the sectors themselves and also from different parts of the world. But those are things that are reviewed from time to time. I think we should not have a theology on this. We should really work on it in a practical sense. We are doing that in the visa regime for many countries. Some

more countries are hoping and expecting that we will do it for them. I think we need to rationalize; we need to be more confident about ourselves and confident of our systems, and be clear that what is important is there must be much greater contact between the peoples.

Q: My question is regarding the security arrangement in the international and the regional security. You spoke about Afghanistan and Syria as an example. Can you elaborate a little especially post-2014 if there is any mechanism between the two countries; and also regarding Syria, especially after the meeting of the Russia and the US for the conference by the end of this month?

External Affairs Minister: I think these are still issues that all of us are reflecting on. There are no ready answers with anyone of us on our questions both for Syria as well as for Afghanistan. We are in fact closely engaged with the Afghan side to understand what happens when we talk to other stakeholders in Afghanistan at the Istanbul Process conference for instance, or with China as we have done, or with the United States of America. We tried to understand better what will happen after 2014. But frankly I do not think there are easy answers being given right now. Therefore, there has to be a wait and watch.

Meanwhile, our commitment as far as development partnership is concerned, the two billion dollars that we are investing in Afghanistan continues. We expect to complete the projects like Salma dam and also the Parliament building well in time before 2014 elections. The small district level projects also are in process.

As you know, in my recent visit to Iran we indicated that Chabahar development will be contributed to by India because we see that as an alternative route particularly to western part of Afghanistan where we could have major investments in time to come. So, we are not putting anything on pause waiting for all the answers. As we continue to work on development partnership and enhancing different areas of our relationship with Afghanistan, we are still waiting to understand better. But we have at least been able to share how our perception would be somewhat different from perception of many other countries but it also overlaps with the perception of other countries. China I think is quite close to us in our perception about Afghanistan.

Q: Considering that you got so much positive signals from China that the new leadership wants to take forward our relationship, did you get any sense why the border incident happen? Was it that part of the army wanted to do it or what? Did you get any sense?

External Affairs Minister: To tell you the truth, I thought the best thing was to flag for them that it is important that we should figure out why it happened. That it happened, we have agreed. That it was reversed, we have agreed. That it was reversed using the mechanisms that we have in place and they worked successfully, we have agreed. But why it happened I think is important. I do not think that if you reflect back on incidents that have happened in the past, this question as to why it happened has ever been asked. Usually the question that is asked is, can you please reverse it, or that if you do not you know what, etc., etc. But nobody has ever asked why it has happened. We raised it for the first time. And you will understand that raising it for the first time you cannot expect an answer there and then. But we raised it, we flagged it, and we said that we both need to do an analysis of why it happened. The analysis then perhaps can be converged and shared and then we would have a better idea. And while all this is going on, we can improve our attempts and our ability to resolve the bigger issue, the larger issue which is finally what we have to resolve. This is only an intermediate arrangement that must address the ambience and the atmosphere as we moved to address the big issue.

Q: You spoke of the trans-border rivers. Have we suggested any species of mechanism to them whereby this issue can be dealt with bilaterally?

External Affairs Minister: No we have not. What we have suggested is that there must be a mechanism and we have left flexibility in saying the existing mechanism can be expanded, the mandate can be expanded to address what we are hoping will be addressed, or an alternative mechanism can be put in place. So, it is the first time that we have seen some movement, and I certainly saw sensitivity to India's concerns, and I think also anticipation that this is an issue that India would want to raise. Therefore, they had obviously considered the issue. They did not say let us think and come back to you. They immediately said we understand your concerns, we are committed to ensuring that there is no adverse impact as far as your downstream rights are concerned, but

something needs to be done, we agree. How it can be done, we can work on it. I think that is a movement forward.

Q: Was there any regret in the Chinese that they had actually intruded and pitched tents in Indian territory? Did they even have a tone of a little bit of regret that they had done what they had done? And also, it is a fact that before that, between January and March, there were five face-offs between border patrols - three in January and two in March. And on the 1st of April there was a sort of deep intrusion in that area. Since India knew about it and reports went right up on the 12th of April, were they seen as warning signals? Did India do anything about it then?

External Affairs Minister: I do not want to expand looking at our border issues and problems to other incidents that may have happened. In the articulation that we placed before them we did say that it is important that one incident in one place does not get linked with issues or incidents anywhere else, and that it is important that we do some systems analysis to find out why it happened. But really the trip was not to score points. The trip was to ensure that we are clear about what we want to say and that it is conveyed clearly.

When you talk about note of regret and so on, you know Chinese are better face readers that we are. They may have read something in my face but I certainly was not able to read their face. I can only say this to you that there was, at least I sensed, an atmosphere of relief and a desire to move forward. And I think that it would not have been fair on my part that when we have only ten days left to receive the Premier, that desire to move forward should have been retarded by me. But the points that we wanted to make I think were very clearly made and understood. We would like to see what the SRs can do with it as we move forward.

Q: Sir, I wanted to ask you about the industrial park that you spoke about with the Chinese. I understand that this must be in a very preliminary stage. But given the fact that we have a major trade imbalance, how does this work out?

External Affairs Minister: The trade imbalance issue is already being addressed. Trade imbalance issue really requires market access issues as far as pharmaceuticals are concerned, as far as IT is concerned, and those the Ministry of Commerce is already addressing. That is the best

that can be done immediately. That is very clear. But in addition to that, since we wanted an industrial park idea to be taken up and they brought up that idea, we were very happy that there was convergence and that that convergence could take us in the right direction. My people told me that if we can pinpoint and agree on this, Chinese will be able to deliver the industrial park a lot faster than most other countries, which is a good idea. I do not know if my State of UP will be happy to snap it up but I would be very happy if my State of UP snapped it up.

Q: You were quoted in Beijing as saying that you did not raise the issue of why they did what they did because there was some blame and you did not want to get into the blame game.

External Affairs Minister: That was on the first day. I had a second day as well and what I am telling you now is what happened in two days. But the report was on the first day.

If you raise everything on the first day, you do not get a chance to raise it on the second day. So, we took it step by step. On the second day I raised all that I have shared with you and I think satisfactorily. The words I see prominently in our discussions are: sense of relief, desire to move forward, let us think big.

Q: If you think that they wanted us to work faster on the boundary agreement, does that mean that in all these talks that we have been having, we have been stalling a resolution or we have been going slow on the resolution on the boundary agreement because that was not something that we took back in all these meetings? Third, the new defence cooperation agreement that we are working on, will that stop the kind of incursions that we saw in Depsang recently? Is that something that you are putting in?

External Affairs Minister: When I said to them that there must be lessons that we must learn from what has happened and those lessons must inform whatever we do in future, a systems analysis of this needs to be done on both sides, I would imagine that that is what it meant. And I did not find the Chinese working at anything that we said. I did not find them specifically giving an alternative formulation. But at the same time it would be wrong if I said that they just ticked everything I said.

I think there was very extensive convergence. And certainly if I am assessing the ground that we have prepared for the two Prime Ministers' meeting, the Prime Ministers meet after Foreign Ministers because they do more than the Foreign Ministers can do, so I think we prepared very good ground for things to happen. The takeaway expression that I gave them was that I am very glad that I have come here in Spring time because what I see is hope all around and beautiful Chinese blossoms. And what the Premier said to me was the world is thinking big, let us think bigger than them. This is what the Premier said to me and I thought that these are the two lines that summed up my two days there.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: This fast, faster, fastest did not come up but certainly it was not an attitude that look this will solve itself one day do not worry. Let us keep that in mind, let us move fast on that as well. I did not get any indication that they felt we were stalling, we were slow, that we were not willing. The formulations that these are historic issues, they are complicated, they take time to resolve, those formulations were repeated. And I think that there is not any major departure there. But yes, not just from my meetings but even otherwise, we have received some signals that they would like to solve a problem. The exact speed and exact velocity etc., I think the SRs will get a better chance to judge.

Q: You said that there was a convergence on Afghanistan. Was there a convergence on Syria as well? If there was, does it take you closer to the Russian and Chinese position on Syria?

External Affairs Minister: I think there was convergence on Syria but at the same time there was some lack of clarity as to how things are moving now that there was statement between the US and Russia. But at the same time while that statement that there should be an attempt, there was also a statement that was carried there which said that Assad cannot be party to this thing. So, I think the contours were still unclear both to them and to us. But the basic principle that we can only solve Syrian issue not from outside but by somehow creating conditions conducive for a Syrian dialogue between the Syrian opposition and the ruling establishment, I think on that there was complete convergence.

Q: From your opening remarks, you seemed to have sort of a foot down position on the regional imbalance being corrected because some of the

proposals, which you said yourself were pretty exciting, have been put on hold until that is done. So, were you able to read some kind of a timeframe with the Chinese apart from the general assurance that they gave you that they are going to move forward on this?

External Affairs Minister: I think the area of trade imbalance is a complicated area and the Commerce Ministry has been dealing with it. I have merely said to them that I would like to flag for Commerce Ministry your attempts to move forward on these areas which would require that the trade imbalance is addressed more effectively. But we did not go into further details on this. I was told that market access on pharmaceuticals and IT was critical and I did flag that and they know. They know very well that that is what is critical. They are talking a great deal about education; they are talking about tourism; they are talking about greater airline connectivity. So, there are many issues of this nature which I will pass on to my colleagues and see if we can get something interesting.

Q: Do we have a geological profile of the area where the Chinese tents were put up? Do we know what minerals are there beneath the surface there?

External Affairs Minister: Broadly speaking yes, we know what is there. It is pretty barren and it is at present pretty unpromising in terms of what it offers except a very difficult stay in the night if you pitch a tent there. But that they came to drill for oil is not something that we seriously ... Our idea of where the uranium is that can be accessed by us is different from the Tibetan Plateau. But I am not going to take a final guess on this. I am sure there are people who are better equipped to be able to tell us.

Q: Minister, you will complete 200 days in your office next week.

External Affairs Minister: Very tough days!

Q: You have been to 16 countries in four continents including the capitals of three permanent members of the United Nations. What do you think have been your three top achievements in the last 200 days?

External Affairs Minister: I think that would be very immodest but I can say with some satisfaction that I have had enormous assistance, help and understanding given to me by Foreign Ministers of the countries that

I have visited. I think I have been able to develop an interesting chemistry with a lot of them. With many I am on terms such as their being able to send me SMSs and call me on my mobile phone and I can call them back. In some cases it has delivered us away from seemingly crisis-like situation developing. Italy was one such case. I think I have certainly received enormous amount of candour in expression of aspirations as well as caution and inquisitiveness about India's plans and India's policies. It has been a very satisfactory experience, these 200 days. But you need 2000 days frankly to do this job well and I have not got 2000 days.

Q: After your talks with the Chinese leadership, do you still feel it is a localized incursion by the Chinese troops and how effective was the hotline between India and China in resolving the standoff?

External Affairs Minister: You cannot give away strategic secrets about hotlines and things like that. But I think yes that is the impression, I think our view is that it was very localized. Localised can be interpreted in two ways - localised in terms of a concept and localized in terms of physical attributes. I think it was localized in both ways - concepts and physical attributes. I have no reason to believe that what impression we gathered before my departure for China was misplaced or in any way required to be modified or rectified.

Q: What is your impression of the social progress in China, especially the slowing down of the economy and corruption and poverty?

External Affairs Minister: I watched Chinese television and it is not like ours. I did not have a chance to go through Chinese social media. So, I may have missed something. I walked around Tiananmen Square and that seemed pretty peaceful and looked very beautiful. There were lots of flowers there. But speaking to ordinary Chinese at receptions and to people from institutions, and indeed meeting them in the Embassy function as indeed talking to some Chinese media, looking at their newspapers there, it was very refreshing. They are talking about a lot of issues that in our perception here ordinary people will feel are not discussed in China.

There are elements of accountability to the public. That is very clearly there. I think in its own way China is moving forward in terms of what we

see a society to be. It is a very disciplined society, and if I am not wrong the impression that I had is that every Chinese seems to be doing everything with a sense of larger national purpose, not just simply limited to the job that they are doing. That is very exciting and very admirable. If you ask me would I like to go and live in China, the answer is yes. It is a beautiful place, a wonderful place. But not while I am Foreign Minister, I mean after.

Q: Just to take you back to the incursion one last time, at the time when it happened you just said that it was localized, you really emphasized that it was a localized incident. There were army sources who told many of us including me that the actual troops on the ground said that they were waiting for further instructions from Beijing. Could you just sort that out please?

External Affairs Minister: These are military personal secrets that are best heard from retired Generals. But the body language and the communications between our platoon that was there in what Chinese described as a face-to-face situation - we describe it as a faceoff, they describe it as a face-to-face. I do not know whether the two are marginally different. I think the ground level situation I can tell you, I was not there but this is on information, the body language, the communication between the troops was just as good as it generally is. There was not a sense of hostility, and there was not a sense of betrayal, and there was not a sense of disagreement, although they knew that something had to give because they were talking about it, they were talking about it.

But clearly if you are out there in a nowhere place, you need having done something in order to revert from that or to change that position you will have to check with somebody, and that takes time. And that somebody may want to check with somebody else. But it was not as belligerent and hostile and as ugly as one might imagine that an intrusion would be. Actually, we continue to use the word incursion which is a little less hostile than intrusion. I mean incursion could also be a joyride, you know come and look and go, but intrusion seems more aggressive and more assertive. But frankly it is a good thing that there was not the same hostility.

If there had been some sense of national pride hurt, hostility, I would not have seen the kind of public reaction that we saw when we walked around

the streets and how young people stopped to take photographs. They certainly must have known that we are Indians or we looked Indians. I mean there were people with me who were dressed in very specific Indian clothes, so they would have known we are Indians, and their flag was there on the car. But the number of people who stopped to take pictures was amazing, incredible. If I did not know China well enough, and I was not reasonably well travelled, I might have thought that they are trying to take pictures to post in places which I would not like to see my picture there. But that was not it. There was genuine warmth that one saw in the streets, genuine warmth. I think if we have genuine warmth in the streets of Beijing, we have a good thing going. Let us develop it further. That is my intention.

I know that today there was a press conference and at that press conference some suggestion was made by the leading opposition party that we have let down India's strategic interest. Let me just tell you with all emphasis at my command that is nothing, nothing but unwarranted suspicion. It is not something that we will allow to happen, it is not something that happened. It was not something that was even remotely suggested by anybody to do a quid pro quo somehow to give a sense that everything was well. Absolutely untrue! If it was, we would not be in this feeling of comfort that we are. There was an offer from the opposition to stand with the Government in the matter of national interest. The national interest today is that the world should see India and China not in disagreement but in agreement, and an agreement on grounds that are reasonable, fair, equitable and transparent.

Q: I know you have answered this question many times on the trade deficit. But on this regional trading agreement, the joint visibility study was finalized in 2007. Is India reluctant to launch the formal round of negotiations because that is the only way we can address the trade deficit problem with China?

External Affairs Minister: I think it has to be examined by experts. If there is such a report available, I am sure the Commerce Ministry would examine it. We did not say this is something that must be completely off the agenda. All we said is that time may not be ripe for us to be able to do this because we need to prioritize and in sequence first begin addressing the trade imbalance issue and then we can come to this. Otherwise, the

acceptability among sectors and people who should really endorse something like this will be very difficult to get. Therefore, let us just take it step by step. Commerce Ministry will address the areas that they are addressing. We will flag it for them and hopefully we can then move forward.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. We have had about an hour's interaction and I am grateful to all of you to have come for this.



254. Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson on the visit of Chinese Premier to India, Prime Minister's visit to Japan and Thailand and External Affairs Minister to Saudi Arabia.

New Delhi, May 14, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon everyone and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. I have a few announcements to make following which, as is the usual practice, I will answer any questions that you may have on those announcements or on anything else. Let me start off with the announcements that I have to make.

His Excellency Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, will pay a state visit to India from May 19th to 21st of May 2013 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh.

The second announcement that I have to make is that the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh will pay official visits to Japan and Thailand – from May 27 to 29 to Japan, and to the Kingdom of Thailand from May 30 to 31.

The visit to Japan is at the invitation of the Japanese Prime Minister His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe. This is for the annual summit between the Prime Ministers of India and Japan which aims to enhance and strengthen the strategic and global partnership between the two countries. The Prime Ministers are expected to discuss bilateral, regional and global issues of

common interest. Prime Minister and Shrimati Kaur will also be received in audience by Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress of Japan.

The visit to Thailand is at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Thailand Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra. During the visit Prime Minister will, as is expected, discuss bilateral, regional and global issues. India-Thailand relations are characterized by shared bonds of civilisational contacts. Our partnership has been strengthened by close cooperation in political, security, economic and cultural contacts as well as coordination on regional issues.

The final announcement that I have to make relates to the visit of the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 24th to 27th May. This is at the invitation of his counterpart the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Saud Al-Faisal. That concludes the parts relating to the announcements. If any of you would like to know any additional information about these announcements, we could begin with that and then move to anything else.

Q: What is the purpose of Mr. Khurshid's visit to Saudi Arabia? Will there be discussions on energy issues also?

Official Spokesperson: The visit of the External Affairs Minister to Saudi Arabia is the first in five years. The last External Affairs Minister who visited Saudi Arabia was the then External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee in 2008. Subsequent to that, we had other high-level visits, that is, the Prime Minister's visit to Saudi Arabia in 2010 and the Defence Minister visited Saudi Arabia in 2012. But the Foreign Ministers have not met since 2008. So, this is in the context of their ongoing need to consult each other. There will be an entire range of issues discussed.

Energy in a generic sense yes, because we import 17 per cent of our oil from Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabian exports are approximately, I think, 33 billion dollars worth. And we have approximately nine billion dollars of exports to Saudi Arabia. So, we have a substantial economic relationship. In addition we have, by the latest estimates provided to us by Saudi Arabia, about 2.8 million Indian nationals resident in Saudi Arabia. Their welfare as you are aware has been a matter on which there has been some concern expressed.

Recently the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Mr. Vayalar Ravi had led an Indian delegation there consisting of the Minister of State Mr. E. Ahamed, and Mr. T.K.A. Nair from the Prime Minister's Office. The goal at that stage was to try and ensure that the Saudi policies which are largely of a domestic nature are implemented in a manner that takes into account the humanitarian needs of Indian nationals who are resident there. Since then Saudi Arabia has made some announcements, I understand on May 10, providing some sort of options for various expatriates including Indian nationals.

Of course the regional situation is bound to be discussed and that means issues related to the Middle East including issues relating to Syria as well as other matters of common interest to both countries regionally and internationally. That is about the expanse of the likely discussions between Prince Saud Al-Faisal and our External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid.

Q: Could you please elaborate on the visit to Japan, on the issues to be discussed and especially the nuclear energy thing?

Official Spokesperson: India and Japan have annual summit level meetings. We also have a strategic and global partnership. We both believe that given our common values and priorities as well as interests, relations can be even broader and deeper. Visits at senior levels are a cornerstone of our interaction. Prime Minister Singh has been interacting with various Japanese Prime Ministers. My understanding is that since 2006 he has interacted with six Japanese Prime Ministers. Prime Minister Abe was the first Japanese Prime Minister he interacted with in 2006 and then again in 2007 when Prime Minister Abe visited India.

As I mentioned, all issues of bilateral interest will be discussed and of course nuclear energy is an important aspect of our interactions. We do understand that there are issues in Japan domestically on this matter relating to safety of nuclear energy. So, we will take it at a pace that is dictated by our Japanese counterparts on this. But we will continue to pursue it because for us in India, nuclear energy is a major component of our energy mix.

As you know, economic cooperation is an important aspect of interaction between Japan and India. We recognize that Japanese Overseas

Development Assistance has played a unique role in India catalyzing advanced projects of exceptional nature in India. And there are several visionary projects of infrastructure development in India which we are cooperating and undertaking together with Japan. These include the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor, the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, and infrastructure development in Chennai-Bangalore corridor is also being looked at. So, we have a very broad range of economic issues that are likely to be discussed, and the two leaders will certainly discuss political and security cooperation also.

We will, at a certain stage nearer the visit, provide you a more detailed briefing on what are the likely outcomes of the visit, what are the deliverables and what is the programme. Right now we have a major visit coming up and so we focus on that. Certainly we will have briefing on the details related to the visit of the Prime Minister to Japan.

Q: Is there a defence component to the team that goes along with the Prime Minister? Will there be a Defence Attache or a defence team - since you did mention strategic issues – in the composition of the team that will go?

Official Spokesperson: The National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister will be on board with the Prime Minister. He certainly will be able to advise the Prime Minister on those elements that you have referred to. We also have a Defence Attache in Japan, but I think inputs from Delhi are available through the National Security Advisor.

Q: Can you please give us the details of the programme of Chinese Premier at Mumbai?

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and give you the details broadly and then of course Mumbai will be an important component. The Chinese Premier will meet the Prime Minister both in restricted meeting as well as delegation-level talks in Delhi. He will be given a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Also he will pay homage to the Father of the Nation at Rajghat. This is normal for a state visit. Prime Minister will host a banquet for him at the Hyderabad House on the 20th. External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid as well as the Leader of the Opposition will call on him. The Chinese Premier is also scheduled to call on the Vice-President of India, and he will meet the Chairperson of the UPA. As

regards his other activities in Delhi, I understand he will address an event which is hosted by the ICWA and FICCI on 21st May, 2013. This is in the morning and it is open to all journalists. So, we would welcome all of you to be present there.

In Mumbai, the Chinese Premier is scheduled to address a meeting involving all three business chambers. It is, I understand, with ASSOCHAM in the lead but also FICCI and CII being partners in this. This is the primary, main business-related event in Mumbai. But I also understand he is likely to visit the TCS in Mumbai, and will meet relatives of Dr. Kotnis while he is there in Maharashtra, and finally the Chief Minister of Maharashtra will call on him. This broadly is the range of activities for the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister here. We will put out a detailed advisory so that you could be informed of the opportunities available for the media.

Q: Could you give us the elements of the Chinese Premier's visit? What are the main issues on the agenda? Secondly, yesterday the Chinese Spokesperson said that the two countries should redouble their efforts on evolving something settling the boundary issue. What would be your response to that especially because the Joint Secretary was in Beijing this weekend and held talks with his Chinese counterpart?

Official Spokesperson: As regards the elements of the visit of the Chinese Premier in terms of substance, we will have a joint declaration. We are still working on other outcomes which we will try and make available to you perhaps just before arrival, given the time that has elapsed and the work that is in progress. So, this is work in progress. I would refer to those of you who have not read it, a detailed briefing provided by the External Affairs Minister. He did point out to some of the elements of the likely outcomes. Maybe if you could read that it would certainly refresh memories of what are likely to be the major areas of discussion.

That said, I will come to the issue that you have raised about the boundary question and how we see that. As all of you are aware, issues related to the India-China boundary have been discussed through the mechanism of the Special Representatives, and this is a specially constituted mechanism which deals with this. The two Special Representatives have

had 15 rounds of talks during which they have completed the first step and that is they have arrived at an agreement on political parameters and guiding principles for the resolution of the India-China boundary question. Now they are in discussions on the second phase which is related to the framework for a resolution of the boundary question. I think we have said it before but I would like to reaffirm that India is committed to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the boundary question through consultations.

Now coming to the specific issue that you have raised about how does India perceive, on the speed etc., I would like to mention quite clearly that it is our conviction that an early settlement of the boundary question will advance the basic interest of the two countries and we, therefore, feel it should be pursued as a strategic objective by both countries.

Q: Of late there have been reports in the media saying that a proposed multilateral military exercise involving the United States, Japan and India was to have taken place in the US and because of the so-called fear of China, India has decided not to get involved in that and go for only bilateral exercises with Japan and America separately. Would you like to throw some light on that?

Official Spokesperson: I too have seen, like you, these media reports. My understanding is that they have already been denied by those who were involved in this. There is a clarification which has been issued by the defence authorities who are in the forefront of these discussions clearly denying that there was any truth to this news report. I do not think I can add anything further to it because that is available on the record as having denied the veracity of this report.

Q: Returning to the border negotiations, the statement you read out is reaffirming India's position about the border as far as I know, perhaps I misheard it, but the impression coming from China leads to what I have been reading in the newspapers that it sounds like they are looking at a renewed push or a new ways to try and move this forward. Is that something that India has been feeling and something that India was responding to?

Official Spokesperson: We have thought of various ways on this and this goes back to quite some time. For example, one of the mechanisms

that we had thought of was while the border issue was to be resolved, we could try and clarify and confirm the Line of Actual Control on the India-China border pending the final settlement of the border question. That is a thing that we had placed on the table quite some time ago. If what you say is what is coming as your perception, that is available on the table for further discussions. But that said, I think I did not only reiterate what we have said previously but I have also said and I repeat it that it is our conviction that the early settlement of the boundary question will advance the basic interests of both the countries, and therefore we feel it should be pursued as a strategic objective by both. And I think this is pretty clear on what we would like to pursue as a strategic objective.

Now as far as I can recall we finished issues relating to the announcements I have made. If you would like to ask questions on any other issues, I would welcome that.

Q: Is it true that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has categorically denied an invite by would be Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Nawaz Sharif to visit Pakistan for his oath taking ceremony? Has he denied categorically?

Official Spokesperson: I think you should be informed that India and Pakistan have very well functioning, established diplomatic channels. Through those diplomatic channels, my understanding is that the Prime Minister did call up Mr. Nawaz Sharif and in the course of that call he did extend his congratulations on the victory of Mr. Sharif. He also extended an invitation for Mr. Sharif to visit India at a mutually convenient time. During the course of that conversation also Mr. Sharif extended a similar invitation to the Prime Minister.

On the diplomatic agenda, these are the two issues that I am aware of following which the Prime Minister then did write to Mr. Nawaz Sharif, and a copy of that letter in its entirety has been made available to you. Other than that, on the diplomatic agenda, no other specific proposal has been received or even heard of except through of course the mechanisms that many of you represent and have been asking since this morning. So, I hope I have clarified to you that while all of you do an excellent job I think on this issue there seems to be a disconnect between what has been put out through diplomatic channels in a very transparent manner by us as well as by Mr. Nawaz Sharif in terms that he had invited the Prime Minister. These are both requests and invitations at a time

which is mutually convenient. Other than that I do not see or have heard of a specific proposal for a specific visit for a specific time available through diplomatic channels.

Q: Not taking part in oath ceremony apart, has the Prime Minister got any proposal to visit Pakistan in the near future? Any timeframe?

Official Spokesperson: I think you are aware that Prime Minister has previously said that he would like to visit Pakistan. This is a stated position. At this stage there is no specific proposal on the table of a specific request for a specific occasion.

Q: ...(Inaudible)

...**Official Spokesperson:** If you say ifs and buts, if ifs and buts were valid, then my point is that I do not think I have ever responded to and I do not want to respond to ifs and buts.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: Let us wait for specific proposals on this. As I said, we are in direct contact through diplomatic channels. These diplomatic channels have functioned very well. You would understand during the recent crisis there have been several diplomatic contacts between senior officials of the Pakistani government and our government to try and ameliorate the conditions which stemmed from the tragic events when an Indian prisoner was killed there, and the tragic death in a regrettable incident of a Pakistani prisoner in India. These mechanisms have worked very well and I would like to assure you that should that happen, it will be through these mechanisms and we will certainly share with you, as we have shared with you the letter of Prime Minister to Mr. Nawaz Sharif.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: There was an old proposal to exchange maps on each country's perception of LAC. Do you think there is any forward movement on this issue?

Official Spokesperson: You are right that this was an Indian proposal made quite some time ago to clarify and confirm the LAC in the India-China border areas pending the final settlement. You are also aware that

this proposal could not move forward. If there are attempts to move that forward, we stand ready on that because this was our proposal at that stage.

Thank you very much



255. Media Briefing on the Visit of Chinese Premier to India.

New Delhi, May 18, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Thank you very much for your patience and staying back for this briefing on the visit of Premier Li Keqiang to India.

As we have announced previously, Premier Li Keqiang has decided to make India the first stop of the first foreign tour that he is embarking upon. We think very highly of this gesture because it is our view that high-level political exchanges between our two countries are an important aspect and vehicle for our expanded cooperation. The object of such visits and meetings is to enhance trust and understanding between our two governments and our peoples as well as to exhibit sensitivity to each other's concerns.

As far as China is concerned, it is a very important country and India places priority to our relations with China. We are both ancient civilizations, the most populous countries in the world, and our economies are growing rapidly. We feel that the relationship between India and China is one of the most important in the 21st century. We need to carefully nurture our growing partnership which is significant not only in the bilateral dimension but also increasingly has a global nature.

We have shared with you details of the Premier's visit but I will just add some elements to what we have shared before. He is arriving tomorrow at 3:20 p.m. following which in the evening there is a restricted meeting with the Prime Minister. Subsequently Prime Minister is hosting a dinner for the Chinese Premier. On the next day, is the formal reception and welcome at the Rashtrapati Bhavan which is at 9 o'clock in the morning.

It is followed by the usual homage that visiting dignitaries pay to the Father of the Nation, and that is at 9:30 at Rajghat.

It is normal for a state visit that the External Affairs Minister usually is amongst the first to call on the visiting dignitary, and the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid will call on the visiting dignitary at 10:15 a.m. After that at 11:30 there will be delegation-level talks at the Hyderabad House, following which we will have some agreements to be signed and these will be signed at 12:30 p.m. There is also an event in terms of media statements by the two leaders. And then Prime Minister will host a banquet lunch for the visiting dignitary and his delegation and other important persons. In the afternoon, again in accordance with the norms of state visits, the Leader of Opposition will call on the visiting dignitary. He will also have a meeting with the Chairperson of the UPA and will call on the Vice-President of India.

On 21st May, the visiting dignitary will address university students at a function organised by the ICWA along with other collaborators. This is at 10:30 at the Taj Palace Hotel. I understand that we have indicated to all of you the process by which you can attend that function if you so desire. Subsequent to that he will call on the President of India at 12 noon at Rashtrapati Bhavan, and then depart for Mumbai.

In Mumbai he would be visiting the Tata Consultancy Services around 3:30 p.m. and will meet the relatives of Dr. Kotnis at where the visiting dignitary is staying and that is Hotel Tajmahal at about 5:45 p.m. Subsequent to that the Chief Minister of Maharashtra will call on him. And at 7 o'clock, he will meet Chief Executives of leading Indian business houses at a function, and dinner which is being arranged by the ASSOCHAM, CII, FICCI, the three apex chambers of commerce. The next day, that is the 22nd, the Premier will depart.

I think this is the expanse of our interactions. Subsequent to this briefing we will put these details out in the public domain and these will be available on our website along with clear instructions of what are the media opportunities, photo opportunities, etc. All those of you who have PIB cards are welcome for these interactions or events.

Having given you the process, I now have with me Mr. Gautam Bambawale, Joint Secretary (East Asia) who also handles China. He is

well-known to all of you. Any of you would like to ask him any questions on any of the substantive issues, you are welcome to do so.

Q: China has proposed a border defence cooperation agreement with India. Any forward movement on that?

Joint Secretary (East Asia) (Shri Gautam Bambawale): That is a subject which is being discussed between the two governments and it will continue to be discussed including during this visit. So, we will have to wait and see.

Q: I understand that the border defence cooperation agreement has proposed that the troop levels should be frozen at the border, and it aims to curb the military plans that we have. What are our views on that?

Joint Secretary (East Asia): This is an intergovernmental agreement which is currently being negotiated. So, obviously I cannot say anything about it because this is a process which is on. Whenever the agreement is finalized and when it is signed, you will get to know the details of the agreement. Right now I cannot say anything because it is a work in progress. We are actually negotiating it with the Chinese and they are negotiating it with us. So, I think I will have to say just say these words and stop there.

Q: This meeting in Mu mbai with CEOs, are there any agreements or anything that are likely to be signed? Can you just give us some kind of a feel as to who all would be present at that meeting?

Joint Secretary (East Asia): You are right. There is the standard meeting that our chambers of commerce hold for any visiting dignitary, any Prime Minister or President from any country. This one is being done in Mumbai. I think the Chinese side thought that they should do the economic meeting in Mumbai. I am afraid I do not know who will be attending from our side from the chambers of commerce and industry. But there are some commercial agreements which are to be signed between firms and business entities of the two sides. I believe that is to be done before this particular event at 7 o'clock in Mumbai starts. I would refer you to ASSOCHAM which is the lead organization for this particular meeting. They will have greater details of the agreements and the contracts which are to be signed between Indian and Chinese companies.

Q: I just wanted to ask if the coincidence in New Delhi of the Chinese Prime Minister and the President of Afghanistan will give any particular opportunity to some contact or discussion on the 20th of May.

Official Spokesperson: Maybe I will just answer you on the process. I think you did not listen to my briefing related to Afghanistan. I said that the Afghan President's interactions here start on the 21st in the evening.

Joint Secretary (East Asia): On the substance, I would only like to draw your attention to the fact that India and China have in various ways been discussing the future of Afghanistan as we move forward. We have done this bilaterally. I think all of you know that our Additional Secretary for Afghanistan visited Beijing a few weeks ago and had a first round of bilateral discussions with the Chinese. It has also been discussed at the NSA's level trilaterally in Russia. So, Russia, China and India have been discussing this subject with the idea of giving all support to the Afghan Government as we make this transition in 2014.

Q: I have seen this figure of 35 billion in investments from China towards infrastructure in India. Is that an accurate figure?

Joint Secretary (East Asia): Actually the figure is \$55 billion. This is the amount of projects contracting the Chinese companies have in India. It is the amount of projects that are either completed or in the pipeline in India. So, it is not investment in terms of foreign direct investment. It is not in terms of setting up factories or units here. It is projects which Chinese companies are doing in India including in many sectors as well as the infrastructure sector.

Q: Given the fact that we are still not looking at a possibility of exchanging maps on the eastern and western sectors, the border defence cooperation is still a work in progress, what are the chances that a recurrence like Ladakh incident might actually impact bilateral relations again? How do you intend to flag it off in the meeting? And is there also a feeling that because the telecom sector issues for Chinese companies have not been sorted out yet completely, they might be holding it as far as opening up the Indian exports in pharmaceutical and IT-enabled services are concerned?

Joint Secretary (East Asia): Let me answer the first question first and then come to the second question on telecom.

What is going to be discussed between the two Prime Ministers is something that even I am not aware of. Everything is on the table when two Prime Ministers of any two countries meet, and definitely that is true even of the Prime Ministers of India and China. Having said that, I think the two Prime Ministers would talk about this subject since it has been a recent occurrence. But I do not want to try to predict what is going to happen. I will see what comes out of their meeting. Of course all of you will be briefed on it by our Joint Secretary (External Publicity) after the meetings of the Prime Ministers have taken place. So, let us see! It is still something that we will look forward to as we move ahead. We will be able to brief you about the outcomes of what the Prime Minister has discussed only after the meeting has taken place. And we will do that as soon as possible after the meeting is over on Monday the 20th of May.

Can you just repeat what was the gist of your question on telecom?

Q: Since we still have issues as far as the Chinese entry into the telecom sector is concerned, Huawei and the other companies, is there a feeling that they might be holding up increased exports of India in pharmaceuticals and IT-enabled services?

Joint Secretary (East Asia): I think we will continue to press on market access in China for Indian companies, whether it is in the pharmaceuticals sector, whether it is in the IT sector. We will continue to press for that and we hope to see results very soon. In fact I can even mention that the reason that the Chinese Premier is visiting Tata Consultancy Services in Mumbai is because TCS has had some success in penetrating the Chinese market especially over the last two, three years. They have adjusted their business model. They have a special business model for China which is different from what it is for the western countries including the United States. And I think they have been successful in getting contracts in China. That is one of the reasons he is visiting TCS. But I am sure TCS themselves will be in a position to explain better to you what their model in China is.

Q: Sir, I just want to know if India's cooperation with Southeast Asian countries, especially Vietnam and Taiwan, will figure in the talks between the two Prime Ministers.

Joint Secretary (East Asia): As I said, I really cannot predict what will figure and what will not figure. But every subject under the sun is on the table. The two Prime Ministers are free to talk about anything that they would like. Whether it is actually discussed, we will brief you after the talks are over on Monday.

Q: Sir, you said that in Mumbai the Chinese Premier will have time to meet all the chief executives and senior members of the business community. Will he have time to meet survivors of 26/11 or members of the families of people who have died, since he is also going to be at that hotel? And since there is precedence with this, I think other senior leaders have done that in the past, is this something India suggested to the Chinese?

Official Spokesperson: We have explained to you the entire expanse of his programme here. These are matters which are discussed in advance between the two sides and worked out based on mutual agreement. We have explained to you what those are. If you have any suggestions to make in this regard, I would suggest you make them through appropriate channels either through the Chinese Mission or through our Protocol. What we are providing to you is what is the agreed programme here.

Q:...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I have already explained to you and we will put it out in the public domain what is his programme here.

Q: Is India raising the issue of Chinese activity in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir? In the same context, is Sakshgam on the table?

Joint Secretary (East Asia): I can only repeat what I have said earlier that everything is on the table and what will be discussed I cannot predict, the Prime Ministers of the two countries will decide. We will brief you after the event is over, after the meetings are over, you can be sure of that. We will do an early briefing as I was mentioning, and I hope that the Joint Secretary (External Publicity) will organise something on Monday itself.

Official Spokesperson: I think we are now getting into a repetition of questions but I will permit one last question on this.

Q: You said everything will be on the table. Will Chinese side raise the Dalai Lama and so-called anti-China activities, what do you think? What will be India's response if they raise it?

Joint Secretary (East Asia): I am afraid I have to repeat what I said. It is all on the table. Whether it is discussed or not we will tell you after the meeting is over between the two Prime Ministers.

Official Spokesperson: I think it bears out my contention that we are repeating the questions and answers. Our suggestion is that once the meeting is over we will have a briefing for all of you and we will provide you information of what were the issues that were discussed. It is premature on our part to pre-empt what the Prime Ministers will discuss. And as he said, everything is available on the table, nothing is off the table.

With that takeaway, may I thank you all for being here?

Thank you very much



256. Media Statements by Prime Minister of India and Chinese Premier in New Delhi.

New Delhi, May 20, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Honourable dignitaries, ladies and gentlemen, and friends from the media, we will have the next event which is the media statements. I would request the Prime Minister of India to make his media statement.

Prime Minister of India (Dr. Manmohan Singh): Your Excellency Premier Li and ladies and gentlemen of the media: It is an honour for me to welcome Premier Li on his first official visit to India. It has been an immense pleasure to get to know him personally. I sincerely appreciate his reaching out to me on his first day in office and his choosing India as his first foreign destination as Premier.

Starting yesterday evening, Premier Li and I have had wide-ranging and candid discussions covering all matters of mutual interest and concern.

I am delighted that there are so many areas of convergence between us and on which there is a great deal of meeting of minds. Most importantly, we agreed that the relationship between our two countries is of growing significance and essential for our peaceful development and sustained economic growth, as well as for stability and prosperity in our region and the world.

India and China are two civilizational neighbours and have lived in peace through the ages. We have had our differences in more recent times, but over the last 25 years we have steadily built a mutually beneficial relationship. The basis for continued growth and expansion of our ties is peace and tranquility on our borders. While seeking an early resolution of the boundary question, Premier Li and I have agreed that this must continue to be preserved.

We also took stock of lessons learnt from the recent incident in the Western Sector, when existing mechanisms proved their worth. We tasked our Special Representatives to consider further measures that may be needed to maintain peace and tranquility along the border. We agreed that our Special Representatives will meet soon to continue discussions, seeking early agreement on a framework for a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable boundary settlement.

I also reiterated to Premier Li India's concerns about the effects on lower riparians of activities in the upper reaches of our shared rivers. It would be useful for the mandate of our Expert Level Mechanism to be expanded to include information sharing on upstream development projects on these rivers. I am glad that we have agreed to expand cooperation on trans-border rivers. It would also be useful for India and China to collaborate on a better understanding of the stresses on our shared Himalayan ecosystem.

I shared with Premier Li my view that the rise of China and India is good for the world and that the world has enough space to accommodate the growth aspirations of both our peoples. To make this a reality, it is important to build understanding between our two peoples. We agreed that both sides must work to strengthen greater trust and confidence, which in turn will permit much larger cooperation.

Economic cooperation constitutes a very important part of our relationship and the growth potential of our two economies can provide the engine

for greater cooperation. There are many ongoing areas of cooperation that we will carry forward as outlined in the Joint Statement. I conveyed to Premier Li our concerns about the trade deficit and sought increased market access to China for our exports and investments. I also invited increased Chinese involvement in the vast opportunities in our infrastructure and manufacturing sectors.

The rapid development of our economies has opened up new opportunities for economic cooperation bilaterally in our region and globally, which our Strategic Economic Dialogue will identify and explore. We have also discussed the possibility of infrastructure development to link India's Northeastern region with Bangladesh, Myanmar, China and other countries in the Southeast Asian region.

Premier Li and I also used the opportunity to review the rapidly evolving global political and economic situation and resolved to strengthen our strategic communication and dialogue on these issues. We also agreed that we have a shared interest in an open multilateral trading system and in combating protectionism.

Before I conclude, let me say once again what a pleasure it has been to welcome Premier Li amongst us. I am sure that his leadership will go a long way in strengthening the relationship between our two countries and extending it to new frontiers. I look forward to seeing him again very soon and I have also accepted his gracious invitation to visit China at the earliest opportunity.

I thank you

Official Spokesperson: I now request the Premier of China to make his media remarks.

Premier of China (Mr. Li Keqiang): Your Excellency Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, ladies and gentlemen, friends of the press: It is my great pleasure in joining the Prime Minister to meet with our friends from the press and to inform you as soon as possible the consensus and the outcomes the two sides have arrived.

Both last night and this morning, together with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and other officials of the Indian Government, we have had multiple, friendly, in-depth and candid discussions. The most important outcome

of these discussions is that the leaders of the two countries have reached strategic consensus and deepened our strategic trust.

Both sides believe that each country should see the other's development as a major opportunity for itself. China and India have a combined population that exceeds one-third of humanity. Amicable relations between China and India will be a positive thing for Asia, and a common development of China and Asia will provide new engines for the world economy.

Since we are strategic partners and we are good friends that can speak to each other with candour, so we do not deny that there are some problems between the two sides. Both sides believe that with regard to the boundary question, one that is left over by history, the two sides have over time established the principles for settling this question. And in the meantime we have worked together to maintain tranquility and peace in the border areas. Both sides believe that we need to improve various border-related mechanisms that we have to put into place and make them more efficient, and we need to appropriately manage and resolve our differences.

With regard to Indian concerns about transborder rivers, in recent years we have shared hydrological information with the Indian side bearing in mind the overall interests of our relations and acting in a humanitarian spirit. And we stand ready to step up communication with the Indian side with regard to the development of water resources and environmental protection.

China and India are friendly neighbours. So, neither side will do anything that damages the interests of the other side without getting benefit himself. The two sides have discussed these issues very candidly and we can inform the content of discussions to the press. That is because we have strategic consensus on these issues. And our two time-honoured nations have the wisdom to resolve these issues and overcome our differences.

Both the Prime Minister and I believe that there are far more shared interests between China and India than the differences that we have, and both sides need to draw wisdom from our long history and learn from our respective vast experiences. We need to confront the various issues with a broad mind and conduct dialogue on these issues in a

mature and sensible way. We need to appropriately handle our cooperation by maintaining peace and tranquility in the border areas and on the transborder river issues.

The strategic consensus that we have arrived at creates the condition for expanding shared interests between China and India, and it also lays down the foundation for our two countries to seize the opportunities and modernize our two large developing countries.

China and India have a combined population of 2.5 billion. Together we account for over one-third of the world's population. Amicable relations, deeper cooperation and common development between China and India are a true blessing for Asia and the world at large. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated that the world is big enough to accommodate the growth aspirations of both China and India. I might add that without the common development of China and India, Asia won't become strong and the world won't become a better place.

By conducting effective and a sincere dialogue, the Prime Minister and I have reached the abovementioned consensus. These also represent the joint views of our two governments and our two peoples. We believe by arriving at these consensus we have made a big stride forward in our relationship and that there are unprecedented and enormous opportunities for opening a new chapter in China-India relations.

On the basis of the consensus, this time the two Governments during my visit have reached a joint statement that covers five major areas. On the basis of strategic mutual trust the two sides have reached agreement on a series of cooperation agreements that cover a multiple range of areas. These will help to boost all-round cooperation between China and India, the world's two largest developing countries. And just now the Prime Minister, myself, government officials from both sides, and the press, friends of the press, have witnessed the signing of these agreements. These are just the seeds that we sow today but in the near future they will blossom into towering trees laden with rich fruits.

Secondly, the two sides will discuss and explore ways to achieve trade and investment liberalization and facilitation and to work out a practical roadmap for arriving at a dynamic balance in our trading relationship. The two sides will also promote cooperation in infrastructure and industrial

zones so that we can connect and complement the two largest developing markets of China and India.

Thirdly, the two sides have agreed to jointly explore the establishment of a BCIM economic corridor, and also to strengthen border trade between us. This way we will be able to increase connectivity between East Asia and South Asia.

Both between our two time-honoured civilizations and in the present day context we need to increase people-to-people exchanges in the fields of tourism, culture, youth affairs and nongovernmental ties so as to further deepen mutual understanding between our two peoples. And number five, the two sides have agreed to increase coordination and communication on major international and regional issues. Both sides would like to see the other to play a more important and constructive role in international affairs in the United Nations including in its Security Council.

It is fair to say that during this trip the two sides have arrived at multiple significant outcomes that can help to both deepen our strategic mutual trust and practical cooperation between the two sides. And that places us in a very favourable position for creating positive areas in Asian cooperation and in proving to be new engines for the world economy.

As I said to the press this morning, I have made India the first stop of my first overseas trip as the Premier of China. This is because India is an important neighbour for China. This is because India is one of the largest developing countries in the world with a population comparable to China's. This is also because I have my own good sentiments towards the people of India. Twenty-seven years ago I spent more than a week in this country as the leader of China's youth organization, and during that trip the seeds of friendship have been sown in my own heart.

In our history, our two civilizations have had uninterrupted and in-depth exchanges. Today facing the future we see enormous potential for the common development of both countries. We hope that the seeds we sow today in spring will be harvested in autumn and that there will be more bountiful fruits to show. And in that context we look forward to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to China later this year so that together we can harvest the outcomes of cooperation and of friendship between our two countries. Thank you.

And I want to thank all of the friends from the press for your hard work and I hope you will join us in saluting the fruits of cooperation between China and India.

Official Spokesperson: With that we come to the end of this event.



257. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson and Indian Ambassador to China on Chinese Premier's ongoing visit to India.

New Delhi, May 20, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. As you know, we have just had the delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Singh and Premier Li. I have here with me Ambassador Jaishankar who is our Ambassador in China. Along with him is Mr. Gautam Bambawale, Joint Secretary (East Asia), who also looks after China at headquarters. What we will try and do is to give you in a summarized form what we see as the importance of the visit.

You have with you a large number of documents which are available. Let me try and recall for you what they are. You have with you eight agreements. We have outlined what these agreements are. If any of you would like any clarifications on them, we will provide them. You also have with you a very substantive, productive and broad-ranging joint statement which gives you an understanding of the broad areas of convergence between India and China. Now let me try and summarise for you the visit before I ask Ambassador Jaishankar to speak a little bit more.

As you are aware, this is the first visit of Premier Li outside China. Therefore, we have repeatedly emphasized that for us this is a very important visit both in terms of gestures but also more importantly in terms of substance. When we mean substance we want you to have a look at the Joint Statement, the various areas – we will run through some of them with you – as well as the agreements which came out of the

visit. It was also for us a very productive visit, productive again in terms of forward-looking areas that how we see the relationship growing. And finally you have yourselves seen the personal chemistry between Premier Li and Prime Minister Singh.

So, if I may summarise for us it has been two very very useful, productive, important, substantive days. We hope that the takeaway that all of you leave with from here is what we are trying to convey to you in terms of this visit.

I will now request Ambassador Jaishankar to speak to you for a few minutes because he has been involved with this visit since its inception to date, and he will give you a flavour of what went into it, what were the issues that were discussed, before we open the floor for questions. Ambassador Jaishankar!

Indian Ambassador to China (Dr. S. Jaishankar): Thank you, Akbar.

At the risk of some repetition, let me start really with what Akbar said, which is: it is a significant visit, it is a substantive visit, it is a productive visit, and he made the chemistry point.

Now why is it significant? I think an India-China visit at the level of a Premier is by definition a very significant visit. The fact that you have a Premier-level visit in India and China itself is a very significant event. The fact that it is the first stop of Premier Li's first visit abroad adds to the significance. And he himself made the point that he had given it some thought before deciding on India. He actually said that this underlined that India was a priority today in Chinese foreign policy.

Now, the substantive part. I think as Akbar mentioned, there were wide-ranging talks, candid. All matters were discussed. And it took place at a time when actually the relationship is expanding in many ways, cooperation is growing. There are issues but on the whole the view was that our shared interests are more than our differences. Regional and global issues also were discussed but not at the same length as bilateral ones.

In terms of the outcomes, the Joint Statement sort of reflects that and the agreements reflect it very accurately. Premier Li is a very outgoing person, very warm. He recalled his 1986 visit to India, quite nostalgic about it. So, that really in many ways sort of set the atmosphere.

On the bilateral side, I think the first big point was the discussions focused on the need to build greater trust. Obviously peace and tranquility issues came up because of recent happenings. I think the main point made from our side was that peace and tranquility on the border is the foundation of our relationship. Where really the discussions led to was that the Special Representatives would meet, they would discuss and consider further measures on how to strengthen peace and tranquility.

Economic issues took up a lot of time in the discussion. Obviously trade including the trade deficit, market access issues came up at some length. What we saw was that the Chinese Premier suggested very practical measures on how to deal with this. I would say, in the last few years certainly this was the most positive and most practical response that we have got at the high level from the Chinese side. Again some of it was in evidence in the agreements which were signed in terms of greater market access.

The second aspect of economic cooperation was investment. Really both sides saw investment as providing part of the solution to trade problems, that if there was more investment it would in a sense facilitate trade between the two countries, it would create more employment, it would open up new areas. I think projects particularly in the infrastructure sector were very positively looked at.

There was some discussion on energy cooperation, all forms of energy cooperation. There was a certain amount of interest in taking that forward. You saw from the agreements that some best practices in urbanization, in water usage were discussed and agreed upon. I should add here that the India-China CEOs' forum had its first meeting today. This was really the economic basket.

Water, in this case river, came up for discussion, trans-border rivers. I would really characterize the Chinese response as sympathetic. I think they recognize that we have concerns. They pointed out that they were responsible, that they would not do something which would damage our interests. And essentially what we agreed upon was that we would strengthen our cooperation based on our existing mechanism and now we have to work further on that.

There was some discussion on people-to-people relations. We signed an agreement on twinning cities. We have, as you know, other

cooperation on teaching Chinese language, on tourism. We are working on liberalizing the visa system right now.

If I were to sum it up on the bilateral side, I would say it was a lot potential, new areas to be explored. I think a point made was that if India and China are both growing, surely our relationship should be growing at least as fast as we are each growing. I think that was fairly optimistic, fairly visionary in a way.

On the bilateral side I think the follow-up which we are looking at is that Raksha Mantri, Defence Minister, would be going to China soon. The dates would be announced when we are ready. NSA Mr. Menon would also be going to China as Special Representative to meet his counterpart. There will be a meeting of the Strategic Economic Dialogue which is headed on our side by Mr. Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, and at some point of time in the near future a meeting of our Commerce Ministers which is the Joint Economic Group. So, these would all now take place now that the Premier's visit is over.

Apart from that, on the regional, global issues I would just make three very quick points. Yesterday at dinner, global economy was discussed at some length. Again if I were to sum it up, it would be really that developing nations like India and China have a shared interest in a more open economy, in a less protectionist economy.

Then regional trade and connectivity came up for discussion. This included issues like the RCEP and the RTA, the bilateral FTA, which as many of you would be aware is a goal that we are looking at when conditions are right.

There was an agreement that we would study economic corridor of BCIM countries which of course would also now require us to consult Bangladesh and Myanmar before that goes forward. There was some discussion today on Afghanistan, and I think the Afghanistan position is very accurately captured by the Joint Statement paragraph.

I think on my side that is really what I have.

Official Spokesperson: With that we will then throw the floor open for questions. We will take about ten or twelve questions because Dr. Jaishankar has another appointment.

Q: Sir, in the backdrop in which the Chinese Premier has come here, was there any specific assurance on the border issue? Of and on there are assurances from the Chinese side but it does not work. What was new in this meeting?

Ambassador to China: First of all what was new was that it was a visit, it was coming after an incident which was very unusual. I think basically where the discussions headed was that we need to look into how this happened and what are the lessons to be learnt. That is where, as I pointed out, the understanding was that we would ask the Special Representatives to really lead that effort and they will look into the mechanisms, how they work, what were the shortcomings, how this happened. And if they have suggestions to make, I think both governments will look at it.

Q: Sir, was the border defence cooperation agreement discussed or how to go forward on it?

Ambassador to China: No.

Q: Did we ever ask them why this incident happened in Ladakh? It was not just a regular incursion. As you yourself said, it was an unusual incident and we still do not seem to have figured out why this happened in the first place.

Ambassador to China: During this visit obviously this issue was discussed at some length. You all heard the Prime Minister's media statement. If you look at the Joint Statement, we underlined the importance of peace and tranquility. The fact is that the boundary issue is a complicated issue. The agreement between the leaders was that this needed detailed examination. And that is really what they left, they charged the Special Representatives with that.

Q: Was there any specific discussion on building greater military-to-military trust and in maritime domain?

Ambassador to China: Yes, there was a certain amount of discussion particularly today on more defence cooperation and defence exchanges including maritime. The understanding was that we would work on this so that by the time Raksha Mantri's visit takes place we would be in a position to really show that this has gone forward.

Official Spokesperson: Manish, I would also refer you to paragraphs 22 and 23 of the Joint Statement. Paragraph 23 deals specifically with enhanced interaction in the military field, and paragraph 22 deals with bilateral cooperation on maritime security.

Q: Can you just talk about BDCA the draft of which was given by China to India on 4th of March? How do you look at this document? Have we given them our own counter suggestions? And you said that this issue did not come up before the two Premiers? Isn't it rather surprising, or was it by design?

Ambassador to China: The Chinese gave us their draft on the 4th of March. I think we gave them our draft on the 10th May. Obviously now we will be discussing it with the Chinese. Since our draft is pending their consideration, to me it is not at all surprising the matter did not come up because it is still something on which we need to engage them in detailed discussions.

Q: Dr. Jaishankar, the border talks have been going on since Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in December 1988. You had a Joint Working Group and then SRs. One hears from academic circles something to the effect that at one point of time the Chinese have suggested that the existing Line of Control be treated as a permanent border. Is there any truth to that?

Ambassador to China: I am here just to brief you on a visit and whatever happened on a visit, not on what academics might tell you about a negotiation where they were not actually in the room. So, I think I do not want to get into what happened, or did not happen, or could have happened, or speculated to have happened. In terms of the visit this was not an issue.

Q: There is a reference to bilateral nuclear cooperation in the Joint Statement. What will be the shape of this nuclear cooperation, and did China agree to India's demand for a membership to various nuclear regimes?

Ambassador to China: We have had bilateral civil nuclear cooperation with China in the past, not in the recent past but in the past. Today the issue came up again. And you must bear in mind that we are today probably the two countries who have the largest planned civil nuclear

energy programme. So, it makes great sense for us to exchange views and have other exchanges. So, I think in the meeting today the two Prime Ministers decided that this was an area that we should be doing more. The NSG issue did not specifically come up because I think that is still being worked at at another level.

Q: Dr. Jaishankar, you said that the talks you are trying to escalate and speed up also bilateral relations and bring them up to scale of the size of the two countries. You spoke about the visit of the Defence Minister, the NSA, Montek Singh Ahluwalia. Is there a timeframe that was discussed given the larger intention of speeding up everything including also for the border talks and the future meetings of the Special Representatives?

Ambassador to China: It was decided that the Special Representatives would meet soon. Here by talking soon, I am not talking months I am talking weeks. But I would hesitate to give you a date because I think they have not worked out a date yet.

Q: ... (Inaudible)...

Ambassador to China: Yes. So, I am telling you that they are meeting soon.

Q: Ambassador Jaishankar, I am a little confused, why does our Prime Minister think that the existing mechanism for peace and tranquility on the border is working while the Chinese Premier says there are deficiencies, it needs to be improved?

Ambassador to China: I do not think your characterization is accurate. Let me tell you the words I heard, and I had the advantage of being in the room. The words I heard were that, I mean they discussed this issue. And where they left it was, if there were shortcomings, if things did not happen as promptly as they should have, as effectively they should have, then definitely the whole matter is worth a very serious look. And then if they both agree that it is worth a serious look, then the logical people to look at it are the SRs. So, that is how that conversation went. I do not think the way you put it that one felt this way and one felt that way. I think there was an understanding on this.

Q: Did the Chinese side express any concern or dismay about the activities of the Tibetan refugees, particularly the Dalai Lama in India? And what was our response?

Ambassador to China: The matter came up, not at any great length, and our response was that the Tibetans in India do not conduct political activities from Indian soil, and we stand by that position.

Q: Sir, Premier Li kept referring to the strategic consensus that has been reached between India and China. Would you please elaborate what the strategic consensus is?

Ambassador to China: The way he used that term to the best of my understanding is that we have agreed on big and basic issues on how to take our relations forward. When you use the adjective strategic, it both indicates in a sense the long-term nature of the understandings between us and the enormity of the implications of what it is that we were discussing.

Q: Because we know that China proposed a new border defence cooperation agreement, and this time we are looking forward to the two sides to sign this agreement, but this time it does not happen. So, what is India's concern?

Ambassador to China: I have answered that. This is an ongoing negotiation. The Chinese have given us their proposal. We have given them our proposal. We gave them our proposal just a few days ago. The Chinese need a few days to study it like we took time to study this. So, it is something which will be discussed between us and only then you will see the result.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction. I do understand there were several of you who would like to ask another twenty-five questions but unfortunately we do not have the time.

Thank you



258. Joint Statement on the State Visit of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang to India.

New Delhi, May 20, 2013.

1. At the invitation of H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, is on a State visit to India from 19 to 22 May 2013. Premier Li held talks with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and will call on H.E. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, President of India. The leaders of the two countries had an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations and regional and international issues of mutual interest in a sincere and cordial atmosphere and reached broad consensus.
2. The two sides reviewed with satisfaction the comprehensive and rapid progress of India-China relations in the 21st century. Over the years, India and China have evolved an effective model of friendly coexistence and common development, which can be an example for relations between big, neighboring countries. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to abide by the principles and consensus arrived at by leaders of the two countries over the years concerning the development of India - China relations, and to further consolidate the Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and mutual sensitivities for each other concerns and aspirations.
3. India and China have a historic opportunity for economic and social development and the realization of this goal will advance peace and prosperity in Asia and the world at large. The two sides welcome each other's peaceful development and regard it as a mutually reinforcing process. There is enough space in the world for the development of India and China, and the world needs the common development of both countries. As the two largest developing countries in the world, the relationship between India and China transcends bilateral scope and has acquired regional, global and strategic significance. Both countries view each other as partners for mutual benefit and not as rivals or competitors.

4. The two sides hold that the right of each country to choose its own path of social, economic and political development in which fundamental human rights and the rule of law are given their due place, should be respected. The two sides will not allow their territories to be used for activities against the other. The two sides are committed to taking a positive view of and support each other's friendship with other countries.
5. Recognizing the growing bilateral relationship and the increasing global importance of both India and China, the two sides agreed to a regular exchange of visits between the Heads of State/ Government of the two countries. The leaders of the two countries will also continue to meet on the sidelines of important multi-lateral forums.
6. The two sides attached great importance to the active role of the Strategic Economic Dialogue in promoting macro-economic policy coordination and pragmatic cooperation in various fields between the two countries and expressed satisfaction over the progress made in the meetings of the Dialogue. They agreed to further strengthen cooperation in the areas of energy and environmental conservation, new and renewable energy and high-technology. The two sides agreed to enhance cooperation in the railway sector including heavy haulage and station development.
7. Considering the rapid changes in the world economic situation, the two sides tasked the Strategic Economic Dialogue mechanism to consider issues of macro-economic coordination, and to suggest possible responses by the two countries. Both countries share a common interest in preventing protectionism and in an open multilateral trading system. The two sides agreed to continue pushing forward the Doha Development Round, consider the potential for a bilateral Regional Trade Arrangement and review the state of negotiations on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).
8. The first meeting of the India - China CEO's Forum was held during Premier Li Keqiang's visit to India. The Prime Ministers of both countries look forward to the recommendations of the Forum to further enhance bilateral trade and investment.

9. While striving to realize the trade turnover target of US\$ 100 billion by 2015, the two countries agreed to take measures to address the issue of the trade imbalance. These include cooperation on pharmaceutical supervision including registration, stronger links between Chinese enterprises and Indian IT industry, and completion of phytosanitary negotiations on agro-products. The Indian side welcomed Chinese enterprises to invest in India and participate in India's infrastructure development. Project contracting cooperation between the businesses of the two countries would be enhanced.
10. The two sides expressed willingness to carry out cooperation on establishing industrial zones so as to provide platforms for cluster-type development of enterprises of the two countries.
11. The two sides agreed to strengthen cooperation between their financial regulators, and support their banking institutions in setting up representative offices, branches or subsidiaries, and carrying out business activities subject to relevant laws and regulations. The two sides agree to promote cooperation between their financial institutions to provide funding for bilateral economic cooperation projects.
12. The two sides agreed to focus on areas of mitigation and management of earthquake and natural disasters, astronomy and astrophysics, technology research on climate change, traditional knowledge and medicine within the framework of India - China Committee of Science and Technology Cooperation.
13. To pursue mutual benefit and fulfill their international cooperation objectives, both India and China agreed to consider collaborating on development projects of common interest in third countries.
14. India and China decided to mark the 60th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Panchsheel) in 2014 by designating it as the "Year of Friendly Exchanges". The two sides noted that youth exchanges play an important role in increasing mutual understanding and decided to continue with the annual exchange of 100 youth. Both sides encouraged Hanban on the

Chinese side and CBSE on the Indian side to enhance their cooperation on Chinese language teaching.

15. In accordance with the Agreement to Facilitate Cooperation and Linkages between Indian and Chinese Cities and States/ Provinces, the two sides agreed to encourage their cities/ provinces to establish twinning relationships.
16. To promote trade, personnel movement and connectivity across the border, the two sides agreed to consider strengthening border trade through Nathu La Pass. The Chinese side shall provide greater facilitation to Indian pilgrims for the Gang Renpoche and Mapam Yun Tso Pilgrimage (Kailash Manasarovar Yatra). The Indian side conveyed appreciation to the Chinese side for the improvement of facilities for the Indian pilgrims.
17. The two sides agreed to enhance media exchanges and cooperation to improve the mutual understanding and friendship of the two peoples, and to hold a India-China High-Level Media Forum. The two Foreign Ministries will work closely together in this aspect. They also decided to complete the compilation of the Encyclopedia of India - China Cultural Contacts in 2014, and agreed to jointly start the project of translating each other's classic and contemporary works.
18. The two sides appreciated the progress made in promoting cooperation under the BCIM (Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar) Regional Forum. Encouraged by the successful BCIM Car Rally of February 2013 between Kolkata and Kunming, the two sides agreed to consult the other parties with a view to establishing a Joint Study Group on strengthening connectivity in the BCIM region for closer economic, trade, and people-to-people linkages and to initiating the development of a BCIM Economic Corridor.
19. In view of the expanding trade and commerce and growing people-to-people contacts, it was agreed to work towards simplifying visa procedures.
20. As large developing countries committed to promoting the use of clean energy, India and China believe that expansion of civil

nuclear energy program is an essential component of their national energy plans to ensure energy security. The two sides will carry out bilateral cooperation in civil nuclear energy in line with their respective international commitments.

21. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to promoting multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation processes. They support the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons and reaffirm their opposition to the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space.
22. The two sides agree to further enhance bilateral cooperation on maritime security, searching and rescuing at sea, oceanic scientific research and environment protection, work together to tackle increasingly outstanding non-traditional security threats, and strengthen cooperation in naval escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and waters off the coast of Somalia, earnestly safeguarding security of international sea-lanes and freedom of navigation.
23. The two sides noted that enhanced interaction in the military field was conducive to building mutual trust and confidence. Both sides agreed to hold the next round of joint training exercises later this year. Both sides also decided to increase exchanges between the Army, Navy and Air Force of the two countries.
24. The leaders expressed satisfaction over the work done so far by Special Representatives of the two countries on the Boundary Question and encouraged them to push forward the process of negotiations and seek a framework for a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement in accordance with the Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles. Pending the resolution of the boundary question, the two sides shall work together to maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas in line with the previous agreements.
25. The two sides noted with satisfaction that the meetings of the India - China Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on Border Affairs held till date have been fruitful.

26. The Indian side expressed appreciation to China for providing flood-season hydrological data and the assistance in emergency management. The two sides will further strengthen cooperation on trans-border rivers. They agreed to cooperate through the Expert Level Mechanism on provision of flood-season hydrological data and emergency management, and exchange views on other issues of mutual interest.
27. The two sides expressed satisfaction at the enhanced bilateral engagement at the working level on wide-ranging issues of regional and global significance. Bilateral consultations on Afghanistan, West Asia, Africa and Counter-terrorism have been held recently and those on Central Asia, Maritime affairs and Disarmament, Non-proliferation and Arms Control will be held soon.
28. Both sides agreed that the Afghanistan issue concerns regional security and stability. As two important countries in the region, they reiterated their support for an "Afghan-led, Afghan-owned" reconciliation process and their commitment to working with regional countries and the international community to help Afghanistan achieve its objective of peace, stability, independence and development at an early date.
29. Asia-Pacific region plays an increasingly important role in global affairs. The two sides are of the view that the current priority of this region is to maintain peace and stability of the region, promote regional common development, as well as to establish an open, transparent, equal and inclusive framework of security and cooperation based on the observance of the basic principles of international law.
30. The two sides support multilateral cooperation mechanisms in Asia, take a positive view of each other's participation in regional and sub-regional cooperation processes, and support each other in enhancing friendly relations with their common neighbors for mutual benefit, and win-win results. Both sides agree to broaden cooperation in the East Asia Summit, the Shanghai Cooperation

Organization, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Asia-Europe Meeting.

31. The two sides believe that the 21st century should be marked by peace, security, development and cooperation. The promotion of multi-polar world, economic globalization, cultural diversity and information revolution are high on the global agenda. The two sides will make joint efforts to democratize international relations and strengthen the central role of the United Nations in promoting global peace, security and development.
32. Noting their convergence on global issues, both sides agreed to enhance their cooperation in multilateral forums including United Nations. China attaches great importance to India's status in international affairs as a large developing country, understands and supports India's aspiration to play a greater role in the United Nations including in the Security Council.
33. As developing countries, India and China share common interest on several issues of global importance like climate change, Doha Development Round of WTO, energy and food security, reform of the international financial institutions and global governance. This is reflected in the close cooperation and coordination between the two sides within the BRICS and G-20 frameworks. The two sides agreed to enhance coordination in the follow up process of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development and in discussions on the post 2015 development agenda as well as international negotiations on climate change.
34. Both sides reiterated their resolute opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and committed themselves to cooperate on counter-terrorism. They also emphasized the need to implement all relevant UN resolutions, in particular UNSC resolutions 1267, 1373, 1540 and 1624.
35. Premier Li Keqiang, on behalf of the Chinese government and people, expressed his appreciation to the government and people of India for their warm hospitality. Premier Li Keqiang invited Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to visit China at a mutually

convenient time and Prime Minister Singh accepted the invitation with pleasure. The dates of the visit will be decided through diplomatic channels.

List of documents signed during the State Visit of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang to India (May 19-22, 2013).

New Delhi, May 20, 2013.

S. No	Name of Agreement/MoU	Indian Signatory	Chinese Signatory	Remarks
1	Protocol Between The Ministry of External Affairs of The Republic of India And Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The People's Republic of China on Indian Official Pilgrimage (the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra) to the Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China	External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid	Foreign Minister Mr. Wang Yi	Both sides have agreed to conduct the Yatra every year from May to September. The Chinese side will make further improvements to the existing facilities on the route of the pilgrims and to maintain smooth communication has agreed to assist in renting wireless sets and local SIM cards
2	Work Programmes of the Three Working Groups under Joint Economic Group Between Ministry of Commerce & Industry, the Republic of India and Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China	Minister of Commerce, Industry & Textiles Mr. Anand Sharma	Minister of Commerce Mr. Gao Hucheng	The three working groups under the Joint Economic Group are: i) Services Trade Promotion Working Group, ii) Economic And Trade Planning Cooperation and iii) Trade Statistical Analysis
3	Memoranda of Understanding on Buffalo Meat, Fishery Products and Agreement on Feed and Feed Ingredients between Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development	Minister of Commerce, Industry & Textiles Mr. Anand Sharma	Minister for General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of People's Republic of China Mr. Zhi	Aims at strengthening mutual cooperation in trade and safety of buffalo meat, fishery products and feed and feed ingredients, and to meet the regulatory requirements with respect to safety & hygiene & quarantine

	Authority, The Marine Products Export Development Authority and Export Inspection Council of India and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of People's Republic of China		Shuping	
4	Memorandum of Understanding between The Ministry of Urban Development of The Republic of India and National Development and Reform Commission of The People's Republic of China on Cooperation in the field of Sewage Treatment	Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia	Minister, National Development and Reform Commission Mr. Xu Shaoshi	Aims at enhancing cooperation in the field of Sewage Treatment and experience sharing in the areas of mutual interest in the urban sectors.
5	Memorandum of Understanding between The Ministry of Water Resources, Government of the Republic of India and The National Development and Reform Commission, Government of The People's Republic of China on Cooperation in the field of Water Efficient Irrigation	Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia	Minister, National Development and Reform Commission Mr. Xu Shaoshi	MoU aims at enhancing bilateral cooperation in the field of water efficient technology with applicability in the area of agriculture and exchange of best practices.
6	Memorandum of Understanding between The Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of The People's Republic of	Foreign Secretary Mr. Ranjan Mathai	Vice Minister, State General Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television Mr. Wu	MoU provides for a Joint Working Group that will coordinate translation and publication of 25 books of Classic and Contemporary Works of each side over a period of 5 years in to Chinese and Indian languages

S. No	Name of Agreement/MoU	Indian Signatory	Chinese Signatory	Remarks
	China on Cooperation in Mutual Translation and Publication of Classic and Contemporary Works		Shulin	respectively.
7	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Water Resources of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Water Resources of the People's Republic of China upon Provision of Hydrological Information of the Yaluzangbu /Brahmaputra River in Flood Season by China to India	Secretary, Water Resources Dr. S. K. Sarkar	Vice Minister, State General Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television Mr. Wu Shulin	China will provide India with information of water level, discharge and rainfall of 8:00 hrs and 20:00 hrs(Beijing Time) twice a day from June 1st to October 15th each year in respect of three hydrological stations on the mainstream Brahmaputra river
8	Agreement between the Ministry of External Affairs, Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China to facilitate cooperation and linkages between Indian and Chinese cities & states/provinces	Ambassador of India to China Dr. S. Jaishankar	Vice Minister, State General Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television Mr. Wu Shulin	Both sides agreed to identify sister cities and sister states/provinces in India and China with a view to establishing relationships between them in areas of mutual interest for enhancing greater people to people contacts



259. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce on the India-China MOUs to address concerns on trade deficit.

New Delhi, May 20, 2013.

India and China today here signed three Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) on buffalo meat, fisheries and pharmaceuticals; and one agreement on feed and feed ingredients. These MoUs will address the growing trade deficit between the two countries. The trade deficit has increased from USD 1.08 billion in 2001-02 to USD 40.77 billion in 2012-13. The MoUs were signed during the visit of the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Li Keqiang to India.

The Union Minister of Commerce, Industry & Textiles Shri Anand Sharma said that "the signing of the MoUs between India and China is a good beginning to address the issues India is raising with China from time to time. All the sectors are of immense trade importance to India and India has clear price and quality competitiveness in these sectors to compete in the world market."

A MoU for the export of buffalo meat from India to China was signed between Chinese General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) and India's Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). The export of buffalo meat is not allowed from India to China and this has been a long pending issue between two countries. With the resumption of trade, India hopes a big merchandise trade that will not only be helpful in reducing trade imbalance of India but also in China's food security by providing quality and hygiene meat products.

The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and AQSIQ signed a MoU on cooperation for import and export trade of fishery products. The MoU aims to institutionalise cooperation in promoting trade of fishery products and healthy development of trade between India and China. India is expecting more exports from India to China through this cooperation.

A MoU was also signed between Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil) and The China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Medicines and Health Products (CCCMHPIE). India

has been finding it difficult to expand its trade with China in the pharmaceutical sector. The signing of the MoU is expected to facilitate access to the China market in pharmaceuticals. The average imports of medicinal and pharmaceutical products from China during last five years were USD 4332.37 million vis-à-vis exports from India of USD 692.44 million.

An agreement was also signed between Export Inspection Council of India (EIC) and AQSIQ on trade and safety of feed and feed ingredients. India hopes a big merchandise trade for feed & feed ingredients after the resumption of trade as China has suspended import of feed and feed ingredients since January 1, 2012.

A work programme was also constituted on the Working Groups constituted during the 9th Joint Economic Group (JEG). The programme proposes concrete deliverables to constitute and define detailed mandate of the Working Groups as per the spirit of the JEG held on 27th August 2012 in New Delhi.

The bilateral trade between India and China had gone up from USD 2.09 billion in 2001-02 to the high of USD 75.59 billion in 2011-12; which tapered to USD 67.83 billion during the year 2012-13.



260. Press Release issued by the Presidents Secretariat on the call by the Chinese Premier on the President.

New Delhi, May 21, 2013.

Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China called on President Pranab Mukherjee at Rashtrapati Bhavan today (May 21, 2013).

The President expressed happiness over the fact that India was the first country Premier Li was visiting after assuming office. He said it reflects the importance attached to India-China relations by the Premier.

The President said the India-China relationship is one of the most important in 21st century. Our vision for India-China relations is of a truly

good neighbourly relationship that is based on a high degree of trust and understanding with a strong intersection of common interests. He said the two countries should be sensitive to each other's concerns and there is need to build trust as well as expand shared interests. The President also said that the trans-border rivers should unite rather than divide the two people.

Mr. Li Keqiang warmly reciprocated the President's words and assured the President that China sees India as a strategic partner and believes there is great potential for improved bilateral relations. It would do nothing to harm India's interests.



261. 16th Round of Talks between the Special Representatives of India and China on the Boundary Question.

Beijing, June 29, 2013.

1. The 16th round of talks between the Special Representatives of India and China on the Boundary Question, Shri Shivshankar Menon, National Security Adviser and Mr Yang Jiechi, State Councillor took place in Beijing on June 28-29, 2013. The talks were held in a productive, constructive and forward-looking atmosphere.
2. The Special Representatives continued their discussions on a framework for a resolution of the Boundary Question, which constitutes the second step of a three- stage process.
3. As directed by the Prime Ministers of India and China, the Special Representatives also discussed the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the India- China border areas including possible additional confidence building measures, ways and means of strengthening existing mechanisms for consultation and coordination on border affairs and methodology to enhance the efficiency of communications between the two sides.

4. The Special Representatives also reviewed the status of bilateral relations in the wake of the recent landmark visit to India of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang. They discussed regional and global issues of mutual interest.
5. The National Security Adviser Shri Menon called on Premier Li Keqiang on June 28, 2013.



* The Official Spokesman of the Chinese Foreign Ministry made a statement in this connection a day before the talks:

Q: China and India will hold the 16th Special Representatives' Meeting on the Boundary Question tomorrow. How do you see the future of special representatives' meeting?

A: At the invitation of Chinese Special Representative on the China-India boundary question and State Councilor Yang Jiechi, Indian Special Representative and National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon will attend the 16th Special Representatives' Meeting on the China-India Boundary Question in Beijing on June 28 and 29. Besides State Councilor Yang Jiechi, Premier Li Keqiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi will also meet with Special Representative Menon.

Premier Li Keqiang once said that friendship, cooperation and development between China and India is friendship, cooperation and development of over one third of the humanity, which is of major implications and significance to the whole world. We hope to make joint efforts with India to maintain the sound and steady development of our relationship, which serves the interests of the two peoples as well as regional peace, stability and development.

China-India boundary question is a complicated issue left over from history, which takes time to resolve. We must see that the two sides have made longstanding efforts for an early settlement of the boundary question. Positive progress has been made in the previous rounds of special representatives' meetings. We have signed the political parameters and guiding principles for the settlement of the boundary question and reached preliminary agreement on the framework of a solution. We are ready to work with the Indian side to make good use of the existing mechanisms and find an equitable, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution based on the agreement and consensus between the two sides. Pending the final settlement of the boundary question, we hope that the two sides could make joint efforts to uphold peace and tranquility in the border areas and prevent the boundary question from affecting the overall development of bilateral relations.

Reports in the Indian media said that the two countries discussed putting in place additional confidence-building measures (CBMs) and strengthening mechanisms for communication along the border, following two days of talks. They also attempted to push forward the slow-moving negotiations to clinch a framework to settle the boundary dispute.

The focus of this round of talks, however, shifted away from the actual process of negotiation to finding ways of strengthening mechanisms to prevent recurrence of incidents such as the April 15 incursion by Chinese troops in Depsang in eastern Ladakh. According to Media report at the start of the talks, Mr. Yang expressed the hope that the discussions would “help both sides take a strategic and long-term view of and better push forward the relationship.

Quoting a top Chinese diplomat the report said both countries were “in a joint march towards prosperity,” a development he described as “one of the most noticeable in the international landscape in the 21st century.”

About the Depsang incident Mr. Menon said that the fact that it had been handled successfully and peacefully, with both sides returning to the *status quo*, indicated progress. “We are making progress steadily. I think the proof is in the successful way we handled the Depsang [incident], and in the way we are discussing a new Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA),” he said.

On July 5, External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid said

On July 5, the External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid said in an interview with the *Straits Times* of Singapore: ‘India and China will not rush to resolve differences over their contested border even as there has been steady progress in the overall relationship. I think we have constantly, if not rapidly, made progress. I feel there is no reason why we should continue to feel a sense of alarm or discomfort. But it helps to remain cautious and vigilant and careful. Because it is not a relationship that has finally overcome the difficult issues that caused us to actually come into a confrontation. We are also very clear that it does not help to hasten resolution if you are not ready.’.

262. Media interaction by External Affairs Minister and Chinese Foreign Minister in Brunei Darussalam.

July 2, 2013.

Chinese Foreign Minister (Mr. Wang Yi): We had a very cordial discussion like between good friends and brothers. If you take a look at how close the two of us are, you can see how close the relationship between our two countries is.

The most important thing that we agreed upon is to constantly push forward China-India relationship. Premier Li Kechiang just visited India, and we look forward to receiving Prime Minister Singh in China later this year. We believe that these two visits are like sowing the seed in spring and reaping the fruits in autumn, and this is our common goal which we believe serves the interests of both peoples.

We believe our two countries are natural strategic partners and we should engage in all-round cooperation in a wide range of areas. We are two big countries and we have the important responsibility; we believe that we shoulder this common responsibility to regional and global peace and stability.

External Affairs Minister of India (Shri Salman Khurshid): Thank you very much. As you can see, Asia's future lies here, together.

Between India and China we have reviewed the work that has to be done, that has already been done since Premier Li's visit. And amongst the various things that we are going to do is several consultations on the region in the areas that we are interested in.

Our Defence Minister will be in China in two days' time and we will take our defence cooperation to a higher level. And most important of all for you, we are looking at ways and means of getting the Chinese media and Indian media together.

Q: I have a question to the Chinese Foreign Minister. Sir, did you touch upon the border issue, the border dispute which we have; and do you think they have made any progress in the Sixteenth Round of talks between the SRs?

Chinese Foreign Minister: As you said, the Sixteenth Round of the Special Representatives consultation was just held in Beijing. As far as I know, it was a very successful round of discussion and good progress was made.

External Affairs Minister: And I have the same information that good progress was made.

Thank you very much.

Chinese Foreign Minister:

Thank you



263. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence on the talks between Defence Minister A. K. Antony and the Chinese leaders in Beijing.

New Delhi, July 5, 2013.

The Defence Minister Mr AK Antony who is on a four- day official visit to China held delegation level talks with his counterpart Gen Chang Wanquan in Beijing. Mr Antony also later called on Premier Li Keqiang.

During the meetings, both sides discussed a number of issues relating to bilateral defence relations, exchanges and interactions between the Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces of both countries and the regional and international security situation.

Premier Li and the Defence Minister conveyed that the new leadership in China attaches great importance to developing friendly and cooperative relations with India. Mr Antony conveyed that India reciprocates the sentiment and looks forward to building the relationship further on a foundation of mutual trust and confidence and based on mutual respect for each other's concerns. In the discussions between the two Defence Ministers, measures to promote mutual trust and confidence building between the Armed Forces were discussed. It was agreed that 'strategic communication' is required for building trust and understanding.

Both sides agreed on the need to maintain peace, tranquility and stability on the LAC. It was acknowledged that the border issue is a remnant of history which both sides are making efforts to resolve and it was agreed that the Special Representatives mechanism should continue to work towards a solution. Both sides also agreed that in the meanwhile, both countries will make joint efforts to maintain peace and tranquility on the borders and take measures to strengthen communication and coordination at various levels between the border guarding forces.

Among the measures for practical cooperation discussed was the conduct of the third joint Army exercise in China in October 2013. Both sides have also agreed that the Navies and Air Forces of both countries will also undertake enhanced professional exchanges.

Mr Antony was assisted by the Indian Ambassador Dr S Jaishankar, the Defence Secretary, Shri R.K.Mathur; GOC-in-C, Eastern Command, Lt General Dalbir Singh; FOC-in-C, Southern Naval Command, Vice Admiral Satish Soni and other officers of MoD and the Armed Forces.

Earlier on his arrival at the Bayi PLA Headquarters, Mr Antony was given a tri-Services guard of honour.



264. Joint Statement issued at the end of Defence Minister A.K. Antony's visit to China.

Beijing, July 6, 2013.

1. The Indian Minister of Defence, Mr AK Antony, paid an official visit to China from 4-7 July 2013 at the invitation of the Chinese Defence Minister Gen Chang Wanquan. He held talks with his counterpart Gen Chang Wanquan and also called on Premier Li Keqiang. Raksha Mantri also met State Councillor Yang Jiechi.
2. The two Defence Ministers held talks in a cordial and friendly atmosphere and had an extensive exchange of views on a wide range of defence and security issues. They reaffirmed

that defence exchanges were an important facet of the India-China strategic and cooperative partnership for peace and prosperity.

3. Noting that peace and tranquility on the border was an important guarantor for the growth and development of bilateral cooperation, the Ministers emphasized the importance of enhancing mutual trust and understanding between the two militaries. They reviewed the working of agreements and protocols dealing with the maintenance of peace and tranquility and directed that it be further strengthened. Appreciating that border defence cooperation would make a significant contribution in this regard, they agreed on an early conclusion of negotiations for the Border Defence Cooperation agreement between the two Governments.
4. The Ministers discussed ongoing and proposed bilateral exchanges and welcomed the holding of the counter-terrorism bilateral joint exercise between their armies in China in 2013. They also agreed on the following additional exchanges and visits between India and China:
 - i. Senior military commanders from service headquarters, command/military region and field formations will exchange visits regularly on a mutually agreed annual schedule.
 - ii. Visits of border troop delegations would be enhanced to promote dialogue and strengthen trust and cooperation.
 - iii. Border Personnel Meetings(BPM) will take place with greater frequency and additional locations will be finalized after discussions.
 - iv. The Navies will increase ship visits, consider conducting joint maritime search and rescue exercises and cooperate in counter-piracy operations. The call by PLA Navy Hospital ship 'Peace Ark' to Mumbai in August 2013 was welcomed.

- v. The Air Forces will carry out high level visits and expand their functional exchanges. They would focus on topics of mutual interest including flight safety, aviation medicine and training.
 - vi. Military training institutions will also strengthen their exchanges at the faculty and student levels.
 - vii. To promote greater awareness and understanding among young officers of the armed forces, visits and exchanges will be carried out annually.
5. Defence Minister Antony invited his Chinese counterpart, Gen Chang Wanquan, to visit India in 2014 as convenient. The Chinese Defence Minister accepted the invitation.
6. Minister Antony expressed appreciation for the warm hospitality extended by the Minister of Defence of the People's Republic of China to him and his high level delegation during the visit.



265. Third meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultations and Coordination (WMCC) on India-China Border Talks.

New Delhi, July 24, 2013.

The 3rd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs was held at New Delhi on 23-24 July, 2013. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Gautam Bambawale, Joint Secretary (East Asia) and comprised of representatives of the Ministries of External Affairs, Defence and Home Affairs as well as members of the Indian Army and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police. The Chinese delegation was led by Mr. Ouyang Yujing, Director General, Department of Boundary and Oceanic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and comprised of representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and National Defence of the People's Republic of China.

The Chinese delegation called on Foreign Secretary, Shri Ranjan Mathai.

The talks were held in a constructive and forward-looking atmosphere. The two delegations reviewed recent developments in the India-China border areas with the objective of enhancing peace and tranquillity between the two countries. They discussed additional confidence building measures between the two sides. They also consulted on measures to improve the functioning of the Working Mechanism and make it more efficient.

The two delegations further discussed the possibility of introducing an additional route for the Kailash-Manasarovar Yatra.

The 4th meeting of the Working Mechanism will be held in China at a mutually convenient time.



* The talks were held in the wake of the three-week standoff in Ladakh's Depsang valley in April. Media reports said that the Officials attending, the third meeting of the Working Mechanism on India-China Border Affairs discussed the possibility of holding flag meetings between in Ladakh non-Army border forces — mainly the Indo-Tibetan Border Police and its Chinese counterparts. The eight representatives from each side also talked about increasing the number of venues for holding flag meetings. The 18-month-old Working Mechanism consists of multi-ministry representatives headed by a Foreign Office official from each side. The setup was meant to prevent gaps in communication between Ministries on both sides whenever an incident took place on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The standoff ended with the return of the Chinese and Indian troops going back to original bases without firing a shot. The Working Mechanism felt such incidents ought to be eliminated altogether. In this respect, they decided to consider the proposal of involving the auxiliary forces in flag meetings that were till now held between the Indian Army and the People's Liberation Army. The Working Mechanism was set up in January last year (2012) and essentially tries to ensure that both sides adhere to the spirit of the three India-China pacts on maintaining tranquillity on the LAC.

266. Information supplied by the Ministry of Defence to the Lok Sabha in answer to a question on the Chinese intrusion into Indian territory.

New Delhi, August 5, 2013.

During the past three years from January 2010 to till July 2013, a total of 28 violations of Indian Airspace by other countries have been reported. All such cases are taken up with the concerned countries through laid down channels as per established procedure.

There is no commonly delineated Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China. There are areas along the border where India and China have differing perceptions of the LAC. Both sides undertake patrols upto their respective perceptions of the LAC. On account of differences in the perception of the LAC, certain transgressions incidents take place on the ground. Government regularly takes up any transgression / incident with the Chinese side through established mechanisms. Government takes adequate measures to safeguard the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of India by reviewing the threat perception from time to time, and takes appropriate steps to meet the threats. Development work in border areas is carried out through close coordination between security forces and local administration.

Indian Territory under the occupation by China in Jammu & Kashmir is approximately 38,000 sq. kms. In addition, Pakistan illegally ceded approximately 5,180 sq. kms. Of Indian Territory in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir to China. India and China have appointed Special Representatives to work out the framework for a boundary settlement.



267. Information supplied to the Lok Sabha by the Ministry of External Affairs regarding Chinese intrusions into Indian Territory.

New Delhi, August 7, 2013.

There is no commonly delineated Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the border areas between India and China. From time to time, on account of differences in the perception of the LAC, situations have arisen on the ground that could have been avoided if we had a common perception of the LAC. Government regularly takes up any transgression along the LAC with the Chinese side through established mechanisms including border personnel meetings, flag meetings, meetings of Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India- China Border Affairs and diplomatic channels. The two sides have reiterated, on many occasions, their commitment to maintain peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas, pending a final settlement of the Boundary Question. Government keeps a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it.



268. Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the Chinese Dams on Brahmaputra.

New Delhi, August 7, 2013.

The recently released 'Outline of the 12th Five Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China' indicates that three more hydropower projects on the main stream of the Brahmaputra River in Tibet Autonomous Region have been approved for implementation by the Chinese authorities. A hydropower project at Zangmu is under construction. Government carefully monitors all developments on the Brahmaputra River. As a lower riparian State with considerable established user rights to the waters of the River, India has conveyed its views and concerns to the Chinese authorities, including

at the highest levels of the Government of the People's Republic of China. India has urged China to ensure that the interests of downstream States are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas.

The Minister of External Affairs Shri Salman Khurshid gave this information in a statement in Lok Sabha today.



269. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry on the signing of the MoU with China to address trade deficit.

New Delhi, August 14, 2013.

India and China have signed MoUs /Agreements to promote Indian exports to China during the visit of Premier Mr. Li Keqiang to India in May 2013. Details are given below:

- (i) MoU for the Export of Buffalo Meat from India to China entered into between the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (AQSIQ)
- (ii) MoU on Cooperation Related to Import and Export Trade of Fishery Products entered into between the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and AQSIQ
- (iii) Agreement on Trade and Safety of Feed and Feed Ingredients entered into between the Export Inspection Council of India (EIC) and AQSIQ
- (iv) MoU between the China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Medicines and Health Products

(CCCMHPIE) and Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion
Council of India (Pharmexcil) for co-operation on Pharma.

Details of import-export and trade deficit with China during last three years are given below:-

Table-1; Trade & Trade Deficit Statistics between India and China

<i>USD</i>	<i>Million</i>		<i>Value in</i>	
Year	Import	Export	Total Trade	Trade Deficit
2010-11	43,479.76	15,482.70	58,962.46	27,997.06
2011-12	57,517.88	18,076.55	75,594.44	39,441.33
2012-13	54,324.04	13,503.00	67,827.04	40,821.04
2013-14	12,080.91	2,435.91	14,516.82	9,645.00

(April- June)

(P)

(P)Provisional (Source; DGCI&S)

Major items of Indian exports to China include cotton raw & yarn, non-ferrous metals, iron ore, other ores and minerals, plastic & linoleum products, spices, Dyes/intermediates, machinery & instruments and petroleum (crude & products). Major imports from China include electronic goods, machinery, organic chemicals, project goods, fertilizers, iron and steel, transport equipments, electric machinery (except electronics) and manufactures of metals.

With the implementation of the above MoUs, export of buffalo meat, and feed and feed ingredients to China are expected to benefit. With the operationalization of the MoU on co-operation on Pharma between CCCMHPIE and the Pharmexcil, Indian generic drugs are expected to get market access in China.



270. Press Release issue by the Ministry of Defence on the information given to the Lok Sabha regarding the India-China Border Defence Pact.

New Delhi, August 20, 2013.

A draft of a Border Defence Cooperation Agreement has been received from the Chinese side. Two rounds of negotiations have been held so far. The purpose of the proposed Agreement is to formalize mechanisms and procedures to enhance mutual trust and confidence between the border troops of India and China and to facilitate the maintenance of peace and tranquility along the border with China. The ongoing and proposed exchanges between the Armed Forces of India and China include visits at various levels, conduct of exercises, ship visits and training-related exchanges. This information was given by Defence Minister Shri AK Antony in a written reply to Shri Eknath M. Gaiwad and others in Lok Sabha today.



271. Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the 5th India-China Strategic Dialogue.

New Delhi, August 20, 2013.

The 5th India-China Strategic Dialogue was held at New Delhi today. The Indian side was led by Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh and the Chinese side was led by Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin. The discussions covered bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Taking stock of developments in bilateral ties since the successful visit to India of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, the two sides discussed several issues including enhancing understanding on the utilization of trans-border river waters, expanding bilateral trade and investment while addressing problems of the large and growing deficit faced by India, ways of maintaining peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control

(LAC) in the India-China border areas, methods of boosting cultural cooperation as well as people-to-people exchanges and expansion of scientific and technological cooperation. The two sides also discussed the possibility of a visit to China, later this year, by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The potential and prospect for BCIM economic cooperation was also touched upon.

Future cooperation in the BRICS framework, ways of ensuring an open, inclusive and transparent architecture in the Asia-Pacific region and the outlook for Afghanistan in 2014 and beyond were other areas of discussion between the two sides.

Vice Foreign Minister Liu called on External Affairs Minister.

The 6th India-China Strategic Dialogue will be held at Beijing at a mutually convenient time.



272. Meeting between Minister of Commerce Anand Sharma and Chinese Minister of Commerce Gao Hucheng.

Brunei, August 20, 2013.

The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Anand Sharma had a bilateral exchange of views with the Chinese Minister of Commerce Gao Hucheng today during his visit to Brunei where he is attending several ministerial meetings on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, East Asian Economic Ministers Meeting and the ASEAN-India Ministerial meeting. This was the first meeting of the two ministers after the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister to India in June.

Ministers followed up their discussion with a view to plan for the next meeting of the Joint Economic Group likely to be scheduled in late October this year in Beijing. The Commerce and Industry Minister informed the Chinese Minister about India's preparedness for further engagements in the three working groups constituted during the Prime Ministerial Meeting earlier this year. The working group on the trade and economic

cooperation is mandated to prepare an action oriented work plan for improving India's trade imbalance with China. Shri Sharma specially drew the Chinese Minister's attention to India's pending request for facilitating Indian exports of Pharmaceuticals, Agricultural products, Buffalo meat and Information Technology services. He was assured by his counterpart that China would make every effort to facilitate imports from India for bridging trade imbalance. They agreed that the working group should meet in September for further work. They also agreed that the other two working groups on Trade in Services and Trade Statistics should also meet in September with a view to implement the decisions of their leaders. The Indian minister sought Chinese investment in manufacturing in the National Manufacturing Investment Zones. China showed special interest in infrastructure, Power and Capital Goods manufacturing. They will finalize the details of such understanding during their next meeting in October. In the last JEG Meeting with China on 27th August 2012 in New Delhi, Shri Sharma had handed over to the Chinese Minister of Commerce the roadmap for enhanced cooperation between India and China in IT& ITeS and the pharmaceuticals sector. If implemented, it would surely be helpful in bringing down the trade deficit with China. "A favourable action in the matter is needed from Chinese side. India and China have many complementarities in these sectors particularly in IT and ITeS sector and the Pharmaceutical sector. Joining hands in these sectors would prove a win-win situation for both the countries" said Shri Sharma.

The minister also exchanged views on the state of negotiations on the Doha Round for the Ministerial meeting in Bali. They both agreed that they would like to see Trade facilitation, Proposal regarding Food Security and the development package to be harvested in Bali. They shared their common views on their strong requirement to see the food security proposal accepted in the Bali ministerial.

During January- June 2013 India's export to china stood at USD 5.42 billion whereas imports were USD 24.70 Billion.



273. Foreign Secretary's speech at the conclusion of India-China Media Forum.

New Delhi, September 16, 2013

Honourable External Affairs Minister

H.E. Vice Minister Zhou Mingwei

Distinguished friends from the Indian media

And honoured guests from the Chinese media who have travelled to New Delhi to be with us for this inaugural meeting of the India China Media Forum.

As a well-known Chinese proverb goes "the journey of a thousand miles begins with a small step." From what I have heard from my colleagues the vibrant, robust and productive discussions earlier today at the India-China Media Forum have set in motion the beginning of an exciting and multi-pronged conversation between opinion leaders from media organisations of our two countries.

This is only to be expected as it is estimated that the total number of registered media publications in both our countries taken together is more than 100,000. The total number of TV channels exceed more than 1000. And, the number of those who are using the social media from both our countries taken together are in the hundreds of millions. Yet today cumulatively there are little more than a dozen news organisations from India and China with correspondents reporting on news about each other. So we have a dozen people from amongst the 2.5 billion of us who have this privileged task of reporting directly about each other and helping us understand each other better.

I hope that your interactions today have opened new pathways, beyond the dozen. A more meaningful and productive relationship between the media organisations of our two ancient civilisations which are transforming themselves and are re-emerging as key players on the world stage is essential.

The imperatives for greater media cooperation are all in place.

From less than a billion dollars a little more than a decade ago, the India-China bilateral trade is now hovering around \$70 billion, and, despite the

festering global downturn we are aiming at a trade target of \$100 billion by 2015 even as we work to reduce the balance of trade and ensure sustainability. The economic and commercial linkages between India and China will keep growing thereby ensuring that the economic imperative for a better understanding of the matrix of our relationship is only going to get stronger.

In an increasingly interdependent global world India and China both desire to co-exist and co-prosper. We have commonalities relating to the international economic system, energy security, climate change and the environment. Both want a stable Asia-Pacific that will allow us to sustain our economic growth. Both are looking towards cooperating on maritime security as we have a common interest in freedom and security of transportation on the global commons. Both are wrestling with the new challenges posed by non-traditional threats and are pursuing new frontiers in space and cyberspace. So the scope of our international cooperation has widened.

Yes, the boundary question which is a particularly difficult issue remains unresolved. Yes, we have differing perceptions on some issues. And, Yes we have potential differences on other matters. However, as governments we have set up a number of mechanisms for dialogue and communication to address these issues. Yes there is need to widen and deepen the scope of our engagement in some areas. And Yes, I can with confidence say, we are endeavouring in a mature spirit of reconciliation and pragmatism to manage issues that arise in our relationship even as we build on the commonalities.

However, in this day and age where our stakes are growing by the day in terms of their scope such channels of communication and engagement cannot remain confined to what Governments do. The media is an important stake holder, in varying degrees, in both our societies. As the scale of India-China interactions has grown so must there be a quest amongst media organisations to find a new equilibrium in our understanding of each other.

I am, therefore, happy to see a frank and free-wheeling exchange of ideas among leading opinion-makers of both countries with a view to taking this important project of bridging knowledge and information deficit forward. There is a lot riding on this exercise of developing and refining

mutual perceptions of each other - an enduring diplomatic and strategic relationship between the two countries can't thrive without adequate understanding of each other's societies, cultures, systems and ethos.

Right now, there is a deficit both in terms of information about each other as well as in terms of the quality of perceptions. There is not enough reporting about each other in the media of the two countries. I am told that a survey by The Global Times, China's influential newspaper, has shown that the reporting on India in Chinese media platforms has declined sharply in the last two years. I am sure there must have been discussions on the reasons for this apparent decline in interest in India and also constructive suggestions on how to bridge this gap.

Also, the same survey has shown that besides India and China, border and incursions are most used words in the reporting about China in the Indian media. The survey, my Indian media friends tell me, is a little unfair as more than 85 per cent of stories on China in India media are neutral, and very often contains elements of admiration about China's accomplishments in myriad fields. These statistics point to the nature of the problem: first, there is limited interest in each other; and second, if there is interest it is focused around a set of specific themes creating asymmetry and perhaps also spawning prejudice.

I understand that the discussions to day have shown, there is a candid acknowledgement of this situation and at the same time a willingness to address the situation.

As the great Chinese sage-philosopher Confucius said memorably:

"When things are investigated, knowledge is extended. When knowledge is extended, thoughts are made sincere, when thoughts are made sincere, the heart and mind is rectified..."

There is a striking echo of this spirit of seeking truth and keeping doors and windows of minds and hearts open in what the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, said:

"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any."

It is with this deep civilizational perspective and the purity of mind and heart we should approach the India-China relationship and aspire for greater heights in years to come.

Friends, there has been plenty of food for thought, and now it's time to have real food. Thank you all for finding time to be here. I hope you will enjoy your dinner and carry fond memories of the intellectual feast which is what the day-long discussions can be best described as.

I wish our Chinese guests a pleasant stay in India and a happy and safe journey back home.

Thank you



274. Address by External Affairs Minister and Chinese Minister of the State Council Information Office during inauguration of India-China Media Forum.

New Delhi, September 16, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Ladies and gentlemen, Hon. Minister, Delegates from the media in India, and our Chinese friends who have traveled a long way to be with us here: I would like to welcome you to this first effort of ours at an India-China Media Forum.

For those of you who are perhaps not aware of the background, let me try and summarise this. This is an effort that has been in the making for some time but it gathered momentum when External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid had discussions with his Chinese counterpart earlier this year. The idea was to provide a platform of the media so that they can interact directly between themselves. So, what we have done is to provide that platform. The rest is for the representatives of the Indian and the Chinese media to take this further.

As a Chinese saying goes, of a good beginning cometh a good end. So, as a good beginning when the Chinese Delegation arrived here, we decided we start with the best that India can offer, and that is a visit to

the Taj Mahal. We hope that with that good beginning we provided a platform for all of you to interact; and we look forward to this evening for the end product.

I am particularly grateful to our Chinese colleagues who have been able to get together a team of media representatives which represents virtually every section of the Chinese media. For our part it was a difficult choice. We have more than 90,000 Indian publications, almost 800 Indian TV channels, and social media is as vigorous as that in China. So, it was a difficult decision, but we did manage to bring a representative group of Indian media representatives here.

I do not want to take much of your time but only to set the ball rolling I will request the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid to deliver his Inaugural Address because he was somebody who started this process. I am grateful for him for being here today and kicking off, so to say, this process in its actuality. External Affairs Minister!

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Good morning to all of you. I have the great honour of the presence of His Excellency the Minister Cai Mingzhao, His Excellency the Vice Minister Zhou Mingwei, distinguished friends from the Chinese media and Indian media, and ladies and gentlemen.

I have a written speech but I thought it is important for us to say something from the heart to our Chinese friends, communicate something which we believe is extremely important for two major countries of Asia and the world.

Often we find ourselves speaking of the 21st century being the Asian century. And it is our firm belief that the Asian century dream will remain unfulfilled if India and China are unable to find congruence on important ways in which we think on global issues, and we know how to communicate effectively from the heart and the head about our dreams with you and your dreams with us.

I take it on board the Chinese saying 'we are living in interesting times' is indeed critical for our understanding of the effort that we are trying to put in towards making Asian century truly a successful century.

I have, in my few months in the External Affairs, emphasized in the formatting and formulation of foreign policy, the very important role that

language plays in diplomacy. Therefore, it is important for us to work on a common language. A common language is not a hybrid of the Chinese and Indian languages, of Mandarin and of Hindi or any other Indian language, but a common language is something that even if not spoken, communicates because it is the ideas that converge. Ideas have a language of their own. And I wish and hope that our conclave here of the media on two sides will be able to provide a bond and link of ideas that would translate themselves into a common language.

We know that historically and culturally we have a very very significant link. In the Mahabharat itself, there are, I understand, at least seven references to China. I also know that in our understanding of Islamic philosophy China is seen as a destination in search of knowledge and connectivity with the world. The spread of Buddhism, we all know - and I have just traveled through parts of the neighbourhood countries of China where Buddhism retains a distant echo even after enormous changes having taken place civilisationally in those countries in Central Asia, in Southeast Asia - remains significantly important cultural and spiritual presence in China. Thirty-five thousand words of Pali and Sanskrit origin, I understand, have been found by scholars in the Mandarin language.

When we speak of historical links, travels of scholars and intellectuals, Chinese itinerant scholars like Hiuen Tsang and Fa Hien studied at the ancient Nalanda University. And the good news is that we together - China and India along with other colleagues in ASEAN - are now working on re-establishing and reviving the centuries-old university in Bodh Gaya in Nalanda.

In the 20th century, our links have inevitably been of a very significant nature. From the Indian side, Mahatma Gandhi, Gurudev Ravindranath Tagore and Jawaharlal Nehru helped create a soaring vision of India that incorporated our relationship with China.

Over the years, we sit here in a building that amplifies and symbolizes the Panch Sheel or the five principles of peaceful coexistence, which continue to be the basic framework of our relationship even as the peaceful and harmonious coexistence that we have known for over a four thousand years - but for a short interlude that both of us feel must become quickly a part of history as we look forward to significant cooperation between us.

It is a fact that we still have an undefined boundary and, therefore, differences in perception - something that appears from time to time to become an insurmountable problem. But we know, deep in our hearts we know, that not only is this not an insurmountable problem but also that both of us are completely and totally committed to eradication and removal of these irritants in a relationship that is significantly valuable to both of us and which we believe matters enormously in the years to come to the way the world will be shaped. Therefore, as I said, language becomes important to reach out to each other, clear cobwebs of misconceptions, misunderstandings of the past, the present and even of the future.

As we do this exercise, I have in mind the Chinese involvement that we encourage, that we welcome, and that we seek for working more closely in infrastructure in our country. We are looking for at the same time greater market access in China for our pharma and the IT companies to provide a more balanced trade between our two countries - a matter that was treated as of high importance between the visit of Premier Li. But we hope that even as we work on balancing of trade, investments will significantly compensate to some extent the importance of sustainable balanced trade.

All this we believe is important in the backdrop of not only our economic engagement but also our working together on many many regional and global issues and much closer cooperation and collaboration. And I do believe that this is happening in a substantive way in many areas such as global trade regimes as well as climate change.

The important thing is for us to understand what will be our relationship. Will we see ourselves only as an artificial construct of rivals and competitors? Or will we see ourselves possibly in a multidimensional role with each other, collaborating, cooperating, competing, assisting, sharing, and - if I might add an important word - caring for each other?

Our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, as you will recall, has said on many occasions that there is enough room in the world for India and China to grow together and to flourish. This in fact I think echoes the Chinese notion of 'a harmonious world' - 'shijie datong' - a synthesis which goes well with the concept of one world enshrined in the Indian ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

Therefore, speaking of language, our connectivity, our shared goals, and our shared aspirations, it becomes important that the speaking voice of our two countries, the media that we cherish and value enormously in our country as a pillar of strength to our democracy, not always necessarily in agreement with government but that is the beauty of having a thousand voices express one strong sentiment of solidarity and patriotic zeal. But we do hope that this interaction here will help in developing constructive reporting and analysis methodology through better understanding of each other's working systems, of each other's – if I may go back again – language.

Independence of the media for us has been an extremely important dimension of Indian democracy. And independence of course comes both ways, with rights and obligations, something that applies to all citizens of our country. And what is the balance that we find within our own system is something that I am sure that you will find interesting coming directly from the very people who are the purveyors of that balance.

Having said this, I would say that there are and there will remain periodically between us - as trust and ability to understand each other better continues to deepen and widen, and the footprint of our work together grows in the world – there will be moments of hyper sensitivity, sensitivity, and moments where we need critical care in conveying what we believe is important for us respectively.

And I do urge colleagues on both sides to look at whether there is permissible, within our system, some methodology that allows for a larger national interest, and here a transnational interest, to prevail over a desire to report more aggressively and to report more extensively. But this is really not something that can be dictated, it is not something that can be normatively imposed. This is something that only can come from within our respective systems, our understanding, our cultural ethos, and of course our professional training.

Finally, I might just bring in something that I am sure is of great interest to the conventional media on our side and certainly on your side - and that is something that we are still learning about, something that we are still learning to deal with – the social media. Social media comes really in a

form which is unlike anything that we have known in the past in terms of governance, in terms of decision making, in terms of influence on public policy. We are still learning, and I am sure that your experiences in social media will also be very edifying and educative for us.

If I might quote Chinese Indologist Ji Xianlin, whom India recognized by conferring the national award of Padma Bhushan, "China and India have stood simultaneously on the Asian continent. Their neighbourliness is created by heaven and constructed by earth". We do not know much about heaven, we are happy to learn from you about heaven, but being earthlings we need to talk more and know each other better to fructify the full potential of this relationship between our two countries.

I wish you all the best in your discussions and hope to hear from you at the end of the day of the ideas that you together suggest for our moving forward with greater strength, greater joy and greater creativity.

Thank you very much

Minister of the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China (Mr. Cai Mingzhao)

Distinguished Minister Khurshid,

Friends from Chinese and Indian media,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very glad to come to the beautiful city of New Delhi, to attend the First China-India Media Forum. First, I would like to extend my warm congratulations on the convening of this forum on behalf of the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China! I would like to sincerely thank Chinese and Indian journalists, experts and scholars present at the forum!

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang paid an official visit to India during May 19-22 this year. India was the first country that he visited after assuming the post of Chinese Premier. This suggests that China's new government attaches great importance to China-India relations.

During the visit, the two sides signed a number of cooperative agreements, including documents on economic and trade cooperation. They also issued a joint statement, which charted the future development

direction of our bilateral relations. Both Chinese and Indian media covered Premier Li's visit with great attention and enthusiasm. Premier Li asked me to convey his thanks to Chinese and Indian journalists.

This China-India Media Forum is a specific measure to carry out the decisions made during Premier Li's visit and to enhance cultural exchanges between the Chinese and the Indian people. I believe that this forum will further deepen understanding between media of the two countries, expand their areas of cooperation and push media exchanges and cooperation to a higher level.

Just like you, I'm also a media professional. I worked for long time with Xinhua News Agency and People's Daily, the two most famous media in China, for more than twenty years. I fully understand that the nature of journalism is to pursue new development and changes and report progresses of the times. There are no two other countries like China and India, each with a population of more than 1 billion, which have achieved rapid growth in the past few decades. This is an unprecedented historic event both Chinese and India media people should cover with great enthusiasm.

The fact that China and India are developing simultaneously illustrates that the world is big enough for us to develop at the same time. It suggests that we have each found a development path that suits our respective national conditions. We should walk hand in hand to continue along the paths that suit our own national conditions.

Since China and India established diplomatic ties more than 60 years ago, the relations between the two countries have been growing soundly and comprehensively. Our mutual strategic trust has been gradually enhanced. Our bilateral ties have become more resilient to disturbances. Our two countries' interests have become more intertwined. The strategic economic dialogue and other mechanisms have become more well-established. The areas of pragmatic cooperation continue to expand. Cultural exchanges keep growing. Friendship between the two peoples has deepened. The two countries have often worked together in international and regional affairs to safeguard common interests.

Looking to the future, China-India relations have great potential for growth. As close neighbors and partners, friendly and pragmatic cooperation

between China and India is in the fundamental interests of both nations, as well as a blessing for Asia and the world.

Ladies and gentleman,

Relations between nations lie in amity between the people, while amity between the people lies in mutual understanding. Exchanges between people constitute an important cornerstone of friendly relations between nations.

From past to present, there are many examples about the exchanges between the Chinese and the Indian people. Tagore is a household name in China and India. One of his students, Wei Fengjiang, came from China.

Eighty years ago, in 1933, the 22-year-old Wei arrived in India, becoming the first modern Chinese scholar to study Indian history and literature in India. After returning to China in 1939, Wei authored and translated many books to introduce the Indian culture and history to the Chinese people.

After Wei passed away, a statute of him was built in Zhejiang Yuexiu Foreign Languages Institute in Shaoxing City, where he once worked, to commemorate his important contribution to China-India cultural exchanges.

Since the 1920s, a large number of famous Chinese scholars, such as Liang Qichao, Cai Yuanpei, Zheng Zhenduo, Xu Beihong, Ji Xianlin, Tan Yunshan and Tan Zhong, have actively contributed to friendly exchanges between the Chinese and the Indian people.

Meanwhile many famous Indian scholars have studied China and promoted bilateral exchanges. These scholars include Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan, Manik Artatrana Nayak, and Kamal Sheel. The seeds of friendship they sowed have now grown into exuberant tall trees.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Media is an important tool to disseminate information, transmit culture and bridge different civilizations. They serve as a bridge to enhance understanding between the people and to foster friendship.

In recent years, Chinese and Indian media have played unique and positive role in maintaining and consolidating strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries. Exchanges and cooperation between media in the two countries are progressing comprehensively. Exchanges between executives of mainstream media are more frequent and so are those between media professionals. Forums, seminars and dialogues have promoted communication between Chinese and India media, significantly contributed to the development of bilateral relations, and enriched the comprehensive bilateral cooperation.

Nonetheless, for some reasons, Chinese and Indian media still do not have sufficient understanding of each other's country, still cannot fully reflect the current status of the friendly bilateral relations, and still cannot meet the two peoples' demand for information about the other country.

To promote media exchanges, I would like to make the following proposals:

First, build this forum into a long-term and institutionalized platform for media exchanges. The forum could be held every year, in turn in India and China. Press officials of the two governments and executives of major media institutions will be invited. Participants will have extensive and in-depth discussions on issues of common concerns.

It is necessary for Chinese and Indian media to engage in long-term and frequent dialogues and communication, pushing us to see each other rationally and objectively and presenting a real China and a real India to domestic audience, so as to promote the healthy development of bilateral relations and deepen understanding and friendship between our two peoples.

Second, strengthen pragmatic media cooperation between our two countries. Currently, China and India have altogether about 20 reporters stationed in the other country, which is inadequate given the two countries' population size and the importance of the two countries' relations. Obviously, these reporters are not enough to meet the two peoples' demand for information about each other.

I suggest that media of both countries carry out extensive cooperation in mutual visits, article exchanges and joint interviews. I hope that they

could gradually station more reporters in each other's country, or send more reporters to each other's country to conduct interviews, meet local residents, and gather real, fresh and first-hand information.

Third, media of both countries should help maintain our bilateral relations. Chinese and Indian media have different cultural backgrounds, perspectives and reporting methods, which is understandable. All media should report truthfully, objectively and fairly. Media should report more on the two countries' efforts to enhance communication and mutual trust, on the efforts to push forward pragmatic cooperation, on the efforts to expand cultural exchanges and deepen mutual understanding and trust, on the efforts to care about each other's concerns and properly handle complicated issues. Media should instill more positive energy into the healthy development of bilateral relations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the world, there are no two other countries that are like China and India, which have made unique contributions to the mankind with their great civilizations that have lasted thousands of years. China and India are connected by common mountains and rivers, and have engaged in exchanges in various fields for more than two millenniums. As early as in the Han Dynasty (206BC-220AD) and the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the Silk Road on the land and sea connected China and India. As two pearls in Asia, the Chinese civilization and the Indian civilization are different from each other. Yet, they also share many similarities and have illuminated each other in history. Together, they have contributed to splendid Asian civilizations.

Over the past century, the destiny of the two nations has been linked ever closer. The Chinese and Indian peoples understood and supported each other in their respective pursuit of national independence and liberation, with many touching stories. Our two countries jointly advocated the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence which have become important guidance for new type of international relations.

Mahatma Gandhi once said that China and India are fellow travelers sharing weal and woe in a common journey. As fellow travelers, Chinese and India media have more reasons to engage in frequent exchanges to deepen the friendship between our two peoples and to jointly push ahead

the strategic partnership between the two countries for the common interests of our two peoples. Let us work together for this great goal!

I wish this forum a great success!

Thank you



275. External Affairs Minister's interaction with Chinese Media.

Beijing, September 17, 2013.

Chinese Media: I would like to thank you on behalf of the whole media delegation, Your Excellency, for taking time out of your busy schedule to accept our group interview.

My question is, what is your assessment of the current India-China relationship and what are your priorities in developing the bilateral relationship?

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): As I tried to suggest this morning, I think there are very strong fundamentals that provide a base for a very sustained relationship between India and China. These fundamentals include complementarities between our two economic and social structures. They include imperatives of our working closely together in the world on many issues that are really of very important common interest. They also include I think some matters essentially pertaining to our region and also finally about our perceptions of an equitable global system. I think these fundamentals are there for everyone to be able to see.

On the foundations of these fundamentals we need to build and we have to build a superstructure. That superstructure is, shall we say, subject to the fashion of the day, the preferred designs, the prevailing political outlooks of the government during different periods in China and the government in different periods in India. I think there is an overall consensus. It is not as though we would move in this direction because my party is in power and then it will be different if there was another

party. I think there is core consensus based on how it is important for us to build this infrastructure. There could be variance in pace and in terms of priority but I think that that is unlikely to be of any appreciable difference.

The critical thing I believe that matters for us between India and China is that China does not and cannot have only one neighbour and one friend. India also cannot have only one neighbour and one friend. There will be people of different priority, size in the region and in the world that we will deal with and you will deal with.

Sometimes people have suggested to us over the years a tie up between China, Iran, India. When I was Minister of State and I went to Geneva for the Human Rights Commission, there was such a proposition. Sometimes, as you are fully aware, people have suggested, last night there were some people on television suggesting US and India working together and trying to have a common position on China. And we have said, no. We have said that we do not want a tie-up with anybody. Our sovereign decision is to have a full, wholesome relationship with China and this I think has now a consensus in our country.

Having said all this, there will be periodic issues of divergence, maybe irritation, concern, some issues that have a more lasting impact of question mark or a concern. You have a very important relationship with Pakistan but your relationship with Pakistan 20 years ago and your relationship with Pakistan today does not have to be based on the similar considerations because China has gone beyond what China was 20 years ago; we have gone beyond what we were 20 years ago; and Pakistan I think has also in a sense moved on from what it was 20 years ago.

So, the kind of relationship China had with Pakistan 20 years ago need not be there today. And, therefore, it is not necessary for China to, shall we say, tie itself to policy formulations that are concentrated on Pakistan. Although you have a relationship with them, and we have no problem that you have a relationship with them, our concern in your relationship with Pakistan is only about the impact on nuclear non-proliferation. That is one concern that we have expressed to you.

And perhaps the other concern is the extent to which your collaboration and help to them is concentrated in the area that we believe they have occupied forcibly. If you were building the highway between Islamabad

and Karachi, we would not even think twice. But if there is a highway that is being built in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, then we have to consider and speak to you and say, look is it necessary, is it possible that you tone down your concentration here. Now this is a very narrow area in which we need to talk from time to time.

And then finally of course there is our common endeavour and effort to moves step-by-step towards resolving our boundary issue, the Line of Actual Control. I think we can say with satisfaction that the Special Representatives and other mechanisms in place are moving steadily. And I think we have both rightly decided not to push the pace so that it gives way rather than continue to progress in the manner. And we think we have a very satisfactory progress as far as the boundary dispute is concerned.

So, if China has a greater stake in India's economy and we have a greater participation in the Chinese economy, many of these issues will get dwarfed even further and we will be able to look at a much larger landscape of collaboration and cooperation. I look forward to the day when in the world when a decision needs to be taken, people will look at India and China and say we cannot take this decision unless both of them are on board because they think alike. So, any desire of anybody to say, 'can we drive a wedge between India and China' is something that we want to reject, discourage, and hopefully obliterate completely.

Chinese Media (China Daily): It seems that there are different views among the Indian elite on the China-India relationship. Some think China and India as two incompatible competitors. Others hold that there is room for cooperation and both countries can benefit from that kind of cooperation. My question is, in your view, which one plays a more dominant role?

External Affairs Minister: Your Yin-Yang circle is what we will become one day. I think that is inevitable. It is inevitable. We are destined to be the Yin Yang. That is what we are destined to be one day. I think we have it in us to at least work towards that.

People who think that the shape of Yin Yang cannot come together in India are very few. They are either ill informed or they have some other reason for taking up a position that India and China cannot be compatible

as collaborators, as friends, and as partners. I think, as I said, either they are not fully informed, or they are informed by interests which are very narrow, political interests which are narrow.

But there is no political gain. Maybe somewhere near the border one or two Districts may get influenced by this kind of talk. But my understanding of Indian politics is that there is no political gain, even in the short term, to be had from this kind of political position that people take, and they will understand. Gradually they will understand this.

Of course what is important is, as I said this morning, that the reporting of our relationship must be of a positive nature, both by the Chinese press and by the Indian press, because if you are reporting not fairly and correctly, it can mislead people. I will give you an example. When I came back from China - I was very pleased with my visit and I think there is nothing wrong in saying that I was pleased with my visit - somebody asked me what do you think of Beijing. I said it is a beautiful city and I would not mind staying in Beijing when I cease to be Foreign Minister.

Now, there are some people who deliberately printed this as saying that why are you showing China to be better than India. It was not about better, it was about liking. You were very hospitable, you were very friendly. I saw outstanding institutions. I went to the National Museum. I walked in the Tiananmen Square. I saw young people; I saw spring in their step. And I think it would not be fair if I did not describe what I saw. It was good. Not to say that you do not have problems like we do not have problems, but every big country will have problems. There will be somebody in disagreement; there will be somebody out of sync, etc.

I think there is nothing wrong in our being frank and open and transparent in our praise of each other. And I think that people of your country should welcome if you say that you went to Delhi and you felt that Delhi was a homelike city, it is a city that you could make your home. I think that kind of positive spins to be given to our feelings for each other are very important. I do not know if the Chinese are emotional people, but we in India are very emotional. And it helps to touch an emotional chord with us. So, if you can touch an emotional chord with India, you will be always more welcome and more successful in dealing with our people.

Chinese Media: Your Excellency, I would like to ask you a question about India's China policy. We know that geographically India is a country which Washington and Tokyo are trying to ... *(Inaudible)*... What do you think ... *(Inaudible)*... India's China policy?

External Affairs Minister: To tell you the truth, a lot of scholars write about it and we read it in papers as well, but nobody, neither the Japanese and the Americans have not told us to participate in an encircling manoeuvre with China. They do not even flag for us their displeasure or discouragement at the collaborations that we are doing with you and military exercises we do with you. The fact that we celebrate our relationship as a strategic, comprehensive partnership, they do not say to us why are we doing this. That is because if they did, we would say well why do you deal with China?

Some of your biggest investment is coming from Japan. I guess your biggest debt to you is owed by the United States of America. So, if they are dealing with you in their best interest and their own enlightened interest, why should we not deal with you, why should we subject ourselves to someone else? Why should we become for somebody else an element by which they can drive a better bargain with China?

We will bargain with you as friends, as partners. And there is always an exchange which should be a fair and equitable exchange between partners. We would not want to be able to load our negotiations with you on behalf of anyone else. But again we also say to you that we have no self consciousness that we have a good relationship with Japan, and you can see for instance the automobile industry, how strongly we work with Japan in the automobile industry. You see the cars in the streets of Delhi. But that is not at your cost. Just as we would not be friends with you at their cost, we are not going to be friends with them at your cost.

But sometimes there will be competition, and let me tell you where. Some people think that India should also have bullet trains. We do not have a bullet train yet. The Chinese have one model of a bullet train, Japanese have one model of a bullet train, the French have another model of a bullet train. And I think there is no harm our saying, why do not you compete and give us the best at the best price. I think that is an acceptable thing to do, to say that let us get the best from the people who have

spent money in research on this train till such time as we get to a level that we can research and develop our own train.

So, no question, we have never endorsed it. Nobody has ever encouraged us to do that. Whatever signals people read from elsewhere, we are not concerned. We are very clear. We have an open, honest relationship with China; and we have an open, honest relationship with the US and with Japan. There are many things that the US-India relationship cannot replicate, which is available to us in China-India relationship; and similarly with Japan.

When there are differences between you, we think and we always advice that we should not get involved. It is best if through dialogue those matters are settled, which is what you are trying to do where you have differences with Japan.

Chinese Media: Mr. Minister, It has been reported that Prime Minister Singh will visit China next month. It will be the first exchange of visit of the two Ministers in one year. In your opinion, what is the significance of this visit and will the two leaders sign any documents or agreements?

External Affairs Minister: I think yes, we are working very seriously on documents. Our Prime Minister makes it a point to tell us that before every visit, that his visit must involve concrete deliverables and not just be a visit for a formality. Therefore, my colleagues have to work very hard day and night to ensure that the documents that need to be signed are prepared well in time. Both sides have worked very hard since my visit.

When I came, we started many of the negotiations followed again and taken to a higher level. Premier Li was in India and we are very honoured and pleased that his first stop outside the country as Prime Minister was in India. And I think that is an important and significant indication of our relationship coming from your side. Then as you said, in the same year Prime Ministers of both countries going to the other country happened two decades ago. I think it happened in 1954 and we are now doing this in the year 2013. So, obviously, there is something very significant that has gone into the growth of our relationship. Our Prime Minister has made a personal investment in improving the relationship of our leadership with your leadership. I think that this in itself is the biggest takeaway that

this is a crescendo of visits from both sides. We would like to see even more visits from China. As you know, I signalled this morning that we are thinking of moving forward now on twinning of cities, sister cities, between our two countries, on industrial parks, which are Chinese industrial parks.

As you will know, Chinese food is the most popular food in our country - perhaps different from your Chinese food but it is Chinese food - and I hope equally Indian food is the most popular foreign food in Beijing. So, just as I said, I think we have complementarities that we just need to work on. Fundamentals are very strong but the infrastructure and the superstructure has to be developed and it is our responsibility to do it.

Chinese Media: Mr. Minister, in the just concluded Media Forum many participants suggested that our two countries should increase mutual trust. What are the main reasons behind the trust deficit between the two countries and how can the situation be improved?

External Affairs Minister: Trust is not something that you can switch on and switch off. Trust is something that is based on experience. It is based on exchanges between people. It is based on sharing thoughts, sentiments, on having positions that are common, facing challenges together and helping each other facing challenges. Learning more about each other, you will begin to trust. You do not trust strangers because you do not know enough about them. The more you know about each other, the more you know about responses and reactions, the more you begin to trust.

And if in critical moments when there is pressure on you and there is pressure on us, in those critical moments we are able to show - whether it is public pressure from within the country or it is pressure from outside globally, there is pressure from institutions, or pressure from other countries - and we withstand that pressure, that will be the way of advancing trust amongst ourselves.

Ultimately and finally, I think much more meeting together, the more you meet and talk, the more you are likely to find common ground. That is true at all levels, not just at the levels of government officials and Ministers and Heads of State and Heads of Government, but also amongst ordinary people. You know Chinese travel to the world in very large numbers,

huge, huge numbers, as tourists, as people who go out for shopping and people who go out for various other purposes. Many more Chinese need to come to India, and many more Indians need to travel to China. I think whatever we can do to facilitate this I think is important. I am going to give your Minister some recently made films in India including “3 Idiots” and I will recommend that you see more Indian films and get more attracted towards what we are doing in our country, and I think all that will bring up trust.

Chinese Media: ...(Spoke in Chinese)...

External Affairs Minister: I tell you how much I trust you, I will say yes without any interpretation. But yes, please continue.

Chinese Media: ...(*Inaudible*)... the China-India Friendship Year that will come in 2014. The year 2014 will come very soon. My question is actually something we talked about this afternoon. In the Forum we agreed that ... communication and exchanges between the two countries especially in the media sector ...(*Inaudible*)... So, my question is, in preparation for the upcoming China-India Friendship Year, has Indian side made any preparation? Our newspaper ...(*Inaudible*)... and we would like to know your plans on ...(*Inaudible*)...

External Affairs Minister: ...(*Inaudible*)... The plans are still being made and they are being prepared. But the person who is hands on preparing the plans will tell you because when they take final shape is when I come into the picture. But he will share with you.

Senior MEA Official: Thank you very much, Minister. As the Minister said, the plans are still being prepared. I will be in Beijing in the last week of September to fructify and consolidate some of these plans. The India-China Cultural Exchange Programme is being finalised also. That will give us some idea about what are the activities that we will do next year. But in general I can confirm to you that there will be a lot of exchanges between our two countries not only in the sphere of performing arts but also in the areas of films, television and hopefully media.

We want to hold the second India-China Media Forum at an early date next year. I can also tell you that we have invited China to be the guest country of honour at the International Film Festival of India which will take place in Goa in November 2014. These are some of the activities

that will take place. A listing is being prepared and hopefully will be ready by the time of our Prime Minister's visit to your country.

Chinese Media: Mr. Minister, my question is that in this era of new social media, in this era of internet we have this saying in China that everything that has a microphone ...*(Inaudible)*... And in fact because of the internet era ...*(Inaudible)*... voice your opinion. And I want ...*(Inaudible)*... any pressure on the creation ...*(Inaudible)*... of the diplomatic policies and whether the Indian Government or your Ministry are doing anything to deal with such a pressure? Or, if I may put my question this way, are you actually being able to find a balance between meeting the demands of the public ...*(Inaudible)*... creation and implementation of the government's diplomatic policies?

External Affairs Minister: I think this is a very difficult question because we do not have answers to this right now. And I am sure you do not have answers in China to this as well. That is because the systems of governance and the systems of public engagement and involvement in policy making that we have followed traditionally, you have followed traditionally in your country and we have in our country, have been in a sense bypassed by social media.

Social media strengthening these systems is a welcome thing. In some places, this social media strengthens the existing systems by making them more affordable, making them more accessible, making them more transparent, and making them more responsive. To that extent social media has been I think a great asset. But it has also in some cases tried to bypass existing systems, which is not a good thing.

People have to understand governance and structure of government, and structure of democracy, and of policy making. That can easily be undermined by social media that has no responsibility. If we are wrong in government, and if you are wrong in government, the people tell you that you are wrong by not appreciating what you have done, or by saying that what you are doing is not acceptable. But if somebody is wrong in social media, they disappear. There is no accounting by them at all.

We have had cases where irresponsible social media comments have caused migrations of huge number of young people working in another part of India back to their own State because somebody had a message

go viral which said if you do not leave, you will be attacked. Now, this is completely unacceptable. And if you try to restrict it, then people complain about censorship and they complain about lack of freedom and so on. So, we have to find a balance. Freedom comes with responsibility. Freedom is not only licence, it comes with responsibility. So, I think that both of us can share our experiences on how to deal with social media.

One thing we have accepted and we agree that if you do not give material to the social media, then it finds its own material. So, we need to populate the social media with information more easily made available by the government and by agencies of government so that there is much more information available leaving less space for irresponsible information to get in. But I think we will have to work by experience and learn how we move forward over the next few meetings of the Media Forum. You can tell us your experiences and we can tell you our experiences.

Chinese Media: Mr. Minister, I am honoured to ask the last question today.

For Chinese investors, India's seems to be a difficult market to enter. For example, Chinese telecom companies ... *(Inaudible)*... frustrated in their efforts to expanding to the Indian market. My question is, what is India's policy towards investment from China? The two countries have decided to expand bilateral trade volume to 100 billion US dollars by 2015. So, how ... *(Inaudible)*...

External Affairs Minister: I think with the telecom and electronics sector which you have mentioned is special. I do not think that the concern that has been felt by Chinese industry vis-a-vis those sectors is not common across the board on other Chinese equipment and Chinese products. Of course, periodically you will have the problem of dumping and you will have the problem of WTO, etc., but that works both ways. It could happen in China for Indian goods and here. That is something that we have both agreed we have to comply with and adhere to.

Here we are ourselves concerned. I do not think that your companies need be frustrated. I have met with them. They have even been to my own constituency and they have dealt with people in my constituency giving them computers and bicycles for girls and so on. There was a concern that is partly protection of Indian manufacturers and partly an

issue of the security issues involved in electronics. But I think we are resolving it. This is something which is of concern. Even within our own Government there were different views of how much concern should be followed and to what extent. So, I think this is only a learning experience because this is something relatively new to the Indian market. I do not think that this is something that really should worry your people. They are in touch with us; we are in communication with them. I think these matters that are being sorted out and will be resolved.

Chinese Media: Thank you. Thank you very much for your time.

External Affairs Minister: Thank you. I enjoyed talking to you and I hope that this is going to become a very important institution, contacts between media in our country with you. And I hope that these contacts will not be restricted only to meeting when the Forum meets. I hope that you will at your own levels remain in contact and in touch, and that we will have the advantage to reap more of your stuff published in our newspapers, and I hope that you can publish something that we give you. I will begin by writing something for one of your agencies, and you can print it and distribute it. I will do it before our Prime Minister comes to China. Thank you.

Chinese Media: Thank you once again.



276. Press Note of the Ministry of Commerce on measures to address trade imbalance with China.

New Delhi, September 24, 2013.

Zinc concentrates & copper concentrates, cotton yarn and cotton linter, frozen fish/linter, methanol, castor oil & gaur gum, Indian granite block and cedrus deodara seed are the most sought after items of export from India which have generated interested among Chinese businessmen. It is to be noted that purchase of zinc concentrates & copper concentrates worth USD 130 million, purchase of cotton yarn and cotton linter worth USD 93 million, purchase of frozen fish/linter worth USD 68 million, were

the prominent products for which Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) were signed during the India-China Business Matchmaking Symposium for boosting exports from India to China. The day-long meeting saw around sixty Indian companies from various sectors engaging themselves with an aim to find ways to address the trade imbalance. For this, fifteen MoUs worth USD 338 million were signed between Indian and Chinese companies here yesterday. This model will be replicated in other cities also.

This step is among various other steps initiated by both the countries in the recent past to take the trade agenda forward on different fronts. Earlier in May 2013, India and China signed three Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) on buffalo meat, fisheries and pharmaceuticals; and one agreement on feed and feed ingredients. The MoUs were signed during the visit of the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Li Keqiang to India. With the implementation of the above MoUs, export of buffalo meat, and feed and feed ingredients to China are expected to benefit. With the operationalisation of the MoU on co-operation on Pharma between China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Medicines and Health Products (CCCMHPIE) and the Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil), Indian generic drugs are expected to get market access in China.

In August 2013, when Union Minister for Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma met Chinese Minister of Commerce Mr. Gao Hucheng, the Chinese Minister assured Shri Sharma that China would make every effort to facilitate imports from India for bridging trade imbalance. Earlier, during the visit of Chinese Premier Mr. Li Keqiang to India in May 2013, both the sides while striving to realise the trade turnover target of USD 100 billion by 2015, agreed to take measures to address the issue of the trade imbalance. These included cooperation on pharmaceutical supervision including registration, stronger links between Chinese enterprises and Indian IT industry, and completion of phytosanitary negotiations on agro-products.

Major items of Indian exports to China include cotton raw & yarn, non-ferrous metals, iron ore, other ores and minerals, plastic & linoleum products, spices, Dyes/intermediates, machinery & instruments and petroleum (crude & products). Major imports from China include electronic

goods, machinery, organic chemicals, project goods, fertilizers, iron and steel, transport equipments, electric machinery (except electronics) and manufactures of metals. While on the other hand, major imports from China include electronic goods, machinery, organic chemicals, project goods, fertilizers, iron and steel, transport equipments, electric machinery (except electronics) and manufactures of metals.

The bilateral trade between both the countries reached around USD 68 billion in calendar 2012, which is less than bilateral trade in calendar 2011 (US\$ 73 billion) due to the slight slowing of economic growth in both countries. There has been fall in bilateral trade of 10.28% during the year 2012-13 but still the trade deficit for India for 2012-13 crossed USD 40 billion which is 3.49 % more than USD 39.44 billion deficit in the year 2011-12. China has emerged as our largest trading partner. India ranked 16th among the countries exporting to China while India was the 7th largest export destination for China in 2011.



277. Joint Statement issued after the Sixth China-India Financial Dialogue.

Beijing' September 27, 2013.

Based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 'Launching the Financial Dialogue between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India' signed in April, 2005, the two sides have successfully held five rounds of dialogues in April of 2006, December of 2007, January of 2009, September of 2010 and November of 2011. The Sixth China-India Financial Dialogue was held yesterday in Beijing.

During this Dialogue, the two sides held in-depth discussions on new challenges facing the global economy, macro-economic situations and policies in China and India, progress on structural reforms in both countries, cooperation under multilateral frameworks as well as bilateral financial cooperation. Both sides agreed to strengthen regular communication and coordination at various levels on macro-economic policies and major international economic and financial issues.

Macro-economic situation and policy

Both sides recognized that global economic recovery was still fragile with downside risks remaining high. Volatility in financial markets has also intensified. With growth picking up in advanced economies, there is a need for them to collaborate with Emerging Market Economies (EMEs) on the pace and timing of recalibration of their unconventional monetary policies and strengthen communication with the market to avoid negative spillovers. As a group, the EMEs have continued to grow but the pace of growth has slowed in several countries. Under these circumstances, China and India called for greater international coordination on economic policies, particularly in the implementation of policy measures adopted by the G20 to boost growth and employment for promoting strong, sustainable and balanced growth of the world economy.

Macro-economic Policy and Structural Reforms in China and India

Both sides recognized the importance of sound macro-economic policies and sustained structural reforms for improving long-term growth prospects. The overall economic situation in China is stable and has the foundations to sustain sound development as new progress has been made in structural adjustment, consumption has realized steady growth, prices have maintained stability and employment situation has remained sound. The fiscal policy has focused on adjusting the expenditure structure, reducing administrative spending, supporting structural adjustment and improvement of people's well-being, and providing tax incentives to small and micro enterprises. With enhanced liquidity management, the monetary policy has neither been relaxed nor tightened. The Chinese government will continue to strive for economic development while maintaining stability, and keeping the continuity and stability of the macroeconomic policies as well as making these policies more targeted and coordinated. The government will also fine-tune the policies at an appropriate time and by an appropriate degree according to changes in the economic performance. China will constantly deepen reform and opening up, promote economic transformation and upgrading, release domestic demand potential, stimulate market vitality and enhance the quality and efficiency of the economic development.

Notwithstanding the persistence of global economic meltdown, India's economic fundamentals remain strong. India has adopted bold macro-economic and fiscal management policies that seek to attain the twin objectives of inclusive development and high, sustained economic growth. The Union Budget (2013-14) renewed the Government's commitment towards fiscal responsibility. It also incorporated a slew of measures aimed at boosting investments, controlling inflation, creating high quality infrastructure and ensuring comprehensive social security for the poor. The Government is continuously undertaking initiative to improve the performance of the manufacturing sector. In a recent review of this, the Government has also liberalized several sectoral caps in FDI. Several monetary measures have already been taken by the Reserve Bank of India. The effects of persistent economic reforms undertaken in the last year have started to manifest and the full effect will eventually be seen in the overall GDP growth. India remains committed towards strengthening and deepening its reform process.

The two sides agreed to actively explore opportunities for cooperation in the process of their respective structural reforms.

Cooperation under Multilateral Frameworks

Both sides acknowledged the effectiveness of bilateral coordination under multilateral frameworks such as the G-20, BRICS and international financial institutions. Both sides agreed to work together to promote the implementation of the important consensus reached in the G-20 St. Petersburg summit, strengthen the momentum of global recovery, push for faster economic growth, generate better jobs, and build on the foundation for long-term growth. Both countries agreed to intensify cooperation with other BRICS member countries towards tangible results on the initiatives on BRICS Development Bank and Contingency Reserve Arrangement in the next BRICS summit. Both sides are committed to pushing forward reforms in the international financial institutions and urge other countries to fulfil their commitment of implementing the 2010 IMF Quota and Governance Reform expeditiously and to complete the next general quota review by January 2014. Both sides urged the international financial institutions to increase their lending capacity to developing countries so as to expand the global aggregate demand.

Bilateral Financial Cooperation

Both sides recognized the importance of strengthened fiscal and financial cooperation in the expansion of bilateral trade and investment. The two sides agreed to maintain close communication, and work for more opportunities and better environment to enhance bilateral financial cooperation. Financial regulators from both countries exchanged views on market access regulation policies for foreign banks, agreed to support banks to establish branches and subsidiaries in each other's market, and advocated deeper cooperation between financial institutions from the two countries, especially in areas of infrastructure investment and financing.

Both sides reiterated their commitment to strengthen the China-India Financial Dialogue, enhance mutual cooperation, deepen mutual trust, and promote bilateral fiscal and financial communication and cooperation. Both sides agreed to hold the 7th India-China Financial Dialogue in 2014 in New Delhi.



278. Fourth Meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs.

Beijing, September 30, 2013.

1. The 4th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs was held in Beijing on 29-30 September 2013. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Gautam Bambawale, Joint Secretary (East Asia) and comprised of representatives of the Ministries of External Affairs, Defence and Home Affairs as well as members of the Indian Army and Indo-Tibetan Border Police. The Chinese delegation was led by Mr. Ouyang Yujing, Director General, Department of Boundary and Oceanic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and comprised of representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and National Defence of the People's Republic of China. The Indian delegation called on Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.

2. The talks were held in a candid, constructive and forward looking atmosphere. Reviewing recent developments in the India-China border areas, especially in the Western Sector, the two delegations agreed that peace and tranquillity on the border is the basis for the continued expansion of India-China relations. To this end, both sides discussed further measures to maintain stability on the border, building on existing understandings and arrangements.
3. The 5th meeting of the Working Mechanism will be held in India at a mutually convenient time.



279. Opening Remarks by Foreign Secretary at Media Briefing on Prime Minister's visits to Russia and China.

New Delhi, October 18, 2013.

On the first leg of his two-nation tour, Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, will pay an Official Visit to Moscow from 20 to 22 October, for the 14th Annual India-Russia Summit.

The practice of having an Annual Summit between India and Russia was institutionalized in 2000 with the signing of the Declaration of the Strategic Partnership between India and Russia. The annual event exemplifies the 'Special and Privileged' Strategic Partnership between our two countries. Our Prime Minister is no stranger to Russia – this is the tenth Summit he will attend, the fifth in Moscow. He has also attended several multilateral events in Russia, including the G-20 Summit held in St. Petersburg in June.

Russia has been a steadfast friend and partner for over six decades. It has been a source of our defence needs, space program and high technologies. It has extended friendship and support through challenging times in India's history. This partnership is today a key priority of India's foreign policy.

The relationship is supported by an elaborate, multi-layered and very effective mechanism which allows us to broaden and deepen our interaction continually. In the run-up to the Summit, we have had an intense exchanges.. This year, External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid has visited Moscow twice: the last visit was in October 2013 for the nineteenth Session of the Inter-Governmental Commission, which is co-chaired by Deputy PM Rogozin. EAM also had a very productive meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov. Home Minister of India Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde has visited Moscow in April. Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Anand Sharma has visited Russia thrice, to energize trade and economic ties and business-to-business links. Our National Security Adviser too visited Russia thrice during the year, while the Russian National Security Adviser visited India in January 2013. The Chairperson of the Russian Federation Council visited India in February 2013. In addition, we have had numerous official level engagements. For instance, we have Foreign Office Consultations with Russia on 17 different subject areas, reflecting the convergence in our approaches on regional and global issues.

What this robust exchange indicates is a deep, rock solid and time-tested relationship, with one of our closest global partners. Today, India-Russia cooperation is truly multi-dimensional, covering the fields of defence, energy, space, high-technology, trade & economy, science, culture and people-to-people exchanges.

Russia is a key partner for us in the field of defence. In recent years, our military technical cooperation has evolved into joint design, development and production of defence systems such as fifth generation fighters and multi-role transport aircraft. Earlier this year, we received our stealth frigate INS Trikand and we are now awaiting the commissioning of INS Vikramaditya next month. Our Armed Forces are holding the INDRA 2013 exercise in Rajasthan, as we speak.

The Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant exemplifies our close cooperation in the field of nuclear energy. The Unit 1 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant has been completed and attained criticality in July this year. Unit 2 at Kudankulam should be ready in the first half of 2014. On Units 3 & 4, our companies are finalizing documents.

Last year witnessed a 24.5% rise in bilateral trade, crossing USD 11 billion in 2012 for the first time. Investment is also emerging as an important focus of our bilateral ties. Russia is an important partner in the field of hydro-carbons and OVL is participating in two projects – as 20% partner in the Sakhalin 1 project and as 100% owner and operator of Imperial Energy in Tomsk Region.

Coming back to the visit program, the Prime Minister shall be arriving in Moscow on October 20th. October 21st is the main engagement day where he shall be meeting President Putin for official talks and a working lunch. The Prime Minister will the same day be conferred with an Honorary Doctorate by the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). As is customary, a Joint Statement will be issued at the conclusion of the talks, touching on bilateral as well as global issues. We expect a few agreements to be signed in diverse areas like science and technology, energy efficiency and standards. Also, on the margins of the Summit, we will have a meeting of the newly re-constituted CEO's Council.

Following the visit to Russia, Prime Minister will pay an official visit to Beijing from 22-24 October, 2013. This is the Prime Minister's second bilateral visit to Beijing. Previously he had visited China in January 2008. Also this is the second bilateral meeting between the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Li Keqiang during the course of this year. You would recall that Prime Minister Li Keqiang was in India for a visit in May 2013. It is for the first time since 1954 that the Prime Ministers of India and China will have visited each others' country in the same calendar year.

The programme for the visit is broadly that Prime Minister will reach Beijing in the evening of 22 October, 2013 and will be received ceremonially the next day morning at the Great Hall of the People by his Chinese counterpart. They will then have discussions both in limited as well as delegation level format. Premier Li Keqiang will host a banquet lunch. PM will also be meeting the Chairman of the National People's Congress Zhang Dejiang in the afternoon. In the evening, Prime Minister will be hosted by President Xi Jinping at a banquet dinner. On 24 October, the Prime Minister will address the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China. So he has a rather tight schedule in Beijing.

The meetings with the Chinese leadership have a broad agenda and are likely to cover all aspects of our bilateral relations in addition to regional and global issues of importance.

India and China have an elaborate architecture of engagement and dialogue which covers the entire gamut of bilateral relations. Prime Minister had met President Xi Jinping on the margins of the BRICS Summit in Durban in March, 2013. Also this year itself, the External Affairs Minister has met his counterpart on four occasions. The Defence Minister visited China in July. The Special Representatives held their 16th round of talks on the boundary question in June at Beijing. The Strategic Dialogue at the level of Foreign Secretary and Chinese Vice Minister was held in August, 2013. We have also had the first India-China Dialogue on Afghanistan and the first India-China Dialogue on Central Asia. The intensity and breadth of the interactions is reflective of the importance that both countries place on the relationship.

Maintenance of peace, tranquility and stability of our border is an important factor in our bilateral ties and it is expected that this would be an important aspect of the discussions as it is also the basis on which the rest of our bilateral relationship can proceed and grow.

Prime Minister has, on several occasions previously, emphasized that there is sufficient space in the world for both India and China to meet their developmental aspirations. Therefore, even as we pursue our economic and social goals we have expanded our bilateral ties. In particular, economic exchanges have emerged as an important underpinning of our bilateral relations. Both India and China are aiming to achieve their commonly set target of US\$ 100 billion in terms of bilateral trade by 2015 and are also striving to ensure balance of trade flows. The possibility of Chinese investment in India through the mechanism of an industrial park is being explored. During the visit of Prime Minister to Beijing, the second meeting of the India-China CEOs Forum is also taking place in Beijing and PM and PM Li Keqiang are expected to receive the recommendations of the CEOs to expand economic linkages.

As 2014 is the 60th anniversary of the enunciation of Panchsheel is designated as the Year of India-China Friendly Exchanges, measures relating to people-to-people exchanges during the next year are also areas where we see possibilities of greater cooperation. The 1st India-

China media Forum was successfully held in New Delhi and we intend to have this as an annual feature. We are also pursuing avenues of cultural cooperation.

At the culmination of the visit, a Joint Statement will be issued summarizing the major areas in our bilateral ties. It is also expected that some agreements would be signed on issues which we are currently working on and hope to conclude during the visit.

Both the visit to Russia and to China manifest the priority we place on regular high level interactions in our engagements with these two very important countries.



280. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary on Prime Minister's visits to Russia and China .

New Delhi, October 19, 2013.

Please see Document No 538



281. Prime Minister's statement to media after delegation level talks with the Chinese Premier.

New Delhi, October 23, 2013.

Your Excellency Premier Li,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media

I am delighted to be in Beijing once again at the invitation of Premier Li. I am touched by the warm welcome and the generous hospitality of the Government and the people of China. I recalled to Premier Li how much India appreciated his decision to make India his first overseas destination after taking over as Premier. This year, I have had the privilege of meeting President Xi Jinping and Premier Li on a number of occasions on the

margins of multilateral meetings, and I am delighted to have another opportunity of meeting them during this visit.

Premier Li and I have just concluded a very productive round of talks and reached a number of important understandings.

First and foremost, we agreed that the prosperity and progress of 2.5 billion Indian and Chinese people would be a major factor of Asian resurgence and global prosperity and stability. As leaders of large re-emerging nations, pursuing socio-economic progress in a rapidly changing and uncertain global environment, we have resolved to realize the full promise of our partnership and maintain the friendliest of relations. This will be our strategic vision.

Second, we agreed that peace and tranquillity on our borders must remain the foundation for growth in the India-China relationship, even as we move forward the negotiations towards a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement to the India-China Boundary Question. This will be our strategic benchmark.

Third, we agreed that, as large neighbours following independent foreign policies, the relationships pursued by India and China with other countries must not become a source of concern for each other. This will be our strategic reassurance.

Accordingly, I suggested to Premier Li that we do things that enhance mutual trust, expand common interest and deepen mutual understanding. I received his full support for this roadmap.

To build mutual trust, we have agreed to enhance transparency and strengthen strategic communication at all levels, including, as I said, on our shared neighbourhood. I flagged our interest in continued and expanded cooperation on trans-border rivers and received reassurances from Premier Li. We decided to encourage and institutionalize greater exchanges between the armed forces of our two countries.

The Agreement on Border Defence Cooperation that we have just signed will add to the existing instruments to ensure peace, stability and predictability on our borders.

Premier Li was receptive to my concern about the unsustainable trade imbalance between our two countries and we have agreed to explore

avenues to bridge this gap. We are taking forward the suggestion made by Premier Li in New Delhi for a Chinese industrial park to act as a magnet for Chinese investment in India. We are also exploring the feasibility of the BCIM Economic Corridor connecting our two countries via the southern Silk Road.

We are determined to inject new dynamism into our economic relations, by working with wider stakeholders. Even as Premier Li and I were holding our discussions, the India-China CEOs' Forum was meeting here under the same roof.

To foster mutual understanding, we decided to encourage provincial and sub-regional exchanges, institutionalize the High-Level Media Forum, continue youth exchanges for the next five years and celebrate the year 2014, which is the 60th anniversary of the enunciation of the Panchsheel principles, as the "Year of India-China Friendly Exchanges". I appreciate China's cooperation on Nalanda University.

I conveyed to Premier Li our commitment to visa simplification to facilitate travel of Chinese nationals to India and expressed hope that China will also facilitate such exchanges.

We also had candid and constructive discussions on regional and global issues of importance to India and China. This is one of the promising developments in our relationship.

The Agreements and MOUs signed today in various areas — covering defence cooperation, road transport sector, trans-border rivers, power equipment, cultural exchanges, Nalanda University and sister-city linkages — will build on our impressive range of cooperation.

As Premier Li has said, India and China are two ancient civilisations. We account for 2.5 billion people. When India and China shake hands, the world takes notice. I believe that my visit to China has put our relations on a path of stable and fast growth. I thank Premier Li once again and look forward to my other engagements with the Chinese leadership and the public today and tomorrow. It has been a most enjoyable stay in this beautiful city and I thank Premier Li and the people of China for their hospitality.

I thank you



282. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary and Ambassador of India to China on Prime Minister's ongoing visit.

Beijing, October 23, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here. We have here with us Foreign Secretary who will briefly outline to you a sense of what were the discussions today. Along with her is our Ambassador Jaishankar who has shepherded Indo-China relations during the last four years plus. On his right is Mr. Gautam Bambawale who is the Joint Secretary and our chief point person on relations with China as far as the Ministry of External Affairs is concerned.

I would request Foreign Secretary to give you a brief understanding of what was the sense of the discussion so far today. Then I think she will also request Ambassador Jaishankar to indicate about the major agreements and the main points of those. Following that we will open the floor for questions. We have about 30 minutes because they have to go for another function after this.

We will have another briefing at the end of today's discussions, that is late in the night at about 8 o'clock, where you can ask any supplementary questions. With those introductory words, I will ask Foreign Secretary to make her opening remarks.

Foreign Secretary (Shrimati Sujatha Singh): Good afternoon friends. As Akbar said, I am going to try and give you a sense of what lay beneath the meeting today, the atmospherics.

You know that we had over three hours of interactions - one hour at the restricted level, about one hour at the delegation level, followed by lunch. I can confirm to you that we had extremely useful and constructive discussions.

China is one of India's most important and complex strategic partners. In the course of the talks, we covered the entire gamut of issues at a bilateral level, at a regional level, and at the larger global level.

There was also a CEOs meeting that was taking place at the same time to address what we could do to enhance trade between the two countries, especially exports from India.

What are the important points that came up? Strategic communication between the two countries covering the entire spectrum of relations, the entire gamut of issues - boundary issues, rivers, question of terrorism, regional developments, economic issues. Prime Minister suggested a three-point roadmap to take relations forward: 1. Enhance mutual trust. 2. Expand common interests. 3. Deepen mutual understanding.

Now, what do we mean by enhanced mutual trust? We mean enhancing the strategic communication at all levels from the leadership levels, including in the shared neighbourhood. Then there were the nine agreements that were signed of which the two most important agreements are on the BDCA which implies increased exchanges amongst the militaries, and the trans-border rivers. Expand common interests through WTO, BRICS cooperation, trade, then you have the BCIM, linkage and connectivity issues.

Underlying all the interactions was this very palpable sense of this being an extremely important meeting, something that the Prime Minister referred to also in his press statement, of relations between India and China embodying relations between 2.5 billion people, two old civilisations and two close neighbours; and relations between India and China being indispensable for Asia's resurgence and a must for stability in a dynamic Asia. To quote, 'no other bilateral relationship can match in scale, scope and time span than that between India and China'. And this is why we believe that India-China relations will be amongst the most important relations of the 21st century.

I am going to ask Ambassador Jaishankar to expand on the two most important agreements that we signed today and a very important component was also the people-to-people relations which is set to expand at all levels. You are already aware that 1954, 59 years back, was the last time we saw an exchange of Prime Ministers in the same calendar year, and there are a slew of programmes meant to increase people-to-people relations. I will come back to that at the end of the press briefing as to how that is doing already and set to grow.

Ambassador to China (Dr. S. Jaishankar): I think all of you would have seen the text of the two agreements that we are talking about – the BDCA and the Trans-border Rivers Agreement.

On the BDCA, let me explain to you the four big underlying concepts of the BDCA. The first concept is that there is actually a lot of activity on and near the border, not necessarily military activity. So you have a set of understandings which relate to management of activity near or on the border. This includes for example exchanging information on unmarked mines, dealing with smuggling of arms, wildlife, other contrabands, locating personnel and livestock which is actually not an infrequent occurrence, and responding to natural disasters. I think I do not have to remind any of you how real that possibility is now. That is one concept of dealing with non-military issues on the border.

The second is regarding meetings on the border itself. This is primarily of course between the border and military personnel. Here we have a set of meetings envisaged starting with border personnel on the border, then between the military regions - in our case the Commands and in their case there are two military regions that we deal with – then between the Ministries, periodic meetings between the Ministries of Defence. And then these two mechanisms we have, the primary mechanism is the Working Mechanism on Consultation and Coordination on Border Affairs which is actually headed by Gautam here on our side, and the Annual Defence Dialogue which is headed by the Defence Secretary. So, this is a kind of graduated scale of meetings that we are looking at.

In addition to the meetings, we are also looking at how to strengthen communications. Here we have two broad approaches, one is at the border. We establish border personnel meeting points and eventually in all sectors. At the moment we do not have it in all sectors. Secondly, we have a hotline between the military headquarters of the two countries. That is the communications side which is the parallel activity to the meetings which take place on a more structured and formal basis.

The third concept is actually to get the troops on the border to get a little more comfortable with each other. So, you have issues like joint celebrations, marking days, doing non-contact sports, cultural activities, and even small-scale tactical exercises.

Finally we come to the fourth concept which is actually the military dimension. In the military dimension there are three important points. One is to formalise an understanding we had that we should not be

following or tailing patrols of the other side, particularly in areas where there is no common understanding of the Line of Actual Control. The other is that when we encounter situations, what we call doubtful situations, then each side has the right to seek clarification from the other side. The third is that when despite one and two if you actually have face-to-face situations in areas where there is no common understanding of the Line of Actual Control, then there is a commitment that both sides would exercise maximum self restraint. This in essence is actually the substance of the BDCA that we have signed today.

On the trans-border rivers MoU, we actually have a mechanism called the expert-level mechanism where hydrological on two rivers – Brahmaputra and Sutlej – is exchanged during flood season. In addition to that we discuss emergency management if such a situation arises. This MoU has three important points. First of all it recognises the trans-border rivers, related natural resources, and the environment are of value to all riparian countries.

The second is in terms of hydrological data, the period for which we get data has been expanded. The third is that the Chinese side and we have reached an agreement that we would exchange views on other issues of mutual interest. Many of you know that we have other concerns in regard to this.

Till now our trans-border dialogue was largely limited to hydrological data. Now under this MoU, the nature of the dialogue has widened. This mechanism would be used to discuss other issues. I think some of that was actually touched upon in the discussions today. The Chinese Premier did indicate to our Prime Minister that China would take a very constructive view and would have a very open mind in discussing issues of concern to us.

That I think would be the explanation in a sense for the second agreement.

Official Spokesperson: Before we open the floor for questions, I just wanted to mention to you that apart from these agreements, in the next hour or so we will put up on the website and email to you all the other agreements.

We now have about 15 minutes or a little less than that for questions. I suggest that you limit your questions in this round to just a few and we will come back and clarify.

Q: I just wanted to ask maybe Ambassador Jaishankar since he explained the agreements. Does the border agreement in any way affect our right to build any kind of border infrastructure/infrastructure along the Line of Actual Control?

Ambassador to China: The short answer is, no. The slightly longer answer is that in the agreement there is actually a very specific mention of something called the principle of mutual and equal security. The principle of mutual and equal security is there in all our previous agreements with the Chinese going back to 1993, 1996 and 2005. Essentially what that means is that there is recognition that the situation on the border is asymmetrical, that what is there on their side is different from what is there on our side. So, each side in a sense will approach its security in its own way. I think if you take that 'no' as the direct answer and this as the additional explanation, I hope I have answered your question.

Q: Madam, during your press conference just before you left, you maintained and said very clearly that Arunachal is an integral part of India. Now, what was the Chinese response, or what has been the Chinese response on this issue because visa has come up several times in these recent weeks?

Foreign Secretary: Arunachal is an integral part of India. There is no doubt about that. Are you asking me a question about stapled visas?**Question:** Yes.

Foreign Secretary: Yes, it did come up. It was raised.

Q: And what was the Chinese response?

Foreign Secretary: That is something that will be under discussion. and I am not in a position to go into further details at this point of time.

Q: Madam, you mentioned that issues of regional importance, events that affect us in our neighbourhood were discussed, the entire gamut of issues was discussed. In this context, India's concerns over terrorism coming from Pakistan, sourced from Pakistan, sometimes supported by

agencies of Pakistan, did we put this across and ask whether the Chinese could use their influence with Pakistan to try and get a better outcome from Pakistan on these issues?

Foreign Secretary: Without going into details as to what exactly we told our Chinese interlocutors and what exactly they told us, you will appreciate we cannot go into those details, I can assure you that the issue did come up. We put it squarely on the table and we did discuss it.

Q: Madam, just going ahead with that Arunachal stapled visa issue, are we right to conclude that there was no categorical assurances which was given by China to India?

Foreign Secretary: I have told you what I can share with you at this point of time. This is an issue on the table now and we will take it further.

Q: Madam, the Prime Minister said that the two countries have agreed that a third country would not influence our internal discussion, our relationship between the two. Does it mean that we cannot raise the issue of PoK or Pakistan with China?

Foreign Secretary: We did raise the issue of PoK with China.

Q: Ambassador Jaishankar, can you share specific details on what are the additional designated places where troops would be meeting? Are there any specific details that you can give us of the number of locations has increased by how many? Also, on the liberalisation of the visa regime which did not happen, what was the reason?

Official Spokesperson: One question per person please. You choose one of those questions.

Q: The first one.

Ambassador to China: On the first one, we have just concluded the BDCA. Consequent to the BDCA there will be further discussions including through the working mechanism, and I think some of those details will still have to be worked out.

Q: Ambassador, yesterday off line you were talking about ...

Ambassador to China: If I mentioned it off line, you cannot ask me.

Q: Okay. I suppose we would have raised the issue of cross-border terrorism and regional terrorism. What was China's response on this

because the impression is that they have not been very responsive to our concerns?

Foreign Secretary: These issues are discussed by us with all our strategic partners. It is an ongoing discussion that we carry on because terrorism is an ongoing issue.

Q: Article 1 says, 'the two sides shall implement the agreement without prejudice to their respective positions'. How long do we agree to differ with each other?

Ambassador to China: I do not think we have put a time line on how long we are going to take about this. But the fact is that at the moment since we do not have an agreement on the alignment of the Line of Actual Control, we do not want to let that stop us from cooperating on issues or working together on issues we are working on. But if you ask me to predict when we would agree, we cannot.

Q: Ambassador Jaishankar, this agreement has come into effect today. Suppose it was there before Depsang, how differently would it have been handled because of the details now agreed upon between the two countries? Can you tell us how it is a step forward?

Ambassador to China: That is very very hypothetical. There are a lot of things ...

Q: How will it help avoid a next Depsang? You can answer that.

Ambassador to China: That is even more hypothetical.

I do understand the sense of your questions. The sense of your question is that if you look at three of the key concepts that I mentioned which is when you look at not following on tailing patrols, it clearly makes for a safer situation on the border. When you have a provision which says, when one party does something which the other party has questions about and has the right, once you accept that the other party has a right to raise clarification, then you set up the basis of some communication between the two parties.

The third is that when there is a very explicit recognition that if you have a face-to-face situation and at the highest levels of the Government people are telling you please exercise maximum self restraint, then I would

imagine in disciplined armies people exercise maximum self restraint. So, I think each one of these has a value because in a sense these become operational instructions to the forces on the ground. So, it does impinge on behaviour, it does create a certain mindset when the two sides occasionally encounter each other on the border. I think that kind of answers your question.

Official Spokesperson: With this we come to the end of this interaction, the next one will be at eight o'clock. I have the list of those who have asked and we could not respond to. They will be asked first, and then the others will be responded to.

Thank you very much



283. Joint Statement- A vision for future development of India-China strategic and cooperative partnership.

Beijing, October 23, 2013.

1. At the invitation of H.E. Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh paid an official visit to China from 22-24 October 2013. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh called on H.E. Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China and held talks with Premier Mr. Li Keqiang. He also met with H.E. Mr. Zhang Dejiang, Chairman of the National People's Congress.
2. The two sides held wide ranging talks on bilateral, regional and international issues of common interest and reached broad consensus. Recalling the important understandings reached between leaders of the two countries this year, the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to take forward their Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity. This would be done by following the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence [*Panchsheel*] and displaying mutual respect and sensitivity to each other's concerns and aspirations. The exchange of visits

by the Prime Minister of India and the Premier of China within the same calendar year was the first since 1954 and has great significance.

3. The leaders recognized that India and China are poised to enter a new stage of economic engagement based on pragmatic cooperation and mutually advantageous policies and practices. They expected the Strategic Economic Dialogue during its meeting in November/December 2013 to work out specific projects and initiatives in areas that have already been broadly agreed upon. The Joint Economic Group will continue to expand the bilateral economic cooperation and promote a balanced growth of bilateral trade. Its Working Groups will expeditiously discharge the mandate given to them in pursuit of those objectives. The two sides agreed to look into the prospects of a bilateral Regional Trade Arrangement (RTA). They will also review the state of the negotiation on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Efforts to conclude a framework agreement for the establishment of industrial zones to provide platforms of cluster type development for enterprises of the two countries would be expedited. Economic agreements signed at the conclusion of the talks reflect the progress made since May 2013.
4. Pursuant to the understanding reached between the two leaders in May 2013, India and China have each established a Study Group on the BCIM [Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar] Economic Corridor. The visit of the Chinese delegation to India in this regard was noted as a positive step. Further discussions on concepts and alignment of the economic corridor are envisaged. Both India and China would continue to discuss with the other parties to this initiative, and hold the first BCIM Joint Study Group meeting in coming December to study the specific programs on building the BCIM Economic Corridor.
5. Special Representatives, who have been charged with exploring a framework of settlement of the India-China boundary question, were encouraged by the two leaders to continue their efforts in that direction. Peace and tranquility on the India-China border

was recognized as an important guarantor for the development and continued growth of bilateral relations. Building on previous agreements signed in 1993, 1996 and 2005 that recognize the principle of mutual and equal security, the two countries signed a Border Defence Cooperation Agreement that will strengthen maintenance of stability on the border.

6. Defence exchanges and military exercises are important in building greater trust and confidence. The holding of a counter-terrorism exercise in November 2013 underlines the shared desire of both Governments to enhance mutual understanding. Exchanges and visits agreed upon by the Defence Ministers of the two countries in July 2013 will be implemented step by step.
7. The Indian side deeply appreciated the resources and efforts of the Chinese Government in making available data on and emergency management of the trans-border rivers. The leaders welcomed the signing of a MoU on Strengthening Cooperation on Trans-border Rivers. The two sides agreed to further strengthen cooperation and, within the Expert Level Mechanism, work together on provision of flood-season hydrological data and emergency management, and exchange views on other issues of mutual interest.
8. The shared goal of an expanded engagement requires facilitating greater people-to-people contacts and exchanges. The Program of Cultural Exchange for the years 2013-2015 which includes art and culture, cultural heritage, youth affairs, education and sports, media, publications and mass communications was also signed. This would be supported by sister-city relationships that have been concluded initially on a pilot basis.
9. In addition to marking 2014 as a Year of Friendly Exchanges, India and China will discuss with Myanmar appropriate ways of commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence [Panchsheel].
10. The two leaders discussed political and economic issues of regional and global significance, including those with a potential

to affect the growth and development prospects of their respective nations. They agreed to further strengthen coordination and cooperation in multilateral forums including Russia-India-China, BRICS, and G-20 to jointly tackle global issues such as climate change, international terrorism, food and energy security, and to establish a fair and equitable international political and economic system. They encouraged the various mechanisms and dialogues covering relevant issues to meet regularly to ensure a proper appreciation of each other's concerns and interests.

11. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh expressed his appreciation for the warmth of his reception and the hospitality extended by the Chinese Government. He invited Premier Mr. Li Keqiang to visit India at a time of mutual convenience.

List of Agreements/MoUs signed between India and China during Prime Minister's Official Visit to China (October 23, 2013).

October 23, 2013.

S. No.	Name of Agreement / MoU	Indian Signatory	Chinese Signatory	Gist of Agreement / MOU
1	Agreement on Border Defence Cooperation	Shri R.K. Mathur, Defence Secretary	Lt. Gen. Sun Jianguo, Deputy Chief of General Staff, PLA	An additional confidence building measure to ensure peace and tranquility on the border.
2	MoU on Nalanda University	Smt. Sujatha Singh, Foreign Secretary	Mr. Wei Wei, Ambassador of China to India	Cooperation on Nalanda as part of East Asia Summit process.
3	MOU to Strengthen Cooperation on Trans-Border Rivers	Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China	Mr. Chen Lei, Minister, Ministry of Water Resources	Provides for expanded cooperation on trans-border rivers.
4	Cultural Exchange Programme 2013-15	Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China	Mr. Yang Zhijin, Vice Minister, Ministry of Culture	A listing of cultural exchanges till 2015.
5	MoU on Cooperation in Road Transport and Highways	Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China	Mr. Yang Chuantong, Minister, Ministry of Transport	Enabling agreement for cooperation in the roads sector.

6	MoU on Power Equipment Service Centres in India	Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China	Mr. Wu Xinxiong, Administrator, National Energy Administration	Provides for establishment in India of Chinese power equipment service centres.
7	Agreement between Delhi-Beijing on Establishment of Sister City Relationship	Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China	Mr. Li Shixiang, Vice Mayor, Beijing Municipality	Establishes sister city relations between Delhi and Beijing
8	Agreement between Bengaluru - Chengdu on Establishment of Sister City Relationship	Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China	Mr. Ge Honglin, Mayor of Chengdu	Establishes sister city relations between Bengaluru and Chengdu
9	Agreement between Kolkata - Kunming on Establishment of Sister City Relationship	Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China	Mr. Li Wenrong, Mayor of Kunming	Establishes sister city relations between Kolkata and Kunming



284. Prime Minister's responses to Chinese media resident in India ahead of his official visit to China.

New Delhi, October 23, 2013.

Q.1 : When China's Premier Li Keqiang visited India in May, the two Governments agreed to promote the construction of BCIM Economic Corridor. What will Gol do to promote the BCIM Economic Corridor?

Ans. 1: India is promoting regional connectivity for balanced economic and infrastructure development within our country and accelerated integration with our neighbourhood, including with Southeast Asia. We believe that the BCIM Economic Corridor can potentially reinforce our existing connectivity initiatives and we have expressed our support in principle to the idea during Premier Li Keqiang's visit to India. To take the idea forward, we need to first get the support of the other two countries, namely Bangladesh and Myanmar and together study the various practical elements of such a corridor, its alignment, funding, responsibility of member countries, economic potential, soft infrastructure requirement, etc. Following our agreement during Premier Li's visit to set up a Joint Study Group of all four countries, we have set up the Indian component of this JSG. India will participate with great enthusiasm in its deliberations.

Q.2: More and more Chinese companies are investing in India. Some local governments in India also want to attract more investment from China. Will the Indian Central Government do something to construct the China Industrial Zone this or next year.

Ans.2: India faces an unsustainable imbalance in its trade with China. One of the ways of overcoming the trade deficit is for India to attract larger flows of Foreign Direct Investment from China. We are happy that more Chinese firms are looking to India as an investment destination. During his visit to India in May 2013, Premier Li suggested that we look at the option of establishing a Chinese Industrial Park in India where companies and firms from China could cluster together. We welcome this idea. Recently, a Chinese delegation visited India and had good discussions with our concerned officials. We have also shown them a few possible sites for a Chinese Industrial Park. We will work with the Chinese side in implementing the idea.

Q.3: What are your views about the prospect of India-China cooperation in the BRICS framework? Can you give some specific suggestions? Could you brief us about progress of India's capital implementation of the BRICS Development Bank?

Ans. 3: BRICS cooperation draws strength from bilateral relationships between its individual members, including between India and China, which have acquired significant depth and substance. There are many functional areas of cooperation such as Urbanization, Agriculture, Health, Science and Technology under BRICS in which India and China find synergies.

It is a matter of satisfaction that the BRICS Development Bank, which was first mooted during the New Delhi Summit in March 2012, has registered significant progress. There is now agreement on key issues. I hope that BRICS technical experts would be able to resolve the remaining issues before the next Summit. Setting up of the New Development Bank would send a strong signal of collective capacity of BRICS to help each other as well as other developing countries to address challenges relating to deficit of long-term infrastructure financing. Another important BRICS initiative is the Contingent Reserve Arrangement, which will help stimulate trade among our countries.

Q.4 : China has accumulated lot of skill and experience on High Speed Railway (HSR) and launched cooperation with Thailand. What will be India's plan of developing HSR and how is the potential of bilateral cooperation?

Ans.4: We are aware of China's High Speed Railway development. India is currently undertaking techno-economic studies on HSR. We have not yet made a decision on whether to go forward with construction of HSR in our current stage of development. Meanwhile, the Railway authorities of India and China have been in touch with each other and are considering cooperation in station development, heavy haul freight traffic and raising the speed of passenger trains on existing tracks.

Q.5 : India-China relations have witnessed enormous development in the past 10 years. Which part of bilateral ties makes you most satisfied and proud? What message will you give the new generation Chinese leadership?

And

It has been more than 5 years since your first official visit to China. What are your main expectations from your upcoming visit to China?

Ans.5: During the past 9 years that I have been Prime Minister, I have attempted to put India-China relations on a stable growth path. Working together with the Chinese leadership, my attempt has been to create a forward looking agenda for our bilateral relations. There has been tremendous increase in our economic exchanges as both India and China themselves have grown and prospered. We have also managed our differences and have kept our border region tranquil. At the same time, we have not allowed our differences to come in the way of expanding our cooperation in diverse areas. Stability and predictability in our relations has proved invaluable as both India and China address their internal priorities, particularly growth and development of 2.5 billion people.

My last visit to China five years ago came before the onset of the financial crisis and the global economic meltdown. Today, despite the fragile global economic situation, India and China continue to grow, albeit slowly. China also has a new Government in place now. I have already had useful meetings with President Xi and Premier Li earlier this year. I hope to utilize my visit to get to know the new leadership better and to work with

them to consolidate the all round progress in bilateral relations and put them on a firm trajectory of sustained growth.

Q. 6: Could you brief us on the progress of the discussion of Regional Trading Arrangement (RTA) between China and India?

Ans. 6: We have asked our Commerce Ministers to explore the idea of a Regional Trading Arrangement, for which some studies were conducted a few years ago. I am sure the Commerce Ministers will continue to discuss this idea. But I must be honest that there is a great deal of concern in our industry, given the large and growing deficit in our trade with China. When conditions are more propitious and trade is more even, we will find it more feasible to discuss an RTA or an FTA between our countries.

Q. 7: What is your view on the prospects of Border Defence Cooperation between China and India? How do you evaluate the border talks between Special Representatives?

Ans. 7: The Boundary Question between India and China is complex and sensitive. We have established the Special Representatives mechanism to find a political solution to the Boundary Question. The Special Representatives have worked hard and arrived at the political parameters and guiding principles for a boundary resolution. In the present stage of their negotiations, they are seeking a framework for a boundary resolution. I support the work done by the Special Representatives of the two sides. This is not an easy issue and will take time to resolve.

In the meantime, both the Governments of India and China are committed to maintaining peace and tranquility in the India-China border areas. This is an important guarantor and a fundamental basis for further progress and growth in our bilateral ties. The leadership of the two countries is united on this issue. As long as we follow the principles and procedures set out in the Agreements of 1993, 1996 and 2005, expand and improve upon them where necessary to take into account the changing reality of India and China and enhance dialogue and friendly exchanges between our border troops, I am confident that the strategic consensus between leaders will continue to be reflected on the ground



285. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Water Resources, the Republic of India and the Ministry of Water Resources, the People's Republic of China on Strengthening Cooperation on Trans-border Rivers.

Beijing, October 23, 2013.

The Ministry of Water Resources, **the Republic of India** and the Ministry of Water Resources, **the People's Republic of China** (hereafter referred to as the "parties"),

Recalling the Working Regulations of the Expert Level Mechanism on Trans-border Rivers between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India of April 2008, the MOU between the Ministry of Water Resources, the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Water Resources, the Republic of India upon Provision of Hydrological Information of the Langqen Zangbo/Sutlej River in Flood Season by China to India of December 2010, the MOU between the Ministry of Water Resources, the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Water Resources, the Republic of India upon Provision of Hydrological Information of the Yaluzangbu/Brahmaputra River in Flood Season by China to India of May 2013, and the Joint Statement between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India of May 2013,

Have reached the following understanding:

1. The two sides recognized that trans-border rivers and related natural resources and the environment are assets of immense value to the socio-economic development of all riparian countries.
2. Both sides agreed that cooperation on trans-border rivers will further enhance mutual strategic trust and communication as well as strengthen the strategic and cooperative partnership. The two sides appreciated the role and importance of the Expert Level Mechanism on Trans-border Rivers between China and India.
3. The Indian side expressed appreciation to China for providing flood-season hydrological data and the assistance in emergency management.

4. The Chinese side agreed to extend the data provision period of the Yaluzangbu/Brahmaputra River, which was agreed upon in the MOU between the Ministry of Water Resources, the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Water Resources, the Republic of India upon Provision of Hydrological Information of the Yaluzangbu/Brahmaputra River in Flood Season by China to India of May 2013 from 2014, that is to start from May 15th instead of June 1st to October 15th of the relevant year. The two sides shall implement this in accordance with related Implementation Plan. The Indian side expressed appreciation to the Chinese side in this regard.
5. The two sides agreed to further strengthen cooperation on trans-border rivers, cooperate through the existing Expert Level Mechanism on provision of flood-season hydrological data and emergency management, and exchange views on other issues of mutual interest.

This Memorandum of Understanding will enter into force upon signature and can be amended and modified with mutual agreement.

Done in Beijing on this 23rd day of October 2013, in two originals each in Hindi, English and Chinese, languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Ministry of Water Resources, Government of the Republic of India

For the Ministry of Water Resources, the People's Republic of China



286. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Border Defence Cooperation.

Beijing, October 23, 2013.

The Government of the Republic of **India** and the Government of the People's Republic of **China** (hereinafter referred to as the 'two sides'),

Firmly believing that the India-China Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity serves the fundamental interests of the people of the two countries,

Reiterating that neither side shall use its military capability against the other side and that their respective military strengths shall not be used to attack the other side,

Reaffirming that neither side shall use or threaten to use force against the other side by any means nor seek unilateral superiority,

Having accepted the principle of mutual and equal security,

Acknowledging the need to continue to maintain peace, stability and tranquility along the line of actual control in the India-China border areas and to continue implementing confidence building measures in the military field along the line of actual control,

Recognizing the importance of materializing the spirit of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of the People's Republic of China on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility Along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areassigned on 7th September 1993, the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field Along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areassigned on 29th November 1996, the Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Modalities for the Implementation of Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field Along the Line of Actual Control in India-China Border Areassigned on 11th April 2005 and the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Establishment of a Working Mechanism for

Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs signed on 17th January 2012,

Have agreed as follows:

Article I

The two sides shall carry out border defence cooperation on the basis of their respective laws and relevant bilateral agreements.

Article II

The two sides shall implement border defence cooperation in the following ways:

1. Exchange information-including information about military exercises, aircrafts, demolition operations and unmarked mines-and take consequent measures conducive to the maintenance of peace, stability and tranquility along the line of actual control in the India-China border areas,
2. Jointly combat smuggling of arms, wildlife, wildlife articles and other contrabands,
3. Assist the other side in locating personnel, livestock, means of transport and aerial vehicles that may have crossed or are possibly in the process of crossing the line of actual control in the India-China border areas,
4. Work with the other side in combating natural disasters or infectious diseases that may affect or spread to the other side,
5. Any other way mutually agreed upon by the two sides.

Article III

Border deference cooperation visualized in this agreement shall be implemented through the following mechanisms:

1. Flag meetings or border personnel meetings at designated places along the line of actual control in the India-China border areas.
2. Periodic meetings between officers of the relevant Military Regions of China and Army Commands of India and between departments responsible for military operations.

3. Periodic meetings of the representatives of the Ministry of Defence of the Government of India and the Ministry of National Defence of the People's Republic of China.
4. Meetings of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs.
5. Meetings of the India-China Annual Defence Dialogue.

Article IV

In implementing border defence cooperation and to facilitate contacts and meetings between relevant organizations, the two sides may establish Border Personnel Meeting sites in all sectors, as well as telephone contacts and telecommunication links at mutually agreed locations along the line of actual control. The two sides may also consider establishing a Hotline between the military headquarters of the two countries. Specific arrangements shall be decided upon through mutual consultations between the two sides.

Article V

In order to enhance understanding and cooperation between the border defence forces of the two sides, each side may invite the other side for joint celebrations on major national or military days or festivals and organize cultural activities, non-contact sports events and small scale tactical exercises along the line of actual control in the India-China border areas. In addition, the two sides may also conduct joint military training exercises, at Army level, in each other's country on a regular basis. The theme of such joint exercises will be decided through mutual consultations.

Article VI

The two sides agree that they shall not follow or tail patrols of the other side in areas where there is no common understanding of the line of actual control in the India-China border areas.

Article VII

In case a doubtful situation arises with reference to any activity by either side in border areas where there is no common understanding of the line of actual control, either side has the right to seek a clarification from the other side. In such cases, the clarification shall be sought and replies to

them shall be conveyed through any of the mechanisms established under Article III of this Agreement.

Article VIII

The two sides agree that if the border defence forces of the two sides come to a face-to-face situation in areas where there is no common understanding of the line of actual control, both sides shall exercise maximum self-restraint, refrain from any provocative actions, not use force or threaten to use force against the other side, treat each other with courtesy and prevent exchange of fire or armed conflict.

Article IX

The two sides shall implement this Agreement without prejudice to their respective positions on the alignment of the line of actual control as well as on the boundary question.

Article X

This Agreement shall come into force on the date of its signature. It may be revised, amended or terminated with the consent of the two sides. Any revision or amendment, mutually agreed by the two sides, shall form an integral part of this Agreement.

Signed in duplicate in Hindi, Chinese and English languages at Beijing on 23rd day of October month of 2013, all three versions being equally authentic. In case of divergence, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of the Republic of India

For the Government of the People's Republic of China



* The Border Defence Cooperation Agreement is a constructive step towards resolving the boundary dispute. The BDCA itself is not a game-changer: it simply reinforces the basic international norm that countries ought to settle differences through peaceful means. Specifically, the Agreement adds to the existing layer of confidence-building measures through flag meetings, joint military patrols, and periodic high-level interaction. The BDCA nevertheless indicates both New Delhi and Beijing have accorded high priority to preventing hostile incidents along the Line of Actual Control. That Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Dr. Singh have exchanged visits within six months of the incident reflects this fact. The Chinese intrusion and subsequent withdrawal from the Depsang plain earlier this year provided the impetus to BDCA negotiations, and prompted serious introspection on the effectiveness of the Working Mechanism on Border Affairs. By opting for a tempered Agreement though, Dr. Singh has chosen to play his hand cautiously in an election year. The BJP, which facetiously claimed the government has ceded territory to China, would do well to acknowledge the spirit with which former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee established the Special Representative mechanism on border talks during his 2003 Beijing visit.

287. Agreement on the establishment of sister city relations between Bengaluru, Republic of India and Chengdu, People's Republic of China.

Beijing, October 23, 2013.

Bengaluru, Republic of India and **Chengdu**, People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as the Parties),

Recalling the Agreement between the Ministry of External Affairs, Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China to facilitate cooperation and linkages between Indian and Chinese cities & states/ provinces, signed in New Delhi on 20 May 2013 to facilitate closer cooperation between the local authorities of India and China;

In furtherance of their desire to promote closer engagement in the fields of public policy, education, health, science and technology, tourism and culture;

Have agreed as follows:

- i. To establish sister-city relations and create mechanisms for its implementation;
 - ii. To maintain regular contacts including between the designated authorities;
 - iii. To carry out cooperation in the fields of education, culture, sports, youth affairs, urban planning, waste water management, infrastructure, environment, public health and exchange of trade and commercial delegations;
 - iv. To the above ends, undertake exchanges involving delegations; interaction between institutions; and sharing of experiences in areas of mutual interest.
2. This Agreement does not create binding obligations among the Parties. Nothing in this Agreement precludes either of the Parties from exercising any measures and satisfying any obligations prescribed under the laws of their respective jurisdiction.

3. The activities would be undertaken in prior consultation with the respective national agencies; namely, the East Asia Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and China International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA).
4. The Parties will ensure that financial resources to support exchanges and activities are available prior to undertaking them. As a general practice, the sending Party will bear costs of international travel, lodging and boarding, while the receiving Party will offer local transportation.
5. This Agreement shall come into effect on the date of signature by the Parties and shall remain in force for a period of five years, unless either Party gives a written notice to the other Party, of its intention to terminate the Agreement, at least three (3) months in advance. The termination of this Agreement shall not affect completion of the projects that are already in progress. Thereafter, the Parties may, through friendly consultation, enter into a fresh Agreement for a further period of five years.
6. Any dispute arising out of the interpretation, applications or implementation of any provision of this Agreement shall be settled amicably through consultation or negotiation between the Parties.

Done at Beijing on this 23rd day of October in the year 2013 in duplicate in Hindi, English and Chinese languages. All texts being equally authentic, in case of any divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

**For Bengaluru, Republic
of India**

**For Chengdu, People's Republic
of China**



288. Agreement on the establishment of Sister City Relations between Kolkata, Republic of India and Kunming, People's Republic of China

Beijing, October 23, 2013.

Kolkata, Republic of India and **Kunming**, People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as the Parties),

Recalling the Agreement between the Ministry of External Affairs, Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China to facilitate cooperation and linkages between Indian and Chinese cities & states/ provinces, signed in New Delhi on 20 May 2013 to facilitate closer cooperation between the local authorities of India and China;

In furtherance of their desire to promote closer engagement in the fields of public policy, education, health, science and technology, tourism and culture;

Have agreed as follows:

- i. To establish sister-city relations and create mechanisms for its implementation;
 - ii. To maintain regular contacts including between the designated authorities;
 - iii. To carry out cooperation in the fields of education, culture, sports, youth affairs, urban planning, waste water management, infrastructure, environment, public health and exchange of trade and commercial delegations;
 - iv. To the above ends, undertake exchanges involving delegations; interaction between institutions; and sharing of experiences in areas of mutual interest.
2. This Agreement does not create binding obligations among the Parties. Nothing in this Agreement precludes either of the Parties from exercising any measures and satisfying any obligations prescribed under the laws of their respective jurisdiction.

3. The activities would be undertaken in prior consultation with the respective national agencies; namely, the East Asia Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and China International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA).
4. The Parties will ensure that financial resources to support exchanges and activities are available prior to undertaking them. As a general practice, the sending Party will bear costs of international travel, lodging and boarding, while the receiving Party will offer local transportation.
5. This Agreement shall come into effect on the date of signature by the Parties and shall remain in force for a period of five years, unless either Party gives a written notice to the other Party, of its intention to terminate the Agreement, at least three (3) months in advance. The termination of this Agreement shall not affect completion of the projects that are already in progress. Thereafter, the Parties may, through friendly consultation, enter into a fresh Agreement for a further period of five years.
6. Any dispute arising out of the interpretation, applications or implementation of any provision of this Agreement shall be settled amicably through consultation or negotiation between the Parties.

Done at Beijing on this 23rd day of October in the year 2013 in duplicate in Hindi, English and Chinese languages. All texts being equally authentic, in case of any divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

**For Kolkata, Republic
of India**

**For Kunming, People's Republic
of China**



289. Prime Minister's speech at the Central Party School in Beijing — India and China in the New Era.

Beijing, October 24, 2013.

Your Excellency,

Executive Vice-President of Central Party School,

Foreign Minister Wang Yi

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply honoured at this invitation to speak at the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China. Ladies and Gentlemen, I am conscious of the unique place that this School holds in the governance system of contemporary China and its contribution to the remarkable transformation of Chinese society. Many of you will play a decisive role in shaping China's future development, which will be of great significance for Asia and the world.

I can think of no better place than this School to speak about India and China in the new era.

Relations between India and China are unique in the world. We are two continuous ancient civilizations. We are neighbours with a long history of cultural, spiritual and economic ties. We both embarked on a new phase of our political histories around the same time. Today, we are the world's two most populous nations, engaged in a process of socio-economic transformation of our people on a scale and at a pace unprecedented in human history.

Ladies and Gentlemen, both our countries have achieved considerable success in this endeavour. Indeed, China's early economic reforms and impressive achievements are a source of inspiration across the developing world. After China, India has been the fastest growing major economy in the world, averaging a growth rate of 7% per year over the past two decades and around 8% per year during the past ten years. As a result, both our economies have expanded several times. We have achieved a high degree of economic modernization and have lifted hundreds of millions of our people out of the clutches of poverty.

In our own ways, we have also had an impact in shaping the global economy – China in the manufacturing sector and India in the services sector.

Over the past two decades, the process of economic reforms in India has gone through the rigour of democratic debate, and met the test of political consensus and public support. India's policies have focused not only on accelerating growth, but also on making it sustainable and regionally balanced. We have emphasized not only modernization, but also addressing the challenges of opportunities, capacity and equity for our vast and diverse population. This is the path on which we will continue to move forward.

In structural terms, India's growth is propelled by domestic demand and financed largely by our own resources. But we are also increasingly integrated into the global economy. The prolonged global economic crisis has affected us, as it has many other emerging economies. I believe, however, that this is a temporary disruption. In recent months, we have taken measures to enhance foreign investment flows, speed up implementation of major projects, boost infrastructure development, strengthen our financial markets, reform our tax system and make our business environment more attractive.

Our effort is to return the Indian economy to a sustained growth rate of 7-8% per annum. We believe that the underlying fundamentals of our economy, particularly investment and savings rates, are strong and consistent with this projection.

India's critical challenges in the days ahead are precisely in areas where I see opportunities for cooperation between India and China and I would like to highlight eight specific areas in this regard.

One, we need to pay much greater attention to the expansion and modernization of our infrastructure.

India plans to invest one trillion U.S. dollars in infrastructure in the next five years and we would welcome China's expertise and investment in this sector.

Two, we need to increase our agricultural productivity in order to reduce rural-urban disparities in income and manage efficiently the process of

mass urbanization, which is a phenomenon common to both our countries. This will mean paying particular attention to the issues of water and waste management.

China has significant experience of urbanization and our national planners, city administrators and entrepreneurs should share experiences and seek solutions in dealing with the physical, social, environmental and human challenges of mobility and urbanization.

Three, we want to draw upon China's strength in the manufacturing sector, which is vital for providing mass employment. India, for its part, has strength in services, innovation and certain manufacturing sectors, which can benefit China. A linked challenge for India is in skill development, where we can learn from each other's experience.

Four, as large and growing consumers of energy, we should intensify cooperation on the shared challenges of energy security, including joint development of renewable energy resources, as well as working jointly with third countries.

Five, growing population, shrinking land, improving consumption levels and price volatility make food security a key policy priority for us. India has launched a major legislation-based food security programme. Our two countries should pool our resources and expertise in this area.

More broadly, in an uncertain global environment, India and China can work together to impart stability to the global economy and sustain growth in our two economies by leveraging our resources, large unsaturated demand, economies of scale and our growing income levels.

Six, in an integrated world, economic success requires a favourable external environment. In recent decades, India and China have been among the greatest beneficiaries of an open global economy; a rule-based and open international trade regime; and free flow of finance, information and technology.

However, the emerging global environment may not remain as favourable as it has been in recent decades. We should therefore work together to make the international economic environment more conducive to our development efforts. Please allow me to elaborate this point.

After the prolonged global economic crisis of 2008, we face a fundamentally different future for the world economy. We are in the midst

of a significant and ongoing transformation where both political and economic power is being diffused. A multi-polar world is emerging but its contours are not yet clear.

Protectionist sentiments in the West have increased and the global trading regime may become fragmented by regional arrangements among major countries. India and China have a vital stake in preserving an open, integrated and stable global trade regime even as we work together to foster regional economic integration. We should also intensify our efforts to support trade and investment and reduce risks in emerging markets. The BRICS Development Bank and the Contingency Reserve Arrangement are examples of such cooperative efforts. Our cooperation will also help accelerate reforms in global financial institutions.

Seven, while we welcome and celebrate the rapid economic growth of our economies, we must also confront the challenges of climate change and focus greater attention on the safeguarding of our fragile environment. Both India and China are heirs to civilizations that value Nature and have practiced sustainability through the ages. However, as we meet the basic needs of our people, we also face the danger of unfair burdens being imposed on us for mitigating climate change. We should ensure that the international response to climate change does not constrain our growth and that it continues to be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Eight, India and China have also benefited from a largely stable global order and peaceful periphery. But we cannot take a stable political and security environment in our region and beyond for granted. If we look carefully, many of our challenges are common. Terrorism, extremism and radicalism emanating from our neighbourhood affect both of us directly and can create instability across Asia. Similarly, maritime security in the Pacific and Indian Oceans is vital for our economies just as peace and stability in West Asia and Gulf are essential for our energy security.

Above all, India and China need a stable, secure and prosperous Asia Pacific region. The centre of gravity of global opportunities and challenges are shifting to this region. In the coming decades, China and India, together with the United States, Japan, Korea and the ASEAN Community, will be among the largest economies in the world. While this region embodies unparalleled dynamism and hope, it is also one with

unsettled questions and unresolved disputes. It will be in our mutual interest to work for a cooperative, inclusive and rule-based security architecture that enhances our collective security and regional and global stability.

While both India and China are large and confident enough to manage their security challenges on their own, we can be more effective if we work together. Regional stability and prosperity will also gain from stronger connectivity in the Asia-Pacific region. This should be a shared enterprise of India and China.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have said on several occasions that India welcomes China's emergence. Frankly, old theories of alliances and containment are no longer relevant. India and China cannot be contained and our recent history is testimony to this. Nor should we seek to contain others.

We both know that the benefits of cooperation far outweigh any presumed gains from containment. Therefore, we should engage with each other in a spirit of equality and friendship and with the confidence that neither country is a threat to the other. This is the essential premise of India's external engagement. Our strategic partnerships with other countries are defined by our own economic interests, needs and aspirations. They are not directed against China or anyone else. We expect a similar approach from China.

The landmark visit of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to China 25 years ago marked a new beginning in our relationship. Since then, successive leaders in our two countries have built on that historic opening. Over this period, our relationship has prospered and our cooperation has expanded across a broad spectrum of areas. This is because we have managed our differences and have, in general, kept our border regions tranquil. At the same time, we continue to make progress in resolving our border dispute. Having agreed to the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles, we are now discussing a Framework for a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable boundary settlement.

This stability in our relationship has created the basic conditions for our two countries to exploit the opportunities created by our economic growth and opening. Indeed, the most dynamic area of our relationship has been

economic and China has emerged as one of India's largest economic partners.

Naturally, there are also concerns on both sides – whether it is incidents in the border region, trans-border rivers or trade imbalances.

Our recent experiences have shown that these issues can become impediments to the full exploitation of the opportunities for bilateral and multilateral cooperation between India and China, which is important for the continuing progress and transformation of our two countries.

I believe that our two countries not only share a common destiny, but that we have unlimited possibilities for closer cooperation. Let me therefore outline seven practical principles of engagement that I believe will set India and China on this course.

One, we should reaffirm an unwavering commitment to the principles of Panchsheel and conduct our relationship in a spirit of mutual respect, sensitivity to each other's interests and sovereignty, and mutual and equal security. India has welcomed President Xi Jinping's concept of a new type of great power relations. This is a contemporary development of the Panchsheel or Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, elaborated by Prime Minister Nehru and Premier Zhou Enlai in the 1950s. It highlights, in a modern context, the need for creating inter-state relations among major powers, based on mutual trust, sensitivity to each other's core concerns and a commitment to resolve all outstanding issues through peaceful dialogue. We should develop our relations on the basis of these principles.

Two, maintaining peace and tranquility in the India-China border areas has been the cornerstone of our relations. It is essential for mutual confidence and for the expansion of our relations. We should do nothing to disturb that. Indeed, we can achieve it by adhering to our agreements and utilizing our bilateral mechanisms effectively. At the same time, we should move quickly to resolve our boundary issue.

Three, we should increase consultations and cooperation on complex issues such as trans-border rivers and our trade imbalance so as to strengthen our strategic and cooperative partnership.

Four, we should maintain a high level of strategic communication and consultations, in a spirit of transparency, on our region and our periphery,

eliminating misunderstanding between our two countries and building experience of positive cooperation. As the two largest countries in Asia, our strategic consultation and cooperation will enhance peace, stability and security in our region and beyond.

Five, our convergence on a broad range of global issues should lead to enhanced policy coordination on regional and global affairs and cooperation in regional and multilateral forums in the political, economic and security domains.

Six, we should harness the full potential of cooperation in all aspects of our relationship, including in the economic area.

And finally, we will achieve much greater success in our relations by increasing contacts and familiarity between our people in every walk of life.

Like a beautiful tangram that emerges from seven different shapes, these seven principles would together create a beautiful tapestry of India-China relations in the years ahead.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased that the agreements that we have signed yesterday will help to advance many of these shared principles. As officials who will determine public policy, I hope you will do everything to advance our cooperation and promote India-China relations from your positions of responsibility.

Before I conclude, let me recall what I have often said that the world is large enough to accommodate the development aspirations of both India and China.

In my meeting with President Xi yesterday, he echoed this thought when he said that the Chinese and Indian dreams for becoming strong, developed and prosperous nations are inter-connected and mutually compatible. My meetings with President Xi and Premier Li give me great confidence that we can fulfill this noble vision. More than ever before, the world needs both countries to prosper together. We were not destined to be rivals, and we should show determination to become partners. Our future should be defined by cooperation and not by confrontation. It will not be easy, but we must spare no effort.

What is at stake is the future of India and China; indeed, what may be at stake is the future of our region and our world.

I thank you for your attention.



290. Extracts from Prime Minister's onboard media interaction *en route* to Delhi from Beijing.

October 24, 2013.

Prime Minister: Ladies and gentlemen, you have been briefed extensively on the visits to Russia and China, so I won't go into the details. My visit to Russia was primarily for the Annual Summit. Russia is, for us, a key strategic partner in many areas, including defence, energy and trade. We also have important convergences in a number of areas of regional and international interest. My visit has renewed my confidence in the strength of this relationship.

In China, my visit was to follow up on the process of getting to know the new Chinese leadership better. China is our largest neighbour, a significant economic partner and a country with increasing global presence. While we have our differences, there are many areas, bilateral, regional and multilateral, where cooperation among us is to our mutual benefit. It is only through a process of intense engagement that we will be able to move forward in all areas. I am satisfied that my just concluded visit has served its purpose.

Any questions which you would like to ask?

Q: Sir, during this China visit, as a part of the nine historic agreements, you have also signed some crucial and landmark cross-border river agreement also. At the moment you represent North-East. What is the likely impact of this agreement for our North-Eastern states?

Answer: Well, because I represent the North-East, I have been emphatic that cooperation between China and India in matters relating to the trans-border river system should proceed forward. I have been discussing this earlier also with the Chinese leadership. I raised this issue again

and there is incremental progress. They have agreed to supply data for more number of days. Also they have recognized that the behaviour of the trans-border river system is of interest to all riparian states. So, our concerns have been put on the table. I hope there will be progress in years to come.

Q: The Chinese leadership termed the visit as very successful, so how do you term your visit to China and compare the two visits to Russia and China?

Answer: Both these visits have served their purpose. I am satisfied with the results that we have been able to secure, both in Russia as well as in China.

Q: Our relations with Pakistan haven't really gone well given the sustained attacks on our border and the meeting in New York which did not go well. With that going down the tube, do you believe that with China we stand a chance with this new border agreement, possibly of settling the border issue at some stage and having peace and tranquillity in that sector?

Answer: There is a commitment on the part of both China and India that peace and tranquillity on the border is a pre-requisite for progress in our relationship. So, there is this recognition and on the whole there has been peace and tranquillity on the Indo-China border. So, I am reasonably satisfied that the Chinese leadership is as serious as we are in ensuring peace and tranquillity on the India-China border.

Q: Sir, you have mentioned at least on a couple of times, and in fact, this morning that terrorism, extremism and radicalism emanating from the region is a matter of concern. What was the response of the Chinese government on the concerns that we have on terrorism, India has on terrorism from the region.

Answer: Both in Russia and China I found growing recognition that terrorism is a threat to all the countries of the region and that terrorism and extremism both are enemies of progress, that we must work together, pool our intelligence and information system to deal with this menace.

Q: Its been over three weeks since you met Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in New York. Firing, Prime Minister, has not only increased

at the LoC but also along the international border, are you disappointed with Nawaz Sharif and if Pakistan continues to fire, how should we respond Prime Minister?

Answer: Let me say that I am disappointed, because in the New York meeting there was a general agreement on both the sides that peace and tranquillity should be maintained on the border, on the Line of Control as well as on the international border and this has not happened. It has come to me as a big disappointment. We had agreed at that meeting that the ceasefire which was made effective in 2003, if it has held ground for 10 years, it could be made to hold ground later on also. The fact that this is not happening, is something which is really a matter of disappointment. I sincerely hope that at this late hour Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will recognize that this is a development which is not good for either of the two countries.

Q: India and China seek for further liberalisation of Visa Regime. Can we expect any positive steps in the near future.

Answer: That's an aspiration that we both have and I hope we can find workable mechanisms to realise that goal.



291. External Affairs Minister's interview with P.S. Suryanarayan of the Institute of South Asian Studies.

Singapore, October 24, 2013

What is the new gravitational pull between the United States and India, on one side, and even between China and India, which is quite a pleasant surprise?

If you go back to the roots of India's philosophical position of non-alignment, it was essentially saying that "we're in nobody's camp. We deal with everybody on merit. We have an autonomous and independent foreign policy and, on merit, we have friendships". There are countries with which we share fundamental values of democracy; there are countries which are important partners for us in terms of our strategic

concerns; there are countries that are in our neighbourhood and therefore ... we have our own reasons for reaching out to them. ... There were one kind of expectations that the world had of India – one kind of leadership [for that] soon after [India's] Independence, you know, [in the context of] the Afro-Asian stirring for emancipation, independence; and the ability [of India] to take your own decisions about your own national interests.

And, now, in another phase, there is the other expectation of India. And, I think, that expectation of India is reflected in people supporting India for a Permanent Seat in the [United Nations] Security Council, [whenever] a reformed Security Council and reformed UN system [is formed]. Because, they think that we provide intrinsic and important link between the developing world and the developed world – which is really where we are when we are in the G20 [Group of Twenty] [given] our relationship with Brazil, Russia [and] China in BRICS or with South Africa and Brazil and ourselves in IBSA. This is the reflection of a current, contemporary situation in which there are different expectations from India, but still expectations of leadership. And, we are trying to fulfil those. And in doing this, we have something to do with China, something to do with Russia. ... We have something to do with the US and we have something to do with other parts of the world, Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America. I have tried to find a balanced approach.

You have given a panoramic perspective of India's foreign policy in the present times. But this being a globalised world and there is a lot of realpolitik – I don't have to say that to you – there should surely be some factor which is galvanising the relations, on one side, between the US and India and also at the same time between China and India. Is there not some kind of a linkage? Is there a China factor in the US-India relations and, therefore, an India factor in China-US relations?

We have very specifically said this and we are very clear: China-India [equation] on its own, US-India on its own. We will never be allies of the US; we will be friends, strategic partners, not allies. And similarly we will be strategic partners with China; hopefully, we will become friends with China when all our issues are resolved; we have a very good working relationship with them, but we have things to resolve with them.

As far as the US is concerned, I think, it is very, very important that we deal with them, because US is a driving force in [the US-India] '123 civil nuclear agreement'; US is a driving force – in a landscape [of global nuclear commerce] where India was excluded – on our terms, on our terms, to give us inclusion. I think the US played a very major role. And, of course, when this happens, it can't be a one-way street, there is an interaction; there is give-and-take. And there are expectations which the US has of India; there are expectations which we have of the US.

What could be the US expectations of India?

The US expectation is market access. Simple

Will that be the be-all and end-all of the relationship?

I think, in all fairness, US has not imposed upon us in terms of strategic choice. We have taken a position on Iraq, we have taken a position on Iran; we have taken a position on Syria. We can talk to US about everything. We have a communication level with US, which is very good. We consult, we talk but we don't necessarily always align our positions. We may not be hostile to a US position, but we certainly are not subservient to a US position. We understand their concerns, we understand their concerns in Afghanistan; we understand their concerns about Pakistan, but we can't necessarily agree. So, we often can agree to disagree. But in the larger context, we converge on many positions; and, critically, those positions that really matter.

What are the US expectations, as you would have discerned them, of India with respect to China? Surely there must be some.

They never told us this is what you need to do with China. People speculate in this part of the world about US position on pivot, US position on rebalancing towards Asia; ... and there are, obviously, methodologies of and connectivity that this part of the world has with China despite differences on certain dimensions. But we are, I think, lucky in that our position is that we will not be part of anybody else's scheme of things; and, therefore, we are not. We have told China "we want to be friends with you and we don't demand that you give up your other friendships in this region. But, all we expect is: don't make your friendships at the cost of India. That's all we ask, not at our cost". That's all we say to Turkey,

that's all we say to any country that has a position that we may not be completely aligned with. ... If we believe that we have a right to an autonomous foreign policy, we must respect the right of other people to have an autonomous foreign policy.

two specifics in relation to China, because China is the overwhelming presence in East Asia: So, with reference to Pakistan as China's old "all-weather friend" and with reference to China's position on India's permanent membership [of a reformed UN Security Council] . What are the updates you have?

Well, you see, obviously, China, as I said, has an important relationship with Pakistan; and we have made it known they can have an important relationship with Pakistan, which is not our concern. Our concern is limited to two things: one is China's cooperation with Pakistan as far as the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is concerned – obviously, I mean, that's adverse to our interest. And, the second one is issues of proliferation – that is, helping Pakistan with their nuclear programme – that is a matter of concern to us. We make it known to China at every interaction that we have with China. But beyond that we have no problem if they are friends with Pakistan. We are happy to work with them on many other fields; we will continue to work with them in many fields. They now have to decide – their friendship with Pakistan entails what kind of positions that they take in the world.

Now, we actually advocated China's entry into WTO [the World Trade Organization] ... because, that allowed China to participate in a larger frame of things, in which India was a willing partner. So, there will obviously be both give and take when something like this happens. It's for China to decide and categorically take a position on what is going to happen with the Security Council; but there is a huge number of countries [supporting India] ...

Does India have a comfort level with China on these issues?

It's a working level. I don't know if I would describe it as comfort level. We have a working level. We have a good working relationship with China. We are working closely with them in many fields, including field of economics. We look forward to China's investment in our country. We want to balance trade with China; and one way to compensate for the

imbalance is to have greater Chinese investment in India. We are willing to have them put up industries, to invest in industrial townships.

Now, you may describe that as comfort level, you may describe that as an interest, you may describe that as cooperation, you may describe that as collaboration; but all this is open with China. We have ring-fenced (re-fenced) our differences with China. And our differences are of perception – basically the border. The good news is that there are no casualties [along the disputed SinoIndian border]; the good news is that our differences don't blow up; there are natural barricades that prevent any spill-over of those into other areas of cooperation. And, I think, this is a good example of working step by step to resolve an issue peacefully through dialogue and with the conviction that, in the long term, we really need to work together rather than remain aloof and remain estranged.

[on a different front] there are once again reports of LoC [Line of Control] firings from Pakistan. What is the situation? Do you think that some sections in the Pakistani establishment are still trying to “sabotage” India-Pakistan relations?

I don't know if it's sabotage, or prevent, or interfere, or obstruct – use any word you like. But if there is firing on the Line of Control and firing on the [India-Pakistan] border, somebody, somebody is doing it. And we believe that something on such a large scale can't be done without the consent, participation, or at least connivance, or at least indulgence of the [Pakistan] Army. Now, when we say this, our Pakistani counterparts get very upset: “Why are you blaming the Army?”

But, you know, we can only go by field reports that we get from our own armed forces. And the field reports from our own armed forces indicate that that there is involvement of regular Army units from the other side. The kind of firing; that is, the nature of violations that happen, and so on. Then, of course, there is this issue of infiltration [into India from Pakistan], infiltration by terrorist elements. That, we have – because of fencing, and because of vigilance – we have controlled considerably; but sometimes they try concerted effort, as they did recently – concerted effort when a large number of people tried to get through either under protection of darkness or under protection of firing from across the border. So, it's a harsh and bitter reality that we live with.

But, in the long run, we believe it's important not to get provoked. We hold our line, we don't let our defence to be breached, and we make our point very clearly across to counterparts in Pakistan that this is unacceptable. Of course, a lot of people say, "how can you keep saying, 'unacceptable' and do nothing about it, to which we say: 'What do you do about it? You don't have a war with another nuclear power because they are firing with small weapons across the border'". It's hurtful; it's irritating; it's unacceptable; but, as a responsible power, as a responsible country that is being considered as a serious candidate for permanent membership of the Security Council – which is not the case with Pakistan – I think we know what we should be doing.

about [India's] Prime Minister Manmohan Singh asking [Pakistan's] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif whether he could show leadership: what exactly was 'leadership' in that particular context? Did Dr Singh mean that Pakistani Prime Minister should be independent of their army? You were privy....

Well, we don't know. Yes, when we say "we want peace" we must deliver peace. When they say they want peace, they must deliver peace. We [India] can't talk to the [Pakistan] Army. We can't talk to the various sections of their government. We can only talk to the elected leaders [in Pakistan]. And the elected leaders have consistently said, during the [recent] election campaign and thereafter, that they want peace with India. And, they want peace on reasonable terms. ... Like we have with China, they [the Pakistanis] also have some issues with us. And we said "we are not afraid to talk about those issues". We have talked about them in the past; we can talk about them again, but we can do so only when you can carry conviction with the people of your country. The people of our country must be able to see that there is bona fide and honest effort from across the border to reach out to India. And then we can talk. That's what leadership is about: leadership is that you have to take responsibility for what your people want to do. And we are asking for responsibility for 26/11 [the terrorist attacks in Mumbai in 2008]; we are asking for accountability, we are asking for dismantling of the infrastructure of terrorism [in Pakistan]. We do understand it's not easy. None of these things are easy if they have gone on for years. It's not easy. But that's where leadership comes in.

What's your sense? Is Mr. Sharif displaying this kind of leadership?

I think you can't judge. [Recently] he has been elected, settling down. His stated position is very clear. We appreciate it. But you have got to put your money where the mouth is. [In the meeting between Dr Singh and Mr Sharif in New York on 29 September 2013, the Pakistani leader did highlight his leadership qualities, it is understood.]

**292. Official Spokesperson's response to a question regarding a report on the India-China Boundary.**

New Delhi, November 29, 2013.

In response to a question regarding a report on the India-China Boundary Question, in the Mail Today, the Official Spokesperson said:

" We have seen the article. It is speculative and factually incorrect."



* The article referred to speculated that India and China had agreed that while China will agree to India retaining the Arunachal Pradesh including Tawang, India would agree to China retaining the entire Aksai Chin in Ladakh Sector of J&K

293. Information supplied to the Rajya Sabha by the Ministry of Defence on the Infiltration by the Chinese troops.

New Delhi, December 11, 2013.

There has been no infiltrations by Chinese troops into Indian Territory. However, there is no commonly delineated Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China. There are areas along the border where India and China have differing perceptions of the LAC. Due to both sides undertaking patrolling upto their respective perceptions of the LAC, transgressions do occur. Government regularly takes up any transgression with the Chinese side through established mechanisms.

Government takes adequate measures to safeguard the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of India by reviewing the threat perception from time to time, and takes appropriate steps to meet the threats.



* However last month on November 11, Minister of External Affairs had while conceding that there were different perceptions of the LAC on both the sides, said India was concerned about periodic provocative incursions by Chinese troops that have resulted in "eyeball-to-eyeball confrontations", but was hopeful that the border issues will eventually be settled. "Obviously, we are concerned about periodic steps that seem provocative or adverse to our interests," External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid said. "But, of course, they (incursions) are occurring in the context of a different perception of what the Line of Control is and where it should be. The good news is that there hasn't been a casualty on the Chinese front for several years. There have been skirmishes and eyeball-to-eyeball confrontations, but no casualties", he said. He believed the border issues will eventually be settled and peace and stability between India and China will become stronger over time, Mr. Khurshid said in an interview to *The Australian*. Responding to a question if India and China, by virtue of their size, proximity, contrasting political systems and diverging geo-strategic interests, were not destined to some extent to be strategic rivals, Mr. Khurshid said: "Yes, I think that's to some extent inevitable, although it's much more complex than that, of course. But we'd like to be rivals who are also partners, partners who are also rivals."

"Our Prime Minister has said that the world is large enough to accommodate the aspirations of both China and India," he said.

Mr. Khurshid said he was prepared to talk in some detail about one of the most vexed issues in the Sino-Indian relationship — the border of Arunachal Pradesh — with China.

India and China last month inked a comprehensive pact — Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA) — which commits them not to use military capability to attack each other.

The agreement was signed following a series of incursions by the Chinese army into Depsang Valley in Ladakh region in May.

Mr. Khurshid also expressed satisfaction with India's ties with the United States.

"The U.S. is a very important security partner to us. We have never subscribed to the idea of an alliance. In the past, we had our non-aligned position and more recently we describe it as our autonomous strategic position.

"But, we have collaborated closely with the U.S. We are constantly now in joint (military) exercises. We are involved in intelligence sharing. We are looking at the joint design and manufacturing of defence equipment, so that we move beyond the vendor and customer relationship," he said.

Mr. Khurshid, however, noted that U.S.-India economic and investment relationship has moved at a slower pace as some Americans, especially U.S. industry leaders, had hoped.

"The experience in what happened in the subprime loan episode and in the financial crisis which hit Southeast Asia some time before that, has confirmed for us that what is described as an element of conservatism in our economic policy has served us well," he said.

On US politics, Mr. Khurshid said, "India, more than any nation, understands the business of internal democratic contention and delay.

"India is a friend of the U.S. We see the U.S. as an inspiration and a very successful economy. When we see question marks over the U.S., it worries us. We hope they emerge stronger than ever."

**294. Information Sheet on ASEAN - India Strategic Partnership,
East Asia Summit and Bilateral Visit to Indonesia.**

October 7, 2013

Please See Document No 73



**295. Media Briefing by Secretary (East) on the Prime Minister's
Visits to Brunei and Indonesia.**

New Delhi, October 7, 2013.

Please See Document No 74

**296. Statement by the Prime Minister prior to departure for
Brunei and Indonesia.**

New Delhi, October 8, 2013.

Please See Document No 75



INDONESIA

297 Prime Minister's interview to *Kompas* newspaper, Indonesia.

New Delhi, October 10, 2013

Q. India and Indonesia share old civilizational links and now we are strategic partners. What are the main expectations from your visit to Indonesia?

Ans. We regard Indonesia as one of our most important partners in our neighbourhood and a key constituent of India's Look East Policy. Our two countries are among the most populous in the world. We are both pluralist democracies, which share many interests, including maritime security and emergence of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Asia. There is enormous potential for bilateral cooperation across a broad range of areas, including trade and investment, based on our civilizational linkages, which led not only to a fusion of art and culture, but also to a confluence of ideas, values and social ethos. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the architecture of ancient temples and stupas, similarities in designs and motifs of handloom textiles, respect for the elderly and the wise – all are our shared heritage. The leaders of our two countries also shared their experiences during our respective freedom struggles, forged Afro-Asian solidarity and led the Non-Aligned Movement.

Our relationship has flourished as a robust, multi-faceted strategic partnership today. We work closely in regional, multilateral and international fora such as the UN, NAM, G-20, EAS and other ASEAN mechanisms, IOR-ARC and WTO. President Yudhoyono's visit to India in 2011 added greater momentum to the relationship. I am keenly looking forward to my own visit to consolidate and deepen the strategic content of our relationship, strengthen trade and investment relations, and broaden people-to-people linkages.

Q. Trade between India and Indonesia stands at US\$ 20 billion. In the context of downturn in the global economy, how do you think the trade/ investment relations between our countries can be improved upon? What are core sectors for a fruitful India-Indonesia engagement?

Ans. The trend in bilateral trade is positive, though trade saw a minor dip in 2012-13 on account of the global financial situation, and stood at USD 20 billion. We are confident of achieving the bilateral trade target of US\$ 25 billion by 2015. We believe the potential is much higher.

We should diversify our trade basket, resolve impediments to trade and investment and encourage higher flow of investments in both directions. A bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) will open up the potential on both sides and provide strong impetus to growth.

The early signing of ASEAN-India Services and Investment Agreements, negotiations on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and emergence of an ASEAN Economic Community by end-2015 would also have a positive effect on our trade and investment relations with Indonesia.

Our imports from Indonesia have largely been from extractive industries, which should be diversified. India could be a significant source for a broad range of goods, including agro-products, automobile components, engineering goods, IT, pharmaceuticals, meat and meat products and biotechnology products.

Indian companies view Indonesia as an attractive investment destination. We already have significant investments in your country in infrastructure, power, textiles, steel, automotive, mining, banking and FMCG manufacturing. All prominent Indian companies, including Tata, Birla, Reliance, SBI, and many others have a presence in Indonesia. In comparison, Indonesia's investment in India is relatively limited. I invite Indonesian companies to look at the immense investment opportunities that India offers in the infrastructure, logistics, hospitality, and services sectors. It would be of mutual benefit if Indonesia invites Indian investments in education, healthcare, pharmaceuticals and port development.

Q. What are the main agreements/MOUs, which are going to be signed during the visit?

Ans. Both sides have prepared a number of MoUs to be concluded. Some of them are between Government Ministries and agencies, and

others are between educational and training institutions. These will reflect the multi-dimensional character of our relationship.

Q. The ASEAN community will come into force in 2015. India successfully hosted the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in December 2012. How do you see India's role in the ASEAN community?

Ans. I am arriving in Jakarta directly from Brunei, where we held the 11th ASEAN-India Summit. I have said on many occasions that our engagement with ASEAN remains the cornerstone of our 'Look East' Policy. We admire the progress in ASEAN cooperation and integration, and ASEAN leadership in forging broader regional cooperation and integration. We firmly believe that ASEAN centrality in that process is important for the evolution of a cooperative, rule-based open and inclusive regional architecture.

We value Indonesia's leadership role in ASEAN and ASEAN-centric processes. We have elevated our relationship to the level of a strategic partnership during the Commemorative Summit we held in New Delhi in December last year. Our engagement with ASEAN covers the full spectrum of political, security, economic and socio-cultural cooperation.

We are keenly following the evolution of the ASEAN Community by 2015, and remain committed to extending all possible assistance. Our focus has been on capacity building and on connectivity. We have established several Entrepreneurship Development Centers (EDCs), Centers for English Language Training (CELTs), IT Centers and Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) in CLMV countries. We offer more than 1000 scholarships to ASEAN countries. We are actively engaged in connectivity initiatives - both physical and institutional - to bring India and the ASEAN closer, including through our initiative to build the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and our support to the ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity.

Q. China has become a dominant partner in the Asia Pacific region. In this context how do you see India's role in the Asia Pacific region? How can the Asia Pacific region become a strong alliance amidst the seeds of regional disputes, border issues and other issues between Japan and China and India and China?

Ans. India and China are two civilizational neighbours. Economic cooperation constitutes a very important part of our relationship and the growth potential of our two economies can provide the engine for greater cooperation and can also contribute to prosperity in Asia and beyond. We have had differences, but we have steadily built a mature and mutually beneficial relationship. We have maintained peace and tranquility on our borders. We also collaborate on a range of regional and global issues.

I am convinced that there is enough space in the world today for cooperative efforts by all sides to meet their needs and aspirations. In this century, when global and regional inter-dependence are growing rapidly, cooperation, consultation and coordination, as also respect for international law and resolution of differences through peaceful dialogue, are indispensable for the peace, security and prosperity of all countries. Regional forums can play a useful role in this process. We, therefore, see immense value in the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, ADMM+ and other cooperative mechanisms in the region. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is also a major initiative with great promise for our region.

Q. The Indian economy is in a downward spiral from a high growth. Apart from the global recession affecting most developing economies, what have been the main reasons for the sluggish performance of Indian economy?

Ans. If you leave aside last year's economic performance, in the previous nine years, the Indian economy has grown at an average annual rate of about 8% per annum. This is the highest rate of growth achieved by India in any previous decade. Last year, our growth rate declined to about 5%, partly because of the recession in the global economy, including the Euro zone and slow growth in US and Japan. India imports nearly 80% of its oil requirement and rising oil prices and slump in exports have hurt our trade balance. There are also some supply side bottlenecks in India, which we are addressing through policy and administrative reforms.

However, our economic fundamentals remain strong. Our savings and investment rates are still over 30% of GDP. Given our capital output ratios, we can restore the growth momentum to 8% per year in the short to medium term. We have taken a number of reform measures to boost

domestic investments, attract more foreign investments, strengthen the financial sector and improve and simplify the tax regime. We have launched a broad range of entitlement programmes for the vulnerable sections of our population that require special attention of the government. And we are purposefully addressing the fiscal and current account deficits. At the same time, we will persist with our open trade regime. I am confident that the impact of these measures will be visible soon.

Q. The free fall of the Indian Rupee has been a matter of concern. The Indonesian Rupiah has also depreciated. What are the precautions/measures we need to take as developing countries to bring about stability in the currency?

Ans. Emerging economies have been affected by the prolonged global economic crisis and uneven and uncertain recovery. Slowdown in our exports and in inward flow of investments has affected growth and balance of payments. The unconventional monetary policy followed by major developed countries and expectations around its reversal had induced huge volatility in the financial and currency markets. India and Indonesia are part of the G20. The need for enhanced international coordination and communication on policies was emphasized at the G20 Summit in St. Petersburg in September. Sustained global economic recovery will benefit emerging economies.

However, each of us also needs to take appropriate national measures to accelerate economic growth, attract foreign investments and boost exports, including by leveraging the competitiveness generated by currency depreciation.

Q. India and Indonesia are gearing to elections in 2014. What are the main issues concerning the people of India which will influence the voters?

Ans. We are both strong democracies and elections are a way of life. In today's India, the electorate of close to 800 million is educated and politically well-informed. Many are young and full of energy, enterprise and ambition. They seek a better life for themselves and their children through access to opportunities, jobs, education, skill development, food and health care. All these issues are bound to figure in the run-up to the elections.

Q. India has been playing a big role in Development Partnership, especially in establishing Vocational Training centres, training and education. What do you think can be done to make it more effective?

Ans. India is a developing country, focused on national development and improving the living standards of its people. At the same time, we are happy to partner in the development efforts of other countries by sharing our experience, expertise and resources in whichever way we can. Human resources hold the key to a country's success. That is why we have laid emphasis on education, training and institutions in our development partnership. We also make a modest contribution in infrastructure development in our partner countries. We have committed, for instance, USD 9.5 billion in concessional assistance to African countries.

Currently, we offer around 100 scholarships to Indonesian students and officials under various schemes and Indonesia also offers such scholarships. We have also set up Chairs of Indian Studies in Indonesian Universities. Every year, we invite many students, academics, scientists, think tanks and media persons from Indonesia to visit India. We have set up two VTCs in Indonesia, in Jakarta and Banda Aceh, which are doing well, and are ready to set up a similar center in Papua. The recently established Development Partnership Agency in our Ministry of External Affairs is providing a new focus to our international development partnership efforts.

I believe that dynamic emerging economies such as India and Indonesia should share their development experience and expertise as this can be more relevant and effective in promoting economic development in the more vulnerable regions and countries of the world.



298. Prime Minister's media statement after delegation level talks in Indonesia.

Jakarta, October 11, 2013.

Your Excellency President Yudhoyono,
Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media

I am delighted to return to this beautiful country on my first official bilateral visit at the invitation of President Yudhoyono. I have always admired the President for his wisdom and visionary leadership and for the abiding personal commitment he has brought to strengthening the strategic partnership between our two countries.

Indonesia is one of India's most valued partners in our Look East Policy. Our bilateral relations are rich in potential and growing rapidly. As two large democracies and major emerging economies, we have many convergent interests and responsibilities in bilateral regional and global forums. As maritime neighbours along one of the most critical sea links in the world, we also have shared interests in maritime security.

I attach great importance to this visit as an opportunity to build on the momentum generated by President Yudhoyono's two landmark visits to India in 2005 and 2011 and to add further content to our relationship.

In our discussions today, we reaffirmed the importance of our Strategic Partnership for our two countries and our region. We expressed satisfaction with progress in our relations and outlined an ambitious course for the future. To this end, President Yudhoyono and I have agreed to deepen our partnership in each of the five major dimensions of our relationship: political, security, economic, people-to-people and international issues.

We agreed to continue the process of intensifying our political exchanges and stressed the early implementation of our bilateral initiatives. To this end, we have directed our officials to evolve a comprehensive action plan for meaningful and mutually beneficial security cooperation.

We reiterated our resolve to boost bilateral cooperation in combating terrorism, organized crime, drug and human trafficking and counterfeiting.

I requested early ratification by Indonesia of the Extradition Treaty and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. The Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Disaster Management and Combating Narcotics Trafficking signed today will also give more substance to our growing security cooperation.

The fourfold growth in bilateral trade in the last seven years reflects the vast potential of our economic relations. I emphasised to the President that measures to increase trade and encourage investments, besides early conclusion of a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement would greatly expand and diversify our economic relations. We agreed that improved connectivity, early implementation of India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement in Services and Investment and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership would be important in this regard.

We took note of our valuable space cooperation and looked forward to strengthening it in future. I conveyed to the President our offer to assist the Indonesian Government in setting up a Vocational Training Centre in Papua, after the successful experience of those established in Jakarta and Banda Aceh.

We have also decided to establish Chairs of Indian and Indonesian Studies in each other's universities and further expand our programme of scholarships, facilitate linkages among educational institutions and encourage partnerships in training and research.

I conveyed to President Yudhoyono our appreciation for Indonesia's strong support for the evolution of India's Strategic Partnership with ASEAN. We value Indonesia's leadership role in the ASEAN and the Association's effort in fostering broader regional cooperation and integration. I also recalled the President's very valuable suggestion for cooperation in the fields of food security and counter-terrorism between India and ASEAN at the India-ASEAN Summit yesterday in Brunei, and directed our officials to work towards concrete proposals in this regard.

Let me reiterate that India-ASEAN partnership is a force for peace and shared prosperity in our region. We also look forward to working closely with Indonesia in important regional, multilateral and global forums.

I thank President Yudhoyono once again for a very productive meeting and his generous hospitality. I am confident that our discussions and the agreements we have signed today will add new meaning and content to the strategic partnership between India and Indonesia.

Thank you



299. Prime Minister's Speech at the Banquet Dinner hosted by President of Indonesia.

Jakarta, October 11, 2013.

Your Excellency President Dr. Yudhoyono,

Madam Yudhoyono,

Distinguished guests,

Friends, ladies and gentlemen,

I thank you, Excellency, for your kind words and the eloquent expression of your warmth towards India. We are deeply touched by your warm welcome and generous hospitality.

Excellency, you have led Indonesia with great vision and wisdom at a crucial time for your country and during a period of remarkable change in the region. Under your leadership, Indonesia's democracy has been strengthened, its economy has grown, its regional role has increased and its global stature has expanded. We also see your unmistakable imprint in every milestone that India has crossed in its engagement with ASEAN. You have been an architect of the Strategic Partnership that was established between our countries during your landmark visit to India in 2005. Your visit in 2011 as the Chief Guest at our Republic Day celebrations reaffirmed the multiple strands of ties – ancient and modern – that bind our two countries into a special relationship. Excellency, in the long history of our civilisational interaction, our worldview has been moulded by the common spiritual heritage of Hinduism and Buddhism in the early centuries and Islam in the last few hundred years. The hearts

of our peoples continue to pulsate to the beats of the Ramayana ballads. In the state of Orissa in my country, Bali Yatra, which recalls the once vibrant maritime Silk Route, is still a part of life.

We have enriched each other through art, architecture, music and language. We gave strength to each other in our struggle for freedom and in the first flush of our independence. Soon thereafter, we worked together for solidarity and unity in a world descending into division. It is not only this rich legacy, but also an extraordinary range of shared interests that add enduring warmth and strength to our relationship today. Both our countries, among the most populous in the world, are pluralist democracies that share development aspirations and face common challenges. We are also two major emerging economies that seek a peaceful and stable international environment to complete our transformation. We share a huge responsibility for shaping the future of our region, which is a storehouse of dynamism and optimism, but is also dealing with unsettled questions and the uncertainty of change. In the past decade, our engagement and cooperation have grown and deepened in every field of human endeavour and every dimension of our relationship. Yet, our discussions earlier today have demonstrated the vast untapped potential for working together to mutual benefit. I am confident that, in the coming years, we shall realize this potential more fully. Excellency, as the home of the ASEAN Secretariat, Indonesia signifies both Asia's unity and its diversity, values that are dear to India as well. Indonesia's foreign policy dictum of "thousand friends and no enemies" too finds an echo in India's guiding philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", that is, the entire world is one family. I have no doubt that Asia, in its resurgence, will show the world the way towards peace, harmony and prosperity. It is the spirit of harmony captured so beautifully in the song composed by Your Excellency, which was rendered this evening, that finds resonance in India and holds the promise for us in Asia and the world.

With these worlds, Excellencies, friends, ladies and gentlemen, I invite you to join me in a toast:

- To the personal good health and happiness of His Excellency President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Madame Ani Bambang Yudhoyono;

- To the well-being, progress and prosperity of our two peoples; and
- To timeless friendship and partnership between India and Indonesia.



300. Media Briefing by Secretary (East) in Jakarta on Prime Minister's Ongoing Visit of Indonesia.

Jakarta, October 13, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): We requested Secretary (East) to brief you all quickly so that you can go and file your stories well in time. It is only now 4 o'clock Indian time. So, you will have enough time to file your stories.

I will request Secretary (East) to make his opening remarks where he will outline the areas of discussion. then if you have any questions, he will be willing to answer.

Secretary (East) (Shri Ashok Kantha): Thank you Akbar.

As you are aware, the Prime Minister and President Yudhoyono had a tete-e-tete followed by delegation-level talks. Earlier in the day, both External Affairs Minister and Commerce and Industry Ministry had separate discussions with their counterparts, and we have signed six documents altogether. Four documents were signed in your presence just now - on health, ant-corruption, narcotics and disaster management.

This morning in the presence of External Affairs Minister and his counterpart, two MoUs on cooperation - (1) between the Indian Council of World Affairs and its counterpart in Indonesia, and (2) between the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration and National Institute of Public Administration of Indonesia - were signed.

As for the flavour of the visit and discussions, the two principles have already spoken. They have given very clear indication of where they

stand in terms of our strategic partnership and kind of strong commitment that we have on both sides to take it forward.

I would like to mention that this was Prime Minister's third visit to Indonesia, but first official bilateral visit, as he mentioned. President Yudhoyono also has been to India three times. In fact in last ten years we have had eight visits at the level of Head of State or Government, four in either direction. That also sort of illustrates the kind of importance that is being attached to this relationship by both countries.

Prime Minister during his discussions with President Yudhoyono expressed desire that we seek a stronger, durable, action-oriented, strategic partnership with Indonesia. He also mentioned that we regard Indonesia as closest of neighbours. He described Indonesia as a maritime neighbour. As you know, the distance between Andaman Nicobar Islands and the tip of Sumatra is barely 90 nautical miles.

Likewise, President Yudhoyono also expressed a very strong desire to enhance what he characterised as long-term strategic partnership. So, there is this convergence of views between the two sides. In fact after the Prime Minister's remarks President Yudhoyono said that he agrees entirely with what the Prime Minister had suggested in terms of future directions of relations.

Likewise, Prime Minister endorsed President Yudhoyono's suggestion that the Ministers on two sides should put in place a medium-term blueprint for further development of strategic partnership between India and Indonesia.

Coming to the outcome document, which has already been released to you, it seeks to add further depth and content to the strategic partnership which was established in 2005 when President Yudhoyono had visited India.

We are focusing on five principal pillars of this partnership: strategic engagement: defence and security cooperation, comprehensive economic partnership, culture and people-to-people links, and cooperation in responding to common challenges. Details are given in the outcome document, Joint Statement that has already been circulated. So, I will not go into detail. I will just highlight some of the key features of the

document and the discussions that took place between our Prime Minister and President Yudhoyono.

On strategic engagement, the two leaders have agreed that we should have annual summits at the leadership level, which I think is a very realistic goal considering that in the last ten years there have been eight visits already. At the suggestion of Indonesian side, Minister of External Affairs of India has agreed that we will have Joint Commission meetings every year instead of alternate year as at present.

The two leaders have also constituted Eminent Persons Group which will come up with a Vision Document 2025. On our side the EPG will be co-chaired by Mr. Shyam Saran, our former Foreign Secretary who is also a former Ambassador to Indonesia. So, he is very familiar with this country.

We have identified number of areas which require attention from a strategic perspective. Just to mention a couple of them, space cooperation is an area both leaders agreed that we need to develop further. Here again if I may just mention, we have fairly significant ongoing cooperation between our two sides. We have a Telemetry Tracking Station at Irian Jaya set up by India. We are cooperating in launch of Indonesian satellites, training Indonesian space scientists. Yesterday in Brunei, in the ASEAN context, we have agreed that beginning April next year we will start setting up a satellite tracking and data reception centre. So, space is an important area of cooperation.

We also agreed to renew the agreement for cooperation in utilisation of nuclear energy. That will be another area that will be developed further.

President of Indonesia, during his remarks at ASEAN-India Summit yesterday, specifically raised two areas where he thought we should step up cooperation. One relates to counterterrorism and the other is food security. Food security he felt that as two large developing countries India and Indonesia need to work together because we have common challenges there, including areas like our common interest in stockpiling of food grain reserves, working together in WTO, R&D cooperation, etc. Prime Minister responded positively.

Counterterrorism is another area he emphasised and he suggested that India and Indonesia are similarly placed in terms of trans-border threats,

in terms of *Jihadi* threat. He suggested enhanced intelligence cooperation. Prime Minister responded very positively to that.

Coming to the related field of defence and security cooperation, here again, as you are aware, our Defence Minister had visited Indonesia last October when we had agreed to enhance our defence and security cooperation. We already have a Joint Defence Cooperation Committee. We have staff talks between two armies and navies. Today we have agreed to establish staff talks between two air forces as well. So, we propose to significantly upgrade our defence and security collaboration including with regard to maritime security. This is one area which was proposed by Indonesian President and our Prime Minister has responded positively. In fact, the two leaders have directed that we should draw up a comprehensive action plan for security cooperation. This dimension of our strategic partnership is getting a renewed emphasis.

The third pillar of our strategic partnership which figures in the outcome document relates to comprehensive economic engagement. Here the two leaders expressed satisfaction that ASEAN-India FTA process has been completed and agreements on services and investment will be signed in December this year. They agreed that shortly after the conclusion of ASEAN-India FTA we will launch bilateral CECA negotiations to build on what we achieved in ASEAN-India context.

As you know, we already have a trade turnover of US\$ 20 billion. Since the establishment of strategic partnership in 2005, our bilateral trade turnover has increased more than five times, and we have set the target of US\$ 25 billion by 2015, which we believe is quite realistic. There are also very significant investment flows from India into Indonesia in excess of US\$ 10 billion. Several big Indian companies are already present here.

There are some issues regarding some of these investment projects. So, in response to our request, President of Indonesia has agreed that there will be a joint high-level task force which will go into issues pertaining to investment and encourage two-way flow of investment because this is again another very important area of cooperation. We had the first meeting of CEO's forum yesterday which was co-chaired by our Commerce and Industry Minister.

Connectivity is another important area. Batik Air has agreed to commence direct flights to India and Jet Airways and Garuda Airlines of Indonesia have also entered into code-sharing arrangement. As you can see, in several areas there is both forward movement as well as new initiatives to consolidate these gains.

The fourth pillar relates to culture and people-to-people links. I will not go into details. They are given in the outcome document. I will just highlight a couple of points there. Prime Minister announced that we will increase scholarship slots to Indonesia, establish Chairs of Indian studies in Indonesia and likewise encourage Chairs of Indonesian studies in India. We will help set up a new vocational training centre in Papua. There are already two, one in Jakarta and the other in Banda Aceh.

On Indonesian side they have agreed to extend their cooperation in setting up Nalanda University. As you just saw, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration and its counterpart institution in Indonesia have signed a memorandum of understanding to consolidate their cooperation in training the civil servants, which is already ongoing.

Finally with regard to cooperation in responding to common challenges, this is one area which received a lot of attention in the discussions between the two leaders. You would have heard in media statements by our Prime Minister and President Yudhoyono, both referred to the fact that we face common challenges; and these common challenges that we face as two largest Asian countries, we need to respond together.

Here we agreed to step up our cooperation say with regard to ASEAN or East Asia Summit. Prime Minister conveyed his appreciation for the very supportive role played by Indonesia in development of our strategic partnership with ASEAN. Earlier when welcoming into the fold of East Asia Summit, Indonesia has always been very supportive.

I referred earlier to a suggestion from President Yudhoyono made yesterday about food security. That was discussed further during discussion today also and the two leaders had directed officials to work out an action plan in that regard. There is a formulation in the Joint Statement you may wish to refer to.

They also agreed that in the context of WTO, especially Doha Development Round where the Ministerial Meeting will be taking place in Bali in December, we will work together because we have very similar concerns and challenges there.

These were some of the highlights I wanted to mention. I will conclude by recalling what Prime Minister mentioned during his discussions with President Yudhoyono. He remarked that there is complete convergence of ideas between him and President Yudhoyono. And both leaders expressed enormous satisfaction with what has been achieved and they expressed desire to build on these achievements. Thank you.

Q: *Sir, Did Indonesia, endorse the food security?*

Secretary (East): *we did not brief him about the food security; no such talk took place. From the population angle we believe that India and Indonesia are among the four big countries of the world, we have to take care of our food security ourselves. This cannot be done externally. There are some requirements, as stock piling of food grains, we have to ensure these requirements. There was a suggestion that we need cooperate in the R&D in this area. In terms of mechanism, and about what you said, there will be discussion. They want to know about our food security act; we will discuss further about it.*

As mentioned before we will cooperate in the WTO; the suggestion about the food security was made by the Indonesian President and our prime minister endorsed it.

Q: Will India support the food security programme of Indonesia?

Secretary (East): ... In food security we have to look after our respective requirements. But there is a certain international framework within which we need to deal with. Like, you would have heard President Yudhoyono referring to the need for maintaining stability of food prices or preventing distortions in markets of agricultural commodities. These are some of the common challenges that we have and when we pursue the agenda of food security, we would like to do it in a manner that it does not in any way impact on our own ability to take care of our food security requirements.

Q: Have you discussed the trade aspect of food security?

Secretary (East): This was a discussion at the leadership level. They have asked officials to work out what could be specific areas of cooperation. So, I really do not want to anticipate that at this point of time.

Q: There are a lot of talks about common challenges. Would you like to spell out what are these common challenges?

Secretary (East): Common challenges range from the fact that, as both leaders mentioned, India and Indonesia are two of the four most populous countries in the world; we are both located in Asia; we are maritime neighbours; we have common challenges relating to counterterrorism, relating to maritime security, relating to our developmental agenda. Indonesia would like to work with us when it comes to developing a security architecture for Asia Pacific region, developing principles for a security architecture.

There is a whole range of issues. The two leaders referred to WTO where we need to work together. G20 is another where we are already working together. There was understanding that there should be greater financial inclusion within G20.

We are currently the Chair of IOR-ARC. Next month we will hand over the Chair to Australia, and Indonesia will take over the Vice Chair of IOR-ARC. Indian Ocean is another where we are working together and there we propose to step up our cooperation. There is a very wide range of issues that we can work together on.

Q: Sir, you said that the President proposed maritime security ... (Inaudible)... and that PM responded positively. Can you elaborate a bit on that?

Secretary (East): We already have a fairly significant defence and security cooperation with NATO countries. Just to give you a couple of examples, we have coordinated patrolling between the two navies in Malacca Strait because we are at the mouth of Malacca Strait and they are the littoral country for Malacca Strait. So, we are already working together through coordinated patrolling. That is one area our navies have agreed to have joint exercises. We have separate navy staff talks.

We are also working on establishment of AIS chain. We have agreed to step up cooperation with regard to maritime domain awareness and hydrography. Maritime domain awareness means movement of what is called white shipping, that means merchant shipping; having a better idea of that through exchange of data. That is one area we have agreed to step up cooperation in. Hydrography is another area. Some of these areas are referred to in the Joint Statement also. So, it is a fairly broad field. Anti piracy is one area. As you know, Malacca Strait had a serious problem of piracy earlier which has been controlled to a large extent mainly through regional cooperation.

Q: Sir, you referred to Indonesia's willingness on cooperation in security, anti terror and especially ...(Inaudible)...

Secretary (East): I will say it is a shared desire. This is one suggestion which came from President yesterday during the course of ASEAN-India Summit, but it is a shared desire.

Q: Can you elaborate a little bit what exactly is the cooperation at this point of time and what new initiatives can be taken in the future?

Secretary (East): I think I have already responded to that question. I talked about our security cooperation earlier. I have talked about maritime security. On counterterrorism we already have an ongoing dialogue. There is recognition on both sides that these are transnational challenges and we cannot deal with these challenges individually, we need to pool our resources because those players, those non-state actors, collaborate among themselves. They do not respect national boundaries. So, when we deal with them, there is need for stepped up intelligence for instance. And that is something that is already happening and we propose to enhance it.

Q: For anti terror also ...(Inaudible)...

Secretary (East): Yes. Counter terrorism is anti terror, isn't it?

Q: Again about the security aspect and both sides, just a day before the Chinese Premier went on a charm offensive, proposed a plan for the South China Sea safe passage and all. Did this figure during the talks between India and Indonesia?

Secretary (East): There is no reference to what the Chinese Premier offered or did not offer. I think we have a fairly strong partnership between India and Indonesia which is driven by our respective desire to promote it further.

Q: But then, suppose if it is between you and me, when we build a relationship our outside environment also impacts ...(Inaudible)...

Secretary (East): There was no discussion on that.

Q: He has used the word comprehensive action plan for security cooperation. It includes ...(Inaudible)...

Secretary (East): It is going to be developed. The two leaders have directed the officials to work out ...(Inaudible)...

Q: It will include ...(Inaudible)...

Secretary (East): Let us see. I do not want to anticipate what will be developed, isn't it? You go through the Joint Statement. You will get a fairly good idea of what is there at present.

Q: But that perception is there, isn't it?

Secretary (East): I do not want to make any such linkage. Let me make it very clear that we are not making any such linkage.

Q: It is independent. It is bilateral.

Secretary (East): It is bilateral but I referred to common challenges. So, we are dealing with common challenges.

Official Spokesperson: I think what Secretary was saying was these are transnational in nature. So, these are challenges which are mostly of non-state actors. Piracy, maritime security, cyber issues, these are all issues which are as far as ...

Q: When we are talking about maritime security, it is not just about piracy. Piracy is one aspect of it. But maintaining the ...(Inaudible)... of the sea lanes the question of sovereignty comes in.

Q: Actually, Mr. Kantha, you can tell us off the record.

Secretary (East): I know. There was no such discussion.

Official Spokesperson: There was no such discussion. This is your perception.

Q: I am not imputing. I am just seeking a clarification.

Official Spokesperson: There was no discussion on this. There was no reference.

Q: Two-way investment flows ki baat hai, us mein kis tarah ke concerns hamaare taraf se the joh address honge? Aur koi big ticket investment negotiation conversation hai pipeline mein?

Secretary (East): Kayi investment proposals already implement ho rahe hain. Indian companies, as you know, are investing in coal mining in Indonesia because that is one critical input for our power sector. We are already importing substantial quantities of coal and several Indian are investing in coal to export to India. In some areas it is moving well; there are some areas where projects which were announced during the visit of President Yudhoyono in January 2011 progress has been somewhat slow. So, Prime Minister is ...(Inaudible)... we agreed to have a high-level task force to go into those issues. Prime Minister also welcomed investment by Indonesia in India. So, it will be a two-way process.

Q: What is the name of the institution participating ...(Inaudible)... and ICWA?

Secretary (East): The name of the institution is National Institution of Public Administration (NIPA).

All that is there in the joint document. That is why I am not going into all those details.

Q: Sir, two specific questions. One is the Indonesia President referred to trade deficit and said that Indonesia has a trade deficit.

Secretary (East): No, we have trade deficit.

Q: Sorry, we have trade deficit. So, how are we trying to address that?

Secretary (East): On this issue I may mention that both during External Affairs Minister's meeting with his counterpart this morning as well as Prime Minister's meeting with President this afternoon, Indonesian side raised it on their own. They fully recognise the need for trade to be more balanced because at present our exports last year are in the tune of US\$ 5.5 billion and our imports are about US\$ 14.5 billion. They recognise that to be more sustainable, we need to increase the basket of commodities.

At present it is focused a bit too narrowly on extractive industries because we are sourcing material from Indonesia, coal for instance. Palm oil is another big area we are sourcing. They are the largest exporter of palm oil to India. Fine! Those are critical requirements for us. But as we broaden our trade I think it will also become more balanced over the years.

Q: On coal, are there any say levy or tax related issues which Indian companies are facing there?

Joint Secretary (South)(Shri Sanjay Bhattacharyya): There are certain regulatory issues regarding the coal, the mining sector which require certain divestment of their stocks, they have the shares over here. The second thing that has happened is a certain indigenous content in terms of the sale of the proceeds. But the experience of the coal companies which are mining over here is mixed. Some of it has to do with the domestic legislation, some of it has to do with the international price of coal on the basis of which it is traded. But mostly they have found that it is a venture into which more business is coming in. But what the Indian operators are looking for is a more transparent, stable and predictable regime.

Secretary (East): But one thing I want to clarify is that whatever regulations are there are global in character. It is not that they are specific to Indian investment. As Sanjay said, since our investors are making fairly large investments here, they would like to have more stability and predictability in terms of investment climate. There is nothing very special, these are issues just as faced elsewhere also.

Q: These are very big issues for Indian coal companies since Coal India's output is not really increasing and we desperately need coal and domestically too we have not cleared many projects because of environment issues. So, Indonesia that way is a big source.

Secretary (East): That is why we have set up a high-level task force to go into those issues. It is an important area for us.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you mentioned that the two leaders discussed about space cooperation and that it is a key area.

Secretary (East): That is one of the areas. I was just illustrating. I did not want to give a laundry list. So, I just gave an example.

Q: Can you just help us understand what about the kind of cooperation that is possible and that we are considering?

Secretary (East): I think it is already there in the Joint Statement. So, I will not repeat that. It is there in the Joint Statement. It lists out cooperation.

Q: I wanted to ask you if we are going to launch a satellite for them. Is ISRO going to do that?

Secretary (East): That is one area where we have proposed cooperation.

Q: Most papers here are saying that. We are doing it for other countries.

Secretary (East): We have done that for them in the past and that is another thing which ... (Inaudible)...

Q: On defence cooperation, are we going to export something, technology?

Secretary (East): There is already some limited defence supply relationship. It is quite limited. But we have agreed to have greater cooperation with regard to say co-production. So, those things have been listed out. But it will take time. This is something which has been identified.

Q: Co-production of defence equipment?

Secretary (East): Yes. It is listed in the Joint Statement. All these details are given in the Joint Statement.

Q: How was the chemistry?

Secretary (East): Chemistry was extremely positive. You would have heard Prime Minister's statement. He paid a personal tribute to President Yudhoyono's contribution to development of strategic partnership. Likewise, President Yudhoyono had lot of appreciation for Prime Minister's role in development of this important relationship.

Q: *Did he say anything about his third term?*

Secretary (East): Please ask this from them.

Official Spokesperson:

Thank you



JAPAN

301. First India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue.

New Delhi, January 29, 2013.

The first India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue was held in New Delhi on January 29, 2013.

The Indian delegation was led by Mr. D.B. Venkatesh Varma, Joint Secretary (Disarmament and International Security Affairs), in the Ministry of External Affairs and the Japanese delegation by Mr. Kazuyuki Yamazaki, Deputy Director General (Ambassador), Foreign Policy Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Representatives of various Ministries participated from both sides.

Issues of mutual interest were discussed, inter alia, maritime security including non-traditional threats, cooperation in shipping, marine sciences and technology, marine biodiversity and cooperation at various multilateral forums.



302. Interaction of External Affairs Minister with Japanese Media in New Delhi.

New Delhi, March 21, 2013.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): It is wonderful to have you with us. All of you presumably are familiar with the working of this Ministry and indeed the events that these days are keeping us all busy. In that range of exciting things that we have to do is now for me and certainly for the country it is a very important visit. For me personally, it is really a very important visit because I have cherished the idea of being able to go to Japan at a time when there is peach blossom and cherry blossom with beautiful pink and white flowers. I have seen a little bit of that in a visit to China but not quite as exquisite and as beautiful as it is in Japan. Therefore, it will be really for me a dream visit.

I look forward of course to first meeting with Foreign Minister Kishida with whom I spoke on the phone and I now have a chance to see him face to face. We start building upon the foundation of a very strong partnership that we have between our two countries. As you know, we will be co-chairing the seventh meeting of the India-Japan Strategic Dialogue. There is an entire range of issues that are of bilateral, regional and international interest to our country. We will review, we will discuss, look for areas of convergence.

This really is the preparation of the annual summit that had to be postponed at the last minute last year because elections were announced in Japan. So, the postponed annual summit of our Prime Ministers is what we will be preparing for particularly looking at dates convenient to both sides. It is a very important annual summit and we therefore want it to be held at the earliest possible date. We do know that the inevitability of elections in democracies is a thing that you have to factor into whatever you are doing. We get distracted obviously because we have elections all the time. Right now as I speak to you we have elections announced in Karnataka. Therefore some of our energies will get diverted to working in those elections, again very important elections for us. So, hopefully we will have an early date.

I also would like to share with you that I will have the opportunity and really a privileged opportunity to address the Rikkyo University in Tokyo where we will talk about the potential of Indo-Japan relations in the 21st century, and of course how we can expand on our strategic and global partnership. Your colleagues from Japanese media will have a chance to meet with me at the Japan National Press Club, which I am sure you are all very familiar with.

We will look at what we can do in terms of enhancing our trade, and I will certainly see if there are ways which we can explore areas of balancing our trade ties. We will look at security cooperation. We will certainly look at how we can enhance people-to-people exchanges, science and technology cooperation.

We will have a chance to review the developments which have taken place on the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor project which is a very important project for both of us, and indeed the very substantial

participation in the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor and the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor.

I think Japan's presence and flag of Japan fluttering with the Indian Tricolour on these far-reaching iconic, if you like dream projects for the 21st century is something that we believe gives our relationship a dimension that is in a sense unique and goes far beyond our relationships with many other friendly countries.

We are happy on this occasion to flag our gratitude for Japan having helped bring a dramatic change to the profile of Delhi and the facilities that we provide to the citizens of Delhi, and that is the Japanese ODA assisted project of the Delhi Metro project the first phases, which were actually the kickoff phases as it were, were actually built through Japanese assistance, and which we believe has transformed the way we live in Delhi.

We do know that both in terms of infrastructure across the country but specifically developing infrastructure on the Buddhist Circuit, part of which is in my State of UP. And I understand I just have been told that the Chief Minister of UP will also be traveling to Japan a few days after I visit Japan. I think that is a very significant infrastructural involvement of Japan in the State of Uttar Pradesh which again I think is extremely important.

We are very happy with our collaboration with the East Asia Summit, with Japan the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Defence Ministers' Plus meeting, and the ASEAN Maritime Forum. I will later today be addressing very important diplomatic figures on India's Look East Policy, and how the Indo-Pacific concept can be developed, and of course China there will play a very important role.

So, on all international issues we are happy that we are able to work together with the United Nations and G20. We celebrate the success of Japan. The story of Japan's success is really the beginning of the story of Asia's success and Asia's arrival in the 21st century as a very significant force, economic force, cultural force, and a force in terms of institutional capacity building.

That is the curtain raiser. I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Q: My question about Shinkansen deal. There are some media reports in Japan that both countries have reached agreement on Shinkansen deal during Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's upcoming visit. Could you confirm whether it is true or not?

External Affairs Minister: I should confirm these things to you when I return. As I said, we will see all the issues that we have that are work in progress. We will review, we will see various adequate progress made on them, and that what more needs to be done. Once both Foreign Ministers are able to be sure and certain that we have reached a point where we can announce the agenda, that of course obviously means that the Foreign Ministers will put it up to their respective Prime Ministers, an agenda will then be decided. But as I said, the entire range of work-in-progress issues will be looked at by us. Wherever we need some effort is required to push them further, we will do so. But when I return I think I will be in a better position to give you a status report on where we stand.

Q: My question is about FTA for ASEAN plus 6 countries including China and Japan.

External Affairs Minister: We have to understand that balanced trade is what is desirable and the aspirational purpose for all of us, and imbalanced trade and one-way trade is not sustainable. But there are sometimes intrinsic difficulties or intrinsic complexities between two countries which do not allow despite your best effort to balance that trade.

Protectionism as we know in the world today is not the preferred and the desirable method by which you try to balance trade. So, wherever we have this difficulty, we try to substitute it by greater investment from the country concerned so that what you are not able to recover in terms of balance trade at least you get in terms of inflows of foreign direct investment, and, therefore, we work harder than on investment. That is the way by mutual cooperation we can give sustainability to our trade relations. And this will be true with all countries.

But China is unique in the sense that China is in our neighbourhood. In that sense China is for many countries an immediate option between India and China for investment and for trade. We make many of the goods that the Chinese make. Chinese have a distinct advantage in

terms of cost inputs. Vis-à-vis them we may be at a disadvantage. We have an advantage vis-à-vis developed societies. So, I think all these things need to be factored in an appropriate way and then we see how we arrive at a sustainable relationship. It is something that you have to continue working on all the time. You cannot just say that we will do it once and that will take care of it. I think it is an ongoing thing that you have to keep working on.

Q: As regards maritime security cooperation among India, Japan and the United States, what kind of cooperation do you expect among the three countries? Also, Prime Minister Abe said recently a security diamond. He said, Hawaii, Australia and India and Japan is a kind of a security net for them against China. I think so.

External Affairs Minister: There are various expressions that have been used by different strategic approaches taken by different countries which are China-centric. I understand that Japan being in the historical position it has vis-à-vis China and also in terms of its relative size of your population and your country vis-à-vis China, Japan has its own special concerns. Then of course you have your regional issues. There are formulations that we have heard about strategic approach that the United States of America takes for instance rebalancing Asia, pivot and so on. These are formulations that we have seen from time to time. 'Encircling' is another, 'containing' is another expression that has been used.

Now we have very consciously and carefully tried to develop our relationships with countries bilaterally and in terms of regional and multilateral cooperation without making that dependent on and focused on China alone. But obviously we do things together, it will have some implications for China. We do things with China, it will have some implications for another country. What we try to do is that our relationships with each country bilaterally must be secured on the merit of our exchange and not influenced by the consequences on the third country, particularly if those consequences are not illegitimate consequences.

So, we do not plan against any country. We plan for the country that we are dealing with and with the country that we are dealing with and this is what we have done. For instance in ASEAN on the whole issue of South

China Sea we have reiterated our position on the freedom of navigation on high sea. We have reiterated it very categorically and clearly. But where we have said there are bilateral issues or sovereignty issues, bilateral sovereignty issues, we believe that by dialogue that should be settled by the countries concerned.

Vietnam has some concerns, Japan has some concerns, and so on. And we have advocated bilateral dialogue between those countries. That is the model that we prefer that if there are disagreements among countries, we are all civilized and we are all very respectable countries, we need to dialogue and find solutions. Obviously it is not completely in silos. There are always overlaps between multilateral approaches and bilateral approaches. There is some overlap at the edges. But I think the core approach has to be that of bilateral dialogue.

Q: What kind of dialogue do you expect between your country and China because in China a new Government is in power?

External Affairs Minister: The first indication that we have had from Chinese leadership including the outgoing leadership is that our Prime Minister had developed a good working relationship with. The first indication is that the new leadership wants to engage with India in a meaningful way. I have seen the incumbent President's statements made recently in the last two, three days where he has talked about enhancing relationship with India, but of course recognize as we do that there are some historical differences and difficulties that we face particularly on the border. But as we both have decided that that will not be a hiccup and that will not be a roadblock to moving forward.

We may have differences from time to time but we know that we have to live together as neighbours, and that we will try to overcome our differences once again through constant meaningful and open dialogue. And that has gone well and we certainly would want to welcome China's indication that they want to enhance that dialogue and to take it to higher levels, we will certainly welcome that but not at the cost of our relationship with anyone else.

Q: I want to ask about nuclear negotiation between India and Japan. What is your expectation of results of the negotiation because so far it has been suspended?

External Affairs Minister: We are sensitive to Japan's concerns. We know that Japan has been preoccupied with a fresh look at its entire policy framework after the tsunami. We also know that Japan has been preoccupied with rehabilitation and reconstruction which is something that I must say is a remarkable example to the world. Rebuilding after such a calamity and such an enormous loss of life and property, and interruption of infrastructure particularly on power, rebuilding really from scratch in such a short time with the least amount of complaints - and I am sure there must have been complaints but least amount of complaints - and solidarity shown by the people is absolutely remarkable. I think the world should applaud this as an example of managing disasters in our lives. I think that is really very good, very terrific.

Now obviously, Japan has reviewed safety and management issues. And we have also done the same sort of review in light of the experiences of Japan. On the other hand, Japan's whole approach to nuclear technology will have to be worked out by the Japanese people. Therefore, we do not want to push Japan on any of these issues. We want to allow Japan the time that is needed for it to work out these issues for itself and then we move forward with negotiating our agreements that are partly negotiated.

But at the end of the day my understanding is that Japan cannot do without nuclear technology, at least in the near future, and that despite all the cautions that one gets from soothsayers from Europe and elsewhere we also because of our diminishing water resources and also the need to address environmental concerns, will have to continue depending on nuclear energy to a much greater extent that we do today. Therefore this is something with Japan we have to move forward and we will move forward. But we would rather give Japan the time it needs before we can start addressing these things more aggressively.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...Yesterday there was a report of North Korea attacking South Korea by means of a cyber-attack and the IP address was in China. US also condemned China for cyber-attacking it from China, but China denied it. How do you think of the situation?

External Affairs Minister: You know that cyber security is a very serious concern for Governments as well as for industry. And I think in times to

come this is going to be a growing challenge. We have been addressing this matter at the level of UN. We have been addressing it globally. This is a matter that we take up bilaterally with all the countries that we are interacting with. Some obviously are more affected by it, some are less affected by it. The most successful countries, particularly countries like Japan obviously have a much greater reason to be concerned and worried than a less developed country would be because the penetration is much greater and the consequences and the impact can be much greater. Therefore, we share the concerns of all countries to address this issue. And I believe that the world is working closely and needs to work faster on issues of cyber security.

Q: I have a technical question. You are arriving in Japan on Tuesday the 26th or Monday the 25th?

External Affairs Minister: Twenty-sixth morning.

Q: And till when will you be staying?

External Affairs Minister: I will be there on the 26th, 27th and leaving on the 28th morning.

Q: The main person you are meeting will be our Foreign Minister. Will you meet somebody else?

External Affairs Minister: The Foreign Ministers' meeting is obviously there. Obviously till the time of my arriving day, we will be working on what more meetings can be fitted in. I will be willing and available for as meetings as possible.

Thank you



303. Media briefing by Foreign Secretary and Secretary (East) on Prime Minister's visit to Japan and Thailand.

New Delhi, May 24, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. You will recollect that on the 14th of May we had made an announcement of Prime Minister's visits to Japan and Thailand from 27th to 31st. This evening's briefing will be focused on those two visits.

I have here with me Foreign Secretary who will brief you about the elements relating to Prime Minister's visit to Japan. I would also like to introduce to you Mr. Ashok Kantha who has today taken over as Secretary (East). He has just come back from Sri Lanka. Along with him on Foreign Secretary's right is the familiar figure of Mr. Gautam Bambawale, Joint Secretary (East Asia), who has been with you for the last week. To his right is Mr. Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Joint Secretary (South), who also handles Thailand.

With those brief introductory remarks I will request Foreign Secretary to make his opening remarks following which we will also have Secretary (East) Mr. Ashok Kantha make his opening remarks, and then the floor will be open to questions to both of them. Foreign Secretary.

Foreign Secretary (Shri Ranjan Mathai): Thank you, Akbar.

It is good to have Ashok join the Ministry as Secretary (East). He arrived late last night. How late was it?

Secretary (East) (Shri Ashok K. Kantha): It was 3 o'clock.

Foreign Secretary: It was 3 o'clock in the morning and as soon as he arrived in the Ministry he was told he has to face the media, which shows how seriously we take you and how important we regard our interaction with you.

The Prime Minister, as you have already been told, will visit Japan from May 27 to 30 - 27th he leaves and 30th he leaves Japan. This is the postponed annual summit between the Prime Minister's of India and Japan which was originally scheduled for the end of last year. PM's delegation will include the National Security Advisor, the Principal Secretary to the

Prime Minister, and other senior officials. Prime Minister arrives in Tokyo late evening of Monday, May 27.

The broad outlines of his programme include an address at a business meeting hosted by Kaidanren, the premier chamber of commerce and industry of Japan, in the afternoon of May 28. He will then address a gathering which is jointly organised by the Japan-India Association, Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League, and the Friendship Exchange Council, in the evening of May 28. The Japanese Prime Minister and Mrs. Abe will host a private dinner for Prime Minister and Mrs. Kaur also in the evening of May 28.

There will also be calls on Prime Minister by senior Ministers in the Abe Cabinet as well as leaders of the main political parties. The Prime Minister and Mrs. Kaur will call on Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan, who will host a luncheon for them on May 29. And then the annual summit between the two Prime Ministers will take place in the evening of May 29.

The two Prime Ministers will take stock of the India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership, and will also discuss how to further strengthen it. This is the first occasion for the two Prime Ministers to meet after the December 2012 general elections in which Japan saw Prime Minister Abe and his party win office. The two Prime Ministers will discuss all issues in the bilateral relationship including political exchanges, high-level visits, the economic interaction, our defence cooperation and people-to-people ties.

As you are aware, our economic relationship is one of the drivers of the overall bilateral relations. The two Prime Ministers will obviously discuss all major projects such as the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor, and the infrastructure upgradation process in the Chennai-Bangalore corridor. The Government of Japan is keen to showcase its high-speed rail technology or Shinkansen, which they would like us to consider. This is a subject which will be discussed.

At his address to Japanese business, Prime Minister will highlight major investment opportunities in India and seek greater Japanese private sector investments. We see very good prospects for increasing Japanese investment in India.

Energy cooperation is another area of promise in the bilateral relationship. Japan will organise a major exhibition of energy efficient and green technologies in Delhi later this year. As you are aware, we have a regular dialogue on energy between the two governments. Of interest though it is at a very early stage, Japan has recently made a breakthrough in the frozen seabed gas hydrates and their exploitation, which is of great interest to us. The two countries are already cooperating on a joint study on LNG pricing.

The two leaders will also discuss regional and international issues. Our cooperation in the field of security will be one of the subjects covered. As is normal in such visits, the two leaders will issue a joint statement which will capture the essence of their discussions and chart a vision for the India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership over the coming years.

Thank you.

Secretary (East): Thanks Ranjan.

Prime Minister after his visit to Japan will pay an official visit to Thailand on 30-31 May at the invitation of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. You remember that the Prime Minister of Thailand had visited India as the Chief Guest at our Republic Day in January last year and she came again for India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in December 2012.

During his visit to Bangkok, Prime Minister will have official talks with Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. We expect a number of documents to be signed and announcements to be made on new initiatives.

As you are aware, we have very close, friendly and growing relations between India and Thailand, and Thailand is also an important component of our Look East Policy. There has been a sustained interaction at the high level which has added dynamism to bilateral relations which are multifaceted and growing. Following the visit of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra in January 2012 when we had signed a number of agreements on security, defence, trade and cultural cooperation, we have covered ground to achieve progress in key areas such as security cooperation, economic relations and connectivity. Later this year we are also planning on the visits of Raksha Mantri (Defence Minister) and Minister of External

Affairs to Thailand which also shows the desire on the part of both countries the momentum in our relationship.

We have made rapid strides in strengthening defence, security and juridical cooperation. We have signed an MLAT in criminal matters, and an agreement on transfer of sentenced persons, and we are now close to signing an extradition treaty with Thailand. We have strengthened cooperation between law enforcement agencies, particularly in counterterrorism and transnational crimes. In defence we have a broad-based engagement which includes training, joint exercises, anti-piracy operations, maintenance of security of sea lanes, and exchange of visits.

Likewise, our trade and investment relations are growing especially after conclusion of the framework agreement FTA of 2003 and early harvest in 2004. We seek a comprehensive and balanced outcome of the FTA negotiations. Trade reached the level of US\$ 9.2 billion in 2012-13 and there has also been a fairly impressive growth in two-way investment flows between our two countries.

India and Thailand have been working to promote connectivity between the two countries and also in the region through cooperation and development of road and shipping infrastructure. Enhanced connectivity will greatly benefit our Northeastern region in particular. India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway project has made good progress and is expected to be completed by 2016.

The newly constituted Joint Working Group on Connectivity and Infrastructure has focused on initiatives in third countries including exploring possibilities for cooperation in Dawei project in Myanmar and connectivity to Lao and Cambodia. Bilaterally we have excellent civil aviation connectivity with 138 flights per week. And last year as many as 1.16 million Indian tourists visited Thailand.

We are also seeking to expand cooperation in science and technology including in areas like ICT, space applications, and R&D cooperation.

Our cultural ties played an important role in deepening civilisational and historical bonds. Indian Cultural Centre in Bangkok and Chairs of Sanskrit studies and Indian studies in different Thai universities have brought our people closer. ICCR and ITEC scholarships have promoted exchanges and earned the appreciation of the Thai people. We greatly appreciate

the contribution of the Thai Government and the Thai private sector towards establishment of Nalanda University as an international institute of excellence. In recognition of the major role played by Buddhism, we are planning a major Buddhist art exhibition in Bangkok which will be coordinated by the Indian Museum in Kolkata.

We have been working together on regional and multilateral issues. We have a strategic partnership, as you know, in ASEAN and have close cooperation in ARF, EAS, BIMSTEC, MGC, as well as multilateral fora such as the UN. The visit of Prime Minister to Thailand is expected to consolidate our partnership and provide new direction in future cooperation.

Thank you.

Official Spokesperson: We will now throw the floor open for questions. We will try and take questions first on the issues that have been now covered, that is Japan and Thailand. And at the end of it if we have time, Foreign Secretary has agreed to respond to a couple of questions on issues other than this. Let us begin with this.

Q: Sir, you talked about defence cooperation between India and Japan. Can you give us an update of what is going on right now between the two countries?

Foreign Secretary: We have a regular dialogue with Japan and we engage in exercises together. Japan is the only country with whom we have institutionalized what is called the 2+2, which is the Defence Secretary and the Foreign Secretary from India and their counterparts in Japan. We have a series of activities which go on between our Services and their counterparts in Japan.

I will ask the Joint Secretary to add a little bit to this.

Joint Secretary (East Asia) (Shri Gautam Bambawale): As you probably know, the first ever bilateral naval exercises between India and Japan took place off the coast of Japan in June of 2012. So, that was a major step that we took forward. This year there has been a series of exchanges between the armed forces of India and Japan. Our Chief of Army Staff was in Japan earlier this year in end of March. Similarly we have had the Chief of the Japanese Self Defence Forces here in India a

few weeks ago. That is an update on some of our defence cooperation activities.

Foreign Secretary: I would also add to this that there is a regular dialogue between Raksha Mantri and his Japanese counterpart, just as there is a strategic dialogue also between the two Foreign Ministers.

Q: Sir, you referred to the energy cooperation that is going to be talked about in Japan. In that respect you spoke of energy efficiency as well as the green technology. Are we going to discuss civilian nuclear cooperation with Japan especially from the point of view of safety? Is this subject going to be discussed?

Foreign Secretary: Certainly. In fact I should have brought in the question of the civil nuclear cooperation. This has been under discussion between India and Japan and there are various aspects to it including certainly discussions on safety. As you are aware, in the post-Fukushima period that is in fact the main focus of much of our dialogues with many countries. But with Japan we also have discussions regarding industrial collaboration in terms of power production through the civil nuclear energy route. These are at a very preliminary stage. We will first need to reach an agreement. We are hopeful of making progress later in the year on this. This is a matter on which we have had discussions over a long period of time.

It is also well-known that in Japan the Japan Steel Works produces reactor vessels which are an important component in the activities which we undertake with other partners also because that is a very specialized technology which Japan has. So, certainly yes, this is one area which we will be discussing. But, as I said, we have been discussing specifically civil nuclear cooperation agreement and we will continue those discussions, and we hope to make by the end of this year more progress in this field.

Q: Foreign Secretary, in what way the India-Japan economic cooperation is helping us particularly in the corridor projects implemented in Chennai and Mumbai? Secondly, since Mr. Ashok Kantha has come to Delhi Sri Lanka is missing a High Commissioner there. Who is going to replace him?

Foreign Secretary: The specifics which we are talking about are these very major infrastructure development programmes. The DMIC is really one of the biggest anywhere in the world if you look at it in terms of its ambition. Japan has already announced 4.5 billion dollars, as you know, when Prime Minister Noda came here in December 2011 to this. And I think by this year we have already reached an outline of at least ten specific projects under that 4.5 billion dollar grant from the Japanese. The Chennai-Bangalore corridor is a more recent development in terms of how we started discussing it. But as you are aware, there is a very large number of Japanese industries both in Chennai and in the Bangalore region. So, there is a desire to upgrade infrastructure and provide a basis for further investments into that region. There is a lot interest also in port development, the development of Ennore Port, the development of infrastructure around it. These are some of the ideas which are under discussion with Japan.

And in answer to your second question, even though it is not technically related, Mr. Yash Sinha will be our High Commissioner. He would be there in a few weeks.

Q: I think both Japan and Thailand were interested in Nalanda University, but Nalanda University is stuck somewhere somehow. What future do you see for the Nalanda University after these visits?

Foreign Secretary: Let me request you to go to the National Gallery of Modern Art where there is an exhibition of the design competition for the Nalanda University. It is really well worth a visit. You will see the winning award. The jury has already met and decided on it. It is already at a stage where the new campus is being designed. So, I do not think it can be described as stuck.

Q: Foreign Secretary, has India been given a briefing by Japan on the status of Senkaku islands and what is expected of India?

Foreign Secretary: When you say a briefing, these are subjects which are discussed from time to time. When we discussed regional security and regional issues, certainly the Japanese did bring this up. Even at the end of last year when I had gone for the 2+2, which I mentioned, there was a discussion regarding these security-related issues. So, this will continue.

Q: Regarding the tension in the Korean Peninsula, do you see India and Japan position as more converged on a common stand on the tension in that region?

Foreign Secretary: I do not think there is a specific convergence as such but there is a convergence in the principle that we would like to see peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula which is vital for the entire region of East Asia. We have had discussions with the Japanese, as I said, on this in the framework of our dialogues on a regular basis. But we also have dialogues with other countries in regard to that. In fact Mr. Bambawale has held a dialogue in North Korea some months ago.

Q: A question about security cooperation. Are there likely to be new exercises, naval or otherwise, agreed upon on this trip? And is it true that India pulled out of a trilateral exercise recently? And if so, why?

Foreign Secretary: India did not pull out of a trilateral exercise. There was some planning between India and the USA for an exercise and at some stage it was felt that this could be converted into a trilateral exercise. That did not quite work out. But what we have done is invite Japan to hold exercises in the Indian Ocean and now to institutionalize them because what we were told is that they need to have a fixed programme that they can work on so that they know when we are planning our exercises together. So, we are going to institutionalize the regular exercises between the Indian and Japanese navies.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Foreign Secretary: It has been under discussion, certainly will be one of the outcomes.

Q: Sir, on the same subject, there is an impression that India is showing reluctance to hold trilateral exercises in the seas around Japan, while it is happy to hold these trilateral exercises in the Indian Ocean region. Is the full extent of the potential of defence ties with Japan circumscribed at some level by the fear of offending China?

Foreign Secretary: I think whatever we do with Japan is intended purely to develop our bilateral defence cooperation and it is certainly not aimed at anyone else. I do not think we are circumscribed in that way. As I said, we would like to place emphasis on having exercises on a very regular basis and institutionalizing them.

Q: Mr. Mathai, is post US withdrawal Afghanistan also likely to feature in your talks given the security talks that you are going to be having with Japan?

Foreign Secretary: Certainly, when we discuss issues in the region Afghanistan will be one of the subjects we talked to Japan. This has in fact been on the agenda of our bilateral discussions for a considerable period of time. We have in fact talked about doing projects jointly with Japan and the United States in the economic field in Afghanistan. Japan was one of the countries we were very keen to have as an investor in Afghanistan when we convened the investors meet in June of last year. So, certainly, yes we would continue our discussions with Japan on Afghanistan.

Q: Foreign Secretary, about the civilian nuclear agreement between Japan and India you just mentioned you expect by the end of the year more progress. Does it mean you want to see it signed by the end of the year?

Foreign Secretary: Agreements always take a certain amount of time. What I am saying is that the discussions have been given some impetus recently but there are a number of stages we will have to go through before we reach the signature. I cannot put a date on it but we would certainly like to progress.

Q: This is about the civil nuclear cooperation agreement again. Has India raised issues about nuclear safety during these discussions? What kind of concerns has it raised and what has been Japan's response?

Foreign Secretary: Safety, as I mentioned earlier, is one of the issues which we always discuss whenever we have discussions on civil nuclear cooperation with any country. And in the present atmosphere safety is in fact probably a very very high priority in our bilateral cooperation with any country. Certainly with the Japanese we will be discussing this at great length.

Q: Ashok, good to see you here. It is nice to know that India is planning to have an exhibition on Buddhism in Bangkok. I was in the Indian Museum a few months ago and I saw several vacant places and it said, 'Sent to South Korea for an exhibition', 'Sent to some country in South America'. These exhibitions got over many many months ago, in fact

two years ago but the statues have not come back. Is somebody keeping tabs on things like this here?

Secretary (East): I cannot possibly comment on that but you have exchange of exhibits as part of such activities. In this particular case we are looking at Indian Museum in Kolkata working with the National Museum in Bangkok to set up an important exhibition of Buddhist art because, as you know, Buddhism is a very important bond between India and Thailand.

Q: This is for Ashok, Sir. Sir, will you tell us about our ties with Thailand in terms of transport linkages that we are planning, both sea and surface?

Secretary (East): We have a good connectivity between India and Thailand when it comes to civil aviation, something like 138 flights a week. We are also looking at Thailand as an important bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asian hinterland. Here there is already, as I mentioned earlier, the trilateral project involving India, Myanmar and Thailand which is making good headway and we expect completion by 2016. In addition, we announced this initiative on Joint Working Group on Connectivity and Infrastructure which had its first meeting in September 2012. Under that we are looking at possibilities of cooperation with third countries including cooperation on Dawei deep sea port and a special economic zone in Dawei, as also projects in Lao and Cambodia. So, there are a number of ideas which are being explored. Trilateral project has already made headway and we expect good progress on other projects as well in the days to come.

Q: Japanese Emperor is planning to visit India. Do you expect the timing will be announced during the Prime Minister's visit?

Foreign Secretary: I do not think it is linked to the Prime Minister's visit. We are looking forward to the great honour of receiving Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress. The visit will be announced as soon as both Governments agree on a date on which we will announce it.

Q: Sir, our Commerce Minister was visiting Japan a few weeks ago and he raised the issue of rising trade deficit after the FTA talks have begun. How is India going to take this issue up during these summit-level talks?

Foreign Secretary: Over the last few years India-Japan trade has increased very substantially except I believe in the financial year we

saw some decline. The CEPA, as it is called not the FTA, has been under implementation since August 2011. And in 2011-12, bilateral trade grew by 29 per cent to reach a figure of 18.5 billion. It came down to 17.5 billion as I said.

Yes, there is a fact that the trade is not exactly balanced, it is in fact very substantially in Japan's favour. We would be taking up issues relating to market access for some of those sectors where India has competitive advantage. We would be emphasizing also certain nontariff barriers which have arisen in the case of our shrimp exports. Certainly we would like to revive some traditional exports of India to Japan which have tapered off in the last few years, for example iron ore. So, there is a range of measures we need to take on our side to address this trade imbalance and we will be raising this with the Chinese.

Q: Sir, China has signed a pact with Pakistan on a rail link from Gwadar to China. Your comments please!

Foreign Secretary: Developments in other countries which are between two countries is not a matter for me to comment on. But to the extent that it involves Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, we certainly have already made our views known to the Chinese leadership at the highest level. We have serious reservations about this.

Q: Sir, the Iranian Energy Minister is coming in a couple of days' time and there is a talk of energy cooperation enhancement. Your comments on that!

Foreign Secretary: Iran has been a traditional partner of India in the field of energy, very specifically in the field of oil. We have been having a supplier-buyer relationship for many many decades, and some of our refineries are in fact geared specifically to Iranian crude. But we are all aware that due to a variety of problems in the field of banking, in the field of shipping, in the field of insurance, the actual off-take by our refineries has gone down. So, this is one of those issues which we will certainly discuss.

But we will also take the opportunity to discuss the prospects for India and Iran to work together in the field of natural gas, in the field of fertilizers and other developments broadly in the hydrocarbons sector. These will take some time to actually come to fruition because, as I said, there are

a number of technical, financial, banking and other problems which come in the way of actually implementing things now. But we are hopeful that once all these problems get sorted out, our relationship will be a strong one in the field of hydrocarbons. But, as I said, right now we have considerable difficulties in implementing many of the projects which we wanted to do together.

Q: Sir, you had a meeting with Ms. Wendy Sherman today. Can you please throw some light on that?

Foreign Secretary: This was part of the regular consultations which India and the United States engage in. When I went to Washington in February I had a long session with Ms. Wendy Sherman, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs of the US State Department. The subjects we discussed are the preparations for the visit of the Secretary of State which is planned for 24th of June for what is called the strategic dialogue - I do not know if we have made a formal announcement of the date yet but anyway that is now impending on us - and also the ongoing dialogue on regional issues which we regularly have. These were the two broad features of our discussions.

Q: Did you discuss Shale gas exports from US to India?

Foreign Secretary: On this occasion I did not. I did bring it up when I was in Washington in February not only with the State Department but also with the Department of Energy. And I would like to say that you may have read in the press that Freeport, that particular project has been approved. Now that is not one from which we will be sourcing LNG. But the arrival of new sources of LNG on to the global market will certainly be a very positive development.

Q: Mr. Mathai, I wanted to ask you about China. What would you say was the main takeaway from the Chinese Premier's visit here for us?

Foreign Secretary: I think we have done extensive briefing on this. Our Ambassador, I think gave you more than one takeaway, in fact a number of takeaways. So, I would not like to expand on it. Just to say that I think it underlined the extensive nature of our relationship, the maturity of that relationship, and also the need for regular dialogue which China in an atmosphere of candour and of constructive approach.

Q: Sir, there is talk of the Prime Minister visiting the US later this year. Would you kindly confirm if that is correct? And is this to revive the drift that has seeped into the relationship?

Foreign Secretary: Since there isn't any drift, I do not see how we can either revive it or deal with it. There have been discussions regarding a visit. As soon as those reach a stage of finality, we will make an announcement.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.



304. Prime Minister's interview with the Japanese Media.

New Delhi, May 26, 2013.

Japanese Media Question: Dr. Manmohan Singh, thank you very much for your time. My first question will be on Indo-Japanese relationship. Are there any changes in your agenda for the summit-level meeting in Tokyo in view of the change of Government in Japan particularly Mr. Shinzo Abe our Prime Minister is considered to be a great friend of India? Also how do you think of economic policy of Mr. Abe like Abenomics and diplomatic policy including our negotiations on civilian nuclear deal? Yesterday we heard Mr. Mathai say he wants to see more progress on this issue by the end of the year.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh: We have the annual tradition of a summit between India and Japan. This visit was to take place in November last year but because of understandable reason it had to be postponed. I am now looking forward very eagerly to meeting Prime Minister Abe whom we know in our country as a very special friend of India, and people of India remember with great fondness his visit to our country in 2007 and his memorable address to the two Houses of our Parliament.

Prime Minister Abe and I would review the state of Indo-Japanese relations. I am of the view that both in India and in Japan there is all-

round agreement that our two countries must have robust strategic and global partnership. Therefore, it will be my effort to use this visit to strengthen our global and strategic partnership, and that also includes trying to reach out an agreement with regard to civil nuclear energy cooperation. I do recognize there are problems in Japan, and they have elections to the Upper House which fall due later this year. But I do hope that we can make progress in the civil nuclear energy cooperation field as well.

As far as Prime Minister Abe's economic policies are concerned, we believe that whatever can be done to revive and give a new push to the Japanese economy is good for Japan, it is good for Asia, it is good for India. Therefore, we earnestly hope and pray that Prime Minister Abe's economic policies succeed in giving a new push and a new momentum to Japanese economic growth, and the initial results of the last few weeks are very encouraging. We wish the Japanese people the best of luck in tackling the economic situation in Japan.

***Q 2:** Prime Minister, what is your analysis of the current economic situation in India? And what in your opinion needs to be done for the economy to bounce back to a growth rate of eight per cent? And what are India's expectations in terms of Japanese investment? And what sector, what industry would they like to see investment coming in from Japan?*

Prime Minister: If you leave aside last year's economic performance, in the previous nine years the Indian economy has grown at the average annual rate of about eight per cent per annum. This is the highest rate of growth achieved by India in any previous decade. Last year our growth rate declined to about five per cent for very special reasons partly because of the recession in the global economy, Eurozone output and incomes declined, Europe was in recession, the American economy was also slow moving, and even Japan's economy was also in the slow rhythm process.

We had also some domestic reasons because several projects which were listed, which were included in our development plan got held up because of regulatory problems with regard to environment clearance, with regard to availability of coal and other inputs. Now we are trying to tackle all these issues. Our hope is that in the current year our growth

rate will go up to six to 6.5 per cent and in the next two or three years, we are confident of returning the Indian economy back to the eight per cent growth rate.

Now you will ask me what convinces me that this will happen. One thing that I would like to point out, in the last few years Indian savings rate was as high as about 35 per cent of the GDP. It has declined recently to about 30 per cent and our investment rate is still very high, about 35 per cent. A capital output ratio of 4:1, a savings rate of over 30 per cent, an investment rate of 35 per cent, will easily yield a growth rate of about eight per cent.

So, our principal concern is to strengthen the impulses to accelerate the process of investment, particularly the investment in infrastructure which has been a big bottleneck which has held up our growth process. We would like to remove these bottlenecks. We have set up the Cabinet Committee on Investment to look at precisely the bottlenecks which hamper the growth of infrastructure sector. And we are hopeful and confident that this will happen. And as I said, this year our growth is likely to go up to about six to 6.5 per cent.

Now, in all this, we require robust participation of Japanese business, Japanese industries in India's economic development. Today we have more Japanese companies operating in India than ever before. But in terms of their contribution to Indian growth process, much needs to be done. We have plans to invest about one trillion US dollars in infrastructure in this Twelfth Five-Year Plan, that is, 2012 to 2017. And I see an enormous role for the Japanese industry to contribute not only to infrastructure development of India, but also to accelerate the tempo of manufacturing sector in India's economy.

We have of course the shining example of Maruti Suzuki, but more such examples could be created. We need Japanese investment in energy, in clean energy, in renewable energy. We would like Japan to repeat for example what Japan has done for India in Delhi Metro. We would like more Metros to come up in our metropolitan cities. And in all these areas I see enormous opportunities to strengthen cooperation between India and Japan. I invite the business community of Japan to take full advantage of the enormous opportunities that are opening up in a liberalized Indian economy.

Q3: *Sir, how about the BRICS Bank? Do you have any opinion about the BRICS Bank?*

Prime Minister: It is an idea which requires lot of further examination. We would I think the developing countries to look at the prospects of south-south cooperation, and the BRICS Bank is an example of that. But we have many many miles to cross before we can say that this idea has really come to a stage where it can take practical shape.

Q4: *What is the view of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on steps needed to strengthen maritime security in the region by both India and Japan, collectively and otherwise, in view of maritime threat from China?*

Prime Minister: Both India and Japan are important maritime nations. Therefore, safety and security of the sea lanes of communication, especially in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, is vital for both countries. India supports freedom of navigation and unimpeded lawful commerce in international waters, and right of passage in accordance with accepted principles of international law. We believe that where disputes exist, they should be peacefully resolved by concerned parties through negotiations. This is essential for peace and stability in our region.

Maritime cooperation and coordination between India and Japan has grown. India and Japan launched bilateral naval exercise last year. We started a new dialogue for discussing maritime affairs, including maritime security challenges. These activities are not aimed against any third country, but are meant to advance our shared interests. As you may be aware, in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and China coordinate escort schedules for merchant ships. This is an example of practical cooperation between Asian countries.

Q5: *How do you see the liberalization of trade in the Asia Pacific region, especially with regard to RCEP and TPP? What is India's stand?*

Prime Minister: Trade liberalization and economic integration can make a major contribution to advancing prosperity and economic development across the entire Asia-Pacific region. India is part of the great process of economic integration under way in East Asia. Like Japan, we are a founder member of the East Asia Summit. We are participating in the negotiations

on a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). We are not a part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and we are studying its implications. Regional trading arrangements, however, should not be at the cost of an open, multilateral trading system. We are also concerned about protectionist tendencies in many parts of the world.

***Q6:** My question will be on security environment of Asia-Pacific region. In order to maintain peace and stability in the region, what kind of role does India want to play, and what kind of role does India want Japan to play? How do you foresee the future relationship with Pakistani newly-elected government?*

Prime Minister: India has vital stakes in security, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. Our shared values, our convergent interests and the potential of our economic partnership anchor our Strategic and Global Partnership. This partnership is indispensable for promoting deeper regional economic integration, cooperation and connectivity, maritime security and the emergence of a rule-based, open and balanced regional architecture. I look forward to discussing with Prime Minister Abe ways in which we can advance those goals.

I have consistently advocated peaceful, friendly and cooperative relations with Pakistan. We have sought to pursue dialogue for the resolution of all issues, in an atmosphere free of terror and violence. I look forward to working with the new Government in Pakistan to take forward our relations.

***Q7:** The Japanese government is expected to offer support to build High Speed Train systems in India including financial assistance. What kind of agreement do you expect with the government of Japan regarding the introduction of Japanese High Speed Train systems like the Shinkansen? What is needed for your government to choose Shinkansen as High Speed Train system in India?*

Prime Minister: Indian Railways have looked into the possibility of High Speed Rail (HSR) corridors for passenger traffic in their long term perspective plans. Japan's Shinkansen system is well known for its efficiency and safety record. Such capital-intensive projects will be considered in accordance with our infrastructure requirement, national

priorities and financial resources. We welcome Japan's interest and would be happy to look at Japan if we decide to take up High Speed Railways in India.



**305. External Affairs Minister's Speech at Rikkyo University,
Tokyo.**

Tokyo, March 26, 2013.

Chancellor Mr. Itoigawa,
President Professor Yoshioka,
Professor Takenaka,
Teachers and students of Rikkyo University,

Friends.

Thank you for your very warm welcome. I am delighted to be with all of you today at this prestigious campus of the famous Rikkyo University. I am here in Tokyo on my first official visit to your beautiful country as the External Affairs Minister of India. I will utilize this wonderful opportunity today to spell out what I see as the trajectory of relations between India and Japan in the coming years of the 21st Century.

When I planned this visit to Tokyo, I did not realize that I would be visiting this capital city of Japan when it is at its prettiest, with the sakura or the cherry blossoms in full bloom. I am told that they have bloomed a little early this year, perhaps in time for my visit. I would like to think that this is an omen. What I will argue in the course of my address to you today is that the relationship between our two countries, between India and Japan, is also on the cusp of flowering and blooming like the cherry blossoms. Relations between our two countries are about to experience spring time.

In a period of history when we are seeing the resurgence of Asia within the world economy, we in India constantly remind ourselves that it was Japan which was the first country in Asia which underwent the industrial revolution. The rise of Japan in the 19th Century into an industrial society

and an important economy has always urged us in India to follow your example and driven us in our national endeavor of economic development and social progress. In this sense, Japan has been like the Pole Star and guided us in India on the way forward in our own national domestic effort.

Centuries before the Meiji Restoration, India had made its own contribution to Japanese society when Buddhism traveled from the land of its birth over the seas to Japan. The teachings of the Buddha with emphasis on the Middle Path found fertile ground for growth in your country. The famous Todaiji Temple at Nara is a monument to the flourishing exchanges that existed between us in a bygone era. Isn't it an amazing fact that the Indian monk Bodhisena traveled to Nara over 1200 years ago to consecrate the Buddha statue at Todaiji?

While we have this rich heritage on which we can build further, today in the 21st Century India and Japan share common values which provide even firmer ground on which our Strategic and Global Partnership is founded. We are the two largest, most enduring democracies in Asia. Each of us cherish the free and fair electoral system which throws up the Governments that lead our countries and which in turn find legitimacy from such periodic elections. The Japanese and Indian people both uphold and value individual freedoms and human rights. We firmly believe in the rule of law and that no individual is above the law of the land. I am confident that this shared value system will stand us in good stead in the years ahead and it will prove to be the foundation for an expanded relationship between our countries and our peoples. Such a relationship will be guided by principle but will also be grounded in reality and pragmatism.

A second factor which augurs well for the India – Japan partnership is that there is consensus in both our nations and across the political spectrum that a strong relationship between our countries is in our national interests and is good for Asia and the world at large. Therefore, whatever political party may be in power either in Japan or in India, our bilateral ties will continue to prosper and grow. We have indeed experienced exactly this through the changes of Government in Japan over the past few years.

The end of the Cold War and the beginning of a new Century provided the necessary conditions for a quantum leap in interaction and exchange

between our countries. It was the vision and leadership of then Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori which helped convert potential into practice. His historic, path breaking visit to India in the year 2000 provided the much needed impetus for our relations to be taken to a new level. Guided by his strategic vision both nations saw the merit in substantive bilateral engagement in diverse spheres. What Mori-san started at that point in time has been taken to its logical conclusion by succeeding Governments both in Japan as well as in India.

Our economic engagement has expanded significantly over these past few years, since we established our Strategic and Global Partnership in 2006. We have implemented a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement since August 2011. It has been well over a year since then and the initial results in terms of greater flows of trade and investment are heartening after factoring in the depressed global economic conditions that have ensued in this period. We are delighted that India continues to poll very high amongst Japanese firms as a long term investment destination. The number of firms from your country which have operations in India is over 1000 now, and while we can take some satisfaction from this fact, naturally we want many more of your firms to invest in India. Very frankly, there is a perfect fit here since India is a labour abundant country with relatively low wage rates. Japan is abundant in capital and has technology and management expertise which can be married to our competitive advantages. We are also immensely aware of the need to upgrade physical infrastructure in India whether at our ports or our highways and roads. That is why we plan to invest about 1 trillion US Dollars in infrastructure during the period 2012 to 2017. We are confident that in the near future the infrastructure needs of corporate Japan will be met in India. We have also recently announced a new manufacturing policy to encourage and support this very important segment of the economy. Jobs for our young population will come mainly from manufacturing and we believe Japanese firms will find a win-win situation in this regard in our country.

Suzuki, of course, is a household name in India thanks to the automobiles it has been producing in India since the 1980s. They were well ahead of the curve in entering India, had first mover's advantage and therefore even today have the largest market share in our domestic car market.

What I find very interesting about the Suzuki model, is that they have now also made India a manufacturing hub for export of cars to the Middle East, North Africa and even East Europe. We are delighted that other famous Japanese auto firms such as Nissan and Toyota have followed suit. The ancillary firms have begun to come to India more recently and this relatively recent development makes us sure that we are on the right track for enhancing foreign investment flows.

India continues to be the largest recipient nation of Japanese Official Development Assistance for many years in a row. The Government and people of India greatly appreciate this help from the people of Japan. This aid has been utilized in large, iconic infrastructure development projects such as the Delhi Metro project which has revolutionized travel within the city for millions of commuters. Seeing this successful example, other cities of India are also vying to build underground metro projects, some of them with Japanese assistance. Similarly, the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor project will help accelerate the speed with which goods are transported between Delhi and Mumbai and will benefit the Indian economy greatly. The Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor is another Japanese funded project in India which has enormous significance since it will establish new towns and cities which will become manufacturing hubs and will combine modern technologies to make them smart cities. Many of these ventures are futuristic in their orientation and will positively impact modernization and development in India.

I firmly believe that India - Japan economic engagement creates a win-win situation for both our countries and will help foster growth in the second and third largest economies of Asia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Political and security cooperation between India and Japan has a significance which goes beyond our two countries. We are both members of the East Asia Summit process and we desire to see this architecture being open, transparent and inclusive. We have a bilateral Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation and an Action Plan to Advance Security Cooperation that spells out a detailed dialogue mechanism which has been meeting regularly and its decisions implemented steadfastly. We have annual Summits between our Prime Ministers and we hope to

have our Prime Minister visit your country soon. We also have an annual Strategic Dialogue between the Foreign Ministers of our countries and I myself am here in Tokyo for the 7th dialogue with Foreign Minister Kishida whom I will meet later this evening. We expect to talk about the entire range of issues in our bilateral ties as well as regional and global issues. The discussions between us are usually frank, candid and constructive in keeping with the partnership our countries enjoy. Japan is the only country with which India has a 2 Plus 2 dialogue between the Defence and Foreign Ministries of our Governments.

The Indian and Japanese Coast Guards have regular interactions as does the Indian Navy and your Maritime Self Defence Force. We had our first bilateral naval exercise last June. All this cooperation is not aimed at any other country but helps us to gain valuable knowledge and experience about the interoperability of our defence forces.

Prime Minister Abe has also contributed immeasurably to the India – Japan strategic partnership. In his earlier stint as Prime Minister of Japan he visited us in India in 2007 and delivered a memorable address to a joint sitting of our Parliament. At that time, he had eloquently spoken of the confluence of the two seas which gave rise to the term 'Indo-Pacific' that is commonly used by strategic thinkers today. There can be little doubt that countries like India and Japan must cooperate in ensuring the security of the global commons including freedom of navigation on the high seas that is critical to both our countries which import large amounts of oil and gas. Let me say clearly today that India stands with Japan, and other like minded countries, in pursuing and implementing these goals and objectives.

India and Japan work closely on international and global issues as well. Both our Governments have been relentlessly pursuing the objective of reforming the United Nations, including its Security Council, so as to make it more representative of the realities of today's world. We are both members of the G-20 where we have worked tirelessly to overcome the international financial crisis and its impact on the world economy. Within Asia, we are partners in the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus and the expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum. We have a Trilateral Dialogue with the United States.

Ladies and Gentlemen, while our economic interaction and political and security exchanges are strong and expanding, the one area in our bilateral ties which continues to remain weak is in the area of people-to-people exchanges. While politics and economics are indeed important, perhaps it is the interaction between the people of any two countries which is a significant variable in relations between nations. This is where the Governments of our countries are paying their greatest attention since tourism flows can indeed be strengthened as can student exchanges. Direct flights between cities in India and Japan have increased over the last two years, but are still far below potential. Given the fact that our combined population is nearly 1.4 billion, we are very aware that we can do far better in attracting more Japanese tourists to India. Indeed, the same is true of Indian tourism in the direction of Japan. The number of Indian students in Japan does not exceed a few hundred. Perhaps, Universities in each of our countries can institute more scholarships which may attract more students from the other country. There are Chairs of Indian Studies at the University of Tokyo as well as at Ryokoku University. I encourage Rikkyo University to establish a Chair in Indian Studies. It will help spark increased interest in India.

I would venture to state that both India and Japan need to work on ensuring a confluence of our peoples if we are to ensure that bilateral ties continue to stay on their high trajectory. I am told that Indian movies are beginning to make an entrance into the Japanese market and that may bring our people closer together.

Which leads me to the question of where I think India – Japan relations will be in a decade from now? As I have spelt out, all the necessary conditions for a take-off in our relations are in place. The sufficient conditions are being worked upon and I hope will fall into place in the next few years. These sufficient conditions include better infrastructure in India, more flows of tourists and students in both directions and political convergence between our Governments.

It is these facts on the ground which leads me to be very optimistic about our bilateral ties and to predict that they will blossom further in the coming decade of the 21st Century. I have little doubt that it will be young people like the students who are gathered here today at Rikkyo University

who will lead this charge and on whom will devolve the responsibility of ensuring that spring comes early to India – Japan relations.

I thank you for your patience. I thank you for your welcome.



306. External Affairs Minister's statement to the media at the joint press interaction following the 7th India-Japan Strategic Dialogue.

Tokyo, March 26, 2013.

Your Excellency Foreign Minister Kishida,
Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media.

I am delighted to be in Tokyo on my first official visit as the External Affairs Minister of India. Foreign Minister Kishida and I have just had excellent discussions on the entire range of bilateral issues in our relations. As you are aware, these conversations form part of the 7th India-Japan Strategic Dialogue. We will continue our discussions on regional and global issues immediately after this media interaction.

My Government looks forward to further strengthening and expanding the India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership. I discussed with Foreign Minister Kishida the way forward for enhancing our economic, political and security cooperation. You have just witnessed the signing of the Notes for the ODA Loan Package for financial year 2012. India appreciates the economic assistance provided by the Government and people of Japan. Such assistance has been utilized in upgrading our infrastructure. The iconic Delhi Metro project has positively impacted the lives of millions of Indian citizens in the National Capital Region of Delhi.

Our security cooperation is proceeding well. Earlier this year, we received the Chief of the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force in India and your Defence Minister is expected to visit us later this year. The 1st Maritime Affairs Dialogue between India and Japan was held in January this year.

Foreign Minister Kishida and I also discussed the possibility of convening the Annual Summit between the Prime Ministers of India and Japan in the coming months.

As the two largest democracies of Asia, we agreed to expand our cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. Foreign Minister Kishida and I agreed that India and Japan will coordinate their actions more closely within the East Asia Summit process.

I have invited Foreign Minister Kishida to visit India soon.



307. Media Briefing by the Official Spokespersons on the visit of Chinese Premier of India, Prime Minister's Visit to Japan and Thailand and External Affairs Minister to Saudi Arabia.

New Delhi, May 14, 2013

Please See Document No. 254



308. Prime Minister's Statement on his departure for Japan and Thailand, May 27-31, 2013.

New Delhi, May 27, 2013.

I am proceeding today on a trip to the East, which will take me to our important friends and partners Japan and Thailand.

My visit to Japan is for the Annual Summit between our two countries, which got deferred last year due to impending general elections there. Japan is a key regional and global partner for India. There is a growing congruence in our interests and I see this relationship as an essential component of our vision for enduring stability and prosperity in Asia. In my Summit with the new government of Japan, led by my good friend Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, I will build on the momentum imparted by successive summits to the India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership.

During this visit, I propose to invigorate our relations with Japan in the political, security and energy spheres. We will explore ways to harness the full potential of our Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership by intensifying and balancing our two-way trade and investment linkages. The visit will also allow the two governments to take stock of the progress in flagship projects in our partnership, like the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, and to facilitate bilateral engagement for meaningful and mutually beneficial association.

I also hope to exchange views with Prime Minister Abe on important regional and global developments of shared interest.

As on every previous visit to Japan, I look forward to a gracious audience with Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress of Japan. I will also have an opportunity to interact with leaders across the entire political spectrum in Japan, captains of Japanese business and industry and friends of India from all walks of life in Japan.

My other destination, Thailand, is an important bilateral partner as well as a regional leader situated at the heart of ASEAN. During my talks with Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, I will carry forward the new dynamics in our relations since her milestone visit to India as the Chief Guest at our Republic Day in 2012.

Thailand and India share centuries-old people-to-people, cultural and spiritual ties. Being maritime neighbours, we also share common interests in maritime security. Our defence and security cooperation with Thailand is progressing well and it will be my effort to further enhance it during my visit. As one of our top trade and investment partners in ASEAN, Thailand is an essential part of India's integration with the region.

Thailand's importance to India is also underpinned by its potential as a hub of connectivity between India and Southeast Asia. The Trilateral Highway project will connect our Northeast with Thailand through Myanmar and create avenues for commercial and cultural interaction.

I intend to utilize this visit also to re-emphasize our commitment to building a stronger partnership with ASEAN. Thailand is also a key component of our sub-regional engagements in BIMSTEC and the Mekong Ganga Cooperation initiative.

My visits to Japan and Thailand will add depth and new meaning to our “Look East” policy and contribute to peace, prosperity and stability in the Asia-Pacific.



309. Prime Minister’s Statement on arrival in Tokyo.

Tokyo, May 27, 2013.

India and Japan have a strategic and global partnership. There are enormous potentialities for further enriching our relationship, deepening it and brightening it in the economic relations, political relations, and security relations. In all areas there is enormous potential for widening and strengthening our relationship with Japan.

The people of India have fondness for the people of Japan. I look forward to further cementing our ties with Japan.



310. Prime Minister’s address to Japan-India Association, Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League and International Friendship Exchange Council.

Tokyo, May 28, 2013.

I am delighted to be here in this room full of friends of India. I am particularly gratified, and honoured, by the presence here of Mori-san.

Mori-san is not only a good personal friend. He is also a great friend of India. As Prime Minister of Japan, Mori-san laid the foundation of a new phase in the ancient relationship between our two countries and our two peoples. That is why we in India were privileged to confer on him our national honour of Padma Bhushan.

Asia’s resurgence began over a century ago on this island of the Rising Sun. Ever since, Japan has shown us the way forward. India and Japan

have a shared vision of a rising Asia. Over the past decade, therefore, our two countries have established a new relationship based on shared values and shared interests. Japan's rise as a modern, knowledge-based industrial power was a source of inspiration to India's great national leaders. The philosopher Swami Vivekananda, the poet Rabindranath Tagore, the engineer M Vishweshwarayya, the patriot Subhas Chandra Bose and the nation builder Jawaharlal Nehru, and many more – were all inspired by Japan's great achievements in the 19th and 20th centuries.

More recently, India's gradual but sustained economic rise has created new opportunities for both our countries to cooperate and work together. India needs Japanese technology and investment. In turn, India offers increasing opportunities for the growth and globalization of Japanese companies for the overall prosperity and growth of Japan.

I was most deeply honoured by the invitation that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe extended to me to be his first guest in Tokyo this year. Unfortunately, I was unable to travel at the time due to my parliamentary commitments.

While I missed the opportunity to visit during the Cherry Blossom season, I am delighted to be here in the season of Spring, which, I am confident, signifies a great future for our relationship. I am also convinced that friendship between our peoples, partnership between our businesses and cooperation between our defence and strategic communities will blossom further under the leadership of Prime Minister Abe.

On this occasion, I am reminded of Prime Minister Abe's inspiring and visionary address to the Indian Parliament in August 2007, when he spoke of "the confluence of the two seas" – the Pacific and the Indian Oceans – which has defined the new framework for our bilateral relationship. Prime Minister Abe and I will work together to strengthen our strategic partnership, impart new momentum to our economic cooperation and deepen our dialogue on shared regional and global interests.

The Indo-Pacific region is witnessing profound social and economic changes on a scale and at a speed rarely seen in human history. It has experienced an unprecedented rise in freedom, opportunity and prosperity over the last half century.

At the same time, this region faces multiple challenges, unresolved issues and unsettled questions. Historical differences persist despite our growing inter-dependence; prosperity has not fully eliminated disparities within and between states; and there are continuing threats to stability and security.

It is in this moment of flux and change that we also have the greatest opportunity to chart a new course for Asia in this century. With the weight of the global economy and its drivers of growth shifting to this region, its future will also shape the contours of the world in this century.

India and Japan are among the major actors in this region. Our shared religious, cultural and spiritual heritage embodies the principles of peace, co-existence and pluralism. It is our responsibility to foster a climate of peace, stability and cooperation and to lay an enduring foundation for security and prosperity. I would like to suggest three areas of cooperation in this regard.

First, we should strengthen regional mechanisms and forums that will help develop habits of consultation and cooperation, enable us to evolve commonly accepted principles for managing differences, reinforce congruence in the region and allow us to address common challenges.

Second, we should promote wider and deeper regional economic integration and enhance regional connectivity. This will promote more balanced and broad-based economic development across the region and also contribute to a more balanced regional architecture.

Third, maritime security across the linked regions of the Indian and Pacific Oceans is essential for regional and global prosperity. We should therefore uphold the principles of freedom of navigation and unimpeded lawful commerce in accordance with international law, resolve maritime issues peacefully and work together more purposefully to harness the potential of the seas and address common sea-based challenges such as piracy.

India's own deepening engagement in the region is informed by this vision. Our Look East engagement began with a strong economic emphasis, but it has become increasingly strategic in its content. Our political relations have intensified with all countries and groupings like ASEAN. We have developed a web of trade and economic agreements.

We are emphasizing connectivity and participating actively in regional anchors of cooperation and security like the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

Our relationship with Japan has been at the heart of our Look East Policy. Japan inspired Asia's surge to prosperity and it remains integral to Asia's future. The world has a huge stake in Japan's success in restoring the momentum of its growth. Your continued leadership in enterprise, technology and innovation and your ability to remain the locomotive of Asian renaissance are crucial.

India's relations with Japan are important not only for our economic development, but also because we see Japan as a natural and indispensable partner in our quest for stability and peace in the vast region in Asia that is washed by the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

Our relations draw their strength from our spiritual, cultural and civilizational affinities and a shared commitment to the ideals of democracy, peace and freedom. We have increasingly convergent world views and growing stakes in each other's prosperity. We have shared interests in maritime security and we face similar challenges to our energy security. There are strong synergies between our economies, which need an open, rule-based international trading system to prosper. Together, we seek a new architecture for the United Nations Security Council.

In recent years, our political and security cooperation has gained in salience. Japan is the only partner with whom we have a 2-plus-2 Dialogue between the Foreign and Defence Ministries. We have also begun bilateral exercises with the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force.

Japan has long been part of important milestones in India's economic development efforts.

The Maruti-Suzuki collaboration sparked off a wave of industrial development in India. The Delhi Metro is inspiring a similar revolution in public transportation. Our two flagship infrastructure projects – the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor and the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor – are unmatched both in their size and scale. We are also exploring new projects such as an industrial corridor between Chennai and Bengaluru. Our Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

was launched in 2011 and last year we signed an agreement for cooperation in the field of rare earths.

All this would suggest that ours is already a rich relationship. However, we have set for ourselves higher ambitions consistent with the vision that we have for this partnership. Going forward, therefore, we should intensify our political dialogue and expand our strategic consultations on regions and issues of mutual interest. Our defence and security dialogue, military exercises and defence technology collaboration should grow. We should consult and coordinate more closely in global and regional forums.

Our relationship should also be anchored in expanded trade and investment relations. As I told business leaders at the Keidanren function earlier today, there should be no doubt about our commitment and confidence that we will soon restore our growth to the 8%-plus levels that we experienced over the past decade.

This confidence stems from the strength of our economic fundamentals, the thriving spirit of enterprise in our country and the steps that we have taken recently to reform policies and accelerate implementation of mega projects.

Greater investment by Japanese companies in India's large market will be in our economic as well as strategic interest. This consideration should also guide closer engagement in high technology commerce, clean energy, energy security and skill development.

Prime Minister Abe and I have a rich agenda for discussion before us. Together, we had started the institution of annual summits and many initiatives that have given our relationship such extraordinary depth and diversity. We will seek not only to sustain the rising momentum of our relationship, but add new content and meaning to it, in the interest of our two countries, our region and our world.

Let me conclude by confessing that Japan has been close to my heart ever since I first visited this beautiful country in 1971. It has been my dream to see our relationship grow and prosper, and this is an objective towards which I have worked in the last nine years of my tenure as Prime Minister of India. Today, I am heartened to witness the

transformation of India-Japan relations into a durable partnership. I have no doubt your efforts and initiatives will continue to be a source of great strength for the relationship.



311. Address by Prime Minister at the Luncheon hosted by Nippon Keidanren.

Tokyo, May 28, 2013.

Chairman Yonekura of Keidanren,
Members of the Japan-India Business Leaders Forum,
Distinguished Business Leaders from India and Japan,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad to return to the precincts of Nippon Keidanren. I have always valued this opportunity to interact with business leaders and share my thoughts on India Japan economic cooperation.

Japan's contribution to India's economic development has been enormous. For many years, Japan has been our largest bilateral donor and we are grateful for the assistance we have received. Japanese assistance has financed some of our most iconic infrastructure projects such as the Delhi Metro and now the Dedicated Freight Corridor.

Japan has also been a major player in the modernisation of Indian industry in the period after economic reforms. The Maruti-Suzuki partnership is a household name in India. There are other similar examples.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since my last visit to Japan in October 2010, both our economies have coped with exceptionally difficult situations.

Japan experienced an unprecedented calamity in Fukushima. You met that challenge with characteristic resolve and determination, and your handling of the problem is the subject of much admiration. On the economic side, the latest economic forecasts and the rise in business confidence

in Japan are positive developments. India and the world have a strong economic and strategic interest in Japan's success.

India too has been affected by the difficult circumstances in the world economy. Our growth rate came down to 5% last year due to a combination of global factors and domestic constraints. We cannot do much about the global economy. But we have reacted with determination to overcome domestic constraints on economic growth.

The 5% growth witnessed last year should be seen as a temporary slow down. The Indian economy grew at an average of 8% per year over the past decade, including the last year of 5% growth. The economic fundamentals which made that possible are still intact. We are confident therefore that we can return to the growth path of 8%.

India's Twelfth Five Year Plan outlines the many things we have to do to realise our full growth potential and to make that growth inclusive and sustainable. Our people have tasted the benefits of rapid growth and they will not settle for less. I want to assure you that our government is committed to take hard and difficult decisions in the long term interest of our economy.

In recent months, we have taken a number of steps to revive the economy. We have started to bring the fiscal deficit under control and also outlined a medium term path for fiscal consolidation. We have accelerated the implementation of large infrastructure projects by setting up special mechanisms to ensure that various regulatory clearances do not lead to delays. We have taken tangible steps to enhance incentives for investments. We have liberalised foreign investments in areas like multi-brand retail, power exchanges and civil aviation and further rationalisation and simplification is being planned. We have introduced further reforms in the financial markets. The Central Bank has indicated that it will start the process of expanding grant of new bank licenses.

As a result of these efforts, we expect that growth in 2013-14 will be much better than in the previous year, hopefully around 6% or so. We will do even better in 2014-15.

Our strategy for growth involves heavy investment in infrastructure. Lack of quality infrastructure is the single biggest obstacle to achieving higher levels of competitiveness in India. We have targeted an investment of

around 1 trillion US dollars in infrastructure over the Twelfth Plan period, with half of it coming from the private sector and public-private-partnership.

India's growth will provide expanding opportunities for foreign investment. We welcome foreign investment in the development of our economy and especially so in the critical infrastructure sector. I hope Japanese business will pick up a large share of the investment opportunities that India offers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The scope for expanding economic co-operation between our countries is enormous. As Asian democracies, we have shared values. We have a very comfortable relationship between the two governments. There is also great public goodwill in both countries.

Given these commonalities, I believe we should have done much more than we have. I am told that Japanese companies rank India the most promising long term destination. However, India accounts for only 4% of total Japanese outward investment flow into Asia. I am sure you will agree that this percentage should be much higher. We on our part will work hard to turn promise into reality.

Let me touch on some areas where India and Japan are collaborating, and which can be the basis for expanded engagement.

The two ongoing flagship projects of the India Japan partnership are the Western Dedicated Rail Freight Corridor between Mumbai and Delhi and the associated Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor. Both are making good progress.

The Western Dedicated Freight Corridor between Delhi and Mumbai is scheduled for completion as planned in 2017. The procurement of civil works for Phase-I of the project is in an advanced stage and construction is to begin soon. The Engineering Service Consultants for Phase-II of the DFC project are already in position. I hope Japanese construction companies will participate strongly in both phases.

The Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor project is also making good progress. It has moved from the planning to the implementation stage. I am happy to say that many of the recommendations you made have

been implemented. JICA has committed 1.5 billion dollars for the project and JBIC has committed 3 billion dollars. JBIC has been given 26% equity in the DMIC Development Corporation, making it a global strategic partner in this iconic project. This is a project in which Prime Minister Abe has expressed great interest. I am confident it will develop futuristic, smart and sustainable industrial cities which will help address challenges of industrialisation, urbanisation and creation of job opportunities for our young population.

A number of priority projects for implementation from the first tranche of 4.5 billion US dollars provided by Japan for the project have been listed. We have resolved the issues of priority sector lending treatment to DMIC projects. Restrictions on foreign currency borrowings have been relaxed. I understand a few problems remain relating to long term swap arrangements. We are willing to consider innovative suggestions to resolve these problems. I am also happy to say that Japanese banks are being given licenses to open branches in metropolitan areas.

I understand that Japan has also offered financial and technical support for a Detailed Project Report for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Railway route. This is an ambitious project and we will need to take a holistic view, based on our infrastructure needs, commercial viability, overall national priorities and the availability of financial resources. We are willing for Japan and India to co-finance a joint feasibility study on this.

The Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor is the base for many Japanese companies in India. It provides another focus for expanded Japanese industrial cooperation in future. I am pleased that the Preliminary Study for a Comprehensive Integrated Master Plan for this corridor has been completed, and the second phase of the project is about to commence.

The present bilateral trade of 18 billion US dollars does no justice to our potential. We must harness the full potential of our Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement to expand our trade and make it more broad-based and balanced. I hope that Japan would be more open and accessible for Indian companies in our areas of strength, such as pharmaceuticals and IT services. I am happy to say that the Social Security Agreement we concluded in November 2012 would be of great benefit to the growing number of Indian and Japanese professionals who live and work in each other's country.

For the past few years, we have been engaged in an India-Japan Energy Dialogue to address some of our shared challenges in the area of energy security, including the issue of access to assured, reliable, secure and affordable supply of hydrocarbons. Japanese investments in India in the areas of solar power generation, clean coal technologies and upgrading of brown coal would be greatly welcome. We also look forward to Japanese involvement in the setting up of a gas hydrate R&D Centre.

One of the outcomes of the Energy Dialogue is that an exhibition on clean and renewable energy technology from Japan will be held in India in September this year. I hope this will be an opportunity for a large number of Japanese companies to display their products and technologies, and for Indian companies to build partnerships in this very important area.

India and Japan are both major importers of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). I am happy that a study is being conducted by research institutions in India and Japan on LNG pricing for Asian importers and will be ready by the end of the year.

Skill development is a key national priority in India to power our industrial growth and to create opportunities and employment for India's vast youth population. We look to closer partnership with Japan in setting up skill development centres in India, just as we are also collaborating on a new generation Indian Institute of Technology in Hyderabad.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The India-Japan partnership has never been more important to our two countries than it is today. It is rich with possibilities. A stronger commercial partnership between our two countries should be the corner stone of our relationship. It would not only contribute to each other's economic growth, but will also be in the strategic interest of India and Japan. It will also contribute to wider and enduring prosperity in Asia and beyond.

I thank Nippon Keidanren for all that you have done in the past to further India Japan co-operation and I urge you to continue to make your contribution to this cause which is of mutual benefit for our two countries.

Thank you



312. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary in Tokyo on Prime Minister's Japan Visit.

Tokyo, May 29, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good evening friends. I must apologise before I begin for keeping you waiting but at least there is still time available for Indian deadlines. So, I hope you will forgive us this one time that we have kept you waiting a little.

We have here with us Foreign Secretary who will brief you on the entire events of today, i.e., the two meetings that the Prime Minister has had with his counterpart as also other meetings. We have with Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Deepa Wadhwa who is our Ambassador in Tokyo. If you would like to ask her any other question because she has been involved with the entire preparations for this visit. We further have here, on my right, Mr. Gautam Bambawale, Joint Secretary (East Asia), who was handling this visit from New Delhi. Finally we have here the familiar figure of the Communications Advisor to Prime Minister, Mr. Pankaj Pachauri. With these introductions I will ask Foreign Secretary to make his brief opening remarks following which the floor will be open for any questions that you may have. Foreign Secretary.

Foreign Secretary (Shri Ranjan Mathai): As Akbar just told you, we are late but that is because the event of the evening has just got over fifteen minutes ago and we have just been able to come here.

You are aware of the extensive engagements that PM has had over the last two days in Tokyo. These included an audience with Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress of Japan at which only our Ambassador was present. So, if there are any questions on that, you can direct them to her. That was followed by a private lunch purely for Prime Minister and Shrimati Kaur with the Emperor and the Empress.

Last night, Prime Minister and Mrs. Abe hosted a private dinner for PM and Shrimati Kaur, which was an occasion both for renewing their acquaintance as well as some substantive discussions. There were talks between the two Prime Ministers this evening, first in a restricted format and then in the delegation-level format. Immediately after the delegation-

level format was the press interaction where I think most of you were present.

I draw your attention also to the fact that the Prime Minister delivered two major addresses during this visit. The first was focused on economics and business, and that was to Nippon Keidanren, and the second was the larger canvas of India- Japan relations which was to the Japan-India Association, the Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League, and the Friendship Exchange Council, who jointly hosted that event. I believe most of you have already covered those speeches, so I will not spend any more time on them.

Today, Foreign Minister Kishida and METI Minister Motegi called on PM during the evening just before he went for his meeting with the Prime Minister. The leader of the Democratic Party of Japan which was holding office till the last election - the current leader is Mr. Kaieda - and the leader of the new Kometo Party Mr. Yamaguchi, had also called on PM.

The main message covered by PM during his range of activities in Tokyo is that India looks forward to expanding the strategic and global partnership with Japan. This covers political exchanges, economic interactions and strategic affairs. As the Prime Minister put it, the global and strategic partnership between India has been designed to lift our bilateral relations to an entirely new level, spreading from the area of economic cooperation, trade development, infrastructure development in India with Japanese assistance to the strategic areas of our current relationship.

You have seen the Joint Statement issued earlier today by the two Prime Ministers. They actually signed it in your presence. I would refer to some of the highlights of this document. It underlines what I just called the Strategic and Global Partnership and includes some specific issues in that partnership. For example, India and Japan have agreed to institutionalize bilateral naval exercises, to conduct them regularly and with increased frequency. The Japanese Government has offered to sell the US-2 amphibious aircraft to India. This has been reported already. This is one of the few occasions where Japan has offered to sell such dual use equipment with both military and civilian applications to a foreign country. I draw your attention to the fact that this has dual uses. The

idea is that this is an aircraft with extraordinary capabilities of landing even in fairly high seas where waves are quite high and has a very very long range, therefore, it has both civilian as well as possible military applications.

Our Prime Minister noted Japan's unwavering support for India's development process, and the DMIC, the Dedicated Freight Corridor, and now what is emerging as a new area of cooperation which is the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor are all symbols of this commitment of Japan. You are aware that our Ambassador signed the latest in the infrastructure development agreements which will be funded from Japanese ODA and that is the Mumbai Metro Line III aff Project for 71 billion yen.

The Japanese side has given great emphasis to the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor. There is a critical mass of Japanese industry which is investing in that particular region, and therefore they felt that this particular corridor holds great potential for the future. As part of this, there has been a preliminary study for a comprehensive integrated master plan, and we have now completed the terms of reference to take forward this master plan.

The two Prime Ministers also agreed to co-finance a joint feasibility study on the possible introduction of high-speed railways or Shinkansen on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad route in India. Now as you are aware, one of the great achievements of Japan is the Shinkansen or the high-speed rail and we are all familiar with the extraordinary achievements of Japan. We are going to have a joint feasibility study to see how this fits in with the overall plans of our Railways given their priorities, and we would like to take it forward after that feasibility study is over.

India and Japan are also cooperating in the field of rare earths. A government-to-government memorandum was signed by the Ambassador last November and it is already in place. Companies from India and Japan – the Indian Rare Earths Limited and Toyota Tsusho – are negotiating the sale of rare earth oxide.

You have witnessed, as I said, the exchange of diplomatic notes for the Mumbai Metro project. The total commitment of Japan ODA this year would be the highest which it has ever been, which is over three billion, and I think that is in the Joint Statement.

You would see from the Joint Statement that the two Prime Ministers have directed us officials to accelerate negotiations - I mark the words - accelerate negotiations on a bilateral agreement for cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy so that we can conclude an agreement at an early date.

There were also a number of initiatives in the field of people-to-people exchanges on which I would ask our Ambassador to elaborate later in case any of you have interest. The IIT Hyderabad is one such; the Indian Institute of Information Management, Jabalpur is another; and the Genesis programme under which Prime Minister Abe said he would like to have more than a thousand young Indian people come and visit Japan, are all examples of this. There was appreciation for India's, what was described as encouraging words which is really, endorsement of Japan's bid to host the Olympic Games in 2020.

I would, therefore, sum up that PM has had an extremely successful visit to Tokyo which has led to expanded strategic understanding between India and Japan which, as the Prime Minister himself stated, will contribute to peace and stability in Asia and in the world.

On a completely separate note I had mentioned that the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister both expressed their shock over the attack which took place in Chhattisgarh and conveyed their condolences over this, and it was described as inadmissible in a democracy that attacks of this nature should take place.

I referred to the IIT Hyderabad. We did raise a number of issues with the Japanese side on the commercial arena. The Prime Minister urged Japan to make the registration procedures for generics and pharmaceutical products quicker and easier. And he was assured that the Japanese side would look into this. This, as you know, has been a longstanding issue.

Japan's contribution to the Nalanda University, which is coming up, through the Faculty of Peace Studies was referred to. And finally we are greatly honoured that Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress of Japan will visit India at the end of November-early December this year.

I will stop there and throw open the field to questions. Thank you.

Q: Sir, today we had a briefing in the afternoon from one of the members of Prime Minister's Office. He told us that on civil nuclear cooperation there will be two tracks – one he said we will continue to work on how we can achieve this, and on the other side he talked about a number of things that are required to be done by India. And he said we cannot put a deadline or dateline. Roughly, he said maybe two years. Would you like to say anything on this?

Foreign Secretary: I am not sure which are the two tracks he is referring to. We have a dialogue which is an ongoing one for a civil nuclear cooperation agreement, which is handled by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Department of Atomic Energy together. That process will continue. Perhaps he is referring to other sets of dialogues which we have on the export control regimes where we have another set of dialogues which is ongoing. But if you see, even in that, in the Joint Statement there is agreement to work together for India's full membership, full membership, of all the four export control regimes. Now I do not know where the timeline of two years has emerged from. As far as we are concerned, we are going on the basis that it has been decided to accelerate the process of the negotiations.

Q: Is it possible to have full-fledged membership unless we sign CTBT and NPT?

Foreign Secretary: I think the four export control regimes stand on their own. They are issues on which our position is well-known. And the export control regimes proceed on the basis of the acceptance of the entire body of accepting new members.

Q: I just bring you back to the question of export control regimes. Could you just elaborate on the paragraph because it talks about a few things? It says, the Prime Ministers recognize the importance of an effective national export control system. Now we have done a lot in the national export control system. Does it mean that what we have done till now is falling short of Japanese standards? And second, when it says that commitment to continue to work to prepare the ground rules can that be interpreted as support because Japan had a kind of a different point of view at the last Nuclear Suppliers Group meeting?

Foreign Secretary: I think these are two separate issues. They talk about preparing the ground, not the ground rules, which is preparing the way for India to enter.

Q: Can that be construed as support?

Foreign Secretary: It is support. It is very clear-cut support for India's moving towards the membership.

Q: About the national export control system.

Foreign Secretary: I think what that line refers to is the extensive briefing we have given to the Japanese as to our other partners, on the upgradation of our export control regimes. You might be aware that our SCOMET lists as they are called are upgraded and this actually was announced when the Director-General of the IAEA was in Delhi, and it has been accepted by most of our partners that today our lists of this what is called SCOMET by DGFT are in fact in line with the best practices of the NSG, the MTCR and the other export control regimes. I think this is a recognition of that.

Q: Sir, how important would be the domestic politics for the Japanese? While we were coming out of the function today, we saw some protests directed against both the Japanese Government and the Indian Government saying no to nuclear exports. How important would be domestic politics in deciding which way Japan goes?

Foreign Secretary: I can hardly comment on the domestic politics of Japan. That would not be appropriate for me to do. What I would say is that if you see even in the statement the Japanese Prime Minister has formally recognized the excellent nonproliferation record of India. That has in fact been mentioned in the Joint Statement. I think we are reaching a stage where today the possibilities of cooperation between Japan and India are taking a decisive step forward. As you are aware, the Japanese Prime Minister had recently visited a number of countries where he in fact signed civil nuclear cooperation. Our Ambassador might be able to expand on this a little, maybe she could tell us which countries they were. But it is in line with that that I think he is moving towards a responsible policy on civil nuclear cooperation with many countries, and certainly he recognizes India's special place in this scheme of things.

Indian Ambassador to Japan (Ms. Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa): The countries have been: Turkey, the UAE, Vietnam. I believe that he is headed shortly to East Europe, the old...*(Inaudible)*...countries, and I think the objective is really the same. So, they certainly are out in the market with nuclear reactors because they believe there are very high safety standards in this country.

Foreign Secretary: I think that is one important point in terms of the domestic opinion which you mentioned. Domestic opinion is focused very sharply also on safety. And the Japanese Prime Minister did mention, the Japanese Foreign Minister did mention, that it is the safety element in Japanese technology which they are emphasizing today.

Q: Sir, the statement states about a gas-based IPP in Maharashtra. Can you elaborate on the location and the size of the power plant to be established by the Japanese?

Foreign Secretary: That is under the DMIC.

Ambassador to Japan: It is one of the early-bird projects.

Foreign Secretary: I do not know if we have a location here.

Q: Sir, regarding the rare earths, when is it likely to start the commercial production? And, is there a Chinese angle for that because the export of rare earths from China to Japan is now affected by their bilateral relations?

Foreign Secretary: I will answer the first one and that is that the negotiations are now at a stage where we are trying to work out between the two commercial entities. Last November the Ambassador and the Japanese counterpart signed the Intergovernmental Agreement, which makes cooperation in the field of rare earths through a joint venture a possibility, a definite target of the two governments. What we are doing now is that the two entities which have been identified by each government - on our side Indian Rare Earths Limited and on the Japanese side Toyota Tsushu - to arrive at a commercial agreement so that they can start production. When you arrive at a commercial agreement you need to make decisions on issues like pricing, volume, etc. That is under negotiations right now. There is an accounting procedure which has to be gone through. Once that procedure is over, I think they should be able to start production. We were in fact told that on the Japanese side the plant is in fact going to be ready or it is already ready.

Q: Would you agree with the perception that Indo-Japan trade has failed to match the hype over the friendly relations between the two countries? For example, the two-way trade is just about 18 billion dollars and it has in fact fallen in the current financial year. Why is this happening? Your comments.

Foreign Secretary: I will ask the Ambassador to first start on the facts of the trade and then I will deal with the perception later.

Ambassador to Japan: I wonder how that perception came about because I think in one year it grew from about 13 million to 18 million dollars. So, it has not certainly been a fall. Maybe it is not growing as we would like it to, as our expectations are, but certainly it is on an upward trajectory.

Foreign Secretary: I will say that Prime Minister has repeatedly said and the Japanese Prime Minister agreed with him that 18 billion is really far below the potential of the two countries. I would not link it to hype about our relations. We need to deal with the reality of where our trade was ten years ago, where it is now, and where it is likely to go. We are focusing on where it is likely to go. We believe that there is tremendous potential for our trade to increase; and there are a number of areas in which we are working together. And we believe the investment-led trade growth will be a very important factor. We must remember that it was only in August 2011 that the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement was signed, and it is only a year and a half coming on to two. I think in the next few years you will see this full flowering of the potential of the CEPA. And when Japanese investment into India grows, you will see a concomitant growth in the trade relationship between the two countries. We have been assured again and again that a very large number of Japanese companies have now prioritized India as the area where they would like to invest.

I know that even two years ago India was identified as potentially the best country to invest. But today there is a critical mass of opinion growing in the offices of the CEOs, this is the feeling we got when Prime Minister addressed the Keidanren. We were sitting and talking to a large number of business people who said, no I think the time has come now. Perhaps they were waiting and watching to see the global situation, the evolution

of our own policies. But I think they have now reached a decision that investing in India makes sense for Japan.

Q: Question for the Foreign Secretary and the Ambassador, on a completely separate track. There was the case in the Delhi High Court recently where they have instructed the Central Government to ascertain the location of Subhash Chandra Bose's ashes. I just wanted to check with the Ambassador if that is something that the Embassy is looking into. Are you looking into it? His ashes are supposed to be at a temple here in Tokyo. Anything on that at all since the court instructed the Central Government to figure out where the ashes are?

Foreign Secretary: This is an issue of great national importance and there is no underestimating how important that issue is. But we will have to await specific instructions. As you know, there is a long history to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's presence in this country, his activities in this country, and his ashes in this country, his memories.

Q: Sir, any timeline regarding acquisition of amphibious aeroplane?

Foreign Secretary: Let me be very clear. What we have agreed to is a setting up of a Joint Working Group to examine the potential of this aircraft, the possibilities of whether it can be used, whether it should be manufactured jointly. There are a number of issues which will have to be looked at. This is a very new proposal which has come to us. It needs to be fitted into a larger framework of how we proceed both, as I said this is a dual use, as a civilian project and as a defence project. We will have to study it. So, the Joint Working Group will go into issues like what is the capability, what will be the uses of this aircraft, can it be jointly produced, which agencies would use it, what would be the off take, a number of such related issues. It is early days yet but I think the fact is that this is an aircraft with very extraordinary potential. Given its long range, its ability to land and take off in very choppy seas, it is a technological achievement. So, we would certainly like to look at it.

Q: Japan has undertaken three important corridors, as you have mentioned. But most of them are lagging behind schedule. What is the reason behind it?

Foreign Secretary: The DFC West is on track.

Ambassador to Japan: I also agree. I do not think they are lagging behind schedule. The Dedicated Freight Corridor is on track. I think it should be ready by about March 2017, that is what we are told. And the DMIC also I think has perhaps reached the implementation phase because there have been lot of studies. The Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor actually is going to envelop a lot of existing Japanese investments in that area as well as build infrastructure. And I think the master plan has just been completed. So, I do not think there are delays.

Foreign Secretary: In fact when you talk of the DMIC, I wish we had brought Mr. Amitabh Kant who is the CEO of DMIC, with us. The size and scale of what is being sought to be achieved through the DMIC is really a game changer. It could transform the nature of industrial growth in that entire western section of India. Just to give you an example, if you look at the plans for Dholera which is in one segment of that corridor, I am told by some people who know, that it is larger than Shenzhen. I mean that is the scale on which this is being planned. So, this is going to be a long-term project, and it will take a certain amount of time. But when it comes through, it will be the biggest thing that has happened in terms of industrial development in western India.

Q: Sir, one question not related Japan. Is it correct that Mumbai police has contacted MEA to bring back Asad Rauf, umpire of Pakistan?

Foreign Secretary: I have not heard about it but I have been out for the last two days. When I get back I will check it.

Q: Sir, it seems Japan has of late been concerned about aggressive stance of China. Today they also talked about how by force and might they are trying to change boundaries. Were these concerns shared in the course of last two days?

Foreign Secretary: I think when the Prime Minister said the Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan is in the interest not only of our two countries but in the interests of Asia, the Asia-Pacific region, and therefore, because of the importance of this region, to the larger world, I think we are talking in terms of building structures of stability. Obviously this means that we share a lot of interests, we share a lot of

concerns, we share a lot of ideas about how to build a better architecture of security in our region.

Official Spokesperson: If there are no other questions, thank you very much.



313. Prime Minister's media statement after meeting the Prime Minister of Japan.

Tokyo, May 29, 2013.

Prime Minister Abe,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to return to Tokyo, a city where I have always found warmth, goodwill and hospitality whenever I have visited it over the past four decades. My wife and I were deeply honoured by the special gesture of Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress in hosting us earlier today. I also want to thank Prime Minister Abe for the excellent arrangements that have been made for our discussions and for his exceptional hospitality.

Prime Minister Abe and I had wide-ranging discussions over the past two days, characterized by a convergence that is fully consistent with our Global and Strategic Partnership. Our discussions were guided by the fundamental belief that at a time of global uncertainties, change and challenges, India and Japan are natural and indispensable partners for advancing prosperity in our two countries and for a peaceful, stable, cooperative and prosperous future for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.

The Joint Statement reflects our mutual understanding and the steps we are taking to advance our relationship. We attach particular importance to intensifying political dialogue and strategic consultations and progressively strengthening defence relations, including through naval

exercises and collaboration in defence technology. Cooperation in high technology, space, energy security and rare earth minerals will also add rich content to our strategic partnership.

While continuing our development partnership, especially in the infrastructure sector in India, we will also strive to substantially expand the flow of trade and private investment.

We had a meeting of minds in our discussions on global and regional issues. We will seek reforms in the United Nations Security Council, an open, rule-based and balanced regional architecture and deeper regional economic integration and connectivity.

I also conveyed our good wishes and support for Japan's bid to host the 2020 Summer Olympics.

I am satisfied that not only is our strategic partnership on a strong foundation, but that we are truly moving forward in pursuit of the vision for which we have reached out to each other with so much resolve and intensity in the past decade.



314. Joint Statement on Prime Minister's visit to Japan: Strengthening the Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan beyond the 60th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations.

Tokyo, May 29, 2013.

1. The Prime Minister of India, H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh, is currently on an Official Working Visit to Japan on 27-30 May 2013 for the Annual Summit of the Prime Ministers at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Japan, H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe. The two Prime Ministers held extensive talks on bilateral, regional and global issues on 29 May 2013 in Tokyo.
2. Applauding the commemorative events held to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2012, the two Prime Ministers reaffirmed

that India and Japan, as the two largest democracies in Asia sharing such universal values as freedom, democracy and rule of law, enjoy very close and wide-ranging relations. They expressed their resolve to further consolidate and strengthen the Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan in the years ahead, taking into account changes in the strategic environment.

3. Prime Minister Abe expressed his appreciation for the invitation to Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress of Japan to visit India. The two Prime Ministers confirmed that the two governments would make necessary preparations and coordination with a view to realizing Their Majesties' visit as State Guests from the end of November to early December.
4. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the steady growth of political exchanges, dialogue and policy coordination at all levels. They positively evaluated Ministerial-level annual dialogues and exchanges, particularly the Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue and the Ministerial Level Economic Dialogue. The two Prime Ministers also noted the successful outcomes achieved during the "2 plus 2" dialogue, the Foreign Secretary level Dialogue, the Foreign Office Consultations, the Defence Policy Dialogue, the Trilateral Dialogue between India, Japan and the United States, as well as other key interactions on various areas including cyber, counter-terrorism and economic partnership. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the launch of the bilateral Maritime Affairs Dialogue, the first meeting of which was held on 29 January 2013 in Delhi.
5. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the expanding defence relations between the two countries based on the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between India and Japan. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction that the first bilateral exercise between the Indian Navy (IN) and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) was held in June 2012 off the coast of Japan and decided to conduct such exercises on a regular basis with increased frequency. They decided to establish a Joint Working

Group (JWG) to explore modality for the cooperation on the US-2 amphibian aircraft.

6. Prime Minister Singh expressed his appreciation to the Government and people of Japan for their continued and unwavering support to India's development. Prime Minister Abe reaffirmed that Japan would continue its Official Development Assistance at a substantial level to encourage India's efforts towards social and economic development, including in the area of infrastructure and human resource development. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of the Exchange of Notes for yen loan totalling 71 billion yen for the "Mumbai Metro Line-III project", as well as the yen loan of the fiscal year 2012 totalling 353.106 billion yen for eight projects. Prime Minister Singh appreciated the pledge by Prime Minister Abe for the Campus Development Project of Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (Phase 2) for 17.7 billion yen and the "Tamil Nadu Investment Promotion Programme" for 13 billion yen.
7. Noting that the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) has given a fillip to economic and trade relations, the two Prime Ministers stressed the importance of continued efforts to further enhance trade in goods and services as well as investments. In this context, they expressed satisfaction with the successful holding of the second meeting of the Joint Committee as well as a series of Sub-Committees.
8. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of the Agreement between India and Japan on Social Security in November 2012 and directed their relevant authorities in the governments to work towards its early entry into force. They expressed hope that this agreement would contribute to further accelerating bilateral activities of private sectors.
9. Prime Minister Singh expressed concern on the issue of import of Indian shrimp by Japan and hoped that this issue would be resolved soon.
10. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction with the progress in cooperation of creative industries and welcomed the

successful launch of the Indian Design Mark developed by the India Design Council and the Japan Institute of Design Promotion.

11. The two Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress in implementation of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC). They expressed satisfaction that in Phase-I the procurement of civil works was at an advanced stage and that the Engineering Service Consultants for Phase-II were already in position. The two Prime Ministers also
12. expressed satisfaction with the signing of the first tranche of the Main Loan Agreement for Phase-II totalling approximately 136 billion yen.
13. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the progress made in the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) as a visionary India-Japan Strategic Partnership project which would enable India to access innovative, cutting edge technologies. The two leaders shared the view that all instruments of funding of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) including the Special Term for Economic Partnership (STEP) may be explored. They appreciated the formation of the DMIC Project Implementation Trust in India as well as the listing of possible projects for Japan's public and private financing as Japan's USD 4.5 billion facility decided during the DMIC Task Force meeting at Tokyo in October 2012. The two Prime Ministers also welcomed 26% equity participation of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in the DMIC Development Corporation (DMICDC), and the dispatch of an expert from JICA and board members from JBIC to DMICDC. The two Prime Ministers reviewed the rapid progress made in absorbing next generation technologies through the Smart Community Projects and directed the relevant authorities to vigorously accelerate implementation of the seawater desalination project at Dahej, Gujarat, the Model Solar Project in Neemrana, Rajasthan, and the gas-fired independent power producer (IPP) project in Maharashtra. The two Prime Ministers also stressed on the early realization of other Smart

Community Projects and directed that all necessary measures be taken to provide solutions for provision of gas at reasonable rates and for electricity and environmental regulations so that each project moves ahead speedily as a symbol of India-Japan strategic partnership. Prime Minister Abe welcomed the relaxations of capital and financial regulations by India which could bring sustainable and stable economic growth in India by enhancing private sector investments and domestic production. The two Prime Ministers decided to continue consultations and work towards expeditious solutions to the remaining issues.

14. Recognizing the importance of development in the Chennai-Bengaluru areas, the two Prime Ministers underlined their commitment to reinforce their cooperation. Prime Minister Singh directed relevant authorities to accelerate the improvement of infrastructure such as ports, roads, bridges and industrial parks, as well as electricity and water supply, in Ennore, Chennai and adjoining areas and to monitor the progress utilizing the Tamil Nadu Investment Promotion Programme (TNIPP). They welcomed the outcome of the preliminary study conducted by JICA for a Comprehensive Integrated Master Plan of the region and the signing of the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Master Plan for the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC). The two Prime Ministers instructed their relevant authorities to accelerate their efforts to develop the Master Plan by the end of fiscal year 2014.
15. Noting the importance of increasing Japanese investment and business in India for economic growth of both countries, the two Prime Ministers expressed their expectation to advance cooperation between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan in the framework of India's "National Manufacturing Policy" in such areas as industrial human resource development and business environment improvement. The two Prime Ministers highly appreciated the achievements of the Visionary Leaders for Manufacturing (VLFM) programme as a valuable Japanese contribution to the development of the manufacturing sector in

India and welcomed the development of this programme as the new project 'Champions of Societal Manufacturing' (CSM).

16. Prime Minister Singh noted Japan's interest in supporting the introduction of high speed railway system in India. Prime Minister Singh appreciated Japan's high level of expertise in designing and implementing High Speed Railway (Shinkansen) systems. Prime Minister Singh conveyed that India will plan such projects based on its infrastructure priorities, commercial viability and financial resources in India. The two Prime Ministers decided that the two sides will co-finance a joint feasibility study of High Speed Railway system on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad route.
17. The two Prime Ministers, recognising the importance of upgrading the speed of passenger trains on the existing Delhi-Mumbai route to 160-200 kmph (Semi-High Speed Railway system), welcomed the final report of the feasibility study undertaken with Japan's cooperation, and confirmed that further consultation between the two countries would be continued to draw up a road-map.
18. The two Prime Ministers shared the view that business environment improvement is significant in enhancing bilateral investment and trade which would drive growth of both countries. In this connection, the two Prime Ministers expressed their expectation that both countries would continue to work closely to achieve an enabling predictability and transparency in terms of business environment including tax administration which is conducive to India-Japan economic cooperation and greater flow of investment, technology and services between the two countries. The two Prime Ministers welcomed JETRO's matching activities later this year to strengthen business partnership and consolidate supply chains between the two countries.
19. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction with the successful outcomes of the 5th and 6th India-Japan Energy Dialogue and shared the importance of strengthening energy cooperation including in areas of renewable energy and energy conservation, Clean Coal Technologies (CCT), institutional issues

as well as transmission and distribution system in power sector. Confirming to expand LNG cooperation through LNG Producer-Consumer Conference, the two Prime Ministers welcomed the progress of a joint study on pricing of LNG the result of which will be reported at the Conference. Prime Minister Singh expressed interest in cooperating with Japan in extraction of natural gas from methane hydrate deposits under the sea. They reaffirmed the importance of India-Japan Energy Forum to be held in India in September 2013 by JETRO, NEDO and TERI, including an exhibition to showcase Japanese technology in energy sector.

20. The two Prime Ministers appreciated the steady progress made in enhancing trade in high technology for mutual benefit and directed their relevant organizations to bring the dialogue in this field to a successful outcome.
21. The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed the importance of civil nuclear cooperation between the two countries, while recognizing that nuclear safety is a priority for both Governments. In this context, they directed their officials to accelerate the negotiations of an Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy towards an early conclusion.
22. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of the Memorandum between the Department of Atomic Energy of India and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan on cooperation in rare earths industry in India. The two Prime Ministers shared the view that the commencement of commercial production of rare earths by Indian and Japanese enterprises should take place at the earliest.
23. The two Prime Ministers noted the importance of cooperation in the field of science and technology for development of national economies and improvement of socio-economic standards of life. They welcomed the progress made under Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of India on Co-operation in the Field of Science and Technology and noted with satisfaction the implementation of various science and technology activities. The two Prime Ministers also welcomed the steps being

taken by both sides to further enhance science and technology cooperation between the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science and Technology of India and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the progress made so far in information and communications technology (ICT) and electronics sectors, including Ministerial level interaction resulting in creation of Japan Help Desk for facilitating cooperation in Electronic system Design and Manufacturing. They shared the common view to further enhance business tie-ups in private sectors and cooperation in cyber security as well as promotion of joint research and development (R&D) and bilateral cooperation in international standardization in the information and communications technology. Prime Minister Singh expressed hope to further enhance opportunities for Japanese industries in Electronic System Design and Manufacturing and Telecommunications in India and business opportunities for Indian ICT companies in Japan.

24. The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their resolve to further promote people-to-people exchanges between the two countries, particularly youth exchange. In this connection, Prime Minister Abe expressed Japan's intention to invite approximately 1,200 youth from India to visit Japan through JENESYS 2.0 in order to promote interest towards Japan among the youth of India and to promote tourism between the two countries. Noting that there is a very high potential for growth of tourism traffic between the two countries, the two Prime Ministers underlined the importance of enhancing cooperation in the tourism sector and welcomed the recent progress concerning the bilateral cooperation in the field of tourism between the Ministry of Tourism of India and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan. The two Prime Ministers also welcomed recent measures taken by the two countries respectively relating to residence permits which would further enhance business and professional exchanges. Prime Minister Abe appreciated India's 'visa on arrival' scheme for Japanese tourists which would facilitate tourism from Japan to India.

25. The two Prime Ministers reconfirmed the importance of educational cooperation between the two countries. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at progress of cooperation for the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IIT-H) and the Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing in Jabalpur (IIITDM-J) with Japanese support. Prime Minister Singh appreciated Japan's intention to contribute to Nalanda University including through the yen loan for the improvement of road access to the University, as well as its support for Peace Studies in the University.
26. The two Prime Ministers noted on-going discussions on cooperation in urban development in the framework of the bilateral Joint Working Group, which is one of the important areas of bilateral cooperation in view of increasing urbanization in India.
27. The two Prime Ministers reiterated the commitment of India and Japan to the freedom of navigation and unimpeded commerce based on the principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They noted ongoing bilateral exchanges on maritime security including counter-piracy activities, participation in bilateral and multilateral exercises as well as sharing of information, and in this context, welcomed the joint exercises between the Coast Guards of India and Japan held off Chennai in January 2012 and in Tokyo Bay in November 2012. They expressed their expectations to further promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation on maritime issues.
28. The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their support for the East Asia Summit (EAS) as a forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia. They acknowledged the significant role the EAS can play as a forum for building an open, inclusive and transparent architecture of regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. The two Prime Ministers noted the importance of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting

Plus (ADMM-Plus) along with the EAS in this regard. They welcomed the successful first meeting of the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum. The two Prime Ministers shared the importance of economic integration in the region and welcomed the holding of the first EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting as well as the launch of negotiations on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), followed by the successful first round of negotiations held in May 2013 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. They also confirmed the 6th EAS Declaration on ASEAN Connectivity that includes consideration be given to the "Connectivity Master Plan Plus" in the future anticipating the Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to provide useful inputs towards this.

29. The two Prime Ministers renewed their intention to assist Afghanistan's efforts to become a stable, democratic and pluralistic state, adhering to rule of law. They welcomed the outcomes of the successful Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan in July 2012 for development and security assistance from Transition to Transformation Decade. Recognising that the main threat to Afghanistan's security and stability is terrorism, they emphasized the need for joint and concerted efforts and cooperation among regional and other countries to address the challenge of terrorism. The two Prime Ministers supported the efforts made by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for reconciliation process that is Afghan-led, inclusive and transparent.
30. The two Prime Ministers expressed concern over North Korea's continued development of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes, including its uranium enrichment activities. They urged North Korea to fully comply with its obligations under all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and its commitments under the 2005 Six Party Talks Joint Statement. They reiterated the importance of full implementation of the Resolutions by the international community. They urged that the abductions issue be resolved at the earliest as a humanitarian concern.

31. The two Prime Ministers condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purpose. They reiterated that no cause or grievance justifies terrorism, and the need to adopt a holistic approach that ensures zero tolerance towards terrorism. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the meetings of the India-Japan Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism and their cooperation in multilateral fora. They recognize the need to finalize and adopt the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism in the United Nations.
32. The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their shared commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Prime Minister Abe stressed the importance of bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) at an early date. Prime Minister Singh reiterated India's commitment to its unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. The two Prime Ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to working together for immediate commencement and an early conclusion of negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). They also supported the strengthening of international cooperation to address the challenges of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism. The two Prime Ministers recognised the importance of an effective national export control system conforming to the highest international standards. Prime Minister Abe recognized India's sound non-proliferation record. Both sides expressed their commitment to continue to work to prepare the ground for India to become a full member in the international export control regimes: the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement.
33. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the outcome of the 18th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Doha in December 2012 and emphasized the need for all Parties in UNFCCC to work together in an open, transparent and inclusive manner for

enhanced action under the Durban Platform. The two Prime Ministers stressed the need to strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation to promote sustainable development and environmentally friendly technologies including in actions for GHG emissions reductions, promotion of low-carbon technology, products and services, and welcomed the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June 2012 as reflected in “The Future We Want”, in particular, political commitment including the reaffirmation of the Rio principle made towards sustainable development and poverty eradication. Prime Minister Abe congratulated India on the successful outcome of the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP11) held in Hyderabad in October 2012, which was an important step toward achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The two leaders expressed their hope that the post-2015 development agenda will be focused on development, economic growth and poverty eradication and that the relevant intergovernmental process under the United Nations on this issue will finalize a balanced, equitable and pragmatic outcome.

34. The two Prime Ministers reemphasized their resolve to work towards early reform of the United Nations, including the expansion of the United Nations Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories, particularly through the efforts of the G-4 so as to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities. They confirmed that such reforms were necessary to make the Security Council more representative, effective, credible and responsive to the needs of its wider membership. They concurred in continuing to take an active part in the inter-governmental negotiations in the United Nations General Assembly supporting the Chair to achieve meaningful progress. In this regard, they also decided to strengthen their bilateral cooperation and consultation with other Member States. They decided to hold the 1st India-Japan Consultation on UN Issues, including United Nations Security Council reform, soon and confirmed to hold regular consultations twice a year, to further enhance cooperation between the two countries.

35. Prime Minister Singh expressed his appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality of Prime Minister Abe and the Government of Japan. Prime Minister Singh extended an invitation to Prime Minister Abe for the next Annual Bilateral Summit in India at a mutually convenient date to be decided through diplomatic channels. Prime Minister Abe accepted the invitation with pleasure.



315. Prime Minister's speech at the banquet hosted by the Prime Minister of Japan.

Tokyo, May 29, 2013.

Your Excellency Prime Minister Abe and Madam Abe,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am deeply thankful to Prime Minister Abe for his warm and kind sentiments. My wife and I are delighted to be back in Tokyo. Over the last two days, we have been overwhelmed by the generous and gracious hospitality extended to us on this visit. This only reinforces my belief in the friendship that we have forged personally and the relationship that we are building steadily between our two countries.

Mr. Prime Minister, in the short time since your return to office, you have moved boldly and decisively to revive Japan's economy and strengthen its foreign relations. You have inspired confidence and optimism at home and won respect and admiration abroad. As far as India is concerned, in your earlier tenure as Prime Minister, you had outlined a bold new vision of relations between our two countries and you have remained steadfast in the pursuit of that vision and in your friendship for India.

Your Excellency,

Each visit to Japan brings home to me the strength and vitality of our

relationship, which is based on ageless bonds of admiration and affection between our people.

In Swami Vivekananda's sermon to the Indian youth to go to Japan after his own visit in 1893 or in Okakura Kakuzo's discovery of India a hundred years ago, we see that when Indians and Japanese come together, they strike a deep chord in each other.

It is not only our spiritual and cultural affinities that bring us together, but also our shared commitment to democracy and international peace. The success of our partnership is vital for the prosperity of our people and indispensable for a future of peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region.

In pursuit of that vision, our two countries established a Strategic and Global Partnership more than six years ago. Since then, our political, economic and strategic dialogues have expanded. Mega infrastructure projects in India such as the Dedicated Freight Corridor and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor signify the scale of our ambitions and the enormous possibilities in our partnership. Our Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement opens new possibilities for our economic relations. Our growing security cooperation is now adding an important dimension to our partnership.

Regional economic integration and the creation of an open rule-based architecture that promotes security and stability are also goals that Japan and India share. India values its cooperation with Japan in the East Asia Summit and other regional forums. Together, we seek a new architecture for the United Nations Security Council.

Excellency, in the course of these two extraordinary days, we have reaffirmed the enduring value of our strategic partnership. We have resolved to expand our economic relations, anchored in increased trade and investment. And we have agreed to progressively deepen our security cooperation. This visit gives me the confidence that a very rich future awaits this extraordinary relationship between our two countries.

With those words, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I request you to join me in a toast to:

the health and well-being of His Excellency the Prime Minister of Japan and Mrs. Abe;

the continued prosperity and progress of the friendly people of Japan; and an expanded and enhanced India – Japan Strategic and Global Partnershi



316. Extracts from the Media interaction by the Prime Minister on-board his special flight from Bangkok to New Delhi.

May 31, 2013.

Prime Minister (Dr. Manmohan Singh): Ladies and gentlemen, I have had two successful visits - first to Japan at the invitation of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and then to Bangkok at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Thailand.

I believe both of the statements that have been issued at the end of these meetings have been made available to you. So, therefore, I will not waste your time in recapitulating what is contained in these two statements. If there are any questions that you have to ask, I will be very happy to answer them.

Q-1: My question is pertaining to your Japan tour. You just described it successful but specifically in terms of forward movement made on civil nuclear deal, is there any possibility of getting it signed with Japan before 2014 Lok Sabha polls?

PM: There have been discussions with Japan and this visit marked a formal move in that direction. I am hopeful that before long we will be able to put our signatures to a civil nuclear energy agreement with Japan as well.

Q-2: How do you describe the progress made so far in respect of the Look East Policy especially in the backdrop of your bi-nation visit? What is the progress made so far and are there any emerging new issues to be focused under the policy?

PM: The Look East Policy of the Government of India is not a new development. When Mr. Narasimha Rao was our Prime Minister, I was

the Finance Minister. We charted out the course of action to get closer to Southeast Asian countries particularly ASEAN. Since then this process has been moving forward. ASEAN countries are our strategic partners and there are enormous opportunities of expanding trade ties, expanding investment relations, expanding maritime cooperation, expanding the scope of trade and investment. And now we have reached a stage where large-scale flow of trade and investment is becoming a reality.

We have, for example, the Dedicated Freight Corridor where Japan is helping us; we have Mumbai-Delhi Industrial Corridor where also the Japanese help will be available; the Mumbai-Bangalore corridor also there is a great interest of East-Asian countries like Japan, Thailand and Malaysia. So I am hopeful that this Look East Policy of India is paying rich dividends and the results are going to improve as we move forward.

Q-3: There is a new Government, a new dispensation in Pakistan and there has been quite a bit of cordiality from the side of Mr. Sharif as far as you visiting Pakistan. Could you give us any guidance on whether you plan to visit there before the end of this year? Also, what sort of outcomes you are expecting before it can be, as you said in your own words, business-as-usual with Pakistan again?

PM: I rang up Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the very first day when election results were coming out. I conveyed my congratulations to him and I reciprocated his sentiments that India-Pakistan relations should move forward. I also invited him to visit India, he also invited me to visit Pakistan. There is an invitation from the Government of Pakistan for me to visit Pakistan. There is no firm decision on either side. No dates have been fixed. But we would certainly like to have good neighbourly relations with Pakistan. It has been consistently our policy that in India-Pakistan relations we should deal with all the outstanding issues. We are committed to resolve them in a peaceful manner. That is also the sentiment which was reciprocated by Shri Nawaz Sharif.



317. Information supplied by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to the Lok Sabha on the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with Japan.

New Delhi, August 5, 2013.

CEPA With Japan

The details of the total trade carried out between India and Japan during the last five years is as under:-

Values in US \$ Millions

(as on 29.7.2013)

S.No.	Year	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
1.	EXPORT	3,025.70	3,629.54	5,091.24	6,328.54	6,099.06
2.	%Growth		19.96	40.27	24.30	-3.63
3.	%Share in total exports of India	1.63	2.03	2.03	2.07	2.03
4.	IMPORT	7,886.27	6,734.18	8,632.03	12,100.57	12,514.07
5.	%Growth		-14.61	28.18	40.18	3.42
6.	%Share in total imports of India	2.60	2.34	2.33	2.47	2.54
7.	TOTAL TRADE	10,911.97	10,363.72	13,723.27	18,429.10	18,613.14
8.	%Growth		-5.02	32.42	34.29	1.00
9.	%Share in total trade of India	2.23	2.22	2.21	2.32	2.35
10.	TRADE BALANCE	-4860.57	-3104.64	-3540.79	-5772.03	-6415.01

(source:DGCI&S, Kolkata)

A Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) was signed between India and Japan on 16th February 2011 and it came into force from 1st August, 2011. The salient features of India-Japan CEPA are as follows:

- The Agreement is most comprehensive of all the agreements concluded by India so far as it covers more than 90% of the bilateral trade between India and Japan. Japan and India have liberalized 92 % and 87.16% of tariff lines at six digits respectively.
- The agreement covers Goods, Services, Rules of Origin, Movement of Natural Persons, Telecom, Financial services, Investment, IPRs, Government Procurement, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Customs Procedures and Cooperation in other Areas.
- India has offered only 17.4% of tariff lines for immediate reduction of tariff to zero duty, as against 87% of tariff lines offered by Japan for zero duty on 1st August, 2011.
- From Indian side Tariff will be brought to zero duty in 10 years on 66.32% of tariff lines to give sufficient time to Industry to adjust to the trade liberalization.
- India's exclusion list covers 12.84% of all tariff lines and 9.9% of volume of trade, as against Japan's exclusion list covering only 8% of all tariff lines and 3% volume of trade.
- CEPA provides for an institutional mechanism to encourage and improve Business/investment environment. India seeks greater investment by the Japanese companies.

Though there is no specific provision in the CEPA for reducing India's trade deficit with Japan, Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) promote stronger trade and commercial ties between participating countries, and open up opportunities for exporters and investors to expand their business in the tariff lines which are opened or in which tariff is reduced. The tariff lines are liberalized between the two countries thus giving impetus to trade which can bring down trade deficit between the countries.



318. India-Japan Joint Press Statement on currency swap.**New Delhi, September 6, 2013.**

1. The two Governments decided to expand the current bilateral currency swap arrangement from 15 to 50 billion US dollars. The two Governments expect that this will contribute to the stability of global financial markets including emerging economies.
2. The two Governments also reiterated the importance of continued reforms in financial and investment sectors for promoting stable and long term capital inflows into India.
3. The two Governments believe that these policy measures will strengthen the bilateral financial cooperation between Japan and India.

**319. Joint Statement on the occasion of the 7th India-Japan Energy Dialogue between the Planning Commission of India and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.****New Delhi, September 12, 2013.**

H.E. Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission of India and H.E. Mr. Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan held the 7th meeting of the India-Japan Energy Dialogue on September 12, 2013 in New Delhi.

Senior officials of the relevant ministries and departments of both sides participated in the discussions. Both sides welcomed the progress achieved so far in the previous six rounds of the Energy Dialogue and in the deliberations of the various Working Groups. They appreciated the sector-specific discussions by experts of both sides and the progress made in various areas of cooperation.

During the dialogue, both sides recognized that it is important to hold the India-Japan Energy Dialogues annually, and that the issues of energy security and global environment are high priority challenges requiring continuous and effective action. In particular, to overcome challenges such as the global-scale changes in the energy demand structure seen in recent years and soaring energy prices, both sides confirmed to strengthen consumer-producer dialogue on LNG and deepen cooperation in energy conservation and renewable energy sectors. In addition, both sides decided to strengthen programs to further disseminate and expand model business projects that have thus far been implemented by both sides, and to enhance cooperation in upstream development of petroleum and natural gas.

Both sides recognized the need to promote industrial cooperation to expand bilateral energy cooperation on a commercial basis, based on the Joint Statement issued at the 6th India-Japan Energy Dialogue. Specifically, both sides welcomed the fact that New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) held the Japan-India Energy Forum after making further improvements to the contents. Both sides also welcomed the fact that the forum contributed inputs to this dialogue. Both sides commended each other for conducting research on Smart Community and renewable energy, and for the forum's suggestions regarding the future of bilateral cooperation in these fields between India and Japan. Moreover, both sides welcomed the fact that NEDO and Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) held the technology exhibition and convention in India to showcase Japanese technology in the energy sector for wider dissemination in India. Both sides welcomed the memorandum between the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and NEDO in the promotion of Japanese technologies that may help resolve energy issues in India.

The two sides engaged in discussions in the following areas:

1. Cooperation in energy efficiency and conservation

Both sides recognized that it is important for them to cooperate with each other in the energy efficiency and conservation sector, and welcomed that the meeting of Energy Efficiency and Conservation Working Group under the India-Japan Energy Dialogue framework was

held in New Delhi on September 2, 2013. Both sides reaffirmed the need to strengthen bilateral relationship in the energy sector, focusing on energy conservation and environmental issues, and the need to expand the consultation process between the government and the private sector.

Both sides welcomed the progress, including organization of workshops, in cooperation among Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) and Energy Conservation Centre of Japan (ECCJ). Both sides also welcomed cooperation to spread energy conservation by using audit manual developed by PCRA and ECCJ for the textile industry.

1. Both sides confirmed to continue the capacity building program further for State-Designated Agencies (SDAs), Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and energy managers/energy auditors.
2. Both sides reconfirmed the importance of the projects carried out by the Regional Energy Efficiency Center (REEC) set up in Chennai with technical assistance from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI of Japan) in promoting energy conservation at the working level in India. In addition, both sides welcomed the training of trainers at Dr. Ambedkar Institute of Productivity for hands-on training of energy-using equipment such as furnaces, motors, compressors, etc. which is being implemented as part of the capacity-building project by NEDO. Both sides also welcomed the fact that the facility continues to be utilized, with the Government of India taking the lead in implementing training for over 120 people.
3. Both sides confirmed that the construction work of the demonstration project for a sinter cooler waste heat recovery system, currently being implemented by NEDO based on the energy conservation cooperation of industries which consume large amounts of energy, would be definitely completed within this fiscal year, although there has been a significant delay in the progress. Both sides also welcomed the achievements of the demonstration project utilizing a coke dry quenching facility, and the demonstration project for cement exhaust heat recovery, both of which were implemented by NEDO, and confirmed their continued cooperation in promoting those projects.

4. Both sides decided to share information in the sectors where consumption of energy has been growing in recent years, such as steel, cement, machine tools, inverter air conditioners and transport, including in relation to SMEs. In addition, based on the fact that demand for energy is increasing in the transport sector in line with India's economic growth, both sides decided to explore the possibility of further cooperation in the said area. Both sides welcomed the implementation of further public-private partnership between Japan and India based on the customized list of 17 Japanese energy conservation technologies in iron and steel sector, which was prepared in the Public and Private Collaborative Meeting between the Indian and Japanese Iron and Steel Industry after its discussion for about two years.
5. Both sides welcomed the exchange of opinions regarding the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) since the 6th India - Japan Energy Dialogue held on 10th October, 2012. Both sides shared the view to continue consultations regarding the JCM.
6. The Japanese side commended India's initiatives to promote energy conservation such as the implementation of the Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) scheme and National Manufacturing Policy. To ensure the effective and efficient implementation of these initiatives, both sides acknowledged the importance of further cooperation. From this point of view, especially regarding the areas of steel, cement, machine tools, transportation, and inverter air conditioners, both sides confirmed their intentions to share information and exchange views on a regular basis through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Working Group under the India-Japan Energy Dialogue and various research projects. They also confirmed their intentions to discuss challenges in promoting advanced energy-saving technologies and actions to be taken to address the challenges.
7. Both sides confirmed the importance of conducting vigorous activities under the International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation (IPEEC) framework. In this light, they praised the activities of Global Superior Energy Performance Partnership

(GSEP) with the aim of promoting best practices and spreading high-efficient and low-carbon technologies in the industrial sectors (steel, cement and power) under public-private partnership. Both sides will continue to collaborate and aim to further expand its activities.

Cooperation in renewable energy

8. Both sides recognized that bilateral cooperation is important in the renewable energy sector. They welcomed the fact that a meeting of the Working Group on Renewable Energy, established under the India-Japan Energy Dialogue framework, was held on July 23, 2013 in Tokyo.
9. Both sides welcomed the smart community projects in the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) that utilize Japan's environmental system technologies and IT technologies such as solar power, smart grids, smart urban transportation, as well as water management, recycling and treatment in order to develop next-generation energy infrastructure, noting that it is important, among other things, from an energy perspective. Both sides confirmed that all necessary steps will be taken by the Indian side as well as the Japanese side for an early realization of the demonstration project of the micro-grid system using large-scale photovoltaic power generation in Neemrana Industrial Park in the state of Rajasthan and its related cutting-edge technologies from Japan under the memorandum signed in April 2012 among the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, the Department of Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Finance, and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation and NEDO. Both sides will study ways to disseminate these technologies widely throughout India.
10. Both sides welcomed the feasibility study by NEDO to promote greening of the telecommunication towers in India by installing a photovoltaic system, lithium ion batteries and an energy management system. Both sides confirmed the mutual cooperation for an early commencement of the demonstration.

The Indian side confirmed to accelerate working for an early conclusion of the memorandum among the relevant Indian and Japanese agencies for the purpose of implementing the demonstration project. Both sides welcomed the National Solar Mission launched by the Government of India, focusing on building a system for generating 22 GW of solar energy by the year 2022, and decided to study the possibility of contribution to be made by technologies and products through mutual cooperation. Both sides also welcomed the joint research program towards energy access improvement in non-electrified areas by introducing micro hydroelectric generation facilities.

11. The Japanese side commended India's initiatives to implement the use of renewable energy such as the Waste to Energy and the "Green Energy Corridor" as well as to develop smart grid. The Indian side acknowledged the support of NEDO and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in the field of renewable energy. From the perspective of ensuring the stable supply of power and the significant increase in renewable energy in India, both sides confirmed their intentions to enhance cooperation in smartening the power transmission and distribution system.
12. For the purpose of promoting the use of renewable energy, which will become more important in the future, both sides confirmed their intentions to cooperate in establishing appropriate investment environment including financing. Moreover, both sides confirmed that they will actively utilize private-sector vitality and know-how, etc., through cooperation with such organizations as the Japanese Business Alliance for Smart Energy Worldwide (JASE-W) and CII. As a specific plan for cooperation with the private sector, both sides confirmed that they will constitute a public-private round table with a particular focus on enhanced introduction of renewable energy and smart grid development, and hold the first meeting by the end of 2013. Both sides also welcomed the exchange of contact information to facilitate private sector cooperation.

Cooperation in electricity

13. Both sides recognized that bilateral cooperation is important in the electricity sector. Both sides welcomed the fact that a meeting of the Working Group on Electricity, established under the India-Japan Energy Dialogue framework, was held on August 23, 2013 in New Delhi.
14. Both sides recognized that it is important and beneficial to closely collaborate in the development of infrastructure in the electricity and energy sector such as deployment of high-efficiency coal-fired power generation, pumped-storage power generation, electrical power transmission and distribution systems in order to meet the rapid increase in power demand, and promote sustainable economic growth taking environmental issues into consideration.
15. Both sides recognized that coal fired-power plants remain as an important power source in India. Both sides also welcomed the fact that the Japan Coal Energy Center (JCOAL) performed a diagnosis of and made a proposal for the renovation and replacement of equipment and facilities of seven sites (Ramabundam and Dr. Narla Tata Rao in Andhra Pradesh, Wanakbori in Gujarat, Kahalgaon in Bihar, Badarpur in NCT Delhi, Unchahar in Uttar Pradesh, and Durgapur in West Bengal) from fiscal year 2010 to fiscal year 2012, and that JICA also conducted the same for four sites (Parli and Bhusawal in Maharashtra, Satpura in Madhya Pradesh, and Obra in Uttar Pradesh) in fiscal year 2012 in order to improve the efficiency of the plants and environment in India, and the implementation of follow-ups.
16. Both sides welcomed the plan that JCOAL will invite Indian experts to Japan in fiscal year 2013 in order to promote the introduction of Super Critical and Ultra Super Critical coal power generation in India. Furthermore, both sides welcomed the completion of study pertaining to pumped-storage power generation in Maharashtra by JICA last year, confirming that they will collaborate in the development of pumped-storage power generation in India.

17. Both sides confirmed that they will discuss technical aspects of Grid Stabilization project and Green Energy Corridors.

Cooperation in coal

18. Both sides recognized that bilateral cooperation is important in the coal sector. Both sides welcomed the fact that a meeting of the Working Group on Coal, established under the India-Japan Energy Dialogue framework, was held on August 22, 2013 in New Delhi.
19. Both sides recognized that it is important and beneficial to closely collaborate in the coal sector such as the implementation of coal washery technology, the promotion of high-efficiency use of low rank coal and the implementation of communication system for the purpose of securing safety in a coal mine in order to meet the rapid increase in coal demand, and promote sustainable economic growth taking environmental issues into consideration.
20. Both sides expressed their strong expectation that the commercial-scale demonstration project by NEDO aiming to reduce ash content of coal in India using highly efficient coal washery technology at Angul, Talcher, Odisha, would be completed in 2013, although there has been a significant delay in the progress, and that said technology would be widely deployed in India. Both sides also welcomed the exchange of technology pertaining to coal washery technology through the invitation of Indian experts to Japan, which has been continuously conducted by JCOAL since 2001.
21. Both sides welcomed the smooth implementation of a feasibility study by NEDO concerning a project that combines Upgraded Brown Coal (UBC) technologies using Indian lignite with Ultra Super Critical (USC) coal power generation technologies. They also welcomed the continuous examination among the participants for the purpose of implementing the project after the completion of said feasibility study.

22. Both sides welcomed the commencement of the examination among the persons concerned regarding the possibility of cooperation in the communication system in a coal mine and the centralized monitoring system that Indian side requested.

Cooperation in petroleum and natural gas

23. Both sides recognized that bilateral cooperation is important in the petroleum and natural gas sectors, and welcomed the fact that a meeting of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Working Group, established under the India-Japan Energy Dialogue framework, was held on September 2, 2013.
24. Both sides confirmed that Japan, the world's largest consumer of LNG, and India, a country where large increases in consumption are anticipated in the future, would cooperate through, inter alia, participation in the LNG Producer-Consumer Conference, to ensure the stable and competitively priced supply of LNG. Both sides especially welcomed the issuance of the joint statement on the "Joint Study on Pricing of LNG in the Asia Pacific Market" on September 9, 2013, by India and Japan.
25. Both sides confirmed that they would strengthen their cooperative relationship in upstream development of petroleum and natural gas. Both sides confirmed to explore possibilities of collaboration in exploration and production activities in India and in third countries and procurement of LNG. Both sides will begin ad hoc meetings by the end of 2013, to discuss actual steps to concretize and realize joint exploration and production and joint procurement of LNG.
26. Both sides also confirmed to continue cooperation in the study of Indian offshore geo-scientific data for delineation of gas hydrates, to explore further cooperation in gas hydrates research and development and technical information exchange, which would support India's efforts to set up a Gas Hydrates Research Centre in India.

27. Both sides reconfirmed to continue to collaborate and jointly work in the field of fuel conservation. In this regard, through the renewed memorandum between PCRA and ECCJ, both sides also confirmed the continuation of cooperation in the field of fuel economy in transport sector through eco-driving programmes.

Cooperation in nuclear energy

28. Both sides reaffirmed that bilateral cooperation is important in civil nuclear energy sector. Both sides welcomed the fact that a meeting of the Nuclear Energy Working Group, established under the India-Japan Energy Dialogue framework, was held on September 10, 2013 and information on current nuclear energy policies of both sides were exchanged.
29. Based on the experience of the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station of Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and the lessons learned from it, both sides reconfirmed the need to cooperate in enhancing the safety of nuclear power plants.
30. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of an early conclusion of the negotiations of an Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, taking into account the joint statement of May 29, 2013 between the two Prime Ministers.

Cooperation in the Energy Sector in the international arena

31. Both sides recognized the need to promote energy cooperation in the East Asia Summit Energy Ministers Meeting (EAS EMM) as well as to demonstrate leadership for enhancing energy security in East Asia. Moreover, both sides praised the research study on the strategic usage of coal through Clean Coal Technologies and the optimization of the electric power infrastructure, etc., by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), which supports the enhancement of energy cooperation in EAS EMM.

32. Both sides expressed hope that progress would be made in discussion on energy security and improvement of the market among countries with large energy consumption at the IEA Governing Board at Ministerial Level to be held in November 2013.
33. Both sides stressed that bilateral cooperation in the framework of India-Japan Energy Dialogue should not be limited to the above-mentioned activities, and such cooperation should be further deepened. Both sides decided to hold the 8th India-Japan Energy Dialogue in Japan at a mutually convenient time in 2014.

New Delhi

September 12, 2013

(For the Planning Commission of India)

Montek Singh Ahluwalia (Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission of India)

(For the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan)

Toshimitsu Motegi (Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan)



320. **Media Statements and Joint Media Interaction after Seventh India-Japan Energy Dialogue in New Delhi (12 September 2013).**

New Delhi, September 13, 2013.

Joint Secretary (East Asia) (Shri Gautam H. Bambawale): We now go into a press conference. I would first request Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Mr. Ahluwalia, to make his opening statement to the media.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission (Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia): I have had a very fruitful discussion with His Excellency Mr. Motegi on our cooperation with Japan in the energy sector.

In the seventh round of the high-level Energy Dialogue, we reviewed progress in energy cooperation since the time the last dialogue held in October, 2012, and identified new areas and new approaches for future cooperation.

Energy cooperation has emerged as an integral part of our expanding global and strategic partnership with Japan. We want to build a mutually beneficial partnership with Japan in areas of capacity building, exchange of best practices, and development of technologies to enhance energy efficiency, reduce emissions and address concerns of energy security, especially in the area of LNG.

Last year, I had proposed that Japan hold an exhibition in India in 2013 to exhibit new technologies in the energy sector. I am very happy that such an exhibition is being held in Greater Noida from today till the 14th of September to exhibit new environment-friendly technologies from Japan. I hope this will give an opportunity to Indian companies interested in these areas to interact with potential Japanese counterparts.

At the last meeting of the Energy Dialogue, I had also suggested a joint study of LNG imports and their pricing in Asia Pacific. We have done such a study and its report was presented at the recently held Second LNG Producer-Consumer Conference in Tokyo.

I have suggested to Minister Motegi that India and Japan jointly participate in planning and execution of gas hydrate expeditions and research programmes related to exploration and exploitation of gas hydrates. We look forward to receiving Japanese technical expertise in setting up R&D facilities in gas hydrates in India.

We are working with the Japanese side in areas like combining Upgraded Brown Coal technologies, using Indian lignite with ultra supercritical coal power generation technologies, and joint R&D in renewable energy sectors, notably in the use of large-scale photovoltaic power generation. These are projects with a lot of potential benefits to us.

We greatly appreciate Japan's assistance to train officials from our energy conservation authorities, and hope to expand the scope of energy cooperation by taking up more joint development projects.

I am greatly satisfied with productive and forward-looking discussions in this room with the team led by Minister Motegi. I look forward to continuing this important dialogue with Japan.

Joint Secretary (East Asia): I now request His Excellency Minister Motegi from Japan to make his media statement.

Japanese Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry (Mr. Toshimitsu Motegi): At today's 7th India-Japan Energy Dialogue, we were able to have a very productive and constructive discussion together with Deputy Chairman Ahluwalia ... (Inaudible)... between the two leaders at the last May summit meeting between Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Singh where they called for enhancing cooperation in the field of energy.

This we believe that we have been able to set ... (Inaudible)... this scheme where the public and private sectors of both countries can cooperate in the field of energy. And as requested from the Indian side we have organized this exhibition where we are showcasing Japan's technology as well as providing opportunities for business ... (Inaudible)...

In the field of renewable energy, in order to study the possibilities of enhancing the investment environment in India and new renewable energy promotion, India-Japan Public-Private Round Table will be established, and the first meeting is due to be held by the end of this year.

At today's meeting we were able to look in to the six areas where the two countries are cooperating: (1) Energy conservation, (2) Renewable energy, (3) Electricity, (4) Coal, (5) Oil and natural gas, and (6) Nuclear energy. And we were able to hear the report on the progress being made at the respective Working Groups. And I believe that we were able to have a very significant ... (Inaudible)... discussion.

In the area of energy conservation, we have talked about the initiatives presented in India to realize energy conservation in particular in the fields of steel, cement, machine tools amongst others. We have agreed that we will carry out joint responsive research between the two countries in order to disseminate the outstanding energy community technologies that are available to us in Japan. And Japan will also cooperate in the area of human resources development.

In regard to ...(Inaudible)... we have confirmed that both countries will continue their cooperation in this area. To be more specific, we have decided that both countries will jointly study and start to study, about the end of the year, what specific measures can be done to collaborate in the upstream development and LNG procurement. We have also confirmed that we would work to expand collaboration amongst the other consuming nations of LNG.

In addition, we were able to look into other initiatives for cooperation mainly the ultra supercritical power generation, engineers retraining, to invite engineers to Japan to undergo training. Also we will be carrying out technical cooperation for the power grid stabilization in India as well as assisting India in the coal upgrading. We have also discussed on nuclear energy amongst other many topics.

Also, we have talked that we would like to continue very much on this energy dialogue. We have conveyed this point and also we discussed that we are sure to, prior to the India-Japan Summit meeting, trying to put together the outcome of our Energy Dialogue so that we can then put these outcomes of deliverables to leaders.

Another point we discussed was that the next meeting should be held in Tokyo, and we would like to invite His Excellency Deputy Chairman to Tokyo to attend the meeting.

Thank you.

Joint Secretary (East Asia): The Ministers have agreed to take one question each, one from the Indian media and one from the Japanese media.

Q (Press Trust of India): My question is to both the dignitaries. How soon do you see the inking of civil nuclear energy pact between India and Japan given the fact that PM's of both the countries have directed their officials during the main meeting to do so?

Japanese Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry: We have agreed that we will make efforts so that we can conclude the agreement between our two countries as soon as possible. There are several outstanding issues that we made and we have said that we will have these issues discussed mainly at the working groups and others so that we can accelerate this effort. .

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I endorse entirely what Minister Motegi has said. This is a very important area of our collaboration but we are not fixing deadlines to it. We are making progress and let us see how it goes. It is a very complex and complex set of issues that have to be addressed.

Joint Secretary (East Asia): The next question will be from the member of the Japanese media. If there is anyone from the Japanese side who would like to ask question, please do raise your hand.

If there is no one from the Japanese media, I see the hand of the correspondent from UNI of India.

Q (United News of India): My question is also to both Mr. Ahluwalia and the Japanese Minister.

You said there are several outstanding issues in the agreement that you will be signing for nuclear cooperation. Could you please elaborate a bit what these outstanding issues are?

Japanese Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry: As the Deputy Chairman Ahluwalia has mentioned, this is a very important issue and yet there are various difficulties that still exist. So, this issue is still being discussed within the Working Group and I think that it would not wise for me to specify what specific outstanding issues exist because this would be misleading. Therefore, I would like to refrain from making any specific comments about that.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: I agree with that and I just want to say that a lot of progress has been made but whenever you have complex negotiations they are not over until they are over; and it is not useful to sort of indicate when we are there, what exactly we have discussed. But progress is being made.

Joint Secretary (East Asia): I can see that the representative of Kyodo news here in Delhi has his hand up. So, I would request him to ask his question.

Q (Kyodo News): My question is about the cooperation in development of oil and energy by both countries. Please clarify more about this issue?

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission: If you are referring to petroleum and energy that's the whole area that we have discussed.

Actually the declaration that we have just signed gives a very detailed account of the collaboration and cooperation. And I am very pleased that in everyone one of these areas since this dialogue began, we have made a lot of progress and certainly from India's point of view we have received a lot of collaboration and support from Japan in technical assistance, in many areas which are crucial for rational management of India's energy resources.

I refer you to the detailed statement you will find quite a lot and it's all detailed sector by sector coal, thermal, power, petroleum, nuclear all of that resources and energy efficiency which is also very important.

Japanese Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry: Deputy Chairman has covered most of what I wanted to say about working groups. And the six areas that I earlier mentioned at the beginning are working hard to ... (Inaudible)... and to try and make progress. We have seen quite a bit of progress not only limited to oil, upstream development, but there is LNG procurement and various other areas where we are cooperating and we would like to continue to cooperate.

At the same time we have discussed that our cooperation should not be limited to just the two countries but the two countries should take the lead so that this cooperation can be expanded to all of Asia.

Joint Secretary (East Asia): Thank you very much ladies and gentleman of the media. With that we bring this press conference to an end.

Thank you so much



321. Press Release on the Prime Minister's Special Envoy Dr. Ashwani Kumar's visits Tokyo.

Tokyo, September 18, 2013.

India and Japan pledged to further deepen their Strategic and Global Partnership as the two countries prepare for the upcoming visits to India of Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko.

In a meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Tokyo this afternoon, Prime Minister's Special Envoy Dr. Ashwani Kumar said that India is honored and privileged to welcome Their Majesties, which would be the first ever visit by the Japanese Emperor and Empress to India. The people of India looked forward to the Imperial visit later this year and the Government of India is making all possible arrangements in ensuring a memorable and productive visit by Their Majesties, he added.

Dr. Kumar also reiterated the invitation extended to Prime Minister Abe to visit India for the annual summit. He said, the summit between the two Prime Ministers would help not only consolidate the India-Japan strategic partnership but also expand bilateral cooperation and signal the shared determination of the two countries to work for peace, progress and prosperity in the region and the world at large.

Echoing the sentiments, Prime Minister Abe referred to the landmark visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Japan in May 2013 and said that keeping up the momentum of bilateral exchanges would be important for taking forward the India-Japan partnership to even greater heights. He called for the bilateral economic engagement to be further intensified to add value to the Strategic and Global Partnership. To give further impetus to Japanese business, he will be accompanied by a high-level business delegation during his next visit to India. Referring to the India-Japan Civil Nuclear Cooperation agreement, Prime Minister Abe assured Dr. Kumar that the process of negotiations towards resolution of all outstanding issues will be taken forward. Recalling his past visits to India, he reiterated the need for the two nations to work together for global peace and prosperity, and conveyed his greetings to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Dr. Kumar said that the multi-dimensional and multi-faceted India-Japan engagement is the culmination of the efforts of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the Japanese leadership, and particularly the recent efforts of Prime Minister Abe. He said India-Japan strategic engagement is unique inasmuch as it would enable both countries to meet common global challenges including piracy, maritime security, terrorism, cyber security and environmental change. He assured to facilitate Japanese investments to India and address specific issues having an impact on these investments. He said that necessary steps in this regard have been initiated at the highest level in the Government. Indian investment in the infrastructure sector over the next five years is projected at US\$ 1 trillion in which Japanese companies are expected to play a major role.



322. Press Release on the visit of the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Japan Dr. Ashwani Kumar to Tokyo.

New Delhi, September 19, 2013.

India and Japan pledged to take forward the ongoing negotiations for an early conclusion of the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. In a meeting today in Tokyo with Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Japan Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida expressed his confidence that the proposed agreement can be concluded soon with the support of the people of both countries.

The meeting with Foreign Minister Kishida also provided an opportunity for a high level review of the India-Japan strategic and global partnership as the two countries prepare for the visit of Their Imperial Majesties and the subsequent visit of Prime Minister Abe for the Annual Summit. The two leaders expressed full support for further deepening the unique multi-faceted relationship between India and Japan. Both sides agreed that closer economic cooperation between India and Japan was essential for Asia's continuing growth. In this context, they welcomed the recent decision to expand the bilateral currency swap arrangement to US\$ 50 billion, the continuing progress on the Delhi-Mumbai Freight Corridor and Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor projects and the discussions on

introducing a high-speed railway system in India. Dr. Kumar also referred to the progress in bilateral defence and security cooperation including in the areas of maritime security, anti-piracy and counter-terrorism.

Continuing his high-level engagements in Tokyo following his call on Prime Minister Abe yesterday, Dr. Ashwani Kumar also met a group of Japanese Parliamentarians led by Katsuyuki Kawai, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Diet. The parliamentarians who had visited India in August 2013 where they were received by Dr. Ashwani Kumar, were greatly appreciative of the arrangements made during their visit to Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore and described it as a great learning experience. Dr. Kumar stressed on the importance of more Japanese companies entering the dynamic Indian market and taking advantage of the DFC and DMIC projects in the infrastructure sectors. In this context, both sides agreed on the necessity of expediting the bilateral Agreement on Social Security which would greatly benefit Japanese and Indian companies working in each other's country.

Dr. Ashwani Kumar today concludes his 3-day visit to Tokyo to carry out his mandate in his capacity as the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister to maintain the momentum of high-level exchanges with Japan and prepare for the visits of Their Majesties and Prime Minister Abe.



323. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson, Chief of Protocol and Director (East Asia) on the State visit of Emperor and Empress of Japan to India.

New Delhi, November 28, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. As you are all aware, one of the biggest moments in terms of our diplomatic engagement this year will begin later during the week and that is the visit of the Emperor and Empress of Japan to India from the 30th November.

For many of us this is a first in many ways. It is a first in the sense that it is the first time that the Emperor and Empress of Japan are coming to

India. It is also a first that India has hosted the same two dignitaries on a state visit after a lapse of fifty years. It has never happened before in the history of independent India.

As you are all aware of the importance that we place on this visit, I have requested our Chief of Protocol who is here with us, Ms. Ruchira Kamboj, to come along and explain to you the efforts that we have made to ensure the success of this visit. We also have with us, for many of you an old friend, Director (East Asia) Mr. Shambhu Kumaran who is right now handling the visit. He will respond to any questions that you may have on the visit other than the protocol aspects.

I will now ask the Chief of Protocol to brief you. Then if you have any questions for her on her briefing or for Director (East Asia), they will both be willing to answer. As usual, we will open the floor for any questions that you may have on other issues. With that I would request the Chief of Protocol to make her opening remarks.

Chief of Protocol (Ms Ruchira Kamboj): Thank you Akbar and good afternoon everybody. I am delighted to be here and to brief you on the programme elements of this most significant visit.

To begin from the very beginning, Their Majesties will arrive on the 30th of November. It is a six-day visit in all. So, it is a longish visit. They will be arriving on the 30th of November which is a Saturday. Then moving on to Sunday 1st December, there would be some private time where they will be taking a walk in Lodhi Garden.

On the 2nd of December, which is Monday the main day of engagement, there would be the ceremonial welcome for Their Majesties at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Thereafter, Their Majesties would pay their respects at Raj Ghat. After Raj Ghat they would proceed for a meeting with the Prime Minister at Hyderabad House.

Following that there are a couple of private engagements, a visit to the Jawaharlal Nehru University. And finally that day the main event, the most significant event, is the meeting with the President followed by the customary banquet, which is very traditional for a state visit, followed by the farewell tete-a-tete.

The next day, that is Tuesday 3rd December, there would be a visit to the India International Centre. This is quite significant also because Their

Majesties had laid the foundation stone sixty years ago. Thereafter, their next two engagements are two calls on at the hotel, the first by the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the second by the Vice-President of India. Thereafter, that day there is some time where there will be some private engagements on their part.

And then we move on to Wednesday, 4th December. Fourth December is the day when they will emplane for Chennai. It is a two-city visit – Delhi and Chennai. So, on the 4th in the morning they will leave for Chennai. Their main engagement that day will be to visit the Kalakshetra Foundation.

The next day, Thursday 5th December, which is effectively their last day in India, they would be visiting the Children's Park at the Guindy National Park in Chennai. Then of course there will be the main meeting, the meeting with the Governor followed by a lunch that will be hosted by the Governor in honour of Their Majesties.

After the lunch and some downtime, they will visit the Spastic Society of Tamil Nadu, and round up their visit with a couple of private engagements in the hotel where they will meet representatives of Japanese expatriates in Chennai. They would be emplaning for Tokyo on the night of 5th December. So, altogether it is a six-day visit.

Needless to add as I round up that this is a state visit and a visit I think on which the Ministry of External Affairs has worked extremely hard, and now we are much looking forward to welcoming Their Majesties to India.

Thank you.

Official Spokesperson: Before we open the floor for questions, since all of you represent media organisations we just like to tell you for example, if any of you are interested you can contact our colleagues, we have been able to dig out footage and photographs of their last visit and these are available with us. If any of you would like to know what were the places they visited, what were the photographs, these are all available. We are also showcasing them on our website. Some of you may have seen that on a day-to-day basis we put in different video footage and photograph because it is also a visit of nostalgia as far as India hosting

the same dignitaries who have been here 50 years ago. We have never had that occasion.

With those words I now open the floor for questions that you may want to ask on anything.

Q: Who is going to the Palam airport to welcome the Emperor? Is Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh also going?

Chief of Protocol: We will have a complement of senior officials at the airport which is the standard norm for a state visit. There will be a Minister Accompanying who will also be at the airport. And for this particular visit the Minister Accompanying is the External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid.

As far as the Prime Minister's presence at the airport is concerned, which point you have raised, matters are still under finalisation. These aspects are being finalised. But yes there might be a possibility of this. But I should also hasten to add in that vein that if this happens, this will not be the first time. There have been a couple of visits, the most notable in the recent past being that of President Obama where the Prime Minister has gone to the airport to receive a distinguished visitor. So, let us wait and see.

Official Spokesperson: Just to add to what she said, all that we have said is indicative that we are placing the utmost importance on this visit, and the highest importance that India can extend. So, please be certain that every aspect of protocol and importance will be given at every level to ensure that this will be a memorable visit.

Q: Actually I would like to know whether there is any special thing about choosing Chennai for visit.

Chief of Protocol: As far as Chennai is concerned, before any visit there are lots of rounds of negotiations with the country's Embassy based in New Delhi. Here I would like to tell you that it was the choice of the Japanese. The Japanese decided that they would like to take Their Majesties to Chennai for the second leg of the visit.

Q: This visit is also about the parameters of our relationship, the fact that there is a China angle here. Can you give us something about the way defence ties are progressing and what is it that we are looking at?

Director (East Asia) (Shri Shambhu S. Kumaran): I think one must bear in mind very clearly that this visit from the Japanese side is a visit that is very high in symbolism. And the practice in Japan is for the Emperor to be studiously away from political issues and contemporary issues, and we would respect the Japanese sentiments on this. The nature of the visit is that it is a highly symbolic visit. The Japanese Emperor is the symbol of the Japanese state and the people. Essentially the way in which the discussions would carry on would, therefore, focus on the extraordinary maturity of the relationship over the past several decades.

As you know, we celebrated last year the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. We have a very strong popular connectivity in terms of spirituality, culture, people-to-people exchanges. So, this visit to a certain degree is a manifestation of that aspect of the relationship rather than getting into the points that you had mentioned.

Q: This meeting between the representatives of the Japanese expatriates and the Emperor, is it a courtesy call or is it on the request of the representatives of the Japanese expatriates that this has been planned?

Chief of Protocol: This particular meeting that you are talking about has been organised completely by the Japanese side. This is their programme and they have led on this. So, this is not part of the programme that MEA has led on. This is their programme.

Official Spokesperson: And it is normal for Heads of Government or Heads of State when they go out to have this sort of thing. We also do that regularly.

Director (East Asia): If I may add, I think in terms of Chennai as you know there is a very large concentration of Japanese expatriates there. So, we suspect that it may also have been a factor in deciding to visit Chennai.

Q: I hear that Mr. Salman Khurshid has met or seen the Japanese Emperor when he came here in 1961. Is it true?

Official Spokesperson: I did ask the Minister this question and he did indicate that his grandfather was the Governor of Bihar at that stage. And the Crown Prince and the Crown Princess did visit Nalanda. He

said that he was I think seven years old at that stage. He has very fond memories of that. And he has specifically requested that we collect as many photos of their visit to Patna. And we have been able to collect those photos and hand them over to the Minister who is very nostalgic and remembers this with great fondness.

Q: What is our understanding of why the Emperor has chosen to visit India now? I am asking this because the invitation from India to the Emperor had apparently been pending for more than ten years now, and such visits take place apparently only at the advice of the Japanese Cabinet. Could you provide us with some understanding?

Director (East Asia): Of course we are deeply honoured that he has chosen to visit us and it would be, I would say, impolitic for us to speak as to why he chose to visit us now. Our invitation, as you correctly pointed out, has been a longstanding one. We have invited him repeatedly. I think we are looking at this visit, as I mentioned earlier, as a reflection of the depth and maturity of the relationship and I do not think we want to read anything more into why now, why not earlier, etc.

Q: Sir, is there any proposal of Prime Minister of Japan's visit to India in coming months?

Official Spokesperson: You know that both India and Japan have an annual dialogue. There was a dialogue earlier this year and it is normal that there would be one next year too.

Q: Does this visit have any bearing on the strategic partnership? And does it impact in any way on the nuclear negotiations?

Director (East Asia): Subhojit, I am just trying to draw up the framework for this visit here and I am trying to bring to your attention that the Japanese Emperor's visits, which are very rare, are essentially manifestations of goodwill and popular sentiment towards another country, a friendly country. We do not want to, as you are suggesting, look at this in a very narrow prism in terms of day-to-day, or shall we say immediate, or medium term diplomatic issues. The way in which we are looking at this relationship is as a symbol of the goodwill of the Emperor and the Japanese people towards India. And as I said, we are very honoured to be able to accept this goodwill gesture from the Japanese side.

Q: Any agreement of importance likely to be signed during the visit, of any historic importance?

Director (East Asia): No agreements envisaged during the visit.

Official Spokesperson: I think all of you would do best to you ask your Japanese colleagues here about the role that the Emperor plays in Japanese society and government. I think with that background information many of your questions will be answered because there are specific norms that these visits follow and the role of the Japanese Emperor, and those norms are being abided by during this visit too.

Official Spokesperson: Since there are no more questions on the visit, now the floor is open for questions on anything else.

Q: India has given the dossiers on 26/11 to Pakistan. But the lawyer for the seven accused has said that the evidence is a sham and is insufficient evidence for the court.

Official Spokesperson: Ranjana, if your question is that should I respond to some nondescript individuals, my answer is that I will not do so. But if your question is a little bit more substantive and do you think that India would just allow this somebody to wish away what is a deeply felt national sentiment that the perpetrators of 26/11 should be brought to book, my answer is that we will never allow that wish list to ever happen. Not now, not later, not ever.

Now if your question is about the quality of evidence that we have provided, my understanding is that when we have had discussions with our Pakistani counterparts including the recent visit of Mr. Sartaj Aziz to Delhi, we were assured repeatedly that all that they wanted was provided to them from information that they had asked us for.

Having said that, I would also like to emphasise that it is our firmly held belief that 99 per cent of that evidence on the 26/11 case is available in Pakistan because this conspiracy was hatched in Pakistan; the people who undertook this were nationals of Pakistan; the training for this attack was undertaken in Pakistan; the financing for this attack was through banking or other channels which are in Pakistan. Therefore, it devolves on the Government of Pakistan to ensure that evidence is provided from what is available with them given the expanse of the evidence and the

entire range of activities that were undertaken there prior to this attack. I hope I have answered all aspects of your question.

Q: Bangladesh is facing poll violence now. Assam and West Bengal share a 4,000 km border with Bangladesh. Are you worried that this poll violence may impact India?

Official Spokesperson: Bangladesh is a democratic country which periodically goes to the polls. We have had our engagement with Bangladesh when they have had previous polls. We respect their decisions to choose freely and democratically their governments. Therefore, we wish them all the best in that endeavour, and we do not see this as anything antithetical to our security or our safety.

Q: Regarding the Italian marines, I saw in Hindustan Times today a report about NIA seeking death penalty for the marines. Can you confirm the news? Also can you explain what is the position of the MEA regarding this issue?

Official Spokesperson: Maria, you know that from this platform we do not comment on issues of an inter-Ministerial or inter-agency nature. Therefore, I do not have anything to say on reporting on this. But if you would like to know the Government of India's position on this, I think you should refer to the statement made on the floor of Parliament on 22nd March, 2013 by the External Affairs Minister. It is available on our website. I could read out portions of that but it is available. It explains clearly what is the Government of India's position. If your argument is that there may be some developments where x, y, z may have felt something at this stage, I can assure you the Government of India intends to abide by those statements that were made on the floor of the House in Parliament, and any decision that we take will be a considered one taking into account the policy framework that has been articulated in that statement to Parliament.

Q: Akbar, this is a question for you and Shambhu. As you know, the eagle has over flown the dragon land. I am referring to the over-flight of two unarmed B2 bombers over China's so-called ADIZ. What are your comments on that? And there are also reports that China is mulling over a similar India-specific ADIZ.

Official Spokesperson: Rajiv, I think I will answer that question. There is no need for two people to answer that. All I can say is that we are aware of newspaper reports and other reports on this issue. And once we have a statement to make, you will be the first to know about that.

Q: Is President Karzai visiting India next month on the invite of the Government of India? What will be on the agenda when he comes?

Official Spokesperson: I can confirm that President Karzai will be visiting India, and this is in connection with an invitation he has received from an educational organisation. This is going to be during the second week of December.

As you are aware, the last time he visited India he was invited by the Lovely University in Punjab. On this occasion, this is another educational institution that has invited him. And let me assure you, whenever President Karzai comes to India as an honoured guest, he always does meet all important sections of Indian society including our leadership. So, he will be received by the Prime Minister of India during his next visit to India in the second week of December.

Q: Which is the organisation which has invited him?

Official Spokesperson: I think it would be best if that university or that group of educational institutions makes this public because this is an invitation from them. I have confirmed to you that the Prime Minister will meet him during his visit here. Now it is only proper for that educational organisation to make public the nature of their invitation.

But as far as we in Government are concerned, every time President Karzai, who is a great friend of India, visits India - and he is always welcome to do so – he will be received with appropriate honour that we extend to friends of India.

Q: Is the institution in Delhi?

Official Spokesperson: I can play this game with you a little bit more and I will answer that its headquarters are not in Delhi.

Q: Regarding Central African Republic which is descending to chaos and the UN is seeking troops, as one of the major contributors in the peacekeeping operations, is India planning to contribute?

Official Spokesperson: We will let you know once we take a decision on that.

Q: Back to Their Majesties visit again.

Official Spokesperson: Welcome.

Q: Her Majesty the Empress was supposed to be visiting India in 1998 to take part in an international conference but for obvious reasons the Japanese Government allowed her not to go to India. But anyway she took part not directly but through sending a video message of keynote speech to that conference. How does the present day Government of India take her decision back then?

Director (East Asia): As you rightly said, the Empress had addressed the Congress of the International Board on Books for Young People. And we are aware of her great interest in children's literature. We have also been told that she has a great interest in the Panchatantra. And I think we are going to let it rest at that.

Q: My question is about the Chinese Air Defence ...

Official Spokesperson: I think I have answered that question.

Q: Yes, but India's flights are also going to fly over that area. For example, the Japanese Government has said that their companies do not need to reply to that. What is India's reaction on that?

Official Spokesperson: I have just answered that question. You will now be the second person to be formed of it since Rajiv is the first. He has taken over that slot.

Q: If you are having a briefing on WTO Ministerial at Bali, then it is okay. Otherwise I wanted to ask about the peace clause. What is India's stand on the two-year, four-year thing? And what are the other issues besides this food thing that India puts upfront at the Ministerial?

Official Spokesperson: Sandip, my understanding is that the Ministry of Commerce will have a separate detailed briefing on all these aspects. So, let us wait for that.

Q: Following the interim arrangement between Iran and P5+1, what is the kind of opportunity it opens up for India in terms of oil trade, and also Indian investments in Chabahar and the land routes to Central Asia. The

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister was here for foreign office consultations. Was this process taken forward?

Official Spokesperson: Yes, the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ibrahim Rahimpour was in Delhi. He did meet the Foreign Secretary. He did provide a detailed briefing on their assessment of the situation as it would evolve following the interim agreement between Iran and the E3+3. At this stage, he also indicated that things need to be watched as go forward because, as you are aware, the document of that interim agreement is now publicly available, there are a series of steps that are likely to be unveiled as we go along.

As far as India is concerned, we have always held that we would like to engage Iran economically and any issues that Iran has with other parts of the world should not impede our legitimate economic interactions with Iran. Therefore, energy is a major area of cooperation between India and Iran and we intend to pursue that.

Similarly, we have, as you are all aware, a very keen interest in the Chabahar port. That *per se* does not get affected directly by any sanctions that are currently in place because those sanctions, even of a unilateral nature, do not have an impact directly on port-related activities. So, we intend to pursue that also actively. In addition, we are also in touch with Iran with other possibilities to strengthen our energy cooperation and that will be unveiled as time goes ahead because I think it is not prudent to tell in advance of decision making on matters of that nature, the outcomes. But you can be certain that there are activities which we are considering.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much for being very patient and for coming here this afternoon.

Director (East Asia): I just wanted to also inform you that former Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Yoshiro Mori will also be a part of the Emperor's Delegation. As many of you who have been following India-Japan relations are aware, he is one of the key personalities who has played a very transformational role in India-Japan relations. I just wanted to mention that. He is what they call the Head of the official suite as part of the delegation. That is just a point of fact.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much.



324. Press Release of the Ministry of Finance regarding Bilateral Currency Swap Arrangement between the Reserve Bank of India and Bank of Japan.

New Delhi, December 18, 2013.

The Government of India today approved the enhancement of the bilateral currency swap arrangement between the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Bank of Japan from US\$15 billion to US\$ 50 billion. The terms of the Agreement have been agreed between the Indian and the Japanese side in this regard. The Government of India has authorized Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to sign the agreement.

This measure will further strengthen the bilateral financial cooperation between Japan and India.



325. Second Press Release of the Ministry of Finance regarding enhanced limit of currency swap.

New Delhi, December 19, 2013.

“On 18.12.2013, RBI Governor Dr. Raghuram Rajan signed on behalf of the Reserve Bank of India the Agreement on bilateral currency swap arrangement between RBI and Bank of Japan.

Under the Agreement, the facility of currency swap has been enhanced from USD 15 billion to USD 50 billion. Earlier, the terms had been agreed between the Indian and the Japanese sides and the Government had authorized RBI to sign the Agreement.

Government believes that this measure will further strengthen the bilateral financial cooperation between Japan and India.”



KOERA, DPR**326. Press Statement on Nuclear Test conducted by DPRK.****New Delhi, February 12, 2013.**

Reports indicate that DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) has conducted a nuclear test on 12 February 2013. It is a matter of deep concern that DPRK has acted in violation of its international commitments in this regard. We call upon DPRK to refrain from such actions which adversely impact on peace and stability in the region.

**KOREA, REPUBLIC OF****327. Third India - Republic of Korea Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue.****Seoul, September 2, 2013.**

1. The 3rd India - Republic of Korea (ROK) Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD) was held in Seoul today. The Indian side was led by Mr. Ashok K. Kantha, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and included Ambassador Vishnu Prakash and senior representatives of the Ministries of External Affairs, Defense and Civil Aviation. The ROK side was led by First Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Kim Kyou-hyun.
2. Secretary Kantha and members of his delegation called on Foreign Minister Mr. Yun Byung-se and had a meeting with Ambassador Ju Chul-ki, Senior Secretary to the President for Foreign Affairs & National Security. Foreign Minister Yun will visit India in early November for the bilateral Joint Commission Meeting and to participate in the ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting.
3. Both sides discussed ways to further expand and deepen their Strategic Partnership. They undertook a comprehensive review

of bilateral ties, including in the fields of economic collaboration, defense and security cooperation, cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts. In this context they discussed the potential for space and nuclear cooperation, upgrading of the bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and collaboration in defense production. They agreed to step up cooperation in the spheres of maritime and cyber security. The two sides discussed the possible outcomes from the forthcoming visit to India of the President of ROK, H.E. Madame Park Geun-hye.

4. Discussing regional and international subjects of mutual interest, the sides agreed to step up coordination on East Asian regional issues. The ROK side provided a briefing on the situation in the Korean Peninsula. Views were also exchanged on the recent developments in Afghanistan.
5. It was agreed that the 4th India-ROK Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue will be held at New Delhi at a mutually convenient time in 2014.



328. Press Release of the Ministry of Defence on the meeting between Air Force Chief of ROK and Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee.

New Delhi, November 13, 2013.

General Sung Il Hwan, Air Force Chief of Staff, Republic of Korea called on Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne, Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Air Staff at Air Headquarters (Vayu Bhawan) today.

The visit saw a wide range of bilateral issues being discussed which relate to the ongoing defence cooperation between the two countries towards expanding the bilateral defence ties. General Sung Il Hwan is also slated to visit Agra and Jodhpur airbases during his three day visit to India

Earlier in July this year the IAF Chief, as chairman COSC had led a composite defence delegation to the Republic of Korea.



MONGOLIA

329. Keynote address by Sanjay Singh, Secretary (East) at the 2nd India-Mongolia IDSA-ISS Bilateral Dialogue.

New Delhi, March 14, 2013.

Dr Arvind Gupta, Director General, IDSA,

Dr. D. Ganbat, Director, Institute for Strategic Studies, Ulaanbataar,

H. E. Ambassador Bayaraa,

Excellencies,

Distinguished scholars and friends,

I am truly delighted to be here this morning for the second round of the IDSA-ISS Dialogue.

The theme you have chosen for today's discussions, "Emerging International Strategic Dynamics", is both extremely interesting and of great topical relevance. The international strategic landscape is evolving faster and in more complex ways than ever. This is particularly true of Asia. In our own ways India and Mongolia are agents of some of the changes that are taking place. We are also impacted directly by fast moving developments in our near and extended neighbourhood. This Dialogue is thus also timely and important for both our countries.

India and Mongolia have extremely warm and friendly relations, both at the inter-governmental level and also in terms of cultural and people to people exchanges. I have always sensed great warmth and cordiality in my interactions with Mongolian officials and leaders and I am sure that my Mongolian colleagues will agree that the reverse is equally true.

Over the past few years, we have imparted greater content and strategic orientation to our Comprehensive Partnership through institutionalised cooperation on foreign policy, defence and security issues in addition to our economic and technical cooperation. The priority that both countries place on our bilateral relationship is underlined by the regular high-level exchanges that have taken place in recent years, including the state visit of the President of India to Mongolia in July 2011 and that of the President of Mongolia to India in September 2009. This was in fact President Elbegdorj's first visit abroad after taking office as President. In January 2013, we were glad to receive Mongolian Foreign Minister Lu Bold and in the coming week we will be holding the next round of the Ministerial Bilateral Joint Committee in Delhi. This is thus a very active and dynamic bilateral partnership. Equally importantly, there is clear commitment on the part of our leaders to take this relationship forward.

Allow me to now make a few general observations about recent international dynamics from a strategic perspective. Speaking in very broad terms, there has been a shift in economic power from the West to the East. We are moving from a situation of Western dominance to a scenario where Asian countries, as well as some major developing countries such as Brazil will play an increasingly greater role even as the US, Russia and major European powers remain crucial international actors. Overall, given the current trends, there is little disagreement in strategic circles that this is the Asian moment, if not as is widely claimed, that this will be an 'Asian century'.

At the same time, several Asian countries are experiencing significant political change, ranging from peaceful political transitions to a violent overthrow of regimes, the implications of which are yet to be fully understood. Asia also has several relatively younger nation-states, some of them just over two decades old as fully independent countries. Also, the pace of political and economic changes in Asia varies widely. The issues and challenges that countries face are also radically different as one moves across Asia. There has understandably been a lot of focus on developments in the Pacific, especially in the seas around China. At the same time, the prospect of a major and imminent shift in Afghanistan could pose even more significant challenges for Asian security over the immediate future.

Paradoxically, even as regional cooperation frameworks have multiplied across the world, and in Asia, there have been serious question marks about the idea of regional cooperation. In Europe for instance, efforts to proceed towards greater political unity have been impeded by multiple crises linked in many ways to attempts to forge greater economic and financial integration. In Asia, where we have several regional frameworks, some of which have been working reasonably well, efforts to bring about greater and broader regional cooperation have to absorb these lessons.

Thus, while it is clear that while this will in many ways be an Asian century, it is far from self-evident as to what sort of century this will be for Asia, India or Mongolia.

From a strategic perspective, the terms of engagement, of competition and conflict, have shifted. Of course, this is a dynamic reality. While it would be hasty to state that conventional conflict does not pose a very serious threat to peace and security, there are fewer and fewer open conflicts between states. At the same time, newer kinds of conflict are here to stay, such as proxy wars and terrorism, as well as new arenas for competition and conflict, over markets and resources or over cyberspace. All of these require new analytical perspectives and newer tools in the policy toolkit.

For India, clearly our immediate neighbourhood in South Asia will remain a key priority even as we engage with a larger Asian reality. The major changes underway in the SAARC countries, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka will continue to engage a large part of our attention. At the same time, China is also our neighbour. Even as we move forward in our bilateral partnership with China, we cannot remain disengaged with the larger strategic context involving China or even the US' pivot to Asia. As we recognise China's growing presence, we also feel the need to engage with them and our other partners about the content and terms of that presence. This is an area on which both India and Mongolia can have a useful exchange. I am sure this Seminar will generate some interesting insights in this regard.

Friends,

India is in the centre of Asia, especially if we were to look at the way Asia is placed in relation to the oceans. On our east we have Australia,

Southeast Asia and the ASEAN countries leading up to Japan and the Pacific. We have the vast Indian Ocean with all its significance for trade and energy security at the centre. If we move westwards, we have Iran and the mineral rich countries of the Gulf and West Asia. Above us, we have China and Central Asia. India has a policy of steady engagement across Asia, and we seek a future of cooperative structures that will promote economic interactions as well as ensure a peaceful context for our continued economic development. Our efforts will thus continue to focus on addressing issues through diplomacy and dialogue, and to bring together what appear to be competing or conflicting interests and perspectives.

Similarly, if we were to consider Mongolia's position on a map, in many ways you are also at the heart of the Asian landmass. We are both developing countries wedded to democracy. It is thus not at all surprising that in many ways both our countries have a balanced orientation emphasizing peace and stability. This is a natural impulse engendered by our geographical position. Both our countries have foreign policies that try and seek to establish a larger, harmonious yet pluralist whole out of the diversity that confronts us. This is also in keeping with our shared Buddhist heritage of the middle path.

I wish the discussions today all success and look forward to hearing about your conclusions.

Thank you



330. Fourth meeting of INDIA-MONGOLIA Joint Committee on Cooperation.

New Delhi, March 21, 2013.

The 4th Meeting of the India-Mongolia Joint Committee on Cooperation was held in New Delhi on 21 March 2013. It was jointly chaired by Mr. E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs of India, and Mr. Luvsannyam Gantumur, Minister for Education and Science of Mongolia.

The Joint Committee reviewed the entire range of issues in India-Mongolia relations.

The Indian side conveyed that Indian companies were interested in playing a larger role in the Mongolian mineral processing and mining industry, and expressed the hope that a favourable environment for their operations could be created.

The Indian side reiterated its support for Mongolia's development processes and reaffirmed that it is modernizing the Rajiv Gandhi Polytechnic College of Production and Art in Ulaanbaatar. The Indian side is also considering setting up a milk processing plant in Mongolia. Implementation of the Line of Credit of US \$20 million extended by India to Mongolia for setting up an India-Mongolia Joint Information Technology Education and Outsourcing Center in Ulaanbaatar was discussed.

Discussions during the Joint Committee Meeting also focused on continuation of joint military exercises, the proposed visit of an Indian business delegation to Mongolia this summer, the possibility of launching air services between India and Mongolia and the establishment of an India-Mongolia Joint School.

The 5th Meeting of the Joint Committee on Cooperation will be held in Mongolia in 2014.



MYANMAR

331. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence on cooperation between India and Myanmar on issues of common concern.

New Delhi, January 22, 2013.

Defence Minister Shri AK Antony today called on the President of Myanmar U Thein Sein in NayPyiTaw. Shri Antony conveyed the importance placed by India on enhancement of bilateral ties in all fields, including defence. He noted that the recent exchanges of visits between

both countries at political and other levels had imparted a new momentum to the bilateral relationship.

In the case of defence in particular, the defence minister noted that the two sides were working to consolidate ties, in mutual interest of both. He informed that the visit of all three Service Chiefs of India to Myanmar in the last 18 months reflected the desire of the Indian government to strengthen ties. These visits and other exchanges in the recent times had provided each side a better understanding of mutual concerns, needs and strengths. Shri Antony stated that as neighbours which share a land and maritime boundary, both sides should work together to address common concerns.

The Myanmar President welcomed the enhancement of bilateral ties between both countries in all fields. He stated that Myanmar can also play the role of a bridge between India and South-East Asia.

The President also assured that Myanmar will not allow its territory to be used by anti-India insurgent groups. He welcomed the development of cooperation between the Armed Forces of both sides to deal with challenges along the land and maritime boundaries between both countries.

Earlier, Defence Minister met the C-in-C Defence Services of Myanmar Armed Forces Vice Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, who also hosted a lunch in his honour. The C-in-C welcomed the enhancement of exchanges and interactions between the Armed Forces of both countries. In particular, he stated that such exchanges would be useful in maintaining stability in border areas. He also looked forward to enhancement of exchanges between the Navies and Air Forces of both countries.

Yesterday, Shri Antony met the Defence Minister of Myanmar Lt Gen Wai Lwin. During these meetings, both sides discussed various issues of mutual interest and also discussed measures to enhance exchanges and cooperation between the Armed Forces of both sides. Enhancement of measures of closer and regular contacts between border forces were also discussed.



332. Recent incidents of violence in Central Myanmar.**New Delhi, March 23, 2013.**

In response to a question from the media with regard to recent incidents of violence in central Myanmar, the Spokesperson said :

“We express our profound sorrow at the tragic loss of lives and damage to property reported during the recent incidents of violence in Meiktila in Myanmar. We have been in contact with the concerned Myanmar authorities in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay. We have been informed of steps taken to restore normalcy. We are hopeful that communal peace and harmony would prevail. India stands ready to extend assistance to relief efforts for those affected by the recent incidents.”

**333. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry on the economic relations between India and Myanmar.****New Delhi, June 6, 2013.**

The Union Minister of Commerce, Industry & Textiles Shri Anand Sharma asserted that with democracy tightening its grip in Myanmar, which has provided a right enabling environment to inspire investors' confidence, India remains committed “to be a steadfast partner of Myanmar as it charts its path to growth and progress.” Speaking during a session entitled “The Long-Term View” at the World Economic Forum on East Asia 2013 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar today, Shri Sharma highlighted that India's engagement with Myanmar is premised on a strong development partnership and that India would like to align its cooperation with the economic priorities of Myanmar.

With India concluding a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with ASEAN, Shri Sharma stressed that this over-arching framework will act as a catalyst to boost trade and investment ties with countries of the region including Myanmar. “India is working closely with

Myanmar and Thailand to develop the tri-lateral highway as we call it... we are half-way there and am sure that by 2015-2016, this should be fully operational,” announced Shri Sharma.

Shri Sharma also spoke on the importance of investment in human resource, by adding that India has always believed that it will reap dividends in the long run. “We have already established Centre of Excellence in IT sector in Yangon. We are going to establish now Information Technology institute like a university in Mandalay. In addition to that we have also established an Industrial Training Centre in Pakokku to develop skilled labour for Myanmar industry,” said Shri Sharma. During the visit of Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2012, India announced doubling the number of training slot to Myanmar from 250 to 500.

Shri Sharma also added that India would also like to share her experiences with Myanmar in the enhancement of agricultural productivity and agricultural extension. “With this end in view, we are establishing an Advance Centre for Agricultural Research and Education at Yezin and a Rice Bio Park is also being established in Myanmar through grant assistance by India,” said Shri Sharma.

Speaking during the session, Shri Sharma also highlighted the importance of developing high-quality infrastructure. Putting stress on the fact that sound infrastructure will help in the creation of a robust economic linkage between India, Myanmar and beyond, Shri Sharma said that “India is developing Kaladan Multimodal Transit-Transport Project which will connect Mizoram to Sittwe port in Myanmar.”



334. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry on the meeting between Commerce Minister Anand Sharma and Aung San Suu Kyi.

Nay Pyi Taw, June 6, 2013.

The Union Minister of Commerce, Industry & Textiles Shri Anand Sharma today met Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the National League for Democracy (NLD), Myanmar at Nay Pyi Taw. Shri Sharma conveyed to Ms. Suu Kyi that India stands ready to extend all necessary assistance to the people of Myanmar in their developmental efforts. "Myanmar is a vitally important neighbour for us. The relations between our two countries have broadened and deepened in the past two years," said Shri Sharma to Ms. Suu Kyi. Both the leaders exchanged views on the issues of mutual interests. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi expressed keen interest in building linkages with the textiles sector of India. Stressing the preference of the people of Myanmar for natural fiber, Ms. Suu Kyi said that the handloom sector of India has immense potential for Myanmar. Pointing to the conducive ecology, Ms. Suu Kyi sought India's help in developing a full value chain for silk production in Myanmar. Shri Sharma conveyed the greetings from Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and UPA Chairperson Ms. Sonia Gandhi to the Myanmarese leader.

Later in the day, Shri Sharma met Mr. U Than Htay, Minister of Energy, Myanmar. In his meeting with the Myanmarese Minister, Shri Sharma conveyed the interest of Indian banks in setting up their branches in Myanmar. "India will also be happy to assist in strengthening the banking system in Myanmar as we inherit common banking laws," said Shri Sharma. The two Ministers set a bilateral trade target of USD 3 billion by 2015.

Shri Sharma also conveyed India's interest in deepening cooperation in procuring energy, oil and natural gas from Myanmar. "Our companies are interested in securing more exploratory oil and gas blocks both onshore and offshore," said Shri Sharma to Mr. Htay. The issue of the revival of the discussions on the gas pipeline connection between India and Myanmar through Bangladesh was also discussed. Shri Sharma said that India stands ready to continue to assist Myanmar in the development of its infrastructural projects. "We are encouraged by the

progress that has been made on implementation of several of the decisions taken during the State visit of President of Myanmar in October 2011 and that of our Prime Minister in May 2012,” said Shri Sharma. He also expressed happiness over the progress made in the Inland Waterway component of the Kaladan project.

The need to improve air, road and water connectivity between India and Myanmar also came up for discussion between the two Ministers. “A Joint Working Groups (JWG) to determine the technical and commercial feasibility of cross-border rail links and the commercial feasibility of direct shipping links between the two countries are working with the sole aim to boosting the trade ties between the two countries,” said Shri Sharma. While in 2011, the total trade between the two countries stood at USD 1.708 billion, it was USD 1.872 billion in 2012. India is the fourth largest trading partner of Myanmar after Thailand, Singapore and China.



335. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce on Minister of Commerce ANAND SHARMA’s call on Myanmar President U THEIN SEIN.

New Delhi, June 9, 2013.

India has offered to help in revival of 300 apparel factories in Myanmar. During his meeting with the Myanmar President U Thein Sein on June 7, 2013, in Nay Pye Taw, The Union Minister of Commerce Industry and Textiles, Shri Anand Sharma also offered US\$ 5 million Line of Credit for revival of these factories. The South India Textile Research Association (SITRA) will provide technical assistance in formulation of revival plans for these factories. Private Sector companies will play a big role in revival and building joint ventures with these closed apparel factories. “A delegation comprising the experts, officials and businessmen will visit Myanmar within two weeks”, Shri Sharma informed the media persons after the meeting.

India will also cooperate with Myanmar in formulating a common compliance code for standards and also the best practices in the

factories, said Shri Sharma. The Minister proposed to the Myanmar President a Common Compliance Code - Disha Myanmar with technical assistance from AEPC – to enhance compliance standards in Myanmar for exports to developed countries. Sponsored by Ministry of Textiles, and helmed by AEPC Disha is an initiative to driving industry towards sustainable human capital advancement. Disha attempts to educate apparel exporting members on a code of ethics that covers all critical social and environmental concerns like child labour, health and industrial safety, etc. For capacity building in Myanmar textiles sector, India has offered 2 scholarships for 2 slots under National Institute of Design (NID) and 250 scholarships for textile workers under Integrated Skill Development Scheme. Scholarships have been offered in National Institute of Fashion Technology and Institute of Foreign Trade also.

India will be setting up India-Myanmar Apparel Sector JVs in Thilawa SEZ in collaboration with other international brands, said Shri Anand Sharma . India will also set up a textiles trade show - Textiles Expo in Yangon for traditional textiles with Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) as lead council. Enterprise India Show in Yangon as an annual event: As was agreed during Indian Prime Minister's visit to Myanmar to conduct an annual trade promotion event. Shri Sharma announced that ITPO will undertake this event during November 2013. "We will also facilitate in return an exhibition of Myanmar industry in India organized by ITPO free of cost next year" said Shri Sharma.

Textiles sector appeared prominently during Shri Sharma's three-day visit to Myanmar as NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, during her meeting with Shri Sharma, also expressed keen desire to establish linkages in the sector specially in handloom an silk. "Entire sector as such will be brought in for cooperation including silk", Shri Sharma told media persons.



336. Media report on the Call by the Myanmar Parliamentary Delegation on the President of India.

New Delhi, December 5, 2013.

India stands ready to support Myanmar's efforts in whichever way it can, President Pranab Mukherjee said on December 5 during a meeting with a delegation from Myanmar at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

A 23-member Parliamentary Delegation from Myanmar — led by U. Khin Aung Myint, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) — called on the President.

He said both Parliaments have a big role in steering and supporting cooperation for the mutual benefit of the people.

Commenting on the relations between India and Myanmar, Mr. Mukherjee said ties between the two countries are, "rooted in our history; generations of our people have travelled, lived and worked together".

The President said over the past year there have been a series of high level exchanges with Myanmar and these meetings between the representatives of people help increase understanding and enhance friendship.

The Leader of the Myanmar Parliamentary delegation said, "Myanmar, which is reviving multi-party democracy has much to learn from India. India has shown 'brotherly spirit' by assisting and providing training in Parliamentary matters."

He also pointed out that despite a large land and maritime border between the two countries, there has never been any problem between the two countries any where on these borders and expressed confidence that the visit of this delegation to India will further advance relations between the two countries.



The above report is as appeared in the Hindu daily of December 6, 2013.

NEW ZEALAND

337. **Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Foreign Minister of New Zealand.**

New Delhi, June 4, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here. We will have the press interaction now. As usual we will begin with the opening remarks. I request the External Affairs Minister to make his opening remarks.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen. Good afternoon and welcome to our press interaction.

I am absolutely honoured to have here as our very honoured guest Foreign Minister of great caliber from New Zealand. This is our second meeting. We have had a very good conversation and dialogue on a host of issues of interest to us of bilateral, regional and multilateral nature.

I do believe, as you will get our both statements together, that we have enormous convergence, agreement on issues of great importance, desire that our people-to-people contacts continue to grow, that we establish much more important institutions and arrangements for enhancing our trade relations, looking at much greater interface as far as the field of education is concerned, and to cooperate and collaborate in key areas in multilateral events as indeed in our bilateral relationship.

We share an extremely close partnership and the strong political understanding, shared values, expanding trade and investment ties, education and cultural linkages and in the growing people-to-people interaction and contacts are of extreme importance to all of us.

We have the common linkage of Commonwealth, in itself extremely important, parliamentary democracy, of course the English language, and cricket. Our dynamic partnership and multifaceted relations are characterized by common aspirations, on a host of bilateral issues as I said and our growing convergence on global peace and security matters, North-South cooperation, and combating international terrorism, as indeed ecological preservation. I do believe that our working together will help

us transform our region. Of course the vast region in which our Look East Policy is now playing a very important role.

Our economic relations are strong. We have of course recognized that there is potential for doing a lot more. And I suggested that in the field of agriculture is an area in which we still have some negotiations to complete as we move on the free trade area agreement. But there are areas in which we can work closely together. And I mentioned to His Excellency that India imports a lot of good wool from New Zealand for the carpets that we make in my own State in Bhadoi and of course Kashmir. I hope that we can work more closely together in the matter of wool production.

As I said we are working on the FTA. We have agreed His Excellency is meeting my colleague Mr. Anand Sharma very soon, and I will certainly urge my colleague that we need to push forward the FTA which was targeted for eight to ten months at the time of the last meeting between the Trade Ministers. But it has already been over a year and a quarter and I think it is time that we push forward quickly.

We have a number of Indian companies in New Zealand now in the area of minerals, banking, IT. And of course the potential for us is cooperation in agriculture as I said, high-yielding varieties for instance, but also in food processing, in agro machinery which is of great importance to India in its present state of development. We will continue to work closely on the fight against international terrorism.

I acknowledge once again that on the attack in Mumbai, one of the first few countries that immediately responded, and I think it is important, was New Zealand. Equally we felt the pain of New Zealand when the earthquake hit New Zealand. I have conveyed my sympathy and my support on behalf of the country for the people who suffered. Also looking at the vast devastation that took place we have expressed our hope and support that New Zealand will soon overcome that set back.

We value the cooperation with New Zealand in multilateral fora, in the ASEAN processes, in East Asia Summit, in the Pacific Island Forum where New Zealand, as you know, have a very important role.

We are pleased with New Zealand Government's steps to attract Indian students. Twelve thousand of them are now presently there. It has gone up from four thousand in 2008. So, obviously you can see that that is a

very attractive educational platform, and we hope we can work even further closely together perhaps in third countries in Central Asia region.

New Zealand has also become, as you know, a favourite destination for location shooting for Bollywood film producers and I am sure that this will bring us closer together and I hope that some stories that bring together our two countries as part of the movies itself will soon be written.

Before I conclude may I mention two sporting issues that bind us? I have already mentioned cricket and we look forward to the Cricket World Cup to be jointly hosted by New Zealand and Australia in 2015, and we hope to return with the Trophy, Minister. I know that you have a share of the matches between you and Australia and some of the good matches will be played by India.

We are also, as you all know, currently celebrating the 60th anniversary of the first ascent of the Mt. Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay on 29th May 1953. Many of you have recently highlighted this event in your channels and newspaper stories including interviews of the grandson of Tenzing Norgay.

We look forward to the further strengthening of our multifaceted relations with this wonderful country New Zealand.

Thank you

Foreign Minister of New Zealand (Mr. Murray McCully): Thank you, Minister Khurshid. Can I first of all thank you for the warm hospitality that we have received here in India and say how much we look forward to your paying a return visit to New Zealand at a date that is not too far distant. And we hope that we will see many people from India come to New Zealand for the cricket world cup matches in 2015 which will be an opportunity to focus not just on the sporting relationship between our two countries, but to also see some of the trade and commercial elements of our partnership taken forward at the same time.

We have had warm and constructive talks this morning covering the various aspects of our bilateral relationship. The Minister has referred to agriculture as an area in which we can obviously take forward our cooperation. Education is an area in which we have seen progress but have ambition to do much more.

Of course the Free Trade Agreement which the Minister speaks of is an immediate goal for us because it has been our experience that the other elements of the partnership always succeed in pursuing a Free Trade Agreement and we believe that the potential of the relationship between New Zealand and India will be unlocked through an FTA. So, we have both agreed that we will urge our Trade Minister colleagues to work out to achieve this objective.

Our two countries are very different in terms of size and in terms of geography. But there are so many areas in which we cooperate internationally. We have discussed the areas above the...(Inaudible)... in our multilateral cooperation this morning.

We also have had a chance to explore some of the issues in your own neighbourhood. Your neighbourhood is a bit more interesting than ours in that respect. India is a big and significant player in this region. It has been valuable for us to sit down and hear the inside understanding of some of the challenges in the wider region, and to be able to commit to working constructively with your government to ensure that we all make progress.

We are at this stage looking forward to an opportunity through the Free Trade Agreement, through sport, through education and tourism, to bring the ties between our two countries even closer together. That says you have seen, Minister, an important view in the relationship. We have a long history but we also believe we have a very bright future.

Thank you

Official Spokesperson: The Ministers have agreed to respond to a couple of questions.

Q: The question is for both the Ministers. You have stressed on the importance of the Free Trade Agreement, but why has there been this delay? Also about the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, why is there a delay in that?

External Affairs Minister: Good wine always takes time to mature. Far-reaching impact these agreements have, particularly the Free Trade Agreement has, and the local producers, local constituencies have to be taken onboard. There is no point having an agreement that ...(Inaudible)... all the stakeholders. So, you have to build up consensus

and that is done through extensive consultations with other Ministries and then you move forward.

Of course, there are a lot of agreements now being negotiated across the world and the best negotiators are very limited in number. But, as the Minister said he would be seeing Mr. Anand Sharma now later in the afternoon. We will provide a further impetus. And this is why sometimes meetings between Foreign Ministers are very significant because they allow for an opportunity to refocus and reenergise the issues that you need to address.

Foreign Minister of New Zealand: To answer the first of your question, I think that the mutual assistance issue is the one that needs to be picked up. As Minister has indicated, the fact that we have these meetings provides an opportunity to take stock ... (Inaudible) ... there is a need for one of the parties to pick up an issue. This can be done. I think we will proceed to prompt from the discussions this morning that this needs to be attended to on the New Zealand side.

With regard to Free Trade Agreements, we have some significant experience in this regard and all of that experience tells us that if the Free Trade Agreement, free trade architecture is in place, then all of the other elements of the relationship burgeon to support and match the growth in trade in goods and services. And it is our ambition to move forward as quickly as we can because we believe that an FTA would set the scene for a period of much closer contact between our two countries... (Inaudible)....

Q: My question is for both the Ministers. First to the New Zealand Foreign Minister. Sir, I believe you are going to Colombo after Delhi. Was there any discussion with Mr. Khurshid on Sri Lanka hosting CHOGM? What level is New Zealand going to be represented at if New Zealand attends the meeting at all?

And to Mr. Khurshid, Sir, what are your exchanges like on the subject? What level is India likely to be represented at?

Foreign Minister of New Zealand: First I should record the fact that the New Zealand Prime Minister Right Hon. John Key has already indicated publicly that he would attend the CHOGM meeting in Colombo this year, and I also will attend that meeting with him. We made this

decision sometime ago. The discussions that we have had this morning, which I hope we will have the opportunity to continue informally, have really been in the nature of seeking a greater understanding of recent developments in Sri Lanka from a country that is a neighbour and has significantly greater knowledge of recent developments in that country. I have found that exchange extremely valuable.

We have obviously some concerns about developments over recent years in Sri Lanka. I will be visiting there tomorrow. I look forward to the opportunity to have a free and frank exchange with my counterpart on that front, that is to say, on the insights from the Minister and his senior colleagues, senior officials, very helpful indeed.

External Affairs Minister: I think we have had a very useful conversation on this. It is important, we are very close in physical terms to Sri Lanka and New Zealand is able to see more objectively from somewhat of a distance. And I think if we compare the two perspectives and it gives you a much better idea of how we should proceed. I think that we have convergence on this which is helpful to both of us. We will of course continue to remain in touch on many issues including this as well.

I am not at present in the know of any decision about the actual CHOGM meeting as and when it takes place. For the present we are really looking at those issues that we have flagged as issues of importance on which there has been a formal agreement of points of view between Sri Lanka and ourselves. We would be pleased to see movement forward as we now know that the elections have been announced. And I hope that all parties will collaborate, participate and contribute to moving forward to a peaceful, permanent settlement to all the issues that have caused agony and hurt to people of parts of Sri Lanka. It is a matter on which I think we should think positively and move forward positively giving our friends such assistance as they need, require or ask for.

Q: Sir, for Nawaz Sharif's inauguration, is anybody going from India?

External Affairs Minister: I think, as I understand, it is a local event. The Missions will all be represented. I am not sure that there are any invites to anybody to be coming, certainly not to our knowledge. Therefore, there was not any need to take a decision on this. There would probably not be enough time between the formal election in the

National Assembly and the actual swearing in which will be tomorrow. Our High Commission was here. We have talked to him this morning. He is going back to attend the swearing in as the other Heads of Mission would.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event



PHILIPPINES

338. Joint Statement on 2nd India-Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation.

Manila, October 21, 2013.

1. The 2nd Meeting of the Philippines-India Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation was held on 21 October 2013, in Manila. The meeting was co-chaired by the Honorable Albert F. Del Rosario, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines and His Excellency Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India.
2. Secretary Del Rosario and Minister Khurshid held comprehensive discussions on political, defense, security, economic and cultural cooperation, and reviewed the progress of the Joint Working Groups on Trade and Investment, Tourism, Agriculture, Health and Medicine, Joint Committee on Renewable Energy and of the Joint Defense Cooperation Committee. They emphasized that the opportunity to meet regularly at high level is important, to reflect their growing and dynamic bilateral partnership.
3. Secretary Del Rosario reiterated the invitation of President Benigno S. Aquino to H.E. President Pranab Mukherjee and H.E. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to visit the Philippines. Minister Khurshid welcomed the invitations and conveyed that the President of India looked forward to his visit to the Philippines in 2014.

4. The Ministers agreed that the next meetings of the Policy Consultations and Strategic Dialogue will be held in Manila, in 2014.
5. Secretary Del Rosario briefed Minister Khurshid on the GPH-MILF Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro and its Annexes. Minister Khurshid expressed India's support to the Philippine government's pursuit of a just and lasting peace in Mindanao
6. Secretary Del Rosario also briefed Minister Khurshid on the developments in the West Philippine Sea. Minister Khurshid expressed support for a peaceful resolution of the West Philippine Sea/South China Sea dispute consistent with freedom of navigation and the rule of law.
7. The Ministers affirmed their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated their commitment to expand and deepen cooperation in counter terrorism. In this regard, they agreed to convene the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism, in New Delhi, in 2014 to discuss all issues related to terrorism and other transnational crimes.
8. Aware that the rise of transnational crime necessitates increased international judicial cooperation, they agreed to commence negotiations on Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters (MLAT) in December 2013 and consider a Transfer of Sentenced Persons Agreement (TSP). Secretary Del Rosario also committed to push for the immediate ratification of the PH-India Extradition Treaty.
9. On defense cooperation, the Ministers welcomed the convening of the 2nd Meeting of the PH-India Joint Defense Cooperation Committee (JDCC) in November 2013, in New Delhi. They also committed to increase exchanges in military training and education. Secretary Del Rosario thanked Minister Khurshid for the naval ship visits which strengthened relations between Philippine and Indian navy and coast guard forces. Minister Khurshid thanked the Philippines side for assistance to the sailing ship INS Sudarshini, on its voyage to mark the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in December 2012.

10. The Ministers agreed to step up cooperation in combating non-traditional threats through exchange of experiences and capacity building in the areas of disaster management, food security and pandemics. The Philippines side welcomed the cash support of US\$100,000 provided by the Indian side for disaster relief following the recent devastating earthquake in the Philippines.
11. The Ministers committed to increase bilateral trade and investments between their countries and to fully maximize the potential of the Joint Working Group on Trade and Investment to bring their bilateral trade to an even higher level. Minister Khurshid welcomed the encouragement provided by Secretary Del Rosario to facilitate the expansion of Indian investments in the Philippines to the sectors of textiles and garments, pharmaceuticals, agribusiness, tourism, renewable energy and automotive parts.
12. They welcomed the results of the 2nd Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Tourism and agreed to review the 1949 Bilateral Air Services Agreement.
13. The Ministers agreed to convene the 2nd Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Agriculture and the 2nd Meeting of the Joint Working Group in Health and Medicine at an early date.
14. They welcomed the convening of the first meeting of the Joint Committee on New and Renewable Energy in July this year, and called for the adoption of its Action Plan.
15. Noting the phenomenal growth and symbiotic relationship of Philippine and Indian Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) companies, the Ministers committed to conclude at the earliest the proposed Memorandum of Understanding in Information and Communications Technology. They also agreed that the 1987 Agreement for Cooperation in Science and Technology must be tapped and implemented through a Program of Cooperation (PoC).
16. They also agreed to discuss a new Executive Program on Cultural Exchange, for the years 2014 to 2016.

17. The Ministers exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest, including the forthcoming 11th Asia-Europe Foreign Ministers' Meeting to be held in New Delhi, and the India-ASEAN Summit and East Asia Summit (EAS) in Brunei.
18. The Ministers agreed that the 3rd Meeting of the Joint Commission will be held in 2015, in New Delhi.
19. Minister Khurshid thanked Secretary Del Rosario for the excellent hosting and the hospitality extended to him and his delegation during his visit.



339. Message of Prime Minister to the Philippine's President Benigno Aquino conveying condolences and offering help in relief and rehabilitation efforts.

New Delhi, November 12, 2013.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has conveyed his condolences to President Benigno Aquino over the loss of life and destruction caused by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. In his message Dr. Manmohan Singh said that India is ready to provide all help in the relief and rehabilitation efforts.

Excerpts of the Prime Minister's message:

"I write to convey to you the deepest condolences of the people of India on the catastrophe caused by Typhoon Haiyan. The scale and severity of the death and destruction caused by the typhoon has saddened and shocked us. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and the people of the Philippines in this extraordinary moment of grief.

While any nation would take time to come to terms with a tragedy of this magnitude, I have full faith in the resilience and resolve of the people of Philippines to quickly rebound from their losses and in the capacity of your government to provide immediate relief to the affected communities and rebuild their lives.

We stand ready to provide all help to support the relief and rehabilitation efforts of your government.

Please accept, the assurances of my highest consideration.”



340. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence on the assistance to Philippines in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan.

New Delhi, November 19, 2013.

In a display of solidarity with the citizens of Hurricane ravaged Philippines, Government of India mounted a speedy Joint Services response coordinated by HQ Integrated Defence Staff to provide help to the beleaguered nation. The relief package comprising of medicines, hygiene chemicals, tentage, blankets, tarpaulins and meals ready to eat were provided ex Armed Forces stock and airlifted by an Indian Air Force C-130 Super Hercules aircraft. The aircraft reached Tacloban, the epicentre of the devastating natural calamity where more than 10,000 people are feared dead, on Saturday and delivered the much needed relief supplies that are expected to help meet the urgent need for life saving medical care, food supplies and construction of temporary shelters in the face of a serious humanitarian crisis. Similar aid was provided to Philippines by India in 2006 as well.

Plans are now underway to further supplement the effort and provide additional relief material, a second consignment on-board an Indian Naval Ship that is expected to be despatched shortly from Vizag. Additional relief material consignment on board will be of much larger quantity to include temporary shelters, prefabricated huts, life saving medical care and earth moving plants. The water purification capacity of the ship shall also be utilized to provide clean drinking water to the affected people. Necessary coordination for sending the ship and its arrival formalities at Philippines are being carried out with the Embassy of Philippines.



SINGAPORE**341. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence extending India-Singapore Five-Year Agreement for the use of Army Training and Exercise facilities in India.****New Delhi, June 4, 2013.**

India and Singapore last night signed a fresh agreement to extend the use of training and exercise facilities in India by the Singapore Army for a further period of five years from August this year. The agreement was signed by the Indian Defence Secretary Mr Radha Krishna Mathur and the Singaporean Permanent Secretary of Defence Mr Chiang Chie Foo in the presence of the Defence Ministers of the two countries, Mr AK Antony and Dr Ng Eng Hen.

It may be recalled that a bilateral agreement for utilization of facilities in India by the Singapore Air Force and Army was signed in October 2007 and August 2008 respectively. The agreement for training and exercises of Singapore Air Force in India was extended up to October 2017 during the visit of Singapore's Permanent Secretary of Defence to India in July last year. Singapore is the only country to which India is offering such facilities.

Mr Antony, who is now on a three- nation visit, arrived in Singapore last evening.

The two sides held wide ranging talks on defence cooperation. They also exchanged views on global and regional security issues including Asia-Pacific Security.



* Defence Secretary, Radha Krishna Mathur and Singapore Permanent Secretary of Defence, Chiang Chie Foo exchange their documents after sign an agreement between India and Singapore on training and exercise facilities in India, in Singapore on Monday. Defence Minister, AK Antony and his Singaporean counterpart Ng Eng Hen are also seen.

342. External Affairs Minister's address at Singapore India Chambers of Commerce & Industry (SICCI).

Singapore, July 4, 2013.

Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani,
SICCI Chairman Mr. Narayanamohan,
High Commissioner Ms. Vijay Thakur Singh,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for your very warm welcome. I am delighted to be with all of you today.

Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani - you have been a student of philosophy and history, served your country with distinction as an astute Diplomat, you have also won widespread acclaim as a thinker and as an intellectual who has written extensively, your academic credentials are indisputable. Moreover, like Singapore itself, you have been a long- standing friend of India - I am happy that you are here with me today at this event.

I am in Singapore on my first visit in my capacity as the External Affairs Minister of India. Each time you visit Singapore, you are struck by the manner in which this amazing city-state keeps reinventing itself to promise a better life for its people. The country's economic success is an example of how people of different backgrounds can come together and create a viable nation. Singapore's strength lies in its multiculturalism, secularism and social harmony- these are attributes which are our two countries share and value.

I wish to utilize the platform of Singapore Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (SICCI) today to share with you my perspectives on the relationship between India and Singapore.

Our two countries have ties which are old and strong- we have a shared sense of history, many culture commonalties, bonds of trade and commerce go way back to historical times when the early Indian traders sailed the waters carrying goods and merchandise. The economic and social connects have grown stronger and more robust as we go forth.

The ties through all these years have been boosted in recent decades particularly by India's Look East policy. In 1991, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao decided that it was in India's best interests to make a strategic shift towards Asia. The opening of our relations with Singapore began the process of our economic partnership.

PM Manmohan Singh at the time of his bilateral visit to Singapore in November 2011 had emphasised that we place the highest priority on our relations with Singapore. As nations, we have convergent perspectives on many regional and international developments. We also work closely together in a number of regional mechanisms, such as the East Asia Summit, ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN+ 5 and ADMM Plus. We share similar views on building an open and inclusive architecture of regional cooperation in Asia, which enhances trust and confidence.

Yet another defining point in the India- Singapore relationship in the present times was when we signed the bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA). After India and Singapore entered into the CECA, in 2005, bilateral trade has grown from a level of US \$ 8.7 billion (2005 - 2006), to US \$ 21.3 billion in 2012-13. Singapore has emerged as the second largest foreign investor in India. Even India's investment in Singapore has gone up eight-fold as a result the Indian business community has emerged as the largest foreign business community in Singapore.

The stock figure for total investment by Singapore in India stood at USD 19.1 billion as in February 2013. The figure for Indian investments in Singapore stood at USD 25.7 billion as in March 2013. Clearly, the mechanism for Bilateral Investment protection and the Double Tax Avoidance Agreement have both contributed wonderfully to building confidence in investors both ways.

Indian companies located in Singapore are numerous, and many from the sub-continent as well as around the world, now live and work in Singapore. In fact, there are large numbers of IIT and IIM alumni in Singapore, perhaps one of the densest concentrations in the world. Many Indian companies have their global headquarters in Singapore which administer their businesses around the world including that in India- TCS

International is in Singapore, is one example. HCL Technologies service their global enterprise clients from Singapore.

Beyond economics, we are also working on the security architecture. Singapore and India have crucial stakes in shielding their common sea-lanes of communication, combating piracy and narcotics trade, curbing gunrunning, and preventing maritime terrorism.

Recently, when our Prime Ministers met they decided to step up bilateral cooperation and exchanges in the fields of defence and security. To that end, they signed a Memorandum of Understanding to renew the bilateral arrangement between our Air Forces on joint training and exercises. The renewal of the bilateral arrangement for continuing joint army training and exercises was done at the time of Defence Minister Shri AK Antony's visit to Singapore in June this year. Notably, Singapore is the only country that India has offered its facilities to for training and its land for exercises.

Bilateral Cooperation in areas of human development so essential for any country's growth like education and skills development has also grown. Singapore has excellent institutions in the area of skills education. At the time of Prime Minister's last bilateral visit to India in May 2011, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Vocational Education and Skills Development. Another MOU which was signed was to establish a world class post-secondary Technical Education Institute in New Delhi- this was to be realised through a joint-collaboration by Singapore's Institute of Technical Education and the Delhi State government's Department of Training and Technical Education. The World Class Training Centre is expected to train up to 15,000 students in different vocational disciplines making them not only more skilled but more employable as well by industry.

In the field of science and technology too, our cooperation has been growing- on 20 April 2011, Singapore's first locally built satellite- micro-satellite, X-SAT- was launched by in space by an Indian PSLV from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota in India.

The institutional connectivity between India and Singapore is also growing - in May 2012, the Singapore Management University (SMU) and Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) entered into a Memorandum

of Understanding (MoU) in management research and education. Raffles Education Corporation Limited headquartered in Singapore has presence in 7 Indian Cities. CECA itself provides the institutional mechanism for both countries to facilitate collaborations in the field of education- as an example, between the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), and the universities in Singapore. Collaborations between IIT Mumbai and the National University of Singapore, and IIT Chennai and the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore, offer post-graduate research and education, with industrial linkages to, multi-national and local companies based in India and Singapore.

In 2009, India and Singapore signed a Joint Action Plan on tourism cooperation. In July, 2012 the Singapore Exchange (SGX) announced a product partnership with National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) to offer SGX S&P CNX Nifty options aimed at further enhancing offshore investors' access to the Indian economy.

Like the growing institutional connectivity, people to people linkages are also growing. Changi Airport is now the most connected point to India from Southeast Asia. There are 422 flights per week to 12 Indian Cities (Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi, Calcutta, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Cochin, Coimbatore, Trivandrum, Vishakhapatnam and Tiruchirapalli). The number of passenger movements between India and Singapore stood at 3.06 million at the end of April 2013.

This year in April when the Minister for Civil Aviation Shri Ajit Singh visited Singapore, the two countries signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral air services arrangement which enhances, by 10%, the capacity entitlement considering the increased economic activity between India and Singapore which requires better air connectivity. This revised capacity is in addition to unlimited seating capacity to 18 cities in India which is available for all the ASEAN countries, including Singapore. There is great potential in flights to the North East.

Singapore sits astride major sea lines of communication & commerce. It is a key member of ASEAN and of the newly emerging regional economic arrangements like the Trans- Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). I look upon Singapore

as an enabler, a global platform that creates a kind of bridging connection between the nations located on the India Ocean with the nations on the Pacific Ocean.

Going forward, from where I stand, I can see the bonds of friendship and areas of cooperation growing stronger between India and Singapore and Singapore. The levels of engagement and connectivity are growing deeper with each passing day with ASEAN and with Singapore. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has already indicated India's strong support to the objectives of creating an ASEAN Community by 2015, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration and the ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity through his remarks at the 10th India- ASEAN meet.

India- ASEAN connectivity will facilitate competitive growth- it will smoothen the progress of the economics of agglomeration and integrated production networks and to enhance trade and exchanges further. Technology and better physical connectivity will allow areas of lesser industrial development to also grow rapidly in shorter periods of time as production shifts to such areas on account established agglomerations having become more and more expensive- this will allow disaggregation and spread of both urbanisation and of incomes.

In India too, we have our own DMIC and the NMIZs - as the new focus areas of growth and urbanisation- the Delhi Mumbai Infrastructure Corridor- one of the largest projects of its kind aiming to develop 7 new urban nodes in phase 1. I am sure many of you here would have looked at these projects with interest and as excellent opportunities to make profitable investments. Singapore companies are present in the DMIC, there is Jurong Consultants which has completed a feasibility study on the Manesar-Bawal investment region which is in Haryana; Hyflux which is a water treatment company is co-developing a seawater desalination plant in Gujarat, in the Dahej special economic zone. Ascendas has evinced interests in developing integrated townships, airports, seaports and utilities.

I have been informed that in Singapore since the beginning of this year, there has been three significant interactions with the businesses and the investing community in Singapore and each of these events had a Ministerial level presence from India. The first was on the occasion of

the visit of the Finance Minister, Shri Chidambaram and drew participation from a large number of institutional and corporate investors based in Singapore; the second was addressed by Minister for Commerce & Industry, Shri Anand Sharma and was marked by an equally impressive turnout from businesses based in Singapore; the third was stewarded by the Singapore Exchange (SGX) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and was attended by Shri Kamal Nath and by Minister Lim Hng Kiang last month- this itself shows the commitment in our intent to continue our engagement with the international investor community and with Singapore in particular.

In order to make it easier for Singaporean companies to do business in India we have, through the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, been actively discussing and attempting to ease the common challenges which are faced by Singapore companies in India. On a broader scale, we have decided to pursue reforms with energy and expedite clearances through the newly constituted Cabinet Committee on Investment- the Cabinet Committee focuses on removing bottlenecks for projects both in public and private sectors, having investment of Rs 1000 Crore.

The Singapore Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry is itself an embodiment of the deep bond between the two countries- each one you represents the bridge that both India and Singapore have. I have been informed that Singapore Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry would shortly be completing 90 years of its coming into being- let me take this opportunity to congratulate you and to wish you every success in the future.

I would also like thank you for the wonderful opportunity that you have afforded to me to speak with you- Thank you once again, for your patience.



343. Prime Minister's Statement on his departure for Japan and Thailand, May 27-31, 2013.

New Delhi, May 27, 2013.

Please see Document No 308



THAILAND

344. Media Statement by Prime Minister during his visit to Thailand.

Bangkok, May 30, 2013.

Your Excellency Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the media.

I am delighted to be in Bangkok on my first bilateral visit to Thailand. I want to thank Madam Prime Minister for her invitation and for her gracious hospitality. I also want to thank her for the momentum that she has imparted to our relationship, especially since her visit to India in January 2012 as our honoured Chief Guest for the Republic Day. We have just completed a very meaningful, productive and satisfying discussion on bilateral, regional and global issues of common interest. We have agreed to maintain the momentum of regular high level dialogue. In the coming months, India's Defence Minister, Commerce and Industry Minister and External Affairs Minister will be travelling to Bangkok.

India attaches high importance to its relationship with Thailand. We are neighbours, linked by millennia old ties of culture and civilization. Our cooperation is growing in multiple dimensions – in defence and security, trade and investment, science and technology, education, culture and tourism – and each area holds enormous potential.

Thailand was also the springboard for India's engagement with Southeast and East Asia and remains the vital link in our Look East Policy and our strategic partnership with ASEAN. We see Thailand as an important

partner in promoting maritime security, regional economic integration and the evolution of an open, balanced and inclusive regional architecture, anchored in ASEAN centrality.

Though our two countries have strong economic synergies, our trade and investment levels are yet to reach their full potential. We have directed our Ministers to quickly resolve the few outstanding issues to achieve a comprehensive and balanced India-Thailand Free Trade Agreement at the earliest.

We would like to see enhanced presence of Indian and Thai companies in each other's markets, especially as both countries are planning massive investments in infrastructure over the next five years.

Our connectivity projects by sea and land will further deepen linkages and cooperation between India and Southeast Asia. They will support economic development and reinvigorate historic cultural and spiritual links in the region, especially in northeastern India. We will work together with Myanmar to ensure completion of the trilateral highway project by 2016 and pursue development of other corridors.

Our growing security cooperation received a major boost today. The Extradition Treaty, concluded after two decades of negotiations, and a memorandum on cooperation in anti-money laundering send a major signal of our shared commitment to combating terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and counterfeiting.

We also agreed to continue strengthening defence relations, including through exchanges, exercises and joint patrolling.

As you have seen from the agreements signed today, we place strong emphasis on improving collaboration in areas like science and technology, space science, education, culture and people-to-people exchanges. These will benefit our two countries and bring our people together in a variety of ways. We are also going to mount a major exhibition on Buddhist Art in Bangkok soon.

We agreed to strengthen consultations and cooperation in the ASEAN Regional Forum and other ASEAN-related forums, East Asia Summit, BIMSTEC and the Mekong Ganga Cooperation initiative. I appreciate Prime Minister's Shinawatra's unstinting support to India's strategic

partnership and enhanced engagement with ASEAN. Let me reiterate India's commitment to making India-ASEAN partnership a force for peace and shared prosperity in our region.

The sapling from the sacred Bodhi Tree, which the people of India are deeply honoured to present as a special gift to His Majesty the King on the occasion of this visit reminds us of our historic links. It also represents the blossoming of our relationship. I am confident that our discussions today will add new meaning and content to the promising relations between India and Thailand.

I thank you



345. Prime Minister's speech at the banquet hosted by H. E. Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand.

Bangkok, May 30, 2013.

Your Excellency Madame Prime Minister,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to thank the Prime Minister for her warm welcome and the gracious hospitality extended to me and my delegation in the Land of Smiles.

Excellency, we admire the way you have steered the industrious people of Thailand through the calamity of nature in 2011 and the turmoil of the global economic downturn. Thailand, by making giant strides towards development, has once again lived up to its ancient reputation as the Suvarnabhumi in our part of the world.

We also appreciate your deep personal commitment to the relations between our two countries and the momentum you have imparted to them with your characteristic drive and resolve. Your milestone State Visit to India as the Chief Guest for our Republic Day celebrations last year took our bilateral relations to a new level. It has been a privilege to work with you in the cause of our relationship and our region.

Madame Prime Minister, no visitor to this bustling city would miss the indelible imprint of our ancient links of civilization, culture and commerce. The timeless message of Lord Buddha and the shared lore of the Ramayana make us kindred in spirit. The sapling from the sacred Bodhi Tree, which was presented as a special gift from the people of India to His Majesty the King on the occasion of my visit, also represents an idea germinated in India but nurtured on this land. It shows the way ahead in our relations.

Madame Prime Minister:

Today, we are two modern nations in transition seeking to transform the lives of our people. I am confident that our shared heritage, shared values and shared aspirations will lead us to seek an even stronger partnership of shared endeavours.

We are part of an Asia experiencing unprecedented change, confident about its future, but also concerned about the uncertainties and challenges that change inevitably brings. Asia has an ancient wisdom drawn from a civilizational heritage of peace, pluralism and co-existence. Asia also has the energy and excitement of youth to shape a future defined by cooperation, integration and shared prosperity. Speaking at the Dusit Palace in Bangkok in 1927, India's Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore said that Asia was regaining its self-consciousness for the realization of its own self. It is a task that India and Thailand must rededicate themselves to in their own interest and for the good of our region.

I am pleased that today we have taken one more giant step in pursuit of closer cooperation, stronger connectivity and greater commerce. We have resolved to strengthen our bilateral engagement and advance maritime security in our region. We will harness the benefits of science and technology and we will nurture our relations through education, culture and tourism. Together, we will work to promote regional economic integration and connectivity, and the evolution of an open, balanced and rule-based regional architecture, anchored in ASEAN centrality. We will also strengthen the India-ASEAN partnership, BIMSTEC and Mekong-Ganga Cooperation.

Madam Prime Minister,

In pursuing this relationship of extraordinary depth and richness, which serves our people and our region well, we are living the oft quoted message of Lord Buddha that noble friends and companions are the whole of the holy life.

So, in this historic Santi Maitri building, which celebrates peace and friendship, it gives me great pleasure to invite you to join me in raising a toast:

- to the good health and well-being of Their Majesties the King and the Queen
- to the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Thailand, and
- to the eternal bonds of friendship between India and Thailand.



346. Joint Statement on Prime Minister's visit to Thailand.

Bangkok, May 30, 2013.

1. At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, H.E. Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra, the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh, paid an Official Visit to Thailand from 30-31 May 2013. He was accompanied by the Minister of External Affairs, a high level official and media delegation.
2. The Prime Minister of India presented a sapling of the sacred Bodhi Tree in Bodh Gaya as a special gift to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej as a symbol of the shared cultural heritage between India and Thailand.
3. The official talks between Thailand and India were held on 30 May 2013 in a warm, cordial and friendly atmosphere, reflecting

the excellent bilateral relations and friendship that exist between the two countries. Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra hosted an official banquet in honour of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the Indian delegation.

4. The two Prime Ministers held wide-ranging discussions on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. They reviewed the progress made in recent years on building a stronger, broader and deeper relationship across the range of Thailand-India interests, based on shared historical, religious and cultural ties. They also noted with satisfaction that Thailand and India have developed a strong and mutually beneficial cooperation at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels and have played a significant role in fostering cooperation, contributing to socio-economic development, peace and stability in the region.
5. They agreed that, while substantial progress has been made, there was considerable potential for expanding the relationship further. Thailand's 'Look West' and India's 'Look East' policies will be pivotal for the development of the Thailand-India relationship towards a strategic partnership. Both sides also agreed that the visit has imparted greater momentum to the ongoing bilateral ties.

Economic, Trade and Investment Cooperation

6. The two Prime Ministers took note with satisfaction that the bilateral trade between Thailand and India has grown significantly in recent years. Over the past five years, trade between Thailand and India increased at over 15% per annum. Last year, bilateral trade crossed USD 8.6 billion. Both sides hoped that bilateral trade would continue to further expand for the mutual benefit and sustainable economic growth of both countries.
7. The two Prime Ministers appreciated the growth in investment between Thailand and India in recent years, which has contributed to economic growth and job creation in both countries. Last year, Thailand's Board of Investment approved 25 Indian projects which

were worth over USD 200 Million. Meanwhile, investment in India by the Thai private sector is growing steadily. FDI inflows from Thailand to India were over USD 12 million last year. They welcomed the new initiatives taken to facilitate and increase the flow of investments between the two countries.

8. India invited participation of the Thai private sector in India's plans to modernize and upgrade manufacturing and infrastructure sectors, especially in Delhi-Mumbai and Chennai-Bangalore Industrial Corridors, the Buddhist circuit and the North-East States of India. India also welcomed Thai investment particularly in sectors such as ports and highways, electronics, automobile components, food processing and power generation, as well as tourism and hospitality facilities. India expressed its interest in participating in mega transport and infrastructure development projects in Thailand.
9. The two Prime Ministers welcomed establishment of Thailand-India Business Forum with the involvement of the private sector to stimulate expansion of bilateral trade and investments, and facilitate business partnerships. They expressed the hope that the Thailand-India Business Forum will expand the existing ties between private sectors in the two countries.
10. In order to further create a supportive atmosphere for trade and investment promotion as well as to facilitate travel of business persons of both countries, the two sides agreed to provide fast track business visa service to the qualified entrepreneurs of each other's countries.
11. The two Prime Ministers underscored the need to have an institutional arrangement on the social security benefits of the workers in each other's countries, which will facilitate labour mobility and investments between the two countries. Both sides noted with satisfaction the positive discussions on Social Security Agreement between the two countries that would facilitate and streamline the movement of professionals and workers and expressed the hope that this agreement would be finalized at an early date. In this connection, they agreed to discuss a proposal

for the establishment of a framework to enable regulated deployment of labour from India into the required sectors in Thailand.

12. The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their strong commitment to achieve a comprehensive and balanced outcome of the Thailand-India FTA negotiations. Both sides appreciated the progress made in the negotiations since the last round held in New Delhi in November 2012. Given the emerging convergence on most issues, both sides expressed hope that the negotiations be concluded soon after the next round of negotiations in June-July 2013 in Bangkok. The Prime Ministers advised their respective negotiators to show the required flexibility in concluding the long pending negotiations to give a further fillip to the bilateral trade which has shown healthy growth even during the current economic slowdown.
13. They welcomed the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the ASEAN-India Agreement on Trade in Services and the Agreement on Investment under the broader framework of Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and the ASEAN.
14. They also agreed that the BIMSTEC FTA will be beneficial to the region and encouraged the BIMSTEC members to accelerate the negotiations with an aim to concluding the negotiations at the earliest opportunity.

Connectivity

15. The two Prime Ministers emphasized the importance of enhancing connectivity between the two countries through regional cooperation and the development of road and shipping infrastructure linking Thailand and India. They welcomed the setting up of the Thailand-India Joint Working Group on Connectivity and Infrastructure to help expedite cooperation on connectivity initiatives in both countries as well as in third countries. They took note of the fruitful outcomes of the first meeting held in New Delhi in September 2012, including the

possibilities for cooperation on the Dawei Deep Sea Port and Special Economic Zone projects.

16. Both leaders reaffirmed the importance of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Project, as it would greatly enhance the connectivity between the Mekong sub-region and India. They also noted that the Joint Task Force Meeting on the Trilateral Highway, held in New Delhi in September 2012 agreed to make all efforts to complete the trilateral road connectivity by 2016. The meeting also emphasized the necessity to develop the infrastructure to ensure fast and seamless transit along the Trilateral Highway as well as an increase in trade, investment, services and tourism activities.
17. In this connection, the Indian side welcomed Thailand's proposal to host the next India-Myanmar-Thailand Joint Task Force Meeting on the Trilateral Highway Project, as well as the second Meeting of the Thailand-India Joint Working Group on Connectivity and Infrastructure in June-July 2013.
18. The Thai side proposed to host the Third India-Myanmar-Thailand Ministerial Meeting on Transport Linkages to address the issues of infrastructure and facilitation. This is aimed at maximizing the utilization of the Trilateral Highway as a means of strengthening regional economic growth and integration. Thailand will liaise with India and Myanmar regarding the appropriate date for the Meeting.
19. The Thai side informed the Indian side of the progress that Thailand and Myanmar have made on the project for the development of the Dawei Special Economic Zone in southern Myanmar, which, once operational, would further enhance regional connectivity including port-to-port linkages with India and open enormous business opportunities for the region. In this regard, the Thai side invited the Indian business sector to invest in the Dawei Special Economic Zone, especially in the areas where Indian companies have expertise, such as steel, manufacturing, power, petrochemicals, services and others. Thailand welcomed India's invitation to organize a road show in India in this respect later this year.

20. Both sides noted with satisfaction that connectivity between India and Thailand through aviation has developed continuously and increased significantly. There are currently around 150 flights between Thailand and India per week. The two Prime Ministers welcomed new air routes by Thai Airways connecting Bangkok with Ahmedabad as well as Phuket - Delhi and Phuket - Mumbai. They also expressed their support for more air connections between both countries.

Security and Defence

21. The two Prime Ministers appreciated the close interactions and regular exchanges between the Armed Forces of Thailand and India including the official visit of the Thai Defence Minister to India in December 2012, the conduct of the Defence Dialogue in February 2013 and the regular Coordinated Patrol (CORPATs) conducted by the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy. The Thai side also welcomed the visit of the Indian Defence Minister to Thailand in June 2013. Both sides agreed to enhance anti-piracy cooperation, promote security of sea lanes and Coast Guard cooperation to contribute to the maintenance of peace in the region and to work towards ensuring safety and security of navigation in the Indian Ocean. Both sides agreed to continue providing scholarships and training programmes for the sharing of expertise.
22. Thailand expressed interest in India's defence industry, which has competitive production and advanced technology. Both countries agreed to pursue defence industry collaboration in areas of mutual interest.
23. They also welcomed the deepening of cooperation through the Joint Working Group on Security Cooperation. The 7th India-Thailand JWG on Security Cooperation, held in Thailand in July 2012, agreed to expedite the implementation of the five-year programme finalized by the Joint Working Group. Progress on the implementation of the Work Programme will be reported at the next JWG meeting, to be hosted by India.

24. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of the bilateral Extradition Treaty which would provide a legal basis for bilateral cooperation in dealing with elements acting against national interests. Both leaders reiterated their resolve to significantly enhance bilateral cooperation in combating terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, counterfeiting and human trafficking. They agreed to strengthen cooperation in the field of counter terrorism and intelligence sharing through expedited follow-up of each other's requests for legal assistance.

Science and Technology

25. The two Prime Ministers acknowledged the significance of cooperation in science and technology. Exchanges of technology, R&D, education and skills are encouraged to broaden ties between the scientific and technological communities of both governments. The leaders noted the importance of continued cooperation and declared their commitment to improve coordination in science and technology.
26. Both leaders acknowledged the progress made under the Programme of Cooperation in the field of science and technology and welcomed the implementation of joint research projects. They agreed that capacity building and joint projects on space application under existing institutional arrangements and agreements such as 'urban mapping', 'agriculture crop mapping' and 'archaeological atlas' would help in the betterment of lives of the people of the two countries.

Culture, Education and People-to-People Exchange

27. Both countries agreed to deepen cultural and historical ties between the two countries by promoting diverse cultural exchanges. Both sides welcomed the setting up of the Thailand-India Exchange Programme which would help accelerate people-to-people contacts in cultural and other fields benefiting both societies. Both sides agreed to further promote exchanges among

parliamentarians, academicians, scientists, artists and intellectuals.

28. Recognizing the significance of educational collaboration, the two Prime Ministers agreed to promote more student exchanges at all levels and expressed interest in further enhancing the mobility and exchange of students between India and Thailand. The Thai side noted with appreciation that India would continue to offer 90 scholarships under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC), 26 scholarships under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and scholarships under AYUSH each year. Both sides noted with satisfaction the contribution of the ICCR Chair for Sanskrit Studies at Silpakorn University and welcomed the decision to establish an ICCR Chair for Hindi at Thammasat University, which has offered a Bachelor of Arts programme in Indian Studies for the first time this year while other universities in Thailand continue to offer Indian Studies courses.
29. The two Prime Ministers noted that institutional links between the two countries are progressing very well. They welcomed the increase in direct university to university collaboration and progress in the realisation of the shared goal of making the modern Nalanda University an international institution of excellence. India appreciated the Government of Thailand's contribution of USD 100,000 to the University's Establishment Fund, as well as contributions totalling more than USD 33,000 by Thailand's private sector, particularly those having investments in India, to the Thailand Fund for Nalanda University. The private contributions will be used to finance students and academicians pursuing Buddhist Studies, Philosophy and Comparative Religion.
30. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to promote Thailand-India cultural exchanges. Thailand welcomed activities by the Indian Cultural Centre in Bangkok, which had been enhancing Thai citizens' understanding of the Indian culture.
31. Both sides discussed the implementation of the bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme for 2012-14, and in this connection welcomed the offer by the Indian Museum in Kolkata to hold a

major exhibition on Buddhist art in Bangkok in collaboration with National Museum of Thailand.

32. People-to-people links are central to the relationship between Thailand and India. The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed that both countries welcomed all legitimate travellers, including tourists, students, workers and monks. In this context, they expressed satisfaction over the progress made in the first two meetings of the ad hoc Thailand-India Joint Working Group on Visa and Consular Matters to facilitate and encourage people-to-people contact between the two countries in addressing issues related to travel, visa facilitation, the safety of tourists and employment with a view to achieve mutually satisfactory solutions.

Regional and Multilateral Cooperation

33. The two sides expressed their desire to further deepen their valued partnership and cooperation in the context of ASEAN-India strategic partnership as well as BIMSTEC. Both sides agreed to foster regional ties, particularly through the enhancement of economic, scientific, educational and technical cooperation.
34. Both leaders reiterated their commitment to development projects and capacity building in the lower Mekong region through the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC). In this context, both leaders supported the setting up of the MGC Asian Traditional Textiles Museum in Siem Reap, Cambodia. They also endorsed the usefulness of the India-CLMV Quick Impact Project Fund to give a fillip to short gestation projects under MGC.
35. The two sides acknowledged that the Leaders-led East Asia Summit can play a significant role as a forum for building an open, inclusive, transparent and participative architecture of regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific to promote peace, stability and prosperity in the region.
36. The two Prime Ministers noted with appreciation the close cooperation between Thailand and India in various international

fora and agreed to further enhance their cooperation in the United Nations and other international fora on matters of mutual interest.

37. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the Doha Gateway outcome of the 18th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and emphasized the need to work closely for a balanced outcome under the Durban Platform in accordance with the principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Equity. They welcomed the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June 2012 which reaffirmed the Rio Principles and made political commitment towards sustainable development and poverty eradication. The two leaders expressed their hope that the post-2015 Development Agenda would focus on development, economic growth and poverty eradication, preserve the national policy space and priorities of developing countries and provide the necessary means of implementation to developing countries.
38. The two leaders reiterated their strong support for the ongoing reform of the United Nations and its principal organs with a view to making the United Nations more democratic, transparent and efficient so that it can deal more effectively with the myriad challenges of the contemporary world. They emphasized the importance of an early reform of the United Nations Security Council so that it reflects the contemporary realities and functions in a more accountable, representative and effective manner. The Thai side acknowledged India's credentials for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. The two leaders commended each other's active role, continued constructive contributions and cooperation in the field of international peace and security.
39. The following agreements were signed during the visit: -
 - o Extradition Treaty.
 - o MoU on the Establishment of the Thailand-India Exchange Programme.

- o MOU between Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency and Survey of India for cooperation in the field of Mapping and Geospatial Technology Applications.
 - o MOU between Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency, Thailand and National Atlas and Thematic Mapping Organization, India for cooperation in the field of Mapping and Geospatial Technology Applications.
 - o MOU between Financial Intelligence Unit, India and Anti Money Laundering Organization, Thailand on Cooperation in the exchange of Financial Intelligence related to Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing.
 - o MOU on Establishment of Hindi Chair at Thammasat University.
 - o Procès-verbal of Exchange of Instrument of Ratification of the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.
40. Both sides agreed to hold the next meeting of the Joint Commission at the level of Foreign Minister later this year in Bangkok to review the sector-wise progress and to identify new areas of cooperation.
41. The Prime Minister of India expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, the Royal Thai Government and the people of Thailand for the warm welcome and cordial hospitality extended to him and to the members of his delegation during his Official Visit.

List of documents signed during Prime Minister's visit to Thailand

Treaty/MOUs signed during the Visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Thailand (30-31 May, 2013)

S. No	Title of Treaty/ MoUs	Signatory from India	Signatory from Thailand	Remarks
1.	Treaty Between The Republic of India and The Kingdom of Thailand On Extradition	Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs	Surapong Tovichakchaikul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs	The Treaty provides the legal framework for seeking extradition of fugitive offenders, including those involved in terrorism, transnational crimes, economic offences etc. Treaty 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.
2.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on the Establishment of the India - Thailand Exchange Programme	Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs	Surapong Tovichakchaikul Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs	India-Thailand Exchange Programme will foster bilateral relations through the enhancement of economic, scientific, educational, technical and cultural cooperation and the promotion of greater understanding between the peoples of the two countries. Cooperative activities in the fields of education and culture through

S. No	Title of Treaty/ MoUs	Signatory from India	Signatory from Thailand	Remarks
				exchange of scholars, academicians, professionals; organizing seminars, workshops; extending financial support to non-governmental organizations; publication of standard works on Thailand-India relations; translations of standard works of Thai Literature into Indian languages, will be promoted.
3.	Procès Verbal on Exchange of Instrument of Ratification of the Treaty on Transfer of Sentenced persons.	Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs	Surapong Tovichakchaikul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs	The bilateral Treaty on Transfer of Sentenced Persons, signed on 25 January 2012, has been ratified by both sides. The Treaty provides the opportunity to foreign nationals, who have been convicted and sentenced on a criminal offence, to serve their sentence in their own country and facilitates their social rehabilitation into their own countries.
4.	MOU between Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency and Survey of India for cooperation in the field of Mapping and Geospatial Technology Applications.	Anil Wadhwa, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Thailand	Anond Snidvongs, Executive Director, Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency	The objective of MoU is to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of Space Technology for the mutual benefit in a project titled "Indo-Thai Geo Spatial Cooperation", in pursuance of the Programme of Cooperation in the field of Science & Technology for 2012-2014. The MoU seeks to share and demonstrate capabilities and

S. No	Title of Treaty/ MoUs	Signatory from India	Signatory from Thailand	Remarks
				expertise gained by the Survey of India in Urban Mapping by undertaking survey of a chosen town of area about 100 sq.km., in Thailand, and for imparting training in surveying and mapping techniques to five officials of GISTDA each year at the Indian Institute of Surveying and Mapping (IISM) at Hyderabad.
5.	MOU between Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency and National Atlas and Thematic Organization for cooperation in the field of Mapping and Geospatial Technology Applications.	Anil Wadhwa Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Thailand	Anond Snidvongs, Executive Director, Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency	The objective of the project is to publish an Archeological Atlas, in book and digital form, jointly by NATMO and GISTDA with thematic plates using high-resolution satellite data and geospatial technologies, to highlight the spread of Buddhism from India to the South-East Asia, on the occasions of Her Royal Highness Princess Mahachakri Sirindhon Birthday Anniversary in 2015 and the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015. The proposed project will include India and participating ASEAN countries.
6.	MoU between Financial Intelligence Unit, India and Anti Money Laundering Organization, Thailand on Cooperation in the exchange of Intelligence related to Money Laundering and Terrorism	Anil Wadhwa, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Thailand	Seehanat Prayoonrat, Secretary General, Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO)	The MoU will facilitate cooperation in the investigation of persons suspected of money laundering and criminal activity related to money laundering and terrorism financing. The MoU seeks to assemble, develop, analyze and exchange

S. No	Title of Treaty/ MoUs	Signatory from India	Signatory from Thailand	Remarks
				Financing information on such issues.
7.	MOU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Thammasat University on the establishment of the ICCR Hindi Chair of Indian Studies (Hindi Language).	Anil Wadhwa, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Thailand	Prof. Dr. Somkit Lertpaithoon, Rector of Thammasat University	The objective of MoU is to establish the ICCR Chair for Hindi Language at the Thammasat University. This Chair will offer a Bachelor of Arts programme in Indian Studies for the first time in Thailand.

Bangkok

30 May, 2013



347. Extracts from Prime Minister's on-board Media Interaction en route to Delhi from Bangkok on May 31, 2013.

May 31, 2013

Prime Minister (Dr. Manmohan Singh): Ladies and gentlemen, I have had two successful visits - first to Japan at the invitation of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and then to Bangkok at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Thailand.

I believe both of the statements that have been issued at the end of these meetings have been made available to you. So, therefore, I will not waste your time in recapitulating what is contained in these two statements. If there are any questions that you have to ask, I will be very happy to answer them.

Q: My question is pertaining to your Japan tour. You just described it successful but specifically in terms of forward movement made on civil nuclear deal, is there any possibility of getting it signed with Japan before 2014 Lok Sabha polls?

Prime Minister: There have been discussions with Japan and this visit marked a formal move in that direction. I am hopeful that before long we will be able to put our signatures to a civil nuclear energy agreement with Japan as well.

Q: How do you describe the progress made so far in respect of the Look East Policy especially in the backdrop of your bi-nation visit? What is the progress made so far and are there any emerging new issues to be focused under the policy?

Prime Minister: The Look East Policy of the Government of India is not a new development. When Mr. Narasimha Rao was our Prime Minister, I was the Finance Minister. We charted out the course of action to get closer to Southeast Asian countries particularly ASEAN. Since then this process has been moving forward. ASEAN countries are our strategic partners and there are enormous opportunities of expanding trade ties, expanding investment relations, expanding maritime cooperation, expanding the scope of trade and investment. And now we have reached a stage where large-scale flow of trade and investment is becoming a reality.

We have, for example, the Dedicated Freight Corridor where Japan is helping us; we have Mumbai-Delhi Industrial Corridor where also the Japanese help will be available; the Mumbai-Bangalore corridor also there is a great interest of East-Asian countries like Japan, Thailand and Malaysia. So I am hopeful that this Look East Policy of India is paying rich dividends and the results are going to improve as we move forward.

Q: There is a new Government, a new dispensation in Pakistan and there has been quite a bit of cordiality from the side of Mr. Sharif as far as you visiting Pakistan. Could you give us any guidance on whether you plan to visit there before the end of this year? Also, what sort of outcomes you are expecting before it can be, as you said in your own words, business-as-usual with Pakistan again?

Prime Minister: I rang up Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the very first day when election results were coming out. I conveyed my congratulations to him and I reciprocated his sentiments that India-Pakistan relations should move forward. I also invited him to visit India, he also invited me to visit Pakistan. There is an invitation from the

Government of Pakistan for me to visit Pakistan. There is no firm decision on either side. No dates have been fixed. But we would certainly like to have good neighbourly relations with Pakistan. It has been consistently our policy that in India-Pakistan relations we should deal with all the outstanding issues. We are committed to resolve them in a peaceful manner. That is also the sentiment which was reciprocated by Shri Nawaz Sharif.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen.



348. Press Release of the Ministry of Defence on cooperation between India and Thailand in Defence production.

New Delhi, June 6, 2013.

The Defence Minister Shri AK Antony offered to discuss with Thailand possible areas of cooperation and collaboration in Defence production. During talks with his Thai counterpart Air Chief Marshal Sukumpol Suwanatat in Bangkok, Shri Antony said India has, over the years, developed a well established defence industry which can meet varying requirements of the Thai Armed Forces. He said India would welcome the visit of Thai teams to various Defence production facilities. Shri Antony said conscious planning, hard work by our scientists and support by the government is resulting in the growth of a strong defence industrial base in the country.

The talks between the two ministers covered a wide range of issues including regional security concerns. Shri Antony said both our countries have large stakes in the maintenance of peace and stability in our immediate neighbourhood and in the wider Asia Pacific region. He said our trade is dependent on the sea lanes. Hence, security of the sea lanes and freedom of navigation is critical to our economic and overall security. India supports the freedom of navigation in accordance with the principles of international law.

Shri Antony said our view is that peace and stability is in the interest of all countries in the region. "We support the resolution of differences and disputes through the process of dialogue and consensus between the parties to such disputes. All countries must exercise restraint and resolve issues diplomatically, according to the principles of international law".

Shri Antony said New Delhi has been of the consistent view that ASEAN is central to any security architecture for the region. "India is committed to efforts of ADMM Plus, ARF and the East Asia Summit for promoting dialogue and consensus building among all countries of the region", he said.

Earlier on his arrival at the Thai Ministry of Defence, Shri Antony was accorded an Inter-Services Guard of Honour. The Thai Defence Minister also hosted a lunch in honour of Shri Antony and his delegation.



349. Statement by Official Spokesman on situation in Thailand.

New Delhi, December 3, 2013.

We are following developments taking place in Thailand and are in constant contact with our Embassy in Bangkok, which is also providing updated information on current situation to Indian travellers and residents, including through its website.

We are supportive of all measures and efforts to address the situation through consultations in order to uphold the rule of law, preserve democracy and restore normalcy.



* The Spokesperson was referring to anti-government protests in the capital Bangkok against Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra calling for fresh elections .Finally in a military takeover, the Prime Minister was put underdetention.

350. Official Spokesperson's response to a question on situation in Thailand.

New Delhi, December 16, 2013.

In response to a question on situation in Thailand, Official Spokesperson said:

“We have taken note of recent developments in Thailand, our close friend, where fresh elections have been announced. We support all measures to uphold the rule of law, resolve political differences peacefully through dialogue and consultations within the constitutional framework and democratic processes of Thailand and to restore normalcy.”



TUVALU

351. Visit of Mr Taukelina Finikaso, Foreign Minister of Tuvalu to India (August 21-25, 2013).

New Delhi, August 23, 2013.

The Foreign Minister of Tuvalu, H.E. Mr Taukelina Finikaso is on an official visit to India from August 21 – 25, 2013. This is the first visit of Mr Finikaso who has recently taken charge as the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade, Tourism, Environment, and Labour, Govt. of Tuvalu.

Foreign Minister Finikaso called on Ms Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs and discussed bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

* Tuvalu, formerly known as the Ellice Islands, is a Polynesian island nation located in the Pacific Ocean, midway between Hawaii and Australia. It comprises three reef islands and six true atolls spread out from 6° to 10° south. Its nearest neighbours are Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa and Fiji. Its population of 11,200 makes it the third-least populous sovereign state in the world, with only Vatican City and Nauru having fewer inhabitants. In terms of physical land size, at just 26 square kilometres (10 sq mi) Tuvalu is the fourth smallest country in the world, larger only than the Vatican City.

Mr Finikaso has inaugurated the newly constituted Honorary Consulate of Tuvalu. The opening of Tuvalu's Hony Consulate provides both countries further opportunity to expand bilateral relations for mutual benefits.

India and Tuvalu enjoy warm and cordial relations. Tuvalu has been supportive of India's candidature in various international fora. India has provided project assistance under its Grant- in Aid Scheme for Pacific Island countries in areas such as health, water management, development projects and training as well as humanitarian assistance in times of need to Tuvalu.



VIETNAM

352. Transcript of the Joint Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister.

New Delhi, January 9, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): I welcome you to this media interaction. As is usual, we will begin with opening statements by the two dignitaries.

I now request the External Affairs Minister of India to make his opening statement to the press.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Your Excellency Mr. Vu Van Ninh, Deputy Premier of Vietnam; friends from the media; ladies and gentlemen:

I am indeed very delighted to welcome His Excellency the Deputy Premier of Vietnam amidst us this morning. The Deputy Premier and I have just concluded a very productive round of discussions on the entire gamut of our bilateral relations and in particular on ways to take forward our strategic partnership.

The visit of the Deputy Premier to India this year is of special significance as he will be participating in the closing ceremony of the India-Vietnam

Friendship Year celebrated in India which commemorates the 40th anniversary of our diplomatic relations and 5th anniversary of our strategic partnership. Correspondingly, we have celebrations taking place in Vietnam, the closing ceremony of which will be presided over by our own Vice-President.

India and Vietnam enjoy very close cooperation, I need hardly tell you this, in various sectors including economic, commercial, scientific and technical, defence, security, cultural and people-to-people.

Today we have discussed ways to promote connectivity and further strengthen economic cooperation. Our corporate sector, we are pleased to note, is already engaged in several areas in investment in Vietnam. We are working together on several other projects. I am confident that once Indian banks are fully operational in Vietnam under the agreement signed between the State Bank of Vietnam and RBI, it will provide further impetus to our economic relations. And that will help us achieve our target of bilateral trade of US\$ 7 billion by 2015.

His Excellency and I agreed that we have to sustain high-level visits to keep our bilateral relationship getting stronger. The State Visit of His Excellency the President Truong Tan Sang to India in October 2011 was significant from that point of view. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has greatly appreciated the visit of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung of Vietnam to India for the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit which was held in December last year. This was yet another occasion for the leaders of the two countries to discuss various issues and deepen what is already an excellent relationship.

We consider Vietnam as a major pillar of our Look East Policy. I reiterated to His Excellency that India accords the highest priority to further strengthening of our ties with Vietnam, and will continue to work closely with it within the framework of multilateral fora such as ASEAN, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, United Nations, and others as well.

In the Friendship Year of 2012, we have intensified exchanges in many sectors including cultural, academic and economic field. The international conferences on Buddhism, on Tagore, and Cham civilisational linkages in Vietnam held during the year have greatly enriched our understanding with each other and our interaction since times immemorial. We were

privileged to receive several Vietnamese troupes in India including one that is performing this evening. The opening of an Indian Cultural Centre in Vietnam we hope will enhance this important cultural dimension of our relationship.

We thank His Excellency for his visit and look forward to working together to further strengthen our strategic partnership. Thank you very much.

Official Spokesperson: I now request the Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam to make his opening remarks.

Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Vu Van Ninh): Ladies and gentlemen, at the invitation of the Indian Government I and my Delegation have come on an official visit to India this time on the occasion of the closing ceremony of the Vietnam-India Friendship Year. And I have had very useful and productive exchange with His Excellency the Minister.

Vietnam and India have enjoyed a very traditional long-term friendship over forty years of diplomatic relations. In the past five years we have established strategic partnership. And I am very happy at the results that we have recorded in the last five years.

We have promoted cooperation between the two countries in all different fields from politics to diplomacy, to national security and defence, to education and training, science and technology, and healthcare. We are very happy at the very successful organization of the very practical and meaningful activities to commemorate the Friendship Year over the past year.

We have agreed on increase of exchange of delegations, implementation of signed agreements between the two countries, and maintenance of different cooperation mechanisms such as the Joint Commission on Trade, the agreement on transfer of sentenced persons, the signing of the supplement aviation agreement between the two countries and the opening of direct flight routes between Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh city with New Delhi, the Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement between the two Ministries, and also other cooperation in terms of national defence and security, culture, education and people-to-people exchange.

We are determined to realize the goal of US\$ 7 billion trade turnover by 2015. We have agreed to actively promote the visit of Prime Minister

Manmohan Singh to Vietnam at the invitation of the Vietnamese Prime Minister. India has also agreed to provide more flexible credit lines to Vietnam in terms of infrastructure and national security.

We are committed to continue to cooperate closely at international and regional forums. Especially we are committed to maintaining peace, stability, security, safety, freedom of navigation over the seas, and also access to resources in the East Sea of Vietnam. We are committed to avoiding violence or threatening to use violence in resolution of disputes in the sea. We would want to have peaceful negotiations based on international law especially the 1982 UNCLOS, the six-point principle of ASEAN, the ...(Inaudible)... construction at the sea ...(Inaudible)... in the South China Sea.

We would like to thank you the Government and the people of India and also the Minister personally for the warm hospitality accorded to me and my Delegation. We would hope to have very productive and positive results of our discussions today in the future. And also allow me to wish India sustainable development in the future for prosperous people.

Allow me to also finally conclude with an invitation to Indian companies to continue to invest and enter into Vietnam. We would hope and are committed to providing and assuring the legitimate rights and interests of foreign companies operating in Vietnam. Thank you very much.

Official Spokesperson: The two Ministers have agreed to take a few questions.

Q (Vietnamese Media)Vietnam and India have a very long and close relationship. What do you think is the most important...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister: Frankly, I think that is a very difficult question because we have discussed so many vast fields - economic, strategic and cultural; and I think each one has a very very important and significant role to play. But basically I think it is important that we continue with our people-to-people contact in a major way. We have a shared culture, we have a shared history, and we need to get new generations to discover that. It is very important that the new generations in Vietnam and in India discover what our great leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and President Ho Chi Minh had seen as a very special relationship both for the present and the future.

Q (Indian Media): Sir, my question is on a different issue. Today the High Commissioner of Pakistan Salman Bashir was summoned to Ministry of External Affairs over the gruesome killing of two Indian soldiers by the Pakistani soldiers. This was not a routine ceasefire violation. They had stepped inside our territory; they beheaded one soldier and took away the head. What kind of protest has been launched? Have you also demanded at least the immediate handing over of the head for the honourable funeral of the soldier that he deserves? Could we also take up this particular issue at the International Court or the United Nations?

External Affairs Minister: As far as my information goes, he was spoken to this morning. He was called to the Ministry this morning and he was spoken to in very strong terms. We have conveyed our deepest concern and protest at what has happened. You know, we had the discussions on 27th of December on the conventional CBMs; and the non-violation of the Line of Control ceasefire is the most important part of those CBMs. Therefore, violation of that in itself is something which is a matter of great concern. That obviously, if not immediately contained, would have an adverse impact on what we have been trying to do for such a long time.

But the specific context that has come to our notice about the manner in which the soldiers' bodies have been treated is of course a matter of very very deep concern, and indeed the sense of hurt that has been felt is taken on board. This has been conveyed as being unacceptable. We are doing the best that is possible. I expect that there will be some response from the other side. Our intent has been conveyed very clearly. Our anxiety has been conveyed very clearly. Now we would expect an appropriate response from that side. I can once again repeat that this is completely unacceptable.

At the same time, I think it is very important that we make sure that whatever has happened should not be escalated. We cannot and must not allow for an escalation of a very unwholesome event that has taken place. I hope that message has gone home.

Q (Indian Media): Mr. Deputy Prime Minister, Vietnam has some of the prettiest sights on the planet. But when I went there I had to change planes in Bangkok. It has got the kind of views which Indian tourists

would like very much. As you know, every year 12 million Indian tourists go to all corners of the globe and spend something like US\$ 25 billion. Fifteen months ago, Vietnam Airlines and Jet had signed an agreement for direct flights between Hanoi and New Delhi or Mumbai or wherever, but nothing has happened so far. When do you think these flights will start so that greater people-to-people action will take place?

Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister: I would like to answer the question as follows. As the Minister has mentioned, there is huge potential for tourism development between the two countries. I do recognize that Vietnamese coming to India and Indians coming to Vietnam right now are very limited and that is why we need to promote it. We have talked about measures this morning with the Minister, and this morning in my meeting with the Vietnam-India Friendship Association also I mentioned this fact. We would want to have promotion of people-to-people exchange between the two countries especially ...(Inaudible)... opening of direct flight routes between Hanoi and New Delhi or Ho Chi Minh city and New Delhi. We are committed to promoting people-to-people exchange. As Vietnam Airlines is a hundred per cent state-owned enterprise, we can and are committed to promotion of people-to-people exchange very soon in the near future.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event.



353. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson and Joint Secretary (South) on the visit of Vice President to Vietnam.

New Delhi, January 11, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. I have an announcement to make and then we will follow from that.

The announcement I have to make is about the forthcoming visit of the Vice-President of India Shri Mohammed Hamid Ansari to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam at the invitation of the Vice-President of Vietnam. This visit will take place from the 14th to the 17th of January.

The visit of the Vice-President is part of our ongoing high-level interactions between India and Vietnam and will highlight the India-Vietnam Friendship Year which was launched in 2012 to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of full diplomatic relations, and the fifth anniversary of our strategic partnership.

During the visit the Vice-President will hold discussions with the Vietnamese leadership. Besides visiting Hanoi, he will also visit Ho Chi Minh City. We expect that the visit of the Vice-President will be an important landmark in our strategic partnership.

I have here with me today on my left Joint Secretary (South) Mr. Sanjay Bhattacharyya, and on my right Mr. Nagesh Singh from the Vice-President's Office. The intention is that Mr. Bhattacharyya will speak a little bit on issues relating to the Vice-President's visit and if necessary Mr. Nagesh Singh will help him out. Subsequent to that, if any of you have any questions, Mr. Bhattacharyya and Mr. Singh will respond to them. After that, if there are any other issues that you would like to ask me, I would be willing to respond.

I will now ask Mr. Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Joint Secretary (South) in the Ministry of External Affairs to make his opening remarks on the forthcoming visit of the Vice-President to Vietnam.

Joint Secretary (South) (Shri Sanjay Bhattacharyya): Thank you.

India-Vietnam relations have been very warm, friendly and stable. We

have experienced positive momentum of cooperation in various sectors. The foundation of this relationship in contemporary times was laid in the interactions between Prime Minister Nehru and President Ho Chi Minh more than fifty years ago. These have been further developed by successive generations. The relations between the two countries are elevated to the level of strategic partnership during the visit of Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung to India in July 2007.

Vice President's visit to Vietnam is a part of the high-level exchanges between the two sides. In recent years, from the Vietnamese side the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung had visited India in July 2007, and then again in December 2012 for the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit. Their Vice-President had visited in 2009. The Chairman of their National Assembly, equivalent to our Speaker, and who is currently the General Secretary of the party, had visited in 2010. The President of Vietnam had paid a visit in 2011. So, you see from their side their top leadership have all visited India in the recent past. On our side as well, our President had visited Vietnam in 2008. Our Prime Minister had visited Vietnam for the India-ASEAN Summit in 2010. Speaker had visited Vietnam in 2011. So, the visit of the Vice-President would complete the circle of the top levels of our leadership.

The Friendship Year was launched in 2012. The Friendship Year has been a great occasion to further deepen our bonds of friendship. We have hosted several cultural and academic events in each other's countries, both in the capital cities as well as in the hinterland. These have included international conferences on Buddhism, Tagore and the Champ civilizational links which were held in Vietnam. These have further enriched our understanding of each other. We also had exhibitions of artistes, seminars of scholars, and interaction amongst business communities.

In terms of our bilateral relations, we view Vietnam as a pillar in our Look East Policy. We have a strong engagement with Vietnam both in the bilateral context as well as in the framework of ASEAN. Our close ties and cooperation with Vietnam are important in the context of the new trends that are emerging in the region and also in the context of the emerging regional architecture.

As we mentioned, our relations have both a positive momentum and vitality. Some of the areas in which there has been remarkable progress are in the areas of political understanding, defence and security, trade and investment, S&T and education, capacity building and bilateral assistance, and of course cultural, and people-to-people contacts.

Our trade volume was US\$ 4 billion last year and we have a target to reach of US\$ 7 billion. We recognize that there is great potential in this particular area and that the India-ASEAN FTA in goods which came in to force recently, two years ago actually, and the new agreement that we have on India ASEAN FTA in services and investment will unleash a new phase in our bilateral economic cooperation with Vietnam as well.

Our companies have made significant investments in various sectors. There are over 70 projects, if you look at Indian companies including those that are based outside of India. These are in various areas such as agriculture, carbon black, fertilizers, healthcare, IT. These have an outlay of almost US\$ 800 million.

There are several new large investments which are on the anvil, and these include possible investments. Discussions are under way for steel, energy, and engineering products. We of course have a very longstanding cooperation with Vietnam in the oil and gas sector.

We worked very closely with Vietnam in capacity building through training programmes, ITEC is a big part of our relationship, and also in the establishment of several institutions in Vietnam. These are particularly in the areas of ICT. There is an Institute of Entrepreneurship Development, vocational training, English language, and we have an agricultural institute there as well. In total, there are about 150 scholarships that are offered under ITEC, and there are about 60 that are offered under the ICCR.

Our cultural bonds are very strong. Actually they go back to history. We plan to open an Indian Culture Centre in Hanoi very soon. There is a major project that the Archaeological Survey of India will be taking up – a three million dollar project – for the restoration of the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Mù Sôn, which is part of the Champa civilization which has a Hindu link. In conclusion, Vietnam is a very close friend with whom we have had peaceful cultural contacts over centuries. The visit of the

Vice-President will expand our understanding and cooperation in our contemporary context and also deepen our civilizations bonds.

Thank you.

Official Spokesperson: Let us begin with questions relating to what Sanjay has said on the visit of the Vice-President to Vietnam.

Question: What is the Delegation accompanying the Vice-President?

OSD to VP (Mr. Nagesh Singh): The official delegation is there. He is accompanied by Mr. Sachin Pilot, the Minister of State for Corporate Affairs (Independent Charge). Then he has four Members of Parliament who are accompanying him, one from Lok Sabha and three from Rajya Sabha. Besides that the MEA delegation is there led by Secretary (East). JS (South) and other officials will be there. That is the main delegation.

Q: There was an investment that Tata was considering in Vietnam and we have not heard about it for a while. It has been stalled for various reasons I believe. What is the status of that investment? When you said US\$ 800 million, is it the total investment made by Indian companies in Vietnam? Over what period?

Joint Secretary (South): You are right. Tata plans to have a greenfield steel project in Vietnam. It is in the southern part of the country. They have been in discussions with the provincial authorities. It is going to be a huge project, about a US\$ 5 billion project, and discussions are under way. I believe the site has been located. They are now in the process of completing all the formalities and agreements that are necessary before the actual project can begin. The investment figure that you mentioned, yes it is about the stock of investments made by Indian companies to date. There are actually 78 Indian projects exactly of which I think 16 are probably located from outside of India. And the total is US\$ 790 million something. That is the stock till now.

Q: What is the status of military supplies from India to Vietnam? Is there any progress on turnaround facilities or logistics for Indian Navy in Vietnam?

Joint Secretary (South): Defence cooperation is a very strong part of our relationship. This has been there for a fairly long period of time. We are engaged in several training programmes for the Vietnamese armed

forces. Our naval ships visit Vietnam on a regular basis and have port calls. We also have had visits of senior military officials to Vietnam, as have military officials from Vietnam come to India. We have what we call the Defence, Security, Strategic Dialogue which is at the level of Defence Secretary and Vice Minister on the Vietnamese side. And they decide the policy aspect. It is a very broad encompassing relationship that we share with Vietnam and it is a growing part of our relationship.

Q: What is our position on Vietnam's demand for a code of conduct on South China Sea?

Joint Secretary (South): Our position on the South China Sea is quite clear. We believe that we should have freedom of the right of navigation in these areas. And we believe that disputes, whatever they may be, should be resolved between the concerned parties. We, as you know, do have a certain interest, economic interest in that area. We have oil explorations. OVL has been engaged in that since the 1980s and these are continuing.

Q: The Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister had come and there was a reference to lines of credit, new lines of credit I presume. How much would that be? Would that announcement be made during the Vice-President's visit?

Joint Secretary (South): We have existing lines of credit with Vietnam. The total amount is some 461 crores, it may be 561 crores, of rupees. I can let you know that in a while. A large of it is for a hydro project. There is an offer of another US\$ 100 million which has been there. These are all existing lines. So, the discussion that has been on is about the utilization of what exactly fills in that amount.

Q: Does India have a view on the crackdown on pro-democracy activists in Vietnam? We have been seeing it of late.

Joint Secretary (South): I have not factored that in.

Official Spokesperson: I think with that we come to the end of this element. If you have any questions on anything else, I will be willing to answer them.

Q: Sir, what is our response to the demarche by Pakistan Foreign Office to Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad over the reported killing of one Pakistani soldier by Indian army?

Official Spokesperson: You are right that the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad was called to the Pakistani Foreign Office today afternoon. He met the Pakistani Foreign Secretary Mr. Jilani. At the meeting he was handed a note verbale regarding an incident that is said to have occurred at the Hotspring Sector on the LoC on 10th January, 2013. This is said to have led to the death of a Pakistani soldier. Those are the contents of that note verbale.

The High Commissioner in his response stated that as we understand it there has been unprovoked firing from the Pakistani side in the afternoon yesterday, 10th January, 2013, in the Mendhar sector and there was a controlled response from our side. The High Commissioner also emphasized the sanctity of the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir established after the Simla Agreement of 1972. And he said this was the most important confidence-building measure between India and Pakistan.

Q: *Pakistan has held up 25 of our trucks laden with our goods for trading. The news is also coming that they have stopped our bus service also. What is your position?*

Official Spokesperson: *It is true that there is since yesterday for some local reasons, no bus or truck has been able to come. Our officers are in contact with them, when some news comes, you will be informed.*

Q: Has Pakistan also stopped the cross LoC bus service?

Official Spokesperson: I think he was referring to the same issue. There is only one issue there. My understanding is that because of local circumstances, yesterday the gates could not be opened on the Pakistani side on one route which has led to both the trucks and the bus not being able to go. At this stage, there will be a discussion with the concerned authorities and we will let you know the outcome of this.

Q: Sir, we heard the National Security Advisor yesterday pretty much dismissing any mandate the UN Military Observers Group might have in terms of investigating ceasefire violations. But again we have heard from Pakistan's Foreign Minister following the NSA's clarification. What do you make of this public sparring on this particular issue? What is India's position? Do they have a mandate? What is their presence in India all about?

Official Spokesperson: You know it is well-known that following the signing of the Simla Agreement in January 1972 and the establishment of the Line of Control, the UNMOGIP has no relevance or role to play whatsoever. The Simla Agreement commits both countries to resolve all issues through bilateral negotiations.

Many of you have raised this question time and again. I would just like to mention to all of you that we are in 2013. Let us not look at instrumentalities which were last used more than forty years ago to try and solve problems of today and to avoid any future problems. India and Pakistan have a mechanism for trying to resolve these issues bilaterally. The DGMOs have been in touch. We have regular interactions at the diplomatic level. And we are fully capable of handling all these matters without any reference whatsoever to either what you mentioned to or to any other third party. I hope I have made that very very clear.

Q: Sir, the Pakistan Foreign Office summoned the Indian Deputy High Commissioner and then the High Commissioner today in a space of less than five days basically to protest ceasefire violation according to them. There were 117 ceasefire violations reported by India last year. For any of the ceasefire violations which happened from either side, did the Pakistanis summon India's High Commissioner or Deputy High Commissioner in Pakistan?

Official Spokesperson: You would have known that before if they had, like you knew of the last instance.

Q: Mr. Menon has met today his counterpart from China. Could you please tell us about the outcome of the meeting?

Official Spokesperson: I am afraid I do not have a full readout of that. But based on our understanding the idea was Mr. Dai Bingo, the Special Representative from the Chinese side, is here for a multilateral event, the meeting of BRICS National Security Advisors or the High Representatives for National Security. This was sort of a meeting on the sidelines of that. I do not have a full readout of that meeting but my understanding is that it was to cover all issues of bilateral interest. Also, this is likely to be Mr. Dai Bingo's last visit to India, and so, a sort of summary of what has been the interaction so far. But I do not have a specific readout of all issues that were covered.

Q: Sir, despite leaders meeting on both the sides for de-escalation of violence ... (Inaudible)... Where do you think does the solution lie?

Official Spokesperson: I think we have mentioned that the DGMOs are in contact and the solutions, as required, are being sorted out bilaterally.

Q: Pakistan denies every thing. When you furnish proof, they don't accept them. They repeat their innocence. Despite this you just say we have to sit down and talk. This is not the first time they are violating the Simla Agreement; It was done earlier also so. We Musharraf had visited, he too did not agree with us. Despite this we show our large heartedness. We always extend our hand of friendship, how many time we are to be betrayed?

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much for that enlightened discourse on India-Pakistan relations. But this has been an established policy of all our leadership that ultimately we have to work out our problems with our neighbours. Neighbours are not going to go away. Therefore, it is in the interest of India and Pakistan both to work out a relationship which will ensure peace and security for both our people. I understand your concern. It is those concerns which are reflected in Government meetings. So, please do not think that concerns that you have espoused just now are not reflected. These are reflected and are reflected very strongly including in the last meeting that the Foreign Secretary had with the Pakistani High Commissioner here.

Thank you very much



354. Speech by Vice President M. Hamid Ansari at the banquet hosted by Madam Nguyen Thi Doan, Vice President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam .

Hanoi, January 15, 2013.

Your Excellency, Madam NGUYEN THI DOAN, Vice President of the Socialist

Republic of Vietnam,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be in a country that holds a special place in the hearts of the Indian people. The occasion itself, the conclusion of an India-Vietnam Friendship Year, adds to the significance of the visit. I congratulate all those who contributed to making the Friendship Year a great success.

Vietnam and India share a long tradition of close relations. Its foundations were laid by our great leaders, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and President Ho Chi Minh. Successive generations of our leaders - and here I would specially like to recall Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Pham Van Dong - nurtured this friendship.

We in India have admiration for the indomitable spirit of the Vietnamese people, for their determination to succeed against all odds, for their tenacity and courage against adversity.

Vietnam's rapid economic and social development resulting in increased prosperity for your people is commendable. The success of your efforts in achieving the Millennium Development Goals are worthy of emulation. I congratulate the leadership and people of Vietnam for their success in reducing poverty from 58 percent to less than 10 percent in two decades.

Excellency

Today Vietnam and India have a Strategic Partnership founded on a common vision, shared interests and mutual trust and friendship. We are convinced that it will promote peace, stability and security in this region and the world.

We stand ready to impart greater content to our partnership for mutual benefit. The agreements and MoUs that we have signed today will open new avenues for bilateral cooperation.

We value our strategic understanding and cooperation at regional and multilateral forums like ASEAN, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, East Asia Summit, ASEM and international organisations like the United Nations and WTO. We deeply appreciate Vietnam's support to India's candidature as a permanent member of an expanded UN Security Council.

As two developing countries with a stake in the future, we must take advantage of our synergies to jointly face emerging challenges and also to exploit new opportunities.

We wish to bring together the exchange of ideas and culture, with a contemporary face, to our ancient bonds of friendship. To facilitate these ties and promote people-to-people contacts, we plan to open the Indian Cultural Centre in Hanoi this year.

Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to invite you all to join me in a toast:

- To the good health and happiness of Her Excellency, Madam NGUYEN THI DOAN, Vice President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and all of you present here tonight;
- To the well-being and prosperity of the friendly people of Vietnam; and
- To the everlasting friendship between India and Vietnam.

Thank you



355. Speech of M. Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India at the Closing Ceremony of the India-Vietnam Friendship Year in Hanoi.

Hanoi, January 15, 2013.

Your Excellency,

Madam NGUYEN THI DOAN, Vice President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam,

Your Excellency, Mr. Vu Xuan Hong, President of the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be in Vietnam for the closing ceremony of the India-Vietnam Friendship Year. We are at a historic juncture in our bilateral relations. The year 2012 marked the 40th anniversary of establishment of our full diplomatic relations and the 5th anniversary of our strategic partnership. In fact, we are celebrating the millennia of contacts between our peoples and our civilizations.

I would like to thank the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations for having taken this initiative in organizing this event.

While we are celebrating forty years of official diplomatic relations, the ties between our peoples are much older; indeed, they go back into antiquity when traders and sea-farers, sages and savants crossed the oceans and the seas exchanging goods and services, ideas and knowledge, culture and spiritual traditions. The splendid monuments of the Champa civilization at My Son and the universal philosophy of love and compassion of Lord Buddha are living symbols of the cultural interface between our civilizations.

In more recent times, our great leaders Jawaharlal Nehru and Ho Chi Minh forged a warm friendship as our nations were struggling to be free from the colonial yoke. "Shared ideas link you and me," wrote Ho Chi Minh from his prison cell to Pt. Nehru. Prime Minister Nehru was the first foreign leader to personally visit Vietnam and congratulate its leaders one week after the great victory at Dien Bien Phu in October 1954.

I am particularly happy to be here today with successive generations of Vietnamese students, scholars, officials and others who have studied in India. Each one of you personally symbolizes the warm feelings and fraternal friendship between India and Vietnam. All of you, in diverse ways, have further strengthened our close relations. I would specially like to thank the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations and to thank Vietnam-India Friendship Association and its many chapters in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and other provinces and cities of Vietnam for being true Ambassadors of India and Indian culture.

India values its relations with Vietnam. Our shared interests and aspirations form the basis of our relations. It was said by Late Prime Minister Pham Van Dong that our relations are as clear as the blue sky without any clouds. Today, we can look forward towards the future with confidence.

Over the years, the commitment shown by the leadership in the two countries resulted in the signing of the Joint Declaration Cooperation Framework in 2003, which culminated in the establishment of a "Strategic Partnership" in 2007.

Our partnership is based on a common vision, shared interests and mutual trust and friendship. It is for mutual benefit and for regional peace, stability and prosperity. We share a strategic understanding and cooperation at regional and multilateral forums.

Vietnam has emerged as a regional power in South-East Asia with political stability and a dynamic economy. Our bilateral economic and trade ties have grown significantly in recent years, though much more remains to be done.

We have set a target of 7 billion US\$ for bilateral trade by 2015. We are confident of achieving it. We need to generate greater awareness about mutually beneficial business opportunities, thereby facilitating trade and investment. Indian companies have ventured into Vietnam in increasing numbers with investments in diverse sectors and in several provinces. Indian companies in the field of oil and gas exploration are already actively engaged in several projects in Vietnam. India is also prepared to continue extending lines of credit on concessional terms, especially for infrastructure development.

India has been a long-standing partner in Vietnam's development process. Our cooperation in diverse areas such as agriculture, science and technology, education, capacity building and human resource development is growing. We enjoy robust cooperation in the areas of defence and security. We are strengthening our cooperation in the field of Human Resource Development and Capacity Building.

Our cultural ties rooted in antiquity are growing stronger. The opening of the Indian Cultural Centre in Hanoi this year will bring to the people of Vietnam a flavour of India. It would greatly facilitate our cultural ties and promote people-to-people contacts.

During our 'Year of Friendship' we have both organized several commemorative events, cultural performances, seminars and business promotion events. The decision to set up the Institute of Indian and South West Asian Studies, under the aegis of Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences is a testimony to the desire on both sides to engage more closely. We will continue our support for the activities of the Institute.

The year 2012 also marked the 20th anniversary of India's relationship with ASEAN. To commemorate this occasion, a special India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit was held in India in December. Several events including the India-ASEAN car rally, a Goodwill visit by a sail training ship, business conclaves and cultural activities were organized to commemorate this event.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for all those here and in India whose cooperation and hard work were essential to making the Year of Friendship a grand success.

Long live our friendship and cooperation. I wish you all a very happy new year.

Thank you



356. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on the visit of Minister of State Dr. D. Purandeswari to Vietnam.

New Delhi, April 29, 2013.

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Dr. D Purandeswari participated in various programmes in Vietnam today and yesterday.

In Ho Chi Minh city she interacted with Indian and Vietnamese businessmen and addressed them. Around 40 businessmen along with the Indian Ambassador to Vietnam Mr. Ranjit Rae participated in the meeting.

In Dak Lak Province of Vietnam, Dr. D Purandeswari inaugurated an instant coffee plant established by CCL Products India Ltd. with an estimated cost of Rs. 300 crores. In the inauguration function, the participants included Mr. Rae, Vice Chief of Steering Committee of Western Highlands of Vietnam Mr. Trie Xuan Hoa, Mr. Mai Hoan, Vice President, People's Committee of Dak Lak Province of Vietnam, Mr. Nguyen Nang Chung, Vice Chairman of Cu Kuin District Committee and other Vietnamese leaders. Mr. Challa Rajendra Prasad, Chairman of CCL Products India Ltd. and Chairman Ngon Coffee Company along with other Indian, Vietnamese and international dignitaries also participated in the function.

Dr. D Purandeswari also conducted bilateral talks with Vietnamese leaders on issues of mutual interest of trade and investment. In talks from Indian side, Mr. Rae, Mr. Siddharth, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Government of India and other officers participated. From the Vietnamese side, Mr. Trie Xuan Hoa, Mr. Mai Hoan, Mr. Nguyen Nang Chung and other Vietnamese leaders participated.



357. External Affairs Minister's statement to the Media during 15th Meeting of India-Vietnam Joint Commission.

New Delhi, July 11, 2013.

Your Excellency, Mr. Pham Binh Minh, Minister for Foreign Affairs;
Distinguished Members of the Vietnamese side,
Colleagues from the Indian delegation,
Friends from the media

I am delighted to welcome my friend H.E. Mr. Pham Binh Minh, Foreign Minister of Vietnam who is visiting India for the 15th meeting of the Joint Commission between our countries. He has a deep connection with India and has many friends here. It is like home coming.

This morning, we had a meeting to discuss the strengthening of our strategic partnership which included exchange of a cooperative agenda on bilateral relations and regional and global issues. I am satisfied that the India-Vietnam Strategic Partnership is developing well. We have agreed to consolidate our activities and add greater content to the partnership and bilateral relations in the fields of defence and security, trade & investment, science & technology, information technology, capacity building and human resource development, agriculture, education & culture and other areas of common interest.

Thereafter, we co-chaired the 15th India-Vietnam Joint Commission Meeting on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation. The Meeting took stock of our entire range of bilateral relations and identified areas for future cooperation to strengthen and expand our strategic partnership. We reviewed the implementation of activities agreed for 2011-13 under bilateral cooperation and exchanges and agreed to a plan of activities for 2013-15. Our cooperation in regional and multilateral fora was also discussed.

At the end of the meeting, we signed the Agreed Minutes of the JCM. You have witnessed the signing of an Agreement on the 19.5 million US Dollars LOC for setting up Nam Trai-IV hydropower project and Binh Bo Pumping station by CMD, Exim Bank and Vietnamese Vice Minister of Finance.

The Vietnamese Foreign Minister will call on Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India during his visit. He will also deliver a speech on “India-Vietnam Relations and Regional Issues” at ICWA.

India-Vietnam strategic partnership is characterised by warm and close bilateral relations and high degree of trust and understanding at political levels. High level visits have played a very important role in consolidating and strengthening our relations. Regular meetings between our PM and Vietnamese leaders have taken place on the sidelines of multilateral summit meetings. The institutional architecture of the India-Vietnam strategic partnership is based on the joint declaration on Strategic Partnership of 2007 and dialogue mechanisms and agreements.

Vietnam has regularly reiterated its support for India's candidature for permanent membership of an expanded UNSC. It has also signed the G-4 Draft Resolution on reforms of the UNSC.

India-Vietnam security and defence cooperation is robust and growing, based on shared interests and a convergence in our security perceptions.

Economic ties have expanded with Vietnam receiving substantial Indian private sector investments and growing trade. Bilateral trade has grown to 6.1 billion US Dollars in 2012-13. We are well on track to cross the target of 7 billion US Dollars by 2015. Investments by Indian companies totals about 936 million US Dollars in 86 projects in sectors such as oil and gas exploration, mineral exploration and processing, sugar manufacturing, agro-chemicals, IT, and agricultural processing.

Recently, Vietnam has chosen Tata Power as developer for a 1.8 billion US Dollars 2X660 MW Long Phu 2 Thermal Power Project in Soc Trang Province in southern Vietnam, despite strong competition from Korean and Russian companies. It will be the single largest Indian investment in Vietnam when it comes through and will give a strong boost to our economic cooperation and the strategic partnership. The MoU between the two Central Banks, viz. Reserve Bank of India and the State Bank of Vietnam, signed in 2012, will enable Bank of India and Indian Overseas Bank to upgrade their representative offices that they opened in Ho Chi Minh City in February 2003 and March 2008 respectively into full-fledged branches in near future.

India has extended 17 LoCs totalling 164.5 mn US Dollars, including 19.5 million US Dollars LoC for setting up Nam Trai-IV hydropower project and Binh Bo Pumping station, signed today. India has also agreed to consider earmarking USD 100 million under the Buyer's Credit under the National Export Insurance Account (BC-NEIA) for use by Vietnam.

The two countries have strong cooperation in capacity building and human resources development. Vietnam has been participating actively in training programmes under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. Presently, 150 ITEC slots are being offered to Vietnam every year along with 16 scholarships under the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme (GCSS), 14 scholarships under the Educational Exchange Programme (EEP) and 10 scholarships under the MGC Scholarship Scheme.

India has set up a 2 million US Dollars Vietnam-India Advanced Resource Centre in ICT (ARC-ICT) in Hanoi and is providing a PARAM Supercomputer, costing Rs 4.7cr, as a grant, for use in multiple applications. The Vietnam-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre (VIEDC) and a Vietnam-India English Language Training Center (VICELT) have been established with Indian assistance under the IAI (Initiative for ASEAN Integration) as well. An IBSA funded Rice Seed Improvement Project in Danang is ongoing.

We plan to establish an Indian Cultural Centre in Hanoi this year and hope that it will further promote cultural cooperation between the two countries. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is about to finalise an agreement on conservation of the ancient remains of the Cham Civilization at My Son. This will help revive our ancient heritage and cultural links.

We attach great importance to the development of our relations with Vietnam and move forward on India-Vietnam strategic partnership by adding more content in all areas. You will recall, the year 2012 marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of full diplomatic relations between India and Vietnam, the 5th anniversary of the India-Vietnam Strategic Partnership, the 20th anniversary of partnership between India and ASEAN. The two sides celebrated it as the 'Year of Friendship between India and Vietnam'.

Thank You



358. Joint Media Interaction by External Affairs Minister and Foreign Minister of Vietnam.

New Delhi, July 11, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends, I welcome you to this media interaction. As is usual, we will begin with opening remarks. I now request the External Affairs Minister of India, Shri Salman Khurshid, to make his opening remarks.

External Affairs Minister of India (Shri Salman Khurshid):Your Excellency Mr. Pham Binh Minh, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Vietnam; distinguished members of the Vietnamese Delegation, colleagues from the Indian Delegation, and friends from the media:

It is a great honour and indeed a great pleasure to be welcoming a very good friend of India and a friend of mine who is visiting India for the fifteenth meeting of the Joint Commission between our two countries. This is the platform for strengthening our Strategic Partnership. We took advantage of this occasion to spend some time together and agreed in frank and friendly discussions to consolidate our activities with greater content the partnership and bilateral relations that we have in the field of defence, security, trade, investment, science and technology, information technology, capacity building and human resource development, agriculture, education and culture, as indeed all other areas of common interest.

We took stock of entire range of the bilateral relations and identified areas in future cooperation that will not only strengthen our relationship but give benefit to people on both sides through the implementation of the activities that we have agreed for years 2011 to 2013 under the bilateral cooperation and exchanges that we have agreed and the planned activities for the 2013-2015 period.

At the end of the meeting we have also signed the agreed minutes of the JCM. You have witnessed also just now the signing of agreement on the US\$ 19.5 million LoC. This is for the setting up of the Nam Trai-IV hydropower project and the Binh Bo Pumping station by CMD, Exim Bank on our side and the Vietnamese Vice-Minister of Finance.

The Hon. Minister will call on our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during this visit. He will also deliver a speech on “India-Vietnam Relations and Regional Issues” at the ICWA.

We believe and we have agreed that it is important that this warm and fruitful relationship that we have between our two countries needs to be continuously fed by important high-level visits that have in the past played a very important role in consolidating our relationship. And these regular meetings that we have, we expect and hope, will continue at the highest level. The institutional architecture of the India-Vietnam strategic partnership is based on the Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership that was made in 2007 and the dialogue mechanisms that we have in place.

We want to acknowledge and thank Vietnam for regularly reiterating its support for India’s candidature for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council. In this context Vietnam has signed the G4 Draft Resolution on the reforms of the UNSC, and we express our gratitude. Our security and defence cooperation is robust and growing because we have shared common interest and convergence in security perceptions. And this has played a very major role in India’s engagement with ASEAN as well.

On the economic ties, we can express with satisfaction that they continue to expand with Vietnam receiving substantial Indian private sector investments and growing trade. Bilateral trade has grown to US\$ 6.1 billion in 2012-13. We are well on track to cross the target of US\$ 7 billion that we have put for the 2015 deadline.

Investments by Indian companies now total about US\$ 936 million 86 separate projects in sectors such as oil and gas exploration, mineral exploration, processing, sugar manufacturing, agro-chemicals, IT, and the agricultural processing sector.

Very recently, Vietnam has chosen Tata Power as developer for a US\$ 1.8 billion 2x660 MW Long Phu-2 thermal power project in Soc Trang Province in southern Vietnam. And this came despite strong competition from friendly countries like Korea and Russia. It will be the single largest Indian investment in Vietnam when it comes through and will give a strong boost to our economic cooperation and strategic partnership.

The MoU between two Central Banks - that is the Reserve Bank of India and the State Bank of Vietnam - signed in 2012 will enable Bank of India and Indian Overseas Bank to upgrade their representative offices, that they have opened in Ho Chi Minh City in February 2003 and March 2008 respectively, into full-fledged branches in the very near future.

India has extended 17 LoCs totalling US\$ 164.5 million, including the US\$ 19.5 million that I just mentioned. India has also agreed to consider earmarking another US\$ 100 million under the Buyer's Credit under the National Export Insurance Account, for use by Vietnam.

In capacity building and in human resource development we have a very strong relationship. Vietnam has been participating actively in training programmes under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC). A 150 ITEC slots are being offered to Vietnam at present every year along with 16 scholarships under the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme (GCSS), 14 scholarships under the Educational Exchange Programme (EEP), and 10 scholarships under the MGC Scholarship Scheme.

We have set up a US\$ 2 million Vietnam-India Advanced Resource Centre in ICT in Hanoi; and we are providing very soon a PARAM Supercomputer costing Rs 4.7 crore as a grant for use in multiple applications.

The Vietnam-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre and the Vietnam-India English Language Training Center have been established with Indian assistance under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) as well. An IBSA-funded Rice Seed Improvement Project in Danang is ongoing and is very successful.

We plan to establish the Indian Cultural Centre in Hanoi this year and hope that it will further promote cultural cooperation between our two countries. Archaeological Survey of India is about to finalise an agreement on conservation of ancient remains of the Cham Civilization in My Son. This will help revive the ancient heritage and cultural links that we have between our two countries and that we all cherish greatly. We attach great importance to the development of our relations with Vietnam and move forward on India-Vietnam strategic partnership by adding more content in all areas all the time.

You will recall, ladies and gentlemen, the year 2012 marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of full diplomatic relations between India and Vietnam, the fifth anniversary of the India-Vietnam Strategic Partnership, the twentieth anniversary of partnership between India and ASEAN. So, there is convergence on all sides. The two sides, therefore, celebrated it as the Year of Friendship between India and Vietnam, and we expect that friendship to grow from strength to strength.

Thank you very much.

Official Spokesperson: I now request the Foreign Minister of Vietnam to make his opening remarks.

Foreign Minister of Vietnam (Mr. Pham Binh Minh): Thank you Your Excellency Minister Salman Khurshid.

Ladies and gentlemen, Minister Khurshid and I have just successfully co-chaired the 15th Joint Commission Meeting. The meeting was held in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere and in the spirit of the Vietnam-India traditional friendship and mutual trust.

Mr. Minister and I have discussed at length the bilateral cooperation and regional and international issues of mutual interest. We noted with satisfaction the positive developments in the Vietnam-India Strategic Partnership in the past years, especially in all pillars such as politics, economy, security and defence, science and technology, and culture and education.

We also noted that there remains vast potential for mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation particularly in high technologies, oil and gas, tourism, and agricultural production.

In further promoting bilateral cooperation in all areas, Minister Khurshid and I agreed upon major directions and concrete actions such as sustaining the exchange of visits at high level and low level, and soon opening direct flights to facilitate tourism and people-to-people exchanges. We also agreed to establish a joint trade sub-commission under the Joint Commission towards obtaining the US\$ 7 billion in trade turnover by 2015.

Vietnam is committed to creating favourable conditions for Indian business investing in Vietnam. I am joined in this mission by representatives of various agencies from Vietnam – Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Public Security, Industry and Trade, Investment and Planning Education. And they have had detailed discussions with their Indian counterparts on how our bilateral cooperation could be more effective and practical.

I agree totally with all the Minister has briefed you on the positive developments of relations between Vietnam and India.

I also would like to take this opportunity to affirm our support to India's Look East Policy which manifests India's more active role in the Asia-Pacific region and the world at large thus contributing to shared developments of the region for peace, stability and prosperity. Concerning regional and international issues we agreed to continue our close coordination and cooperation at regional and international fora such as the United Nations, the Nonaligned Movement, and other ASEAN mechanisms.

Also we would like to take this opportunity to thank India for supporting Vietnam's candidature to the Human Rights Council for the term 2014-2016, and the International Hydrographic Organisation.

I also would like to thank the Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for organizing and chairing this meeting.

Thank you.

Official Spokesperson: The two Ministers have agreed to take a couple of questions:

Q(Vietnam News Agency): As I know, the relationship between Vietnam and India is very good. But Excellency, could you give some details on what India can do put ahead the key aspect of Vietnam-India strategic partnership including defence, security ties, trade and investment, information technology, science and technology cooperation?

External Affairs Minister of India: You will see when the agreed minutes are made available, we have had very extensive convergence both of strategies and of the objectives that we need to meet in all these fields. Of course it would involve some more meetings of high officials, and I

have invited Minister for Defence later this year before the visit of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam. We hope that there will be other visits perhaps on both sides so that we can complete some more formalities and get closer to the delivery that we aspire on all these fields.

In many areas it involves institution building or consolidation; in many areas it will involve some more work for the MoUs to be signed. And in defence we want including defence and security issues to be able to consult much further. And of course the supply of patrol vehicles to the Border Guards Organisation on the Vietnamese side will be a major and unique step of expression of our solidarity and friendship. So, in the entire range of issues that have been mentioned by His Excellency and have been mentioned by me, we are looking at how we take the relationship forward in a substantive and specific way within the timelines that are drawn up.

Q(Press Trust of India): Was the issue of South China Sea discussed?
...(Inaudible)...

External Affairs Minister of India: There are no issues but I will let the Minister answer this.

Foreign Minister of Vietnam: Minister Khurshid and I have discussions on a wide range of issues, on all the issues of bilateral relations as well as the relations of mutual interest. So, South China Sea or Eastern Sea is one of the issues we have also had discussions on. Our position is that we need to respect the international law, UNCLOS to solve the issue in South China Sea namely that the peaceful resolution of the issue.

We also reaffirmed all the rights of the countries to have the rights in the exclusive economic zone. So, all the blocks that India has exploitation and exploration basins are well within the exclusive economic zone of Vietnam.

External Affairs Minister of India: We have expressed our commitment for continuing our collaboration with Vietnam in the field of exploration. We have reiterated that these are commercial ventures by the Indian companies. This is other than the fact that we have, not just here but also at the ASEAN meeting, reiterated India's commitment to free passage in the international waters, and have indicated that if there is an

issue of a bilateral nature it should be settled bilaterally through dialogue in a peaceful manner. But this was also an issue that was discussed widely at the ARF. And I think a convergence of points of view within the ASEAN countries has become apparent to move towards negotiating the COC for South China Sea.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event.



359. Seventh India-Lao Joint Commission Meeting on Bilateral Cooperation.

Vientiane, September 9, 2013.

Shri Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs visited the Lao PDR from 8-10 September, 2013. He held the 7th Lao-India Joint Commission Meeting on bilateral cooperation with his counterpart Dr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR in Vientiane on 9 September 2013. He will call on Mr. Choummaly Sayasone, President and Mr. Thongsing Thammavong, Prime Minister and will also inaugurate the 2nd Roundtable of the ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks, on 10 September 2013.

An Agreement under Line of Credit for four Irrigation Projects in three provinces in the Lao PDR for US\$ 30.94 million was signed and conversion of another Line of Credit to substitute the Nam Boun-2 hydro power plant by the extension of transmission lines to Thasala-Laksao amounting to US\$ 35.25 million was approved. The projects will contribute to socio-economic development in Lao PDR.

During the JCM, both Ministers expressed satisfaction with the development in bilateral relations and noted that close cooperation and partnership between the two countries have expanded rapidly for mutual benefit, in recent years. India reiterated its preparedness to continue to provide assistance to the areas of water management and irrigation, energy generation and transmission and capacity building. It was

recognized that our soft credit and grant projects have improved the visibility of India and Indian products in Lao.

The Ministers identified agriculture, defence, ICT, culture, education, health, trade and investment promotion, mining as priority areas of cooperation between the two countries that would give further impetus to bilateral relations. A number of new initiatives were taken to promote people-to-people contacts, training and scholarship opportunities and expansion of private sector participation in trade and investment, as well as in health and education.

Both Ministers also exchanged views on a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. They agreed to strengthen coordination on ASEAN and multilateral issues. Lao has extended financial support to the Nalanda University, which is being developed as a centre of international excellence. Lao reiterated its support to India on UN and other multilateral issues.

EAM invited Foreign Minister of Lao PDR to visit India for the next meeting of the Joint Commission.



360. Homage paid by Defence Minister A.K. Antony to Gen. Giap.

New Delhi October 15, 2013.

In his first public engagement in a month, the Defence Minister Shri AK Antony drove down to the Vietnamese Embassy in the capital and paid homage on behalf of the nation to Gen Vo Nguyen Giap, the brilliant commander who brought victory for Vietnam in many wars. Gen Giap passed away in Hanoi on 04 October at the age of 102. 1. The Indian defence delegation members led by Shri Antony were the last foreign visitors who were received by Gen Giap and his wife at their modest residence in Hanoi on 17 December 2007. Offering the deepest condolences on behalf of Government of India, Shri Antony said India shares the grief of the people of Vietnam on the passing of one of their most respected national heroes. He said Gen Giap's leadership of

Vietnam's national liberation had evoked the admiration of the Indian people. 'He shall remain an inspiration to people all over the world', Shri Antony said.



361. Press Release of the Ministry of Home Affairs on the signing of the Treaty between India and Vietnam on Transfer of sentenced prisoners.

New Delhi, November 12, 2013.

The Union Home Minister Shri Sushilkumar Shinde and Minister of Public Security of Vietnam Mr. Tran Dai Quang signed a treaty on transfer of sentenced prisoners. The Treaty will help the Indian prisoners imprisoned in Vietnam or vice-versa to be near their families for serving remaining part of their sentence. This would facilitate the process of their social rehabilitation.

The Government of India has so far signed such Agreements with the Governments of U.K., Mauritius, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Egypt, France, Bangladesh, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Sri Lanka, UAE, Maldives, Thailand, Turkey, Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Israel and Russia. Negotiations have also been concluded with the Government of Canada, Hong Kong, Brazil, and Spain. These treaties have helped in repatriation of 43 Indian prisoners from Sri Lanka, Mauritius and UK. Similarly 7 prisoners of UK and France were repatriated to their respective countries.

The Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders adopted the Model Agreement on the Transfer of Foreign Prisoners in 1985 and since then many countries have arrived at bilateral and multilateral treaties. The Repatriation of Prisoners Act, 2003 was enacted for achieving the above purpose. For achieving the objectives of the Act, a treaty is required to be signed with countries having mutual interest on this matter.

In addition to the above, the two Ministers also held bilateral talks on security matters, issues of training, capacity building, cyber security,

cyber crime, trans-national crime, terrorism and disaster management. They reiterated the resolve of both the countries of working together on different issues of mutual interest.



362. Media Statements of Prime Minister and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

New Delhi, November 20, 2013.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh: Your Excellency Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the media,

I am delighted to welcome His Excellency General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong on his first State Visit to India.

Both India and Vietnam belong to a region that holds enormous potential, but also many challenges. We have a strong convergence of interests in working together, and with others in the region, for a stable, peaceful and prosperous Asia. We have therefore sought to build a comprehensive relationship with a broad-based agenda of bilateral and regional cooperation. Vietnam's emergence as one of the most vibrant economies in the Asia Pacific region is greatly welcomed by India, especially because we regard Vietnam as a trusted and privileged strategic partner and an important pillar of our Look East Policy.

General Secretary Trong and I held very cordial and productive discussions today. We have agreed on a number of initiatives that will define the contours of our Strategic Partnership in the years ahead.

We reaffirmed the importance of defence and security cooperation in our overall Strategic Partnership and agreed to strengthen it further. India will continue to assist Vietnam in modernization and training of its defence and security forces, including through a 100 million U.S. dollar line of credit for defence purchases. We will also help in setting up the Indira Gandhi High-tech Cyber Forensic Laboratory in Hanoi and a Vietnam-

India English and IT Training Centre at the National Defence Academy of Vietnam.

Our bilateral trade has grown steadily and we are on course to achieve the trade target of 7 billion US dollars by 2015. A new Joint Sub-Commission on Trade has been tasked to work towards realizing the enormous potential of our economic relations. Indian investments in Vietnam are growing and I requested General Secretary Trong to facilitate them further in Vietnam. I expressed appreciation for Vietnam's decision to award Tata Power a 1.8 billion US dollar thermal power project in Vietnam and the offer of another offshore block to ONGC Videsh Limited for continued oil and gas exploration. We also look forward to boosting our bilateral economic ties through the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement and connectivity projects. The Air Services Agreement signed today advances our goal of strengthening connectivity between our countries.

General Secretary Trong and I reviewed our development partnership and capacity-building efforts. The PARAM High Performance Computing Facility has just been inaugurated at the Hanoi University of Science and Technology, which is India's first gift of a supercomputer to another country. Vietnam has been an important partner in the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme, which we have agreed to continue. We have identified Education and Information Technology as important areas for further collaboration.

We are satisfied with the progress in Science and Technology cooperation, especially in bio-technology and agriculture. India also appreciates Vietnam's assistance in setting up its first overseas farm for catfish breeding, where Vietnam has proven expertise.

I conveyed the Archeological Survey of India's readiness to take up the project for conservation and restoration of the Cham Monuments, which are a symbol of our historical, civilizational and cultural contacts. We have also decided to open an Indian Culture Centre in Hanoi.

We have agreed to further strengthen contacts at all levels - national and provincial - and between leaders in all walks of life. We also look forward to initiating a Distinguished Visitors Programme soon.

We exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interest. We appreciate Vietnam's steadfast support to India's integration and engagement with the ASEAN and our aspiration for permanent membership of a reformed UN Security Council.

I believe that this visit by General Secretary Trong has put our Strategic Partnership on a firm growth path.

I thank you.

General Secretary, Communist Party of Vietnam (Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong): Your Excellency Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, ladies and gentlemen and dear friends:

I am very happy to visit the beautiful and hospitable land of India. On behalf of the Vietnamese Delegation I would like to express my sincere thanks to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the Government and the people of India for the hospitality and warm friendship extended to us.

Vietnam-India friendly relationship has been longstanding and it is growing fast. On the basis of the interests and vast potentials for bilateral cooperation, the two countries established Strategic Partnership in 2007. My current visit to India aims to further expand and deepen our Strategic Partnership.

The Prime Minister and I have had open, trusted and meaningful talks. We discussed the situation in each country and reached agreement on the direction and major measures to promote bilateral relations in the years ahead. We also shared views on regional and international issues of mutual interest.

We agreed to strengthen bilateral relations based on the five pillars underlined under the framework of the Strategic Partnership including the enhancement of close and trusted political ties and expansion of security and defence cooperation. We promote exchange of delegations at all levels including the highest level through such channels as state polity and people-to-people exchange.

We have identified economic, trade and investment cooperation as a priority of our future cooperation and set the goal of US\$ 15 billion for bilateral trade by 2020. At the same time, both sides should expand cooperation on culture, tourism, education and science and technology.

During this visit we signed cooperation agreements on such areas as trade, finance, energy, customs, transport, education, training, and people-to-people exchanges.

On the multilateral basis, the Prime Minister and I exchanged views on regional and international issues and agreed that we should strengthen collaboration at international forums, especially under the ASEAN-India cooperation framework, the EAS, the UN, and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Vietnam highly appreciates India's support of its candidacy for a non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for 2020-2021 terms. Vietnam reiterates its support for India to become a permanent member of the enlarged UN Security Council and a non-permanent of the UN Security Council for subsequent terms.

We highly appreciate India's persistent support of a peaceful resolution for the disputes in the East Sea of Vietnam on the basis of international laws, and in particular the 1982 enclaves ensuring maritime security and safety and freedom of navigation in the Asia-Pacific region.

I am confident that the outcome of today's talks along with the agreements signed during this visit will help deepen the Vietnam-India relationship taking it to the next level with added substances in line with the potentials and desire of our peoples for peace, stability, cooperation and development in the region and the world at large.

Thank you very much



363. Joint Statement on the occasion of the State Visit of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam to India.

New Delhi, November 20, 2013.

1. At the invitation of H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam paid a State visit to India from 19-22 November, 2013.
2. The General Secretary called on the President of India H.E. Shri Pranab Mukherjee and met Vice President H.E. Shri Hamid Ansari and Speaker of the Lok Sabha H.E. Smt Meera Kumar. Prime Minister held talks with the General Secretary and hosted a banquet in his honour. External Affairs Minister H.E. Shri Salman Khurshid and leaders of Indian political parties met the General Secretary separately. The General Secretary was accorded a ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapati Bhawan and he laid a wreath at the memorial of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat.
3. The General Secretary also visited Mumbai where he met the Governor of the state of Maharashtra and interacted with the Indian business community.
4. The leaders noted that India and Viet Nam had common objectives of inclusive growth and socio-economic development and affirmed that they shared a common vision to meet the aspirations of the peoples of both countries. They also noted that both countries faced similar challenges posed by global economic recession, the menace of terrorism and other issues confronting the international system. The Prime Minister reaffirmed that Vietnam was a pillar of India's Look East Policy, which was supported by the General Secretary. They envisaged a more active role for India in the regional and international arena.
5. The leaders recalled the great contributions of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and President Ho Chi Minh to the development of India - Viet Nam friendship, which was further nurtured by

subsequent generations of leaders and peoples of both countries. They expressed satisfaction that regular consultations at all levels had helped consolidate and expand bilateral ties.

6. The leaders expressed satisfaction at the success of the “India - Viet Nam Friendship Year” held in 2012 that celebrated the 40th anniversary of establishment of full diplomatic relations and the 5th anniversary of the Strategic Partnership between the two countries. The numerous events organized by both countries raised awareness among the people of both countries about the civilisational linkages between India and Viet Nam and the scope for future collaboration in the contemporary world.
7. The leaders emphasized that India - Viet Nam relationship was a time tested friendship, characterised by shared interests, mutual trust and multi-dimensional cooperation. In view of the convergence on strategic interests, they agreed to further strengthen and deepen the Strategic Partnership between the two countries. This would contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia Pacific region and beyond.

Strategic engagement

8. High level visits in recent years by the Indian President in 2008, Vice President in 2013, Prime Minister in 2010 and Speaker of Lok Sabha in 2011, and the Vietnamese President in 2011, Vice President in 2009, Chairman of National Assembly in 2010 and Prime Minister in 2012 reflected the importance attached to the strengthening of bilateral ties by both sides. The leaders decided to reinforce high level political interactions by enhancing the frequency of bilateral visits and meetings in the margins of regional and multilateral events.
9. The leaders welcomed the agreements and the substantive Action Plan adopted at the 15th Joint Commission Meeting in New Delhi on 11 July, 2013 and commended the important contributions made by other existing bilateral mechanisms for consolidating and expanding the relationship.

10. The leaders welcomed the decision to establish exchange of visits under the Distinguished Visitors Programme between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Commission for External Relations of the Communist Party of Vietnam to strengthen mutual understanding in the fields of governance, public policy, challenges of development and inclusive growth.
11. The leaders agreed that defence cooperation was a significant pillar of the strategic partnership between the two countries. The leaders welcomed the regular defence dialogue, training, exercises, Navy and Coast Guard ship visits, capacity building, exchange of think tanks and other exchanges between relevant agencies of the two countries in recent years. The utilization of the Line of Credit in the field of defence would further strengthen defence cooperation. The leaders recommended that both sides continue to work closely on suitable terms and conditions for the Line of Credit of US\$100 million in the field of defense to augment the momentum already created. Both sides welcomed the signing and implementation of the Arrangement on Protection of Classified Information between the two countries and the understanding on training of naval and air force personnel of Viet Nam, currently under implementation.
12. The leaders reiterated their desire and determination to work together to maintain peace, stability, growth and prosperity in Asia. They agreed that freedom of navigation in the East Sea/South China Sea should not be impeded and called the parties concerned to exercise restraint, avoid threat or use of force and resolve disputes through peaceful means in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the UNCLOS. They also welcomed the collective commitment of the concerned parties to abide by and implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and to work towards the adoption of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea on the basis of consensus. They called for cooperation in ensuring security of sea-lanes, maritime security, combating piracy and conducting search and rescue operations.

13. The leaders noted that cooperation had strengthened on security and law enforcement issues. They welcomed the signing of the Treaty on Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners. They also welcomed the entry into force of the Extradition Treaty signed between the two countries. They instructed relevant departments on both sides to focus on sharing of information and experience in combating organized crime, illicit arms and drug trafficking. They welcomed the signing of the MoU on establishment of the India-Gandhi High-tech Crime Laboratory in Ha Noi, Viet Nam and called for early realisation of the project. The Indian side agreed to continue assisting Vietnam in its efforts at training and capacity building and modernization efforts of the Vietnamese Police.
14. The leaders strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and agreed to increase cooperation in the fight against this global scourge. Both sides also agreed to further strengthen cooperation for an early conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, for which India had presented a draft at the United Nations.
15. The leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation and coordination to effectively address the challenges posed by non-traditional security threats such as climate change, environmental degradation, energy security, food and water security, HIV/AIDS and avian influenza.
16. The leaders decided to broaden bilateral cooperation in areas such as space technology, natural resource management and use, disaster management and mitigation, weather forecasting, oceanography, hydrology, meteorology, nanotechnology and civil nuclear cooperation. They instructed relevant authorities on both sides to work towards early completion of the project to establish a satellite tracking, data reception and processing centre in Ho Chi Minh city under India-ASEAN Cooperation and agreed that both sides will explore new areas such as launching of Vietnamese satellites using Indian launch vehicles and assistance in setting up of earth observation centre in Vietnam.

Economic partnership

17. The leaders agreed that enhancing the economic partnership was one of the main components of the strategic partnership between the two countries. They welcomed the outcome of the first meeting of the India - Viet Nam Sub-Commission on Trade held in New Delhi on 18 November, 2013. They noted with satisfaction the steady growth in bilateral trade, which on way to meet the target of US\$ 7 billion by 2015. They noted that favourable conditions should be created for further boosting bilateral trade to US\$ 15 billion by 2020 and for promoting mutual investments especially in the areas of education, infrastructure, hydrocarbons, power generation, new and renewable energy, agriculture, textiles, information technology, and pharmaceuticals. The leaders also agreed to work for the early signing and implementation of the India-ASEAN FTA in Services and Investments to build on the momentum created by India-ASEAN FTA in Goods. They also agreed work together for early realisation of RCEP so as to facilitate India's integration into the ASEAN Economic Community.
18. The Vietnamese side welcomed new investments by Indian companies in oil and gas upstream and downstream projects in Vietnam. The leaders noted with satisfaction that Viet Nam's Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) has offered new areas to India for oil and gas exploration.
19. Both sides welcomed and committed to facilitate the opening of branch offices by their commercial banks in each others' countries, in accordance with the laws of the host country, universally recognized principles of international trade as well as bilateral commitments. They expressed satisfaction with the cooperation between the Ministries of Finance and Customs Departments of the two countries.
20. The leaders encouraged cooperation between the private sectors of both countries and reaffirmed their support to the Viet Nam-India Business Forum and the activities of the chambers of commerce and industry of both countries. The Vietnamese side

also agreed to actively support the "ASEAN - India Business Council".

21. The leaders welcomed and supported Tata Power to participate as the developer of the 1320 MW Long Phu 2 power project. This would be the largest Indian investment in Viet Nam and would act as a forerunner towards greater investment flows from India.
22. The leaders decided to strengthen physical connectivity through land, sea & air transport between India and Viet Nam. They welcomed the signing of the Air Services Agreement that would promote cooperation in the civil aviation sector. They welcomed the signing of the bilateral Maritime Shipping Agreement and proposed to initiate discussions, at the official level, on a sub-regional shipping agreement between India and CLMV countries. They highlighted the importance of extension of the road connectivity between India and Vietnam and welcomed India's suggestion to discuss soft infrastructure requirements to facilitate seamless movement of goods and services across economic corridors and initiation of discussions on an ASEAN-India Transit Transport Agreement (AITTA), to be concluded by end 2015.
23. The leaders highlighted the important contribution of capacity building and development partnership projects such as the establishment of a Viet Nam-India English Language, IT training Centre at the National Defence Academy in Hanoi, the Vocational Training Centre in Ho Chi Minh City and the operationalization of the High Performance Computing Facility at Hanoi University of Science and Technology. They also agreed to expedite new projects involving Lines of Credit from India. The Vietnamese side welcomed the establishment of the India-CLMV Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) Fund under which short gestation projects would be undertaken with grant assistance from India, to directly benefit local communities in a visible and immediate manner in areas such as education, health, sanitation and community development.
24. The leaders noted the strong cooperation in agriculture and related fields and agreed to further deepening of cooperation in research

and development in agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture, animal husbandry and dairy. They called for an early convening of the India-Vietnam conference on Agriculture between the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Vietnam Academy of Agriculture Sciences (VAAS) and highlighted the immense scope for further collaborations. They welcomed the establishment of a *Pangasius* breeding farm in India in cooperation with Vietnam. They agreed to promote information exchange and research in Early Mortality Syndrome in shrimp industry.

25. The leaders noted with satisfaction the signing of the Programme of Cooperation in Science and Technology for 2013-14. Both sides also welcomed the Program of Cooperation between the Ministry of Science and Technology of Viet Nam and the Department of Biotechnology of India.

Cultural and people-to-people contacts

26. The leaders agreed to deepen friendly exchanges, people to people contacts and cooperation in the fields of culture, archaeology, conservation, museology, tourism, public health, sports, education and media. They welcomed early establishment of sister-city relations between Mumbai and Ho Chi Minh City. The Viet Nam side welcomed the decision to open an Indian Culture Centre in Hanoi to promote exchange of artists and troupes, holding of film festivals, exchanges between the youth and other cultural activities.
27. The leaders called for early signing of the MoU on Conservation and Restoration of Cham monuments by the Archaeological Survey of India at My Son heritage site in Viet Nam.
28. The leaders noted with satisfaction outcome of the 2nd meeting of the Joint Working Group on Educational Exchange for cooperation between universities and academia, in particular the proposal for introduction of the Indian Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum in Vietnamese schools.

Cooperation in regional and international fora

29. The leaders noted the growing role of both countries in regional affairs and agreed to further strengthen cooperation at regional and international fora, especially in the ASEAN, the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+), the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations and the Non-aligned Movement. The leaders highlighted that their cooperation was in keeping with the common desire and determination of both sides to work together for peace, prosperity and stability in the region and the world.
30. India expressed its appreciation for Vietnam's continued support for India's permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council. The Indian side reaffirmed its support for Viet Nam's candidature for the United Nations Security Council non-permanent membership for the term 2020-21 and the Vietnamese side expressed reciprocal support for India's candidature for the United Nations Security Council non-permanent membership for a subsequent term. Viet Nam also expressed support for India's membership of the Human Rights Council for the term 2015-17. The Vietnamese side expressed its appreciation for India's support to its application for membership of the International Hydrographic Organization. The Indian side expressed appreciation for Viet Nam's support for its re-election to category-II seat in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Council.
31. The leaders welcomed the signing of a number of bilateral agreements and MoUs during the visit and called on relevant departments to initiate steps for early implementation of these agreements fully. The documents signed during the visit included: Air Service Agreement, MOU for setting up of the Indira Gandhi Hightech Crime Lab in Hanoi, Agreement on Protection of Classified Information, MOU between two Ministries of Finance, Cooperation Agreement between Hanoi National University and

Indian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, MoU on Cooperation between India Institute of Management (IIM) Bangalore and HCM National Academy of Public Administration, MoU between Vietnam Oil and Gas Group and ONGC Videsh Limited(OVL), and MOU between Vietnam Ministry of Industry and Trade and Tata Power Ltd. on development of Long Phu 2 Thermal Power Project in Soc Trang, Vietnam.

32. The interaction between the two leaders was warm, cordial and friendly. General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong expressed his gratitude to the Government and the friendly people of India for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to him and the accompanying delegation during his State visit to the Republic of India. General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong extended an invitation to Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to visit Viet Nam at a mutually convenient date. The Prime Minister accepted the invitation with pleasure. The dates of the visit will be finalized through diplomatic channels.

List of documents signed during the State Visit of Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of Communist Party of Vietnam to India

November 20, 2013

List of documents signed during the State Visit of Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of Communist Party of Vietnam to India

S. No	Name	Vietnamese Signatory	Indian Signatory	Remarks
1 air	Air Service Agreement	Mr. Dinh La Thang Minister for Transport	Shri Ajit Singh Minister for Civil Aviation	The ASA seeks to promote international services, including direct flights between the two countries and also to promote an international aviation system based on competition among airlines. The ASA will ensure the highest degree of safety and security in international air services and

S. No	Name	Vietnamese Signatory	Indian Signatory	Remarks
				reaffirms the grave concern about acts or threats against the security of aircraft, which jeopardize the safety of persons or property and adversely affects the operation of air services.
2	MOU for setting up of the Indira Gandhi Hightech Crime Lab (IGHCL) in Hanoi	Lieutenant General Le Quy Vuong Deputy Minister for Public Security	Smt. Preeti Saran, Ambassador of India to Vietnam	The MoU reaffirms the desire to further strengthen and consolidate the cooperation between the two countries in the field of crime investigation, counter terrorism and other transnational organized crime, and other relevant areas. India shall provide financial grant towards procurement of technical equipment for IGHCL, teaching aids, training programmes for staff members and deputation of experts and Vietnam shall provide a permanent venue and related infrastructure to establish the IGHCL in Hanoi.
3	Agreement on Protection of Classified Information	Senior Lieutenant General Nguyen Chi Vinh Deputy Minister for Defence	Shri Radha Krishna Mathur Defence Secretary	The MoU is based on the principles of the MoU on Defence Cooperation signed between the two countries in November 2009 to recognise the benefits of sharing of information and to confirm mutual interest in protection of such information in accordance with the

S.No	Name	Vietnamese Signatory	Indian Signatory	Remarks
4	MOU between two Ministries of Finance	Mdm. Vu Thi Mai Deputy Minister for Finance	Dr. Arvind Mayaram, Mayaram, x Dept. of Economic Affairs	<p>respective national laws and relevant provisions.</p> <p>The MoU will permit the parties to strengthen exchanges and share experiences in the fiscal policies for transitional economies, macro economic management, budget management process, financial policies to support high technology and software technology development. Exchange of financial policies would be used to develop policies in related areas as mutually agreed by the Parties.</p>
5	Cooperation Agreement between Hanoi National University and Indian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research	Prof. Phung Xuan Nha President of Vietnam National University, Hanoi	Prof Samir K Brahmachari DG CSIR & Secretary, Dept. of Scientific & Industrial Research	<p>The purpose of the Agreement is to promote Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the two institutions aimed at developing a long term S&T collaboration between the two countries and also promoting friendly relations. This would include exchange of Scientists, Research Scholars and Specialists etc. for the purpose of research, training and consultation.</p>
6	MoU on Cooperation between India Institute of Management (IIM) Bangalore	Prof. Truong Thi Thong Vice President of Ho Chi Minh National Academy	Prof. Devanath Tirupati Director (In-Charge), IIMB	<p>The MoU shall focus on the activities and programmes such as exchange of faculty members and students, joint</p>

S. No	Name	Vietnamese Signatory	Indian Signatory	Remarks
	and HCM National Academy of Public Administration	of Public Administration		research activities, participation in seminars and academic meetings, exchange of academic materials and other information, special short-term academic programmes, training programmes and study tours. The cooperation will initially be focused on Public Policy, Entrepreneurship, Corporate Governance, Training for executives from public and private sector enterprises, Social Sciences and Student & Faculty Exchanges.
7	MoU between Vietnam Oil and Gas Group and ONGC Videsh Limited(OVL)	Mr. Nguyen Vu Truong Son Vice President of Petro Vietnam	Mr. D. K. Saraf Managing Director, OVL	The MoU provides for association in the field of exploration, development and production of petroleum resources between the two countries for new investments by OVL in oil and gas blocks in Vietnam for oil and gas exploration and production. Petro Vietnam is also invited to participate in open blocks in India and in third countries.
8	MOU between Vietnam Ministry of Industry and Trade and Tata Power Ltd. on development of Long Phu 2	Mr. Nguyen Khac Tho Deputy Director General of the Energy Department	Shri Anil Sardana Chief Executive Officer, Tata Power	The MoU approves TATA Power belonging to TATA Group to act as Investor to develop Long Phu 2, coal-fired Power Plant Project of 2x660 MW capacity. The Project will be designed,

S. No	Name	Vietnamese Signatory	Indian Signatory	Remarks
	Thermal Power Project in Soc Trang, Vietnam			engineered, procured, contracted, constructed, owned, operated and maintained through a BOT Company owned by TATA Power and additional investors, with TATA Power as the lead member and will reach commercial operation in accordance with Agreements with the Vietnam side.



364. Prime Minister's speech at the banquet hosted in the honour of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

Hanoi, November 20, 2013.

Your Excellency General Secretary Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong,
Distinguished Guests,

It is a great pleasure tonight for me to welcome amongst us His Excellency the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam on his first State visit to India. Excellency, your visit to India in 2010 as the Chairman of Vietnam's National Assembly added great momentum to our relationship. Tonight, we welcome you back as a friend and a leader of a great country - a nation that has stood as a symbol of resilience, resolve and heroism for generations of Indians and which is now a vibrant economy at the heart of a dynamic region. Your leadership, Excellency, is vital not only for Vietnam's progress, but also for our region's stability and prosperity.

Excellency, if Bodh Gaya is the symbol of our shared spiritual heritage, the historic Cham monuments in My Son in Vietnam equally bear witness

to the vigorous civilizational links between our two countries. Our great leaders, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and President Ho Chi Minh, forged a partnership in the wake of the retreat of colonialism from Asia. There was a relationship based on mutual trust and respect, sentiments which have also been our guiding principles as we have slowly built our relationship in the modern era.

Today, in this new century, at a time of new dynamism in our two economies and in a resurgent Asia of great promise and many challenges, our relationship holds ever greater promise.

It was to fulfil this promise that, six years ago, our two countries embarked on a new journey of Strategic Partnership. It is a partnership of great character, diversity and depth. Our political engagement and our growing defence and security relationship are of immense value to our two countries. Our convergent interests, including in maritime security, have translated into productive partnerships in regional and multilateral fora.

Our economic and energy relations are growing. We are working together on oil exploration and production in the East Sea and your offer of new blocks for exploration and award of a 1.8 billion U.S. dollar power project to Indian companies demonstrate the promise of our economic relations.

India's support in the 1970s for the transformation of Vietnam's rice cultivation and, now, in your special gesture of establishing Vietnam's first overseas catfish breeding farm in India, are very special symbols of friendship and mutual support in capacity building, which now also covers areas such as information technology, education and science and technology.

Excellency, Vietnam is an important pillar of our Look East Policy and crucial for our vision of India's integration with ASEAN. As India-Vietnam relations prosper, India-ASEAN relations will also deepen. As heirs to the ancient wisdom of Asia and blessed with the energy of its youth, India and Vietnam have common interests, profound responsibility and enormous opportunities to promote peace, stability and prosperity in Asia Pacific.

Long ago, a Vietnamese monk said, "We have more possibilities in a moment than we realise". Your visit, Excellency, shows that we are

seizing every possibility and every moment to make our relationship richer and bring our people closer.

With those words, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I request you to join me in a toast to:

1. the good health and happiness of His Excellency Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam;
2. the prosperity and happiness of the people of Vietnam and;
3. the everlasting friendship between India and Vietnam.



(iii) West & Central Asia

365. Foreign Secretary's inaugural address at the Conference 'The Arab World: March Towards Democracy and its Implications' at Mahatama Gandhi University, Kottayam.

Kottayam, February 4, 2013.

Respected Mr. K.P.S. Menon, Foreign Secretaries, Ambassador A.P. Fabian, Ambassador T.P. Srinivasan, Mr. Seethi, ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour and a privilege for me to deliver the inaugural address of the Conference 'Arab World: March Towards Democracy and its Implications'.

The MEA greatly values the views and opinion of people all over the country and we regard it as a privilege to partner MG University in this activity. I believe that MEA is a pioneer in public outreach – we have an active press relations division, and our Public Diplomacy Division is a manifestation of our widening horizons. We organized the first ever national seminar of International Relations Departments of Universities from all over the country in 2011. With this little self-congratulation let me turn to the subject at hand.

The developments we have witnessed over the last two years in the Arab World are unprecedented, have brought in phenomenal changes and have altered the character of regional politics. Whether these constitute a March towards Democracy is for history to judge. Let me just preface my remarks by saying that the significance of the developments is not only for individual countries in the region, but equally important for India too, and the subject of the seminar is indeed one of global significance. Hence this conference here in Kottayam is particularly valuable. When we talk of the Arab world it is necessary to recall that a significant part of this world is in Asia, and has therefore the so called Arab Spring has some meaning for the future of Asia and of India. Even before independence Pandit Nehru spoke of India's place as the natural centre and focal point of many forces at work in Asia. "The history of India is a long history of her relations with other countries of Asia. If you should know India you have to go to Afghanistan and West Asia, to China, Japan and then countries of South East Asia".

I started by saying it is for history to come to judgement on the so called Arab Spring. Two years is clearly too short a time to deterministically and accurately judge the implication of these events, especially when they continue to unfold even as we speak. (Recall the answer which Premier Chou en Lai never actually gave about it being “too early to tell” how he assessed the French Revolution!) At the same time, while a rush to judgement should be avoided, policy makers need assessments of what has happened so far to help them in the task of policy formulation. And policy is about people not about abstract concepts. I am glad therefore that we are holding this conference in Kottayam which is the heartland of the area from which millions of our citizens have gone to the Gulf; and for whom, the issue unfolding in West Asia are of critical importance in their daily lives.

It is obvious that for India, the Gulf which we consider our extended neighbourhood and the West Asia-North Africa (WANA) region is of vital strategic importance. We have said this to all our partners – who seek our views on matters ranging from Iran to Syria. The region is home to more than 5 million Indians (a significant percentage of them from Kerala) who contribute over US\$ 35 billion in remittances every year. Some estimates are that more than 20 % of Kerala’s GDP is dependent on the Gulf. India’s overall economic and commercial engagement with these countries is around US\$ 160 billion per annum. The region is a source of around 60% of our oil and gas requirement and hence critical for our energy security. It is also a major source of phosphatic and other fertilizers and hence a factor in our food security. Stability in the region is, therefore, vital to India’s national interest. This has become a mantra in Delhi today – but decades ago – in Kerala this was instinctively understood. That is why so many have sought to build ties with the region and influence foreign policy decisions, and do want calculations based on the importance of stability.

I must assure you that the interests of our working people have been uppermost in our minds when we analyze West Asia. Yet India’s policy towards the region and developments there, and our posture in the Security Council have also been guided by our principled desire not to interfere in the internal affairs of States and being non-prescriptive. We are aware of the ramifications of the movements for democracy. We are aware that in many countries rulers have not accepted the new tide of

democracy. We have called for restraint in the use of coercive measures against people who we believe should be permitted to articulate their aspirations. But we are absolutely clear – (to put it in PM's words) that societies cannot be re-ordered from outside through military force and that people in all countries have the right to choose their own destiny and decide their own future. In some cases that may take time particularly in countries with traditional power structures – but in the end the democracy that emerges is sustainable.

Developments which we are witnessing in the Arab World affect, first and foremost, the countries and peoples of that part of the world. While transition in some countries has been relatively smooth, such as in Tunisia, in others like Libya it was affected by a drawn out campaign and blatant external intervention – however explained. That said we do respect the new leadership that has emerged in Libya and its commitment to representative government. Our Ambassador to Libya has developed contacts with the new leadership. Many of them have experience of India and respect for our governance model. We hope circumstances will enable the thousands of Indians who left to revive their professional and business ties with Libya. The conflict in Syria is still being waged and there has been considerable loss of life and blood-shed. The outcome is still in the balance and it is too early to say what will emerge. Egypt, which saw a change in leadership soon after the popular uprising is today witnessing violence and clashes as it moves to put in place a new system and structure of governance. Clearly, the road to transition and change has not been easy. We helped a little with election management. Elections are a critical condition but not the only one for democratic government. I am reminded of the description of Kerala as the Yenan of India and my response to the praise of Kerala as the first place where Communists took power through the ballot; viz. that they have won many elections, but Kerala is also the first place where they exited from power through the ballot. And there is a profound message in this – because it is only through repeated elections that the democratic roots are laid down; when people look to interests and broader aspirations beyond slogans and religious appeals – which may be dominant in the first elections. And it is this long term view which provides a degree of optimism. Any government in the region which has to provide welfare to its people – will ultimately need safety and stability of its administration, of its workers

and investors, steady production of natural resources and trade partners. What we need is a way of navigating the short term.

The popular movements which emerged in countries across the region were not ideology led or driven by a cohesive group. In fact, there is some debate about how it all started – in Tunisia. But at the same time recall the history of popular movements in Egypt, the rise of the Wafd and other parties from the 1920s and you realize there is a historical basis for democratic upsurge. Just as in India in Egypt it was tied to national resurgence. There was of course a long period of political stagnation when democratic expression was suppressed, so there is a learning curve to be climbed. Now the movements, in some countries where they were successful in affecting regime change are said to have ceded political space to “Islamists” as outcomes of democratic process. What are the implications of this? I have an issue with the simplistic term “Islamist”. But even if one accepts it, the issue is:- would “Islamists” dominate the political space or would it be shared in democratic manner with other more secular political actors? With this question comes the issue of the place for religious minorities and women in new power structures – these groups were in the fore-front of many of the popular movements. And, most importantly, we should ask ourselves the question as to what we can do to contribute to the process of capacity and institution building in these countries. It is in our interest that democracy stabilizes and brings the religious and secular forces into an evolutionary framework. As I said earlier – above all democracy means submitting government to popular will at the end of the term; and meanwhile governance in accord with the freedoms that make participatory democracy meaningful. Thus our analysis would require looking beyond the economic calculations of long and short term that I earlier made.

Equally significant are the implications of the unfolding developments for regional and global geopolitics. Some of the regimes which had provided the bulwark of a particular vision of security in the region for superpowers are no more. What kind of role would the successor regimes play? The turmoil in Syria has far reaching reverberations which go well beyond the country's or the region's borders. The Shia-Sunni fault-line which runs through the region adds its own volatility to the potent mix. The impact of the developments on the Arab-Israeli conflict, major power rivalry and the regional power equations requires close monitoring and

in-depth analysis. For us in India – and China – and perhaps Europe – the impact on oil production trends also has to be factored in. It is we in Asia (not US) who are now critically dependent on oil from West Asia. If the democratic upsurge affects oil production it is Indian and Chinese consumers who will feel the effects first. It is heartening that there are so many professionals and technocrats in the democratic movements.

At another level, the developments in the region have a direct bearing on global terrorism and hence on our national security. The situation in Mali today is inter-alia a consequence of the turmoil in Libya whether acknowledged or not. Al-Qaeda and its affiliates such as Ansar-dine in Mali, Al-Shabaab in Somalia and others have sought to exploit the political instability in the region to their advantage. Arms pumped into the region are finding their way to terror groups. The unending conflict in Syria is facilitating similar trends in that country, providing terror groups arms and sanctuary. It would be worthwhile for this Conference to look closely at this phenomenon and its very serious implications for the world at large. Are these forces exogenous to the region? Are they separate from the democratic surge? And do we need international cooperation to deal with the menace of terrorism.

While a number of countries in the region witnessed popular movements, only six – Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain have witnessed large scale upsurges which challenged the regimes. Would such movements spread to other countries of the region? While swift change in leadership and/or regime could encourage popular unrest in other countries, drawn out, violent and bloody conflicts could well act as a deterrent. While technology facilitated the spread of information and mobilisation of people, there are other traditional networks including social and religion-based which act as countervailing forces. (This is by the way something which even fully functional democracies are familiar with!) Except Bahrain which sits on the Shia-Sunni fault line and where the demonstrations were contained through regional effort, all other countries which have witnessed large scale popular movements, are non-monarchies. Will this continue to be so? Do monarchies enjoy greater credibility amongst the populace? There are questions which your seminar needs to address: Let me say we have been conscious of the need to avoid a 'one size fits all' approach. We have been guided by a sense of solidarity with democratic movements, opposition to external

interventions, and being very clear about the preservation of our relations in the national interest.

The issue of whether the Spring is actually a regional phenomenon could be put differently by posing the question, whether the desire for change is a Pan-Arab phenomenon. Rami G. Khoury, Editor-at-large of the Daily Star in a piece written at the end of last year said that there is no such thing as a cohesive, single “Arab World” as every Arab country follows a different path in pursuing its own political re-configuration. Khoury, however, added that the 350 million ordinary Arab men and women across the region are nevertheless expressing some common grievances, attitudes and aspirations. Among them there is a desire to acquire freedom that people in other parts of the world take for granted. To restore their place in the global movement of ideas and achievements. This is not just about social media led middle classes – though these media facilitate a leadership role; they are conscious they once had a great place in the world of ideas. Recall Nehru’s words about the extraordinary achievements of Arab civilization in historical times: “The intellectual curiosity, the adventures in rationalist speculation, the spirit of scientific enquiry, among the Arabs of the 8th and 9th centuries are very striking”. The heirs to such a great tradition cannot long accept being unable to participate in the globalization of cultural, scientific and spiritual movements. We in India certainly cannot stand aloof from this mobilization.

To conclude, ‘the march towards democracy’, as the Conference title refers to Arab aspirations, is a path of promise but fraught with challenges and pit falls. It is a path of far reaching consequences and would need to be traversed with caution. There will be no dearth of self serving detractors working for their own narrow interests; but in the end democratic movements are larger than the specific interests which might motivate some among them. And as beneficiaries of democracy ourselves, we believe the implications of the democratic upsurge would be positive in the long run.

I wish the Conference all success.

Thank you



366. Inaugural Address by Defence Minister A.K. Antony at the 15th Asian Security Conference on “Emerging Trends in West Asia: Regional and Global Implications”.

New Delhi, February 13, 2013.

Members of the strategic communality

Distinguished participants,

Excellencies,

Members of the media,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address this distinguished gathering that has come together for the 15th Asian Security Conference being organised by IDSA. Over the years, the Conference has attracted eminent strategic experts and scholars from across the world. This is the 15th year in a row that the IDSA is organising a conference on themes pertaining to Asian security.

The response of the international strategic community to this year’s theme, “Emerging Trends in West Asia: Regional and Global Implications”, has been encouraging. In the context of West Asia, the theme is highly relevant, as developments in West Asia have a major impact on regional and international security. Many distinguished speakers from West Asia, North Africa, United States, United Kingdom, Europe, Australia, Pakistan, Japan and China will be sharing their views during the Conference. ‘

Since December 2010, the Middle East has been experiencing tumultuous changes. These changes have ushered in fundamental political and socio-economic transformation in the Arab world. New political dispensations have taken over in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen. Such transition, unfortunately, has been accompanied by large-scale violence. The ongoing violence in Syria is a matter of concern for the region, as well as the world. Moreover, recently, extremists believed to be linked with the Al Qaeda elements took over the government in Mali. Meanwhile, France has sent its military forces for intervention.

The recent developments in all these countries afford a few lessons: Firstly, no government, or regime, can afford to ignore the popular

aspirations anymore. The common strand running through all these protests and demonstrations has been the youth. The voice of the youth is a universal message that is strongly echoing across to governments in all regions of the world. The strong urge for change is clearly visible across the region. Secondly, the process of transformation is far from complete and on the contrary, has just begun. The journey ahead will be long, tortuous and full of unexpected twists and turns. Thirdly, the developments in West Asia have the potential of changing the regional and geopolitical landscape. The West Asia region is critical for energy security. Instability in the region will have an impact on global oil prices, availability of oil and gas and shipping of these resources. Fourthly, though traditional political and socio-economic structures have been transformed, new structures that will replace them have not yet got consolidated. While fundamentalist forces have got a fillip, democracy is yet to be consolidated. New political equations are emerging in Iraq and Afghanistan, which has heightened regional and global uncertainties. Lastly, social media has emerged as a potent and vibrant force. The social media has served as a 'force multiplier' in the hands of the protesters.

For India, in particular, West Asia is a critical region. People-to-people contacts have existed between India and West Asia for centuries. These links have got deepened and further strengthened in the era of globalisation. Our stability and prosperity are affected by the developments in the region. First, the Gulf region is vital for India's energy security. The region has about 48% of the world's total proven oil reserves and almost 16% of the world's natural gas reserves. Nearly two-thirds of our hydrocarbon imports are from this region. This will continue to be so in the near future. In addition, nearly 6.5 million Indians live and work in different countries of this region. A World Bank report says that India received US \$ 70 billion in remittances during 2012 and a majority of the remittances came from the Gulf region. These remittances support nearly 40-50 million families in India and at the same time, contribute to local prosperity. During 2011, India evacuated nearly 19, 000 Indians working in Libya. The safety and security of Indians working in the region is a sensitive concern for the Indian government.

India's trade with the region is expanding. During 2011-12, India's trade with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was more than \$145 billion (with

exports and imports from the region standing at 20% and 14%) respectively). India also offers a destination for surplus funds in GCC countries. India has a long tradition of democracy and it is home to a diverse, pluralistic society. The democratic processes have managed its vast regional, cultural, linguistic and regional diversity. At a time when several West Asian nations are in a state of transition, India can share its experiences with the governments and civil societies.

Recent developments have complicated the security situation in the region. Given India's vital stakes in peace and stability in the region, it is natural for India to have an interest in abiding peace and security in the region. At the same time, long-standing conflicts in the region cannot be ignored.

India can ill-afford to remain aloof from the transformative changes taking place in its immediate and extended neighbourhood. We have centuries old linkages with the Arab world. Our civilisations have closely interacted and influenced each other in the past. We have excellent bilateral relations and the relation can be placed on an even stronger footing in the new phase that has set in recently in West Asia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This Conference is holding deliberations on several themes. The discussions will explore the causes behind the ongoing transformation; look into the future and make an attempt to assess the regional and global impacts of these changes. I have been told that several sessions will also explore India's relations with this region. I am sure that the delegates will come up with crucial inputs and practical recommendations during these discussions.

With these words, I hope that our foreign guests will have a pleasant and an enjoyable stay. I wish the deliberations at the Conference all success.

Thank you. Jai Hind.



367. IBSA Statement on the Middle East Peace Process**August 23, 2013**

Taking into consideration the previous declarations of the India, Brazil and South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA) on the Middle East Peace Process, the Foreign Ministers of India, Salman Khurshid; Brazil, Antonio Patriota; and South Africa, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, after consultations, agreed on the following statement:

We reaffirm that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains an urgent and key issue for the international community, the resolution of which is a prerequisite for building a sustainable and lasting peace in the Middle East region.

We support the mediation efforts undertaken by the U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and welcome the announcement of the resumption of direct final status negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis. This is an encouraging development, one that has the potential for reverting the deadlock and paralysis that have plagued the peace process in recent years. We hope this renewed effort will lead to the full and overdue realization of a two-state solution based on 1967 borders.

We have noted with satisfaction the decision of Israel to release 104 Palestinian prisoners, which is a gesture that contributes to the spirit of cooperation surrounding the negotiations. We are also pleased with the announcement made on 30 July by Mr. Kerry indicating that the Palestinian and Israeli negotiators are committed to reaching a comprehensive peace agreement within nine months. Such an agreement should culminate in the full realization of an independent Palestinian State. We call on the parties to adhere strictly to this timetable.

As we reiterate our call for the Security Council to fully exercise its functions under the UN Charter, with regard to the Palestinian Question, we express our firm belief that the Council should provide sustained support to the peace process and work towards its full and satisfactory completion.



368. Address by Minister for External Affairs on 'International Interests in Middle East Security and Non-Proliferation' at IISS Manama Dialogue

Manama, December 8, 2013.

Dr. Chipman,

Distinguished participants in the Manama Dialogue,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to begin by thanking the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) for inviting me to this prestigious event, the first time for an Indian Minister for External Affairs. I would also like to thank the Kingdom of Bahrain for the excellent sponsorship of this meeting.

The Gulf region is India's extended neighbourhood. It has historically been an important artery for the flow of goods and ideas and movement of peoples from and to India. Just one subject – seaborne trade – is enough to illustrate the learning that has happened in the two directions. In addition to these historical civilisational links, there are several factors of contemporary importance in our relationship with the countries of the Gulf.

Let me list the vital stakes that India has with the Gulf countries. As a region, the Gulf is our largest trading partner. Our bilateral trade with the Gulf has increased from US\$ 167 billion in 2011-12 to over US\$ 180 billion in 2012-13. The traditional dominance of oil imports persists but there are encouraging trends. For instance, our exports to Saudi Arabia increased by over 70% last year to reach nearly US\$ 10 billion.

Two-third of India's oil and gas requirement comes from the Gulf and thus the region plays a vital role in our energy security. About 7 million Indians live and work in the Gulf and their remittances contribute 40% of our total inward remittances of US\$ 70 billion a year and thus play a critical role in our external finances. The contribution of Indian expatriates to the socio-economic development of their host countries is well recognized and they are respected for their technical competence, sense of discipline, non-involvement in regional political issues and for their law-abiding nature.

The Gulf region is also a potential source of sizeable investments for us. The GCC members have significant surplus capital and India is one of the few countries, having the capacity to absorb large capital flows for infrastructure development. The Gulf is now a significant platform for the operations of Indian companies. It is also a hub for outbound Indian passengers and tourists, with 700 flights a week between UAE and India alone.

Relevant to the theme of this meeting, there are new areas of growing importance in our bilateral partnership with the Gulf such as counter-terrorism, money laundering and anti-piracy. Defence is another emerging area of cooperation. We are adding joint military exercises, friendly visits of naval ships and broad-based MoUs on defence cooperation to the traditional templates of bilateral cooperation. This is not surprising as the vital security interests of the two sides are interlinked. We also remain engaged on issues of WMD proliferation and disarmament in the Middle East given the global impact of WMD proliferation, including on India's own security interests, and given India's consistent commitment to the global and verifiable elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. I will return to this theme in a little while.

The attention of the international community has been riveted in the past couple of years on West Asia, in particular on the aftereffects of the so-called Arab Spring. In India too, we have been engaged with these developments, and their impact on the countries in the Arabian Peninsula as any instability in this region could affect our vital interests. India is a vibrant democracy and we find that such a political system best suits our national temperament and needs. We are in favour of democratic pluralism and religious moderation but it is up to the people of the region to decide the pace and the means to achieve those goals, keeping in mind their traditions and history. We are also against armed conflict or external intervention as a way of resolving political issues in the region or elsewhere in the world.

Two and half years after the Arab Spring, the earlier, exaggerated expectations of progress towards democracy have turned out to be misplaced. Initial optimism has given way to serious concerns about the aftermath of those much-hyped events. Let me list a couple of concerns as we see them from India. The first is that of the hijacking of genuine demands for democracy and pluralism by radical elements driven by

narrow agendas. We see this for example in Syria. The second is the exacerbation of sectarian divides. The horrific sectarian killings in Iraq and Libya are a daily reminder of this danger. All those who live in plural societies, and we are all plural these days in some way or the other - can be affected by this growing divide. Jockeying to shift the strategic balance to the advantage of those unaffected by the Arab spring has further added to the climate of political uncertainty generated by the aftermath of the Arab spring. Such a climate of political upheaval makes developing stable bilateral cooperation difficult. Egypt, a vital partner in the Arab world, is a case in point.

The most serious situation today, however, is Syria. The Syrian uprising, which began in Daraa on 18 March 2011 and later spread to other cities in stages, has now developed into a full-fledged civil war with external dimensions. Nearly one-fourth of the country's population has been displaced. The humanitarian impact of the war has been heartrending. India condemns violence by all sides and supports dialogue and negotiations between the Government and the insurgents, leading to the formation of a Transitional Governing Body, followed by elections, as envisaged under the Geneva Communiqué of June 2012. Any external military intervention is unlikely to help. Apart from the question of legality, there are concerns about the spill over effects of any such action and the possibly undesirable consequence of fueling extremism. The only silver lining in recent weeks is the rapid progress achieved on destruction of Syria's chemical weapons and we do hope that the cooperation seen among the major powers and the Syrian government that led to the agreement of time-bound destruction of Syria's chemical weapons can now extend to the trickier area of a political resolution of the conflict. I am happy to share with this distinguished audience India's decision to provide US dollars 1 million as well as experts and training for the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons. This is in keeping with India's active participation in the Chemical Weapons Convention and our firm commitment to the global and verifiable elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. The peaceful resolution of the crisis over Syria's chemical weapons shows that global, non-discriminatory regimes on non-proliferation and disarmament matter and that they have a crucial role in resolving international security challenges.

The Iranian nuclear issue has been festering for several years, creating uncertainty across and beyond the region. Recent developments, however, are encouraging. We welcome the agreement in Geneva reached on 24 November between Iran and the E3+3. This agreement is consistent with India's position that the issue should be resolved diplomatically on the basis of recognition of Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in accordance with Iran's international obligations as a non-nuclear weapon state. We also welcome the agreement reached on 11 November between Iran and the IAEA, which is the competent technical agency to verify the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities, on practical measures for enhanced IAEA verification activity at Iranian nuclear sites. That should help rebuild confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities. It is our hope that the interim steps that have been agreed in Geneva would build trust and confidence between Iran and the international community and lead to a durable and long-term settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue.

I am pleased to share with this audience that we have not let the recent uncertainties come in the way of our growing engagement with all countries of the Arabian Peninsula and the broader Middle East. This mutually beneficial engagement is based on a clear-headed assessment of our national interest and our bilateral complementarities. Our successful efforts to upgrade our relations with both Saudi Arabia and Iraq are an illustration of this approach. The cooperation we are getting on counter-terrorism for example is a tribute to the mutual trust and understanding we have been able to build together. Further in the Middle East, another example is the bilateral engagement we have been able to construct with Egypt – my dear friend Nabil Fahmy was in India just a few days ago - despite the rapidly changing political landscape in the region.

Before concluding let me dwell for a while on some of the long-term strategic facets of India's relationship with the Gulf. Let us take energy security first. Four out of top five oil suppliers are from the region. This is a symbiotic relationship wherein, on one hand, India's energy security heavily depends on the Gulf region, and on the other, India is a dependable and long-term market for the Gulf countries. Serious efforts are being made to transform these relationships from a buyer-seller one to a more broad-based one, with equity partnership in oil production, joint ventures in oil exploration,

petrochemical complexes, fertilizer plants and partnership in strategic reserves storage facility being built up in India.

Due to the discovery of shale gas in US and its cost-effective extraction, the US dependence on the Middle East for oil/energy may decline. As a result, the current big oil consumer markets of India, China, Japan and ROK will gain even more importance for the Gulf States. If technology evolves and geopolitics permits, as I am sure it soon will, a number of different pipelines either overland or undersea can begin carrying gas from the Gulf to India, the nearest large-sized market for gas exports for the Gulf. This could herald the next phase of energy security cooperation between our two sides and could pull together Central, West and Southern Asia into a hub of energy driven economic cooperation.

Let me turn next to investment and economic cooperation. Despite being each other's largest trading partners, the investments by India and the Gulf in each other's territory has remained well below potential. While FDI investment from the Gulf countries into India stands modestly at around US\$ 3 billion from April 2000 to August 2013, the portfolio investment figure is higher. Sovereign Wealth Funds of the Gulf countries can be a game changer for infrastructure investment in India, which would add a stable and profitable element to the portfolio of assets held by them. In the other direction, the Oman India Fertilizer Company (OMIFCO) with an investment of US\$ 969 million is India's largest joint venture abroad and a successful example of the possibilities of economic integration between India and the Gulf. Bilateral cooperation in the field of higher education, skill development, agriculture, tourism, health-care, power, and infrastructure projects can add heft to the existing trade ties, for too long centered on oil.

The third facet of our long-term cooperation has to be defence and security. Our security cooperation with the GCC countries is developing to mutual benefit. An example is the 2011 Agreement on Security Cooperation with UAE which provides for cooperation to combat terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, weapons smuggling, money laundering, economic crimes and cyber crimes. The region sits astride strategic Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs) and any disruption to these SLOCs can have a serious impact on the Indian economy, including in terms of energy supplies. It is important to keep the region out of bounds for pirates and other nefarious non-state actors. India has the

capabilities and the will to not only safeguard India's own coastline and island territories, but also contribute to keeping our region's SLOCs open and flowing. The Indian Navy has continuously deployed one ship since October 2008 in the Gulf of Aden for anti-piracy duties with Operational Turnarounds (OTRs) at Salalah in Oman.

Let me conclude my presentation by underlining the high priority we attach to our economic, political and security relations with the Middle East in particular the countries of the Gulf region. These relations are poised to grow, with increasing realization of the existing enormous potential on both sides, even though the broader context in which we seek to pursue this cooperation might seem fraught and unpredictable. The region will find in India a steady and stable long-term partner, sensitive to its needs and alive to opportunities to develop bilateral cooperation.

I thank you for your attention.



369. Extract relevant to the visit of Secretary General of the Arab League from the Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson.

New Delhi, December 13, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good evening friends. Today is a busy news day although it is the end of the week, and there are lots of issues that I suppose you may be interested in. So, apologise for coming a bit late.

I have one announcement to make and it will be followed by any questions that you may want to ask on that or on anything else. So, let me begin, as is the usual practice, by making that announcement which is about the visit of the Secretary-General of the Arab League Dr. Nabil El-Araby to New Delhi from the 16th to the 18th of December. December 17 is his main day of engagement where he will meet the External Affairs Minister and also call on the Vice-President.

The focus of the discussions between the Arab League Secretary-General and the External Affairs Minister is to update the Memorandum of Understanding that we have with the 22-nation Arab League to make

it more effective and to elevate the level of interaction between the representatives of member states of the Arab League and India. The Secretary-General will also interact with the media after his meetings with the External Affairs Minister.

As you know, India has a historical and civilisational link with the Arab world. We have extremely good relations. Our total trade with the Arab world is in the vicinity of about US\$ 200 billion. A significant amount of that comes from of course the Gulf but I include in this figure the entire Arab world.

We also have approximately more than 60 per cent of our oil being sourced from the Arab world or the Middle East. And we look forward to elevating our relationship with the League of Arab States in the context of our growing interest in the region and the Arab world in general.

That is the announcement I have to make. I am now open to questions on that or on anything else that is of interest to you. As is usual, let us finish the questions on the Arab world and then take up questions on anything else.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Official Spokesperson: The visit is from 16th to 18th of December. The main day of engagement, the day when all the major engagements are, is the 17th. As I said, there will also be a media interaction subsequent to the meeting between the External Affairs Minister and Dr. Nabil El-Araby. You are perhaps aware that Dr. Nabil El-Araby is an old friend of India. He was Egyptian Ambassador here many years ago.

Q: You mentioned that one of the main areas that we are looking at during his visit is the updating of the MoU with the Arab League. Could you just let us understand a little more about what the update is about?

Official Spokesperson: Charu, right now I can give you a tantalising glimpse and that I have done. As I said - elevating, enhancing the mechanism, making it more effective. Wait till the meeting is done and then you will have the outcome of that based on these three "e"s that I have outlined to you.



370. Joint Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Secretary General of the League of Arab States.

New Delhi, December 17, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Hon'ble dignitaries, members of the delegations, and friends from the media:

As is usual we will have a brief media event. I would now request the External Affairs Minister of India, Shri Salman Khurshid, to make his opening remarks.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Thank you very much Your Excellency, Dr. Nabil Elaraby, an old friend of India and has been Ambassador for Egypt in our country some years ago and it is good to have our old friend back amongst us.

Ladies and gentlemen of the media, my colleague Mr. E Ahamed, distinguished Ambassadors, excellencies, it is indeed really a great pleasure to be welcoming Dr. Nabil Elaraby on his first visit in the capacity of Secretary-General of the League of Arab States. He is no stranger, as I said, to our country having served as Ambassador; and I believe that this is really a homecoming in a sense even if it is his second home.

The Secretary-General and I have concluded extensive discussions. We have had very productive exchange of views. I need hardly say that it was marked by warmth and friendship that is characteristic of the very special nature of the relationship that we have between Arab countries and ourselves in India.

I expressed my respect and admiration for the work the Arab League has done over the years to strengthen Arab solidarity in which we have a stake, and to enhance the economic well-being and social developmental of the Arab peoples.

We have expressed our belief that India and the Arab world share deep historical and civilisational ties, and these have evolved collectively in our South-South cooperation. We have noted that both sides have a great deal to learn from each other, and build firm partnerships that would have a positive effect for our common and extended neighbourhood. As

our extended neighbour ends, your extended neighbourhood begins. So, we really are in that sense in the extended neighbourhood.

In particular we noted the success of three Indo-Arab investment summits that have taken place so far. The training programmes that we believe are the most extensive that we have with anyone in the world, and that is giving young Arab diplomats at our Foreign Service Institute a special feel, and special ability to link our two regions.

At the same time, there was a realistic acknowledgement that while a significant amount of work has been done in the formal cooperation between the League and India since 2002, I need hardly say that enormous potential for deepening, widening and taking our relationship to a higher level remains. So, the new memorandum of cooperation between the League of Arab States and India and the new executive programme that we have just signed represent a beginning - if I may not be exaggerating - of a new era of our partnership.

The schedule for the coming two years includes Ministerial and senior officials meetings in addition of course to the business summits and cultural festivals. The Secretary-General and I have agreed that the new format for the high-level political interaction includes Ministers from 22 Arab nations, and this would energize this relationship in a very special way.

The Secretary-General and I have also exchanged views on a range of regional and international issues. The Arab countries that lie in our immediate extended neighbourhood and we are closely linked in many many ways both with history, commerce and of course community ties. We have shared interest in peace and stability in the Arab world and the rest of the world.

I have conveyed our steadfast support to the Palestinian cause and expressed our support for the role played by the League in partnering the Middle East Peace Process towards establishment of State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital. And I am grateful that His Excellency reiterated the recognition of India's constant and steady support on this issue.

We have also discussed the situation, the distressing and deteriorating situation, in Syria and condemned the violence and the loss of life on

both sides. We have agreed on the urgent need for a comprehensive peaceful resolution of all issues through dialogue in keeping with the aspirations of the Syrian people.

The Secretary-General and I have agreed on the need for strengthening our cooperation at multilateral fora such as the United Nations. We have noted that our delegations had worked closely in the past for coordinating our positions, and would seek to enhance those links through planned high-level political consultations that I have mentioned earlier.

So there is no doubt, ladies and gentlemen, that the visit of the distinguished Secretary-General is an important step in a natural and historical partnership between India and the Arab peoples, which is poised, we say with confidence, to grow strategically and dramatically in the coming years. Thank you very much.

Secretary-General, Arab League (Mr. Nabil Elaraby): Your Excellency Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid, Your Excellency Mr. Ahamed, Their Excellencies the Arab Ambassadors:

It is a great pleasure for me to be in India. As the Minister rightly pointed out, I was the Egyptian Ambassador here. And I was very happy when I came in presenting my credentials to President Zail Singh to say that I have read in a book that when the Great Indian King Ashoka took over he decided to send three letters to leaders of the whole world at that time and one of them was to Egypt. So, the relations between my own country and India are very old.

But in our modern time the relations have been exemplary between the whole Arab world. I had the pleasure to tell His Excellency the Foreign Minister today that in all Arab problems, India is there to support. The number one problem in the Arab world is of Palestine and India has been a steadfast supporter of Palestine. I remember when I was here during 1983 NAM Summit, President Arafat himself was telling us that when I have a problem, I go to the Prime Minister of India. So, the relations are old and we feel the bonds between our part of the world, which you call West Asia. And I think it is very important to renew these efforts.

The Arab League signed in 2008 an agreement with India which has been renewed, and added new elements. Now every year we are going to have high-officials meeting; every two years, Foreign Ministers

meeting. It is very important that they should come and discuss everything, thrash out all problems and try to find solutions. And I am sure they will find solutions because the background of the two areas - here in India and in the Arab world - are similar. We all came out of colonialism and maybe the same coloniser sometimes. And we are looking for the future to have our rights and to play a role in building the world.

Cooperation in the United Nations is very important. The United Nations as we know needs a lot of reform. The Security Council needs a lot of reform. And it is important that we all work together to attain a just and workable solution for the problems the United Nations is facing, the Security Council in particular.

The type of cooperation between India and the Arab world which has been agreed upon covers all fields really not only political but technical and which is very important educational. India has reached a level of education which is very high. And it is very important to exchange views and see how we can mutually benefit from the achievements of India and the achievements in the Arab world.

I think as His Excellency has just said rightly, this is a new era, we have to build on it, and we have to continue to pay great attention to relations between our two countries because we have a lot in common in this world.

Thank you very much Mr. Minister. I do appreciate and I am sure all my colleagues appreciate the very close relationship between India and the Arab world.

External Affairs Minister: Thank you.

Official Spokesperson: The two dignitaries have agreed to respond to a couple of questions.

Q (Dr. Akhilesh Suman, Rajya Sabha TV): Sir, the warmth was very visible on the faces of both of you. What was that special thing, Mr. External Affairs Minister, that you discussed and what is the outcome of this discussion?

This question is addressed to His Excellency the Secretary-General. There have been many discussions about India's role in Middle East

and Arabian world. What do you think India role has been in the Middle East and Arab world? What prospects do you see in the coming days after the visit is over?

External Affairs Minister: I will give it to the Secretary-General to answer first.

Secretary-General, Arab League: What I expect after the visit here is that the Chancellors throughout the Arab world would be working on programmes that would be able to enhance the relationship between India and the Arab world. As for the Arab world itself, we are going through a transitional period. There is no doubt about it.

We have on the one hand our perennial problem of Palestine which has to find a solution and as soon as possible. The Arabs took a decision last year, 2012, at Ministerial level that this conflict has to end. It is enough that we have gone through over 65 years now. We have to end this conflict. The whole world has accepted that, and the Americans have proposed that they will work for that. They are still working on it, I do not want to give an opinion now because it is a very delicate part of negotiations.

But the Arab Foreign Ministers are meeting in Cairo on the 21st in the premises of the League of Arab States and they will be addressed by His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas who will explain where we stand now on all matters relating to the Arab-Israeli talks. I had never used 'peace process' because this is part of what has been called 'managing the conflict'. I would not say attaining peace, not a peace process ... (*Inaudible*)... because peace process takes time and we have no time for that.

On the other hand there is no doubt the Syrian problem, and maybe I should say something on that before the next question. No doubt we see a very ugly situation. A civil war, people are dying every day from both sides, all Syrians, three million refugees, the countries neighbouring Syria cannot any more find the resources to provide for these refugees who are suffering. And we have very cold weather now, exceptionally cold weather, in the area. Then we have six million displaced persons who cannot find food and shelter. No medicine, no hospital, no school. So, it is a very ugly situation, as I said. It is a very dangerous situation: it has to end.

I am very happy that the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr. Ban Ki-moon issued a statement yesterday calling for cessation of hostilities during the Geneva Conference. I hope the Geneva Conference will take place - I have every indication that it will take place on the 22nd – and that there will be an effort, a real effort, from the Security Council. I regret very much that India is not on the Security Council now like last year.

So, to work for a cessation of hostilities and to save lives, the most important thing now is to save lives, Syrian lives very dear to all of us in the Arab League, and to save Syria as a country from destruction. The country has seen a lot of destruction in the last two years and we hope this is going to end. The people in Syria like every people in the Arab world and everywhere are always looking for liberty and democracy. And I hope the regime that will come out of Geneva will provide them with liberty and democracy.

External Affairs Minister: To the question that you have asked me I can only say that the historical dimension of our relationship is in itself extremely important and just continuing with that heritage itself is very important. But now there are additionalities, the additionalities such as our concern about strategic stability of the region not only for the world but also because we are hugely dependent on that region for our fuel supply. We also have more than six million of our people who are working. We are grateful to Arab countries for the livelihood they provide to our people. The remittances that come into India every year are a huge help to balancing our foreign exchange requirements.

Therefore, it is very important for us that we should be able to contribute both in terms of ideological position that we have consistently held on issues such as Palestine and Arab unity, but also in terms of our combined common interest and our enlightened interest in the welfare of the Arab people. And this is why every instrument, every platform, and every architecture that serves this overall purpose for the Arab world and for us is of high significance.

And I do believe that there are few relationships that can have the same quality, tenor, the feel, the content and the value that the relationships that we have with the Arab world. So, what we are now doing is, in

signing these agreements we are trying to ensure that we have the right sort of existing functional architecture in order to maximise on the desire on both sides to be able to help and to work together for the betterment of our own people but also of human kind in general.

Q (Mr. Ashish, ABP News): My question is for External Affairs Minister Salman sahib. Sir, beg to invite your attention to what has happened to the Indian diplomat by the US authorities. In the light of new details that are coming, what action are you taking? What is your reaction to it? So far there has been no lawyer also for the diplomat. Has anything been done in that regard?

External Affairs Minister: I think that we have expressed our deep distress and a sense of disquiet that has been very very strongly felt. In strongest words possible we have communicated the sense that we feel both in terms of diplomatic responsibilities, of relationships between friendly countries, but also we feel a very extreme level of distress in terms of the human element that is involved.

The person of the officer being subjected to that form of indignity is for us completely unacceptable. Therefore, I can only say this to you that whatever needs to be done is being done. It is already in process. We have put in motion what we believe would be effective way of addressing this issue but also in motion such steps that need to be taken to protect her dignity. I think there are some larger questions involved that we will deal with in good time. But the immediate concerns we are going to address first.

The External Publicity Division and the Spokesperson will keep you posted and informed. I do not want to say anything in haste. I think that everything that can be done will be done, I can assure you. We take this thing very seriously. I think that our sense has been adequately communicated to our friends in the United States of America. Let us just now see what happens. You will be kept posted.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.



371. List of documents signed during the Visit of Dr. Nabil Elaraby, Secretary General of the League of Arab States to India.

December 17, 2013.

S. No	Title	Signatory from Indian side	Signatory from Arab League side	Details
1.	Memorandum of Cooperation between the League of Arab States and the Republic of India	Sh Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister	H.E. Dr. Nabil Elaraby, Secretary General of the League of Arab States	The new Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) replaces the existing MOC signed in December 2008. The new MOC provides for replacing the High Level Joint Committee of the existing MOC with new formats for future meetings, namely Ministerial and Senior Officials meeting, involving all the member states and the Arab League Secretariat. It also provides for setting up of an Executive Programme which will be renewed every two years.
2.	The Executive Program of the Arab-Indian Cooperation Forum between the League of Arab States and the Republic of India for 2014-2015	Sh Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister	H.E. Dr. Nabil Elaraby, Secretary General of the League of Arab States	The Executive Programme is much more specific in terms of the cooperation envisaged in diverse areas like trade & investment, energy, small and medium enterprises, culture, capacity building, etc. and attempts to specify the modality for each major activity. As per the EP, the League of Arab States Mission in New Delhi and the Indian Embassy in Cairo have been designated as the nodal points for coordination.



372. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on External Affairs Minister's visit to Bahrain and Foreign Secretary to the United States.

New Delhi, December 6, 2013.

Please see Document No 476



ISRAEL

373. India-Israel Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism.

New Delhi, February 20, 2013.

1. The 8th meeting of India-Israel Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism was held on 20 February 2013. The Indian delegation was headed by Mr. Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Special Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs. The Israeli delegation was co-led by Ambassador Jeremy Issascharof, Deputy Director General, Head of Strategic Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Eitan Ben David, Head of Counter Terrorism Bureau at the Prime Minister's Office. The delegations comprised of representatives from relevant ministries and agencies of the two countries.
2. Both sides exchanged perceptions of threats emanating from terrorism and emphasized their determination to fight the menace. They discussed terrorist threats in regional and global arenas as well as national counter-terrorism measures, state sponsored terrorism, prevention of transfer of weapons to terrorists, cooperation in multilateral fora and lessons from 26/11 and 13/2. The two sides agreed to enhance dialogue and cooperation in the area of counter terrorism.
3. The 9th meeting of the JWG will be held in Israel in 2014.



KUWAIT

374. State Visit of HH Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of Kuwait to India.

New Delhi, October 31, 2013.

1. At the invitation of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of Kuwait is paying a state visit to India from 7-10 November 2013. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers, senior officials and captains of industry.
2. This is the first Head of Government-level visit from Kuwait to India since the post of Crown Prince and Prime Minister was bifurcated in 2003. From our side, the last Head of Government level visit to Kuwait was in 1981 when the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi visited there.
3. During the visit, Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber will call on President Shri Pranab Mukherjee and Vice-President Shri Hamid Ansari. He will hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. His other engagements would include meetings with Ministers of Finance, External Affairs and Commerce & Industry. Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber will also attend a business luncheon meeting jointly organised by the three business chambers, FICCI, CII and ASSOCHAM. Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber and his delegation would also be visiting Agra.
4. India and Kuwait historically share friendly relations based on close people-to-people contacts. Geographic proximity, historical trade links, cultural affinities and growing cooperation in key areas of mutual interest, including interalia energy security, trade and investment, infrastructure development projects, petrochemicals and education continue to strengthen and broaden this longstanding relationship.
5. The two countries are among each other's major trading partners. Kuwait has been India's fourth largest crude oil supplier globally

with bilateral trade in excess of US\$ 17 billion in 2012-13. Both countries are exploring enhanced cooperation in energy and other sectors through mutually beneficial investments in projects, including in oil exploration, refineries, petrochemical complexes and fertilizer plants.

6. Indians form the largest expatriate community in Kuwait and their positive contribution in the progress and development of their host country is well recognized. There are over 700,000 Indian nationals working in Kuwait.



OMAN

375. **Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence commemorating the 20 years of Indian Navy – Royal Omani Navy Partnership and Ninth ‘Naseem Al Bahr’ Biennial Naval Exercises.**

New Delhi, September 22, 2013.

The ninth edition of the bilateral Indian Navy-Royal Omani Navy biennial exercise begins tomorrow off Oman, in the North Arabian Sea. In this, the ninth edition of the bilateral exercise, Indian Naval Ships Mysore (guided missile destroyer), Tarkash and Tabar (stealth frigates) and Aditya (fleet tanker) are participating under the Command of the Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet, Rear Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla. The Royal Omani Navy is being represented by Royal Navy of Oman Vessels (RNOV) missile and gun vessels, Al Muazzar, Al Mussandam, Al Naja and a Landing ship RNOV Temsah, along with Royal Air Force of Oman aircraft F-16, Hawks and Jaguars amongst others.

With the first Indian Navy-Royal Navy of Oman exercise having been conducted in 1993, this year marks 20 years of IN-RNO bilateral exercises. “Naseem Al Bahr” 2013, will be the ninth edition of the biennial bilateral exercise between the two navies. The exercise is aimed at

deriving mutual benefit from the experiences of both the navies. A good measure of interoperability has been achieved over the years as result of such exercises. The scope and content of exercise have also increased progressively. The focus of the exercise this year would be on Surface Warfare, Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS), Anti Air Warfare, Air Operation, Advanced Helo Operations and Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO).

Bilateral relation between Indian and Oman were formally established with the 1953 Indo-Oman Treaty of friendship, Navigation and Commerce, a first between Indian and any Arab country. Naval exercises have contributed to strengthening of bilateral ties between India and Sultanate of Oman. The signing of a MoU on Defence Cooperation in Dec 05 and subsequent establishment of the Joint Military Cooperation in Mar 06 has set the foundation for increased defence cooperation. Since then, naval cooperation between the countries has progressed steadily with increased port visits by naval ships and training of RNO personnel by the Indian Navy in hydrography, diving, training management, logistics management and dockyard management.

The visit to Oman is the last leg of the Western Fleet's Overseas Development to the Persian Gulf as the IN Ships have visited UAE and Kuwait earlier during their month long deployment to enhance bilateral ties and engage in naval exercise with friendly regional navies.



PALESTINE

376. Statement by Minister of State E. Ahamed, at the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People held at Indian Council of World Affairs.

New Delhi, November 30, 2013.

Your Excellency, Mr. Adli Hassan Shaban Sadeq, Ambassador of Palestine to India;

Your Excellency, Dr. Mazin Al-Masoudi, Incharge of League of Arab States Mission;

Director General of the Indian Council of World Affairs Shri Rajiv Bhatia;

Dr. Peter E. Kenmore, FAO Representative, United Nations;

Excellencies, distinguished invitees;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be here today amidst this august gathering to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Indians have always placed Palestine close to their hearts. India was the first non-Arab State to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in 1975 and was one of the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine in 1988. India opened its Representative Office in Palestine in 1996 following the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority.

Since the opening of the Representative Office in Palestine, India has been extending technical and economic assistance to the Palestinian National Authority. The assistance has been for humanitarian relief, development projects, establishment of educational institutions, budgetary support, training of Palestinian officials etc. We pledged an amount of US\$ 10 million as budgetary support to Palestine during the visit of President Mahmoud Abbas to India in September last year. We are also in the process of construction of schools, setting up of an IT Centre and Vocational Training Centre in Palestine. Additionally, India contributes

US\$ 1 million annually to United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Jointly with Brazil and South Africa as partners in IBSA, India is implementing developmental projects in Palestine. India is committed to continue with its support for the development and nation-building efforts of Palestine.

At the multilateral fora, India has played a proactive role in garnering support for the Palestinian cause. We played an active role in securing full membership for Palestine in UNESCO. We co-sponsored the resolution on enhancing Palestine's status to "Non-Member Observer State" in the UNGA in November 2012. We also chaired and proactively participated in the discussions on the Palestinian issue in the UN Security Council under India's presidency last year. We will continue to support Palestine's bid for full and equal membership of the United Nations.

Excellencies,

There has been regular exchange of high-level visits between India and Palestine. I visited Ramallah in July this year and met with the whole gamut of Palestinian leadership. I also handed over a cheque for US\$ 1 million, as first tranche of our budgetary support, to the Palestinian Prime Minister. My Minister met with his Palestinian counterpart in New York on the sidelines of UNGA in September this year. India's support to the Palestinian cause was reiterated during these meetings. Visit of Palestinian Foreign Minister to India is on the cards.

I am glad to announce on this occasion that the government of India has started visa issuance system directly from our Representative Office in Ramallah since September 2013. With this facility, Palestinian nationals will be issued visas within 2-3 working days. I am hopeful that this will further strengthen people to people contacts between our two countries.

Excellencies,

In line with our support for United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, India supports a negotiated solution resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders with East Jerusalem as its Capital, side by side and at peace with Israel as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap and relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

India has supported the Arab Peace Plan, which calls for withdrawal of Israel to pre-1967 borders, along with recognition of Israel and the establishment of the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital. India has called for an end to Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories and for an early and significant easing of restrictions on the free movement of persons and goods within Palestine.

Excellencies,

We welcome the recent efforts of Palestine and Israel, mediated by the US, for resumption of direct peace talks and remain hopeful that the negotiations would lead to a comprehensive peace process for final resolution of the conflict within the agreed timeline.

Let me take this opportunity to reaffirm India's consistent and unwavering support to the friendly people of Palestine and reiterate India's conviction that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region can be achieved through negotiations and dialogue so that a sovereign, independent, viable State of Palestine living side by side within secured borders, with the State of Israel, becomes a reality.

I thank the Indian Council for World Affairs for organizing this event.



SAUDI ARABIA

377. Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson on some aspects of relations with Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia.

New Delhi, May 22, 2013.

Please see Document No 134



378. Media Briefing by the Official Spokesperson External Affairs Minister's visit to Saudi Arabia.

New Delhi, May 14, 2013.

Please see Document No 254



379. Opening Statement by External Affairs Minister at Joint Press Conference with Foreign Minister of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in Jeddah

May 25, 2013

Your Royal Highness Prince Saud Al Faisal, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al Faisal for the invitation extended to me to visit Saudi Arabia. This is my first visit to Saudi Arabia as the External Affairs Minister of India. I had the privilege of visiting this country in the past both as a Minister and also a pilgrim to this Holy land.

2. India regards Saudi Arabia as one of our most valued strategic partners. We are bound by shared history and close and regular contacts that span several centuries. In modern times, each generation of our leaders have contributed to deepening this relationship. The High level visits between our countries in 1955, 1956 and 1982, have laid a very strong foundation to our relationship.
3. The visit of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to India in January 2006 as Chief Guest at our Republic Day and the historic 'Delhi Declaration' we signed during that visit broadened our relationship and opened a new era of intense dialogue and cooperation. The 'Riyadh Declaration' signed during the visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2010 confirmed the joint commitment of our two countries to pursue "a new era of strategic partnership". I am happy that we have been able to further

strengthen and diversify this partnership through regular high level exchanges and interactions.

4. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques is a visionary leader who played a very important role in shaping this great country, pursuing peace and accommodation in the region and establishing an era of strategic partnership with India. I carry a personal letter from Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to His Majesty.
5. I thank His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al Faisal for his leadership in guiding our bilateral relationship. Today we exchanged views on a number of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of common and mutual interest. We reviewed the progress in the implementation of the Delhi Declaration and Riyadh Declaration, expressed satisfaction at the state of our bilateral relationship and discussed ways and means to further strengthen our strategic partnership.
6. We expressed satisfaction at the progress in our defence and security relations. The visit of Defence Minister of India in February last year, the first by an Indian Defence Minister, and the exchange of other defence delegations have contributed in strengthening our defence and security engagement.
7. The security and stability in the Arabian Peninsula is closely linked to the security in South Asia. We discussed the menace of terrorism the world continues to face and agreed to further strengthen our counter-terrorism cooperation which is an essential element of the Riyadh Declaration we signed in 2010. Our cooperation would not only benefit our two countries but also contribute significantly to the stability and security of the entire region and beyond.
8. We held productive discussions on a wide range of regional and multilateral issues. Saudi Arabia is part of our extended neighbourhood. It is very important that we remain in constant touch on the developments in the region. We both have similar views on a large number of regional and global issues.
9. India and Saudi Arabia are two major countries in the region. Despite the global economic down turn our countries continue to

grow. We expressed satisfaction at the steady increase in bilateral trade. I also pointed out the increasing Indian investment in Saudi Arabia and highlighted the opportunity for Saudi companies to invest in India and become partners in India's growth story. We agreed to further deepen our economic engagement by utilising the enormous synergies between our two economies in the hydrocarbon sector and beyond.

10. We welcomed the regular meeting of the India - Saudi Arabia Joint Commission Meeting and agreed on the need for speedy implementation of its recommendations to strengthen our engagement. Information Technology, life sciences, pharmaceuticals, education, new and renewable energy are among the several areas where we hope to cooperate. There is huge potential for the private sector in both countries for deepening their business engagement. In this century of Asia, further enhancing economic cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia would benefit not only the peoples of our two countries, but the entire region.
11. I thanked His Royal Highness for hosting a large Indian community in Saudi Arabia. I expressed by gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for the concessions that Saudi Arabia announced for expatriate workers to correct their status or return to their country without penal action. Indians are the most preferred community in Saudi Arabia due to their hard work and discipline. I pointed out the contributions of Indian Diaspora in the economic growth of India and emphasised the importance we attach to the welfare of the Indians abroad. We also emphasised the need to further deepen our people to people exchanges through youth exchanges and cooperation in the education sector.
12. I once again thank His Royal Highness for the invitation and his warm welcome to me and my delegation. We spent more than an hour speaking to each other and I greatly benefitted from the enormous experience that his Royal Highness has. We discussed the concerns of the region particularly Syria and also to remain in close touch to ensure that the cycle of violence is addressed with sense of urgency and we move to a peaceful future. I have

also personally extended an invitation to His Royal Highness to visit India at an early convenient date. I look forward to working with him to further expand and diversify our strategic partnership.

Thank You



380. Interview by External Affairs Minister to Arab News Saudi Arabia.

May 27, 2013.

Indian Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid is known all too well for his eloquence. He is suave and never shies away from fielding the difficult questions. He is forthright. He does not consider Nitaqat and its impact on Indians a hot-button issue. "You have completely misread the situation. Saudi Arabia is implementing its domestic laws. If they have not done it in the past, then those working here were lucky. Now that this is the case, everyone needs to comply with their domestic laws." In an exclusive interview with Siraj Wahab of Arab News at the Conference Palace in Jeddah yesterday, Khurshid said India considers Saudi Arabia a center of stability in the region, adding that the security and stability of the Gulf region and that of the Indian Subcontinent are interlinked and that bilateral security cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia can contribute to regional stability

Following are excerpts from the interview:

Can you tell us about the talks that you have had with senior Saudi officials, including Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal?

Saudi Arabia is one of India's most valued strategic partners. My visit is part of high-level exchanges that we maintain regularly as partners in peace, stability and prosperity. This is my first bilateral visit to Saudi Arabia as foreign minister, though I have been to the Kingdom earlier in different capacities. I had fruitful meetings with Crown Prince Salman, Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Prince Muqrin, Interior Minister

Mohammed bin Naif and Labor Minister Adel Fakeih. I also delivered a personal letter from our prime minister to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah.

Has the visit laid a solid foundation for the two countries to take the relationship to a new level?

The directions are very clear. We need to fine-tune the steps that we can meaningfully take. It is necessary, therefore, that we have more extensive two-way visits at the highest level. India considers Saudi Arabia a center of stability in the region. The security and stability of the Gulf region and that of the Indian Subcontinent are interlinked. Bilateral security cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia will contribute to regional stability and in addressing the common threat of terrorism in the region.

You did not seem very vocal on the Syrian issue at the joint press conference on Saturday with Prince Saud Al-Faisal. Are there any points of divergence between the two countries?

It would be the same kind of divergence if you ask me about the car that you drive and the car that I drive. It is simply a different model. The Arabs here live next door to Syria. They have to see to a lot of factors that confront them in this region. We are a little bit farther away and we therefore have a different perspective. Moreover, we must keep in mind the standard positions that India holds. We have said this at the UN, and I think everyone accepts that in principle there shouldn't be an external dictation of how a country should rearrange itself. There are different ways of recognizing the aspirations and the opinions of the people themselves and creating conditions conducive for their own good. We have remained consistent in this regard. We don't expect everybody to fall in line with us. The objective may be common, but strategies and methodologies may vary from place to place. We support the objective but we only come on board to the extent of our capacity and in terms of our philosophy. We were not part of the coalition of the willing in Afghanistan, were we? Afghanistan remains the highest priority for us. We are fully committed to Afghanistan and we will remain in Afghanistan

to help them in any way they wish. Our objectives (in Syria) are in line with Saudi Arabia. There must be free expression of the aspirations of the people and there must be an immediate cessation of violence. On this, we are very categorical. Our position is very clear. We support the UN effort and we support the Geneva effort. It has not succeeded thus far. Now that there is a conference, there seems to be greater convergence between Russia and the US. We would like to see how that works out.

Stretching the car metaphor a little further, is it fair to say then that while the models remain different, the ultimate destination is the same?

The people of Syria must find their voice. That is the Saudi position and our position as well. That is what Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal said on Saturday.

India is said to have an equidistant policy vis-à-vis Riyadh and Tehran...

I don't know where this equidistance has come from. We have a natural relationship with Saudi Arabia and we have a natural friendship with Iran. We also have a commonality of energy security with Saudi Arabia and Iran. Iran is closer to India and, in a sense, Iran impacts a larger neighbourhood of India, whereas Saudi Arabia is a friend in an area where there is a huge presence of Indians. In that sense, Saudi Arabia is a distant neighbour whereas Iran is closer neighbour. Then there are next-door neighbours such as China. The position that you have with each country will dictate priorities and the fine-tuning of policies. We have differences with Iran on the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty). We voted against Iran (at the UN). At the same time, we believe that Iran has the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and that is what the Saudi foreign minister also emphasized very categorically. We don't accept that Iran should violate the NPT and weaponise. Saudis say that they shouldn't weaponise, and the Iranians themselves say that they don't want to weaponise. So where is the difference?

With tensions rising between Saudi Arabia and Iran, what is India's wish?

I would prefer there to be no conflict. Differences of opinion can be resolved through dialogue. I think everybody supports that view. I don't think there is anyone who would want to encourage conflict and confrontation. There are many events unfolding in the region. This includes the outcome of the Arab Spring, the spillover of weapons from one state to another, such as what we saw in Mali, for instance. There are also attempts to support and sustain the change that has taken place in Yemen and also to ensure that Bahrain remains stable. I think all these are different dimensions that we need to understand. For us, the priority is, of course, our own region. Afghanistan is our priority. We believe that all stakeholders, including Saudi Arabia, must be able to contribute to a peaceful solution. Your immediate priority should be your immediate neighborhood. We understand that. It is important that we understand why each one of us is giving priority to the immediate neighborhood, not because we think the others are unimportant. The big picture is something on which there is tremendous convergence between Saudi Arabia and ourselves. And, that was reflected in my conversations with the Saudi leadership.

What is the status of the agreement that was signed to swap prisoners, which calls for all Indian prisoners languishing in Saudi jails to be repatriated to India to serve their prison terms?

In 2010, we had signed the agreement on transfer of sentenced persons with a view of rehabilitating them socially and psychologically. Both sides are now discussing the modalities for implementing this agreement which will go a long way in addressing the issue of Indian prisoners in Saudi Arabia.

India has close bilateral ties with Israel. Arab states, including the key Gulf allies of India, are not comfortable with that. How do you manage these contradictions?

Our relationship with Israel came into existence in 1992, much after some of the Arab countries had established ties with Israel. Our relationship with Israel is independent of our ties with Islamic countries. India has strong and historic ties with the Arab world the key Gulf allies understand that our relationship with Israel does not impact on their own relationship.

India firmly believes that all states in the region, including Israel, should have the right to exist in peace within secure boundaries.

There is a new government that is taking over in Pakistan and the prime minister in the waiting, Nawaz Sharif, has made all the right gestures, hasn't he?

It is a good beginning. He has sent all the right signals.

Including the release of Indian fishermen languishing in Pakistani jails?

Well, the release of the fishermen was already in the pipeline. It was a good signal. Obviously, he (Sharif) is the prime minister in waiting so he would have been consulted. I think the signals that he gave during his campaign and also subsequently his response to the Indian prime minister's call all these are important signals, but they must not remain mere cosmetic, must not remain window-dressing. We have to go to the heart of the matter. I think we can only expect that he will first settle down as prime minister, his government will settle down, and then they will take up issues which are of important concern to us which we believe if addressed in an appropriate manner could open up tremendous opportunities.

The hot-button issue here is Nitaqat ...

No, not at all. I think this issue is misunderstood. One should look at it proportionately. We must comply with the domestic laws of this country just like we would expect our laws to be respected. If there was a period in which there was no insistence on compliance, well, we were lucky that there wasn't. If there is an insistence on compliance now, there is a reason. It is not that they don't want Indians. They have repeatedly said that they are very happy with the services that Indians are providing, both in terms of quality and conduct. They have also given us a grace period. We are processing all the candidates. They have also given opportunities for the people to switch jobs and regularize their work and continue to work here. So it is only those who can't switch due to lack of employment opportunity without incurring any penalties. I don't think you can expect any greater generosity than this. And then it leaves the

opportunities open for fresh people to come here, provided there is demand and they have the proper papers. I think rationalizing, regularizing and sorting out the ambiguities is something that we should welcome. Some responsibility also falls upon us as well to do some handholding, to ensure that those going back home are resettled in India, and then when the opportunity arises they can come back. Meanwhile, I am confident that once this is sorted out the demand for workers will continue and, therefore, more people from India can legitimately come. And add to the legitimate work force here.

Speaking of hand-holding, is your government doing anything to rehabilitate those forced to go back?

This must be done by state governments. I have spoken to chief ministers and I am sure they will take care of them.

Why can't the federal government do anything?

The Central Government can only give money to state governments through the Finance Commission and through different schemes.

You are an integral part of the ruling Congress party. Is there a possibility of early general elections because of your party's good performance in the recent elections in Karnataka?

The elections should take place as scheduled. Why should we give up the time that we have. It is like asking somebody who is playing a five-day test match to turn it into a three-day match. This is a test match, not T-20. Elections come periodically. And no elections are a last word for any political party. You will win a few, and you will lose a few. Every election is a learning experience. Somehow some people think that the election they win is the last election and the election they lose is not the last election. In democracy, every election is a learning process. You learn from every election, the one that you win and the one that you lose. And then you prepare for the next one.



381. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Maldivian President, relations with the US and visit of the Saudi Arabian Labour Minister.

New Delhi, December 31, 2013.

Please see Document No 478



SYRIA

382. Address by Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed at High-level International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria.

Kuwait, January 30, 2013.

His Highness the Emir of the State of Kuwait;

His Excellency UN Secretary-General;

Distinguished Heads of State/Government;

Distinguished Foreign Ministers;

Distinguished invitees;

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I feel honoured to be here today to represent India at the 'High-level International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria'. Let me thank the Kuwaiti leadership for hosting this conference and the United Nations Secretary-General for this need of the hour initiative.
2. All of us present here, representing a wide cross-section of countries, in our own ways are here to express support to the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people arising out of continued escalation of violence and rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Syria.

3. Syria has, historically and in contemporary times, been an important country in the Middle East. Its role in the Middle East peace process and in the stability of the wider region is pivotal. Thus, prolonged instability or unrest in Syria will have serious ramifications for the region and beyond.
4. India has been closely following the developments in Syria. Syria continues to face acute crisis as the impasse has become explosive and could engulf the region. India has strongly expressed its concern on the steep escalation of violence and has called upon all sides in Syria particularly the Syrian leadership to abjure violence and resolve all issues peacefully through discussions taking into account the aspirations of the people of Syria. We have also clearly articulated our position that there should be no outside military intervention and the peace process should be Syria-led. In this regard we supported the Geneva Communiqué which includes the 6-Point Plan of Kofi Annan, and have welcomed the appointment of Lakhdar Brahimi as the new Joint Special Envoy.
5. India is deeply concerned about the hardships and sufferings of the people of Syria as a result of unabated violence in Syria. Thousands of people are being displaced internally and have also fled to neighbouring countries like Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. India welcomes and fully supports the initiative of UN to address the need of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people.
6. India has always responded positively to the call for rendering humanitarian assistance and shall certainly do so in case of Syria as well. We have already processed humanitarian assistance to Syria in the form of life saving drugs and fortified biscuits.
7. In keeping with India's commitment to extend sympathy and support to the Syrian people, I am glad to announce at the conference that my government pledges US\$ 2.5 million towards humanitarian assistance to the people of Syria. This assistance will be in the form of life saving drugs, food and other essential items required by the people of Syria.

8. I take this opportunity to reiterate that India is extremely concerned about the security situation in Syria and the spiralling violence. India considers that the only acceptable way to resolve the internal crisis in Syria is through urgent peaceful negotiations with participation of all parties taking into account the legitimate aspirations of all Syrians.
9. I once again thank the State of Kuwait for hosting this conference and the UN for this timely initiative.



383. Response of Official Spokesperson to a question on the Alleged use of Chemical Weapons in Syria.

New Delhi, March 22, 2013.

In response to a media query on the alleged use of Chemical Weapons in Syria the Official Spokesperson said:

“We have noted with concern reports regarding alleged use of chemical weapons near Aleppo in northern Syria. The UN, in cooperation with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) would be investigating these reports.

As an original signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention, India attaches the utmost importance to the complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapons world-wide. We stress that the international legal norm against the use of chemical weapons anywhere must not be breached. It is important to ensure the safe and secure custody of chemical weapons stockpiles and to prevent access to terrorists and non-state actors.”



384. Media reports regarding alleged use of chemical weapons in areas near Damascus in Syria.

New Delhi, August 22, 2013.

In response to media reports regarding alleged use of chemical weapons in areas near Damascus in Syria the Official Spokesperson said:

“There have been media reports regarding alleged use of chemical weapons in areas near Damascus in Syria, resulting in a large number of casualties. If the use of chemical weapons is confirmed, it is a matter of grave concern.

India has consistently supported the complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapons world-wide. Pending their elimination, it is vitally important to ensure safe and secure custody of chemical stockpiles and prevent their access to terrorists and non-state actors. We stress that the international legal norm against the use of chemical weapons anywhere and by anyone must not be breached.”



385. Response to a query on Indians in Syria.

New Delhi, August 31, 2013.

In response to query on Indians in Syria, the Official Spokesperson said:

“We are in touch with our Mission in Damascus who are also in contact with the approximately 25-30 Indian citizens in Syria. All Indian citizens are safe. Previously, we had advised all Indian citizens in Syria to return to India. They have once again been advised to leave Syria. The earlier advisory for Indian nationals not to travel to Syria also remains in effect.”



* The advisory was issued due to highly unsettled conditions and civil war waging in that country.

386. Spokesperson's Response to a query on situation in Syria.**New Delhi, September 3, 2013.**

In response to a question from the media on the situation in Syria, the Official Spokesperson has responded as follows:

“India has consistently called upon all sides to abjure violence so that conditions can be created for an inclusive political dialogue leading to a comprehensive political solution, taking into account the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. There can be no military solution to this conflict. We continue to support the proposed ‘International Conference on Syria’ (Geneva-II), being the best prospect for a political solution, for bringing the Syrian Government and the opposition to the negotiating table.

On use of chemical weapons in Syria, India has consistently supported the complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapons worldwide. The international legal norm against the use of chemical weapons anywhere and by anyone should not be breached. However, we will prefer to await the full results of the UN inspection.”



* The response came with reference to mounting media reports that the United States was wanting to attack Syria to punish the Government of Assad al Basher for use of chemical weapons on his own people in the ongoing civil war in the country.

387. Official Spokesperson's response to a question on current developments related to Syria.

New Delhi, September 16, 2013.

In response to a question from the media on the agreement reached between the Foreign Minister of Russia Sergei Lavrov and US Secretary of State John Kerry and on Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles, the Official Spokesperson said:

"India welcomes the framework agreement reached between Russia and the US on the time-bound safeguarding and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles. As an important step in the process, India also welcomes the recent steps taken by Syria to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention. This is in alignment with India's consistent stance of supporting the complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapons worldwide.

We also see these developments as the reinvigoration of the peace efforts towards a political solution to the Syrian conflict. We are hopeful that this will lead to the early convening of the proposed 'International Conference on Syria' (Geneva-II), which will bring all parties to the conflict to the negotiating table.

India has consistently called upon all sides to the Syrian conflict to abjure violence so that conditions can be created for an inclusive political dialogue leading to a comprehensive political solution, taking into account the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. Any external military intervention in Syria's affairs should be excluded."



KAZAKHSTAN

388. **Joint Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan.**

New Delhi, March 5, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming over for this media interaction.

As usual, we will begin with opening statements by the two Ministers and then they have agreed to take one question each from both the sides. I therefore now request the External Affairs Minister of India to make his opening remarks to the media.

External Affairs Minister of India (Shri Salman Khurshid): Your Excellency Mr. Erlan Idrissov, Hon. Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan; Friends from the Media; and Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure indeed to host His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan. Mr. Idrissov is on an official visit to India at my invitation. I am deeply grateful that he accepted our invitation. It is a particular honour for me to meet this very old friend of India, who in fact started his diplomatic career in this city as a member of the then Embassy of the Soviet Union.

As you know, India's relations with Kazakhstan have been extremely warm and friendly. In the last few years we have had several high-level exchanges between our leaders. In 2009 during the visit of the President of Kazakhstan to India as the Chief Guest for our Republic Day, we declared a Strategic Partnership that we have assiduously nurtured since then.

Our Prime Minister visited Kazakhstan in 2011 on a visit which further strengthened this strategic partnership. And that is when we signed the Joint Action Plan defining the roadmap till 2014 which involves various bilateral projects. We have had the opportunity today to review a lot of them and the very constructive progress that has already been made on the roadmap.

Our meeting today was, needless to say, very fruitful. We reviewed particularly our bilateral relationship which now encompasses a number of strategic sectors including defence, civil nuclear energy and hydrocarbons. We also discussed various regional and international issue of mutual interest and we will continue to do so over lunch after this media interaction. We have a remarkable similarity of views on most of the global problems of today. We agreed that the menace of international terrorism has to be fought by the international community collectively and that we must also make bilateral efforts in this direction.

We have expressed satisfaction over the progress in our trade and investment relations, but the Hon. Minister was quick to point out that the potential is much greater. Our trade is reported to have crossed the half billion dollar mark for the first time last year. But still we agree it is modest.

We also have a number of significant investment projects in the pipeline in both countries. We have agreed to explore possibilities of creating a direct trade and energy corridor between our countries and this is really the visionary project that we are thinking of. We hope to also have enhanced air connectivity with airlines from Kazakhstan, and India soon having 14 flights a week to destinations in each other's country.

We reviewed our growing cooperation in the energy sector. Our company ONGC Videsh Limited has already acquired a 25 per cent stake in the Satpayev oil block in the Caspian Sea based on agreements that were reached when our Prime Minister visited Kazakhstan. We also explored further possibilities of cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector. We have requested the support of the Government of Kazakhstan for an important bid that OVL is making for a stake in the Kashagan oilfield.

We have strong links in the educational and cultural spheres. Collaboration in the field of Information Technology is of very special interest to Kazakhstan and India is pleased to be setting the IT Centre of Excellence at the Eurasian University in Astana, which will be equipped with a supercomputer. The first batch of trainees from the Eurasian University has begun training in India last month. We have also informed the Hon. Minister that India will set up a Central Asia E-Network as part of our Connect Central Asia Policy which would bring tele-education and tele-medicine to the people of Kazakhstan.

We have agreed to stay in touch on important global and regional issues. I have informed the Hon. Minister that I will be visiting Kazakhstan for the Istanbul Process conference and indeed also accepted his gracious invitation to visit on a separate bilateral visit. We have decided to strengthen our strategic partnership with a range of new initiatives that will boost trade and economic ties. Thank you very much. I now request the Hon. Foreign Minister Idrissov to address you.

Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan (Mr. Erlan Idrissov): Sir, thank you very much for your very kind words. Dear ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to see you here, and I am heartened by your interest on Kazakhstan-Indian relationship.

Foreign Minister Khurshid has given an outstandingly detailed overview of our agenda and what we have discussed today. It is indeed a very full plate of things we have to do together. It was our mutual recognition that our record is quite impressive and our relationship covers many important areas of our cooperation which is of significance to both countries.

I fully subscribe of course to what the Foreign Minister said and I thank him for a very high appraisal of what we have been able to achieve so far. I fully agree with you that we have to jointly raise the plank of our relationship even higher because both countries with their potential deserve this.

Let me add one thing to make it very clear to Indian media. I came here to confirm and reaffirm our full respect and recognition of India's global and regional standing. India is one of the key players in political and economic, global affairs and regional affairs. We respect India as the country who was one among the first to recognize and support our Independence 21 years ago. We see the growth of India and we have full appreciation for the opportunities the growth of India presents to the world and to our part of the world.

We are also appreciative of India's recognition of Kazakhstan as the regional powerhouse. In 21 years of our Independence, Kazakhstan has been able to achieve great strides of development in political, economic and other aspects of life in Kazakhstan. This mutual recognition of India as a major global player and a major country of South Asia, and India's recognition of Kazakhstan's major role in Central Asia, is a very good basis for us to look into further opportunities to enhance our partnership.

We recognize today that the 21st century presents enormous opportunities. But it is also full of different challenges. Only by joining hands we will be able to efficiently address those challenges and efficiently utilize multiple opportunities. That is a common desire which was affirmed and cemented during the visit of my President to New Delhi in 2009 and during the visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Kazakhstan in 2011.

The prospects of cooperation between India and Kazakhstan are bright. We are in the region which carries a lot of opportunities, and without India no single issue can be resolved in this part of the world. Therefore, we are here to develop an enhanced agenda with India to address regional issues. Of course, at the centre of regional security issues is Afghanistan, and we know that India's role in bringing normalcy to this long-suffering country is enormous. Therefore, this will continue to be one of the important areas of our cooperation.

The key message which I bring to India and which I carry back to Kazakhstan from India is that we agree to work very closely and pragmatically to develop connectivity between South Asia and Central Asia. This is the key answer to many opportunities which lie before us. We hope that with the strength and potential of India we will be absolutely able to develop those connectivities in multiple forms. Thank you very much.

Official Spokesperson: The floor is now open for a couple of questions.

Q: Your Excellency, we know that ...(Inaudible)...between the two countries are oil, space and nanotechnology. Is there any general agreement achieved in these spheres?

External Affairs Minister: This was really an opportunity to review what we are actually doing on the basis of agreements and memoranda that we have signed in the past. We are actually not only reviewing what has been achieved but also fine-tuning what more can be done and how we can speed up and enhance the level of cooperation. This we have agreed requires regular meetings, and we will find as many opportunities to ensure that the regular meetings continue to monitor. Wherever there might be anything that holds back progress, we have been able to flag those items on both sides. We will address them with alacrity and with determination.

I think that both of us are very optimistic about our work together. I must say the Hon. Minister actually used the words, 'we like to dream'. We share the dream of Kazakhstan and we share his dream. We hope that together we will be able to give substance to these wonderful dreams.

Q: Sir, would you update us on the status of the bilateral civil nuclear cooperation including the supply of uranium? Is this being implemented?

External Affairs Minister: Yes, in fact, I will let the Minister answer that because he is supplying it. So, you will have it directly from the country that is supplying it.

Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan: Yes, peaceful nuclear energy cooperation is a new important area of our partnership. During the visit of my President and your Prime Minister to Kazakhstan, major agreements have been signed. These agreements are being implemented. The timeframe for the current arrangement is 2014. Therefore, we are looking beyond that period and we are looking into longer term context of our cooperation. We also look at diversifying the forms of our nuclear cooperation.

In my Delegation I have the Chairman of Kazakhstan's National Atomic Company Kazatomprom. He specifically joined this delegation to stress the importance of our partnership in this important area for both countries. We know that India has big appetite for nuclear energy, and we as neighbours definitely have to cooperate in this area. Mr. Shkolnik had separate meetings today with his counterparts in the Department of Atomic Energy of the Indian Government, and they have agreed that they will of course take care that the current engagements are completely fulfilled by both parties. And they agreed to enter into specific forms of further partnerships. They agreed that they will have a mid review expert meeting in the summer. And in the fall, they will come for a full-fledged view of the ideas how to take this partnership further.

Q: Mr. Khurshid, you spoke about a trade and energy corridor. Would you give us some more details about how we are planning to establish that? And, to the Kazakh Foreign Minister, Sir, how soon is the Kazakh Government likely to give approval for the stake that the ONGC is planning to buy from ConocoPhillips in Kashagan?

Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan: Let me take the floor first. Thank you for your question. I do not want to prejudge time-wise and contents-wise the answer to the question of the share which ConocoPhillips decided to hand over to others. I hope that a decision will be done soon. This is a very complex project. It involves a lot of partners in the consortium. Changing hands is not just a simple matter. It involves lots of technical, financial and similar type issues. Therefore, I think everyone is interested that a decision is taken on a well-informed, well-balanced way. Therefore, I hope that this is the manner in which this issue is being considered. We of course are aware of the proposal made by ONGC. We are aware of your internal agreements with ConocoPhillips. I hope that decision will be done sooner than later. But let me stress that Kashagan is not the end of life. We have a very successful example of our cooperation on the same Caspian Sea but on a bilateral basis with India on the Satpayev block which is a promising block. They are nearing the production phase. They are nearing the physical drilling for the product in that field. I met yesterday with the Oil Minister of India and we discussed it today. At our negotiations we had people from the Oil and Gas Ministry of India. We agreed that we will keep our vision on energy, oil and gas cooperation broader than narrower, and we will continue to seek for more opportunities for bilateral cooperation on the offshore or onshore fields in Kazakhstan. That was our agreement.

External Affairs Minister: As far as the corridor is concerned, this is the North-South corridor concept that we have revived. And we are very encouraged by the support that we have had from Kazakhstan on revival of this project. This is of course something that goes far beyond TAPI. Therefore, the first step is to move forward with TAPI, and this is then an enhancement of that. Its basic principle on which we are all agreed is going to be obviously a landmark and a big ticket thing between Central Asia and ourselves. Now there are more than just two of us involved. Eight countries in Central Asia are on board and involved in this effort.

But we have to work through all the issues that are necessary. There are geopolitical issues; there are security issues; there are feasibility issues; there would be issues of finance; sharing of costs; sharing of benefits; etc. So, all that will come in due course. But what we have done is that we have agreed in principle that this is something that has to

be done, something for which we can say its time has come. Now we have to make sure that it is actually implemented.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.

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Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.

(Concluded)



390. Address by Minister of State E. Ahamed at the Second India - Central Asia Dialogue.

Almaty (Kazakhstan), June 17, 2013.

Prof Derbisali, Director, Institute of Oriental Studies;

Madame Abuseitova, Head of Department of Oriental Source Studies;

Excellency Mr. Kuanyshiev, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to India;

Distinguished scholars and academics;

Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen,

1. I feel pleased and privileged to inaugurate the Second India-Central Asia Dialogue in this beautiful city of Almaty. I am no stranger to this city or to the region and therefore, I am happy to be on familiar territory again amongst all of you.
2. I recall with pleasure, the inauguration of the first India-Central Asia Dialogue last June in another picturesque capital Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. During that inaugural event, we took a decision

to have this Dialogue annually on a rotational basis. So now here we are, a year later, inaugurating the Second Dialogue. I think this is a reiteration of India's deep and sustained commitment to enhance links with Central Asian countries and the warm response from all of you to this common objective.

3. For over two decades of the independence of our neighbors in Central Asia, India has been focusing on this region and evolving ways and means of reinforcing the centuries of bonds. As part of this exercise, during the inaugural of the first Dialogue, I had spelt out our "Connect Central Asia" policy. The policy marks a more pro-active approach to engaging with our friends in Central Asia. It is in fact an attempt to re-connect in newer ways with a region with which we have been closely connected in our hearts and minds for centuries. We now need to update the means to connect our physical spaces and connect our common economic goals.
4. The elements of India's Connect Central Asia Policy are in various stages of formulation and implementation. High level political exchanges are taking place. Recently, in April and May, India's Vice President paid very productive visits to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Our External Affairs Minister was in Almaty two months ago when he met the President of Kazakhstan. We have had other high level engagements with all Central Asian countries. We have also worked on our common quest to build strong connections between our peoples.
5. We are continuously engaged in efforts to further our level of trade and economic cooperation, currently well below potential. To improve commercial relations, a major goal is enhancement of surface connectivity and access-route options. We are seeking to re-energise the North-South Transport Corridor and bridge the gaps in rail-road connections. We are looking at alternate routes through the Chabahar Port in Iran, and other Trans-Afghan links. I see that this Dialogue is devoting a full session to discuss connectivity-related issues. I have no doubt this will throw up some fresh ideas which can create breakthroughs in this vital area.

6. Another priority area is energy cooperation. Central Asian countries possess energy resources in abundance and India has a big energy appetite. We have to find viable solutions whereby Central Asia could be a reliable and sustained source and India could be a reliable market for Central Asian hydrocarbons and other resources.
7. Partnership for development is an important aspect of India-Central Asia relations. India believes in sharing its developmental experience in nation building with our friends. We are happy to provide economic and technical assistance for viable projects in the region. We have completed some modest projects like fruit & potato processing plants; machine and tool rooms; upgradation of a mini hydel plant and computerization of post offices. We are looking at connecting the region through an e-network to deliver tele-medicine and tele-education projects. We are also pursuing proposals for setting up collaborative India-Central Asia Universities and are discussing business models to set up hospitals and clinics with Indian expertise.
8. India has the privilege of contributing to capacity building and human resource development in the region and here I am happy to note that annually about 485 slots under our Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme, are utilized in Central Asian Countries. Some students from the region are also pursuing studies in India under other scholarship schemes. We are delighted to share our experience in this important area.
9. We are also working with our partner Governments to resolve problems like non-tariff barriers and stiff visa regimes so that business flows improve and we stimulate bilateral trade relations. India sees great potential for tourism and towards this end since last July has announced 14 weekly flights for each Central Asian country from India. Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are well connected by air with India. Now, we need similar sustained air connectivity with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.
10. Both India and Central Asia are multicultural and pluralistic. We share civilizational bonds and ancient commercial links through

the Silk Route. Our friendship is a fact of history and we must tap more effectively this natural reservoir of goodwill. It is our firm belief that enhanced interaction and collaboration between India and Central Asia will contribute to stability and development in the entire Central and South Asian region. We also believe that Afghanistan is an important factor for peace and stability in the region. At the "Heart of Asia" Istanbul Process conference held at this very venue barely two months ago, all of us agreed that a cooperative approach towards Afghanistan would benefit the entire region's stability. India chairs the CBM on Trade, Commerce and Investments in the Istanbul Process and our cooperation in Afghanistan can become a possible driver of its economic development.

11. Beyond Afghanistan, I am glad to see that the Dialogue has devoted a session to Security and Strategic Cooperation. We in the region face common threats of terrorism and extremism and we need to counter these tendencies in a coordinated manner—through expanding political and security dialogue and evolving common positions on terrorism and security and cooperating in economic growth. India is ready to offer cooperation in military training and joint research in defence.
12. The ambitious TAPI pipeline project which envisages transit of gas via Afghanistan and Pakistan to India is a welcome development. It could be the realization of a vision to connect Central and South Asia through an economic corridor. The success of joint regional initiatives will open new vistas of economic cooperation between India and Central Asia.
13. Here, I would also like to underscore India's commitment to develop multilateral relationships with the region through close and consistent cooperation in various multilateral fora. We support the CICA process, contribute as Observer in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and have proposed a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with the Customs Union. We note with satisfaction the evolving economic inter-dependency and integration in the Eurasian space.

We recognise this strong and positive contribution of Kazakhstan to these trends and commend its constructive role in the region.

14. Today, in Almaty, I am happy to particularly note India's growing bilateral relations with Kazakhstan, the largest country in Central Asia with a truly impressive and vibrant economy. Between 2000 and 2007, Kazakhstan has doubled the size of its economy and is targeted to triple the size by 2015. Our bilateral relations also have received a boost in 2012 with bilateral trade at US\$525 mn. By 2050 we expect Kazakhstan to be among 30 most developed countries of the world. We rejoice in the success of President Nazarbayev's vision of Kazakhstan and are willing to be close partners in its resolute march to greater prosperity.
15. I congratulate the Indian Council for World Affairs, New Delhi and Institute of Oriental Studies, Almaty and special sponsor CRRID, Chandigarh for putting together this Dialogue. A special thanks to Kazakhstan, our hosts for their graciousness and enthusiasm and to all participants, whose deliberations would provide valuable inputs to research scholars, academicians, experts and policy makers.
16. I am confident that the India-Central Asia Dialogue, which was initiated on the 20th Anniversary of India's diplomatic relations with Central Asian countries in 2012, will be sustained. It will no doubt impart further momentum to academic exchanges and people-to-people contacts. It will help connect us in the most important way, it will connect our hearts.

Thank you



KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

391. **Press Release of the Ministry of Defence on the official visit of Kyrgyz Defence Minister to India.**

New Delhi, September 13, 2013.

Major General Taalaibek Omuraliev, Minister of Defence of the Kyrgyz Republic, who is on an official visit to India from 11-15 September, 2013 held a meeting with Defence Minister Shri AK Antony here today. Both Ministers discussed a range of issues of mutual interest concerning bilateral defence cooperation and also shared views on security issues. Both sides reaffirmed their desire to further enhance bilateral defence cooperation in areas of interest such as training, UN Peacekeeping and defence industry cooperation. Both side also agreed to take steps to enhance cooperation between the Armed Forces of both countries.

During this visit, the Kyrgyz Defence Minister visited various defence establishments in Delhi. He would also visit Agra.



TAJIKISTAN

392. **Media Briefing by Joint Secretary (Eurasia) on the Vice President's Visit to Tajikistan**

New Delhi, April 13, 2013

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good morning friends and thank you very much for being here this Saturday morning.

As you know, this briefing is about the forthcoming visit of Vice-President to Tajikistan. Vice-President will be visiting Tajikistan from 14th to 17th of this month. India and Tajikistan have been having very high-level visits on a regular basis. For those of you who perhaps may not be aware, President Rahmon has visited India five times. From our side, the last visit was by President Pratibha Patil, and prior to that it was Prime Minister Vajpayee.

I have here with me Joint Secretary (Eurasia), Mr. Ajay Bisaria, who will brief you on the visit of the Vice-President. What we will do is follow the usual procedure and that is I will ask Mr. Bisaria to make his opening remarks which will provide you a broad picture of the visit, following which we will be open to any questions that you would like to ask on the Vice-President's visit. Subsequent to that, if any of you may have one or two questions on anything else we will be willing to answer them. Without much ado I will ask Joint Secretary Bisaria to make his opening remarks.

Joint Secretary (Eurasia) (Shri Ajay Bisaria): Good morning.

I think when we talk about this part of the world, Central Asia, it is always useful to have some maps. So, I am going to put on the screen a couple of maps for you to see what we are talking about.

As Akbar said, the Vice-President of India, Shri Hamid Ansari, will be on an official visit to Tajikistan from 14th to 17th of April. This will be the first ever visit by any Vice-President of India to Tajikistan. During his visit the Vice-President is expected to meet with His Excellency Mr. Emamolii Rahmon who is the President of Tajikistan. He will also hold talks with the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and the Defence Minister of Tajikistan, apart from meeting the Chairman of the Majlis-e-Milli, which is the Upper House of the Parliament of Tajikistan.

The Vice-President is also expected to visit the Tajik Technical University where India set up an India-Tajikistan modern engineering workshop which was inaugurated in 2011. He is also expected to visit a city called Nurek in the Khatlon Province in Southern Tajikistan.

The Vice-President will be accompanied by Mrs. Ansari, and a high-level delegation comprising: Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Shri Tariq Anwar; Dr. M.S. Gill, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha; Shri G.N. Ratanpuri, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha; Shrimati Harsimrat Kaur Badal, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha; and Shri Chandan Mitra, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

Let us just get to the next map. What I am going to do is just talk of some background of the bilateral relationship to give a context to the visit.

Relations between India and Tajikistan have been very close and cordial in the two decades of Tajikistan's Independence. Exchange of visits at higher levels has served to cement bilateral ties. As Akbar mentioned, Prime Minister Vajpayee had visited in 2003; President Pratibha Devi Singh Patil paid a state visit in September 2009; and of course President Rahmon has been a regular visitor to India. He has visited five times in 1995, 1999, 2001, 2006 and most recently in September 2012.

During his last visit, India and Tajikistan elevated their relationship to the level of a strategic partnership encompassing cooperation in a very wide spectrum of areas. We signed bilateral documents in many areas including textiles, culture, education, sport, health and labour, apart from agreements with private Indian companies.

During the visit India announced several new development projects in Tajikistan including an IT Centre of Excellence, a Pan-Central Asia E-Network which would include tele-education and tele-medicine delivery in the region, medical centres, language laboratories, an Entrepreneurship Development Institute and various small development projects.

Tajikistan, as you would see from the map, has immense geostrategic significance. It has borders with China of over 520 kilometres which were recently settled. It has a border with Afghanistan of 1425 kilometres. This is a very porous border and adds to the geostrategic significance of the region. The Afghan Wakhan Corridor, which you see a little sliver of in blue, is at its narrowest point 16 kilometres, which would mean that the distance between Tajikistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir is just that much, 16 kilometres.

India has strong civilisational ties with Tajikistan. We have linguistic similarities, similarities in customs, food, music, arts. These roots stretch into the depths of history from ancient times, even before the Kushana period in the first century AD. These ancient links have now a strong resonance, we are proud to say, in our modern ties with Tajikistan.

In terms of the bilateral relationship, we have several very strong consultative mechanisms which have been reinforced by high-level visits. We have foreign office consultations, a joint working group on counterterrorism, we have a joint commission meeting regularly on trade

and economic, scientific cooperation. And we also have a working group on defence cooperation.

In keeping with the very close bilateral relations, we have responded several times to humanitarian crises in Tajikistan. India's project assistance in the form of grants has also been significant. In 1995 for the first time India extended a credit line of five million dollars to Tajikistan to establish a joint venture with a private Indian company in the pharma sector. This and the accrued interest were converted into a grant later.

Similarly in 2003, India helped set up a food-processing plant in Dushanbe which was commissioned in 2005. And we provided a grant in 2003 for setting up an IT Centre in Dushanbe which was inaugurated in 2006, started functioning in the name of the Bedil India Tajikistan Centre for IT. This has been a very successful model which is why it is being replicated now. During the state visit of President Rahmon in 2006 we committed to undertake the rehabilitation and modernisation of a 1936 vintage Varzob hydropower station. This has recently been completed in December 2012 and inaugurated. So, it is a very strong development partnership that India has with Tajikistan.

Apart from that, we have very strong and close defence relations. India has played a major role in development of infrastructure at the Gissar military aerodrome which was inaugurated by President Rahmon himself in October 2010. India is also training a large number of Tajik officers and cadets both within Tajikistan as well as by sending them to various military courses in India including the NDA and the IMA.

The level of trade between our countries is low for one very obvious reason which is the transportation difficulties and access to this landlocked country. The usual route or the most popular route right now for transportation of goods from India is by sea to Bandar Abbas in Iran and from Bandar Abbas by land. This is time-consuming and costly. And of late, for those who are following the region, we have taken several initiatives to reenergize the north-south transport corridor, and we are also talking of trans-Afghan corridors which give us special access to Tajikistan.

In terms of trade for 2012, trade figures from Tajikistan say it was 27 million dollars, extremely low, mainly Indian export of meats and meat

products and pharmaceuticals, iron and steel, apparel and clothing accessories. We had the seventh session of the Joint Commission which has laid a blueprint for trying to improve this level of trade that met in February 2013 and identified a series of measures to accelerate our economic relations.

Apart from the development partnership, India has also contributed to capacity building in Tajikistan in a very strong way. The ITEC programme is extremely popular. During the visit of President Rahmon the number of seats was increased from 100 to 150, and there continues to be a strong demand particularly for courses in information technology, diplomacy, banking, etc.

One happy development for Tajikistan has been that it has joined the WTO in December 2012, and we hope that will give an impetus to bilateral trade as well as Tajikistan's integration into the global economy.

Of course, India and Tajikistan have coordinated closely in UN bodies and international organizations as well.

Let me stop right there. I will be happy to take any questions.

Q: Since MoS Agriculture and Food is accompanying the Vice-President, will there be any agreements relating to food and agriculture or any other agreements?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): Let me just make an overall comment. Visits by the Vice-President are normally goodwill visits, and we see them as a high-level continuation of a political dialogue with a very close strategic partner in Central Asia. Normally during these visits we do not have deliverables like agreements. But we certainly expect a conversation to take place on this issue to take forward the discussions that took place in September last year. Incidentally, in the agriculture sector, you know that Tajikistan is very strong in cotton, there was a great deal of discussion during the visit of President Rahmon last year, and we expect some further discussion to take place.

Q: The Vice President has a background of foreign affairs. Has he been working in that area in his previous avatar? Or does he know the President of Tajikistan personally?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): Yes, the Vice President has worked in the

contiguous area. As you know, he was Ambassador in Iran and Tajikistan's roots are all Persian. So he is, I would say, an expert in the region apart from the fact that he has met President Rahmon personally and he has met in fact most of the leaders of Central Asia personally and has strong personal equations with them. He is, I believe, a scholar on the region and knows the history, background and culture very well. And we feel that this will certainly come into play in his conversations with the leadership.

Q:Is there any movement on the setting up of a military hospital facility in Tajikistan? And you mentioned the airbase at Ayni. Have the Indians disengaged and handed it over or are they still engaged in sort of jointly operating it?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): As I said, India has at the GMA Ayni airbase, India has contributed in terms of helping in renovation and reconstruction of that airport and making it state of the art. It is a military air field. India continues to be engaged there in training. We have a military training team present at the venue as well as for training cadets, young Tajik military officers, both in Tajikistan as well as in India.

On the hospital, yes, there is a talk going on of creating a hospital and you will come to know when it is done.

Q:Is there any contingency plan regarding the post-2014 after the withdrawal of the combat forces in Afghanistan because it is one of the areas of concern for both the countries?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): Certainly we expect Afghanistan to be in focus in the conversation that Vice-President has with the leadership in Tajikistan. Even when President Rahmon was here in September 2012, that was a very important area for discussion, as I mentioned. Tajikistan is extremely concerned about the situation in Afghanistan. They have a 1425 kilometre, very porous border. There have been some troubling incidents in the south in the Badakshan region, and some Afghan mercenaries have been involved. We have, as I mentioned, a counterterrorism working group. We will certainly have conversation on the situation in Afghanistan and particularly, as you said, the situation as it will unfold post-2014 and the ISAF withdrawal.

Q: Do we have fighter plane stationed there in Tajik airbases?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): No, we do not. At GMA, as I said, we have reconstructed an airfield and that is the extent of our engagement.

Q: Do you have any long-term business plan with Tajikistan being one of the central countries in Central Asia?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): I think we just defined the elements of our long-term business plan. We have a very high level of engagement with Tajikistan; the President of Tajikistan was here; the Vice President of India is going there; we have declared a strategic partnership; and we have very strong areas of cooperation in multiple sectors including defence and on the trade side. So, I think there is a blueprint for very long-term coordination.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*... plan with Tajikistan, competing countries?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): I am not here to comment on behalf of China or Russia or other forces. But let us just say that there are a number of active countries with whom Tajikistan incidentally has good relations and that includes Russia, China as well as the US. So, that is a question you should put to our Tajik friends.

Q: Are there any Indian firms in Tajikistan?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): We have a very limited presence of Indian firms. There is one group from Bangalore called Khode which is trying to get active in Tajikistan. There is a wonderful five-star hotel coming up by the Crowne Plaza Group in Dushanbe. Those are two or three exceptional stories. BHEL of course is active as a public sector organization because of Tajikistan's huge hydroelectric potential and their need to develop hydroelectric energy where we want to coordinate with them. But there is a limited presence of Indian companies in Dushanbe.

Q: Khode, are they making rum there?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): No.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you.

(Concluded)



393. Onboard Media Interaction by Hon. Vice-President En Route to Dushanbe

April 14, 2013

Good afternoon dear colleagues and welcome to you. Hon'ble Vice President has kindly agreed to interact with you. The media briefing will start with brief remarks by the Hon'ble Vice President, followed by few questions which the Hon. Vice-President has kindly agreed to answer.

Vice-President of India (Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari): Thank you everyone, Hon. Tariq sahab and friends here.

This is a visit to a neighbouring country. As you might have noticed, the air distance between Delhi and Dushanbe is less than the air distance between Delhi and Bombay. Total flying time is three hours till the door opening and all the rest of it. So, this is really a neighbouring country. And it is a country with which we have had very good relations since it came into existence after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

There have been good many visits. Prime Minister Vajpayeeji went there; President Pratibha Patilji went there. From their side President Rahmon has been to India on five occasions. There have been a lot of Ministerial visits.

is a very small country. It was one of the smallest units of the old Soviet Union. It is also a country where levels of development are much lower. It used to depend a great deal on subsidies from Moscow. So, after the collapse of the Soviet Union it went through a bad patch, both economically and politically, because there was a civil war, which finally got settled.

Today it depends on remittances. There are almost a million citizens of Tajikistan out of a total population of seven million who are as guest workers in the Russian Federation, in Kazakhstan and maybe a few other places. And those remittances are a critical element for the income of the country and the welfare of the country.

Our own relations with them are good, extremely cordial, politically very good relations, commercially modest. I think the total trade turnover is about 34-35 million dollars. We have rendered a good deal of assistance

to them in a variety of small projects, and that assistance is continuing. Recently we had a meeting in Delhi of the Joint Commission chaired on our side by the Commerce Secretary. Similarly there are various other small groups.

We cooperate on terrorism. One area of common interest between the two of us, and of high priority interest, is the problem of terrorism emanating from the territory between us and them, which means Pakistan and Afghanistan. And Tajikistan has an enormous interest in the stability of Afghanistan. We have the same kind of interest, same kind of concerns. So, this is an area where cooperation and exchange of views has taken place on a continuous basis and it is also an area of convergence.

I think I have said my piece.

Q: ...(Inaudible)what aboutthe poet Badil.....

Vice-President of India: Yes, the point, Bedil of course is buried close to Pragati Maidan. The cultural links are very old. If you go back and read their history, the archaeological finds that have been there have produced sufficient evidence of very lively exchanges, I mean shells from the seashores of India. So, that kind of thing has been there for a long time and of course we can always say that the founder of the Mughal dynasty Emperor Babur originated from somewhere in that area.

Q: Your Excellency, after 2014, after the likely withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan, ...(Inaudible)... strategy for India. Is this visit a normal visit or does it have a specific agenda?

Vice-President of India: It is a normal visit because this is part of the exchange of visits which take place between the two countries. The visit of a Vice-President is the first one on our records, but exchanges at high-levels have been on a fairly continuous basis. As far as the withdrawal from Afghanistan of ISAF forces is concerned, that is something which everybody is watching. We are also watching. Let us see how things shape up.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Vice President of India: The level of below poverty line population is very high. I read somewhere it is almost 60 per cent or so. So, assistance in any form is welcome by them, and we have been offering assistance

to them in three-four specific areas. Capacity building is a critical area. We have given a very large number of ITEC scholarships to them, a substantial number of ICCR cultural scholarships to them. Some of their military cadets train in our military academy. So, this capacity building, that includes IT parks and things like that, is a major area. It is a strong point with us and we are happy to share it with them.

Q: What does the Government of India expect from Tajikistan in terms of trade? We have a wonderful relationship with Tajikistan, but what are we going to do for our trade?

Vice President of India: Trade will develop. Our major problem not only with Tajikistan but with all the Central Asian states is of access. We do not have a line of entry into Central Asia. The road through Pakistan which is the most obvious one is for the moment blocked, may remain blocked for God knows how long. The only other access on which we have been working is through Iran, Afghanistan, Bandar Abbas, Chahbahar, Zaranj-Delaram road. So, Afghanistan route is possible. Of course there is a long route through the old Soviet Union but that is not an economically viable thing. There is technically another route through China but again it extends distances so much.

So, our real problem of trade with Central Asian countries, whether it is Tajikistan, Uzbekistan or any other, is the problem of access. This is a problem that we are also addressing as far as energy sources are concerned, gas from Central Asia for example.

Q: Is there a move to ...(Inaudible)... defence engagement?

Vice-President of India: We have an ongoing cooperation. That is going on. We are training some of their officers and cadets in our military academy. That is a pretty open up thing. But there is a no specific, I mean we are not military allies or anything like that.

Q: Can you leverage on the terrorism issue? ...(Inaudible)...

Vice-President of India: They have suffered on their own from terrorism very considerably and, therefore, they are very sensitive to the issue of terrorism. Just as we have suffered from terrorism from across our borders, they have suffered from terrorism from across their borders, in this case terrorism emanating from Afghanistan. So, they have concerns.

They have concerns about the various kinds of extremist movements which they have managed now to bring under control, but it remains a live issue. So, we do exchange information on the question of terrorism. There is a working group that meets at a certain frequency. Thank you. Have a pleasant flight!

(Concluded)

On Board Air India 1

April 14, 2013



394. Media Statement by Vice President Hamid Ansari at the Joint Press Event with the President of Tajikistan.

Dushanbe, April 15, 2013.

Distinguished Representatives of the Tajik and Indian Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am delighted to be in your beautiful country. India and Tajikistan share deep historical bonds which have been invigorated through exchanges at all levels. I take this opportunity to thank you Mr. President and to convey to the people of Tajikistan our best wishes of peace, stability and prosperity under your prudent leadership.
2. I had a very productive meeting on a one-to-one basis with His Excellency President Emomali Rahmon followed by very constructive delegation level talks. Our talks focused on further strengthening the already close relations between our two brotherly countries. Our relations are not of today; they go back, even before the first millennium A.D. These ties have been strengthened in recent years and I have no doubt that they will be further strengthened in times to come.

3. In our talks, I emphasized India's commitment to our strategic partnership. We have agreed to strengthen our relations further in the energy sector, IT, health, education and in the establishment of small and micro industries in Tajikistan. We discussed cooperation on security issues as well as in countering cross-border terrorism. I also apprised His Excellency the President, of India's drive to expand its relationship with the countries of Central Asia through a 'Connect Central Asia' Policy. I am happy to state that both, His Excellency President Rahmon and I agree that our cooperation has greater potential and we should work to realize it.
4. I also apprised HE President Rahmon, of the progress in various areas of cooperation that was agreed to, during His Excellency's extremely successful visit to India in September 2012. My visit carries that dialogue further. We discussed different ways to strengthen the strategic partnership, which was declared during the President's visit to our country. We have agreed to focus on our common approaches and work towards the welfare of both our peoples.
5. H.E. President Rahmon and I also discussed regional security issues. We exchanged views on how to cooperate in maintaining regional peace and security. In this, the situation in Afghanistan is of prime importance. Both the President and I agree that nations in the region, as well as the international community, should strengthen Afghanistan's capacity to maintain peace, stability and prosperity of the Afghan peoples. We also discussed the international political situation and agreed to strengthen our cooperation in multilateral organizations.
6. I congratulate the Republic of Tajikistan on its becoming the 159th Member of the World Trade Organization. We welcome Tajikistan's entry into this premier trade organization and will work with Tajikistan within the Organization to our mutual benefit. The deeper integration of Tajikistan with the global economy will not only benefit your country but would also enhance our bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

7. I look forward to visiting the Nurek Hydroelectric station as well as the Tajik Technical University. I will be meeting with the Chairman of the Majlisi Namoyandagon along with Members of Parliament from India who have accompanied me. India and Tajikistan share common secular and democratic credentials and we have much to discuss between our Parliaments.
8. Finally, on behalf of myself and my delegation, I would like thank H.E. President Rahmon and the Government and people of Tajikistan for the warmth and hospitality accorded to us during this visit. We are truly at home here.

Thank you all very much.



395. Media Briefing by Secretary (East) on Vice President's ongoing visit to Tajikistan.

Dushanbe, April 15, 2013.

Under Secretary (XP): Good evening friends and welcome to today's media briefing. To brief you on the various engagements that the Vice President had today, we have with us Secretary (East) Shri Sanjay Singh, Ambassador Asith Bhattacharjee and Joint Secretary (Eurasia) Shri Ajay Bisaria. The briefing would begin with brief opening remarks by Secretary (East), following which the floor will be open for a few questions.

Secretary (East) (Shri Sanjay Singh): Thank you very much. I will not give a 'brief' opening statement, I will give you a detailed opening statement; and I will bring your attention to the media statement which was made by the Hon. Vice President. I hope all of you have got a copy of it. I will just highlight some points from that.

He said he had a very productive meeting on a one-to-one basis with His Excellency President Rahmon followed by very constructive delegation-level talks. He also said, 'I emphasized India's commitment to our strategic partnership' and that 'We have agreed to strengthen our

relations further in the energy sector, IT, health, and education and in the establishment of small and micro industries in Tajikistan'. He also talked about discussions on cooperation in countering cross-border terrorism. He talked about the Connect Central Asia Policy which has been launched by the Government.

Both of them took stock of the considerable progress in various areas of cooperation and expressed satisfaction. They also discussed regional security issues and the situation in Afghanistan. He congratulated Tajikistan for becoming the 159th member of the WTO. He told you that he would be visiting a hydroelectric power station tomorrow, and the Tajik Technical University the day after.

Let me also give you further details beyond this. The one-to-one restricted meeting lasted around forty minutes, and then we had the delegation level talks. It was reiterated that this high-level visit by the Hon Vice President was part of our efforts to renew contacts at regular intervals, high-level contacts, which is in keeping with our strategic partnership.

In the Tajik delegation today - the Indian delegation you know because you have met all of them - at the delegation level talks you had Foreign Minister, Energy and Industry Minister, Education Minister, Trade and Economy Minister, Health Minister, Agriculture Minister, Culture Minister. This reflects the various areas in which we have cooperation with Tajikistan which is multifaceted.

In the delegation-level talks, in addition to what President Rahmon has told you at his press conference he expressed satisfaction with the state of bilateral relations, which he said were marked by cooperation in a number of areas and has enormous opportunities for expansion. He said that he had visited India in the year marking 20th anniversary of our diplomatic relations, his visit was very good. And he remarked that the Vice President's visit would bring a higher level of cooperation because the Vice President had got along with him - something which is very welcome in our region which is rare. So, it was a good omen for the visit.

The President emphasized that our ties are brotherly. We have got good international cooperation. We have cooperation in counterterrorism, we have security cooperation. We have a number of joint projects. And he expressed satisfaction at the cooperation in capacity building. He invited

Indian investments in the areas of cotton, agriculture, mining. He pointed out that Tajikistan has enormous reserves of silver and precious stones, which is something that he felt Indian industry could source from Tajikistan. He talked about energy, hydrocarbons and other areas in which there could be cooperation. He also talked about regional cooperation focused on Afghanistan.

The Hon. Vice President in his discussion said that Tajikistan was a very close friend and neighbour. We have historical ties with Tajikistan which has seen various cultures and various religions over its long history, such as Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Islam. And this is reflected in the Museum of Antiquity, which some of you had seen yesterday, the various aspects of Tajik civilization. We have diverse areas of cooperation, and we have security cooperation as well as cooperation against terrorism.

Hon. Vice President emphasized that we should work in promoting cooperation which would be taken forward by the private sectors of the two countries because this would be very useful. He also talked about Tajikistan's WTO accession which would help create better conditions for more cooperation. He emphasized that we stand committed to developmental cooperation with Tajikistan, and are ready to create another IT centre in the Tajik Technical University, which he would be visiting on Wednesday morning. We are also to put up an Entrepreneurship Development Centre, certain small medical units, we are also going to be cooperating with Tajikistan in setting up micro, small and medium enterprises in Tajikistan.

We have considerable cooperation in capacity building. We also sought Tajik help for cotton in India because Tajikistan has considerable expertise in growing cotton, and this is something that we can use. We have very good cooperation in the multilateral fora and the United Nations, and for the expansion of United Nations Security Council.

Thereafter, Hon. Vice-President visited the Majlis-e-Namandyagon which is the Lower House of the Majlis or the Parliament of Tajikistan. He was welcomed by Chairman Zuhurov and his colleagues who are from the Parliamentary Friendship Groups and heads of various Committees. It is interesting that Chairman Zuhurov talked about civilisational links based

on the Avesta, the Rig Veda, and ties go back to that era. They talked about Rumi, Rudaki, Dehlavi, and in modern time by the relationship between Tursunzade and Rabindranath Tagore, and obviously Bedil.

He said that Tajikistan and he himself are very happy with India's growing stature as an emerging economy, and that Indian Parliament was a great beacon of cooperation for the Tajik Parliament and it wished to increase cooperation, and (that) they were exchanging a lot of delegations to India.

Hon. Vice President did mention that it is true that we belong to a common cultural area and the visit to the Museum of Antiquity posited that. We have strong, stable relations. We have elevated them to a strategic partnership during President Rahmon's visit in September last year. We have regular exchanges between our Parliaments. He emphasized that India is wedded to democracy and that Indian Parliament is ready to strengthen the bonds of friendship between our two countries.

In the afternoon, Prime Minister Akil Akilov called on the Hon. Vice-President, and he praised India's emergence as a major economy. He emphasized that bilateral ties have been elevated to a new level. He talked about the renovation of Varzob-1, Pamir Energy. He thanked India for developmental assistance, and also talked about the IT centre in the Tajik Technical University from which nearly 600 trainees have already been trained, and when we renew the centre I think it will create a greater capacity in Tajikistan in the information technology field.

He talked about trade and economic links and invited Indian participation, like the President did, in mining and pharmaceuticals. But he also talked about cooperation in cotton, wool and leather sectors which Tajikistan has enormous raw material; and said that Indian industry could utilize the three new free trade zones that are going to be put up by Tajikistan.

The Hon. Vice President emphasized that the MoU signed by FICCI with its counterpart and that we must get our entrepreneurs together and work towards utilizing the opportunities and the potential that exists.

He also said that we must have regular meetings of the Joint Working Group on Terrorism, we should strengthen air connectivity, and facilitate visas for businessmen which would help our trade and industry. And the Tajiks said they were working hard on these two areas.

I would not go over everything that Foreign Minister said in his call on the Hon. Vice President, but it is interesting he said we have the same common vision and common fight against terrorism. He said that every Tajik of a certain age has been accustomed to Indian cinema, generation grew up on it, he mentioned. And he said Tajikistan is like Switzerland, only more pristine and has 13,000 glaciers and a thousand pure rivers running out of it. It is a fantastic locale for film shooting and he invited Indian Bollywood and other Indian centres to come and make films in Tajikistan. And he said he will try and make sure that business visas and visas for films will be facilitated.

The final meeting today was with Trade and Economy Minister Mr. Sharif Rahimzode who has just visited India in February for the meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission. This was the seventh meeting where a number of projects were discussed to take forward and implement the vision of Prime Minister and President Rahmon for the strategic partnership. He had had very a good meeting with Commerce, Industry and Textiles Minister, MoS Commerce, and others.

He said one of the things that Tajikistan is looking for is markets in India and they are working on an agreement on transit to India, and he sees the market as very promising and he will be working on seeing a passage of transit to India. And he welcomed exchange of business delegations, and thanked India for WTO support.

I will end there and I will request Ambassador, if he has some other points which he would like to just add, to give local colour to this briefing.

I thank you.

Ambassador to Tajikistan (Shri Asith Kumar Bhattacharjee): Thank you, Secretary, in fact you have been so exhaustive that it was locally colourful, if I may put it so, more colourful than I can say the thing. But what I could do perhaps is interject when there are questions.

Secretary (East): Okay. And Ajay is our expert who has already briefed you in Delhi. Would you like to add something?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia) (Shri Ajay Bisaria): No.

Secretary (East): Alright. Okay, the floor is yours.

Q: What tangible progress was made since September 2012 visit of the President in strategic areas?

Secretary (East): Tangible progress now is that we have identified a locale for a second set of an IT centre, we have a partner; we also have a partner for the medical centre that we are setting up in southern Tajikistan which has made considerable progress. I think Joint Secretary (ERS) briefed you on that in Delhi. There is progress in other areas of capacity building that we have tried to put into place, the various areas that were discussed during President Rahmon's visit. I think we are quite satisfied with the developments that have been there since then.

Q: Over the last two days?

Secretary (East): The last two days has been a method of good opportunity, rather today has been a good opportunity to take stock of our relationship in the multifaceted areas of cooperation that we have. And after seeing the progress that has been made, we are quite satisfied.

Ambassador might like to say something on this. He is the one who has been working on it.

Ambassador to Tajikistan: I am going back to your first question. There is one very important tangible progress which has been made and that is we have assisted Tajikistan to join the WTO as the 159th member. We are members of the WTO, now they are members of the WTO. So, it assists in our bilateral trade and economic relations. That is one very tangible progress. And this request has been coming down from 2006 visit and it has taken Tajikistan a long time to negotiate with the countries to get the accession to WTO.

Q: My question is to Mr. Sanjay Singh. I am intrigued this morning when the Vice President was making the statement, he used the words strategic partnership and concern for counterterrorism and security; and also in your briefing you have also mentioned these words at least five times. Can you relieve me of my intrigue and tell me it has something to do with the coming year when NATO leaves? And do you think that our responsibility of problems is going to cease for both Tajikistan and us? Let us face it. We all know that there is going to be some trouble there. And if there is trouble in Afghanistan after NATO forces leave, we are going to be affected. Will you agree with that assessment?

Secretary (East): I am generally an optimistic person and I have a positive outlook towards the future. And we have and Afghanistan has built considerable capacity over the last decade or so. And we are very happy to cooperate with Afghanistan in being able to create a stable and prosperous polity. I think a stable and prosperous polity is required in the region not only in Afghanistan but everywhere because the main requirements for us in India and other countries of the region is development and prosperity because we are all developing countries, and we have to bring the gains from development to our people. So, while we are cautiously optimistic, we also work and create, in a way, partnerships for any eventuality that may or may not come up.

Q: The Vice President mentioned this Connect Central Asia Policy which has started ...*(Inaudible)*... Under this programme which he mentioned to President Rahmon today, are there any tangible outcomes of it yet? Have we decided on any areas because there were four points that the programme started with – the commerce, connectivity – because we agreed to improve connectivity but the flights to Dushanbe never really happened.

Secretary (East): Thank you very much for the question. There is a very good address given by our Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. E. Ahamed in Bishkek at the India-Central Asia Conference or seminar that was organised by Ajay last year in July, and since Ajay is the architect of the Connect Central Asia Policy, perhaps he will be able to do a better briefing. So, may I request him to come in here and talk about it?

Joint Secretary (ERS): Sure. Connect Central Asia, as we have been talking in the briefings, was a conceptual idea of proactively increasing our engagement with Central Asia. It had a number of points, about 12 of them, apart from a few flagship projects. Let me tell you the state of health of flagship projects which we announced at that stage. Apart from the IT centre of excellence which we will announce soon and which will be set up here, a flagship idea was a Central Asia E-Network. And we have just gone to the stage of issuing a tender for it, and we expect to roll this out very soon within the next year or so, which will be a programme based on a hub in New Delhi and spokes in all five Central Asian capitals, and able to deliver telemedicine and tele-education with backend support of state-of-the-art hospitals in India, with backend support of universities

and to be able to deliver this. So, this is the stage we have reached of completely designing the project and now it is going to roll out.

We are talking of a Central Asia University, we are talking of one in Bishkek, and we are in an advance stage of discussions with Kyrgyzstan for developing this university. Medical centres are what we are also talking of. We are trying to find the right business models. For Tajikistan we had the idea of urgent care centres which we will roll out. So, the idea was that we announced a policy which was a conceptual framework of increasing engagement. Within it we have a number of flagship projects which you will see them rolling out in the next year or so.

Q: Do you see any Iran's role in this Central Asia programme?

Joint Secretary (ERS): The Connect Central Asia Policy is about India's role in Central Asia. So, that is what I am going to talk about. I am not going to talk on behalf of Iran. But since you have mentioned Iran, one of the ideas of Connect Central Asia is connectivity, physical surface connectivity, and one of the elements is the North-South Corridor, which uses the Bandar Abbas and the territory of Iran to develop a connection with Central Asia. We are promoting that, as also Chabahar Port in Iran which is also being used along with trans-Afghan routes. So, that is where Iran comes in.

Q: In the Azerbaijan, do you think you can use their ports as well? Azerbaijan ...*(Inaudible)*... Iran. Is it a part of the Central Asia Connect?

Joint Secretary (ERS): Certainly. The North-South Corridor which we have been talking about goes north from Bandar Abbas to Bandar Anzali, and then to Astara in Azerbaijan, and thence through the Caspian Sea to Astrakhan in Russia. So, Azerbaijan is very much part of the North-South Corridor Project. It is a signatory to this, and in fact the next meeting of the coordination council is expected in Baku in the month of May.

Secretary (East): If I may add to that, there is a railway line from Bandar Abbas to a place called Rasht, and the missing link is from Rasht to Astara which is about 180 kilometres. So, if you could build that railway line from Rasht to Astara, then you would have connectivity from Astara to St. Petersburg. So, the challenge is to build that missing link. And Ajay is trying very hard, along with our friends in the Ministry of

Commerce, that at the meeting in Azerbaijan we would all agree on building that link so that we would have direct connectivity.

Q: What sort of terrain is that from Astara? Is it plains?

Secretary (East): No, it is not plains; it is part of the mountainous area of North Iran.

Joint Secretary (ERS): In fact this is the link within Iran. But after that, to the point in Azerbaijan, it is through the Caspian Sea and then from the city of Astrakhan in southern Russia is through the Russian railway network.

Q: As a corollary to an earlier question, the Vice President mentioned his extensive talks on Afghanistan post NATO withdrawal. ...*(Inaudible)*...

Secretary (East): He mentioned that he had talks with President Rahmon on regional security issues, and the situation in Afghanistan is of prime importance.

Q: Post the withdrawal, should we expect a departure of the strategy that we have been using over deploying in Afghanistan or should we continue on the same?

Secretary (East): I would not like to speculate on what will happen once one year ends.

Q: In view of the next year's pullout, was there a request from Tajikistan to train more military personnel, or did India offer to train more?

Secretary (East): I see no connection.

Q: As regards the military men whom we are training, was there a request to train more? There are officers being trained in the Indian Military Academy.

Secretary (East): We will continue with our programme.

Q: Does India plan to offer its assistance in identification of probable oil and gas reserves in this country?

Secretary (East): First you assure me that there are oil and gas reserves! Having said that, I will say that yes, we have been told that there are oil and gas reserves in Tajikistan. I think it is an early date. It would first need prospecting and thereafter exploiting it. Now, we are at a very early

stage. We have been told that this is an area where we can have cooperation. And since India is looking for oil and gas assets around the world, I see no reason why we should not do so in Tajikistan also in due course.

Q: Is uranium is available in this country?

Secretary (East): I did not know that there was uranium in Tajikistan. Is there, Ambassador?

Ambassador to Tajikistan: Yes, there is.

Secretary (East): Okay, I am sorry, I have been educated and thereby I have answered your question.

Q: But Ambassador may like to add something on it.

Ambassador to Tajikistan: If I can be categorical, if you ask as of today, we have not pursued this.

Under Secretary (XP): Thank you very much, Sir, and thank you friends for your patience. With that we come to the close of this media briefing.



396. Vice President's remarks at the India-Tajikistan Modern Engineering Workshop during his visit to Tajik Technical University.

Dushanbe, April 17, 2013.

1. India is committed to cooperating with Tajikistan in all spheres, particularly, in human resource development.
2. I am happy to see that the commitment between the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and His Excellency the President of the Republic of Tajikistan on human resource development has manifested itself in the establishment of this Modern Engineering Workshop.
3. The Workshop is providing students and the engineering faculty practical training and is contributing to enhancement of their skills. This capacity building is bound to play a big role in the path to development of Tajikistan.

4. I may add that India is fully committed to cooperating with brotherly Tajikistan in the welfare and development of both our peoples.
5. In February, the Tajik Technical University signed an agreement of cooperation with our premier technology institute, IIT Delhi. This will facilitate further academic exchange and promote joint research and project work between both the institutes of excellence.
6. I am happy to announce that the Government of India has decided to collaborate with the Tajik Technical University to create a center of IT excellence with a super computer. I have no doubt that this centre will become the seed for developing IT expertise among young people in Tajikistan. This centre will also become one of the focal points of a pan Central Asia e-network Project that India hopes to implement soon. The e-network will enable tele-education to be delivered from India, as also tele-medicine.
7. India also proposes to set up an Enterprise Development Centre in Tajikistan which will help create entrepreneurs and job providers, as against job-seekers.
8. I wish the faculty and the students well and hope that your endeavour at attaining greater technical skills and knowledge will indeed be successful.



TURKMENISTAN

397. Fourth Meeting of India-Turkmenistan Inter-Governmental Commission

New Delhi, January 22, 2013.

1. The Deputy Chairman of Cabinet of Ministers (DPM) & Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov led a high level delegation comprising Chairman of 'Turkmengaz', Deputy

Minister of Trade and senior officials of the Government of Turkmenistan to New Delhi for the Fourth Meeting of India-Turkmenistan Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific & Technological Cooperation on 21-22 January 2013. DPM Meredov was hosted by the Indian Co-Chair Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs.

2. The IGC discussions were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere and marked by a spirit of mutual respect and understanding. Shri Ahamed and DPM Meredov comprehensively reviewed the progress and current status of bilateral relations in areas such as energy, trade & economic cooperation, transport & connectivity, civil aviation, information technology, science & technology, cultural, educational, consular and visa issues.
3. The issue of the strategic gas pipeline project Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) was in focus during the meeting. It was noted that TAPI project has made significant progress since the State visit of President of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov to India in May 2010. Both sides agreed to take necessary steps for early realization of the project.
4. Both sides noted the significant increase in trade. The Indian side statistics revealed that the bilateral trade has recorded 67% growth and had risen to the level of US\$ 60 million. The Turkmen side conveyed that as per their statistics, trade has increased three times in 2012 as compared to 2011.
5. The Turkmen side informed of its intention to start flight services from Ashgabat to Goa in order to increase tourism and people to people links. Shri Ahamed also raised the issue of difficulties being faced by Indian nationals in renewal of their work permits. Turkmen side agreed to look into the matter sympathetically.
6. The Commission agreed to form a Joint Working Group on Trade & Economic Cooperation which was tasked to meet early and discuss the measures to increase the bilateral trade and identify new areas of cooperation. A Protocol of the 4th meeting of the IGC was also signed by the two co-chairs.

7. The Turkmen dignitary also called on Hon'ble President Shri Pranab Mukherjee and held meetings with Minister of External Affairs Shri Salman Khurshid and Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas Shri Veerappa Moily.
8. It was agreed that the next meeting of the IGC would be held in Ashgabat in 2014 on a mutually convenient date.



UZBEKISTAN

398. Media Briefing on the Vice President's visit to Uzbekistan.

New Delhi, May 19, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good morning friends and thank you very much for coming so early in the morning for many of you on a Saturday, and I apologise for that. The idea was to try and fill you in on several visits that are going to happen in the next few days both incoming and outgoing. What I will do is first make the formal announcements of some of those visits. I have here with me Joint Secretary (Eurasia) Mr. Ajay Bisaria who will brief you specifically on one of those visits. Following that we will also have my other colleagues come and talk to you on other visits that are taking place.

With that introduction let me make the announcements that I have. The first one is about the visit of the President of Afghanistan. President Karzai will be visiting India from 20th to 22nd of May. This is President Karzai's twelfth visit since he assumed office in 2002. He was last in New Delhi in November 2012 on a state visit.

President Karzai will arrive on 20th in the afternoon in Chandigarh. From there he will go to Jalandhar and visit the Lovely Professional University in Jalandhar where he is being conferred an honorary doctorate, honoris causa, by the President of India. The Chief Minister of Punjab will also be present on the occasion.

Subsequent to this ceremony in Jalandhar President Karzai will come to Delhi. On the 21st he has two meetings in Delhi. He will meet the President at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Subsequently in the evening he will meet the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister will also host a dinner for him. On 22nd morning, President Karzai will return to Kabul.

The visit is indicative of the strong and close relations that we have with Afghanistan and the frequent contacts between the senior leaders of the two countries. That is the first announcement that I have to make.

The second announcement is regarding the visit of the Vice-President Dr. Hamid Ansari to Uzbekistan. Vice-President and Shrimati Salma Ansari will be visiting Uzbekistan from 21st to 24th May.

During his visit Vice-President is expected to call on the President of Uzbekistan Mr. Islam Karimov, and he will also have meetings with the Chairman of the Senate. The latter is also expected to host a banquet in his honour. Apart from Tashkent, Vice-President will also visit Samarkand and Bukhara where he is expected and scheduled to also meet the regional heads of those Provinces.

Vice-President will be accompanied by the Minister of State for Environment and Forests (Independent Charge) Shrimati Jayanthi Natarajan, and four Members of Parliament. These Members are: Dr. E.M. Sudarsana Natchiappan, Shri Shivanand Tiwary, Shri K.N. Balagopal, and Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan.

We have had frequent high-level contacts between Uzbekistan and India since the independence of Uzbekistan in 1991. President Karimov has visited India in 1991, 1994, 2000, 2005 and 2011. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao had visited Uzbekistan in 1993, and Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2006.

Just to summarise some of the major contacts and economic links, our bilateral trade with Uzbekistan is in the vicinity of about 200 million dollars with the balance of trade in favour of India. Our major exports are drugs and pharmaceuticals. By various estimates, about 40 per cent of the pharmaceutical imports of Uzbekistan are from India. There are 15 pharmaceutical companies from India which have offices or representative offices in Uzbekistan.

Another area of contact is the ITEC scheme. Under the ITEC scheme we provide 150 scholarships for Uzbek nationals and these are utilized fully every year. In terms of air connectivity, as you know this is an area of priority for us, there are 15 direct flights between India and Uzbekistan, and there is discussion to perhaps increase this a little bit more. Ajay will provide you further details if you would like to know.

The Vice-President's visit is expected to give a further fillip to the strong bilateral relations that we have with Uzbekistan in particular and Central Asia in general.

What I will now do is request my colleague Mr. Bisaria to speak to you about the substance of our relations, following which we will open the floor for any questions that you would like to ask.

Joint Secretary (Eurasia) (Shri Ajay Bisaria): Thanks you, Akbar. I would like to believe that this very healthy attendance is thanks to a surge of interest in Uzbekistan and Central Asia.

I am going to talk about a country which is north of Afghanistan and west of China. This is where the Vice-President is headed. Vice-President Shri Hamid Ansari, as Akbar just told you, will be visiting Uzbekistan from 21st to 24th May. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation as is the norm, which is the Minister of State for Environment and Forests and four Members of Parliament the names of whom Akbar read out. The Vice-President will also visit the historical cities of Samarkand and Bukhara. This is of course the first ever visit by a Vice-President of India to Uzbekistan.

During the visit Vice-President will call on the President His Excellency Mr. Islam Karimov where we expect bilateral as well as regional and international issues particularly Afghanistan to come into a serious discussion. He will also have a meeting with the Chairman of the Uzbek Senate Mr. Sobirov who will be accompanying him throughout the visit, and the Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, where we feel there will be opportunities to discuss Parliamentary cooperation in some detail. The Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Mr. Ganiyev is also going to call on the Vice-President and that will give us an opportunity to review bilateral economic and commercial relations.

Broadly speaking, I think we need to look at the Vice-President's visit as a continuation of high-level contacts with a strategic partner in our neighbourhood and particularly a strategic partner which will be a key player in the Afghanistan that we come to see developing post 2014. As you know, during the last visit of President Karimov to India we declared a strategic partnership between the two countries, and this is the intensity of the relationship that we hope to continue.

As Akbar mentioned, India and Uzbekistan are part of a common region. We share a similar approach to several important regional issues. Our ties have traditionally been cordial. We have deep-rooted historical and cultural linkages. Let me just recount some background of Indo-Uzbek relations which go back to many centuries. So, if you really need to start the story you have to start it in the 2nd century AD when we were part of the same political space in the Kushan empire with its capital in Bactria and present day Afghanistan. So, if we were going eighteen centuries ago, we would not have needed a visa for Vice-President to travel because we were part of the same country. The Kushan empire extended through Delhi right up to Varanasi.

We have had of course several exchanges since the 14th century. Timur or Timurlane came from Uzbekistan, he extended his empire through several parts of North India. Thereafter in the 16th century came the great Mughal Babar who set up the Mughal empire which brought us again together in multiple ways in terms of culture, cuisine, architecture and so on. Of course the silk route has connected us for ever since almost 100 BC, and there have been multiple exchanges of several influences from Central Asia to India, and of course Buddhism traveling up to Uzbekistan.

Even during Soviet times Indian leaders visited Tashkent. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru accompanied by Shrimati Indira Gandhi visited Uzbekistan in 1955 and 1961. Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri visited in January 1966 and he passed away in Tashkent. His name has in fact been commemorated in Tashkent. A street and a school are named after him. There is also a statue and a bust in his memory. So, even in modern times, in Soviet times there was a great deal of interaction with this country or this region.

India had a consulate in Uzbekistan since 1987 even before the breakup of the Soviet Union. Following Uzbekistan's independence in 1991, we converted that consulate into an Embassy. So, since its independence we have had a very close friendship with Uzbekistan. President Karimov has been the President of Uzbekistan since that time and visited India in that capacity four times. We have signed more than 87 documents which give us a framework and the legal basis for cooperation. So, we have had continuous engagement with Uzbekistan through high-level exchanges. Our Prime Minister last visited Uzbekistan in 2006 and of course President Karimov came on his fifth visit to India. The first was actually when he was Communist party President in 1991.

This is a country which is the heart of Central Asia. It shares borders with all the other Central Asian countries and about 200 kilometres of border also with Afghanistan. Naturally we have a very common and pressing concern on terrorism. Both India and Uzbekistan are deeply concerned about the terrorism which comes from the epicenter between us in our neighbourhood. Several radical elements of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, now called the Islamic Movement of Turkistan, and also the Hizb ut-Tahrir have found shelter in this region. And we have a very robust ongoing dialogue with Uzbekistan on counterterrorism issues which get even more pronounced in the run up to 2014 and the multiple scenarios we are discussing which could unfold then.

We have converging views on the stability in Afghanistan and would like to work together with Uzbekistan in discussing this issue. We already have a structured dialogue on Afghanistan. Uzbekistan just in terms of context has been a member of the Northern Distribution Network or it has provided its territory for this Northern Distribution Network which takes care of the reverse flow of the ISAF non-lethal cargo. I believe as much as 60 per cent of it is using this trans-Afghan route through the border town of Termiz up into Russia and the Russian ports.

We have in this context a very interesting dialogue going on with Uzbekistan on using trans-Afghan borders for promoting connectivity to Central Asia. This includes you would have seen recently reports about the Chabahar port where India is going to be investing. That provides a very very potentially promising corridor for trans-Afghan movement of goods into Uzbekistan.

We have a very strong cooperation in the information technology sector where Uzbekistan has a great deal of interest. We have the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for IT Excellence which we are going to upgrade shortly. Then as part of our Connect Central Asia policy we are also going to implement a flagship project of an e-network connecting all of the Central Asia to India with hubs in each capital including Tashkent.

Let me stop right there. I will be happy to answer any questions.

Q: I just want to ask you whether this Islamic Movement of Turkistan which you are referring to does have some relation with the Xinjiang Province of China where the same kind of movement is on for a separate Turkistan?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): It is very hard to pinpoint these things but I do believe that several of the movements, separatist and fundamentalist, are connected. We saw as we spoke a common training infrastructure in the region and that comes up for discussion very frequently. But whether they have organic linkages and whether these keep shifting, changing, that is a matter of expert opinion. But I believe there are connections.

Q: You just mentioned multiple scenarios that you all are discussing on Afghanistan. Could you just give us a sense of what are these multiple scenarios?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): I think I have been reading in the media about them.

Q: You have been discussing them.

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): I think the point is that when we have a conversation with another neighbour of Afghanistan on Afghanistan, the dialogue moves to possible scenarios that might unfold. I do not want to spell out the scenarios because you see them a lot of strategic literature. But they are from the very scary to the scary to the positive to the very positive.

Q: A kind of related question. You talked about your convergent views. What would India like to see as an ideal scenario? What would India like to see Uzbekistan doing in the post-2014 Afghan situation? What role would Uzbekistan play ideally?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): I think the point of convergence is that the interest in both Uzbekistan and India is in having a stable Afghanistan which does not have a spillover of terrorist influences or fundamentalist influences into the territory either of Uzbekistan or of India. So, I think the conversations that take place with Uzbekistan are on details of counterterrorism cooperation, on discussing also on collaboration in economic projects.

For instance I can remind you that one of the main projects that India has executed in Afghanistan is the transmission line which essentially brings Uzbek power into Kabul. This is a transmission line built by India from the border town of Termiz which is the opening of Afghanistan to the outside world, the bridge on the Amu Darya to Pul-e-Kumri town to Kabul. So, I think the conversation would revolve around economic reconstruction projects where this is an instance of India and Uzbekistan's cooperation, and also on counterterrorism cooperation with an emphasis as I said on multiple scenarios that could unfold post 2014.

Q: Since the Environment Minister is also going with the Vice-President, are there any specific environmental issues or agreements which are going to take place with Uzbekistan?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): A Vice-President's visit is essentially a goodwill visit. Of course a bilateral conversation does take place and we would not rule out discussions on environmental issues. But there is no operational discussion that is planned by them.

Q: *Mr. Akbar I have a question for you. What is the purpose of Karzai's visit to India? There is a change of government in Pakistan. Pakistan does not want us to operate in Afghanistan. What is the agenda for the talks and how the question of terrorism is to be tackled? It would be better if you tell us in Hindustani.*

Official Spokesperson: *As you know my Hindustani is not fluent. I shall try to answer your question. Since I come from South India, I have a problem with Hindi speaking; but still I will try.*

President Karzai has been to India often. In the last few years this is his twelfth visit to India. In the last two and a half year this is his fourth visit. As you in know we have deep relations with Afghanistan. We have strategic partnership. On this basis we talk to him. Perhaps I can say there are four main issues—one is

security and political consultations; the second is economic and trade, and the projects we have there, as Ajay just now told you, the Zaranj-Delaram Road, Pul-e-Kumri transmission, Salma Dam on which the work is in progress, the Parliament building is being constructed by the Indian companies, and the last is the one we say in English, Human Resource Development and capacity building. About two thousand Afghan students get trained here.

Now the question is terrorism. Our main focus has been normally on economic cooperation, and the issue like this; we are also aware that without political and security situation improving it is not going to help much in Afghanistan, and therefore there shall be talks on these issues too and when it is complete we shall share with you.

I am grateful to you for having borne with this.

Q: Ajay, during his election campaign Nawaz Sharif had said that if he comes to power he would be open to opening up Wagha for trade to Afghanistan and Central Asia. If that happens, or whether it happens or not and once Chabahar in place, we can trade with the entire Central Asian block. Has any work been done about what kind of potential there is for India's trade with Central Asia post Chabahar? And when is Chabahar going to be ready for trade into the region?

Joint Secretary (Eurasia): On Chabahar, you know that India has recently announced cooperation with Iran in working on the port and developing parts of it and some jetties and so on. This is a medium-term project. Connectivity with Central Asia is contingent on also a railway project which is being developed by Iran which is going to be a connection from Chabahar North to Zahedan and Mashhad in the North and from there the Uzbek Railways has already developed a connection of 75 kilometres from the town Termiz to Mazar-e-Sharif. And they have plans to go up to a little west to Heart, and eventually the Iranian Railway and the Uzbek connection would connect.

This I think would be an extraordinary development in the next five years, let us say definitely within the next five years, of connectivity, rail connectivity which would allow a container to be loaded from Mumbai, reach Chabahar and then be transported into Afghanistan or Central Asia. So, I think that is a strong connectivity option.

You mentioned Pakistan. Well this is a question you ought to put to Pakistan. But the point is that if a corridor presents itself through the territory of Pakistan and Afghanistan, we would be happy to support the idea. We already do in principle support an idea of an economic corridor which brings Turkmen gas from Turkmenistan to India. That TAPI is essentially an economic corridor which goes through Kandhar to Quetta and comes to Gujarat, and this hopefully will be on the ground in 2017. The point is that if once we have a gas pipeline, what stops us from having an oil pipeline or a railroad or a road using a corridor.

Q: Just two days ago Afghanistan Ambassador has briefed the media and spoke about deeper military ties with India. I want to know what is India's view on it? He specifically said that lethal weapons should be supplied to Afghanistan, that without arms a trained army means nothing.

Official Spokesperson: Let me try and address the issue that you have raised. Afghanistan is a traditional friend and partner of India. It is a strategically important neighbour with whom we have historical, cultural and economic ties that go back to the dawn of history. We have also a long-term vision of our bilateral relations and have taken a number of initiatives which stem from the strategic partnership agreement that we have with Afghanistan.

In recent times we have of course focused on economic empowerment of Afghanistan and tried to implement key developmental projects within the capacity that we have. I could list a number of these issues. For example, recently we eliminated all custom duties for Afghanistan so that Afghan goods can have access to our entire market of more than a billion plus Indians. We also have planned investment in the Hajigak iron ore mines with the intention not only to evacuate iron ore but also to construct Afghanistan's first steel plant.

I have previously mentioned some of our other main developmental projects in Afghanistan in Hindi but I could repeat them in English. These are: the road from Zaranj to Delaram, the 220 kW transmission line from Pul-e-Kumri to Kabul, we have a very expansive bilateral capacity-building programme where about 2000 Afghans are trained in various aspects of capacity building every year in India, we have humanitarian assistance in terms of our wheat exports in the biscuits which we provide, and we

are also taking important infrastructure programmes such as the Salma Dam and the building of the Parliament.

Now while we are striving to realize this vision of an economically viable Afghanistan, we do realize and we have no illusions that we can ignore the political and security issues that stand in the way of realizing that vision. And to implement that, under the Strategic Partnership Agreement we have what is called a Strategic Partnership Council and that is headed on our side by the External Affairs Minister and on the Afghan side by their Foreign Minister.

They met for the first time last year in the summer in New Delhi, and of course during the course of this year there will be the second meeting of that. Under this, there are four rubrics, and one of those relates to political and security consultations. And perhaps that is the rubric under which all this will fit. If there are issues to be raised in terms of security consultations, that is where these will be raised. I do understand that all of you are very eager and have carried news reports of statements, but our view is that there is a mechanism that is available and all issues are discussed under this mechanism. And within our own modest means as a developing country I have just listed out to you the sort of activities that we have done, and we will continue to discuss and respond to specific requests of the Afghan Government. My suggestion to you is please wait when these discussions take place there is a format, there are diplomatic channels and we will consider these as and when these are raised in the channels which are available.

Q:...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I think you summarise my words. These are available on the record. Each one of you representing independent media organizations is free to summarise them the way he or she would like to. I would not like to comment on that.

Thank you very much.



399. Media Briefing by Vice President en-route to Tashkent on board his flight.

May 21, 2013.

Dear friends from the media, welcome onboard on what is the first ever official visit of Hon'ble Vice President to Uzbekistan. During the course of our visit we will be visiting three cities – Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara. Hon'ble Vice President has kindly agreed to brief you on the visit. We would begin with brief opening remarks following which the floor would be open for a couple of questions.

Vice President: Thank you. Well friends we must get the geography right. The flying time from Delhi to Tashkent is about the same as the flying time from Delhi to Chennai or to any of the State capitals in the North-East. So, we are visiting a country in the neighborhood and also a country which is critically important in its own region. If you have a look at the map you will see that Uzbekistan has borders with all its neighbors and one of them is off course Afghanistan which is not part of the old Soviet Union but all others were part of the Soviet Union. It is also the most populous country in its own region, it is about 30 million. It is a reasonable affluent country in terms of resources not necessarily in terms of per capita GDP but its importance lies in the approach it has to regional security problems on one side and to its foreign policy perceptions on the other side.

We have been engaging with them since they became independent after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The President of Uzbekistan, who has been the President since that time in 1992, has visited India 5 times. From our side our President has visited, two prime Ministers have visited and innumerable visits by Ministers and officials. We have an excellent relationship but excellent relationships also mean that they need to be renewed frequently. We don't take relationships for granted.

The purpose of this visit is one to continue exchange of visits at high level. Last year their President was in India and he signed a number of agreements but the most important thing was that we have established a Strategic Partnership with them. We have common strategic interests. They relate principally to what is happening or might happen in

Afghanistan. Uzbekistan has a border with Afghanistan. Therefore it will willingly (or) unwillingly end up playing a critical role in what may happen there tomorrow or day after. In terms of foreign policy Uzbekistan likes to keep away from pacts and alignments. It is something like a neutral policy - neutrality approach, it is not quite neutrality but it is something along those lines. So they don't want to get involved in any of the pacts except to the extent that there is economic cooperation.

This is the purpose of the visit. Most of the substantive part will be done tomorrow. After that we are visiting two famous historic cities - Samarkand and Bukhara. This is an area with which we had, for centuries, intense exchanges both cultural and trading exchanges. I hope everybody will enjoy the visit, both the second part of it and the first part.

Thank you. If I can answer any questions I will be happy to do so.

Question: Your Excellency is there any specific or special agenda for the visit; and any agreement /MoU being signed.

Vice President: The specific agenda is to exchange views with the leadership of Uzbekistan; benefit from their perceptions about what is happening in their own region and also to try to understand how the common struggle against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is proceeding.

Question: Sir, when we talk about common counter terrorism strategy, what is the commonality between India and Uzbekistan?

Vice President: Well the commonality is the perception that terrorism in any form or manifestation is unacceptable. It is destructive of civilized life. Now each country has its own specific strategy because each country faces some aspect of that problem. But exchange of information and exchange of views is always useful. We have a joint working group on countering terrorism and that is a work which is in progress.

Question: Sir, you would be meeting your counterpart the Chairman of the senate. You would be discussing parliamentary procedure of both the countries? Sir, what about the frequent adjournments of the parliament in the last few sessions? Would you like to say anything on the frequent adjournments as Chairman of the Rajya Sabha?

Vice President: I thought I said what I had to say in the valedictory address. I don't think there is any need for adding anything to it.

Question: Sir, Uzbekistan is quite rich in Uzbekistan. Is there any aspect of energy security we are exploring in our relationship with Uzbekistan?

Vice President: Well, I believe, like we are doing elsewhere in the world wherever there are Uranium resources, we working to explore the possibilities of Uranium supplies coming from Uzbekistan also. This is a work in progress and I think the technical discussions and other things are taking place. And we don't see any impediments in this.

Question: Sir, would you like to share any details of the joint working group on terrorism.

Vice President: Well in the nature of things even I don't know the details of the joint working group on terrorism nor should it be made known to everybody. The objectives are clear but how do we proceed to achieve these objectives, this is something that should remain confined to specialists.

Question: Sir, we share a historical relationship with Uzbekistan. Any future event through your visit you would you like to establish and revive the silk route and silk route tradition with Uzbekistan.

Vice President: We have a trading relationship of great vintage which goes back to thousands of years. We have a cultural relationship which is again very deep rooted. And even today the interest that the people of Uzbekistan take in ties with us, in exchange of teachers and languages and all that, you will find great many people who know Urdu and Hindi and who are studying Urdu and Hindi in Tashkent. Indian films are very popular. So this is something which they respond very easily.

Q: Sir, you met with the Chinese Premier before he left. Anything you would like to share with us – anything that you discussed, the body language, the way the premier behaved with you, anything.

Vice President: Well, I though one of the papers revealed the grate secret of what we discussed. It was on a philosophical level. Basically the point which I took with him was that the world is changing very fast; in 21st century world India and China will be playing a very important role. And therefore while we are working on linkages in the areas of

trade, technology and other things, we also need to devote more time to thinking about the future. In other words nobody can say what the shape of the world will be 50 years from now. We have to think about it, not only in terms of technology but also in wider terms, what would be the relationship between people in societies, between societies. That is something on which the Chinese, I am sure, are doing their own work and we are doing our won work. My suggestion that we need to interact and he reacted positively. He agreed that we need much more contact at the level of University and think tanks

Q: Possible role of India in Afghanistan in the backdrop of the possibility of US pullout from Afghanistan. In your visit to Uzbekistan.....what role do you foresee for India for the regions stability in Afghanistan?

Vice President: Well I can't anticipate what President Karzai is discussing in Delhi today. But India's role in Afghanistan and Indian interests in Afghanistan have remained unchanged for decades at least. We have people to people relationship. Governments have gone, come, governments have gone. Our efforts have been always to help Afghanistan in the best possible manner for the benefit of the people of Afghanistan. And if you look at the work that we have done in Afghanistan for the last 50-60 years, since we became independent, we have done projects there which they wanted and which are people centric. We have built hospitals; we have built roads, industrial estates, power transmission lines, all these things. And I think this role is well understood and well appreciated in Afghanistan whether they belong to this group or that group. So this work will continue. We don't have hegemonic interests in Afghanistan. We don't want to use it as some kind of front yard or backyard. That is our approach. But I will leave it to Governments, the governments are talking. We will see how it goes along.

Q: Sir, any political message that you are carrying to the Uzbek side.

Vice President: Intensify our relationship and friendship.

Friends with that we come to the conclusion of the on board briefing. Thank You.

Vice President: Thank you and have a good lunch.



400. Media briefing by Secretary West of the Ministry of External Affairs on the Vice President's on-going visit to Uzbekistan.

Tashkent, May 22, 2013.

Good evening friends and welcome to the media briefing. To begin with, apologies for keeping you waiting but today we really had a very hectic day. The Hon. Vice-President has had a series of meetings since morning. As you are aware, in the forenoon he met with the Chairman of the Senate as well as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of Uzbekistan. In the afternoon, the Uzbek Minister for Foreign Economic Relations had called on the Hon. Vice-President. Later the Hon'ble Vice President met with the President of Uzbekistan. To brief you on the day-long engagements of the Vice President, we have with us Secretary (West) Shri Sudhir Vyas. He is joined by Joint Secretary (Eurasia) Shri Ajay Bisaria. As is the practice, we will begin the briefing with brief introductory remarks by Secretary (West) followed by which the floor would be open for questions.

Secretary (West) (Shri Sudhir Vyas): Good evening. Once again from my part too sorry for being late, reason being that the Hon. Vice-President has just returned a few minutes back from a one-hour-forty-five-minutes meeting with His Excellency President Islam Karimov at the Oqsaroy, the glittering palace which is his office, a wide-ranging meeting in which they covered a whole host of subjects but I would like to draw your attention to a couple of highlights.

There was considerable discussion on Afghanistan as a country which is very much in the immediate neighbourhood of both India and Uzbekistan, and where peace, stability and development are in the interest of both. What emerged was that there is a complete commonality of views on Afghanistan and perhaps how we should be dealing with Afghanistan in the post-2014 scenario, and in particular the fact that both countries are very clear that interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan will be counterproductive, and that we would be working with whichever government the people of Afghanistan elect in the elections that are to take place, that is to say support for an Afghan-led political process without interference from external actors.

Another area of engagement the Hon'ble Vice-President and H.E. President Karimov spoke at considerable length is on the prospects, ways and means of intensifying India-Uzbek bilateral engagement. I think President Karimov in fact invited with open arms Indian investment into Uzbekistan. They spoke of ways and means to intensify that aspect of the relationship.

Earlier, as was mentioned, the Hon. Vice-President had meetings with the Chairman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis and the Speaker of the Legislative Chamber. In Hon'ble Vice-President's own words, he had come to renew friendship and in a fast-changing world also explore new ideas for friendship between India and Uzbekistan. As strategic partners, he pointed out, in an immediate neighbourhood India and Uzbekistan need to work together in the interests of stability, development and peace in their shared region.

There is a long history of relations between India and Uzbekistan, a fact that was highlighted by both the Chairman of the Senate and the Speaker and in fact, I should mention, by President Karimov himself. The sense of the discussion was that this background, this relationship going back several centuries, is a solid foundation to develop and enhance a friendship between two countries that can meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Some interesting highlights can be mentioned. The Speaker, for example, did say that, with 60 years of experience with democracy, the Uzbek Parliament would be interested in learning from Indian best practices, and enhanced engagement between the Parliaments of India and Uzbekistan is something that we would be looking for in the future. She also mentioned that when Uzbekistan was framing its own Constitution they studied the Indian Constitution at length and took on several board best practices from that exercise.

The Minister for Foreign Economic Relations called on the Hon'ble Vice-President this afternoon. There was a very detailed discussion on the prospects of enhancing economic cooperation between the two countries. Issues of connectivity that would provide a base for enhanced economic activity were discussed at length. We spoke of the steps that have been taken by President Karimov to expand infrastructure and connectivity

into Afghanistan and the plans that he has in mind, and India too has taken some initiatives in this regard, and that in the foreseeable future this forms a very useful base to develop and enhance this connectivity which would, as was pointed out, shorten the overland link between the ports in the Persian Gulf and Uzbekistan by over a thousand kilometers.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on upgrading and enhancing the Jawaharlal Nehru India-Uzbek Centre for Information Technology in Tashkent. This was signed by the Minister for Foreign Economic Relations and on the Indian side by myself. The Minister also pointed out that the business environment that Uzbekistan has put in place to attract investment and in particular noted that a special economic zone at Navoi has already begun to attract Indian investment. Three Indian companies have invested there for manufacture of tablets, smart phones and auto parts. Sixty Indian companies are in Uzbekistan at this point of time. And a joint commission on trade, economics and culture, which last met in 2011 in Uzbekistan in Tashkent, is expected to meet this time in India perhaps in the autumn.

The academic interaction and cultural contacts between India and Uzbekistan form an important part of the architecture of the bilateral relationship. In this context I would like to recall the Hon. Vice-President's remark after his meeting with a number of Indian Indologists at the dinner event yesterday. He referred to them in his meeting with the Chairman of the Senate, as a living legacy of Al-Beruni. Perhaps I should stop here and then take any questions that come to your mind.

Q: Sir, anything on counterterrorism?

Secretary (West): Counterterrorism figured in the discussions both at the level of President Karimov as well as at the other meetings. As you know, there is a Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism between India and Uzbekistan which is taking the engagement in this particular area forward.

Q: Could you give us any specifics on this?

Secretary (West): the Joint Working Group is carrying on with its work. The level at which this discussion took place does not go into specifics. We are talking about larger issues of relationship and the perspectives

for the future.

Q: Sir, any forward movement on acquisition of uranium from here?

Secretary (West): That is a work in progress and I think it is not again something that was being discussed in such concrete terms at this particular meeting. This is work in progress and is being dealt with on another plain altogether.

Q: Any specific strategy during the talks to check ISI influence in Afghanistan?

Secretary (West): Once again, I do not think we got into that kind of specifics. The broad consensus on Afghanistan that external interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan would be counterproductive to peace and stability in the middle and long term in Afghanistan came out very clearly. And there was a complete identity of views between both sides on this matter. Also, that the political processes in Afghanistan - and that there can be no military solution there - will have to be Afghan led, will have to be internally led rather than imposed from outside.

Q: Sir, when you refer to this external influence and external interference would be counterproductive, are we revisiting the past as what has been happening in Afghanistan(*inaudible*) for the larger in-depth strategy on Pakistan?

Secretary (West): Any strategy that you look for the future in Afghanistan has to draw upon the lessons from the past.

Q: And, when you say that this is unacceptable, what role India and Uzbekistan can play in stopping this external interference in the affairs of Afghanistan?

Secretary (West): One, in international fora in discussions, I think this point cannot be overemphasized. And it will require a coordinated will of all players in Afghanistan, countries which have Afghanistan's best interests at stake, to accept and to follow this basic maxim.

Q: Sir, Afghanistan you said there is unanimity of views to take up the post-2014 situation. What are the measures we are looking at to step up the communication and take forward this policy to carry forward this consensus on Afghanistan? Secondly, you mentioned about the

connectivity links, India is looking at utilizing the connectivity links with Uzbekistan. Can you just throw some light on the connectivity projects which may be useful for Indian strategy?

Secretary (West): On Afghanistan, I think this is not the kind of forum where you get into actual elements of what you are going to do. But the broad principles which should govern strategy were certainly talked about and that is where I mentioned that there was a complete consensus between two sides.

On connectivity, as you know, Uzbekistan has been involved in the construction of a railway line from Termez at the border to Mazar, and there is discussion that they plan to take that forward towards Herat. From Herat we will be looking at connectivity towards the Iranian border, and in one direction or the other connectivity to the ports of the Persian Gulf is what is being talked about. But I should mention this is not something that is going to happen immediately. This will take a little time. It is not going to happen tomorrow. But this is the perspective that is in the interests of Uzbekistan, of India, and of the region.

Q: Sir, you said that there is similarity in the perception about terrorism between the two countries. Is there any difference of opinion on the issue, or differences, where Uzbekistan does not agree with the perception of terrorism of India? Any variation?

Secretary (West): No, I did not notice any such nuances of difference.

Q: So, on the issue of terrorism perceptions of both are absolutely identical.

Secretary (West): We were looking at the impact on both India and overflow of the internal situation perhaps in Afghanistan extending in some fashion across the border. It is in that context there was complete identity of views.

Joint Secretary (Eurasia) (Shri Ajay Bisaria): If I may add one point here, there is also congruence of views on the issue of development and the importance of development in Afghanistan. As you know, there is a project already which is a sort of bilateral project, which is transmission line from Termez to Pul-e-Kumri to Kabul which brings in Uzbek power for lighting up Kabul using Indian transmission lines. So,

there is a congruence of views that development is also an important part of the peace in Afghanistan going forward.

Secretary (West): Just to expand on that thought, in the words of the Hon'ble Vice-President, peace, stability and development have to go together, cannot handle any one of them in isolation from the other.

Q: Sir, I want to know on trade what are the major sectors we have been focusing on?

Secretary (West): On trade, I think Uzbekistan is looking at exporting some resources and it realizes that there is a need in a growing India, rapidly developing India for resources. They are also looking at investment, bringing Indian investment in a variety of sectors, in small business, in IT. Textiles was mentioned as a possible area that we should be looking at. Pharma was another area that was referred to specifically. Tourism is an area which can hold tremendous potential for growth between the two countries and has not been exploited fully.

Question: Sorry for interrupting, tourism from Uzbekistan to India or the other way?

Secretary (West): In both directions. In fact the general sense that was expressed very clearly was that in spite of the very strong foundations that are available for building up our business links, our economic engagement between India and Uzbekistan is clearly below potential. This was a focal point that was emphasized by His Excellency President Karimov himself as well as by the Chairman and the Speaker of the Oliy Majlis, and was explored in much greater detail during the meeting and the call by the Minister for Foreign Economic Relations and the Hon'ble Vice-President.

Q: Could you elaborate on exporting resources? What does Uzbekistan actually want to export to India?

Secretary (West): There is a tremendous wealth of natural resources in Uzbekistan and that includes oil and gas. They are already exporting some gas I believe, not so much oil, to China. And they would certainly be interested in Indian companies looking at Uzbekistan for exploration, production and so on.

Thank you. With that we come to the conclusion of this briefing.



401. Speech of Vice President M. Hamid Ansari at the Banquet hosted in his honour by the Chairman of the Senate of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Tashkent, May 22, 2013.

“Excellency, Mr. Iligzar Sobirov, Chairman of the Senate,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

My wife and I, and members of my delegation are delighted to be in Tashkent, amidst friends the warmth of whose welcome underlines and reaffirms the silken ties of history and culture that bind our two people.

The convergence of our destinies owes much to geographical proximity. Most people are surprised when told that the distance from Delhi to Tashkent is much less the distance to most parts of southern or north-eastern India. This facilitated the movement of people and sharing of beneficial skills. It is reflected to this day in linguistic affinities, social practices, customs culinary preferences and dress forms.

Trade and traders led the way; a parallel stream manifested itself in the flow of ideas, knowledge, savants and scholars. In one age Buddhism became the dominant instrument of discourse; in another Islamic learning and Sufism led the way and left an indelible imprint.

Today we came together to draw, on the basis of these solid foundations, the contours of a mutually beneficial relationship relevant to the imperatives of the 21st century. India’s Connect Central Asia Policy is in reality a re-connect endeavour premised on mutually identified areas of beneficial cooperation.

Earlier in the day I had a fruitful meeting with President Karimov and I am even more convinced that our relations are truly special and we have

similar approaches to major issues. This understanding at the highest political level gives us reason to be optimistic about the future of our relations.

Uzbekistan is one of India's closest friends. We celebrate your many successes since your independence. It is important that we join hands to increase the intensity of our bilateral economic cooperation to match the already close level of political understanding and people-to-people affinity.

In recent times, our relations have been elevated to the level of a strategic partnership. It means that we can look forward to cooperation in all possible spheres of human endeavour.

Today, India and Uzbekistan face common challenges from terrorism and religious extremism. We therefore need to work closely towards promoting peace and stability not just in our common region, but in the entire world.

Our Parliaments have an important role to play in nation building and we need to learn from each other's experiences. We must encourage greater engagement between our two parliaments.

- May I request you to join me in a toast:
- For the health of His Excellency Mr. Igizar Sobirov
- For the prosperity and progress of the people of Uzbekistan; and
- For eternal friendship between our two peoples.



INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-V

AFRICA

402. U.S.-India-Africa Triangular Partnership to Improve Agricultural Productivity and Innovation in African Countries.

January 16, 2013.

As part of the India-U.S. Strategic Partnership, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and U.S. President Barack Obama agreed during President Obama's visit to India in November 2010 to use the expertise of both countries in agricultural capacity-building to extend food security to interested third countries. Pursuant to this, India and the United States inaugurated the first triangular India-U.S.-Africa partnership in agricultural training at the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, on 6 January 2013 for 30 trainees from three African countries – Kenya, Liberia and Malawi.

The three-year triangular partnership program aims to improve agricultural productivity, strengthen agricultural value chains, and support market institutions in Kenya, Liberia, and Malawi. Supported by the U.S. Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture of India, and implemented by two of India's leading agricultural training institutes - National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, and the Chaudhary Charan Singh National Institute of Agricultural Marketing (NIAM), Jaipur, the program will train 180 mid-level African Government and private sector agriculture professionals from Kenya, Malawi, and Liberia in agricultural extension practices, agri-business, and agricultural marketing. The training will include classroom sessions, group work, field trips, and interaction with industry experts. After their training, these professionals will go home with new knowledge, skills, and potential innovations to address their domestic challenges in food and nutrition security.

On January 16, 2013, Joint Secretary (Information Technology and Extension) Indian Ministry of Agriculture Mr. Sanjeev Gupta, Head of the Ministry of External Affairs Branch Secretariat in Hyderabad Mr. Srikar Reddy and the U.S. Department of State Special Representative for Global Food Security Jonathan Shrier (Acting), attended the first agricultural training program currently underway in MANAGE for 30 professionals from

the three African countries on agricultural extension management. The two-month training program covers 15 major themes of agricultural extension management and includes study tours to different parts of the country. The study material developed by the faculty in MANAGE, also covers basic skills in computers, internet, and other information and communication technology tools. MANAGE will also undertake impact evaluation six months after the completion of the program.



403. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Vice-President to Ethiopia to Attend Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Africa Union.

New Delhi, May 23, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. As is our usual practice, I will first make the announcements and then we will have a formal briefing on an issue and then the floor will be opened for any questions that you may like to ask on anything else.

The announcement that I have to make relates to two of my colleagues who are here. Let me introduce them to you before I make that announcement. On my right is Joint Secretary Mr. Ravi Bangar. He handles East and Southern Africa. On my left is Joint Secretary (West Africa), Mr. Sanjiv Kohli, who handles the entire range of issues relating to West and Central Africa. Both Sanjiv and Ravi will be available to respond to questions that relate to the announcement that I have to make.

The Vice-President Shri Hamid Ansari will represent India at the 50th anniversary celebrations of the OAU, or the African Union now, in Addis Ababa on 25th May. As you are aware, our relations with Africa are rooted in history and our history of solidarity against colonialism and apartheid. Since then of course our engagement with Africa has come a long way, and today we have built a new template for partnership in the form of the India-Africa Forum Summit. Our partnership is guided by the vision and promise of our African partners of their priorities.

India assists Africa in charting its course through institution building, infrastructure development, technical and vocational skill development. By our estimates there are about 15,000 African students who are studying in India. India is undertaking approximately about a hundred national or regional or sub-regional projects of various kinds in Africa. All of you are aware of the Pan African E-Network for Telemedicine and Tele-education which covers a span of 47 countries. This is a major success story of our institution building partnership with Africa.

We also support actively peace and security on the continent. Currently there are about 6,500 Indian soldiers who are involved in peacekeeping on the African continent in different parts.

Our trade just about two decades ago was less than a billion dollars, in 1991 it was less than a billion dollars. In 2012, it is approximately 70 billion dollars. Our target is 90 billion dollars by the year 2015. Those of you who are following this are also aware that we have extended non-reciprocal duty-free tariff preference scheme for LDCs. Of the 47 countries which qualify for this, there are 33 from Africa. This has significantly enhanced their market access to the growing Indian market. Finally, just to round it up, Indian investment in Africa since 2005 is approximately 47 billion dollars.

In short, we are working in myriad ways to assist the historic transformation taking place in Africa. My two colleagues will speak to you about different aspects of that. Subsequent to that we will have the floor open for questions on this issue. Let me ask first Mr. Bangar to speak about the 50th anniversary celebrations.

Joint Secretary (East & Southern Africa) (Shri Ravi Bangar): Thanks Akbar. I think you have made my job very easy through the fact sheet that you have run on India-Africa relations and Africa's development.

I think the significance of the 50th anniversary celebrations of the African Union, and its earlier avatar of Organization of African Unity, lies in two milestone achievements it has to its credit. One is the end of colonialism in the continent. When it was founded in 1963, several countries of Africa were still under the colonial rule. But that has got all over in these fifty years. Another significant and spectacular achievement of the African Union was the end of apartheid regime in South Africa. These are two

political developments with which, as Akbar had mentioned earlier, India has been very closely associated with, supported them.

And we take pride in the achievements of the African Union, and therefore, given this background and also India's close political relations with several leaders of Africa, with our own leaders like Pandit Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, we have had close relations with Kofi Annan of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Sam Nujoma of Namibia, then Samora Machel from Mozambique, Agostinho Neto of Angola, Oliver Tambo and Mandela of South Africa. These are a few of the names which immediately come to mind and which resonate even today on India's engagement and the leadership role they played in shaping the current continent and the politics and the developments that we see today on the African continent as well as Africa's engagement with its other developing partners.

The importance again of the African Union today one sees more in its actions which are taking place for socioeconomic development, at the regional level the regional economic communities which are eight of them, and then also in the peacekeeping operations on the continent. It is important because back in the 1970s and 1980s Africa was known more for war, disease, death, hunger, famine and what not.

But today when we look at the reports coming out from Africa and also by some of the leading economic and financial institutions including Ernst and Young, is very much called the possible next goal on the pole of global economic growth. And that is something very important for us to take note of because now this is the transformation of Africa into a new modern, forward-looking continent which provides hope to its youth and to the other sections of population, a diverse population, in wide-ranging areas in which Africa today wishes to engage with its partners again is I think a factor that we need to take note of.

In view of this we devised India-Africa Forum Summit mechanism. The first meeting took place in New Delhi in 2008 and the last one in Addis Ababa in 2011. Akbar has already mentioned about the lines of credit we have extended which are close to about eight billion dollars of the two summit decisions. The trade is close to over 70 billion and investment again is close to about 50 billion between India and Africa. Duty-free tariff preference scheme is another tool, important one, of providing

market access to the exports of LDCs to India. And since bulk of the LDCs still happen to be in Africa, this is mainly benefiting the African countries.

In terms of scholarships, we have doubled the number. They are close to 22,000 now. And we hope that by the next India-Africa Forum Summit mechanism which will take place in Delhi, we will have much more substantive elements to add to it given the experience that we have now developed, the Africans' evolving needs which are again remain focused on human resource development. A major focus of India-Africa Partnership is in capacity building, in terms of establishing institutions, in human resource development, training programmes, and also sending out our experts to the various African countries responding to the needs of the African countries.

Now I will come to a little bit about the Hon. Vice-President's visit to Addis Ababa which is on the 25th and that is to participate in the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the African Union. Given India's close, strong, historic and present partnership with Africa, it is I think absolutely appropriate that India is represented at such a high level in the summit meetings. He will be addressing the gathering in the summit. We are one of the very few select partners who have been invited by the African Union. Apart from India they invited Brazil, France, EU, China, US, Russia, Jamaica, Palestine and the UAE. This is the select list of the invitees for the summit as the partners of Africa in Africa's development.

With these words I will stop.

Official Spokesperson: Joint Secretary (WA) Mr. Kohli is open to take questions. With that I think we will open the floor for questions rather than anybody else speaking on this.

Q: Sir, even China, US and Europe are deeply engaged with African countries. What is special and unique about India that we are being invited by the African Union?

Joint Secretary (E&SA): This is a decision taken by the African Union. I am sure that they do see some uniqueness in this partnership. And India's engagement with Africa is not predicated on Africa's relationship with any other country. So, we are talking about India-Africa relationship and their partnership.

Q: Ravi, the Chinese trade with Africa has just crossed 200 billion dollars and they are practically buying up all the mines, they overbid us and so on and so forth. But at the same time there is a lot of disenchantment with the way China is doing business in certain African countries. It has even become an election issue in certain parts of Africa. In their way of dealing with Africa and our way of dealing with Africa, what do you see are major differences and how is the overall African response or reaction to the way we are trying to help them?

Official Spokesperson: Before I ask Mr. Bangar to answer that question, I think we will confine it to what is our way of dealing with this thing and we do not want to get into a comparison with others. But I think what is unique about India and what are our strengths and core capacities, that he will answer.

Joint Secretary (E&SA): When the former President of India Shrimati Pratibha Devisingh Patil went to South Africa, in the joint press meeting which was held in Pretoria President Zuma by name appreciated the ITEC programme of India. This is last year. This is something very unique that for the first time an African leader was naming India's ITEC programme. So, there are certain unique features of India's engagement with Africa. India's engagement, as I said earlier, is in responding to the African needs. India's engagement with Africa is in the paradigm of the south-south cooperation, which means they have the ownership of what they would like India-Africa partnership to develop together.

Another significant element is that our core focus has remained on capacity building and human resource development. If you visit Ethiopia today, you will very commonly find people saying that we owe whatever we are today to the Indian teachers. So, those have created I think the base, the niche areas of our modern-day engagement and cooperation with Africa.

Q: Mr. Venkat has just asked about the business dealing in comparison to India. A lot of Chinese goods and Taiwanese goods are there in West Africa at least in Ghana. I had been there also. So, what is the position today of the Indian goods? What is the business of commerce dealing with India and Africa, West Africa?

Joint Secretary (West Africa) (Shri Sanjiv Kohli): Trade basically in principle happens on principles of comparative advantages. If you look

at Ghana, Ghana is a growing economy, it has been growing at probably double digit for the last ten years. We have our core strengths. The trade would respond to our core strengths and how they fit into their requirements. Chinese have their own share of the market. So, again actual comparisons probably will not hold. But as the trade figures have pointed out, we have also gone up to 70 billion in terms of bilateral trade.

The Chinese trade might be three times of what our trade is. But I will just again make a note because we spoke about we are not going into comparisons, but according to official statistics, Indian investments still exceed Chinese investments into Africa. That again talks of our model. Probably our cooperation and our investments have been long term. China probably has been spending more in terms of credit, but in terms of actually setting up industries, value addition, I think we have been doing better than the Chinese.

Q: As you have said, we have more than 5,000 peacekeepers in Africa but we seem to be ignoring or neglecting the defence sector while engaging with Africa. China is making deep inroads in defence equipment in Africa but we are not pushing our defence systems there.

Joint Secretary (E&SA): Again in terms of the defence cooperation that India has with several African countries, it is quite significant. South Africa, Mauritius, Seychelles, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Nigeria are a few of the countries I can straight away name. Again we are not getting into a comparison with what China is doing there. We will work on the basis of what our core strengths are. That is our advantage. This cooperation has also been appreciated in the United Nations, in the African Union, in the regional economic communities like ECOWAS or EAC of India's contribution in peacekeeping, in providing security in the countries which are in the conflict zone in Africa.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Official Spokesperson: We do not have those figures here with us.

Question: Sir, Vice-President of India is coming back on 23rd and is scheduled again to go to South Africa on 25th. Is it correct that Prime Minister of India is not in India and his schedule is to go to Japan and that is why Vice-President of India is going to South Africa on 25th, or President has refused to go out of India?

Official Spokesperson: I think you are mistaken and have got it wrong. The Prime Minister is only leaving on the 27th and this- the OAU/AU event - we are talking of is on the 25th. I do not know where you are getting that sort of information. It is a carefully considered decision to send a very high-level representation to the summit. And the summit has allotted a speaking slot giving importance to India on that. I think it is baseless to say what you are saying. I do not know where this information has come and we can totally deny it.

Q: There is a controversy over Indians buying land in Africa. One reads a lot about it. Could you just clarify that point?

Joint Secretary (E&SA): Africa again finds itself challenged because of lack of agricultural development. And one outcome of this is the food security element, equation, of several African countries. Several countries in Africa have identified that they need to enhance agricultural production. This is their policy. Under this policy they also identified the arable land on which crops can be grown.

I will give you one example. In case of Malawi for example, they have looked at India as a target export for pulses as well as for their own nutrition requirements. So, they grow what is called the Tuvar dal in Malawi, in Tanzania. They also meet their own requirements and the bulk they export to India. But that is also for increasing the revenue or export surpluses. The policy of some of the African governments is also to invite foreign direct investment in the agricultural sector. When they invite a foreign direct investment, it is not exclusively to any particular country but to all the global players. And the response of the companies from country x, y or z is based on their own analysis of their own requirements and what they look at from a purely business model of risks and the profits. And, therefore, they participate in the projects in all sectors of agriculture, be it irrigation, be it crops, or be it post harvest operations over there. So, this is not something that is a Government of India policy but it is a policy of the recipient or the host governments. That is what the businesses respond to irrespective of whichever country they come from.

Q: Sir, is the Vice-President scheduled to meet any important leaders on the sidelines?

Joint Secretary (E&SA): These are still being worked. As they get finalized, I am sure we will let you know.

Q: Sir, last month there was a controversy in South Africa where a group landed in an Air Force Base in South Africa. There were reports that the Indian High Commissioner's role was under the scanner. Has that been raised with the South African Government and any information sought?

Official Spokesperson: I think you are a bit dated in this information because since then our High Commission in Pretoria has put out twice I think press releases, and they list out the entire details of this issue. If you are interested, let me try and run through quickly the factual information.

The request was made by the High Commission of India on the 28th of February. This request was in accordance with normal protocol. It was made by the Defence Advisor of the High Commission of India on 28th February addressed to the Chief of the Defence, Foreign Relations in the South African National Defence Force, which is the standard and official channel of communication prescribed for communications by the Defence Advisors based in South Africa. Copies of these communications are also sent to others. The communication was followed up on 4th April by the Defence Advisor. And it was on 9th April that an authorization was provided by the South African authorities.

That is, the request was made on 28th February and a response with the clearance was provided on the 9th April. So, there was adequate time, for a proper consideration of that request. And even 9th of April is about three weeks prior to the scheduled landing date. So, the request was made in advance, it was in accordance with normal proper channels, and it was cleared well in advance of the visit.

Now, my understanding is that there were several senior dignitaries on that aircraft and that is why in accordance with normal processes that the High Commission asked for due courtesies for such dignitaries. The request was made and it was acceded to. I would suggest that if you are interested you have a look at the Press Release which we can provide to you and it has the names of those who were there on that flight so that you have information on this. Some of them were also part of a delegation which was officially meeting other dignitaries in South Africa.

Question: Sir, I was wondering about the status of the company Denel. Is it blacklisted, has it been removed off the blacklist? What is the status?

Joint Secretary (E&SA): I do not have any information on this.

Official Spokesperson: If there are no more questions, I will just give a break so that my colleagues can leave. Then if you would like to ask me any question on any other thing, I will come back in a couple of minutes.

Thank you



404. Address by Vice President at the 50th Anniversary Summit of OAU/AU in Addis Ababa.

Addis Ababa, May 25, 2013.

Your Excellency, Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the African Union

Your Excellency Chairperson of the African Union Commission

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government

Distinguished Guests

It is a pleasure and an honour to join you at the Golden Jubilee of the African Union and the OAU. I bring to you good wishes from the people and Government of India on this very special occasion.

The establishment of the OAU this day 50 years ago was an event of global significance. The African Union must take a large part of the credit for the emancipation of the African people from colonialism and apartheid.

Over the past five decades, Africa has stood tall, its vision firmly focused on the future of its youth, inspired by the wide horizons and the beauty of its land and drawing from the wellsprings of wisdom of its ancients. Pan Africanism as an ideology inspired the founding fathers of Africa. The African Union today is the modulated, considered voice of Africa, committed to the vision of peace, progress and prosperity for its myriad peoples.

Our own founding fathers believed that India's freedom would remain incomplete as long as Africa remained in bondage. History records that India imposed a trade embargo on apartheid South Africa in 1946 and took the lead in placing apartheid on the agenda of the very first session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Our partnership with Africa is anchored in the fundamental principles of equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit that should, we hope, serve to redefine the contours of the international order on more egalitarian lines.

Our development partnership with Africa has been illuminated by this experience. Reinvigorated and multi-dimensional in scope, the India-Africa partnership is today being taken forward under the India-Africa Forum Summit process.

Anchored in the philosophy of South South cooperation, our approach is non intrusive and non prescriptive, consultative and, above all, responsive to Africa's own assessments of its needs.

The Golden Jubilee celebration is an occasion to pay tribute to the vision of the founding fathers of the OAU. I salute the leaders of Africa today, so many of whom are present here. They will continue to lead the African Renaissance in the future. In this endeavour, India will remain a trusted partner, working with Africa for the economic and social empowerment of its people.



405. Address by External Affairs Minister at the meeting with the African Heads of Mission in New Delhi.

New Delhi, June 18, 2013.

His Excellency Mr Francois Balumene, Ambassador of DR Congo & Dean of the African Group,

Mr Sudhir Vyas, Secretary (West),

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is great pleasure to welcome you all today evening for this interaction. It always gives me great joy to meet and interact with our friends from Africa and I hope this initiative will grow stronger and stronger and we will have more such interactions in the future.

I visited Uganda exactly 2 months back. I had extremely useful exchanges with the Ugandan leadership on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest to the two countries. We had organised a regional (African) Heds of Mission meeting in Kampala during my visit. I plan to visit more African countries in the coming months. Listening to our HOMs, I was struck by the very strong underpinnings and historic significance of India-Africa relations, its fundamental convergence of values and the enormous potential it holds. I am very excited about Africa.

Excellencies,

History records that India imposed a trade embargo on apartheid South Africa in 1946, even before we gained our own independence. The same year we raised our voice for Africa, placing apartheid on the agenda of the United Nations in the first ever session of its General Assembly.

India and Africa have been bound by ties of history, geography and cultural affinities. Our relations have been shaped by shared experiences during our respective freedom struggles as our leaders believed that India's own freedom would remain incomplete, insubstantial, as long as our partner states in Africa remained in bondage. There is enormous respect in India for the founding fathers of the African dream, who sacrificed their lives for the liberty and well-being of the people of the

Continent. Nasser, Nkrumah, Lumumba, Mandela, Kaunda ... are names that come immediately to mind. As much as Africa took inspiration from Indian freedom struggle, the principles of Satyagraha and Non-Alignment had their genesis in struggles and events in Africa. Today, our relationship has acquired a robust and dynamic character to assume the dimension of a strategic partnership.

The last five decades in Africa have witnessed momentous changes; peace and stability, democracy, economic growth and improvement in social indicators are the prevalent norm. It is very encouraging to note that out of 38 countries which have met one of MDG on eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, include Algeria, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Djibouti, Ghana, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe and Togo from Africa.

And if there are a small number of countries which face political crises today, we believe these will also be resolved soon through mainly African efforts. At the UN, during our recent membership of the UN Security Council in 2011-12, we worked closely with Africa as the Council dealt with a number of African issues on its agenda. Libya, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo are some that come to mind. Again, apart from the UN itself, India spoke up on issues of direct interest to Africa and India— issues of economic growth and sustainable development, food and energy security and climate change, public health, and so on – such cross-cutting issues were constantly in our vision in G-20, BRICS, IBSA and such forums.

As Africa seeks to increase its voice and influence on issues of global governance, specifically by requiring a more inclusive framework to address the world's problems, it will find full support of India. Our positions will be guided by our long standing ties with the region and our firmly held opposition to interference in the internal affairs of States. We believe that societies cannot be re-ordered from outside through military force and that people in all countries have the right to choose their own destiny and decide their own future.

The Indian-African partnership is clearly underpinned by a strong political understanding. India was honoured to be invited for the Golden Jubilee celebration of the African Union last month. Mr. Hamid Ansari, Hon'ble Vice President represented India at the celebrations in Addis Ababa. He

reiterated India's commitment to work with Africa, to leverage our strengths and bring prosperity to our peoples.

Excellencies,

The world economy has been witnessing rapid changes and one of the most important of these changes is the growing share of the increasing role of developing economies in the global economy. India and Africa are today assuming the role of active and influential players in the global economy. It is significant that during the 2011-2015 period, seven of the 10 fastest-growing economies will be in Africa. Economically, thus the African continent is marching ahead with several of its countries posting a high growth rate and emerging as a pole in the world economy.

India is committed for a reinvigorated and multi-dimensional India-Africa relationship. Our cooperation is not new, it goes back over 50 years, and has witnessed many successes in many areas. India's partnership with African countries has been vibrant, extending beyond trade and investment to technology transfers, knowledge sharing and skills development.

Our substantive engagement with the African countries may be better appreciated if seen through the prism of our own experience. When we became independent, we still relied on external support for building our industrial base, for job creation, infrastructure and human resources. Our experience demonstrated vividly to us that much assistance came with conditionalities, both explicit and implicit, prescriptions that could abridge the sovereignty and independence that we so zealously guarded. Yet the support we received in terms of capacity building and education was invaluable for our economic development.

Excellencies,

Our development partnership with Africa has been illuminated by this experience. Reinvigorated and multi-dimensional in scope, the India-Africa partnership is today being taken forward under the India-Africa Forum Summit process. Thus the India-Africa partnership today pulls together these varied strands to weave a tapestry of cooperation that is non-intrusive and non-prescriptive, consultative and, above all, centred on responding to Africa's needs.

Let me briefly touch upon the different strands of India-Africa partnership:

- i. Capacity building, is a core aspect as both India and Africa are young societies demographically and economically are at a relatively nascent stage of growth. The successful utilization of the very flexible and adaptable ITEC programme offered by India has been a positive manifestation of the South-South Cooperation that has drawn admiration and is being replicated elsewhere. The enhancement of scholarships and training positions under the ITEC programme, as well as the creation of new courses for training of African nationals in specified, relevant areas, all emerge from the Action Plan of our agreed Framework of Cooperation; and altogether, we are looking at building over 100 capacity building institutions in Africa.

Over 22,000 new scholarships for African Students in various academic courses and training programmes including special agriculture scholarships and C.V. Raman fellowships are being utilised by African students and scholars. India has offered more than 700 CV Raman Scientific Fellowships till 2014. We have seen a very healthy utilisation. However, there is scope for improvement. We are also working towards establishment of Virtual University to cater to the educational needs of the African students.

The Pan African e-Network Project is unique project to use the Indian expertise in information technology to bring benefits of healthcare and higher education to all countries of Africa. The Network is connected by a satellite/fibre optical network to provide tele-medicine, tele-education and VVIP connectivity to these countries.

- ii. Trade and investment: India ranks as the third largest export destination for Africa. India has set a bilateral trade target of 100 bn US Dollars with Africa by 2015 from over 67 bn US Dollars at present. The growing Indian corporate

presence in Africa is complemented by a definitive expansion of the India-Africa bilateral trade flow. This trend has been encouraged in part by India's duty-free tariff preferential scheme for 49 least developed countries (LDCs) which has benefited 33 African countries.

The footprints of Indian private and public sector enterprises can be seen in Africa. The recent wave of Indian investment into the continent has gained in size. Major Indian private sector enterprises such as Tata, Vedanta, Bharti Airtel, Jindals, Cipla, Ranbaxy, Videocon, Shapoorji Pallonji, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kirloskars, Coal India Limited etc. have invested in key sectors like automobiles, engineering, chemicals, IT, telecom and pharmaceuticals in many African countries. To give a further impetus to this engagement, I have decided to meet with the Indian corporates active in Africa to encourage them to invest more in Africa.

The CII-EXIM Bank India-Africa Project Partnership Conclaves have become an annual feature. The last one had over 500 projects with investment of 70 bn US Dollars being discussed. CII and FICCI have also partner institutional arrangements with their counterparts in Africa. An "India Show" has been scheduled in Dar es Salaam in September this year to showcase Indian products, technology and expertise.

- iii. Natural resources: Indian companies are directing their investments to Africa for generating wealth and to create win-win opportunities. The second area of cooperation can be in midstream and downstream sectors of African energy resources. With our proven expertise in refining, consultancy, training, infrastructural developments, we perceive potential for mutually beneficial business tie-ups in this sector. The third area is that of energy access. India has been an ardent advocate of renewable energy in the international arena, particularly emphasizing the "Energy Access for All". India has achieved some

success in harnessing renewable energy, especially Wind and Solar. We already have ongoing cooperation between India and Africa in this sector in terms of training and capacity building and in establishing solar energy projects under IAFS and on bilateral basis. I believe that there is scope for deepening and broadening the cooperation in this area as well.

- iv. Lines of Credit: In recent times, one of the key elements of India's development partnership with Africa has been the extension of Lines of Credit (LoC) on concessional terms. The mechanism of Lines of Credit requires no introduction to you.

Since 2002-03, Government of India has approved 123 Lines of Credit for Africa, aggregating 5.9 billion US Dollars. India-Africa Forum Summit I in 2008 and IAFS II in 2011 have led to significant changes in the geographical dispersion, sectoral coverage and magnitudes of Lines of Credit. During IAFS-II in May 2011, our Prime Minister announced that Lines of Credits of 5 billion US Dollars would be made available over the next three years to Africa. During the six years preceding 2008, Lines of Credit valuing 1.9 billion US Dollars were approved for African countries whereas the subsequent six years, including the current year, witnessed approvals valuing 4 billion US Dollars. The feedback from Africa underscores the fact that these Lines of Credit have helped the African countries substantially in the creation of sustainable infrastructure in diverse fields. The success of Lines of Credit depends crucially on the planning of the project, in terms of its conceptualization, smooth implementation and sustainability. I am sure that you will give utmost attention to these issues and sensitise your Governments appropriately.

- v. People to People Contacts: There is no alternative to enhance understanding than through enhanced people to people contacts. With this in mind, we have been

promoting contacts between African and Indian media, youth and parliamentarians who form the core of the opinion makers in the civil society. Nearly 100 journalists from Africa have visited India, in addition, another 45 young African journalists have undergone short duration training courses in India.

To enhance Africa's footprint in the Indian mainstream media, we are collaborating with various organizations to have agency reporters in select African cities. I have no doubt in my mind that we need to do much more and we are open to any suggestions you may have in this regard.

The 'INDIAFRICA: A Shared Future'. This unique youth outreach programme invites creative exchanges between young Africans and Indians through a multidisciplinary contest series and a Young Visionaries fellowship program. Under this concept, Campus outreach programmes have been organised in institutions across 17 African countries. Four collaborative business ventures are being set up by young entrepreneurs who had won the INDIAFRICA Young Visionary Fellowships. As we move into the third year of the programme, would be very happy to receive suggestions from you.

We have hosted till date around 85 young Parliamentarians in India representing 32 countries.

When I was in Kampala, we also discussed an additional area of cooperation that we felt may be of interest to African countries, that is e-governance and Open Governance Platforms, where we have developed some very useful models. I am in touch with Dr Sam Pitroda, PM's Advisor on Innovation and Public Information Infrastructure Development, and we are looking at approaches to share our expertise and experience in setting up an Open Governance Platform with interested African countries, which can also be further expanded to cover variety of applications in the field of e-governance.

Excellencies,

We would like to involve all of you in our efforts to forge even closer ties with Africa. We are looking at enhanced engagement with the African

Union, African Regional Communities, African Development Bank and above all bilaterally. We hope to formally launch IAFS II through signing of Joint Action Plan with the African Union. We also look forward to an early visit of the Chairperson of the African Union to India. We will involve you in these discussions and interaction as we take the process forward. We will carry forward this process of regular interactions between us and I look forward to meeting you again in the coming months.

One issue on which some of you have raised concern is Delhi's second diplomatic enclave. On this front there has been positive movement and I am confident that soon we will be able to share some good news with you.

In conclusion, I wish to state that as Africa and India had mutually benefitted through our inspirational struggles in the 20th century, we shall work together for our common prosperity in this new century. There is a vibrancy and economic dynamism in Africa today for all to see. The partnership of our young nations has the potential to redefine this century. The years to come would present challenges and opportunities which we need to ready ourselves to face and address. In this journey, India will remain a trusted partner, working with Africa for our shared progress and for the economic and social empowerment of our peoples.

Thank You



**406. Visit of African Union Commission's delegation to India
New Delhi, September 06, 2013**

A four-member delegation led by Ambassador Jean-Baptiste Natama, Chief of Staff of the Bureau of the AUC Chairperson from the African Union Commission (AUC) visited India during 4-7 September 2013.

The delegation called on the Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Smt. Preneet Kaur.

During the visit the Plan of Action of the Enhanced Framework of Cooperation of the second India Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-II) was

launched in New Delhi today. The Joint Plan of Action takes stock of present state of progress of the implementation of IAFS-II decisions and charts out the contours of future India Africa cooperation. An interactive session was co-chaired by Shri Sudhir Vyas, Secretary (West), MEA and Ambassador Natama. The Heads of African Missions in New Delhi and the representatives of various Indian implementing agencies participated in the interactive session for a detailed review of the progress in implementation of IAFS decisions.

During their stay in New Delhi the visiting delegation held deliberations with senior officials in the Ministries of Agriculture and Commerce & Industry. The delegation also visited National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC); Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT); Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd. (TCIL); and Water and Power Consultancy Services (WAPCOS). The delegation met with the representatives of various implementing agencies including Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI), NABARD Consultancy Services (NABCONS), Solar Energy Centre (SEC), National Institute of Design (NID) et.al.



407. Inaugural Address by Minister of State E. Ahamed at the 52nd Annual Session of Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization.

New Delhi, September 9, 2013.

Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad, Secretary-General, AALCO;

H.E. Mohammed Bello Adoke, Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and President of the Fifty-First Annual Session;

Hon. Mr. Rauff Hakeem, Minister of Justice of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and President of the Fiftieth Annual Session of AALCO;

Heads of Delegations;

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is indeed my honour this morning to be amongst Ministers, Attorney Generals and high-ranking officials of the Member States of Asian-African Legal consultative Organization attending the Fifty-Second Annual Session. I warmly welcome you all on behalf of the Government of India and on my own behalf to India, the world's largest democracy.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

International Law is no longer a branch of law which governs only inter-State relations. With the rapid pace of globalization, the scope of international law has also expanded to include newer areas, which were once considered to be in the exclusive domain of domestic law. There is virtually no area of international interest, which is not, in one way or another, governed by international law.

International law has witnessed a tremendous evolution in both substantive and institutional terms. It has now developed into an intense web of rules and institutions that address and govern non-State actors, such as international organizations and even the individual. Institutions have been established that provide for important mechanisms to facilitate international cooperation and compliance with international law. Today it touches the lives of millions by addressing trade and business, transnational crime and human trafficking, terrorism, intellectual property rights, child custody, piracy and a host of other issues.

International law is still in development and remains, as of today, the only viable means to ensure a common denominator to regulate the conduct of States and other actors. International law and the institutions it has created, continue to be the best tool to maintain international peace and security.

These developments, I believe, afford AALCO an excellent opportunity to enhance the scope of its activities and lead to an expansion of their work and thereby contribute to a more focused study of international law, with emphasis on problems of the Asian-African region.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

AALCO has its foundation firmly built on Asian-African solidarity. As we all are aware, AALCO is the only inter-governmental organization which brings together two continents of Asia and Africa in the progressive

development of international law. Since its inception in 1956, AALCO has served countries of the Asian-African region as a consultative inter-governmental Organization fostering deliberations of common concerns and playing an active role in developing Asian-African perspectives of international law.

India has been always in the forefront in facilitating the fulfilment of noble objectives of AALCO. As a Founding Member of AALCO and has a member State which hosts its Headquarters, India is committed in contributing to the work of AALCO. Government of India attaches the highest importance to the Organization and its work and has always played a very significant role in the activities of AALCO.

I take this opportunity to commend AALCO's role in establishing regional arbitration centres under its auspices to settle commercial disputes. Centre for Research and Training of AALCO also deserves appreciation for undertaking training activities and bringing out publications on international law issues.

Please accept my best wishes for the Fifty-Second Annual Session of AALCO, which I'm sure, will deliberate upon a number of international law issues of contemporary importance to our region. I am impressed by the range of topics on the agenda set for deliberations for the next four days. Important topics such as Environment and Sustainable Development; Law of the Sea; Challenges in Combating Corruption; Statehood of Palestine under International Law; Extra-territorial Application of National Legislation: Sanctions Imposed against Third Parties; and Selected Items on the Agenda of the International Law Commission are on the agenda. These topics are of great significance for the international community, in general, and Asian-African Countries, in particular. I hope the in-depth exchange of views on these issues will contribute to the development of law in these areas and promotion of the interests of Asian-African States.

I wish the Conference all success.

Thank you



408. Joint Statement issued by the Ministry of Commerce at the end of the India-Africa Business Council Meeting in Johannesburg.

New Delhi, October 1, 2013.

1. The members of the Africa-India Business Council, representing the voice of industry in Africa and India met today in Johannesburg, South Africa, for the 2nd meeting of Africa-India Business Council to deliberate, consolidate and explore mutually beneficial economic engagement between the two sides.
2. The business council was led by Dr Bright Chunga, Acting Co-Chair, AIBC from Africa and Mr Sunil Bharti Mittal, Co-Chair AIBC from India. The meeting was attended by leading industry and institutions from Africa and India.
3. The business leaders from both sides expressed satisfaction on the deepening and comprehensive politico-socio-economic relations between Africa and India. As long-standing strategic partners in progress of each other, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to work together with a balanced and rewarding approach, bearing in mind each other's development priorities, based on common shared values.
4. The business council, with members representing industry of both sides, discussed the possible partnerships at bilateral, regional and continental level. The council deliberated on the issues that are bottlenecks in achieving the true potential of Africa-India partnership and suggested the possible mechanisms to address the same. The members felt that such mechanisms will inter alia, strengthen economic cooperation and facilitate a coordinated approach to undertake initiatives to steer economic growth in the current challenging times.
5. While the trade and investment relations between Africa and India have helped the two sides in their socio-economic capacity building, the members realize that with the economic developments around the globe, it is time to build upon the positive achievements and support each other in becoming more self-reliant and economically vibrant.

6. The members recognized that India and Africa have undergone significant economic transformation, in particular over the last decades. Linked by history and civilizations, India and Africa have been close allies and this should continue.
7. The Council took note of the progress made since its first meeting held in March 2012 at New Delhi, India and appreciated that the Africa-India engagements have intensified with substantial progress achieved across the board on different areas.
8. The members noted that 5 working groups have been constituted to explore and promote the agenda of the business council. It was felt that increased cooperation in the focus sectors of 5 working groups has the potential to provide a new thrust to bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation.
9. The members of the 5 working groups discussed their agenda for the coming year and recommended concrete action plan to promote engagements at bilateral, sub-regional and pan-Africa level to further trade, investment, technology transfer, skills development, capacity building, SME development etc.
10. The members also took note of the various activities like setting up of country desks, developing business guides, developing business directories, regularly organizing roundtables with the relevant stakeholders in India and Africa.
11. The members of the council strongly felt that visa and connectivity are two important aspects that have to be worked upon on priority to deepen the engagement between both sides.
12. The members emphasized that considering the importance that both sides hold for each other the governments should consider providing long term (1-2 year) multiple entry visa to bonafide businessmen on the recommendation of the apex chambers of commerce and industry of India and recognized private sector bodies in Africa.
13. The members would recommend government/s of both sides to make renewed efforts to bring about greater connectivity between India and Africa especially by air and sea.

14. The Council decided to share the data on investments between India and Africa on a half yearly basis. This shall be done by DIPP from Indian side and AUC from Africa.
15. Recognising the need for promoting African industrialization, the members agreed to explore opportunities for value addition at source in their agenda for investment cooperation.
16. The Council members agreed to interact regularly for a focused and result oriented plan of action under the umbrella of the working groups.
17. The Africa-India Business Council members also interacted with the Trade Ministers from Africa and India and discussed with them the shared vision of industry on both sides. They assured the policy makers their full support in achieving the vision that the leaders have set for mutual growth and also sought the support of the governments to achieve the true potential for economic growth.
18. Supplementing on-going and future programmes of India and Africa at the bilateral, regional and other levels, the Africa-India Business Council members agreed to meet alongside the next Africa-India Trade Ministers meeting in India.
19. AIBC members also agreed Africa related issues and initiatives should be flagged to the AUC which in turn will refer them to RECs and Member States respectively.



ALGERIA

409. Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the Visit of Minister of State E. Ahamed to Algeria.

New Delhi, April 18, 2013.

Shri E. Ahamed, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs paid an official visit to Algeria from 17-18 April, 2013 at the invitation of Foreign Minister of Algeria: The prime objective of the visit was to revive and renew our already strong bilateral relations on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Algeria's Independence and 50 Years of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between India and Algeria. Algeria is the largest country in Africa and second largest economy with considerable trade existing between India and Algeria to the extent of US\$ 2.2 billion. Our exports to Algeria have increased manifold to reach US\$ 1.1 billion in 2012.

The Hon'ble Minister called on H.E. Mr. Abdelmalek Sellal, Prime Minister of Algeria and H.E. Mr. Mourad Medelci, Foreign Minister. During his interaction with both the leaders, the Minister of State discussed the possibility of signing term contracts for supply of oil and natural gas to India, Algeria being the 4th largest producer of oil in Africa. Possibility of joint venture in manufacture of gas-based nitrogenous fertilizers for captive export to India was also discussed. A Road Map for further strengthening of areas of bilateral cooperation including political, commercial & economic, human resource development, science & technology etc. were discussed while presenting to the Algerian side.

The Algerian side requested India for furthering cooperation in the field of ICT and pharmaceuticals whereas Shri E. Ahamed expressed interest in participating in the Presidential programme for development of infrastructure including social housing, roads & highways, railways and airports. Possibility of more cultural cooperation and people to people contact including hosting Indian Food Festival and Films Festival in Algeria were also discussed.

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the excellent level of bilateral relations in various sectors. However, both agreed that a large potential

exists for further development of these relations for which the two sides would work together under the Road Map drawn for it.



CHAD

410. Announcement by the Official Spokesperson on the visit of the Chadian Foreign Minister.

New Delhi, August 13, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin):

The first one is about the visit today of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and African Integration of Chad. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and African Integration of Chad Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat is in Delhi today and he met the External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid. This is the first bilateral interaction at this level between India and Chad and, therefore, it has its own importance. It was an opportunity for us to exchange views on the current situation in the region there.

As you are aware, the situation of Chad is very important in the current ongoing issues that are plaguing that region. Chad was involved in Mali a little earlier during the year, and has emerged as an important economic and political player in that region. It heads the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and is likely to be the next Chair of the important regional organization Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

India has started buying limited quantities of crude from Chad. Chad has also one of the best equipped forces in that region, and its forces were on the frontline in Mali. We have a growing development partnership cooperation with them. We have offered something in the vicinity of more than 100 million lines of credit for various projects. We provide 25 ITEC slots to students from Chad. And we have offered to set up a civil aviation academy. Chad also, as you are aware, is part of the Pan African E-Network that we have set up. That is about the visit of the Foreign Minister of Chad.



EGYPT

411. **Media Briefing on Egyptian President's Visit to India.** **New Delhi, March 14, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming for this briefing today.

Before I begin, I would like to introduce my colleagues who are here with me. On my right is Mr. Navdeep Suri who is our Ambassador in Egypt; and on my left is Mr. Rajeev Shahare who is Joint Secretary (West Asia & North Africa).

What we have today primarily is a briefing regarding the forthcoming state visit of President of Egypt Dr. Mohamed Morsi to India from 18th to the 21st of March. The programme is still evolving and we will provide to you a detailed advisory of all his engagements, but I can just try and share with you a little bit of information before I ask my colleague Joint Secretary (WANA) to brief you in a little bit more detail.

President Morsi is expected to be accompanied by senior Ministers and a Business Delegation. As is the practice, he will be received ceremonially at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. He will have delegation-level talks with the Prime Minister. There will be a meeting with the President followed by a banquet. And there will be calls on him by the External Affairs Minister, the Vice-President, and the Chairperson of the UPA. In addition, there is a business segment to his visit, i.e., he will be interacting with businessmen here in Delhi before he departs.

Those are my brief remarks. With that I will request Mr. Shahare to brief you in a little bit more detail about the visit. Then the floor will be open for any questions that you would like to ask either to Mr. Shahare or to Ambassador Suri. As is the norm, we will first exhaust this topic before I am willing to take any other questions that you may have on any other topic. With that I will ask the Joint Secretary (WANA) to make his opening remarks. Rajeev.

Joint Secretary (WANA) (Shri Rajeev Shahare): Thank you. Like Akbar has said, the visit of Dr. Mohamed Morsi is from 18th to 20th. We are looking at the date of departure, it is still being evolved.

The visit, if I may say so, is happening at a very important juncture of our bilateral ties and also regional developments. What we have witnessed in the North Africa, West Asia region over the past two years with the Arab Spring, the political tumult that the countries have gone through, and some of the countries have come out of it and are presently undergoing the phase of democracy, of bringing in institutions which can usher in reforms. So this is a very crucial juncture for Egypt to undertake this visit. We in India look forward to receiving President Morsi and partner Egypt in these areas that they want to strengthen their ties with India.

As you are all aware, our ties are historic, dating back to many centuries, millennia for that matter. But in the recent times we have shared a colonial past, and together have launched the Non-Aligned Movement which is still very fondly remembered in Egypt.

Coming to the more recent times, even after the political tumult and after the January 25 Revolution that took place in Egypt in 2011, we were very quick to link up with the new dispensation in Egypt. Our Minister of State visited very early on to Egypt. Last year we had the visit of External Affairs Minister in March, 2012, where we also met up with the leadership and held the Joint Commission meeting. In fact, that Joint Commission meeting set the tone and pace of how we will be engaging with the new Egypt and that was very well appreciated by Egypt as well.

In this visit we will be looking at interaction at various levels. It has all components of a very strong relationship: on the political level, on the economic level, on the level of engagement in the science and technology areas, cutting edge technology areas, frontier areas of science, in information technology. So these will be certainly on the table for discussion.

Importantly and very significantly at that has been our economic engagement. Despite the political tumult, we saw a record increase in our economic engagement. We saw an increase of almost 30 per cent. From US\$ 3.2 billion, our trade went up to US\$ 4.5 billion. But I have just been told by our Ambassador that the figures correspond to the Egyptian financial year, according to our financial year it has reached US\$ 5.5 billion. So, this is a significant increase and it shows that despite the political situation, despite the political scenario, what has really come up is that the will form both sides to engage with each other in the economic

sphere. We certainly hope to carry this forward during the visit of President Morsi.

He will be accompanied by a very high-level Business Delegation. So far they have told us maybe 15 to 20, but very high-level business people are to accompany him. We have a separate business segment which of course is being organized more with the Egyptian Mission and our three apex business houses – FICCI, CII and ASSOCHAM – in which FICCI is taking the lead role. There will be various elements to that. I think they are still being developed. So we will not be in a position to give you the details of the economic segment. But I think to some extent the Commerce Ministers from both sides would be chairing some sessions; there is a likelihood of the President also addressing the session. But I think I would leave to the Egyptian side to give more details on that. They are the ones who are doing this segment.

As happens in the Presidential visits, they are also accompanied by a high-level delegation. We are expecting at least four to five Ministers accompanying Dr. Morsi. We will get to know the details, but as of now we have been given to understand that their Foreign Minister, Minister for Information and Technology, Trade and Commerce Minister, and Investment Minister would also be coming. So, we have four Minister so far who would be there with us.

Might I also add here that last year we had a visit by the counterpart Chief Election Commissioner. His name is Bugato. Commissioner Bugato had visited and signed an MoU for cooperation in the field of electoral issues. This shows the Egyptian will to partner India in this very important segment. Before that, our Chief Election Commissioner had also visited. We were also Observers in the first round of the Presidential elections. I think this is an important area. I think that also would be looked at during the visit.

There are many other things we are looking at. Biotechnology, information technology, cyber security areas, all those things will be discussed. There will be delegation-level talks headed by the Prime Minister from our side. There will be the usual trappings of the state visit with the forecourt ceremony and the banquet by the President, etc.

We also have presence of a large number of Indian companies, almost 50 companies are there, big names are there. Aditya Birla is there, Kirloskar has been there for at least 60 years or so, Daburs are there. There is a new company that has come up called Sanmar who are manufacturing PVC and caustic soda. It is a huge company with a billion dollar plus investment. Our total investments are more than US\$ 2.5 billion in Egypt. Likewise Egypt is also investing here. There are a few companies here. So this is one area we would be looking at how to partner on the investments side.

I will stop at that and we can take questions thereafter. I think the Ambassador might like to add to that.

Official Spokesperson: I think I will ask Ambassador Suri to perhaps add a little bit before we take some questions.

Ambassador to Egypt (Shri Navdeep Suri): Thanks Akbar. Good to see many old friends again.

On the trade side, one thing that I would add is that overall our trade with Egypt has increased so rapidly in the last three years that India is now Egypt's seventh largest trading partner. Last year it was the second largest source of its exports. Our own exports have comfortably crossed about US\$ 2.3 billion last year.

We have a very diversified export basket. In fact it is interesting to see how Indian products such as two-wheelers and three-wheelers are rapidly gaining ground over other competitors who had a head start and were dominating the market.

As Rajeev said, on investment as well, it is a fact that we have 50 Indian companies in a very diverse range of sectors – in petrochemicals, in chemicals, in paints, in consumer products, in healthcare products, in adhesives. Particularly when you talk to Indian companies that what is the driver for you, the first thing everybody says is - location. The geo-strategic location that Egypt enjoys enables them to look at markets not only the fact that Egypt itself is a US\$ 260 billion economy with 85 million consumers, the second largest in Africa, but also that by having a manufacturing base in Egypt they are able to access markets in Europe, in Africa, and in the Middle East. That is a major attraction for them.

We always discuss in general terms, yes we will have a collaboration in IT, but how you concretize this? I think what you will see emerging out of this visit is a number of very interesting concrete ideas of taking relationships forward in a way that they stand out as visible symbols of cooperation. One for example will be in very advanced stages of discussing - a centre for excellence in IT in Al-Azhar University. As you know, Al-Azhar Sharif is the world's single most influential, respected, oldest organization in the field of Sunni Islam. And the request has come from them as recognition of the value that India can add to their curriculum.

We talk often in general terms about space technology and cooperation but here we are talking in specific terms about launching an Egyptian satellite. So, you will see some interesting things come out of the visit in the next few days.

I will leave it at that and if there are any questions, then Rajeev and I will be happy to answer them.

Question: What is the President looking for in India? What is it they want? Politically it is not that we have been very close. Maybe long ago, but in the recent past ...(*Inaudible*)...So, what is it that they want?

Ambassador to Egypt: The new Government is very clearly looking at a much deeper engagement with India. They are looking at diversifying their relationships, and you will see that emerge. They genuinely look at India as a country from which they can access our knowledge, experience and expertise in areas like information technology, in small and medium enterprises, in microfinance. They have done their homework; they are very focused on what they need from India.

Joint Secretary (WANA): I think Navdeep has very much said this. I sat on a meeting with Dr. Morsi when EAM had visited. At that time he very clearly articulated that he would like to learn from India and also gain from India's expertise. What he was saying about was about (a) capacity building, so that he can address the problem of unemployment there, how to increase on that; and (b) to learn from India's pluralism, a pluralistic society, how we are going about that, I think this is another very important element which even Egypt is looking at. Of course certainly all these high-tech areas they want to partner India. I think that is what is driving them to look towards India.

Q: What are the new areas you are going to discuss as compared to the summit meeting with Mubarak? I think I remember during Mubarak's time there was space exploration. What is the new ground that you are going to cover?

Joint Secretary (WANA): As I indicated, what we are doing is moving from general agreements to specifics of collaboration. When we say that we are moving to the specific of a Centre for Information Technology, where we are establishing, in the hallowed premises of Al-Azhar University, we are moving on. So, there is progress that you can see in concretizing some of those ideas. I gave you the example of space as well. So, there is an MoU that creates an enabling framework, and then there is action on the ground to actually make something tangible happen. That is the stage we are at now. Also with regard to say small and medium enterprises, again capacity building, more opportunities for employment. So, from a generic Memorandum of Understanding, going on to specific implementation of the MoUs, we are going to have vocational training centre specifically that we are going to set up in Cairo. These are the specificities, just to add to what Ambassador has said.

Q: Navdeep, considering your office-cum-residence is not too far from the Tahrir Square, the ongoings in Cairo, do they bother you at all? How does that affect the Indian companies there? The last time I went to Cairo I had to change planes in Dubai. Considering that they are a big trading partner now, do we have direct flights connecting India with Egypt?

Ambassador to Egypt: I think that is two separate questions. On the flights, there are flights between Mumbai and Cairo of Egypt Airlines four days a week, but there are none between Delhi and Cairo. But there are many connections through Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Muscat, Riyadh, etc.

On Tahrir Square, I keep telling my friends when they call up and express concern that Cairo is a city of 20 million. It is huge, sprawling. Tahrir is half a square kilometer or less, and detours are easily available if there are disturbances happening. Yes, the power of the visual medium to convey a certain image is very strong. But by and large, life goes on in the city which is the unreported fact of the situation there. There are a couple of Embassies which are right next to Tahrir Square and if there are clashes taking place in that area, they are impacted directly. But

schools and colleges work, Embassies work, the malls are open till 1 o'clock at night. Life goes on.

Q: Navdeep, just now Mr. Shahare said that they are looking for pluralism from India. I just want to know what kind of political cooperation you are looking with Egypt so far as international fora is concerned.

Ambassador to Egypt: First of all on the issue of pluralism, just to expand it, that is one element that comes out almost unerringly in every major conversation that we have. The affection that they have for India is derived from Indian democracy and multiculturalism, the economic story, and the IT story, and then possibly Bollywood as well which has a very wide-ranging appeal.

Internationally, this is a visit at the highest level to give us an opportunity to compare notes on the situation both in our own part of the world and in their part of the world. I think maybe JS (WANA) wants to expand a little bit on that.

Joint Secretary (WANA): As far as India's democratic credentials and the pluralism aspect is concerned, I think we have a proven track record on that. Not only Egypt but many other countries are moving towards how our entire secular approach, the coexistence between various religions, and the whole concept of pluralism. How successful it had been in India has become in a way a role model for many of these countries. These emerging countries that are in transition are facing this, and definitely in the transition phase we are seeing what is happening in other countries as well. There are these problems which are cropping up. So, I think they feel that what is already there in India, the peaceful coexistence or the coexistence of various segments in our society whether it is linguistic diversification or ethnic diversification or religious, how we come together and exist peacefully, I think this is what these countries are looking at India for.

Official Spokesperson: Rajeev has to leave but Ambassador Suri is still here with us and I have still a fairly long list of questions.

Question: I would like to know if there are any proposals from Egypt for any kind of defence cooperation, defence capacity building, etc.

Ambassador to Egypt: We are awaiting next month for the Joint Defence Committee. It will take place in Delhi. It is an institutional

framework. This is going to be the fourth meeting of the Joint Defence Committee. I am sure they are going to explore new areas of cooperation, particularly since that Committee will be meeting in the wake of Dr. Morsi's visit. Beyond that we do have regular training exchanges. Our officers go to Egyptian establishments for training; theirs come to NDC, etc. That is part of an ongoing process. We make regular ship visits to Egypt. We have had a number of these in the recent past. But I think this Joint Defence Committee will really provide us an opportunity to take that agenda forward.

Q: You spoke about pluralism. How does India see a Government which is led by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt?

Ambassador to Egypt: It is not a good idea for me to be commenting on the internal politics in a country. At some point maybe we will have a conversation about it.

Q: If I can just draw you back to the Muslim Brotherhood question, we have got Shahbagh happening in our neighbourhood, you have got Muslim Brotherhood and its emergence where you are. How do you intellectually make sense of these two contrasts? What explains the striking difference?

Ambassador to Egypt: Let me just give a general answer. What you are seeing is a region in transition from Governments that were somewhat authoritarian, less or more, to the yearning for democracy manifesting itself in different countries. In Egypt as a case in point and Tunisia and Gaza, as three areas where it has been tested, the elections that were widely regarded as free and fair have been won by parties that are broadly regarded as being of an Islamist leaning. So what you are seeing at play is serious, pragmatic people, modern-thinking people trying to come out with how to reconcile the emerging idea of political Islam with the established idea of a modern democracy.

Q: Egypt is on the other side of the fence on the UNSC issue. Are we still in the business of persuading them to support us or have we given up? Will this issue come up at all during the PM's talks with the President?

Ambassador to Egypt: It will come up for discussion. We are grownups. We understand that each one has his own position. We are very confident about our position, they have a certain rationale for their position, and we are discussing this issue. It is not something that we have swept off the table.

Q: Ambassador, you said that India would be launching an Egyptian satellite. What kind of satellite would it be? Will any defence cooperation plus space cooperation agreement be signed for this satellite?

Ambassador to Egypt: This is a nanosatellite called EgyCubeSat. It is a small satellite. It is essentially for scientific purposes. I think there is great pride in Egypt that it is entirely built in Egypt itself. And certainly they recognize the track record of our very successful satellite launch programme and look at us as preferred partners for this purpose.

Q: What is the size of this nanosatellite?

Ambassador to Egypt: The weight is about one kilogram, that is how much it is usually. But with the trappings and everything, fixtures and all, it would probably come to about six to six and half kilos.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much friends.



412. Statement by Prime Minister to the Media during the State Visit of President of Egypt to India.

New Delhi, March 19, 2013.

Your Excellency President Dr. Mohamed Morsy,
Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome President Mohamed Morsy, the first democratically elected President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on his State Visit to India. We deeply appreciate the fact that he has undertaken a State Visit to India despite his pressing domestic commitments. This is a reflection of his personal commitment to our relationship.

President Morsy and I have just concluded extensive and very productive discussions, marked by the warmth and friendship that characterizes the truly special nature of the relationship between our two countries. We agreed that his visit, at an important juncture for Egypt, offers us a great opportunity to renew our relationship and take it to a different level of engagement and cooperation.

We discussed the historic political transition underway in Egypt following the events of January 2011. I expressed our admiration for the courage and sacrifices of the people of Egypt in ushering in a new era of democracy in Egypt. I conveyed our full support to President Morsy and offered to share our experience, as he ably leads his nation in building strong institutions and frameworks for democracy, social justice and inclusive economic development. I am convinced that Egypt's successful transition would be an important model for the region and the world.

President Morsy and I agreed that India and Egypt have enormous potential for deepening our cooperation across the full spectrum of our relationship. Our economic partnership has rich possibilities. We agreed that information technology, services, electronics, small and medium enterprises, manufacturing, fertilizers, and renewable energy constitute important areas of cooperation. Egypt's location, as a bridge between Asia and Africa, astride a major global trade route, together with its skilled human resources, makes it an attractive business destination for India.

We also agreed to foster productive partnerships in socio-economic development programmes, skill development, higher education, agriculture and health care. We also agreed to enhance our defence exchanges and cooperation.

The agreements that we have signed today are a clear manifestation of our desire to impart a new dynamism to our relationship.

President Morsy and I also exchanged views on a range of regional and international issues. We have a shared interest in peace and stability in the Gulf, West Asia and the North African region. I conveyed our steadfast support to the Palestinian cause and expressed our deep appreciation for the role played by Egypt in trying to forge unity between the Palestinian groups and work towards a peaceful resolution of this long standing issue.

We also discussed the deteriorating situation in Syria and condemned the violence and loss of innocent lives there. We agreed on the urgent need for a peaceful resolution of all issues through dialogue.

President Morsy and I also underscored the importance of forging stronger regional and international cooperation between our two countries to address common challenges like climate change, food and energy

security and terrorism. We agreed to intensify our efforts on issues that affect developing countries, and increase our coordination in various international forums, including the United Nations, G-77 and the Non Aligned Movement.

Before I conclude, I must mention the enormous reservoir of goodwill and trust, and the ties of history, culture and religion, which bind the people of India and Egypt. President Morsy and I agreed that this provides a solid bedrock on which to build a strong and durable bilateral relationship and international partnership between our two countries.

Thank you



413. India-Egypt Joint Declaration on the State Visit of Dr. Mohamed Morsy, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

New Delhi, March 20, 2013.

1. The President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Morsy, paid a State visit to India from 18 to 20 March 2013 at the invitation of the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. President Morsy was accompanied by a high-level delegation of Ministers, senior officials and business persons.
2. President Morsy called on the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. The Vice-President of India, Shri Mohammed Hamid Ansari, the External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid, Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance, Smt. Sonia Gandhi and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Smt. Sushma Swaraj called on President Morsy. The President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, hosted a banquet in honour of President Morsy.
3. The Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh held delegation-level discussions with H.E. President Mohamed Morsy on 19 March 2013. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh congratulated President Morsy for being a democratically elected President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and expressed India's happiness in

seeing democratic traditions taking root in Egypt. He offered all support in the democratic transition process in Egypt and expressed satisfaction with regard to the growing interaction between the Election Commission of India and its counterpart in Egypt.

4. The two leaders expressed satisfaction over the evolution of bilateral relations in recent years and directed that exchanges and consultations should be further intensified in order to realise the full potential of the relationship. They took note of the successful meeting of the India-Egypt Joint Commission in March 2012 at the level of Foreign Ministers and the India-Egypt Foreign Office Consultations at the level of Secretary/Assistant Foreign Minister in January 2013.
5. The two sides discussed bilateral defence ties and measures to enhance cooperation, including through the forthcoming Joint Defence Committee meeting scheduled to take place in Delhi in April, 2013.
6. The two leaders noted the growing bilateral economic interaction in recent years and particularly welcomed the growth in Indian investment in Egypt which today stands at US \$ 2.5 billion. They underlined the importance of taking all measures in order to provide better climate and opportunities for promotion of investments. They agreed that all investment related issues would be accorded utmost priority.
7. The two leaders also exchanged views on a wide range of issues of bilateral, regional and international interest including those relating to the situation in the Middle East and North Africa region; the Non-Aligned Movement; and the reform of the United Nations.
8. The two sides expressed deep concern over the deteriorating security situation and continued violence and bloodshed in Syria. The two sides, while expressing their support to the mission of Lakhdar Brahimi, asserted their position regarding the safeguards of the unity and territorial integrity of Syria, and called for the implementation of the Joint Communiqué of Geneva Action Group

with a view to bring about a political solution to the conflict in order to achieve the just aspirations of the Syrian people for freedom, dignity and democracy.

9. The two leaders reiterated their well-known support for the Palestinian cause in line with their backing of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) calling for a negotiated solution resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable, contiguous and united state of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders, side by side at peace with Israel as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1397 and 1515. The two leaders welcomed the overwhelming vote at the United Nations General Assembly to upgrade Palestine to non-member observer state in the United Nations. The two leaders called for an end to the expansion of Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine and for an early and significant easing of restrictions on the free movement of persons and goods within Palestine. Both sides agreed that peace in the region required sustained and substantive negotiations among the parties. They advocated active support of the international community and regional players for efforts in normalizing the situation in West Asia, and resuming the Middle East Peace Process.
10. India and Egypt strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Both sides considered terrorism, including cross border terrorism, to be one of the gravest threats to international peace and security, and affirmed that there can be no justification for any act of terrorism, irrespective of motivations, wherever and by whosoever committed. They are convinced that terrorism cannot, and should not, be associated with any nationality, religious, cultural or ethnic group. They reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen their cooperation in combating terrorism at all levels.
11. His Excellency, President Dr. Mohamed Morsy addressed a meeting of the India-Egypt Business Forum where the potential of economic cooperation between the two countries was

highlighted under the theme “Complementarities for Growth”. Memoranda of Understanding on skill development and training, micro-finance and setting-up of an industrial park on plastics were signed by the Indian and Egyptian companies, during the India-Egypt Economic Forum.

12. The two countries agreed to collaborate in the field of technology, in particular in information and communications technologies; agriculture; biotechnology; and non-conventional energy technologies. They will work towards enhancing cooperation in the field of science and technology and in this regard agreed to set up a Joint Working Group. The two sides also set up a Joint Working Group to explore new initiatives for cooperation in the field of space science. They also agreed to work in the areas of tourism, youth affairs and sports, agriculture research and education, technical education and vocational training and other fields of mutual benefit.
13. The Egyptian side expressed its appreciation for the Pan African E-network Project for tele-medicine and tele-education at Alexandria University, solar electrification of a village in Siwa and establishment of a textile vocational training centre in Egypt. Both sides agreed to continue to cooperate closely in these areas.
14. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the significant growth in the bilateral trade in the recent past to cross US\$ 5 billion and agreed to achieve a target of US\$ 8 billion by March 2016. They welcomed the first meeting of the Joint Trade Committee held recently in Cairo on March 10, 2013 where the introduction of new commodities, including trade of wheat, cotton and fertilizers, was discussed. They also agreed to enhance the cooperation through appropriate trade arrangements.
15. India and Egypt discussed intensification of cooperation in the ICT sector by facilitating and providing assistance to help promote trade and technology sector. They welcomed the conclusion of MoUs on ICT cooperation and cyber security between the two countries to strengthen collaboration in the field of cyber security.

16. India and Egypt will work towards expanding cooperation between their respective oil companies, both in the public and private sectors, for establishing long-term relationships in supply of crude oil and petroleum products, upstream and downstream joint ventures, refineries, petrochemical industries and marketing, both in Egypt and India as permitted by their respective laws and regulations. They also agreed to explore the possible collaboration in the field of fertilizers.
17. India and Egypt welcomed ongoing efforts towards developing partnerships between institutions of the two countries in the areas of culture, Indian and Egyptian studies and languages. They also encouraged more interaction between civil societies and stressed on the importance of enhancing people to people contacts between the two countries.
18. The following Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement were signed at the conclusion of the talks between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Egypt:
 - i. Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Communications & Information Technology of Government of India and Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Arab Republic of Egypt for Cooperation in Information and Communication Technology
 - ii. Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Communications & Information Technology of Government of India and Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Arab Republic of Egypt on Cooperation in the area of Cyber Security.
 - iii. Memorandum of Understanding between Government of the Republic of India and Arab Republic of Egypt for the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) in Egypt.
 - iv. Memorandum of Understanding between Indian National

Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage and Ministry of State for Antiquities Affairs, Arab Republic of Egypt for cooperation in the fields of protection, preservation, promotion and management of cultural heritage.

- v. Memorandum of Understanding between National Small Industries Corporation, Republic of India and Social Fund for Development, Arab Republic of Egypt on cooperation in the field of micro and small enterprises.
 - vi. Agreement between the Government of Egypt represented by Industrial Development Authority and Government of India Enterprise, the National Small Industries Corporation, New Delhi for upgradation of a Vocational Training Centre at Shoubra El Kheima, Cairo, Egypt.
19. In addition to the above, the following two Letters of Intent were signed:
- i. Letter of Intent on India-Egypt Solar Energy Cooperation between Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of the Republic of India and Ministry of Electricity and Energy of the Republic of Egypt.
 - ii. Letter of Intent concerning launch services of the Egyptian nano-satellite EGYCUBESAT-1 on-board the Indian polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV) by Antrix Corporation Ltd. of India and the Egyptian National Authority for Remote Sensing and Space Sciences.
20. His Excellency President Mohamed Morsy invited the President and the Prime Minister of India to visit Egypt at a mutually convenient time. The invitations have been accepted.
21. His Excellency President Mohamed Morsy expressed deep gratitude and appreciation to the President and the Prime Minister of India for the warmth of the reception accorded to him and to his delegation during their stay.

New Delhi,

20 March 2013

List of documents signed during the State Visit of President of Egypt to India, March 18-20, 2013

March 19, 2013

	Title of MOUs	Signatory from Indian side	Signatory from Egyptian side	Remarks
	MoU between Ministry of Communications & Information Technology of Government of India and Ministry of Communications & Information Technology of Arab Republic of Egypt on Cooperation for Cooperation in Information and Communication Technology	Shri Kapil Sibal Minister for Communications & Information Technology	Eng. Atef Helmy Minister of Communications and Information Technology	The MoU identifies a number of core areas which would be the focus of cooperation. These include e-governance and e-education, IT and electronics hardware, sharing of experiences in the creation of Technology Parks and IT clusters, and strengthening the cooperation between ICT companies in the private sector etc.
	MoU between Ministry of Communications & Information Technology of Government of India and Ministry of Communications & Information Technology of Arab Republic of Egypt on Cooperation in the area of Cyber Security	Shri Kapil Sibal Minister for Communications & Information Technology	Eng. Atef Helmy Minister of Communications & Information Technology	MoU facilitates sharing of expertise by exchanging information on all aspects of cyber security and supporting each other in taking appropriate measures in order to prevent cyber security incidents.

<p>MoU between the Government of the Republic of India and Arab Republic of Egypt for the establishment of a Centre for Excellence in IT (CEIT) in Egypt</p>	<p>Shri Salman Khursid External Affairs Minister</p>	<p>Mr. Mohamed K. Amr Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt</p>	<p>The MoU for the establishment of a Centre for Excellence in IT (CEIT) in Al Azhar University marks an important step in actualizing the goals of technical and development cooperation between the two countries. Under the MoU, India will provide the human resources, as well as the hardware and software to set up a centre for the training of upto 500 students per year. Egypt will facilitate the establishment of the centre including the provision of space and logistical support.</p>
<p>MoU between National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), Republic of India and Social Fund for Development, Arab Republic of Egypt on Cooperation in the field of Micro and Small Enterprises</p>	<p>Dr. H.P. Kumar Chairman Managing Director National Industries Corporation (NSIC)</p>	<p>Mrs. Ghada Fathy Waly Managing Director Social Fund for Development (SFD)</p>	<p>The MoU facilitates sharing of information, meetings between enterprises, technology transfers and to provide consultation services to enhance the abilities of business enterprises of India and Egypt</p>

<p>MoU between Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage and the Ministry of State for Antiquities Affairs, Arab Republic of Egypt for cooperation in the fields of Protection, Preservation, Promotion and Management of Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>Maj. Gen. (Retd.) L.K. Gupta, AVSM, Chairman, INTACH</p>	<p>Ambassador Khaled Elbakly</p>	<p>Facilitates joint activities, sharing of information and exchange of expertise through conferences, workshops, joint projects etc. and cooperation in the field of protection of intellectual property rights and prevention of illicit traffic of antiquities</p>
<p>Agreement between the Government of Egypt represented by Industrial Development Authority and the Government of the Republic of India represented by National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), New Delhi for Upgradation of a Vocational Training Centre at Shourba El Kheima, Cairo, Egypt</p>	<p>Dr. H.P. KumarChairman cum Managing DirectorNational Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)</p>	<p>Dr. Mahmoud El Garf. Head of Industrial Development Authority</p>	<p>As part of the MoU, NSIC will be upgrading the Vocational Training Centre at Shoubra El Kheima, Cairo especially in the technological upgradation required in the area of spinning, weaving, knitting and dyeing technology.</p>
<p>Letter of Intent on India-Egypt Solar Energy Cooperation between Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of Republic of India and the Ministry of Electricity and Energy of the Republic of Egypt</p>	<p>Ratan P. Watal Secretary Ministry of New and Renewable Energy</p>	<p>Ambassador Khaled Elbakly</p>	<p>Envisages providing 8.8 kilowatt of power using solar energy to 40 households in a village in Siwa located in Martrouh Governorate of Egypt.</p>

In addition to the above, a letter of Intent concerning launch services of the Egyptian Nano Satellite EGYCUBESAT-1 on board the Indian Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) by Antrix Cooperation Ltd., was signed between Antrix Corporation Ltd., the commercial wing of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Egyptian National Authority for Remote Sensing and Space Sciences (NARSS).



LESOTHO

414. Press Release issued by the Embassy of India on Second Meeting of the India-Lesotho Joint Bilateral Commission of Cooperation Between India and Lesotho.

Maseru, (Lesotho), September 13, 2013.

1. The second meeting of the India-Lesotho Joint Bilateral Commission of Cooperation (JBCC) was held during 12-13 September 2013 in Maseru, Lesotho to discuss the current state of bilateral relations and the follow up of decisions taken at India Africa Forum Summit. This was the first meeting of the JBCC to be held in Lesotho. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Ravi Bangar, Additional Secretary (East & Southern Africa), Ministry of External Affairs and Lesotho delegation was led by H.E. Mr. J.T. Metsing, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations of Lesotho.
2. India and Lesotho enjoy close and friendly bilateral relations which are multifaceted. There is a strong cooperation in bilateral matters and excellent coordination of views in regional and international fora. India-Lesotho cooperation has developed through capacity building programmes, training and sharing of experience in diverse fields including defence and security.
3. The heads of the delegation commended the existing warm and cordial relations between the two countries. They emphasized the significance of the second meeting of the Joint Bilateral Commission on Cooperation as another milestone of meaningful and growing cooperation between the two countries.

4. During the discussions, both sides also reviewed implementation of decisions taken at the first meeting of the JBCC in March 2009 as well as those under the two India Africa Forum Summits.
5. Both sides held extensive discussions on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of common interest. Cooperation under the India Africa Forum Summit, defence and security cooperation and Lines of Credit offered by the Government of India were also discussed at length.
6. It was also agreed to propose that the next JBCC meeting will be held in New Delhi on mutually convenient dates.



LIBERIA

415. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Liberian President.

New Delhi, September 10, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon, friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon.

The first announcement is regarding the visit of the President of Liberia, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirlief, who is currently on a state visit to India. Tomorrow is her main day of engagements. Tomorrow, as usual, there will be a ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in the morning. Subsequently she will have delegation-level talks with the Prime Minister. There will be a series of dignitaries calling upon her - that is the External Affairs Minister, the Speaker of Lok Sabha and the Chairperson of the UPA. In addition, President will host a banquet for her tomorrow evening. Day after tomorrow she will be bestowed with the Indira Gandhi Prize.

Those of you who are aware of her background, she is the first African woman Head of State. This is also the first visit by a Liberian Head of Government or Head of State to India.

We have had a few high-level meetings during the last few years. The first of these was in 2009 when the Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. Shashi Tharoor visited Liberia. Subsequently, in 2010 we had the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Mr. Vayalar Ravi visiting Liberia.

From the Liberian side we have had two important visits. Their Foreign Minister had visited India in February 2011. And earlier this year for the CII-Africa Conclave we had the Vice-President of Liberia visiting. So, there has been in recent times a regular exchange of visits between Liberia and India.

Those of you who are following peacekeeping affairs are perhaps aware that in a sort of a seminal effort in 2007 we had sent a fully formed all-women peacekeeping police unit to Liberia. This was a trailblazer in terms of UN peacekeeping and has been welcomed by all concerned. Currently we have two fully formed police units – one is the all-women police unit which is of 104 women police officials, along with 21 male supporting staff.

In addition, we also have another fully formed all-male police peacekeeping unit in Liberia. Both these are part of what is called the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The second Indian unit is outside Monrovia. The first one is located in Monrovia.

As regards bilateral trade between Liberia and India, I understand that it has touched last year approximately 150 million dollars with the balance of trade being in favour of India. Our main exports are pharmaceutical products and engineering products.

As part of our development assistance to Liberia we provide approximately 40 ITEC slots and nine ICCR research scholarships. Under the India-Africa Summit process we are working with Liberia to set up an IT training centre and also a vocational training centre for women solar engineers.

Finally, Indian companies are eyeing investment opportunities in Liberia's mining sector. During the visit of the President we hope to have several agreements signed also including on oil and natural gas apart from institutional agreements between various organizations on the Liberian and the Indian side. That is about what I have Liberia.



416. Prime Minister's media statement during the State Visit of President of Liberia to India.

New Delhi, September 11, 2013.

Your Excellency, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf,
Ladies and Gentlemen of the media.

It is a great honour to welcome President Sirleaf on her first state visit to India. Her voice is heard with great respect in Africa and throughout the world. Her vision and leadership has contributed to Liberia's political transformation, economic resurgence and progress towards peace and stability in the region. We are honoured that she has accepted the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2012, which will be conferred on her tomorrow by the President.

India and Liberia enjoy warm and friendly relations. Our official exchanges, trade and investment linkages and people-to-people interactions are growing steadily. President Sirleaf and I reviewed our relations and pledged to work together to realize the full potential of our partnership.

We have decided to enhance our cooperation in a number of areas, including agricultural research, health, small and medium enterprises, science & technology, education and skill development. A new Joint Commission will guide and review progress in our bilateral cooperation. The Memorandum of Understanding signed today for cooperation in the oil and gas sector will enable our countries to undertake structured cooperation in this area, where India's experience can be of some relevance to Liberia.

There is great potential to further strengthen bilateral trade and investment relations. Indian investments in Liberia, especially in the mining sector, are growing. I requested President Sirleaf to facilitate Indian investment in agriculture, infrastructure, hydrocarbon, mining and manufacturing in line with Liberia's national development goals and policies.

In recent years, India has participated in Liberia's development effort through human resource and capacity building support. I conveyed to President Sirleaf our decision to extend a line of credit of 144 million US

dollars to fund a power transmission and distribution project in Liberia. We will also enhance scholarships and training slots under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme for Liberia. India will be setting up an IT Centre, a Vocational Training Centre, a Farm Science Centre and a Training Centre for Women in the field of solar energy in Liberia.

We also exchanged views on the India-Africa Forum Summit in pursuit of our shared objective to build a robust and contemporary India-Africa partnership.

Our two countries have agreed to work together for the promotion of international peace and stability, particularly on the African continent, and to make common cause to ensure that global governance is just and meets the aspirations of the developing world. We also exchanged views on regional and global issues, including the urgent need for reform of the United Nations Security Council. India deeply appreciates Liberia's support for its candidature as a permanent member of a reformed and expanded Security Council.

President Sirleaf's visit has imparted fresh impetus to our joint efforts to strengthen our bilateral relations. Our talks today have laid a strong foundation for closer political understanding and deepening of our economic exchanges in the coming years.

Thank you



417. Joint Statement issued on the Visit of President of Liberia to India.

New Delhi, September 11, 2013.

1. Her Excellency Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, paid a State Visit to India from 11-13 August 2013. The President was accompanied by a high level Ministerial and official delegation. The Ministerial delegation included Honorable Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Honorable Dr. Florence Chenoweth, Minister of Agriculture;

Honourable Axel Addy, Minister of Commerce & Industry; Honorable Patrick Sendolo, Minister of Lands, Mines & Energy; Honorable Julia Duncan Cassell, Minister of Gender & Development.

2. The President of Liberia was accorded a ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhawan in the capital New Delhi on 11 August 2013. The President laid a wreath at the memorial of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat and paid homage to the Father of the Nation. During the visit, President Sirleaf met with the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, who hosted a banquet in her honor. She held talks with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The President of Liberia also received Speaker, Lok Sabha and the External Affairs Minister.
3. President Sirleaf met leaders of Indian business and industry in New Delhi and extended invitation to them to participate and invest in Liberia's private sector development. She noted that the Indian Community in Liberia was the second largest expatriate community in the country and that a number of Indian businesses have found a springboard in Liberia from which they have spread throughout the West Africa Sub-region and elsewhere.
4. The President of Liberia and the Prime Minister of India held delegation level discussions on bilateral, regional and international issues. These discussions were held in a warm, cordial and friendly atmosphere. They welcomed the development of friendship and cooperation between India and Liberia.
5. Both sides noted that there still remained considerable potential for cooperation and agreed to enhance the partnership between the two countries in all areas of mutual interest.
6. The two leaders agreed to further deepen the partnership by adding more concrete programmes and projects and broadening it to new areas of cooperation. Both sides agreed to continue strengthening cooperation in the areas of economy, trade and investment, finance, human development, agriculture, etc., while striving to expand cooperation in other potential areas such as

mining, hydrocarbons, food processing, ICT, science and technology, medium and small scale industries and public health. Both sides agreed to find ways and means of further expanding bilateral trade. President Sirleaf affirmed that Liberia would create favourable conditions for Indian enterprises to invest in the country.

7. President Sirleaf highly appreciated the support and assistance of the Government and people of India rendered to Liberia's development process over the past years and warmly welcomed the announcement by the Prime Minister of India to continue to assist in its socio-economic development.
8. The Liberian side welcomed Government of India's consideration of its requests for enhanced slots for education, training and capacity building of the Liberian people as well as for the Government of India's Line of Credit for a power transmission project. Both sides agreed on the need to expedite implementation of projects which have been offered to Liberia as part of the decisions of the India-Africa Forum Summits of 2008 and 2011.
9. President Sirleaf took special note of India's active participation in the United Nations sponsored peace mission in Liberia and appreciated the role India continues to play in promoting peace and security in the continent.
10. The leaders affirmed their desire and determination to work together for peace and stability in the region and the world and agreed to further strengthen cooperation at regional and international fora.
11. Both sides stressed the need to speed up the reform of the United Nations and the expansion of the Security Council in both its permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. Liberia reaffirmed its support for India for a permanent seat on an expanded Security Council. The Indian side thanked Liberia for this support and conveyed that it respects Liberia's commitment to the Common African Position regarding the reform of the Security Council.

12. The two sides strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and resolved to increase cooperation in the common efforts of the international community in combating this scourge in a comprehensive manner.
13. The following agreements were signed during the visit:
 - a) Agreement on Establishment of Joint Commission between India and Liberia
 - b) MoU between Foreign Service Institutes of India and Liberia
 - c) MoU on cooperation in the field of Oil and Gas between India and Liberia
 - d) Agreement between Exim Bank and Government of Liberia for a Line of Credit of US\$ 144 million for funding a power transmission and distribution project in Liberia
14. Both sides agreed that the State visit of the President of Liberia will provide fresh impetus for the future development of a comprehensive partnership.15. The President of Liberia expressed her gratitude to the Government of India for the warm reception and hospitality extended to her and the members of her delegation during the visit. She invited the President and the Prime Minister of India to pay State visits to Liberia. The invitations were accepted and it was agreed that the dates of the visits would be finalized through diplomatic channels.



**418. List of Documents signed during the State Visit of
President of Liberia to India, September 9-13, 2013
September 11, 2013**

S.No	Name of Agreement/MoU	Signatory from Indian side	Signatory from Liberian Side	Remarks
1.	Agreement between India and Liberia on Establishment of Joint Commission	Mr. Salman Khurshid Minister of External Affairs	Mr. Augustine Kpehe Nagafuan, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Institutionalizes cooperation between the two countries in political, security, social, human resource development, economic, cultural, scientific, judicial and technical areas
2.	MoU between Foreign Service Institutes of India and Liberia	Ms. Nengcha Lhouvum Dean, FSI, Government of India	Dr. Augustine Konneh Director General, FSI, Government of Liberia	Aims to promote academic exchanges of students, faculty & experts and sharing of information related structure and content of training programmes for diplomats between the two Foreign Service Institutes
3.	MoU between India and Liberia on cooperation in the field of Oil and Gas	Ms. Panabaaka Lakshmi Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas	Mr. Patrick Sendolo, Minister of Lands, Mines and Energy	MoU aims to establish a cooperative institutional framework to facilitate and to enhance bilateral cooperation in the oil and gas sector, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit
4.	Agreement between Exim Bank and Government of Liberia for extending a line of credit of US\$ 144 million for funding a power transmission and distribution project in Liberia	Mr. T.C.A. Ranganathan Chairman and MD, Exim Bank	Mr. Augustine Kpehe Nagafuan, Minister of Foreign Affairs	The US\$ 144 million EXIM Bank LoC at an annual interest rate of 1.75% also covers for the preparation of Detailed Project Report for the setting up of a power transmission and distribution project in Liberia

New Delhi

September 11, 2013



LIBYA**419. Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the Visit of Minister of State E. Ahamed to Libya.****New Delhi, 15 April, 2013.**

1. H. E. Shri E. Ahamed, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs of India, paid an official visit to Libya from April 14-16, 2013, at the invitation of Foreign Minister of Libya. The visit has taken place in the backdrop of new democratic Libya and was the first high level visit after the visit of External Affairs Minister to Libya in 2007. India, being the largest democracy, greatly appreciates the onset of democracy in Libya and looks forward to further enrich it through cooperation in vital sectors that are essential for New Libya's stability, reconstruction, development and institution and capacity building.
2. The Hon'ble Minister has made calls on H. E. Dr. Mohammad Yousef Al-Magarief, President of the General National Congress, and H. E. Dr. Ali Zeidan, Prime Minister, on 15 April, 2013. Both the leaders have welcomed return of Indian companies and Indians to Libya to partake in the reconstruction and development of new Libya.
3. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the excellent bilateral relations as well as cooperation in the field of health, education, IT, pharmaceuticals, sectors. The President thanked India's offer for providing assistance and expertise in drafting of Libyan Constitution and expressed desire to be benefited from India's experience. They also assured of looking into the financial losses suffered by the Indian companies.



KENYA**420. Letter of Prime Minister to President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, conveying condolences on the death of some people in a terror attack on a Mall in Nairobi.****New Delhi, September 22, 2013.**

Excellency,

I was deeply shocked and saddened by the brutal terror attack yesterday on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi. This incident is a stark reminder that the persisting menace of terrorism remains a formidable challenge that calls for a concerted and sustained response from the global community. India condemns in the strongest terms this heinous and senseless assault, which has snuffed out so many innocent lives, including nationals of both our countries .

We stand in solidarity with you and the Government and the people of Kenya in this hour of grief. Please convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and our good wishes to the injured for a full and speedy recovery. I am confident that Your Excellency and the people of Kenya will have the strength and resilience to deal with this tragedy and respond firmly to the forces of terror. We stand ready to assist you in your efforts.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.”



* A day ealier the official spokesperson of the MEA in an immediate reaction said: “Reports are coming in of a terror attack and taking of hostages at a shopping mall in Nairobi. The official figures of injuries and deaths are not yet available. Our High Commission is closely monitoring the evolving situation, have been visiting hospitals and is in close touch with the Kenyan Government and leaders of the Indian community. All members of the High Commission are reported to be safe.

According to media reports 68 persons two of whom were Indians, were killed in the unfortunate incident. The dead Indians have been identified as 40-year-old Sridhar Natarajan, employee of a local pharmaceutical firm and Master Paramshu Jain, son of a Branch Manager of Bank of Baroda (Kenya Limited).

MAURITIUS

421. Speech by President Pranab Mukherjee at the ceremony conferring Honorary Degree of Doctor of Civil Law by the University of Mauritius.

Port Louis, March 10, 2013.

Hon. Rajkeswur Purryag, President of the Republic of Mauritius,

Hon. Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius,

Sir Ramesh Jeewoolall, Chancellor of the University of Mauritius,

Distinguished guests and dear students,

1. I am delighted to be here among you. I have been in your country for nearly two days now. I have been mesmerised by the natural beauty of this island which is rivalled only by the warmth and friendliness of its people. I have been touched by the gracious hospitality accorded to me. I am, above all, struck by the profound awareness that this island's success is vested, in large part, in the education of its citizens. Mahatma Gandhi's brief stopover in 1901 had set the stage for a peaceful revolution in the area of education in Mauritius. Nurtured by the efforts of Barrister Manilall Doctor and other stalwarts, the seeds of social transformation continued to grow after Independence, thanks to the visionary leadership of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, who was deeply aware of the power of education. He had said and I quote "In the modern world, education has a vital role to play in the life of a nation, particularly in developing countries, where people are becoming more and more conscious of their duties and responsibilities in shaping the future of their countries" - words which ring true even today. Investment in education continues to reap rich dividends for Mauritius and has been one of the reasons for the praiseworthy level of development that we see in Mauritius today.
2. Excellency, Sir Ramesh Jeewoolall, Chancellor of the University of Mauritius, it is indeed a privilege to receive the Honorary Degree

of Doctor of Civil Law from your esteemed University. I thank you for this high honour. This University has a rich tradition of providing quality education that responds responding to the contemporary needs of Mauritian society. I wish all its distinguished faculty members, scholars and students every success in their academic pursuits. May you achieve, with distinction, your motto of “bridging knowledge across continents through excellence and intellectual creativity”.

3. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen , I am especially happy to be here as Chief Guest for the 45th Anniversary of the Independence Day of Mauritius. On this occasion, I extend to all Mauritians the good wishes of the Government and the people of India. While enjoying last evening’s colourful and dignified ceremony at the Anjalay stadium, I could not help marvelling at the long way that Mauritius has come - since its independence in 1968. Every Mauritian, regardless of his ethnic or religious background should be proud of the remarkable achievements of this country. Not only has Mauritius triumphed in the realisation of its democratic and secular ideals, but it has also registered a commendable rate of economic growth, and established for its citizens the strong institutions that make Mauritius a well integrated and progressive people. Today Mauritius figures high in economic and social development indicators in Africa and has become a role model to many countries because of its economic success story.
4. During my visit to your country, I have had the opportunity to review the entire canvas of our bilateral co-operation with President Purryag, Prime Minister Ramgoolam and other distinguished leaders . All of us place great value on the unique bilateral relationship between India and Mauritius and agree that the friendship and trust between our governments and our people is based on enduring ties of kinship and brotherhood , our common history and culture and our shared vision for the future . In recent years, we have been able to leverage these linkages to evolve a modern, dynamic and mutually beneficial partnership, guided by close and frequent high-level political interaction - and

strengthened by robust people-to-people contacts. The abiding strength of our bilateral partnership is amply reflected in close and strong engagement at various levels.

5. I am happy to note that several agreements have been signed during my visit in key sectors of our respective economies including tourism, health and medicine, co-operation in the addressing the issues related to senior citizens and disabilities. These agreements reflect the diversity of our engagement and will definitely benefit the people of both countries.

6. Ladies and Gentlemen, India has the third largest higher education system in the world with hundreds of universities, thousands of tertiary education institutions and millions of students studying in colleges and universities. We have a highly developed curriculum, globally reputed for its high quality - particularly in engineering, medicine, management, material science and technology, nano-science, remote sensing, environmental studies, renewable energy and space science to name a few. With over 600 million Indians below the age of 25, we have prioritised the education and training of our youth over the next two decades to carry forward our development agenda. Needless to say, India is committing huge resources to towards this end.

7. Distinguished Ladies and gentlemen, cooperation in the field of education has always been an important dimension of our bilateral relations. Nearly 100 scholarships are offered annually to Mauritian students to pursue under-graduate, post-graduate and research studies in various streams in India. This is in addition to 290 slots for short term courses under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. In recent years, we have seen an upswing in the number of Mauritian students availing of these scholarships. Many Mauritian students also enrol themselves in Indian universities on a self-financing basis. We welcome them in India. As the next generation, young people should have a say in determining our responses to the variety of challenges that our developing nations face today. I recall the words of Gandhiji who said, about living and learning, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." I hope these words inspire you too.

I once again thank the University of Mauritius once for receiving me and I wish you all great success in the future.



422. Media Briefing by Secretary (West) in Mauritius on President's Ongoing Visit.

March 12, 2013.

Secretary (West) (Shri Sudhir Vyas): Good evening. Sorry for this delay. We were there at the function celebrating the 45th anniversary of the Independence of Mauritius and that went on a little beyond schedule. Let me just very briefly run you through the President's programme and his activities here. Most of this you know already.

The President is here at the invitation of Prime Minister His Excellency Mr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam as Chief Guest at the Independence Day Celebrations of Mauritius this year. This is a relationship that stands on extremely firm foundations; very firm foundations based on historical close ties; based on shared values of democracy, of rule of law, of secularism; values which in fact predate the Independence of Mauritius. They have looked to the Indian model in designing their own Constitution. They have looked to India in establishing the manner in which they handled these kinds of issues. In fact it was mentioned during the discussions that Indian democracy has been an inspiring force for Mauritius. So the foundation for this relationship is very very strong, and it can only move forward.

The President yesterday - after his arrival, after the ceremonial reception which you all witnessed at the airport - had a meeting with the President of the Republic of Mauritius, His Excellency Mr. Rajkeswur Purryag, followed by a banquet hosted by the Prime Minister of Mauritius at the Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre. This morning there were two ceremonial functions of great significance - a wreath-laying ceremony at the Samadhi of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam at Pamplemousses, located within the precincts of the Botanical Garden; and the visit to Apravasi Ghat, which was the landing place for much of the indentured labour 200 years ago.

Thereafter, there was a call by Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, at Clarisse House; calls, discussions followed by delegation-level talks between the two sides; and the signing of three Memoranda of Understanding on tourism, on the health and medicine, and on senior citizens and disabilities. This in fact indicates also the broad canvas, the scope of the kind of interaction that we had. This afternoon, there were calls on the President by the Chief Justice of the Republic of Mauritius, Hon. Yeung Kam John Yeung Sik Yuen, followed by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Mauritius, His Excellency Mr. Abdool Razack Peeroo, and a call by the Leader of Opposition in the Mauritius Parliament, His Excellency Mr. Alan Ganu. Celebrations followed thereafter.

Hon. President starts off his tomorrow's programme with the conferment of the degree of the Doctor of Civil Law *honoris causa* on the President at the University of Mauritius. The President will be making an address following the conferment of the degree. That would be followed by a visit to the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, floral offerings at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi, and presentation of books.

Then he is briefly at Ganga Talao, a highly sacred spot in the southwestern islands of Mauritius, which assumes particular significance since Shivaratri was celebrated just two days ago; followed by a civic reception which will be held at Grand Boa, which lies between this particular location and the airport. He would be received there by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius Hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam and Mrs. Ramgoolam. He will be speaking and addressing the gathering at the civic reception. Perhaps about 2500 people or so are expected to be present at that event.

As you of course know, the President is accompanied by the Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri R.P.N. Singh, and three Members of Parliament – Shri Satyavrata Chaturvedi of the Congress, Shrimati Kusum Rai of the BJP, and Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh of the RJD.

Hon. President had the opportunity during his visit to meet practically every member of the Mauritius Cabinet of some capacity or the other. This is in addition to the calls that I have mentioned. The meetings with the President of the Mauritius and the Prime Minister of Mauritius were

marked by a complete understanding of views. The warmth, the understanding was evident to any participant in the talks. They were also very very noticeable, came through very brilliantly during the speeches by both leaders at the event at Vivekananda Hall yesterday evening. If you have heard them, you would have really seen the depth, the richness and the understanding that characterizes this particular relationship.

The talks of course covered the entire gamut of issues, broad terms between India and Mauritius which are of course marked by political understanding on many multilateral issues, on support for each others' positions, candidatures, Mauritius at the highest levels has reiterated its strong support for India's candidature for a permanent seat on an expanded UN Security Council. President also reiterated India's support for Mauritius' position on the Chagos Islands and so on and so forth. They also touched on economic issues, economic cooperation. As you know, during the Prime Minister's visit to New Delhi in February 2012, our Prime Minister made an offer of an economic package comprising US\$ 250 million line of credit and a US\$ 20 million grant. Possibilities of utilizing this line of credit for the development and welfare of the Mauritius people were discussed. In general, if I were to put it very briefly, there was complete understanding on both sides on each of the two countries' aspirations and positions.

Of course I have mentioned that the chemistry between the leaders was excellent. President has assured Mauritius of whatever support it requires in taking its plans forward for the development and welfare and wellbeing of its people. Both the President and the Prime Minister of Mauritius have thanked President for all the assistance that India has offered. The assistance and support also in capacity building, also in education, which forms a particularly large component of our cooperation. The President has extended an invitation to Prime Minister Mr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam to visit India which has been kindly accepted.

Is there anything which you would you like to add?

High Commissioner to Mauritius (Shri T.P. Seetharam): I would just point out a few things so that you appreciate this very special relationship. At the airport yesterday when the President arrived, the entire Cabinet

of Mauritius was present. The Cabinet has 25 members including the Prime Minister; every one of them was present along with of course the Speaker, the Chief Justice, and the who's who of Mauritius. I doubt if this happens in many countries where our dignitaries visit.

They also have this arrangement of Minister-in-Waiting - which normally happens everywhere, a Minister is attached to the VVIP - where for each segment of the travel of the President you have a different Minister traveling with him in the car. So, every time he travels, he has a different Minister from Mauritius sitting with him providing an opportunity to interact. In addition, at each venue he reached there were several Ministers connected with that venue in some way or the other being present. For instance, at the Botanical Garden you had the Minister for Agriculture who is in charge of the Botanical Garden, in addition to several other Ministers who were probably in Constituencies, the Garden is located in his Constituency or some other manner. The same way when he went to Apravasi Ghat, the Minister for Arts and Culture was there who looks after Apravasi Ghat. So this is the way they provided opportunities for the entire Cabinet to interact with the President in a meaningful manner. The reason is that our relationship covers almost all political, economic, social aspects of the two countries, which is reflected also to an extent in the programme that we have.

For instance, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, where we will go tomorrow, started in 1970s at the time of Indira Gandhi and Seewoosagar Ramgoolam. It is now a university like institution that teaches various Indian languages, Indian performing arts. We have an ICCR Professor for Sanskrit there at the MGI. In the education field that was a beginning, but today there is an Indian engineering college here - the JSS Academy; there are three medical institutions - the SSR Medical College, the D.Y. Patil Post Graduate Medical College, Anna medical college; there is a dental college. There are MBA courses. Amity has a presence here, a small campus.

In the field of health, you have Apollo Hospital here, you have the Fortis Hospital here, you have Agarwal Eye Hospital here. This will give you an idea that in every sphere of activity we have an engagement here.

They do not have an army or air force or navy, but they have a police

force with a coast guard element. There again we are actively present. Indian naval officers are here assisting them in training their police, running the coast guard. And we offer scholarships, a hundred scholarships under ICCR for graduation and postgraduate studies; nearly three hundred scholarships under the ITEC scheme for short-term attachment, about two hundred of them in civil side and a hundred of them for their police force. That is just to give you an idea of the complexity of the relationship, the intimate nature of the relationship, and as you have noticed in your interactions here the genuine warmth that there is for India.

Mauritians would have already told you that they are Little India, that you are Mother India. They talk about umbilical cord that links them to India. And all this is very genuinely felt, seen and expressed in our interactions. And all that warmth I think is reflected on this occasion of the visit of the President of India on their 45th Anniversary.

Press Secretary to President (Shri Venu Rajamony): I think the Secretary and the High Commissioner have virtually covered all the ground that needed to be covered. I will just summarise it in a few points which occurred to me.

First, the President was received with the highest degree of respect. Almost all the interlocutors, all the people who met him had interacted with him in the past in various capacities. They were aware of his experience in handling different portfolios as Cabinet Minister, his public life of over five decades in the Parliament. All of this knowledge resulted in him being received with the highest degree of respect. The Prime Minister himself described him as a heavy weight who knows virtually every subject which concerns India-Mauritius relations, and that was the attitude with which the Mauritian leadership received him.

The President in turn to the Mauritian leadership repeatedly expressed the view that he was overwhelmed by the hospitality he has received, by the warmth he has received, by the friendship he has received. So, what the High Commissioner just now mentioned is a strong message that our President is going to take back to India with him, and that will help invigorate the relationship even further.

The third point is that in all the interactions what came out is, while we have a truly unique relationship, there is great potential still to be discovered; and both sides need to work together to take this relationship to even greater heights.

The fourth point is that the acting Leader of Opposition called on the President and he emphasized the fact that the Opposition fully stands by India-Mauritius relations; they would like to see a strong relationship. He described India as Mother India and he said, "On behalf of my party I salute India and you have done a great honour by coming here." The President in turn also pointed out that as far as India-Mauritius relations is concerned there is no difference between any political party in India, and he has come with a Parliamentary Delegation which comprises a representative from the BJP, a representative from the Rashtriya Janata Dal, and a representative from the Congress, not to mention the Minister who was accompanying him. Lastly, I will just reiterate a point which the High Commissioner had made yesterday in an informal interaction with some of you, which is that this is the second visit of the President abroad. This is his first visit to Africa and it comes close on the heels of Bangladesh. When we talk about neighbourhood we tend to think only in terms of it being a geographical expression, but it is not a geographical expression it is an intellectual construct, it is an emotional construct, it is a cultural construct. And there would probably be no nation closer to us than Mauritius irrespective of the fact that it takes us seven hours to fly and come here. The distance really disappears in the front of the emotional, cultural and people-to-people ties that bind our nations together, not to mention the economic relations, the political relations and the security of nations.

Q: Do the MoUs signed in the morning really reflect the relationship that we foresee in the coming years? They are mostly on the social sector, like handicapped persons' rights and stuff like that. The issues which we talked about, even the Prime Minister talked about, like the scientific, naval, and hydrographic things, when will we work on them?

Secretary (West): This is a very small segment of the very very diverse area of cooperation between India and Mauritius. You mentioned for example the hydrographic surveys. Indian experts have just completed

a hydrographic survey of the larger Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) around Mauritius and the Seychelles. The High Commissioner referred to the training programmes for the coastguards. So, these three MoUs represent only a very very small segment. Something that was ready has been signed in the presence of the President and His Excellency the Prime Minister of Mauritius. They certainly do not represent the totality of the relationship which goes far far beyond. There are many other understandings also now under discussion. High Commissioner to Mauritius: We already have about 58 agreements with Mauritius. When the Prime Minister of Mauritius was in India last year, we signed five. The problem is to find new areas for signing agreements. We have so many. In fact we will be very happy to give you a whole list of agreements that we already have. For instance, the hydrographic agreement is working wonderfully and they are very happy with the kind of work being done. So that is the point. We already have so many agreements and we will be having some more. The relationship really covers almost every sector.

Secretary (West): In fact almost any area of interaction that you can think of, you will find something that is going on. An MoU on law and justice issues is under consideration. And you have a Law Institute here, for which they have hired an Indian to set it up, to put it in place, develop its structure and take it forward. So you will find in almost any area that you can put your finger on, some activity or the other would be in progress.

Press Secretary to President: I was just trying to repeat what Secretary said in Delhi that a comprehensive architecture already exists and these are just a few new elements which are being added to that architecture.

Q: After the morning talks, one-to-one meeting and the delegation, the Prime Minister of Mauritius said that on the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention we have already found common ground and it will be soon behind us. That is what he said. Has there been a detailed discussion on this convention at this meeting?

Secretary (West): If you are talking about a detailed discussion, this is not a subject on which the President would be speaking with the Mauritius leadership. They reviewed what has been done. There have been two meetings of the JWG that have taken place in December 2011 and August

2012. There has been progress in certain areas. There are issues pertaining essentially, as we all know, to the misuse of the treaty by certain elements; and both sides have clearly expressed their commitment to put an end to such misuse, and in a manner that is mutually beneficial to both sides, that is a win-win situation for both sides. These discussions are continuing. The next meeting of the JWG is going to be held shortly in the first week of April.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Secretary (West): I think let us not try to look at the stars and foretell what will happen. But the intent is clearly in that direction, to try and resolve as much as possible. Sometimes it will have to be a step-by-step procedure. Everything cannot be achieved at one time as you very well know.

Q: You mentioned about tourism. MoUs have been signed today. Last time in the informal conversations, you said we have air charter agreements. But we do not seem to be getting ...(Inaudible)... of all. Considering that China has activated its ...(Inaudible)... How do you see that on the one hand we are talking of promotion of tourism but the implementation in ...(Inaudible)...

High Commissioner to Mauritius: About fifty thousand tourists come to Mauritius from India - mostly honeymoon couples, this is one of the favourite hotels for honeymoon couples from India - and this is growing. This is also a venue for destination weddings. The hall that you are sitting in has witnessed numerous Bollywood style Indian weddings with people coming in chartered aircraft, guests being brought from India in several aircraft. So these are two segments which are growing, bringing in more and more people from India. Right now there is only Air Mauritius flying to India. They have the right to fly 16 flights a week to India. Right now they are operating only six; they are expanding it to seven. They fly to Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore. Chennai is a hopping flight. But they can increase the number of flights. Of course Air India or any other airline from India can fly here. They have rights. They have not exercised their ...(Inaudible)... you know the reasons, you know their situation now. But they will be very happy to have more flights and connections. They wish to become a hub which is very well connected to Asia, Africa and

Europe. The connectivity is very important and if our airlines can start trying, I am sure there would be sufficient business and more happening. In terms of travel to India, it is about twenty thousand odd people going from Mauritius. But I think this number can dramatically increase, not only with business travelers or just tourism, but also people wish to explore their roots in India. And if we provide a little support and some facilities at the other end, this business of diaspora going back to visit places where their ancestors come from can be a great business opportunity for the travel and tourism. Similarly pilgrimage tourism, a lot of people travel to different parts of India for pilgrimage purposes. They go to Haridwar, Rishikesh and South Indian temples and so on. These are things which we have not really developed at the other end and provide facilities. If our State Governments could also get into the act - most of these people of Indian origin in Mauritius come from Bihar, UP, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra - if the Tourism Departments of those States could be a little more proactive, they could attract a large number of people.

Mauritians are doing very well. Their per capita income is about four to five times that of Indians. They are traveling a lot. They would love to go to India. We need to reassure them that it is a safe place to go to and you do not fall sick by drinking water and so on. This is also a usual concern. Do not take Mauritius as an under-developed African country whose people can stay anywhere. There is a perception problem which we have to resolve also in terms of being a safe and comfortable destination for them to travel. So we need to do much more.

I have been trying to encourage our Tourism people to come and do road shows and so on. The problem with many of the things that we try to do with Mauritius is people of India look at the size of the population and hold themselves back, thinking is it worth our time and effort to woo this place which has only a population of 1.2 million, which is smaller than some housing colonies in Gurgaon. So this is a mental block that we have to get our tourism people and others to overcome. I think a lot can be done in the tourism sector.

Secretary (West): To that I would just add that the tourism MoU that has been signed also provides for cooperation in bringing tour operators

together in regional tourism, in the hospitality industry, capacity building in the hospitality industry, and so on. But I am tempted to taking the floor to comment on one additional point that you made when you mentioned 'an African country'. Mauritius is very much part of the African Union. As you know, India has an extensive, and that is the only word that one can use, and diversified programme of cooperation with Africa under the India-Africa Forum Summit process. Two Summits have been held, last in 2011 in Addis Ababa and the next one will be due next year in India. Mauritius is very much part of this. If you want examples of the manner in which it is part of this, you do not have to look very far. I do not know whether you accompanied the Presidential carcade to the Pamplemousses where the Samadhi of Seewoosagur Ramgoolam. On the way you would have passed the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospital. This hospital has been linked with several top Indian specialty hospitals for consultation, for tele-medicine under the India-Africa E-Network programme which goes across the African continent. It is just one example of the kind of engagement that we have.

The other aspect which was also repeatedly highlighted during the discussions by the President's Mauritius interlocutors was that Mauritius has a network of agreements, free trade agreements, with African countries, African Regional Economic Communities - it is a member of OMESA, it is a member of SADC, a member of the Indian Ocean Commission - and that the India's interaction with Africa can take advantage of this web of relationships that exists. So, in creative ways to use Mauritius as a bridge between South Asia and Africa, it is perfectly ready and willing to try and develop a paradigm and position itself to this objective. As you know, we have got enormous programmes and interests in Africa, in capacity building and almost in areas I do not think I need to get into that. I will leave it at that.

Secretary (West): Both India and Mauritius are also cooperating very closely under the auspices of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation. The present Secretary General of IOR-ARC is an Indian. It has been our attempt during our Chairmanship - we owned the chairmanship since the last year, November Bengaluru summit and November 2011 we would be handing over to Australia. - we have put in our best efforts to try and take this Association forward as an apex body

for the Indian Ocean, and we are moving that direction. I think in the month of July, a major business meet of the Indian Ocean Rim countries will be hosted in Mauritius which promises to be this expanding network that I talked about across the Indian Ocean. It is the future and this is a step in that direction.

Press Secretary to President: At this late stage of the evening, we will not tax our media friends too much and I think there is a party waiting to be held.

Thank you very much.

(Concluded)



423. Documents signed during the State Visit of President to Mauritius.

March 12, 2013.

S.No	MoUs to be signed	Indian signatory	Mauritian Signatory	Remarks
1.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL SECURITY, NATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND REFORM INSTITUTIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS IN THE FIELD OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND SENIOR CITIZENS	Shri R.P. N. Singh, Minister of State for Home Affairs	Mr. Arvin Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade	For collaboration in the following areas: i. Empowerment of persons with disabilities and senior citizens; ii. Exchange of resource persons in the identified fields; iii. Strengthening capacity-building of personnel and NGOs in the identified fields; iv. Exchange programmes for the benefit of senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and NGO leaders/volunteers in these fields; v. Conducting joint research and exchange of research outcomes.
2.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA and THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH AND MEDICINE	Shri R.P. N. Singh, Minister of State for Home Affairs	Mr. Arvin Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade	For collaboration, amongst others, in the following areas of cooperation, which include: i. Medical Research ii. Health Service Planning iii. Lab and Diagnostics iv. Drugs and Pharmaceutical products: v. Traditional Medicine

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|----|--|---|---|---|
| 3. | MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM | Shri R.P.N. Singh,
Minister of State
for Home Affairs | Mr. Arvin
Boolell,
Minister of
Foreign
Affairs and
Trade | vi. Health Tourism
vii. Telemedicine

Endeavor to enhance cooperation in following areas
i. Expansion of bilateral cooperation in tourism sector
ii. Exchange of information and data related to tourism
iii. Encouraging cooperation between tourism stakeholders including Hotels and Tour Operators
iv. Investment in the Tourism and Hospitality sectors
v. Exchanging visits of Tour Operators/Media/Opinion Makers for promotion of two way
vi. Promoting safe, honourable and sustainable tourism |
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Port Louis

March 12, 2013



424. Press Statement by President Pranab Mukherjee after the meeting with the Prime Minister of Mauritius.

Port Louis, March 12, 2013.

Excellency Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, the Prime Minister of Mauritius

Friends from the Indian and Mauritian media

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a unique honour and privilege for me to pay a State Visit to Mauritius and be the Chief Guest at the 45th anniversary of the Independence of Mauritius.

On this momentous and happy occasion, I bring with me the warmest wishes and greetings from the Government and the people of India, to the Government and the people of Mauritius.

I thank Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam and the Government and the people of Mauritius for the exceptionally warm and gracious welcome accorded to me and my delegation.

India and Mauritius share deep-rooted ties of history, culture, kinship, traditions and common values. We are united by the democratic foundations and the secular traditions of our societies. There is also a wide convergence of interests on many regional and global issues of mutual interest. These aspects lend our bilateral relations a special and extraordinary character.

We have, in recent years, forged a dynamic, modern and mutually beneficial partnership. Mauritius is the second country I am visiting after assuming the post of President of India. This reflects the importance that India attaches to its relationship with Mauritius.

Close, high-level and regular political interaction has been a hallmark of our bilateral relations. Our present-day partnership has also benefitted from growing framework of more than 30 inter-governmental agreements in wide-ranging areas of mutual benefit, as well as from the vitality of our people-to-people contacts.

My visit to Mauritius reaffirms our shared commitment to take our relations to even greater heights.

I met President Rajkeswur Purryag yesterday. My discussions with His Excellency Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam were cordial and covered the entire length and breadth of our multi-dimensional engagement. We discussed bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. I am confident that the meetings and discussions during my visit here will further strengthen our partnership.

While expressing satisfaction over the current state of our relations, Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam and I agreed that there was untapped potential, particularly in the areas of trade and economic cooperation. The bilateral Line of Credit between the two sides must be used as a vehicle to upgrade our economic and commercial exchanges,

including the possible financing of projects that will improve the quality of life of Mauritian citizens. We also discussed potential areas for cooperation such as exploration of marine resources, renewable energy and environment friendly technologies.

The Prime Minister and I have agreed to further enhance exchanges in the fields of Health, Higher Education, Information Technology, Science & Technology, Tourism, Textiles, Agro-Processing, Culture and Legal Cooperation. I am very happy to note that MoUs in Health and Medicine, Tourism and Cooperation as well as in the field of Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities have been signed today. I am positive that these agreements will further enhance the quality of our partnership and be of benefit to the people of India and Mauritius.

I am pleased to note that the Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) has met twice in the last one year. They have provided an opportunity for both sides to discuss all issues with the aim of finding a mutually acceptable and beneficial outcome. India looks forward to holding the next meeting of the JWG soon in New Delhi. We also look forward to the holding of the 11th India-Mauritius Joint Commission Meeting.

India will continue to extend assistance to Mauritius in the field of human resource development and capacity building. We have already increased the training slots for Mauritius under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme to 170 for civilian programmes and 100 for defence-related programmes. These slots can be increased to meet further demands. It is heartening to note the rise in the number of Mauritian students availing of the 100 educational scholarships offered by the Government of India annually.

I thank the Government of the Republic of Mauritius for its valuable support on global issues of vital importance to India. Mauritius has been steadfast in its condemnation of international terrorism. India is also grateful to Mauritius for consistently supporting our rightful claim for permanent membership in an expanded United Nations Security Council. I am also grateful to Mauritius for extending whole-hearted support to the process of revitalising the Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC).

Piracy in the Indian Ocean region adversely impacts us all. We are committed to the safety and security of Mauritius and will continue to work towards enhancing our cooperation in the security arena. Indian Naval ships will continue to undertake joint anti-piracy and EEZ surveillance exercises with their Mauritian counterparts to ensure maritime security in these waters. We are ready to assist the Government and the people of Mauritius, on security-related issues, in accordance with the requirements and priorities of the Government of Mauritius.

My discussions today with Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, have established a firm roadmap for the consolidation and enhancement of our mutually beneficial bilateral relations. Ours is a strategic partnership which has the well-being of our peoples at its core. I have invited Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam to visit India on mutually convenient dates, which could be decided through diplomatic channels.

Thank You



425. President's interview to *Le Matinal*.

March 12, 2013.

(English translation of Hon'ble President's interview to Le Matinal on India-Mauritius Relations published on March 11, 2013)

1. Excellency, how would you assess Indo-Mauritian relations as they stand today?

At the outset, let me convey my warmest greetings and good wishes to the Government and the people of Mauritius on the historic occasion of the 45th Anniversary of Independence. I consider it a great honour and privilege to be invited as the Chief Guest for the celebrations. This gesture of the Government of Mauritius reflects the depth of our partnership. This is my second overseas visit since assuming the post of President in July 2012 and first to an African country.

India and Mauritius share deep-rooted bonds of friendship, culture and history. Both countries and people also cherish the ideals of democracy, social harmony and pluralism. In recent years, India and Mauritius have evolved a dynamic, mutually beneficial and multi-dimensional partnership building upon inherent strengths and commonalities in our bilateral relations.

This has been made possible through close, high-level political interaction including the State Visit of Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam in February 2012, the State Visit of President Rajkeswur Purryag in January 2013 and numerous Ministerial visits in both directions in recent years. I am confident that my State Visit will add further substance to this partnership and enrich the already existing rich architecture of our bilateral relations. I hope to engage in wide ranging interaction and exchange of views with your leadership. Bilateral MoUs in diverse areas including in Health and Medicine, Tourism and Cooperation as well as in the field of Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities are also proposed to be signed during the visit.

A wide array of inter-Governmental agreements in various sectors including trade, investment, education, culture, renewable energy, ICT, science and technology, technical cooperation, etc. have already been signed. This platform has enabled our relations to flower but it is now for us to take them to higher levels. Vibrant people-to-people contacts have also been influential in elevating our bilateral relations to the level of a modern and comprehensive partnership based on mutual respect and mutual trust.

Both our countries, Governments and people must continue to seek more and more avenues for active cooperation. I believe this bilateral partnership holds great promise for the future.

2. Do you think that the younger generation of Indian politicians share the same traditional ties with, and feelings for Mauritius as their predecessors did?

Close interaction at the political level has been a hallmark of India-Mauritius bilateral relations. Mutual understanding and mutual respect fostered at the highest level have guided our partnership. Ministerial visits

from both sides, including young leaders from India and Mauritius, have already led to strengthening of cooperation in new and emerging sectors.

Youth are the future of both our countries. Their aspirations and ambitions will shape the destiny of our nations.

It is incumbent on us to inculcate the right values and guide the youth in building an even stronger India-Mauritius partnership for the 21st century and beyond.

We need to further encourage greater exchanges between young leaders at the Ministerial, Parliamentary, business, cultural, media, science and technology and people-to-people level to ensure that our bilateral relations scale greater heights.

3. What according to you can be done to further strengthen the economic relations between India and Mauritius?

Our bilateral cooperation in the economic and commercial areas has grown but needs to be further reinvigorated. India has been the largest exporter of goods and services to Mauritius since 2007. As far as FY 2011-2012 is concerned our official figures indicate that India exported goods worth US\$ 1.4 billion to Mauritius and imported goods worth US\$ 39.13 million from Mauritius. These figures mean that India has now become Mauritius' largest trading partner. Our trade figures also suggest the need for our two countries to expand and diversify our trade basket.

In our assessment there are vast opportunities and complementarities in sectors like agro-processing, manufacturing, infrastructure, drugs and pharmaceuticals, light engineering, textiles, medical equipment, renewable energy technologies, marine food, automobile parts, tourism and hospitality, IT and ITES, Indian traditional medicine etc. The bilateral economic package of USD 270 million (USD 250 million Line of Credit and USD 20 million grant), announced during the State Visit of Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam in February 2012 could serve as a platform to diversify and energise our trade and investment linkages.

India has participated in various developmental activities and projects in Mauritius in the past. These are visible all over the island be it the Cyber Tower in Ebene, the Swami Vivekananda International Convention

Centre, the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre, the Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital or the Mahatma Gandhi Institute besides others. Both countries, at the same time, need to work together to create an environment conducive to the creation of more joint venture projects of developmental import. As in the past, India is keen to partner with Mauritius in the realisation of several large infrastructure and development projects which are on the anvil.

4. To what extent can Mauritius serve as a springboard into Africa for India?

Indian overseas investments to Africa are beginning to be channelled through Mauritius. Mauritius, with its preferential and trading arrangements as well as export zones could attract Indian SMEs engaged in the field of pharmaceuticals, light engineering, consumer goods, textiles, seafood processing, etc. The members of SADC and COMESA in mainland Africa could be the main target market. The Indian and Mauritian private sector should explore how the FTAs Mauritius has with the SADC and COMESA countries can be used to our mutual advantage. Opportunities and fiscal incentives offered by the export zones of Mauritius would also be helpful in this regard.

5. How favourable is the investment climate for the willing Mauritians in India? How does India perceive Mauritius as an investment destination?

Since the 1990s, India has been incrementally liberalising the investment climate. Recently, in September 2012, the Government of India ushered in a slew of reforms.

The Budget 2013-14, which has been tabled in Parliament, acknowledges that FDI is imperative for India. Over the last two decades, several measures to attract FDI from all over the world have been undertaken making India one of the most attractive destinations for FDI in the world.

6. The comprehensive Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) signed between India and Mauritius has been subject to severe criticism in recent years from members of the Lok Sabha and some Indian media. To what extent are these

criticisms justified? Are there any changes that you think need to be brought to the DTAA?

The Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) has met twice in the last one year which has provided an opportunity for both sides to discuss the means forward to a mutually acceptable and beneficial outcome - a win-win situation for both. India looks forward to holding the next meeting of the JWG in New Delhi. The DTAC cannot be seen in isolation, separate from the many strands that weave the tapestry of our relationship. Our continued efforts should remain focused on realisation of the full potential of our relationship.

7. What is the progress on the proposed Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement?

The two countries are engaged in negotiations for a successful Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement (CECPA) to evolve ways and means to further stimulate trade and investment between the two countries.



426. Onboard Media Interaction of the President en route from Mauritius.

March 13, 2013.

Press Secretary to President (Shri Venu Rajamony): Friends, it is a privilege to have the Hon. President here for this interaction, along with the Minister of State for Home Affairs. As is normal practice, the President will read out a statement briefly first and then take your questions.

Hon. President of India (Shri Pranab Mukherjee): Friends; Mr. R.P.N. Singh, Minister of State for Home Affairs:

I have just concluded my three-day visit to Mauritius as Chief Guest at the 45th anniversary of Independence Day celebrations. This was my second overseas and the first visit to Africa since I assumed the office of the President of India.

I was deeply touched by the warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded to me and my delegation. Once again I wish to thank the Government and people of Mauritius for the excellent arrangements made for my visit.

As you are aware, relations between India and Mauritius are unique and special given the historical relationship based on close ancestral ties. I had a rich, wide-ranging and useful exchange of views with the leadership of Mauritius on issues of bilateral, regional and global interest, in a very friendly atmosphere.

Over the last two days I had the opportunity to meet all members of the Cabinet of Mauritius and also had useful exchanges with the Speaker of National Assembly, Leader of Opposition, Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Mauritius. It pleases me greatly to see first hand that the desire for expanding positive relationship with India is shared by all Mauritian stakeholders. India and Mauritius share values of democracy, rule of law and secularism. There is convergence of views between India and Mauritius on all major issues. The warm and good feelings towards India were evident in all matters.

During the visit, three Memorandums of Understanding were signed, which I believe will further expand our cooperation in new areas of tourism, health and medicine, senior citizens and persons with disability, to the mutual benefit of both our countries. On behalf of India, all the agreements were signed by Shri R.P.N. Singh, Minister of State for Home Affairs, and I think from their side it was their Foreign Minister. These represent a small vignette of the range of areas the two countries are working together.

My visit to 'Apravasi Ghat' was a moving experience as this place resonates with indomitable spirit of Indians who landed there, struggled against all odds and triumphed. Twenty-five years after Independence, Mauritius has made tremendous strides in socioeconomic development, and I wish them an even more prosperous future. I am honoured to receive Doctor of Civil Law *honoris causa* by the University of Mauritius.

I concluded my visit to Mauritius with a civic reception hosted by people of Grand Bois. It was an opportunity to meet with the rural people which Prime Minister Ramgoolam described as Soul of Mauritius. I was

overwhelmed by the warmth and goodwill showed by the people of Mauritius and their respect for values and ideas that India represents.

I am happy that Shri R.P.N. Singh, Minister of State for Home Affairs, three hon'ble Members of Parliament – Shri Satyavrata Chaturvedi, Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh and Shrimati Kusum Rai – from leading political parties in India could accompany me to meetings with the leaders of Mauritius.

I return to India convinced that India and Mauritius can further build on the existing multifaceted, mutually beneficial relationship. I am convinced that India should do its utmost to support Mauritius in every way possible and that together we should strive to take this relationship to greater and greater heights.

Thank you.

Q: His Excellency, how would you react to such an unprecedented reception and response at Mauritius airport where the entire Cabinet had come to receive you for the first time? Secondly, would you like to take up the issue of poor air connectivity between India and Mauritius when you go back to Delhi?

Hon. President: Firstly, this is emotion. Of course, before me number of Presidents had visited Mauritius and so a Presidential visit as such is not new. But people of Mauritius have good feelings for India. And they have cultivated, which you have seen, their old connection in the new context, in the new environment. They have not forgotten them. That is the beauty of the people of Mauritius. I deeply appreciate the warm reception. As you have mentioned, the entire Cabinet was present. I have noticed a new method they have had that in my every journey one Cabinet Minister accompanied me. So, apart from meeting them ceremonially I had the opportunity of talking to almost all Cabinet Ministers for seven or eight minutes because the journey from the hotel to the place was a minimum of ten to twelve minutes. That time we could utilize for discussion with them. This is a new way of having interaction.

Q: Sir, we got a feeling that Mauritians were really upset about the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) issue.

Hon. President: DTAA is an old issue. It is nothing new and the discussions are going on. As I mentioned in my discussion with the Mauritian leaders, two rounds of discussions have already taken place last year of the Joint Working Group. The mechanism which is dealing with this is a Joint Working Group. So, there have been two rounds of discussion in the Joint Working Group. We have narrowed the areas of divergence. Next meeting has been decided sometime in the first week of April. I do hope it would be possible to resolve the issue which will be beneficial and acceptable to both sides through dialogue.

Q: Sir, while looking at or listening to the speeches of the Mauritians here, it seems they think that they expect more ...(Inaudible)...initiatives from India and I think they are a bit ...(Inaudible)...

Hon. President: We have provided some lines of credit. Earlier we provided about US\$ 100 million; that has been exhausted. Now we have provided US\$ 250 million line of credit and US\$ 20 million as grant. I have suggested that they utilize this grant; as and when the grants are utilized, fresh lines of credit are being given.

Q: Sir, after your visit is there any common ground or understanding that emerged on the DTAA?

Hon. President: Unless the issues are resolved, it will have to wait. What I feel is that there has been some progress in the first two rounds, and it may be possible to resolve the issues which will be mutually acceptable and beneficial to both sides, in the third round or the fourth round.

Q: ...(Inaudible)... As far as investment in Mauritius is concerned, I think China ...(Inaudible)... China seems to be investing heavily. So, what is your view on that?

Hon. President: I would not like to make any comment about the relations between two countries. Each country is sovereign; each country decides its relations with other country keeping its own national interest, geopolitical situation in view. China is showing lot of interest in Africa and they are providing assistance. Naturally they may show interest in Mauritius. But during my talk with leaders of Mauritius I have assured them that whatever possible, India will try to help them in areas of investment, expanding trade, and also especially in the areas of

education, health, telecommunications - I have identified about nine subjects – where we can have good equation and good relations with Mauritius. In fact, a large number of Memorandums of Understanding and agreements have been signed which provide the institutional framework in which we can work in close cooperation with each other.

Q: Your Excellency, did China figure in the discussions between you and Mauritian leadership either tangentially or directly?

Hon. President: When we have a bilateral discussion, unless there is any urgent, relevant, contemporary issue, there is no question of discussing in relation with other countries.

Thank you



427. Press Release of the Ministry of Commerce regarding exports to Mauritius.

New Delhi, July 5, 2013.

The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma met Mr. Sayyad Abd-Al-Cader Sayed Hossen, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection, Mauritius, in Port Louis last evening. During the meeting, the Mauritian minister conveyed that most of the issues regarding renewal of contract with Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) have been sorted out and only the final touches are being put in place. Shri Sharma welcomed the development and said that “in such negotiations, issues are bound to arise but mature democracies sort them out through discussions and deliberations.” Shri Sharma reiterated India’s commitment to ensure uninterrupted supply to Mauritius. “We would like to continue this trusted partnership agreement with Mauritius”, said Shri Sharma. India’s exports to Mauritius comprises largely of petroleum products as a result of the three year Agreement signed between MRPL and the State Trading Corporation of Mauritius in July 2007 for the supply of all petroleum requirement of Mauritius. The Agreement is expected to be renewed later this month.

The Indian Minister raised the issue of export of basmati rice to Mauritius. In May 2013, a draft agreement for recognition of export inspection and certification system of Export Inspection Council of India for export of basmati rice to Mauritius was forwarded to the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection of Mauritius. The Mauritian Minister assured that there is a broad agreement on the proposal and that they will soon revert on it. Shri Sharma said that India will be happy to extend any assistance with regard to the issue. Basmati rice is a unique Geographical Indication (GI) product under the World Trade Organization (WTO). Standards in India are dynamic in nature and are currently being harmonised amongst all relevant institutions for ensuring uniformity which will be notified when ready. India has already nominated the Export Inspection Council as the nodal agency which will issue a Certificate of Authenticity (COA) for all Basmati rice exports from India to Mauritius.

The Mauritian side expressed happiness on the advancements in the field of textiles and conveyed determination to take forward the intended outcomes of the Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) signed recently. Five institutional level MoUs were signed to take the partnership forward. These are:

- i. MoU between Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) and Enterprise Mauritius (EM)
- ii. MoU between Northern India Textile Research Association (NITRA) and Mauritius Standards Bureau
- iii. MoU between NITRA and National Productivity and Competitive Council (NPCC) of Mauritius
- iv. MoU between Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI) and Mauritius Export Association (MEXA); and
- v. MoU between Institute of Apparel Management (IAM) and Fashion and Design Institute of Mauritius (FDI)

Shri Sharma expressed "India's willingness to implement these MoUs and project proposals in a fruitful and time bound manner." The Mauritian side informed the Indian Minister that under DISHA Mauritius, a draft compliance code is under preparation.

Apart from these MoUs, a Letter of Intent outlining the implementation plan for training for 1000 textile factory workers, 35 scholarships in the textile sector as well as the development of a compliance code (on the lines of DISHA) for 10 Mauritian textile factories was also signed between the two governments.

On the issue of export of Indian mangoes to Mauritius, the Mauritian side informed Shri Sharma that they will cooperate with the Indian side with regard to harmonisation of standards.

Later in the evening, in his meeting with the Mauritian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration & International Trade, Dr. Arvin Boolell, Shri Sharma discussed the issue of liberalisation of visa and conveyed that including Mauritius in the list of the countries that get visa on arrival is under consideration. Both the leaders discussed the upcoming WTO Bali Ministerial. Shri Sharma conveyed that the development dimension of the round should not be lost sight of and Trade Facilitation cannot be the only outcome. "Trade Facilitation has to be balanced with internal balances. G-33 proposal on food security is also important expected outcome of the Ministerial", Shri Sharma added.

Mr. Richard Marles, Australian Trade Minister, in a meeting with Shri Sharma appreciated India's efforts in the area of fighting piracy in the Indian Ocean Rim region. Mr. Marles said that small countries of the region rely on countries like Australia and India for the scourge of piracy in the region and India is playing its part. He also informed Shri Sharma that Australia is working out an India Strategy Paper to deepen economic ties.

Mr. Taira Masaaki, Parliamentary Vice Minister for Economy, Trade & Industry, Japan, conveyed Shri Sharma that this meeting of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) has sensitised Japan on the importance of IOR as opposed to their pre-occupation with the Pacific Region. Shri Sharma thanked Japan for their contribution in the development process of the emerging Indian Ocean Rim region.



MOROCCO

428. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Finance regarding signing of India-Morocco Double Taxation Avoidance Convention.

New Delhi, August 8, 2013.

India signed a Protocol amending the India - Morocco Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) in New Delhi today. The Protocol was signed by Dr Sudha Sharma, Chairperson, Central Board of Direct Taxes on behalf of Government of India and H.E. Mr. Larbi Reffouh, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to India on behalf of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco.

The Protocol is based on international standards of transparency and exchange of information. It provides for effective exchange of information including banking information between tax authorities of the two countries. It also provides that each treaty partner shall use its information gathering measures to obtain the requested information even though it may not need such information for its own domestic tax purposes.

The Agreement will enhance mutual co-operation between the two countries by having effective exchange of information in tax matters.



MOZAMBIQUE

429. Opening Statement by Minister of State for External Affairs at the 3rd Session of India-Mozambique Joint Commission Meeting in Maputo.

Maputo, July 4, 2013.

Your Excellency, Mr Eduardo Koloma, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs & Cooperation of Mozambique, ladies & gentlemen:

1. Excellency, I have great honour and pleasure to be co-chairing the Third Session of the Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) between India and Mozambique. On behalf of the Government

and people of India, the members of my delegation and on my personal behalf, I would like to convey warm greetings to the Government and people of Mozambique.

MOS introduces the delegation

2. On this occasion, I wish to recall the historical, close and friendly relations between our two countries even prior to colonial times. Since liberation of Mozambique in 1975, our ties have been growing steadily and have been transformed into a multifaceted, strong and robust strategic partnership about which we are very proud today. At the same time, there is immense potential for further growth. We must tap this potential for the benefit of our two countries and our peoples.
3. Since the last JCM held in 2009 in New Delhi, there have been many important developments not only between our two countries, but also regionally and internationally. President Armando Geubuza paid a State Visit to India in 2010. This was a landmark visit. India feels proud that every Mozambican President has visited India. Indeed, the political exchanges between India and Mozambique have been taking place regularly. After President Guebuza's visit, there have been many high-level ministerial, official, business and other visits between our two friendly countries. We feel very satisfied about these political exchanges and we want that these exchanges and positive engagements must not only continue but intensify in the interest of both our countries.
4. I would like to felicitate Mozambique for assuming the chairmanship of important groupings of CPLP and SADC in 2012. At the same time, India also wishes to congratulate Mozambique for playing an important and active role in various regional and international fora, including as an active member of the African Union and SADC.
5. Excellency, during President Guebuza's visit to India in 2010, both the countries had set a target of achieving the bilateral trade of US\$ one billion by 2013. I am happy to share the good news

with you that this important bilateral milestone has already been achieved, but this should encourage both sides to further expand our trade and investment relations. I have brought an Indian business delegation so that our trade relations would further deepen and diversify.

6. As regards capacity building, India has been providing training slots and university scholarships every year to Mozambique. We hope that these offers by India are contributing towards strengthening of human resource development in Mozambique. I must underline that these initiatives are excellent examples of India's contribution towards South-South Cooperation and have been deeply appreciated by our partners. Apart from the training and university scholarships, the Indian companies in Mozambique e.g. Jindal Steel & Power and Coal India Limited have also been providing training to Mozambican nominees in important areas which Mozambique has identified such as mining and mineral resources. Excellency, we feel that all these efforts by India would contribute towards the development of friendly Mozambique. We feel happy that our bilateral cooperation is becoming more diverse and expanding into new areas.
7. Further, India remains committed to support Mozambique in various areas, particularly infrastructure development and capacity building. The Government of India had offered a Line of Credit of US\$500 million to Mozambique during the state visit of President Guebuza to India in 2010. I am happy to say that all the project proposals submitted by Mozambique under this LOC have been approved by the Government of India. We will be signing 3 LOC agreements later this afternoon amounting to US \$ 216.44 million in areas of drinking water supply, roads and housing.
8. In the field of defence, we had previously, at the request of the Government of Mozambique, sent our naval ships to provide coastal security on important events in Mozambique such as African Union Summit in 2003 and World Economic Forum's Africa Economic Summit and 4th EU-ACP Summit meetings in June

2004. I am also happy to note that Indian Naval Ships are regularly paying goodwill visits to Mozambique. At the request of Mozambique, an Indian Naval Ship 'Darshak' has carried out the hydrographic survey of Beira Port in March-April 2012. The signing of Security Cooperation Agreement by the two countries in July 2012 is an important development and adds another dimension to our expanding cooperation.

9. We are confident that this session of JCM will help further strengthen our bilateral relations in various fields.
10. Excellency, I am thankful for the warm welcome and kind hospitality extended to me and my delegation.



430. Remarks by Minister of State for External Affairs at the Interactive Business Session during the 3rd session of the India-Mozambique Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) in Maputo.

Maputo, July4, 2013.

Your Excellency, Mr. Abdul Razak Noormahomed,
Vice Minister of Mineral Resources

Mr. Rogério Manuel, President, Confederation of Business
Associations of Mozambique

Ms. Belamina Capatine, Head of Business Development,
Investment Promotion Centre of Mozambique

Distinguished Guests, ladies & gentlemen:

I have great pleasure to address this interactive business session of Mozambican and Indian business personalities.

As you are aware, I am visiting Mozambique for the third session of India Mozambique Joint Commission which is currently underway.

India and Mozambique enjoy historical, close and friendly relations which have been steadily growing over the past several decades. Our close relations have transformed into a multifaceted, strong and robust partnership. At the same time, there is immense potential for further growth which must be tapped for the benefit of our two countries and ultimately for the benefit of our peoples.

After President Armando Guebuza's landmark State visit to India in 2010, relations between our two countries are growing on a fast-track. The trade between the two countries has doubled from US\$631.76 million in 2011-12 to US\$ 1.28 billion in 2012-13 and thus, have crossed US\$ one billion target set by the two countries during President Guebuza's visit. I would also like to inform that the trade between India and Africa is likely to touch US\$ 100 billion by 2015. Therefore, Mozambique also has an opportunity to increase exports to India, which has the potential to touch greater heights in the coming years.

India is the 8th largest foreign investor in Mozambique with an investment of US\$104.75 million. However, this does not include investments in extractive mining industry and all these investments are included, the total Indian investments are estimated to be more than US\$500 million while there are plans to make more investments by the Indian companies. The Indian investments in Africa have already touched US\$33 billion and I want to assure that Mozambique is a priority country for us.

In recent years, there have been huge discoveries of coal and natural gas in Mozambique. It is estimated that there are 23 billion tons of coal reserves and 150 TCF of natural gas in Mozambique and to exploit these resources, big investments are required. This presents a great opportunity for the Indian companies to take part in the development of related infrastructure like railways, roads, ports, gas pipelines, fertiliser plant, power plants, etc. I would urge the Indian companies to consider investments in these areas which would be a win-win situation for both the countries.

I am happy to note that recently, Oil & Natural Gas Corporation of India and Oil India Limited have acquired 10% stake in the Rovuma Basin at a cost of approximately US\$2.5 billion and Indian public sector oil companies now hold a 20% participating interest in the Anadarko-led consortium.

Some Indian companies are also interested and have submitted proposals for infrastructure development in Mozambique. Another important area which is growing fast in Mozambique is the agriculture sector and some Indian companies have already made or are considering investments in this field.

India is committed to Mozambique in its efforts towards capacity-building by providing training in various fields and university scholarships. India also is committed to continue to assist Mozambique in its socio-economic developmental efforts in various ways, including through Line of Credits (LOCs). India has so far extended Lines of Credit worth US\$ 640 million to Mozambique for various projects identified by Mozambique as its priorities. Yesterday, we signed three LOC agreements worth US\$ 216.4 million in areas such as drinking water supply, roads and housing development.

We have created an enabling environment by entering into several agreements for the benefit of the business communities of the two countries including Avoidance of Double Taxation, Promotion & Protection of Investments and Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme for Least Development Countries. I am happy to share that the two countries are also considering a new Trade Agreement which would further enhance our cooperation.

I would encourage the business-persons from Mozambique and India to promote business activities for the benefit of the two countries. With these few words, I would like to conclude my remarks and would like to felicitate all of you for fruitful discussions. I would also be very happy to answer some to your questions.

Thank you



431. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the Bilateral Security Review between India and Mozambique.

New Delhi, September 12, 2013.

Bilateral security matters between India and Mozambique were reviewed at the Minister's level meeting held here today. The Indian side was led by Shri Mullappally Ramachandran, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs and the Mozambique side by Mr. Jose Mandra, Deputy Minister of Interior.

Both the Ministers reviewed matters related to training of police personnel, supply of security related equipment, visa for their citizens, immigration issues and disaster management. The meeting was held in a warm and cordial atmosphere. Both the countries resolved to strengthen their bilateral security cooperation.



432. Meeting of Minister of Commerce & Industry Anand Sharma with the Prime Minister of Mozambique.

Maputo, September 27, 2013.

The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma will meet Prime Minister of Mozambique Mr. Alberto Clementino Vaquina, and the country's Trade Minister Mr. Armando Inroga during his two-day visit to Mozambique from today. In his meeting with Prime Minister Mr. Vaquina, Shri Sharma is likely to discuss the positive developments in the bilateral relations between the two countries in recent years. Shri Sharma is likely to convey Mr. Vaquina that the two sides must exert all efforts to further strengthen political and economic engagement between the two countries as there is huge potential to further increase in cooperation. Issues related to export of coal and commencement of mining are also likely to come up for discussion between the two Ministers.

Later, Shri Sharma will meet Mr. Armando Inroga, Minister of Industry and Trade, Mozambique, where the two Ministers will discuss trade and investment related issues. The two Ministers are likely to take up the issue related to the Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme for Least Developed Countries, which was announced by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during India Africa Summit held in New Delhi in April 2008. The Scheme envisages enhanced market access for Mozambican exports to India. Shri Sharma may also mention to Mr. Inroga that the two governments must encourage trade promotion activities by economic operators on both sides including visits of businessmen and holding of fairs and exhibitions. Issues pertaining to coal mining and exploration of huge reserves of natural gas are also likely to be discussed by the two Ministers. Later, Shri Sharma will deliver a keynote address at a Session on 'Enhancing Economic Partnership between India and Mozambique', where members from Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Mozambique's Confederação das Associações Económicas de Moçambique (CTA) will participate.

Mozambique's exports to India during 2012-13 had an increase of 184.94% amounting to USD 291 million compared to USD 101 million of 2011-12. Of this, export of coal constituted USD 179.63 million during 2012-13 and is the top export item to India. The main items of Indian exports to Mozambique are – petroleum products, drugs/ pharmaceuticals, transport equipments, bicycles, metals, cotton yarn/ fabrics, machinery and instruments, iron and steel, paper/wood products, rubber made products, chemicals/fertilizers, glassware, electronic goods, paints/enamels, cosmetics and machine tools. The main exports from Mozambique include coal, pulses, raw cashew, coconut, metal ores and scrap metal etc.

India's investments in Mozambique are estimated around USD 600 million making India the eight largest investor in Mozambique, with Brazil, Portugal and South Africa occupying the first three places.



433. Press Release of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry regarding trade with Mozambique.

New Delhi, September 30, 2013.

The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma visited Mozambique on a two-day visit from September 27-28, 2013. On September 27, Shri Sharma met the Prime Minister of Mozambique, Mr. Alberto Vaquina and discussed the bilateral historical relations between the two countries.

Later, Shri Sharma met Mr. Armando Inroga, Minister of Industry and Trade of Mozambique, where they discussed bilateral cooperation and agreed on the need for further diversifying trade and investments. Shri Sharma said that owing to the the impressive growth in trade between the two countries, the bilateral trade could reach USD 3 billion by 2016 from the current level of USD 1.28 billion.

India has been assisting Mozambique in its developmental efforts and has provided Lines of Credit of USD640 million for various projects, apart from providing other assistance, grants and technical training, university scholarships, etc. Large quantities of coal and natural gas have recently been discovered in Mozambique. There are various Indian companies which have acquired stakes in these coal and gas fields, particularly the recent acquisition by ONGC Videsh and Oil India Limited in the Rovuma Basin in the North of Mozambique at cost of approximately USD5 billion for the natural gas consortium led by Anadarko of the United States and planned investment of USD4 billion for setting up of integrated fertiliser plans in Mozambique.

Shri Sharma also invited Mr. Inroga to visit India for participating in the Partnership Summit scheduled to be held in Bengaluru in January, 2014. Shri Sharma also addressed a “Session on Enhancing Economic Partnership between India and Mozambique” along with Mr. Inroga which was attended by industry leaders from India and Mozambique.



SEYCHELLES

434. Press Release on the 8th India-Seychelles Joint Commission Meeting.

New Delhi, May 8, 2013.

1. The 8th India-Seychelles Joint Commission meeting was held on 8 May 2013 at New Delhi. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Sudhir Vyas, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs and the Seychelles delegation by H.E. Ambassador Maurice Jean Leonard Loustau-Lalane, Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Seychelles.
2. The Joint Commission Meeting exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international matters of mutual interest. The Meeting also reviewed ongoing cooperation between India and Seychelles in diverse fields and exchanged views on further expanding and strengthening it.
3. Ambassador Loustau-Lalane called on Shri Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister, Shri AK Antony, Defence Minister and Smt. Preneet Kaur, MOS, External Affairs.
4. The next meeting of the Joint Commission will be held in Seychelles at mutually convenient date.



SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN

435. Visit of Minister of Finance and National Economy, Government of Sudan, Mr. Ali Mahmoud Mohamed to New Delhi (July 24-26, 2013).

New Delhi, July 25, 2013.

1. Honourable Minister of Finance and National Economy, Government of Sudan, H.E. Ali Mahmoud Mohamed is on a visit to New Delhi during July 24-26, 2013 regarding rescheduling of the existing Government of India Lines of Credit to Sudan.

Honourable Minister of State for External Affairs, Smt. Preeti Kaur met the Minister on the 24th of July, 2013 and hosted a dinner in his honour. The Honourable Minister of Finance and National Economy of Sudan is expected to call on the Honourable Minister of Finance, Shri P. Chidambaram during his visit.

2. Technical discussions between India and Sudan were held regarding rescheduling of the existing Lines of Credit to Sudan in New Delhi on the 22nd and 23rd of July, 2013. Delegation level talks were held between Indian delegation led by Additional Secretary, Development Partnership Administration in the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Smt. Radhika Lokesh and Sudanese delegation led by the Director General, International Cooperation, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Government of Sudan, Mr. Omer Mohamed Ahmed Alhaj. There are six existing Government of India Lines of Credit totaling US\$ 566.9 million to Sudan and the EXIM Bank is the implementation arm for the Line of Credit.
3. The mutually agreed terms for the Lines of Credit were arrived at by taking into account the sensitivities of both the countries. The rescheduling has been made by way of relaxation of the interest rate, repayment period and moratorium of the Lines of Credit. The agreed minutes and the rescheduling agreement were signed in the presence of the Honourable Minister of State for External Affairs and Honourable Minister of Finance and National Economy of Sudan. This is a first request for re-scheduling the Lines of Credit of such magnitude being considered by Government of India and it was favourably considered given the difficult economic situation of Sudan post the secession of South Sudan.
4. The issue of payment dues by Government of Sudan to ONGC Videsh Limited and other commercial interests was raised by the Indian side and Sudanese delegation assured that this issue will be resolved at the earliest. Sudanese side agreed to make every effort to ensure that Indian commercial interests are not adversely affected.

5. India and Sudan share robust and historic ties and the two countries have enjoyed strong and friendly political relations since the latter gained independence in 1956. India remains committed to further strengthen the cordial, diverse and mutually beneficial relations that exist between the two countries and people.



436. Announcement by the Official Spokesperson on the visit of Special Envoy of the President of South Sudan.

New Delhi, August 13, 2013.

I have another announcement from the African continent and that is about the visit of the Special Envoy to South Sudan. As you perhaps are aware, Mr. P.S. Raghavan, the Special Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs is also the Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan. In this capacity he visited Juba recently and was among the first to call on the President Mr. Salva Kiir subsequent to his swearing in the new 18-member Cabinet in South Sudan. This is reflective of our commitment in partnering South Sudan which gained independence in 2011.

As you are also perhaps aware, we are working towards the visit of the President of South Sudan to New Delhi later during the month, and the visit of the Special Envoy was preparatory to that visit.

For your information, India has also two battalions of 2,200 personnel in UNMISS which is deployed in two of the largest States of South Sudan currently. The visit was also helpful in identifying various development projects for South Sudan. Mr. Raghavan, incidentally, is also the Head of our Development Partnership Administration.

The areas that we are trying to focus have two main components, that is, capacity building and infrastructure development in key areas of health, education, solar electrification, mining, agriculture, electoral management, and of course hydrocarbons.

We look forward to the early visit of the President of South Sudan. The visit of Mr. Raghavan was successful in laying the path to that.



437. Visit of Special Envoy of India for Sudan and South Sudan, P.S. Raghavan to South Sudan (8-9 August, 2013).

New Delhi, August 14, 2013.

Special Envoy of India for Sudan and South Sudan and Special Secretary (Development Partnership Administration), Ministry of External Affairs, Shri P.S. Raghavan, paid an official visit to Juba, South Sudan from 08-09 August 2013. The visit came only a day after the swearing in of the new 18-member South Sudanese Cabinet, reflective of India's strong commitment in partnering South Sudan, which gained independence only in July 2011, in its political transition process. The fact that Shri Raghavan was the first foreign dignitary to interact with the new South Sudanese leadership across the board was sincerely appreciated by the South Sudanese side.

Shri Raghavan had detailed discussions with the President of South Sudan H.E. Gen Salva Kiir, as well as with the key Ministers of Foreign Affairs; Electricity; Health; Agriculture and Rural Development; Petroleum, Mining and Industry as well as high level officials of the Ministry of Finance. He also interacted with key members of the Indian community based in Juba as well as representatives of the Indian contingent of the peacekeepers attached to the United Nations Mission for South Sudan (UNMISS). India has two battalions of 2,200 personnel in UNMISS, deployed in two of the largest states in South Sudan, Jonglei and Upper Nile, since 2011.

The visit was useful for identifying India's development projects for South Sudan. The programme has two main components of capacity building and infrastructure development in key areas of health, education, solar electrification, mining, agriculture, fisheries, food processing, electoral management and hydrocarbons. Additionally, an offer was made to the South Sudanese side for granting concessional lines of credit (LOC) for undertaking other sustainable development projects, in alignment with its socio-economic priorities.

Shri Raghavan stressed the importance of India's energy security in bilateral cooperation. ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) has made substantial investments in the hydrocarbon sector in South Sudan over the last ten years, and has expressed interest in further expanding its operations, when conditions permit.

The visit was also undertaken in preparation for the forthcoming visit of the South Sudanese President to India, scheduled from 26-28 August, 2013. President Kiir will be accompanied by a high level delegation of Ministers, senior officials and business leaders.



438. Official Spokesperson's response to a question on the evolving security situation in South Sudan.

NEW Delhi, December 24, 2013

In response to a question on the evolving security situation in South Sudan, the Official Spokesperson said:

“We are closely monitoring the political developments and the evolving security situation in South Sudan. The Indian Embassy in Juba is in close contact with the Indian community members in South Sudan for ensuring their safety and security. In view of the deteriorating security situation, the Mission has also issued an Advisory to the Indian nationals to leave South Sudan at the earliest. A significant number of Indian nationals have left South Sudan by availing the facility of commercial flights which are operating from Juba and also through the road links, including the link to the Ugandan border, which are open for public transport. Our Mission in Juba is providing all assistance in facilitating relocation of Indian nationals.

The Mission is closely liaising with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), particularly the Indian Battalion of UNMISS, in monitoring the evolving security situation and has availed their assistance in evacuating Indian nationals stranded in remote areas such as Bor (Jonglei State). It may be noted that two members of the Indian contingent in UNMISS tragically lost their lives and one member injured during an attack on UNMISS compound at Akobo in Jonglei State of South Sudan on 19 December, 2013. The role played by the Indian Battalion of UNMISS under difficult circumstances in South Sudan has been widely appreciated.

Ministry of External Affairs is also in touch with the South Sudan Embassy in New Delhi which has assured all assistance of its government in ensuring safety and security of Indian nationals and Indian Embassy in South Sudan.



* Media reports said on December 26:

The fate of Indians employed in various establishments in strife-torn South Sudan, continues to remain uncertain even as the Union government has issued an advisory to Indian nationals to leave the troubled African nation. With the struggle between two leading ethnic groups that erupted few days ago threatening to turn into a civil war, a few hundred Indians employed there are facing a risk to their lives. A good chunk of them hail from Andhra Pradesh.

On January 2, 2014, another report said:

India will conduct an on-ground assessment of its interests in South Sudan, especially the wellbeing of its 2,000 soldiers who are part of a United Nations stabilisation team. The Indian Army contingent had lost three men after its camp was overrun in the ongoing ethnic strife. In an earlier ambush in April 2013, four Indian soldiers and an officer were shot dead in an ambush.

The Indian Army contingent had to be evacuated by air and the situation is considered so delicate that New Delhi has sent back a senior army officer to serve an unusual second term as the deputy chief of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) because of his knowledge of the land.

India as one of the three biggest contributors of soldiers to U.N. peacekeeping missions has been unhappy about not being consulted on some of the ways in which operations are now being carried out. India, along with some other nations, has also urged the U.N. Security Council to take steps for going after people responsible for the killing of their troops. India's interests are also political and economic and their furtherance depends on peaceful ties not only within South Sudan but stable ties with Sudan from which it was carved out in 2011. Indian companies have 25 per cent stake in a South Sudan oil company whose crude is sent across Sudan by an India-built pipeline.

The two Sudans have the third largest crude reserves and India appointed a Special Envoy for South Sudan even as its independence was being negotiated. It was among the earliest to open a consulate in Juba, four years before it formally became the national capital. Both Sudans are keen on Indian assistance and expertise in infrastructure development and capacity building and a wider footprint by its corporates.

SOUTH AFRICA

439. Press Release of the Minister of Commerce regarding review by Commerce Minister Anand Sharma and South African Commerce and Industry Minister Rob Davies India – Africa Trade in Johannesburg.

New Delhi, October 1, 2013

The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma and Mr. Rob Davies, Minister of Trade and Industry, South Africa today co-chaired the third meeting of India-Africa Trade Ministers in Johannesburg. The meeting was attended by Chairperson of African Union Commission Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and 11 trade ministers from Africa, representatives of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and regional economic communities like Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

In his opening remarks Shri Sharma mentioned that the trade ministers meeting was a significant event in the annual calendar of exchanges between India and Africa. He said that the partnership between India and Africa was distinct and different and a strategic relationship. The robust economic growth of both India and Africa provided new opportunities of forging a development partnership which would not just be focussed on transactional trade but subsume capacity building, institution building, human resource development and productive investments. Shri Sharma mentioned that the governments of India and Africa were confronted by challenges of currency volatility, high inflation, commodity volatility, and similar issues of underdevelopment and poverty. He further added that the India Africa Forum Summit declarations have given a blueprint of the partnership between these two regions covering a wide range of sectors. A large number of regional and pan-African institutions have been established in Africa for capacity building and skill development, which enable development of rich human resource. He mentioned that 22,000 scholarships were being administered for African students. He said that the economic engagement has been a buoyant one as investments from India to Africa has crossed USD 50 billion in

the last decade and trade has crossed USD 70 billion. He mentioned that the bilateral trade target of USD 90 billion by 2015 is a modest one and is certainly achievable.

Chairperson of African Union Commission Dr. Zuma in her remarks mentioned that GDP of BRICS economies is set to overtake that of G-7 countries soon. She mentioned that the rich resource base of Africa have driven the economic growth of the world. The plan of industrialization aims to increase value addition, enhance regional economic integration with an aim to achieve a pan-African free trade area. Dr. Zuma appreciated “Indian investments in infrastructure, mining, energy sector which enabled significant value addition in Africa and skill upgradation which would lead to sustainable development and help in poverty eradication.” She sought greater diversification of Indian investments with greater thrust on joint ventures and participation of women. She said that interest of developing countries and LDCs are safeguarded especially in the area of food security in the forthcoming Bali Ministerial Meeting on WTO. She further said that the current trade facilitation package had certain implementation challenges for African countries as it entailed huge resource commitments and therefore urged for a balanced outcome at Bali.

In his remarks Mr Davies spoke about the need of ushering in an age of industrialization in Africa with a greater thrust on value addition, moving away from commodity led export models. In this context, he appreciated the engagement with India which was in the nature of a true developmental partnership. He mentioned that “Indian investments into Africa had seen a phenomenal growth” and appreciated that “these had led to considerable value addition and employment generation in Africa.” He also stressed upon the need of greater regional economic integration in Africa through the architecture of regional free trade agreements, which would be building blocks for a continental free trade agreement in Africa. Intra -African trade is barely 12% contrasted with other dynamic regions of the world. He mentioned about the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) which aims to strengthen infrastructure development in Africa. Indian imports from Africa have risen by 14% but there was need to shift to value added exports. He recalled the BRICS Summit and said that the BRICS development bank idea should become a reality to ensure investments not only in each others’ economies but also in Africa.

Intervening in the ministerial meeting, Shri Sharma said that “the forthcoming Bali ministerial meeting was an opportunity to give momentum to the Doha development round, which has its heart a strong development agenda.” He mentioned that there is a need to address the genuine concerns of food security of the developing countries. The interests of subsistence farmers must be protected and a multi lateral trade regime must address livelihood concerns of small and marginal farmers of the developing countries. He was of the opinion that public stock holding for food security must be accepted as this is essential for assuring food security of millions of poor in the developing countries. He also said that the LDCs would also need resources to meet the commitments on trade facilitation including for infrastructure up-gradation at ports. He said that India has supported the need for a package of LDCs in Bali. He informed the Trade Ministers about the Duty Free Quota Free Market Access Scheme for LDCs introduced by India which provides a huge opportunity for market access for African LDCs to the Indian market.

The second meeting of the India-Africa Business Council co-chaired by Shri Sunil Bharti Mittal from the Indian side and Dr. Bright Chunga was also convened and the industry leaders collectively identified priority sectors of private investment and presented a report to the Trade Ministers.

Yesterday, Shri Sharma had a bilateral meeting with his counterpart Minister Mr. Rob Davies where he urged for an early conclusion of the India- Southern African Customs Union (SACU) Preferential Trade Agreement negotiations. They also discussed the whole range of bilateral issues, expressing satisfaction on the healthy growth of trade which had touched USD 14 billion and investment flows from India had crossed USD 7 billion. They also reviewed the progress of negotiations in the Doha round and preparations for the Bali ministerial meeting.



440. Speech by President Pranab Mukherjee on the occasion of the memorial service in honour of Dr. Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa.

Johannesburg, December 10, 2013.

President Jacob Zuma,

Distinguished Leaders of the African National Congress,

Eminent Heads of State and Governments and

Representatives of the world community gathered here today,

2. It is with the deepest reverence that I, on behalf of the Government and the people of India, join the South African nation in paying homage to their beloved Madiba, former President, Dr. Nelson Mandela.
3. For India, the passing of Nelson Mandela represents the departure of a venerated elder, a great soul. We pray for his eternal peace. Madiba lived a life of sacrifice and privation as he pursued a seemingly impossible goal for his people – and the world is richer for his legacy. We, in India, have long admired him - and all that he stood for - and we will always cherish his friendship and love for our people.
4. To us, Nelson Mandela was a visionary. He epitomised an uncommon humaneness that inspired all of mankind. He was an icon of irreversible social and economic change – the kind of transformation and emancipation that his people had only dreamt of. A towering personality of great compassion and wisdom, he guided his nation, bruised by decades of apartheid and violence, to embrace his simple message of tolerance and harmonious co-existence. Indeed, his life and struggles - which represented ‘hope’ for the downtrodden in South Africa and all over the world, remind us of the principles that the father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, stood for. In the face of the severest persecution, punishment and relentless oppression, Nelson Mandela continued his non-violent struggle with dignity and pride, refusing to be intimidated. He never diminished his commitment to his

kind of 'satyagraha' against injustice and inequality. His stoic determination, patience and magnanimity reminded us, in India, of the revolutionary methods of Mahatma Gandhi.

5. It was, therefore, an honour for Indians to confer upon Madiba our highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna when he visited India in 1990. Madiba received an unprecedented public welcome and was felicitated in Delhi and Calcutta.
6. In 1995, when he visited India as the first President of post apartheid Africa, Mandela visited Gandhiji's Sabarmati Ashram and said that it was for him a homecoming, a pilgrimage.
7. We, on our part, associate South Africa with the first chapter of Mahatma Gandhi's freedom movement. Gandhiji had staked his career as a budding lawyer in South Africa to resist segregation and inequality - before he embarked for India and took up, in India, the same cause.
8. The six principles that Madiba identified as the fundamentals of the foreign policy of the new South Africa – equal human rights, democracy, respect for international law, world peace achieved through non-violent means, effective arms control regimes and economic co-operation in an interdependent world, are the same principles that the Founding Fathers of free India had enshrined in our own policy of Panchsheel.
9. Madiba often acknowledged the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and the first Prime Minister of India, Jawarharlal Nehru on his own thought process. It is no wonder then that we, in India, attach great sentiment to our unique friendship with the people of this great country South Africa.
10. We stand by you in your hour of bereavement and we share your sense of loss today.
11. We have no doubt that the world will honour the historic legacy of Madiba, one of the most influential personalities of our century, who taught the world the true meaning of forgiveness and

reconciliation - and steered South Africans onto the path of building a truly Rainbow Nation.

Jai Hind!



TANZANIA

441. Press Release on the Visit of Mrs. Preet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs to Tanzania.

New Delhi, July 10, 2013.

Smt. Preet Kaur, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs of India visited Tanzania at the invitation of Hon'ble Bernard K. Membe (MP), Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania on 8-10 July, 2013.

During her visit she called on Hon'ble President, H.E. Dr. Jakaya M. Kikwete and held discussions with the Hon'ble Foreign Minister Membe. The two Ministers Co-Chaired the 8th session of the India-Tanzania Joint Commission Meeting and presided over its Opening Session on 8th July and Closing Session on 9th July 2013.

In talks with the President Dr. Jakaya Kikwete, Minister Preet Kaur emphasized continued commitment to forge stronger and closer ties with Tanzania building upon the excellent traditional ties with Tanzania which have origin in the pre-independence period. President Kikwete reviewed the current level of development partnership between the two countries including use of Indian lines of credit, grants and capacity building training programmes in specific areas of Tanzania's growth story, and exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest. He mentioned certain new areas where he hoped Tanzania would be able to use the expertise available in India for its benefit. The Tanzanian President assured the visiting Indian Minister of his country's support for India's aspiration for a permanent seat in a reformed United Nations Security Council.

In discussions with the Tanzanian Foreign Minister, the Indian Minister reviewed the growing commercial, economic and people to people ties and discussed issues of interest in the regional and global context. The two sides agreed to strengthen bilateral ties in all fields, including security and defence, and to resolve remaining outstanding financial matters.

Smt. Preneet Kaur also joined Hon'ble Dr. Abdulla Kigoda, Tanzanian Minister for Industry and Trade at a business event organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in cooperation with the Confederation of Tanzanian Industry (CTI). The CII had organized the visit of a multi-sectoral Indian business delegation to Tanzania during the visit of the Indian Minister.

The India-Tanzania Joint Commission deliberated on areas of bilateral cooperation, including agriculture and rural development, health, education, small and medium industries, mining and minerals, industrialization, energy, telecommunications and ICT, tourism and connectivity, water resource development, cooperation in the areas of women and child development, sports and youth affairs and development partnership between India and Tanzania. Both sides worked towards concrete measures to consolidate and strengthen the ties in these areas, which have been reflected in the Agreed Minutes signed by MOS(PK) and the Tanzanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Dar es Salaam on 9th July 2013.



INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-VI

AMERICAS

- (i) America, United States of
- (ii) South & Central America

(i) America, United States of

442. Remarks by the Foreign Secretary at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Washington, D.C., February 21, 2013.

A 21st Century India-United States partnership for peace, prosperity and progress

Thank you very much President Jessica Matthews,

Friends of India and the United States,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

Since the President of the US has already decided to call the India-US relationship a defining one, I have decided to call my presentation more modestly, "A 21st Century India-US partnership for peace, prosperity and progress".

Thank you therefore for this opportunity to share some thoughts with you on a theme that broadly takes up the conversation from where I left it last year. And as I did last year, let me say that it is remarkable how much has changed in our relationship since I was here a quarter of a century ago.

The theme is therefore timely: Are we on track so that one of the young diplomats in your Embassy in Delhi or ours in Washington could find, a quarter century from now, that another positive paradigm shift has taken place? I wouldn't assume any one can see upto 2038, but I hope to suggest some ideas to take stock of where the relationship is, and to consider the way forward as a new Administration establishes itself in the United States so that we do keep on track.

In doing so I trust I will not be accused of plagiarism as your esteemed institution recently released a paper by my friend Ashley Tellis with the subheading that encapsulated the task at hand. The subtitle was "Sustaining the transformation in U.S.-India relations". The headline was of course eye catching: "Opportunities unbound". But headlines often leave one wondering. Like the one in the news paper which said "Squad helps dog bite victim". Not all readers clearly saw dog bites as an adjective and not a suggestion of the squad's assistance to the dog!

Anyway for me the subject is clear – I am part of the squad called upon to sustain the remarkable transformation that has brought the U.S. and India closer together than we have ever been in the past. And I deem this an extraordinary privilege.

To an audience such as this, I do not need to dwell on history—or the historical nature—of this transformation. But it is worth emphasizing that the nature of this change has been unprecedented. The centrepiece was the India-U.S. civil nuclear arrangement and all that went into it and has since emerged from it.

The problem, of course, is that everything since that definitive moment tends to be compared with the audacity of what we dared to do together in putting this arrangement in place. This places a somewhat-unfair strain of expectation. But I think it is also misplaced. Because the truth of it is that much that has happened since is equally significant in the game of nations in which we have evolved a “new normal” in the relationship.

Let me cite a few instances of what I mean by the new normal, going beyond the regular exchanges between our Heads of State and Government, both bilaterally and at multilateral events, and the Strategic Dialogue which has unprecedented levels of Ministerial participation on both sides.

It is now normal that we have over one hundred visits at the senior official and higher level exchanges per year.

It is normal that our dialogue architecture covers the gamut of governmental activity—from social sector measures to trade and global financial policy coordination; from energy to defence, counter-terrorism and homeland security. At our inter-departmental review meeting, which we held in the MEA in New Delhi in the beginning of January, we identified over 30 dialogue mechanisms, connecting almost all major departments of our Government.

And it is now entirely normal that our foreign offices consult each other on a wide range of global and regional challenges. Already we have held three rounds of a trilateral between the US, Japan and India, and several rounds of bilateral consultations on East Asia. Just two days ago, we hosted the second round of our trilateral dialogue with Afghanistan. We hold regular consultations on strategic security issues, covering non-

proliferation, disarmament and export controls; we are working together closely on India's membership of the four multilateral export control regimes.

We hope to expand these dialogues to cover many more areas of interest. And that is also now normal.

In short, in a few years, consultation has become a habit. We have created a comfortable space to exchange opinions as trusted partners, with both candour and often convergence. This is not just because we enjoy talking; that we do—or being connected! As India's horizons expand with the growth of our strategic and economic interests, we will need to talk regularly about real-world concerns to the US, which continues to have both critical interests and a vital presence across the entire globe. This is as it should be in a partnership that is genuinely strategic. There is no hint here, however, of taking lessons from each other.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I do not suggest that the partnership is already at a stage of maturity or that we are in complete accord on all issues. If that were so, I and some of you would be looking for other avenues of gainful employment! I am aware that converting the civil nuclear agreement into the expected commercial arrangements is still a work in progress. In a more general sense, it needs recognition that it is probably not in the nature of either of our nations to be in complete agreement with any other on many issues.

Someone said we are perhaps not on the same page. To mix metaphors, even if we cannot be on the same line of the script on all occasions, both of us are increasingly willing to read from the same score even if we do not always play the notes the same way. I want to reiterate this point, because the mutuality of benefit in our partnership is measured in more than merely dollars and cents, important as those are.

It is also measured in a growing realization that the rise of a democratic, pluralistic and liberal India is in the fundamental interests of the United States. (It is not called the peaceful rise of India – because it is self-evidently peaceful). And that a strong, prosperous, innovative, globally engaged, United States is fundamentally in India's interest. We in India have no evangelical tradition, but we share the conception that the spread of democracy, open societies, and rule-based multilateral frameworks,

will shape a better world order. At the more mundane level of how we see India's growing interests converging with US Strategic outlook, let me outline a few broad areas.

I will start with our own continent, Asia. I think I should address a misconception that has secured the force of conviction through multiple reiteration. India does not harbour misgivings over your re-engaging—or rebalancing, or indeed, pivoting—towards Asia.

While I recognize that the policy is still evolving, enhanced American economic, diplomatic and maritime engagement in the development of the Indo-Pacific region takes forward what is a recognized part of independent Asia's experience. Moreover, it synchronizes with India's own enhanced engagement with our extended neighbourhood. The most recent example of this extended neighbourhood was the commemorative summit of ASEAN and India, marking 10 years of partnership, at which almost all ten ASEAN Heads of State were present in New Delhi. This is premised on our conviction that regional connectivity, economic integration, development and cooperative security are the surest guarantors of peace and stability across our region.

This is the spirit in which we have engaged in the East Asia Summit and the past discussions on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. It was and with this in mind that we worked to bring the U.S. into the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) as an Observer.

Our engagement with partners in South-east Asia and beyond must contribute to the creation of a mutually-acceptable regional security and economic architecture. Such architecture must be based on commonly-accepted international rules. It should facilitate respect for international law, freedom of navigation, maritime commerce and communications. We are happy to work with all our partners towards evolving a larger regional architecture for the whole of Asia.

By virtue of our geography and historical connections, we have vital interests both in the heartland and in the rimlands of Asia. It is useful therefore that on our neighbourhood and beyond, we have an increasingly-improved dialogue with the U.S. We welcome the increased

frequency of our consultation on most regional issues of mutual interest and the improved texture of these conversations.

Afghanistan is one of the key areas in which we need to continue to hold close and candid consultations. It is also an area in which there is greater need for us to be absolutely frank with each other.

To start with, we sincerely respect and honour the significant sacrifices made by our American and Afghan partners in securing and reconstructing Afghanistan. India too has given lives and has spent almost two billion dollars in reconstruction assistance. And we intend to remain engaged with Afghanistan and its other international partners. We continue to support efforts to bring Afghanistan into regional connectivity frameworks. We are also helping lead the effort to transform the economy of Afghanistan, including in its evolution to a trade and investment-based economy.

Why is India involved? Very simply, history has taught us that whatever happens in Afghanistan has and will continue to affect our security directly and materially. We have not forgotten the terrorist havens that targeted us, springing up as Afghanistan descended into chaos in the 1990s. And obviously, we do not want that to happen again.

It is for this reason that internationally-accepted red lines must be respected in whatever reconciliation models are being considered. So also, actions in support of the political transition should not undermine Afghan institutions of governance. We all need a credible government after 2014 as well. But most of all, we are yet to see any evidence that supports the notion of a dividing line separating Al Qaeda from other terrorist and extremist groups, or indeed, that these groups and those who support them have either had an epiphany or made a strategic reassessment of their objectives.

To us, it makes little sense to draw lines of distinction that most of these groups or their sponsors are themselves not prepared to do, either in word or deed.

In this context, I cannot overemphasize the point that terrorism is and will remain a pre-eminent security challenge for both our countries. Our convergence on the source and the nature of the threat in our region has

never been greater. It is therefore a challenge that provides us an opportunity for enhanced cooperation in combating terror and protecting our people from it. This is even more of an imperative today, as we move into a period of significant uncertainty in the next few years. Behind this regional concern lies a general conviction which we have about combating terror, that led us to pledge support of about U.S.\$ 1 million at the donor conferences even on the situation in Mali, which is quite distant from us.

Not surprisingly, counter-terrorism is a key dimension of our partnership. Quite obviously, it also has a strong public resonance. It is an area of our work which we must continue to strengthen, including in exchanging information and working to bring terrorists to justice. We are aware of the specificities of legal procedure and their requirements but we need to commit to the goal of assisting our authorities in the pursuit of justice.

Cyber-security, to which the President of the United States made a reference, and counter-piracy are also areas in which our two countries can work together, particularly since the terrorist threat folds into these areas of challenges. We already have working groups dealing with cyber security issues, and feel that there is much more we can achieve together, including in operational aspects of managing and mitigating these challenges.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Further afield on our west, we are faced with a complex situation in the Gulf region and Iran. Our relations with the GCC region are vital, self evidently so, with around 5 million of our people working there and a significant source of energy supply. We have very old ties with Iran, which emerged as a critical and reliable source of oil over many decades. We have a beneficial economic relationship covering trade in food, medicine and other everyday commodities. Yet we also recognize and emphasize the need for Iran to fulfil its international obligations and to address questions raised in the IAEA about its nuclear programme to restore confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. We sincerely hope that the talks to be held in Kazakhstan—I believe on the 26th of this month—will make some progress in resolving this issue.

From where we are situated, Iran is an essential element in our access to Afghanistan and in the medium term to Central Asia; it affords us the access that we are prevented from having directly. Iran also, as I said, situated in that region where we have vital economic interests and where millions of our citizens work. For these reasons, it matters greatly that we can continue to have quiet bilateral conversations on this matter.

We also have shared interested in the democratic development and economic growth in the rest of South Asia—that's a long theme and I will leave this to questions after this. We have opportunities ahead for building on these shared interests.

In the Middle East, we share concerns over the crisis in Syria and the instability in northern Africa. India has supported the democratic aspirations of the people of the region, but have been cautious about externally-enforced change. In general, we believe that external involvement only fuels instability. In effect, the search for military solutions to political challenges has created many humanitarian crises, and has pushed the region on a slippery slope towards civil strife and, as we now see, the spread of weaponry into dangerous hands.

Looking eastward of India, we are working to enhance the full range of our relationship with Myanmar, enhance our historic links with that neighbour and take forward our shared interests in the contemporary setting. We are encouraged by the changes in internal and external policies of that country. We continue our dialogue with the Government—we have had a number of interactions with the President and the Speaker—and also our engagement with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who paid us a visit in November. The historic visit of President Obama a few months ago, and the easing of sanctions should help Myanmar process of re-engagement with the world and restore its historic role in the region.

Even on global and extra-regional issues, ladies and gentlemen, we are developing the habit of broader cooperation. Our Prime Minister and President Obama agreed in 2010 that we would begin to work together in trilateral mode, in capacity-enhancement projects in Africa and also in Afghanistan.

We have now put in place the software for an IT-enabled Open Government Platform—using IT to bring open governance to the people—

in joint partnership with the Government of Rwanda, and we intend to expand this soon in partnership with Ghana.

Similarly, we are working with USAID to offer agriculture training programmes at Indian institutes, for specialists from Kenya, Malawi and Liberia

One of India's leading women's self-help agencies, SEWA, is working with USAID and the Government of Afghanistan to offer "train-the-trainers" courses to Afghan women so that women can be empowered to earn livelihoods in their country.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

What does all of this mean to our bilateral relationship? Well, quite a lot, actually. It feeds in to and binds on growing convergences around.

Defence is a key pillar of our bilateral cooperation. It bears mentioning that from a state where this trade was, to borrow Ambassador Blackwill's inimitable phrase, flat as a chapati, there is today nearly \$9 billion in bilateral defence trade. I dined out on this figure when I spoke in Washington last year also. But it will grow over time; it will assuredly not be stuck like the chapati jokes.

Our armed forces are developing the habit of closer cooperation through training together and through bilateral military exercises. Today, our armed forces conduct the maximum number of military exercises with U.S armed forces.

We are currently in the midst of an effort to find ways in which we resolve process-related rigidities in our respective systems. We do need to find ways of making procedures more compatible if the partnership is to develop to mutual benefit.

We also hope to find ways in which we can genuinely transform our defence partnership by significantly strengthening the technological dimension of the partnership, so that it has a mutually-beneficial impact on the development of India's defence industry.

Trade and economic cooperation continue to increase. Both services and goods trade are up, and we are hopeful that in the near future, our bilateral Trade Policy Forum can be held; a meeting is overdue.

Just before I walked in here, I was reminded that there is a reference in Ashley's book to cooperation in space, and I entirely commend this suggestion as there is significant compatibility between the capacities of our two countries in space.

It is essential that we re-engage in a more focused manner especially because of the changed policy environment in India. As you know, the Government has announced a range of reform measures to make India a more attractive investment destination. The effort has been to address a long-standing demand from our own businesses most of all, for second and third generation reforms, which have been pushed through with significant political will and which we hope will evoke a suitable response, not only from our own industry but also from our foreign partners.

These new measures offer significant openings in single and multi-brand retail, aviation and the financial sector. Some measures have already been rolled out—and companies have started opening stores. [Brooks Brothers, Fossil, Gant.] Ikea of Sweden has also obtained clearance to set up its own units in India. Government has also pushed forward on raising the ceiling on FDI in financial services as well, although this last item requires Parliamentary approval. The effort is in place, and we hope for a positive outcome.

Meanwhile, however, we hear from our U.S. partners that there are still elements on which clarity is awaited, at least in terms of new policies in force. Ultimately, these are business decisions. However, these waters can only be tested by taking the plunge in what has consistently been proved to be a large and profitable market. I do recall a study in which the academic was hard-put to find a multi national company that had lost money in India.

I should also underline that the process of reform and policy change is most sustainable when it is recognized that the policy measures India is taking lie in its own interests. We will do what we need to do for our own sake; however, it should be recognized that what we do will naturally create benefit for our partners.

We also hear complaints on both sides on a number of matters. Procurement policies that are intended to promote industrial growth in India are raised with us. Just as the U.S. has also identified industry as

the key driver of employment, we too need to do so. The simple fact is: we cannot harness the demographic dividend promised by our young population without developing industry. The Services sector alone cannot help us absorb millions of young people.

On our side too, we have concerns regarding non-immigrant visas and our inability to initiate even a conversation about a totalization agreement. This is necessary, we feel, as it would begin to address the concerns of the law-abiding, tax-paying expatriate Indians working in the U.S. It is this group of people who serve, at the same time, as the strongest and most committed advocates for our relationship in both countries. This is particularly difficult to explain when we have concluded such Agreements with other major G-8 economies including, recently, with Canada.

We note your deadline to conclude negotiations for a Trans-Pacific Partnership, and your plans to start discussing a comprehensive Transatlantic Partnership, and at the same time, we are moving forward with Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreements with ASEAN, Singapore, Japan and Korea. And we are also in dialogue with the EU.

We have been talking about a Bilateral Investment Treaty as well, but not necessarily with the due sense of urgency. Four meetings since negotiations started in 2007 does not suggest a great deal of haste. Much as it might surprise, we want this as much as you do because it is also of interest to us.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Important as they are, market access issues—in goods and services—can either be seen in perspective, or they can be made the defining narrative.

While we must work to sort out these challenges, it is not in our interest to let such issues define the relationship. This is why we have proposed to create an ad hoc clearing-house mechanism to discuss market access issues in the Trade Policy Forum.

I believe that we also need to find a new positive narrative that can bind our countries closer together. One such opportunity, I feel, is in the energy sector. Without assured access to energy inputs in sufficient quantities, we will not be able to sustain our economic development.

Therefore, an enduring India-U.S. partnership in energy should not only cover technological and regulatory aspects, but also establish commercial partnerships in energy. As the U.S. evolves from being an importer of energy to a net exporter of energy, we hope that we can develop mutually-beneficial partnerships in the hydrocarbons sector, in renewable energy, biofuels and in new energy-efficient technologies.

In each of these cases, there can be immediate benefits for both sides. Let me cite a few examples:

Your interest in exporting natural gas and intention to export to non-FTA countries, even if just agreed upon, would help stabilize internationally-traded LNG prices which are at historic highs.

Indian investment in the oil and gas sectors will not only help add to energy transportation linkages, but also to refining and shipment facilities here. Long-term partnerships between us in energy will also help us in India diversify our sources of supply much more globally.

Bio-fuels from non-food crops and energy efficiency are two areas identified in our energy dialogue. Grid management, self-healing and smart grid technologies, and the capacity to bring renewable energy on to grids could be mutually beneficial areas of exchange.

Our regulations and processes involving large projects are being re-examined by a Cabinet Committee on Investment. Among the first which the Cabinet Committee has taken up are those related to energy. Progress is being made on simplifying the approval process for oil and gas exploration blocks. US companies have world-recognized strengths in this industry, and we hope that as we move ahead, we will be able to draw in new players to India. I believe that the exciting new finds off the coast of East Africa, and north-west Australia, will lead to greater interest in other areas of the Indian Ocean basin.

The extraordinary transformation caused by the shale gas boom could also bring larger quantities of US coal into a global market facing supply constraints.

So as I see it, there is much that we can talk about.

Education is also, similarly, a strategic area for our partnership. In being part of the reform and upgradation of our higher learning infrastructure,

you will help support modernization of the supply line of trained workers on the other. Think about it: millions of young Indians will be coming onto the job market in the next few decades. The U.S. can, through partnerships with new educational institutions in India, enable them to be productively and gainfully-employed.

The education partnership can span the entire range of options: at one level, we would like to create mutually-beneficial partnerships in state-of-the-art institutions of learning. These could include engineering institutes, management institutes, pure science research facilities and social science colleges. This would also provide a base upon which we develop our growing partnership in science, technology and innovation, and in fulfilment of the vision of our Prime Minister and President Obama, in what is called the "Singh-Obama Knowledge Initiative".

We also need to develop specific immediately-employable skills. We need better community colleges in India. Earlier this month, we made a good beginning with a special event focusing on creating community colleges and how they would work in India. As many as 12 American community colleges were represented, for which Under Secretary Sonnenshine visited India.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me endeavour to draw my presentation to a few clear conclusions and recommendations on the way forward.

First, from our perspective, closer and more effective cooperation between us on terrorism is critical. There is strong public support in India for this aspect of our partnership. Obviously, this has an impact on our bilateral and trilateral consultations on Afghanistan and the region. We recognize and welcome your enduring commitment to the security and stability of Afghanistan. We hope that our concerns will also factor into your calculations.

Second, the relationship between us must now stand squarely on its own merits. It has taken decades for us to stop viewing each other from the prism of each others' relationships with third countries. As you recalibrate your presence in Afghanistan, we hope that the transformation of our relationship can accelerate, based on the unique merits of what each side brings to the table.

Third, we need to do more to make defence cooperation part of the new normal. We can do so by finding simple process solutions to enable your defence companies to make value-for-money bids to meet our defence requirements. It would also help for us to evolve our relationship towards co-design and joint production of defence material. In short, let's actually move to make this happen, rather than inviting each other to move first.

Fourth, let us recognize that trade and economic cooperation must be about more than finding fault with each others' policies. Both of us need significant investment in industry and manufacture and the jobs that they create. We must find ways to work more closely together in this context. There will be value for U.S. companies to engage in our efforts to build several industrial ecosystems in India in a manner that is compatible with each other's market or employment interests. We believe the US industrial and manufacturing sector could witness a significant revival led by your energy and chemical industries. We ourselves expect to return to a high GDP growth trajectory—and by high, we mean over 7.5%—in over a year's time. And we expect that the policy emphasis on manufacturing will start showing tangible results. As India industrialises, the scope for beneficial cooperation will only increase, whether in terms of R&D, technology agreements, integration of manufacturing processes, or trade.

Fifth, we cannot allow the differences we have in trade in goods or movement of services to dominate the discourse. At the same time, we have to create forums to discuss these issues openly and with a forward-looking approach.

Sixth, energy and education are strategic openings for the US to invest in the future of India. As many of our American friends remind us, enabling the rise of India is, or should be, a strategic end in itself for the US. These are sectors in which the US would be part of such a strategy.

Seventh, we have begun to work together well in a number of multilateral fora—the G-20 is a case in point. We appreciate the support of the U.S. for our membership in various multilateral export control regimes. There is also room for us to do more together as our interests coincide with yours in the maintenance of a strong and stable global and regional

architecture. However, to keep this process on the rails, it is important that the signalling remains positive. We have been told that the U.S. has placed a strategic bet on India's rise; therefore it makes little sense to accept strategic arguments from those working to make you lose that bet.

And finally, we need to display towards each other more of that rare commodity: patience. You have demonstrated that in abundant measure – listening to me for half an hour of talk without a single slogan or catchy phrase to explain how much progress we feel we have made. But the evolution of our relationship cannot be conducted in fitful leaps, from one transformative moment to another. Instead, we must recognize that the process of drawing us closer together will need consistent attention, regular consultation, regular cooperation, and continued high level engagement.

It is essential that we continue to invest in our engagement at the highest levels, ladies and gentlemen—and this is my final point here—because this partnership is really in our respective national interests. Just this morning, I read with great interest the outstanding case made yesterday by Secretary Kerry at the University of Virginia, on why the resources spent on foreign policy are in the fundamental interests of your great country. And he then referred specifically to the middle class Indians creating jobs here. And it not only struck me that the case he made could quite easily have been made by my own Minister, but equally, that our mutual investment in the India-US partnership is actually all about making our people safer and more prosperous. It is also about jointly addressing the growing complexities of a world in which the people of India and their American partners face many of the same global challenges. And it is in working towards addressing this strategic reality that our partnership will be defined in the decades ahead.

We look forward to keeping our leadership engaged in this vital relationship, both at the level of the two governments, but also with the support of friends of this remarkable partnership, which is all of you here today.

Thank you



443. Foreign Secretary's visit to United States, February 20-22, 2013.

New Delhi, February 22, 2013.

- Foreign Secretary Shri Ranjan Mathai completed a series of very useful and important interactions at the State Department, including a brief call upon the new U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. John Kerry on February 21, 2013.
- In his meeting with Secretary Kerry, Foreign Secretary extended to him the good wishes of our leadership, and their congratulations upon his appointment as Secretary of State. The Foreign Secretary discussed the proposed visit to India by Secretary Kerry for the Third Round of the Bilateral Strategic Dialogue. While dates for this being finalized, Secretary Kerry reaffirmed his invitation to the External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid to visit the United States soon.
- Secretary Kerry offered his sincere condolences at the loss of life as a result of the terror attacks in Hyderabad, and the condemnation of the government and the people of the United States. This was reiterated at all of Foreign Secretary's meetings with United States officials.
- Foreign Secretary also called upon Deputy Secretary of State William Burns and Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman. He had a conversation over lunch with Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and Environment Robert Hormats as well as extensive and wide-ranging consultations with Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman during which the two sides covered bilateral, regional and global issues.
- In these discussions, the importance of the bilateral partnership in key areas, including energy, trade and economic development, as well as our existing regional and international consultations were reaffirmed.

- In the year ahead, it is intended that the two sides would increase the frequency and pace of bilateral consultations, including at official and political levels.
- Foreign Secretary set out a detailed blueprint of the bilateral relationship in an address on India and the United States in the 21st century, covering all areas of the bilateral partnership at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on February 21, 2013. The text of the speech is available at Remarks by the Foreign Secretary at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace



444. Official Spokesperson's Press Statement on the Boston Bombings.

New Delhi, April 16, 2013.

The President and Prime Minister of India have already strongly condemned the multiple bombings in Central Boston on April 15. The solidarity and sympathy of the people of India have been expressed by India's leadership, including in a letter of condolence sent by the Prime Minister to the President of the United States of America earlier this morning.

As has been underlined by India's leaders, India remains committed to the effort to defeat terrorism and to uphold the values that define democratic nations such as ours.

Although no reports have as yet been received of injuries caused to Indian nationals as a result of this despicable act, our Embassy in Washington DC and our Consulate General in New York have been placed on alert. Indian nationals with concerns to report may do so at the Embassy's emergency number, (001) 202 939 7000.

* The Spokesman was referring to the two bomb blasts in Boston when the marathon race was in progress which killed three persons including a child and many injured.

445. Union Home Minister Reviews Cooperation With United States of America in High Level Meetings.

New Delhi, May 23, 2013.

Union Home Minister Shri Sushilkumar Shinde, currently visiting United States of America met senior Government functionaries including Secretary for Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, Attorney General Eric Holder and FBI Director Robert Muller.

Shri Shinde also led the Indian delegation for second round of the Homeland Security Dialogue with Secretary for Homeland Security Janet Napolitano leading US delegation. The two leaders emphasized that cooperation between India and the United States in internal security was a key pillar of the India-US Global Strategic Partnership. They also recognized that such cooperation was imperative, in view of commonality of the threats that confront the two countries. They welcomed progress made over the recent past in developing practical steps to enhance the security of the citizens and to prevent the misuse of increasingly-interconnected global financial, transportation and communication systems. Both the countries agreed to enhance cooperation in capacity building programmes and to identify technologies and equipment useful for Indian law enforcement agencies to source in the United States.

During the dialogue two leaders received reports from the six sub-groups that constitute the Homeland Security Dialogue and welcomed progress being achieved in substantive terms. They applauded the fact that specific cooperation programmes were identified and emphasized the need for results from this Dialogue. Shri Shinde invited Secretary Napolitano to visit India in 2014 to co-Chair the next round of the Dialogue. Both the countries agreed to carry out a review of the process a few months before that, under the stewardship of Union Home Secretary and the US Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

The outcomes of these meetings and the overall strategic perspective within which this Dialogue took place are outlined in the Joint Communique released by the Home Minister Shri Shinde and Secretary Napolitano after their meeting.

Home Minister Shri Shinde met US Attorney General Eric Holder on May 21. The two leaders recognized the compelling reasons for closer cooperation between India and the United States based on the larger strategic objective underlined by President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during the US President's State Visit to India in November 2010. They also agreed that the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Department of Justice should work together institutionally, so as to ensure the best possible outcomes within the laws of the two countries, to address pending issues relating to extradition, execution of Letters Rogatory and Red Corner Notices, as well as other areas of cooperation in law enforcement, counter terrorism and judicial processes.

Shri Shinde also met Director of Federal Bureau of Investigation of USA, Robert Muller and reviewed areas of cooperation and issues of interest. The FBI and Indian agencies have remained in close contact, and it was agreed that the process of inter-agency cooperation would be developed further, in this context.

After the completion of his official meetings, Home Minister Shri Shinde and senior members of his delegation left for a day-visit to Boston, during which Shri Shinde is expected to have a detailed briefing of the successful investigation of the April 15 Boston Marathon bombing.



446. Media Briefing by Joint Secretary (Americas) on US Secretary of State's Visit to India.

New Delhi, June 22, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here today. Let me begin with an apology for having kept you waiting. Sometimes there are situations which are beyond our control and this was one of those days. So, I beg your indulgence on that delay.

Let me introduce to you Mr. Vikram Doraiswami, Joint Secretary (Americas), who will talk to you about what you, I suppose, have come here for. Before that, let me just give you a brief outline of the announcement I have to make and then Vikram will fill you in with other details. This announcement relates to the visit of US Secretary of State John Kerry.

The External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid, will host the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, on his visit to New Delhi from June 23rd to 25th. This is Secretary Kerry's first visit to India as Secretary of State, and his first meeting with the External Affairs Minister, since both of them assumed their respective offices.

Secretary Kerry is scheduled to arrive here on the 23rd in the afternoon. We will be providing you a detailed advisory regarding media opportunities on 23rd, 24th and 25th. The programme is still being finalized, and as soon as this is finalized this will be put on the website.

Secretary Kerry is visiting India primarily for the fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue which will be held on the 24th. During the Strategic Dialogue the External Affairs Minister and Secretary Kerry will review progress in bilateral relations and ties over the past year and exchange views on regional and international issues.

On the bilateral side the focus will be on the expansion of cooperation in the areas of defence and security, trade and investment, science and technology, clean energy and environment. It is expected that following the discussions several new initiatives to strengthen bilateral cooperation in these areas in particular will be identified. In addition to the Strategic

Dialogue, Secretary Kerry is also expected to co-chair, with the Minister for Human Resource Development, the India-US Higher Education Dialogue. This will be on 25th June prior to his departure.

These are the broad outlines of Secretary Kerry's engagements. In addition he will also have some other media events which will be put out after consultation with the US Embassy.

I will now request Vikram Doraiswami, Joint Secretary (Americas), to make brief opening remarks on issues that are to be considered, following which you are free to ask questions on those. Vikram, over to you now.

Joint Secretary (Americas) (Shri Vikram Kumar Doraiswami):

Thank you very much and please can I add my own apology for keeping you all waiting. I was called away for a frenetic last minute briefing for my bosses - we all report to different people - and so I did get delayed much beyond what was conscionable. So, my apologies for that.

This is Secretary of State's first visit to India in his current capacity. As friends in the media know, he has visited India before as a Senator and as Chair of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He is of course no stranger to India, but this is his first visit in his current capacity. It comes some five months after his appointment to his current post. So, we are very happy to have him come so soon in his tenure.

It is also External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid's first interaction with the Secretary of State of the United States. Indeed it is the first high political interaction in the second term of the Obama Presidency. So, it is part of the process of taking forward the India-US relationship which currently is one of our more intense and more in-depth partnerships as it covers interaction across most of the spheres of government work.

We have had a very busy agenda with the United States for the first six months of this year. It has included high-level visits on both sides plus dialogues covering most of the areas of our cooperation. Taking that into account the Strategic Dialogue is our premier mechanism in the dialogue architecture which is both an opportunity to carry out some stocktaking of the relationship, what has happened over the past one year since the last round of the dialogue, but also to try and set a new vision ahead for what we expect to do in the remaining six months of this year and the

first half of next year before the next round of Strategic Dialogue.

So, we will look at having a detailed conversation more or less around four broad thematic pillars. One would be the bilateral relationship which would cover our bilateral economic and security aspects of our relationship. It would cover energy and it would cover, well that covers under more or less one strategic pillar. The other would be the detailed political consultations that we have with the United States on regional and other issues. The third major pillar would really be global issues in which we consult each other on developments relating to multilateral and other fora including in the evolution of a regional architecture in Asia. That is the broad format in which we would have these discussions.

The Secretary of State will also be meeting Prime Minister on Monday the 24th. So, those are the two sort of book-ended arrangements. The Secretary of State is expected to be traveling with a high-level delegation which will also include the new Secretary for Energy Dr. Ernest Moniz. Also, the rest of the delegation would include the Science and Technology Administrator, the NASA Director, the USAID Director - these are all heads of Departments and in a sense the terminology is a bit misleading otherwise - the Pacific Commander Admiral Locklear, and senior officials from the Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security, and so on.

I think that about covers opening remarks. I would be happy to take any questions.

Official Spokesperson: The floor is open for any questions that you may have on this issue.

Q: Mr. Doraiswami, I just wanted to know if you also have cyber security on the agenda and also specifically the snooping that came to light in recent times?

Joint Secretary (AMS): Cyber security is part of our dialogue architecture. It is part of the Homeland Security Dialogue plus we also have a detailed interaction between the National Security Council on our side with the American side. So, this is certainly an opportunity for us to take up all issues on our agenda with them.

Q: *Sir, what are you going to talk in the meeting on higher studies?*

Joint Secretary (AMS): *I am sorry my Hindi is not upto the mark, if you permit I would like to answer in Hindi?*

Higher education dialogue will happen on Tuesday the 25th. Our Minister for Human Resource Development also went to the United States in early May, as you all know. The way we look at it is, for us to realize our demographic dividend the most important opportunity for us is to be able to invest in training our people. So, there are two parts to that. One part is what the US calls community colleges and what we call technical education. We need to ensure that our technical education or community colleges actually produce people who are trained enough to get jobs in industry and, therefore, make the training of community college trainees directly linked to the end user which is industry.

As I understand, the Ministry of Human Resource Development is rolling out a large number of community colleges in India, 200 new community colleges are to come up in the next few months using existing facilities. So, the US will be a partner to a very large number of this. We hope to have specific cooperation items put down for technical education.

At the same time we are also looking at higher education as in premier colleges of India and cooperation with the United States' colleges. On that part there were a number of regulatory issues that the US was looking at in terms of policy. We understand the UGC has taken those on board and there is an effort now to try and find ways in which not just the US but a variety of other advanced countries' higher education premier institutes can cooperate with our universities.

The third part is online learning. Many countries have excellent capacity for what is called massive online open courses (MOOCs). We are very keen on the capacity to use the internet greatly to reach out to a number of young people who are otherwise left out of capacity to reach higher education. So, all this will be taken up. The Secretary of State will jointly launch the Higher Education Dialogue with our HRM on Tuesday morning. This will be carried on thereafter at the Secretary to Government level through the day which will include Vice-Chancellors from Indian universities, education specialists. So, it is a full day's programme. It is not just a small event.

Q: Under this rubric of regional issues, is India going to raise the concerns about proposed talks of the United States with Taliban which are being talked about? They deal with Afghanistan also. Are we going to raise those issues? Secondly, what are the important issues so far as homeland security is concerned?

Joint Secretary (AMS): Afghanistan is of course part of our region. So, definitely it is on our agenda. And we would be interested to listen to the US since they are one of the lead players in this process as to what is happening over the last few days and their current engagements there to compare notes with them on what we understand of what is happening. Definitely it is on our agenda.

On homeland security, we have just had the second round of the Homeland Security Dialogue in the United States. It is a process that was set up after President Obama's visit in 2010. We have had only two rounds of it so far at the Ministerial level. But this last round we had identified under it we have six Working Groups. One deals with what is called the global supply chain, which essentially, to make it simple, is all issues relating to trade and commerce, movement of goods and people through ports, seaports and airports, and ensuring the security and integrity of the movement of goods and people from both sides. So, there is airport security, port security, the best ways of doing things in a manner that is least invasive to people and to the movement of goods, but yet at the same time provides high-end security

The second Working Group deals with illicit finance and counterfeit currency which is very important for us given the significant challenge we face with counterfeit currency. The third Working Group deals with technology, which essentially is our interest in securing technologies for homeland security which are used by US law enforcement authorities.

The fourth Group deals with cyber security which deals with the operational aspects of conversation on securing critical infrastructure and preventing hacking. We are very interested in this part for obvious reasons, but our interest in this predates many of these disclosures. So, before any of you think that this is something new, this has been one of the original Working Groups from the start. So, the conversation that we wish to have with the United States on cyber security covers operational parts of law enforcement in cyber security.

The fifth Working Group deals with capacity building in which we look at the opportunities for our police forces and our law enforcement authorities to obtain training opportunities with premier law enforcement authorities in the US. And the sixth and last Working Group is the Working Group that deals with what is called Megacity Policing. As our population becomes more and more urban, the needs of high-end policing and better quality of policing services has been felt, and we look at many of the larger American cities which have used technology and policing skills in very high end bringing together of technology including fusion centres that transmit data both ways between local community and State level law enforcement authorities to federal law enforcement authorities. So, there is a lot that we can share in terms of homeland security with the US.

Q: Are shale gas exports and DTI on the agenda? And the status of DTI please?

Joint Secretary (AMS): Shale gas is a very important part of what we want to talk to the United States about. We are very interested in the opportunity for expanding our energy cooperation. We already have an India-US Energy Dialogue which is co-chaired by Deputy-Chairman Ahluwalia sahab, and by the now the new Energy Secretary. That next round is to take place in India. So, we will be offering dates for that. But over and above the discourse, this has verticals relating to new and renewable energy, hydrocarbons, coal, power, etc.

Our interest in the hydrocarbons piece is particularly strong now as the US is on its way to becoming a net exporter of energy, both in the acquisition of energy resources, in terms of getting permission to import gas from the United States based on the US law that currently requires prior clearance of all exports to non-FTA signatory countries with the US. So, a number of our companies have already lined up purchase agreements with US companies which require to be cleared by the US Department of Energy. That process is on. We have continued to flag our interest in this over the last several months. We have been assured that the processes will be taken forward and indeed we already have one which has already come through directly for India which will export gas to GAIL.

But we are also interested in the US capacity in terms of technology, capital and regulatory experience in managing shale gas. We need to look at whether we have the resources and if we do have the resources, how best can we utilize them in a manner that secures the interest of the citizens and also deploys the highest possible technology to it. So, this is definitely on the agenda for the Secretary of State's visit.

As regards DTI, not just the DTI but the India-US defence relationship is very much on the agenda and that will include conversations on the DTI.

Q: Is there any specific proposal for space collaboration also because the NASA Administrator is coming?

Joint Secretary (AMS): Yes, there are. We are hoping to finalise a few more things on the space side. Secretary (Space) will also be there on our side. So, we are really looking forward to further develop our partnership in space.

Q: On the trade and economics side, can you amplify on some of the key issues which will figure prominently in the discussion? Most of the trade-related irritants are on the American side and they seem to be very unhappy with some of the issues relating to patents and copyrights and all that. Could you just give us an insight?

Joint Secretary (AMS): We are quite happy to discuss any issues that they want to table on the trade and economics side but we want to begin with the fact that they now have a new US Trade Representative who has recently been confirmed two days ago in his new post. USTR Mike Froman takes charge shortly. We would like to resume the trade policy forum which is co-led by the USTR and our Commerce Minister. We hope to have a meeting very soon of the India-US CEOs Forum. There are ample fora to discuss whatever issues that might have arisen in the bilateral trade and economic relationship, which I must emphasise are on both sides. There are market access issues that we have, and those that they have. We can clearly discuss what we think are areas of divergence and areas of convergence and find solutions to these.

Part of the problem has been that because many of these mechanisms have not met in a long time, in over two years, there has really been no forum to bring these issues up. So, these then tend to spill out into the

public domain rather than find resolution. But issues on the American side as well as issues on our side will also be raised.

Q: Vikram, you spoke about a new architecture in Asia. What is this about?

Joint Secretary (AMS): There is an evolving architecture in Asia. We are not creating it ourselves but it is an ASEAN-driven process which includes the new mechanisms with which ASEAN deals with the countries of East Asia, with India, with the extra-regional great powers like the United States and Russia, that includes the East Asia Summit process, the Asian Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus Process, and the ASEAN Regional Forum. So, all these areas are now areas in which India and the United States are actually sort of associated partners in a sense. So, our conversation with them will also include conversations about how this architecture is beginning to evolve.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Joint Secretary (AMS):Of course, China is also a part of these processes.

Q: What about the visa issue? And the American nuclear suppliers seem to have a problem with our liability law and they had expressed some reservations. Our stand is that this is the law and we have to. How does that affect our proposal to import certain nuclear materials and equipment from the United States?

Joint Secretary (AMS):On visas first. Per se we are not raising this as a visa issue. We recognize the point that it is every country's sovereign right to decide whom they allow and how many people they allow and in what format they allow. The question that we are concerned about is the specificity of the US laws that apply to the temporary movement of highly-skilled personnel under what are called H1B visa, which is highly-skilled non-immigrant visas, and the movement of people on business intercompany transfers, which are L category visas in the US system. Our concern is that these are actually trade and economic relations matters rather than visa matters. It is not a consular matter in that sense.

The conversation is ongoing with the US. We need to see how the segment dealing with highly-skilled non-immigrant visas is dealt with in

the comprehensive immigration reform that the United States is taking up. We want to be very clear that we are taking up issues that have relevance for our business relationship and the provision of services by our companies to the United States. These are matters of concern for us. Insofar as the US has policies that it is looking at in the overall immigration package, whether it is Green Cards, whether it is legalization of illegal immigrants, those are matters of domestic importance to the United States. We wish them well on that process. But we have no comment to make on their internal policies on that.

It is only in terms of the H1B and the L visas that we are engaging with them and we are putting our concerns forward on behalf of Indian industry. And we are also trying to ensure that Indian industry and government can work together more closely to ensure that our concerns are duly understood by those involved in the immigration reform in the Senate and in the House of Representatives.

In terms of liability, you are correct, we have said that this is our law. But we have also said we are more than willing to engage in explaining our law to anybody who has specific queries, and we will do our best to address these queries within the four corners of the Indian law. We have nothing to hide about our law.

Q: My question is connected with the visa. Many American universities are now coming to India and a lot of students are also going to US for studies. They are facing a lot of problem for even student visa. Many visas were rejected. Will this be discussed? When we are allowing them to come to India, they should reciprocate it and allow Indian students to go there.

Joint Secretary (AMS): On visas, as I said, the issue is we have to be very careful about what we ask them to do in terms of what facilitates business and the legitimate rights of enhancing the bilateral economic relationship and the facilitation of the movement of people.

Insofar as student visa cases are concerned, the US keeps assuring us that they are doing the best they can to ensure that students with valid admission papers and the correct I-20s are able to go to the United States to study. We have no reason to disbelieve them because insofar as the economic opportunity is concerned, it is obviously a good

economic opportunity for the receiving universities. I do not see why they would not want Indian students to come because increasingly a large number of Indian students are going. We are not where we were twenty years ago. Not everybody is going on only 100 per cent scholarships. A fair number of Indians are going including on paid terms. So, obviously there is interest. And the fact that they are wanting to come and drum up studying opportunities in India suggests that this is the issue.

The issue is that the processes are complicated at times. So, maybe people are not able to fill these things up properly. We will certainly encourage the American Embassy here and the Consulates here to find the greatest possible ways of addressing these challenges. But I must also say in their defence that they have been extremely forthcoming in trying to respond to these problems including by citing pretty staggering figures of the number of visas that they are issuing every year, certainly much more than we are issuing right now.

Q: On liability law again, so you do not expect any breakthrough on finally getting the US side to be on terms with the Indian side. Is that so?

Joint Secretary (AMS): I do not know about breakthrough. We have a law and we are happy to discuss the law. If they have issues about the law, we are more than happy to clarify them. We are not expecting either them to expect us to change the law or to change their position. But if we can find clarity and a common ground on the implementation of the law in terms of nuclear business, by all means.

Q: What is India's position on the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between Maldives and the United States?

Joint Secretary (AMS): You will need to ask the Maldives that or the US that, not me.

Q: Will there be a discussion on India-US Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture, and cooperation in GM crops and biotechnology?

Joint Secretary (AMS): Agriculture is one of the themes on our agenda but largely in the sense of science and technology cooperation. We have a pretty robust programme of cooperation in science and technology as applicable to agriculture. That includes the application of science and

technology to crop details, to our Indian Council for Agricultural Research and to more scientific prediction of cropping. We are also looking at cooperation in terms of meteorology as applied to agriculture. This is dealt with on the agriculture and S&T side.

GM, I do not recall that this is part of our discourse currently. I do not think it is. Not in this dialogue at least.

Q: There have been reports that India sought temporary custody of David Headley. Has India indeed sought his temporary custody and what has been the US response to it?

Joint Secretary (AMS): Let us be clear about this. We have sought the extradition of both these individuals to start with. We will wait for the American response before we look at other options.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Joint Secretary (AMS): This was done some months ago. Quite some time ago now.

Official Spokesperson: With that I think Vikram has answered all your questions and there do not seem to be any more questions on the US. Thank you very much.



447. Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue: India-US Fact Sheet on International Security.

New Delhi, June 24, 2013.

Defense cooperation is an important aspect of U.S.-India bilateral collaboration. The defense relationship encompasses military-to-military dialogues, exercises, defense sales, professional military education exchanges, and practical cooperation. Both sides plan to continue pursuit of defense cooperation to mutual benefit. Both sides reiterated that the defense establishments of both countries should remain engaged through the process of dialogues, regular staff talks, reciprocal high level visits and other exchanges.

The bilateral defense trade has also been expanding. In this regard, the induction of the C-130J and C-17 aircraft into the Indian Air Force and of the P-8I maritime patrol aircraft into the Indian Navy is an important milestone. Both sides concur on the need to go beyond buyer-seller relations and on the opportunities for wider defense trade and industry collaboration in areas of mutual interest. Both sides are engaging in a number of ways and through diverse forms of dialogue and exchanges to progress defense cooperation.

India and the United States continue to strengthen bilateral cooperation to counterterrorist groups – including through annual Counterterrorism Joint Working Group meetings and the Homeland Security Dialogue, which last met in May 2013. Such discussions have facilitated close coordination in areas such as cyber security including, critical infrastructure protection, global supply chain security, countering counterfeit currency and illicit financial flows; mega city policing as well as cooperation in capacity building. The two countries have also cooperated on the investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators of the 2008 Mumbai attacks, and continue to work together to fight terrorism, organized crime and threats to the internal security of both countries.

India and the United States plan to soon hold another round of whole-of-government Cyber security Consultations chaired by their respective national security councils to coordinate positions on cross-cutting cyber-security issues that impact international and economic security. The Consultations consider overall bilateral cooperation on cyber-security,

cyber-security best practices, supply-chain security, and norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace. In addition, the Ministry of External Affairs and the State Department chaired the first successful meeting of a cyber experts' Strategic Cyber Policy Dialogue focused on cyber policy issues such as norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, internet freedom, internet governance, and cybercrime cooperation. Robust operational cooperation continues between India's Computer Emergency Response Team and the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team.

India and the United States are cooperating to facilitate missions to recover the remains of U.S. service members from World War II.



448. Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue: India-US Fact Sheet on Economic Collaboration.

June 24, 2013.

At the fourth India-U.S. Strategic Dialogue, India and the United States reaffirmed that economic collaboration between both governments and private sectors is a keystone of our deepening partnership. Business ties have led the way in achieving a nearly fivefold increase in bilateral trade since 2000. Annual two-way trade is more than \$100 billion, while the total two way foreign direct investment is nearing \$30 billion. These developments are drivers of innovation, economic growth, and job creation for both of our nations.

Working Together on Shared Economic Priorities

India and the United States have resolved to facilitate even greater economic benefits by engaging in robust bilateral economic discussions, working to facilitate greater trade and investment in each others' economies, and discussing opportunities and challenges our industries face. Our numerous bilateral interactions complement our engagement in multilateral fora such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Our bilateral economic cooperation includes:

Economic and Financial Partnership

Since 2010, India and the United States have engaged in an Economic and Financial Partnership (EFP) to deepen India – U.S. engagement in core economic policy areas. Annual ministerial meetings led by the Indian Minister of Finance and the U.S. Treasury Secretary , and additional discussions at the subcabinet level, have focused on macroeconomic policy, G-20 topics of mutual interest, financial sector development, infrastructure finance, anti-money laundering, and combating the financing of terrorism. The EFP meetings have featured participation of our central banks and financial sector regulators. Under the dialogue, Indian economic officials have engaged with U.S. officials and market participants in areas of relevance to India, such as attracting private investment into infrastructure financing, and government debt issuance.

Bilateral Investment Treaty Negotiations

India and the United States have engaged in bilateral investment treaty (BIT) negotiations since 2008, with the last round held in June 2012. A high-standard BIT would deepen the bilateral economic relationship and support economic growth and job creation in both countries. Both sides look to working together to move forward on negotiations.

Commercial Dialogue

Since 2000, the Commercial Dialogue facilitates discussions on key economic topics such as standards for smart grids and intelligent transportation systems, public awareness programs on Intellectual Property Rights , sustainable manufacturing practices, and support for small and medium enterprises.

Trade Policy Forum

The Trade Policy Forum (TPF) enables India and the United States to engage on a wide range of policy issues impacting bilateral trade and investment. As part of an ongoing commitment to strengthen this dialogue, both governments plan to renew expert-level discussions on trade and investment policy issues of interest to the two countries. These discussions are intended to lay the necessary groundwork for the next ministerial-level TPF meeting later this year. The TPF's Private Sector

Advisory Group (PSAG), composed of Indian and U.S. private sector leaders, plans to provide input to both governments.

Aviation Cooperation Program

Under the India – U.S Aviation Cooperation Program (ACP), the U.S. Trade and Development Agency will sponsor the fourth India – U.S. Aviation Summit in October 2013. This Summit and the many technical cooperation projects under the ACP enable engagement between India and the United States in important aspects of aviation safety, technology, and management, facilitating ties between Indian and the U.S. aviation sectors.

Information and Communication Technology Working Group

Through the Information and Communication Technology Working Group (ICTWG), Indian and U.S. officials work to promote collaboration and partnerships in a sector that is at the forefront of innovation. The ICTWG will meet in Washington later this year to discuss cooperation on equipment security, manufacturing incentives, cloud computing, and enhanced cooperation in ICT related innovations. The meetings will be held in conjunction with the private sector to present issues in the context of public-private partnership.

Antitrust Partnership

Increased cooperation between Indian Competition Agencies and the U.S. Antitrust Agencies helps ensure that markets are open and competitive. In September 2012, the Indian Competition Agencies (Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Competition Commission of India (CCI)) and the U.S. Antitrust Agencies (Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Antitrust Cooperation. Under the MOU, all agencies plan to keep each other informed of significant competition policy and enforcement developments in their jurisdictions. The MOU sets out a framework for technical cooperation and consultation on competition policy and enforcement. Since July 2010, the U.S. Agencies have conducted a dozen week-long training programs for the CCI on antitrust topics including mergers, abuse of dominance/monopolization and economic analysis; and they have provided comments and guidance on Indian competition policy. Both sides look forward to additional training

programs and staff exchanges – including placement of an FTC economist at the CCI in August 2013, a possible International Fellowship at the FTC for a CCI staff member under the U.S. SAFE WEB Act, and participation by senior officials in the third BRICS International Competition Conference hosted by the CCI in New Delhi, November 20-22, 2013.

India-U.S. CEO Forum

The India-U.S. CEO Forum is a unique gathering of CEOs and senior government officials from both countries that enables a forthright conversation about immediate policy issues that are impeding greater trade and investment between our two countries. The Forum also provides an avenue for both sides to identify ways that public-private collaboration could fill gaps in the market that neither would, nor could pursue alone. The CEO Forum has facilitated new collaborative initiatives in key areas such as infrastructure financing, aviation, clean drinking water, and renewable energy. At its next meeting on July 12, 2013 in Washington, it intends to further develop joint initiatives and priorities, and discuss ways to overcome business challenges.

State-to-State & City Engagement

Over the past year, economic ties at the state and city levels have grown. Several highlights include:

- Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley's trade mission resulted in several new commercial deals in education, technology, life sciences, and energy with a combined value of more than \$60 million.
- Washington state's Governor Christine Gregoire led a trade mission of nearly 50 business, education and government leaders and established partnerships in energy, life sciences, and film.
- City mayors like San Antonio's Julian Castro are laying solid groundwork for enhanced city-to-city engagement with new and existing India partners.
- The Confederation of Indian Industries brought a delegation of business leaders from the state of Jammu & Kashmir to visit several U.S. cities.

- The U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC) led a delegation to attend Vibrant Gujarat, and USIBC also sent a Chairman's Executive Mission to participate in the first U.S.-India Business Summit in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

American Business Corners

export.gov

The new American Business Corners initiative is facilitating economic engagement with India's booming urban centers and strengthening India – U.S. business connections by providing Indian entrepreneurs information about trade and investment opportunities with the United States. To date, the U.S. Commercial Service has opened 12 American Business Corners in India from Chandigarh to Thiruvananthapuram and from Surat to Guwahati.

New Delhi

June 24, 2013



449. Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue: India-US Fact Sheet on Sustainable Growth, Energy and Climate Change.

New Delhi, June 24, 2013.

At the June 24, 2013, U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi, Secretary of State John Kerry and Minister of External Affairs Salman Khurshid reaffirmed their countries' strong commitment to work collaboratively to help ensure energy security, combat global climate change, and support the development of low-carbon economies that will create opportunities and fuel job growth in both countries, recalling the 2009 U.S.-India Memorandum of Understanding on clean energy, energy efficiency, energy security, and climate change. Both sides reaffirmed that technological and business innovation, scientific cooperation, research, development and deployment of environmentally-friendly technologies and products, open trade, and sound regulatory frameworks are needed to deliver solutions for sustainable growth.

U.S.-India Energy Dialogue

The two sides noted the robust and full range of cooperation under the U.S.-India Energy Dialogue, highlighting ongoing engagement in the areas of electrical grid cooperation, energy efficiency, expanding markets for renewable energy technologies and addressing barriers to clean energy deployment, shale gas resource assessments and sharing lessons on exploitation, clean coal technology development, and civil nuclear energy.

U.S.-India Climate Change Dialogue

The two sides plan to enhance the existing U.S.-India Global Climate Change Dialogue to engage in constructive discussions on the Durban Platform negotiations under the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change, to facilitate climate policy dialogues and exchanges, and to identify opportunities for further and significant bilateral cooperation.

India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Energy

Over the past year, negotiations leading to the construction of U.S. nuclear power plants in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh have continued with notable progress made towards land acquisition. Additionally, our nuclear regulatory agencies have increased their scope of cooperation on key safety issues. Both the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Indian Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) have been working to finalize an arrangement for the exchange of technical information and cooperation in nuclear safety matters, which is needed to expand upon their current level of cooperation. A key example of cooperation under this arrangement would be the NRC working with the AERB to assist with AERB's work to prepare to certify and license the operation in India of U.S.-origin nuclear power plants.

Oil and Gas Working Group

The U.S. Department of Energy and Indian Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas are working to renew an MOU for Cooperation in Gas Hydrates aimed at increasing the understanding of the geologic occurrence and the potential of methane production from natural gas hydrates in India and the United States.

New Joint Working Group on Sustainable Growth

On May 7, 2012 USAID and the Planning Commission of India signed a Statement of Principles forming a new Joint Working Group on Sustainable Growth that will support efforts to “enhance Indian and U.S. capacity to develop long-term plans and strategies to achieve low carbon inclusive growth.” It should also help us in development and adoption of clean technologies.

Shale Gas Feasibility Studies

On May 3, 2013, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) signed an agreement to conduct a study to support Essar Oil Limited in further assessing its coal bed methane license areas for the presence of commercial grade shale deposits, moving India closer to a potential new domestic energy resource offering cleaner alternatives to coal. USTDA signed a new grant agreement during the Strategic Dialogue for a second study to support Deep Industries Limited in assessing its conventional oil and gas license areas for the presence of commercial grade shale deposits.

Regional Gas Markets

The Department of State held an energy security roundtable with Indian counterparts in May 2013 and discussed the development of an Asian natural gas market to provide more secure and diversified supplies of natural gas throughout the region. The U.S. will continue to engage with India including through the U.S.-India Energy Dialogue to address challenges such as financing gas infrastructure, share data on regional and global natural gas trends, and partner on market development capacity building activities.

Unconventional Gas

The Department of State’s Unconventional Gas Technical Engagement Program (UGTEP) has promoted unconventional gas development in India by hosting a delegation from the Ministry of Petroleum and natural gas in the U.S. and holding a workshop in New Delhi in 2013. UGTEP is increasing its engagement with India by funding a tight gas and shale oil resource assessment to be concluded this year.

Refineries

At the request of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, USTDA brought representatives of India's Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and directors of state-owned refineries to the United States to meet with U.S. companies specializing in a range of refinery efficiency and residue up-gradation technologies. The Indian refiners are looking for ways to improve refinery efficiency and productivity by integrating slurry hydro-cracking and advanced conversion process technologies, presenting opportunities for U.S. firms in this sector. The delegation visited Chicago, Houston, and New Orleans in May 2013.

Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Cities

The U.S. Department of Energy is working in two Indian states – Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu – that are in the process of implementing the Energy Conservation Building Codes (ECBC). One city in each State (Jaipur in Rajasthan and Chennai in Tamil Nadu) has been selected to showcase implementation at the local level; the work should have benefits beyond those cities. DOE through Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) is working with India to adopt Building to Grid (B2G) best practices to improve the energy efficiency of data centers and measures to improve energy efficiency performance of exemplary IT office buildings.

Renewable Energy

DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) is collaborating with India's Solar Energy Centre (SEC) to increase understanding of how solar photovoltaic modules perform in different climatic environments over long periods of time and to develop testing procedures to help improve product reliability. NREL is updating solar maps for India with new data obtained on aerosol optical depth from the Indian Space Research Organization. DOE/NREL and India's Centre for Wind Energy Technology (C-WET) are collaborating to enhance existing wind resource characterizations for priority areas in India.

U.S.-India Partnership to Advance Clean Energy (PACE)

Prime Minister Singh and President Obama announced PACE in November 2009 to improve energy access and promote low-carbon growth. Under PACE-Research, in 2012, the Government of India and

the Department of Energy are supporting three innovative public-private U.S.-India consortia work in solar energy, building efficiency, and advanced biofuels under the \$125 million Joint Clean Energy Research and Development Center. The Clean Energy Finance Center, a partnership between OPIC, the Ex-Im Bank, USAID, the Department of Commerce, and USTDA has provided roughly \$2.0 billion in renewable energy financing to India, including financing nearly 40 percent of India's first 1,000 MW of installed solar energy capacity. USTDA also supports the U.S.-India Energy Cooperation Program, a partnership of U.S. companies and the two governments which provides project development support to the Indian energy sector in such areas as energy efficient buildings, smart electrical grid development, and solar power generation, including as part of a rural micro-grid initiative. Under PACE-Deployment, USTDA has also supported a package of smart grid feasibility studies, pilot projects and technical assistance aimed at improving the reliability and efficiency of India's electricity supply, and was able to announce a new commitment to develop a Smart Grid Test Bed with India's Central Power Research Institute (CPRI), USAID's \$20 million PACE-Deployment technical assistance program is improving end-use energy efficiency and increasing the supply of renewable energy with a focus on strengthening policy and regulatory institutions, increasing access to finance, and enhancing institutional capacity.

In May 2013, USTDA signed a grant agreement with Reliance Infrastructure Limited. The grant agreement supports funding for a feasibility study and pilot project for the installation of a demand side management (DSM) power system on Reliance Infrastructure's Mumbai distribution system. Reliance Infrastructure has selected Innovari, Inc. (Austin, Texas) as the contractor for the project. Innovari will assist Reliance Infrastructure in deploying and utilizing the new smart grid DSM system to manage peak demand and more efficiently utilize its electric power infrastructure. Reliance and Innovari were able to sign their contract for the execution of the pilot during the Strategic Dialogue.

Clean Energy Finance

USAID announced a new loan guarantee under the Development Credit Authority that will mobilize at least \$100 million for clean energy investments.

Clean Energy Ministerial

The United States and India acknowledged the important role of their joint efforts in the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM), a global forum to share best practices and promote policies and programs that encourage and facilitate the transition to a global clean energy economy. The Government of India hosted the fourth Clean Energy Ministerial on April 17-18, 2013, in Delhi, with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh providing opening remarks. At the Clean Energy Ministerial, India's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and the U.S. Department of Energy launched the beta version of the Indian Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policy Database (IREEED), an online repository of India's central and state government renewable energy and energy efficiency policies, regulations, and incentive programs for the benefit of policy makers, project developers, businesses, and consumers. The United States and India co-lead the CEM's 21st Century Power Partnership and the Super Efficient Appliances and Equipment Deployment (SEAD) initiative. India's participation in the Clean Energy Ministerial has led to significant domestic achievements, such as becoming the first country in the world to comprehensively regulate the performance, safety, and quality of light-emitting diodes (LEDs). Through the CEM, India is also paving the way forward for a new model of power sector work, focusing on peer-to-peer engagement with international experts on grid integration of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency.

U.S.-India Collaboration on Smart and Efficient Air Conditioning and Space Cooling

The United States and India announced collaboration on smart and efficient space cooling that will aim to facilitate the AC market transformation to super-efficient space cooling technologies. Under the collaboration, the United States intends to support sharing of technical expertise and experience, building on and contributing to several existing collaborations like SEAD, the 21st Century Power Partnership, and PACE-D/PACE-R.

Arctic Council

On May 15, India was welcomed as a new Observer State to the Arctic Council. The Arctic environment is changing rapidly, primarily as a result

of global climate change. The emergence of new challenges and opportunities in the Arctic is drawing greater global attention. India is a major player in global scientific climate studies and has a research station in the Arctic. India's observer status in the Arctic Council should bring reciprocal benefits to the global community by enhancing global science collaborations and data exchanges on climate modeling and research.

Forest-Related Initiative

A Partnership agreement was signed between the U.S. and India for the Sustainable Forests and Climate Adaptation programme on September 30, 2010. Under President Obama's Global Climate Change Initiative, in July 2012, the Indian Ministry of Environment and Forests and USAID initiated a five-year, \$14 million contract to take Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) actions to scale in India. The program is to: (1) develop and deploy scientific tools and methods for improved ecosystem management, forest carbon inventory, and monitoring; (2) design modalities to provide better incentives to forest-dependent communities for forest management and conservation; and (3) enhance human and institutional capacity. USAID works in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service on this initiative.

Disaster Preparedness and Climate Change Adaptation

USAID/India's Disaster Management Support project, in collaboration with the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs aims to reduce the vulnerability of eight Indian cities to climate change-related disasters. The project, which started in October 2012, should enhance institutional capacities to integrate climate risk reduction measures in development programs, undertake disaster risk mitigation activities based on scientific analyses, and enhance community preparedness and measures. The U.S. Geological Survey collaborates with India on ground water and aquifer studies.

Short-Lived Climate Pollutants

Through the Global Methane Initiative, the United States and India collaborate on a range of joint projects and programs to capture methane and use it as a clean energy source. Additionally, the U.S. EPA has collaborated with Indian oil and gas companies to capture and reuse fugitive methane from gas facilities, and has established a research

clearinghouse with Coal India on coal mine and coal bed methane. Coal India is using this facility to explore prospects for commercially viable methane capture systems to both reduce emissions and recycle methane as an energy source. India and the U.S. will work together to exchange information on short-lived climate pollutants, including black carbon.

Environment

India has long standing collaborations on environment and forestry with various U.S. agencies including the U.S. Environment Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). EPA has been an active partner with India in several areas, including environmental governance and air quality. The USFS and the USFWS have collaborated over the past few decades with India in the areas of watershed management, wildlife conservation, improving forest health and productivity, and integrated forest planning and management for conservation of biological diversity in India. The USFS has also conducted workshops in India on carbon monitoring and assessment, and climate adaptation and mitigation issues in the Eastern Himalayas.



450. Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue: India-US Joint Fact Sheet on Science & Technology Cooperation.

New Delhi, June 24, 2013.

India and the United States enjoy robust bilateral science and technology cooperation. This collaboration has been vital in achieving a broad range of shared goals, including sustaining economic growth and job creation; allowing our citizens to live longer, healthier lives; developing clean sources of energy; and protecting our environment for future generations. The India-U.S. Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement, signed in 2005, established the Joint Committee meeting (JCM) to plan, coordinate, monitor, and facilitate bilateral cooperation in science and technology. The JCM biennially convenes leaders from both countries to provide strategic guidance for our S&T initiatives. The Commission,

co-chaired by the Indian Minister of Science and Technology and the Science Advisor to the U.S President, has met twice, in June 2010 and in June 2012. The joint Commission developed an action plan for 2012-2014 that includes joint projects, joint workshops, exchange visits of scientists, and establishment of virtual networking in various disciplines such as Basic and Applied Sciences; Atmospheric, Environmental and Earth Sciences; Health and Medical Sciences; Data Sharing; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education; Innovation; and Women in Science.

To realize the potential of science and technology, India and the United States maintain active engagement aimed at fostering cooperative cutting edge research and building public-private partnerships that support technology-based innovation and entrepreneurship.

Working Together on Cutting Edge Science Research and Development

Under the auspices of an agreement signed in July 2011 between Indian Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the DAE and the DOE are exploring collaborative mechanisms to develop next-generation, high-intensity superconducting radio frequency proton accelerators and enhance cooperation in related physics research.

Tackling the Scourge of Diabetes

Approximately 62 million Indians and 26 million Americans suffer from diabetes. Under a 2012 agreement between Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services , the Indian Council of Medical research and the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) are conducting cooperative research aimed at developing a better understanding of the mechanisms underlying diabetes and identifying innovative solutions to prevent and treat the disease. A joint workshop on this subject was organized by ICMR and NIDDK in partnership with the India- U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF).

Rotavirus Vaccine

Through a unique India-U.S. social innovation partnership involving India's Department of Biotechnology, U.S. National Institutes of Health, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, PATH, Bharat Biotech, Stanford University, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, and a range of other public and private partners, collaborators recently released the results of a Phase 3 clinical trial involving a new rotavirus vaccine: ROTAVAC®. Positive results from the Phase III clinical trial, involving more than 6,000 participants in India, showed that ROTAVAC® has an excellent safety and efficacy profile, and could be recognized as the first entirely new vaccine developed within India in over 100 years.

Low-Cost Medical Technologies

The U.S. National Institutes of Health signed two Joint Statements in 2013 with India's Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology. The Joint Statements are intended to initiate new areas of bilateral scientific collaboration focused on the development of low-cost, diagnostic, and therapeutic medical devices, and to continue such existing collaboration.

Joint Astronomy to Better Understand Our Solar System

Through a partnership between the Indian Initiative in Gravitational Observations (IndIGO) and the U.S. Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory Laboratory and other institutes in India, both sides are working to build a world-class gravitational wave detector in India that will greatly enhance a network of detectors under construction in the United States, Europe, and Japan to study gravitational waves emanating from some of the most cataclysmic events in our universe – black holes, neutron stars, and supernovas. This research may improve our understanding of the Big Bang. India has proposed realizing this goal in its Twelfth and future Five-year Frameworks.

Collaborating on Innovative Science and Technology Research

Indian Department of Science & Technology and the United States endowed the India-U.S. Science & Technology Forum (IUSSTF) in 2000 with matching funds to facilitate mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in science, engineering, and health. Over the past ten years, the IUSSTF

has facilitated more than 12,000 interactions between Indian and U.S. scientists. In 2012-2013, IUSSTF supported over 30 bilateral workshops, four advanced schools, 10 virtual joint research centers, three innovation/technology transfer programs, and dozens of student and faculty fellowships. The IUSSTF, in partnership with the Indian Department of Biotechnology and the Science and Engineering Research Board, has supported 100 Indian and 35 U.S. students for summer internships in Indian and U.S. academic/ research institutions respectively. Khorana Technology Transfer course was launched during July 2012 in partnership with DBT for training of Indian scientists on US best practices on technology management. In April 2013, IUSSTF held its fifth India-U.S. Frontiers of Science symposium involving 60 young Indian and US scientists, and plans are underway for the 2014 India-U.S. Frontiers of Engineering. Both events are done in partnership with the U.S. National Academies to nurture linkages among the young leading scientists and engineers.

Linking Research and Education

India established its Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) in 2008. The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) continues to receive visitors from SERB and India's Department of Science & Technology (DST) interested in learning more about NSF's merit review processes. In January 2013, the U.S. National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering signed an agreement with SERB at the IUSSTF board meeting to launch a new jointly funded collaborative research program on hypertension. DST and NSF are discussing plans to partner through NSF's Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide, which focuses on providing U.S. Graduate Research Fellows opportunities for enhanced professional development through research collaborations in top caliber research environments in India. SERB has initiated the S.N. Bose Scholar program, implemented by IUSSTF, providing fellowships to 50 Indian and 30 U.S. students for internships at S&T institutions in each other's country. The Indian Department of Science and Technology, in partnership with NSF has also launched a Virtual R&D Network Joint Center in the area of mathematics and statistics covering exchange of faculty, students, postdocs, and joint workshops involving Indian and U.S. universities. DST and NSF are

also working on summer internship program for U.S. students in Indian universities to be launched in 2013 under EAPSI program.

Cooperation in Clean Energy

Recognizing the need to address climate change, ensure mutual energy security, and build a clean energy economy that drives investment, job creation, and economic growth, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Barack Obama launched the India – U.S. Partnership to Advance Clean Energy (PACE) under the India – U.S. Memorandum of Understanding to enhance cooperation on energy security, energy efficiency, clean energy and climate change. The MoU was signed on November 24, 2009 during Prime Minister Singh's visit to the United States. As a priority initiative under the PACE umbrella, the Government of India and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) signed an agreement to establish the Joint Clean Energy Research and Development Center (JCERDC) on November 4, 2010 during President Obama's visit to India. The overall aim of the JCERDC is to facilitate joint innovative research and development through public-private consortia in the three priority areas: Solar Energy, Building Energy Efficiency, and Second-Generation Biofuels in multi-institutional public-private partnership. The JCERDC is funded by the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology and the U.S. Department of Energy. The program is being administered in India by the Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF). Three consortia namely (1) Solar Energy Research Institute for India and the United States (SERIUS); (2) India- U.S. Joint Centre for Building Energy Research and Development (CBERD); and (3) India-U.S. Consortium for development of Sustainable Advanced Lignocellulosic Biofuel Systems (SALBS), with more than 80 academic and industrial partners, were launched during 2013.

Promoting Women in Science and Technology

In 2010, the United States and India identified "Women in Science" as a priority area for bilateral engagement. The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, in partnership with IUSSTF and DST, has jointly convened annual workshops to advance this initiative since 2009. These workshops have identified mentoring and networking of women science professionals in both countries as areas for bilateral engagement. The IUSSTF has elevated this issue to a flagship program. In December 2012, both sides

established a standing steering committee to develop women in science initiatives and convened a workshop to share best practices for promoting women in science professions under the auspices of the India-U.S. Joint Committee meeting on science and technology cooperation. In May 2013, the U.S. State Department led a delegation of U.S. technology executives to India to learn about challenges and opportunities for women in the Indian Information and Communication Technologies sector. An Indian delegation will visit the United States for discussions with concerned agencies to develop a long term sustainable program in this area.

Developing the World's Most Powerful Telescope

Since 2010, India has committed to contribute as a member in the Thirty Meter Telescope to a California Institute of Technology-led consortium that is developing one of the world's most powerful telescopes on Mauna Kea in Hawaii. The Indian consortium partners include the Indian Institute for Astrophysics, the Inter-University Center for Astronomy & Astrophysics and the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences. The State of Hawaii granted a building permit for the project in April 2013.

Funding Joint Projects to Leverage S&T Capacity for Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Established in 2009 with an annual budget of \$2 to \$3 million per year, the Science and Technology Endowment Board (STEB) promote commercialization of jointly-developed innovative technologies with the potential for positive societal impact. Projects focus on improving health and empowering citizens. To date, STEB has awarded four grants, two in the health area (a mobile phone-based diabetes diagnostic and a device to manage fecal incontinence) and two in empowering citizens (improved refrigeration for transporting agricultural products from field to market and providing financial services for the unbanked). This year, seven proposals made it to the final stage of review. Five new awards are being announced on the margins of the 4th U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi on June 24, 2013.

Public-Private Partnership to Harness Data Networks

On June 9, 2012, the first direct India-U.S. advanced science and education network began supporting enormous data flows between the

United States and the science center of India in Bangalore. The project, part of the Global Ring Network for Advanced Applications Development (GLORIAD), is a jointly funded public-private partnership between the NSF and Tata Communications, and is housed at the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences of the Tata Institute for Fundamental Research in Bangalore. Since connecting India to GLORIAD, Bangalore scientists have become engaged in an international challenge to improve patient care using genomics data and moving an unprecedented three terabytes of data in a single download with partners at the Harvard Medical School.

Scaling up Innovation to Solve Global Development Challenges

In May 2012, the Indian Government, through the Department of Science and Technology, pledged \$5 million toward the Millennium Alliance (MA), a joint initiative between USAID and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) that is working to identify, support, and scale innovative, game-changing, and cost-effective solutions to developmental challenges in India and around the world. To date, USAID has contributed \$7.7 million to the Alliance, which is being matched by FICCI. In September 2012, the MA issued a call for concept notes that led to 1,400 submissions. The MA partners announced the first nine awardees on the margins of the Strategic Dialogue on June 24, 2013.

Arsenic Removal from Drinking Water The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi is leading a multi-stakeholder engagement to develop models for providing safe drinking water in rural areas, one of the national water strategy priorities. Technology providers, Government of India Ministries, non-government organizations, and financing parties will engage to deploy the latest arsenic mitigation technologies in a 25-village cluster affecting approximately 125,000 people as a pilot program in early 2014, with U.S. companies providing the technology and knowhow.

Making Governments More Transparent and Accessible

India and the United States announced in July 2011 the launch of an open-source software platform with the goal of combining elements of both countries' respective open-government sites that house government data. The Open Government Platform (OGPL) enhances data transparency and citizen engagement by making more government data, documents, tools, and processes publicly available through a freely

available, open source platform. Through the availability of these data in useful machine-readable formats, innovators, developers, media specialists, and academics can develop new applications and insights that will give citizens more information to make better decisions, and most importantly, spur innovation and create economic opportunity. India and the U.S. have worked with Ghana and Rwanda on pilot projects.

Advancing Plant Health Systems in India and South Asia Project

As part of the efforts under the India–U.S. Agricultural Dialogue, USAID/India’s Agriculture and Food Security Program launched a Participating Agency Service Agreement with the FAS/Office of Capacity Building and Development to provide technical assistance and training to strengthen the institutional capacity of India’s National Institute of Plant Health Management (NIPHM). This training should enable NIPHM to become an International Plant Protection Convention recognized leader for training the international plant health community in South Asia and improve the capacity of India’s Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen quarantine facilities. The outcome encourages collaboration on research projects and strengthens the plant health management and bio-security network in South Asian countries.

Expanding Civil Space Cooperation

The India-U.S. Civil Space Joint Working Group held its fourth meeting in Washington, D.C., on March 21, 2013. The Joint Working Group engaged in a broad range of discussions and endorsed expanded work in a number of areas including measures to improve the use of earth observation data to promote sustainable development and promote the compatibility and the interoperability between the U.S. Global Positioning System and the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System. Under agreements signed in March 2012, NASA, the U.S. National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) are cooperating on ISRO’s Oceansat-2 mission and the Global Precipitation Measurement and ISRO-French Space Agency Megha Tropiques missions. NASA and ISRO signed an agreement for activities related to India’s Mars Orbiter Mission. Further, NASA and ISRO are pursuing discussions on the potential development of a joint dual frequency (L & S band) Synthetic Aperture Radar Imaging Satellite Mission. The two agencies will also explore further cooperative

space exploration work, including future missions to the moon and other destinations.

Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences

Under the 2008 MoU on Earth Observations and Earth Sciences between India's Ministry of Earth Sciences (MOES) and the U.S. National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), collaboration includes development of Research Moored Array for African Asian Australian monsoon studies through RAMA moorings and generating useful data to understand the Indian Ocean and changing climate, research on climate variability, tropical cyclones, monsoon as well as research on key pelagic fish stocks and harmful algal blooms. A Statement of Intent is currently being produced to facilitate current and future research partnerships in living marine resource research. MoES and U.S. Geological Survey are in the process of finalizing a MOU on earth sciences research that will include collaboration on cropland monitoring and water studies.

Under the 2010 India-U.S. Agricultural Dialogue, a "monsoon desk" at the U.S. National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) has been established for working together towards improved monsoon prediction. Under the International Ocean Drilling Program (IODP) which is steered by NSF, MoES will conduct deep ocean seabed core sample drilling in the Arabian Sea/Indian Ocean utilizing the "JOIDES Resolution" facility. This research is expected to shed light on global climate change and variations in the Indian monsoons. Discussions continue on the signing of an MoU between the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR) and MoES for weather and climate studies that include development of airborne research aircraft.



451. Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue: India-US Fact Sheet on Space Cooperation.

New Delhi, June 24, 2013.

India and the United States pursue civil space cooperation under the framework of the Joint Working Group on Civil Space, which was constituted as the follow-up to the India-U.S. Conference on Space Science, Application, and Commerce held in Bangalore in June 2004. Since then, space cooperation has expanded to the areas of space science, earth observation, satellite navigation, natural hazards research, disaster management support, and education.

India-U.S. Civil Space Joint Working Group

The fourth meeting of the India-United States Joint Working Group on Civil Space Cooperation was held in Washington, D.C. on March 21, 2013. The Joint Working Group engaged in a broad range of discussions and endorsed expanded cooperation in a number of areas.

Space Science

Building on the highly successful Chandrayaan-1 lunar mission, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) agreed to explore further cooperation in such fields as planetary science and heliophysics, as well as potential future missions to the moon and Mars.

Earth Observation

ISRO, NASA, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration have active cooperation in the area of oceanography through the sharing and analysis of data from ISRO's OCEANSAT-2 satellite. ISRO and NASA are also working to derive the best possible global precipitation data for research and applications using the joint ISRO-French Space Agency Megha-Tropiques satellite and the Global Precipitation Measurement (GPM) constellation of satellites. NASA, in cooperation with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, intends to launch the GPM Core Observatory Satellite in 2014 and plans to make data from this satellite available to ISRO for studying tropical atmosphere. ISRO and NASA are also cooperating under the multilateral framework of the

Committee on Earth Observation Satellites and the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations.

Satellite Navigation

India is implementing a 'Global Positioning System Aided Geo Augmented Navigation System (GAGAN)' for civil aviation purposes through a commercial agreement with the U.S. firm Raytheon. India is also working on its indigenous satellite navigation system, a seven-satellite constellation known as the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS). Coordination to ensure compatibility between IRNSS and the U.S. Global Positioning System is currently under way.

Cooperation in Microwave Remote Sensing

RO and NASA are exploring the possibility of collaborating on the joint development and launch of a radar satellite mission comprising a dual frequency (L and S band) Synthetic Aperture Radar System.

Deep Space Navigation and Tracking Services Support for Mars Orbiter Mission

ISRO is planning the launch of the 'Mars Orbiter Mission' during October-November 2013. NASA is providing deep space navigation and tracking support services to this mission during the non-visible period of the Indian Deep Space Network.

Scientific Personnel Exchange Programme and Fellowship Programmes

ISRO and NASA have worked out Terms of Reference for 'Professional Engineer and Scientist Exchange Programme.' Two NASA scientists specialised in earth observation are expected to visit ISRO centers in 2013. India has also funded the establishment of the "Prof. Satish Dhawan Graduate Endowment Fellowship Programme" at the California Institute of Technology under which, one meritorious graduate student from the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology will pursue a masters program in Aerospace Engineering at Caltech. The first student is expected to register in September 2013.



452. Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue: India-US Fact Sheet on Health Cooperation.

New Delhi, June 24, 2013.

India and the United States share a strong collaboration in the area of public health covering a wide range of issues, including disease prevention (HIV, TB, malaria, polio), maternal and child health, environmental and occupational health, vaccine development, and emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases. The Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the U.S. Department of Human and Health Services collaborate under the framework of several agreements and arrangements covering different areas of public health, as well as biomedical and behavioural health research.

India-U.S. Health Initiative

The Health Initiative, co-chaired by the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare and the U.S. Secretary of Human and Health Services, is an inter-agency umbrella organizational mechanism for bilateral discussions between India and the United States on health collaboration and programme implementation. It was launched in Geneva, Switzerland, during the World Health Assembly in May 2010. Under the India-U.S. Health Initiative, four working groups have been organized in the areas of Non-Communicable Diseases, Infectious Diseases, Strengthening Health Systems and Services, and Maternal and Child Health.

The Working Groups' priority efforts include: India National Cancer Institute and other cancer collaborations, tobacco prevention and control, mental health, human resources (emphasis on nursing and allied health professionals), registries of vital records, health system financing and public-private partnerships, food and drug regulation, and international health regulations and disease detection.

Global Disease Detection- India Centre

The Indian National Centre of Disease Control (NCDC) and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC) and Department of Health and Human Services signed a MOU in November 2010 to collaborate in the establishment

and operation of the Global Disease Detection-India Centre. The Global Disease Detection-India Centre is now fully operational and experts have collaborated in the areas of food borne diseases, emergency operations, zoonotic diseases, public health laboratory systems, disease surveillance, epidemiology and acute encephalitis. The India National Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) (India IES) was launched in October 2012 and the first cohort of EIS officers are being trained in field epidemiology and participating in outbreak investigations. Indian scientists from NCDC and the National Institute of Virology, Pune, are being trained at the U.S. CDC facilities for identification of unknown pathogens. The U.S. CDC is also extending technical support for the operationalization of the Strategic Health Operations Centre within the NCDC for disease surveillance activities under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Project. The NCDC and Global Disease Detection- India Centre intend to organize an Epidemic Intelligence Service conference in October-November 2013.

Prevention and Control of Road Traffic Injury, Trauma System Development, and Emergency Medical Services

The Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and U.S. CDC within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services collaborate in the areas of prevention and control of road traffic injury, trauma system development and emergency medical services under the framework of a Joint Statement signed in June 2009. In collaboration with the U.S. CDC, World Health Organization, and Indian Council of Medical Research, the Indian Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has embarked on an effort to address the burden of injury via a national program on injury control.

India's National Call to Action for Child Survival and Development

On June 14-15, 2012, the Governments of the United States, India, and Ethiopia, in collaboration with UNICEF, hosted the Child Survival Call to Action event in Washington, D.C. to mobilize the world to achieve the ambitious yet achievable goal of reducing all preventable child deaths by 2035. At this summit, India's Minister of Health and Family Welfare announced India's commitment to take a leadership role in reducing preventable child mortality. As a follow-up, India's Call to Action for Child Survival and Development Summit was held in February 2013 and called

for an accelerated response to promote child survival. USAID and UNICEF supported the process, with Indian ministries in the lead, to plan and organize this landmark summit. Summit outcomes included the launch of the Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A) Roadmap and a national and state scorecard and dashboard to track progress.

Cooperation on Human and Avian Influenza and other Emerging Infectious Diseases

The Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and U.S. CDC, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, cooperate on human and avian influenza and other emerging infectious diseases. We are collaborating in capacity building, including sharing of expertise in the operation of high containment laboratories and safe handling of high hazard viruses, parasites and bacteria, development of protocols and standard operating procedures, sharing expertise in the area of pathogen detection, diagnosis, epidemiology, disease surveillance, virology and vaccinology.

Collaboration between Regulatory Authorities

The Drug Controller General of India and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have been collaborating in the area of training, regulation of medical devices, clinical research, pharmaco vigilance, and e-governance. A Statement of Intent between the U.S. FDA and Indian Central Drugs Standard Control Organization is under discussion to create a framework for expanding cooperation in these areas.

Collaboration between Biomedical and Behavioural Health Researchers

Over the past few decades, the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Indian Council of Medical Research, and India's Department of Biotechnology have developed a robust relationship in the biomedical and behavioral health sciences. These bilateral research collaborations are focused in several high-priority areas for both sides, including research related to HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health, infectious diseases, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, eye disease, hearing disorders, mental health, and low-cost medical technologies. The NIH currently has bilateral agreements with the Indian Council of Medical

Research and the Department of Biotechnology in the areas of HIV/AIDS, vaccine research, vision, maternal and child health research, mental health, neurology and addictive disorders, diabetes research, and the development of low cost diagnostics. In addition, the NIH supports an International Center for Excellence in Research for Tuberculosis as well as two International Centers for Excellence in Malaria Research.

Collaboration in the Area of HIV/AIDS

Since 2004, the United States, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), has supported India's implementation of its large-scale, multi-faceted HIV/AIDS program through the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO). Working in close partnership with NACO, PEPFAR has contributed \$261.6 million to India between 2004-2012 for HIV prevention, care and treatment. The U.S. CDC, USAID, and NIH all have bilateral agreements and arrangements with Indian institutions to address HIV/AIDS. CDC's agreement (signed May 2010) is to expand and deepen engagement with Indian institutions in laboratory systems, strategic information, and capacity development. USAID's agreement (signed September 2010) is to collaborate on improving quality and coverage of services to key populations and vulnerable populations, enhance private sector engagement to complement the Indian government's prevention to care continuum efforts, strengthen supply chain management systems, strengthen national capacity on behaviour change communication programming, and support the global transfer of best practices. NIH's arrangement, signed October 2011, is to advance epidemiological, prevention, and operational research on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.



453. Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue: India-US Fact Sheet on Cooperation in Higher Education.

New Delhi, June 24, 2013.

India and the United States share strong linkages and a history of collaboration in the field of higher education. The United States is the most favoured destination for Indian students, with more than 100,000 Indian students pursuing higher studies in the United States. In response to strong interest among academic communities in both countries we convened a highly successful India-U.S. Higher Education Summit in Washington D.C. in October 2011 that ultimately led to the establishment of an annual bilateral Higher Education Dialogue.

India-U.S. Higher Education Dialogue

The annual Higher Education Dialogue was originally held in June 2012 in Washington, D.C. and is being held in New Delhi on June 25, 2013. Key areas of collaboration include student and faculty exchange, research cooperation, implementing technology-enabled education strategies such as e-learning and online courseware, cooperation between community colleges, and facilitating partnerships between Indian and American universities.

Singh-Obama 21st Century Knowledge Initiative Awards

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Barack Obama announced the Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative in November 2009 to fund institutional partnerships between Indian and U.S. institutions of higher education, through faculty exchanges and research and innovation collaboration in the priority areas of food security, climate change, sustainable health and public health. Each side has committed \$5 million for the initiative, which will grant awards of up to \$250,000 to selected projects. Eight projects were selected in the first round of awards in 2012 and eight awards are being announced during the second Higher Education Dialogue in New Delhi on June 25, 2013.

Fulbright-Nehru Partnership

The Fulbright-Nehru program, supported by both governments, has nearly tripled in size over the last four years, with approximately 300 students

and scholars from the United States and India participating annually. The United States now exchanges more faculty under this program with India than with any other country in the world. The Fulbright Program and related exchanges with India have benefited more than 18,000 American and Indian students and scholars since 1950.

Raman Fellowships

The C. V. Raman Fellowship program, announced during the Higher Education Summit in 2011, aims to place junior faculty members from India for post-doctoral research in U.S. higher education institutions. The first cohort of 126 Raman Fellows will conduct post-doctoral research in different U.S. institutions beginning in August 2013.

Development of Community Colleges

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has finalized a framework for establishing community colleges in India. A high-level Indian delegation visited the United States in May 2012 to study the community college system. The Ministry of Human Resource Development organized an International Seminar on Community Colleges in New Delhi on February 6-7, 2013. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Tara Sonenshine led a delegation that included representatives from U.S. community colleges to attend the seminar. The American Association of Community Colleges continues to facilitate cooperation and overall capacity-building efforts between Indian and American partner institutions. Beginning later this year, the United States intends to host a series of delegations of community college leaders from India to the United States for professional development and capacity building.

New UGC Regulations Relating to Foreign Education Providers and Twinning Arrangements

The University Grants Commission (UGC) of India has finalized guidelines for twinning arrangements between Indian and foreign educational institutions. The guidelines will facilitate greater collaboration between Indian and U.S. universities.

Connect India Program

The 'Connect India Program' was announced during the India-U.S. Higher Education Dialogue held in June 2012. It envisages placement of 200

U.S. students at Indian education institutions for a semester of study. Their course of study will be integrated with other activities, including exposure to Indian culture and economy, service-learning with corporate entities and interaction with political representatives. The details are being finalized by the University Grants Commission of India in consultation with Indian universities.

Centre of Excellence on Cyber Systems

India is collaborating with U.S. institutions to establish a Centre of Excellence on Cyber Systems at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. An Indian delegation plans to travel to the United States to identify potential areas of cyber systems collaboration.

India-Support for Teacher Education Program

The India-Support for Teacher Education Program (In-STEP) is a joint project between the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development to build the capacity of teacher educators in India. This thirty-month, \$4.3 million activity plans to send two groups of approximately fifty teachers each from eastern and northeastern states in India to attend a three-month customized training program at a U.S. university. The training should include teaching pedagogy, observation of in-service and pre-service teacher education, and assessment techniques. Every teacher educator would be asked to prepare a long essay which sets forth a clear proposal for reform of a specific area of teacher education in his/her state or institution. Upon return from the United States, the teacher educators are expected to implement their new skills and knowledge in their classrooms, resulting in better-trained, higher quality teachers. Additionally, the U.S. Department of State provides opportunities through its exchanges for more than 50 U.S. and Indian teachers each year to further develop their subject area expertise and enhance their teaching skills, pursue individual projects, conduct research, follow courses for professional development, lead master classes and seminars, exchange teaching assignments and professional duties, or participate in internships at local schools.

Passport to India

The Passport to India Initiative seeks to increase significantly the number of U.S. students in India. Through partnerships with the private sector

and non-governmental organizations, the Initiative promotes internships, service-learning and study abroad so more American students have the cultural understanding and language skills that underpin economic, academic, and social ties, as well as effective diplomacy. The Initiative complements the U.S. Department of State's support for more than 170 U.S. university and high school students to study in India and learn Indic languages each year through its Gilman Scholarship Program, Critical Language Scholarship Program, the National Security Language Initiative for Youth and the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study Program.

Education-USA

Education-USA provides students in India with accurate, comprehensive, and current information about opportunities for study at accredited institutions in the United States. The U.S. Department of State has significantly expanded its Education-USA advising services in India to include more virtual advising, a new mobile app, social media outreach, and a nationwide advising hotline.



454. Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue: India-US Fact Sheet on Cultural Cooperation.

New Delhi, June 24, 2013.

India-U.S. cooperation in the area of culture includes cultural exchanges, art exhibitions, collaboration in areas of conservation and museum management, and the establishment of Indian chairs at U.S. universities.

MoA between Ministry of Culture and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The Indian Ministry of Culture and the Metropolitan Museum Art, New York, signed a Memorandum of Agreement in February 2013 to enhance cultural exchanges, training and visits undertaken by museum professionals from both sides and enhance cooperation in areas of conservation, exhibition, academic research, information sharing, public education, promotion and publicity, publication, museum management and short and long term loans.

The Indian Ministry of Culture Vivekananda Chair

As part of the celebrations of the 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, a \$1.5 million “The Indian Ministry of Culture Vivekananda Chair” was established in the University of Chicago and a plaque of Swami Vivekananda was installed at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Vivekananda Memorial Program for Museum Excellence

The Ministry of Culture is cooperating with the Art Institute of Chicago under the \$500,000 “Vivekananda Memorial Programme for Museum Excellence” for upgrading the skills of museum professionals of India. The training of the first batch of Indian museum professionals took place in the Art Institute of Chicago during September-October 2012. The second program will commence in the later part of 2013.

The Last Harvest

The Tagore exhibition “The Last Harvest” was organized at the Asia Society, New York (September 2011 to January 2012) and at the Art Institute of Chicago (January to April 2012).

New Delhi**June 24, 2013****455. Vice President’s Speech at Banquet Hosted in Honour of Vice President of USA.****New Delhi, July 23, 2013.**

”Vice President Biden

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen

A visit to India by the Vice President of the United States of America is a rarity and, therefore, all the more meaningful. Its significance is enhanced many fold when the visitor happens to be Joseph Biden, a legendary figure in the Senate of United States, known to the world long before he came to occupy, and re-occupy for a second term, this august office.

Your reputation, Vice President, travelled ahead of your arrival last evening. You have been described as a moderate pragmatist and a fundamentally happy person. These are invaluable traits in our troubled times when the effort is to contain the levels of unhappiness that surround us.

Relations between nations, Excellencies, are mostly reflective of a complex set of considerations pertaining to values and interests. The two do not always converge; they may at times even diverge. The challenge to the statesmen, as someone once put it, is to steer on the stream of time with "more or less skill and experience." The endeavour should be to seek points of convergence and build upon them.

Wishing to be friends, it is said, is quick work but friendship is a slow ripening fruit that requires diligent tending.

Happily for our two countries the areas of agreement are considerable and expanding. They are premised on shared values of liberty, constitutionalism, Rule of Law, democracy, tolerance and promotion of diversity. We both believe that discussion is an indispensable preliminary to wise action.

Remarkable progress, Vice President, has been registered in our bilateral cooperation. We now have a tradition of political engagement at the highest level. Your visit today adds to the edifice.

From an Indian perspective we have with the United States more defence cooperation, more strategic dialogues, more economic exchanges and more science and technology partnerships than with any other country. Our cooperation in education and health is particularly note worthy, as is the prospect of even stronger ties in trade, investment, and energy. Each of these furthers our own national effort for inclusive development.

Peace in the world and in our own region is a pre-requisite for sustained and sustainable development. Threats to peace, many in India's immediate region, are the greatest impediments to progress. They emanate from terrorism, extremism, intolerance, injustice and misuse of the benefits of science and technology. It is incumbent on our two nations to counter these threats, jointly and individually, with a realistic perspective of the dangers they pose.

Countering threat to peace is one aspect of our cooperation; equally important and inseparable from it is promotion of stability and widening the global arc of prosperity.

- Both necessitate a deeper understanding of each other's essential interests and legitimate aspirations.
- Both make incumbent an on-going, no-holds barred dialogue.
- Both call for focused cooperation and even more intensive people to people contacts in which, I presume, language is not an impediment.

As vibrant democracies we cherish, as you do, the right to disagree without losing sight of our endeavour for the common good. Your visit and your own long standing personal commitment, Vice President, has contributed to this endeavour.

It has been a pleasure meeting you. I wish you a pleasant and fruitful stay in Mumbai.”



456. Joint Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and US Secretary of State Mr. John Kerry.

Washington (D.C), June 24, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends. I welcome you to this media interaction. As is usual, we will first have opening remarks followed by a few questions that the two leaders have agreed to respond to.

May I now request the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid to make his opening remarks?

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Mr. John Kerry the Secretary of State, Secretary Moniz, distinguished delegates from the US, colleagues, friends from the media:

I am indeed delighted to host Secretary Kerry and Secretary Moniz and a very distinguished American Delegation that is here. It is a pleasure to welcome the two Secretaries on their first visit to India after taking over their current responsibilities.

We have just completed detailed discussions covering key strategic pillars of our relationship - security, economics and technology, regional strategic and political issues, and global issues. Our discussions were truly characterized by their convergence and the candour.

Secretary Kerry was positive in his assessment of our strategic partnership, and generous in his appraisal of the potential for the future of our relationship. It is a perspective my colleagues and I fully share. This shared perspective is also reflected in our Joint Statement and in the Fact Sheets drafted by officials on both sides which will be made available to you very shortly.

Today we are expanding our bilateral cooperation to new horizons such as energy while intensifying existing avenues of cooperation in health, science and technology, education, space, defence and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. At the same time, we are very satisfied with the ongoing pace of our political dialogues which have enabled us to intensify bilateral consultations on key issues in our region and beyond including in the larger Asian context. We are delighted to be developing an increasingly global dimension to the India-US Strategic Partnership.

Today at the conclusion of this fourth round of our Strategic Dialogue, we can take satisfaction in the fact that within the few years since we raised our relationship to the strategic footing our bilateral dialogue is wide-ranging to the extent of taking on an all-of-government character. To put that in perspective, we have exchanged as many as 112 senior official and high-level visits in the year 2012. Exchanges in the current year continue to be equally intense and wide-ranging, with over 47 official visits already exchanged covering conversations ranging from Homeland Security to Education, from Space to Energy, and from our trilateral dialogue with Japan to a trilateral conversation with Afghanistan.

A number of important visits and dialogue processes are scheduled over the next several months including the Ministerial Energy Dialogue and the CEOs Forum, both of which are coordinated on our side by Deputy-Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

In participating in special events celebrating our partnership in Green and Affordable Innovation and in co-chairing the Higher Education Dialogue with our Human Resource Development Minister, the Secretary has highlighted the significance of innovation and education as pillars of this strategic partnership. I want to particularly thank him for this as there has otherwise been too little said about these very vital aspects of our partnership which exercise an important impact on the lives of our people.

I want to thank our distinguished visitors for their presence here in India. We deeply appreciate their commitment in this partnership and their substantive contribution during our dialogue. We hope to continue to build on the good work done so far in expanding the horizons of the India-US relationship.

May I say on a personal note that Secretary Kerry and I seem to have struck the right chemistry and we will work on it. It is now my pleasure to request Secretary Kerry to address you, after which we will take a few questions each.

Thank you.

US Secretary of State (Mr. John Forbes Kerry): Thank you very much, thank you, Minister Khurshid.

I do not think we seem to have an ... *(Inaudible)* ... so, I am happy to be here with you.

I am really delighted to be here at the fourth US-India Strategic Dialogue. This is my first visit to Delhi as Secretary of State, but I have had the privilege of coming here to India many times as a United States Senator. And I am always grateful for the wonderful reception, the warmth of the reception, the good friendships that I have here as the Minister said this morning too where he said 'welcome home'. So, in a sense it is a second home, and I appreciate the chance to be here.

I want to thank the External Affairs Minister and the Government of India for a wonderful welcome to our entire delegation. I commented this morning that there were more people from more agencies at a higher level than I get to see on any given day in Washington. It is a significant representation, and there is a reason for that significant representation. It is because this is a very important relationship, it is a very important

dialogue, and today I think the breadth of the issues that we discussed really underscores that reality.

I am very pleased to announce that in furtherance of this dialogue and in an effort to keep the high level that we think this relationship deserves that Vice-President Biden will be visiting India in late July in order to continue this dialogue, and I look forward to welcoming the External Affairs Minister to Washington as soon as we work out a date.

This is the first time that Minister Khurshid and I have together led this dialogue. Both of us are particularly and committed to taking this relationship to new heights. India and the United States - two of the most powerful economies in the world, two democracies, two countries that share so much in terms of our values and our aspirations - we believe have an opportunity to be able to set a new standard for cooperation on the number of challenges that we all face.

Twenty years ago, as a United States Senator I led one of the first, if not the first, US Senate Trade Delegation visits to India. It was at a time when there was a fellow who was the Finance Minister by the name of Singh the current Prime Minister. He had just embarked on a series of major economic reforms and nobody quite knew where those were going to go, where they would take either India or the rest of the world. Now, that is a matter of history. It has taken India to new economic heights and potential.

But relationships do not transform by chance, they transform through a lot of hard work and through a shared vision, and that is exactly what the Strategic Dialogue that we have engaged in today is all about. It is an effort to galvanise both sides to think ambitiously and creatively about the next steps in the partnership so that twenty years from now our successors will stand here before you and they will be able to look and say how far the relationship has come.

In witness of that today we talked about space, space cooperation, about technology and technology possibilities of joint venture. We talked about procurement issues between our countries. We talked about defence co-development, co-manufacture, co-purchase. We talked about education, about agriculture, about health, and ways in which we cooperate in terms of health capacity building. We talked about

commercial enterprises. We talked about some of the impediments to joint investment and to foreign investments. And we were reassured certainly from our part that India is taking important steps to try to address each of those concerns, and that we are committed to taking steps to address the concerns of our friends in India. There are always mutual concerns.

Yesterday at the Habitat Centre I had the privilege of speaking and I talked about how India and the United States are really uniquely positioned and equipped to take on some of the toughest challenges of our time, particularly security challenges, the challenge of global climate change, and the challenge of bringing full economic possibilities to not just our populations but to the region and to other countries.

So, in today's Strategic Dialogue we dove into these, as I mentioned, into all of those topics. We talked about how to increase our energy cooperation, our efforts with respect to climate change and other issues. Let me highlight a couple of the outcomes from our discussion today.

First, we reaffirmed that the United States and India share a very specific and similar vision for peace, democracy and stability in Asia and in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. We welcome the strong leadership that India plays today both in the region and on the global stage. And there is more that we can do together.

Both of our countries support a stable, democratic, united, sovereign and prosperous Afghanistan. We are grateful for India's investment in Afghanistan and support and help. We support India's bilateral economic assistance programmes with Afghanistan with its private sector investment and its leadership in promoting regional economic integration.

I think it is safe to say that our economic engagement has seen tremendous progress in the last decade. Since that time, trade between the United States and India has grown five-fold just in the years of the Obama Administration. Investment between our countries has grown by a factor of ten. In last year we almost topped 100 billion dollars in two-way trade in goods and services, and we are on track to do even better this year in 2013. It is a good start. But both of us agreed today that we can do better, we can do even more, we can break down trade and investment barriers. And I was particularly appreciative of the productive discussion that we had on those issues.

India is currently reviewing the text of its bilateral investment treaty model, and we agreed today to try to look forward and move forward on that model as soon as possible.

We had a productive dinner last night with business leaders from the United States and India. I look forward to welcoming India's Ministers of Commerce and Finance to the United States for the CEO Forum that I will host in the State Department on July 12.

I was also pleased that the United States and India reaffirmed our commitment to full and timely implementation of the civil nuclear deal. We welcome particularly the intention of Westinghouse and the Nuclear Power Cooperation of India to arrive at a commercial agreement. And we agreed that that commercial agreement should be arrived at by September of this year.

I have been a strong personal advocate of this civil agreement. Since I came here a number of years ago and engaged with Prime Minister Singh and then with our Congress and we shepherded it through our Committee ultimately, and was pleased that it was accepted, I will continue to be a strong advocate.

We also talked today about the common threat of terrorism. Democratic societies such as ours have obviously suffered at the hands of terrorist groups. We are open, we are more open than others. We welcome people to our countries. And at our Homeland Security Dialogue in Washington last month and here in the Strategic Dialogue today, we discussed ways that we can further cooperate on keeping our countries safe.

I spoke extensively last night about the imperative for both the United States and India to act forcefully and cooperatively on the subject of climate change. Climate change grows more urgent. The science grows more compelling. And it screams at us, all of us, to take action. There is no country in the world that has not experienced some of the impact of climate change already. Together, India and the United States are undertaking clean energy research. We are collaborating on development efforts. And together we believe we can do more to work on climate change. To that end we agreed to today that we will create a Working Group, which Minister Khurshid and I will coordinate within our respective governments, in order to intensify our efforts to find out ways that we

can bilaterally join together in order to address the urgency of climate change.

I might add that led by the very very vibrant diaspora, the Indian American diaspora, we have seen our exchanges, our travel, our higher education cooperation greatly expand. And we want to take that too to another level. As large and as prosperous as our democracies are, both the United States and India know that transformative change takes a certain amount of time. But we are both countries of innovators and big thinkers. You see that in the remarkable accomplishments of technology and of other efforts in India in the last years.

We also have vibrant civil societies. We welcome that. And we have a vibrant free press. We share common values and goals, and we both share the will and the determination to keep pressing forward towards positive change. So I am convinced that the US-India friendship, as President Obama said, is one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century. And today I believe we laid a path for helping to make certain that everybody understands that.

We have made a long list of items that we need to follow up on, and we are undertaking to create an action plan so that these won't just be words but they will be policies and programmes that will be implemented, that can improve the lives of both of our people and hopefully in keeping with our values and our spirit, they improve the lives of our neighbors around the world.

Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Official Spokesperson: We will now have questions.

Q(Indian Media): Minister Khurshid, the same companies that actually refused to engage with India on citing privacy issues basically give that kind of information to the US. They give the US access to private emails and two other confidential communication records. Is that cause for concern? Did you raise it with Secretary Kerry? What was his response?

And Secretary Kerry, do you think this is a case of double standards - one set of standards for American citizens and their right of privacy and another set of standards for the rest of us?

External Affairs Minister: I think saying have you raised it with Secretary Kerry might not be the correct way of looking at it. This is an area that we are both interested in and we discussed it. We discussed it and I think it is important to keep a distinction in mind, and I am sure that Secretary Kerry will tell you from the American point of view, but to keep a distinction in mind as to get access to content of communications is one thing and being able to study by way of computer software patterns of communications whether that is emails or telephone calls is two different things. I think the President of the United States has already spoken of this and has indicated their information that in several countries terrorist strikes were prevented because of some of this work that they have been able to do.

Now, the issues of privacy and issues of reciprocity etc., are issues that we will all keep in mind, and these are matters that engage our attention on both sides, and we are constantly in touch, and if there is need for anything to be brought to the notice of either side, it will be done so. But to that extent I think a meaningful discussion, amongst many other things that we have discussed, briefly took place on this as well.

US Secretary of State: I am really glad you asked that question and I am very very happy to answer it. And I want to answer it very very carefully because there is an enormous amount of misinformation, there is an enormous amount of misunderstanding about what the programme is in the United States. And I will proudly, proudly and forcefully defend the civil liberties and the protections of those civil liberties of the United States and of India and of other democracies over every other country in the world.

We take painstaking efforts, sometimes at the expense of endangering ourselves, to protect the rights of the people. The fact is that this law that is utilized in the United States does not look at content. It does not look at individual emails. It does not listen to people's telephone conversations. It is a random survey by computer of anybody's telephone, of just a number, not even a name. No name associated with it.

And it takes those random numbers and looks at whether those random numbers are connected to other numbers that they know by virtue of other intelligence or other things that have happened are linked to terrorists in places where those terrorists operate. And only then, only

then, can they take that information if it shows an adequate linkage, they will meet a high standard of law, they then go to a judge in a special court and ask that court for permission, meeting the standard of the law to be able to go further in the investigation.

Now, all three branches of the American Government, the executive branch, the judiciary and the legislative branches were aware of this program, were part of this program by virtue of either a vote or implementing it or passing on it as the judiciary. And in so doing, the evidence has shown from our FBI, from our intelligence community, that we have avoided terrorist acts and we have saved lives.

Now, regrettably we live in a world that is more dangerous because there are some people who prefer to kill people randomly rather than to enter a political system and offer a program and try to make a change. Just today I was driving along on the streets here in Delhi and I was remarking how different it is today to see guards and barbed wire and people having to guard buildings and so forth – the things that we did not live with years ago. And this is true in country after country after country. I see security in front of the Capitol of the United States of America. Where once I used to be able to walk in at will, now there are barricades and police officers holding machineguns because some people do not choose to participate in democracy.

Now, I believe that what we have done is to put in place a program that meets the highest standards of scrutiny, and the highest tests of civil liberties. And there is a balance in this world we live in. When the marathon bombers bombed in Boston, Massachusetts, in April, one of the first questions that was being asked was why did not you guys notice that they were in touch with radical websites; how come you did not track them and know that they were being radicalized when they went to Russia or wherever they went? And the answer is, because we do not look at their emails without the sufficient legal justification to do it.

So, this is a dangerous and complicated world we all live in, and I believe that the program the United States has pursued is a very judicious balance of civil rights, civil liberties, but also of the right of people to live free from being killed by terrorists, and the right we have to be able to protect people in the effort to do that.

Q (US Media): Mr. Secretary, the Obama Administration and you personally have invested a great deal in the US relationship with Russia and China, and have indicated previously that things are on a good track forward. What does the Snowden incident tell you about the strength of those relationships and the possibility of future cooperation? Have you asked Russian authorities specifically to prevent Mr. Snowden's departure from Moscow? And if so, what has been the response? Have you spoken to Mr. Lavrov in the past two days?

In the case of China, why did the State Department wait for nearly a week after the arrest warrant was issued to revoke his passport, and when was the Hong Kong Government informed? And finally, what response have you gotten from Latin American countries you have appealed to to deny Mr. Snowden entry?

And I have one question for the Minister. Neither of you spoke really about immigration reform in the United States. Could you outline India's concerns on that issue and indicate what reassurances you received from Secretary Kerry?

US Secretary of State: With respect to the response of the Latin American countries, all appropriate countries have been notified with respect to his status legally and that is the appropriate step to take, to put them on notice that he is an indicted individual, indicted with three felony counts, and that he is wanted by the legal process in the United States, and those countries are now on notice about that. Historically we have always known there are some countries that play outside of that process. And we do not know specifically where he may head or what his intended destination may be.

With respect to his passport, you have to first of all have the notification of the indictment and then obviously after the indictment the process cuts in. I do not know precisely when the order was received, but I do know that apparently at the time, we are waiting actually for confirmation of that, we do not know whether he traveled under that passport or another passport. We just do not know all the details yet. So, I am waiting to get those details, and obviously I am a long way from there. I was in touch with the White House last night and with the State Department. We do have officials of the State Department, Will Burns has been in touch with the Russians directly and they are on notice with respect to our desires.

With respect to the China and Russia relationship and where this puts us, you know it would be deeply troubling obviously if they have adequate notice and notwithstanding that they make a decision willfully to ignore that and not live by the standards of the law. There is a surrender treaty with Hong Kong. And if there was adequate notice - I do not know yet what the communication status was, but if there was - it would be very disappointing if he was willfully allowed to board an aeroplane as a result. And there would be without any question some effect and impact on the relationship and consequences.

With respect to Russia, likewise I again do not know fully yet the determinations or where they are heading. But I would urge them to live by the standards of the law because that is in the interest of everybody. In the last two years we have transferred seven prisoners to Russia that they wanted. So, I think reciprocity in the enforcement of the law is pretty important. And I suppose there is no small irony here! I mean I wonder if Mr. Snowden chose China and Russia as assistants in his flight from justice because they are such powerful bastions of internet freedom. And I wonder if while he was in either of those countries he raised the questions of internet freedom, since that seems to be what he champions.

But evidently, he places himself above the law having betrayed his country with respect to the violation of his oath. And I think there are very serious implications in that. So, we obviously hope countries will live by the standards of the law. When they do not, they invite other countries to break those standards. And I think it is a very serious question for all of us in our relationships.

External Affairs Minister: On immigration, of course as far as our industry is concerned, particularly the IT sector, they have expressed a deep concern but they are also in touch with their counterparts and public representatives in the US. We have got this to the Secretary's notice, and I must acknowledge that he has promised to do whatever is possible for him at his end. This is a matter of legislation, of immigration being rationalized. This is not clearly an immigration issue because a lot of this has to do with work permits to go temporarily and work in a field that has been of tremendous significance and the growth of economic relationship between the US and ourselves in India.

We have a CEOs Forum meeting which will be hosted at the State Department on the 12th of July, and I am sure that when CEOs on both sides meet this is something that they will certainly want to discuss. As partners, we need to factor in concerns of both sides, the potential that the IT sector had unlocked and continues to provide to both sides in the growth of our relationship and find something that is win-win for both sides.

Question (Indian Media): I have a set of interlinked questions for both Foreign Ministers on Afghanistan.

Foreign Minister Mr. Khurshid, did you convey India's concerns over the play of Taliban reconciliation process in Afghanistan? What were those concerns?

And Secretary Kerry, do you think the way the reconciliation is going on amounts to dilution of the red lines? And is the US planning to initiate talks with Haqqani Network?

External Affairs Minister: This is another issue that we discussed. I think to say did you express your concern may again not be the correct way of describing it because I think this is a matter which both sides take with urgency and as a matter of great significance. We need to be on the same page, we need to consult, and we need to share with each other, which is the attitude that we have because we have a dialogue with the United States of America besides as part of our strategic relationship. And we have a trilateral between Afghanistan, United States and ourselves.

Now this is a process and I think it is an experiment that is being done in order to find an alternative for sustainable peace in Afghanistan. One cannot disagree with that. The issues or dimensions or aspects which are of concern to us, I must say with gratitude that the Secretary himself earmarked and said that as we proceed, hopefully the matter will be able to proceed, but as they proceed, it will ensure that none of the concerns of India are overlooked or undermined. And I think that is a good way of our working closely together. I think it is very clear what the objective is. How far that objective is possible, only time will tell. But with caution and care being approached as an objective I think is something that nobody can have a problem with.

US Secretary of State: I agree completely with Minister Khurshid. I think he has articulated very clearly the principles that are guiding us here. We will consult very closely with India and with others in the region. Ambassador Dobbins, who is an experienced diplomat, who is the head of our Afghanistan-Pakistan efforts and who is leading this initiative, will be here in India on Wednesday in order to brief officials directly.

We are working very closely with President Karzai as is entirely appropriate and really required because we are talking about Afghanistan and he is the President of Afghanistan. So, this is an Afghan-led process and it is an Afghan-led process that will only negotiate under certain conditions. Thus far those conditions have not yet been met. So, there is no negotiation at this point. If the conditions are met, then there is a negotiation that will take place not with the United States but with the High Peace Council of Afghanistan.

And one of the requirements or many of the requirements are that the Constitution of Afghanistan be respected, that they not affiliate or associate themselves, in fact disassociate themselves from Al Qaeda and from violence, and that the rights of women and the minority rights will be respected going forward. Now, that is not going to change. And if it is required to change, there obviously won't be an agreement. But it is better to explore the possibilities of having a peaceful resolution and inclusion in a political process if it is possible.

Ultimately, that will be decided by the Afghan people through this negotiation or it will be decided at the ballot box in 2014 without the Taliban. And we will continue under any circumstances, the United States will continue, as President Obama has made clear, to support the Afghan Government, to support the Afghan military, to continue to equip and train it well beyond 2014, and to continue to have a level of a force on the ground that will continue to conduct antiterrorism and counterterrorism activity. So, the hope is that this could provide an avenue for the reduction in violence. But there is certainly a course that we are committed to, if it does not.

Q (US Media): I wanted to follow up a little bit on Afghanistan. Secretary Kerry, you mentioned yesterday during your speech a role for India in the election process in 2014. To both of you, I wanted to see what more

if anything you think India could do. Could you perceive or foresee a security role for India post 2014?

And I also wanted to follow-up, particularly to the Foreign Minister on the issue of Iran. India has kept open dialogue with Iran and a much better relationship with Iran than the United States does. What was the nature of your discussion, if any, on Iran and your hopes or your considerations about President-elect Rohani?

US Secretary of State: With respect to the future of Afghanistan, India has invested two billion dollars in development and projects in Afghanistan. And India obviously has its own diplomatic relationships with Afghanistan, its own relationship with President Karzai. And so we certainly hope that India will, and I am confident will from the conversations we have, encourage President Karzai and Afghanistan to be as prepared for the elections as possible, to do anything if the Afghans ask for it and wanted, to be able to be helpful.

Obviously India is not going to interfere - no one should interfere in an election of another country - but if that country needs help in getting either polling or equipment or technical assistance or whatever it might be, any number of countries should be prepared to be helpful because this election must be accessible, accountable, transparent, free and fair. And the people in the country need to know and see that. And so whatever India can do in its relationship with President Karzai to encourage him to help to make sure all the preparations are in place, that the independent Election Commission has the tools and the rules that it needs so that the people of Afghanistan have no question whatsoever about those five qualities I mentioned - the transparency, the freedom, the fairness, the accessibility and accountability.

On Iran, we did discuss Iran of course and we completely understand the relationship that India has. We are appreciative that India has worked hard to reduce its dependency on Iranian oil. That has been an important step and India has been very cooperative in communicating to Iran and standing up publically and holding them accountable for nonproliferation requirements. India has stood up and enforced the IAEA and UN resolutions and requirements, and we appreciate that.

We also believe that hopefully India with its relationship could help urge the new Iranian leadership as well as the old leadership and the Supreme Leader to take advantage of this moment that they would recognize that, we would call on them to urge the Iranians not to miscalculate, not to miscalculate about American and international commitment, I might add all international commitment. China, Russia, the UN Security Council, the UN itself have all set certain requirements that need to be adhered to. And we would urge Iran to prove to the world that its peaceful nuclear programme as they say it is, is in fact peaceful.

They have been told by President Obama and other leaders that there is no problem with having a peaceful nuclear programme, but there is a problem if everybody sees that you are doing it in a way that they have legitimate reason to believe that it is not in fact peaceful. So, we would hope India would help us so that Iranians do not put the world in a position where they are forced to take additional steps with respect to Iran.

External Affairs Minister: I think you have got a pretty good picture there. I can only add that we have a valuable relationship with Iran, but we have not allowed our friendship with Iran to come in the way of our objective commitment to nonproliferation and our commitment to the IAEA provisions because of Iran being a signatory to the NPT. And we do speak about these things frankly on both sides with our friends in the US Administration as well as with people we interact with in the Iranian Government. They do have a new President now and we would want to judge and test as to what the new President's intentions and inclinations are.

My reading from my visit to Iran I conveyed to Secretary Kerry. My assessment, which is only a provisional one, I conveyed to Secretary Kerry. But obviously it is something that is only in the process. We still obviously would want to see a peaceful settlement to the issue that has become a very burning issue. Such comfort is that we can give and ensure for movement forward, we would always willingly do. We can today only express our hope that the process that began, but with a process with which some people might well be getting impatient, is a process that is best taken forward quickly. And we sincerely hope that that is what will happen.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.

Thank you



**457. Joint Statement on the Fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue.
New Delhi, June 24, 2013.**

External Affairs Minister of India Shri Salman Khurshid and Secretary of State John F Kerry met in New Delhi and co-chaired the fourth India-US Strategic Dialogue on June 24, 2013. During their first meeting, they reviewed the extensive transformation of the bilateral relationship and identified key sectors of cooperation that will continue to add strategic depth to the partnership.

Secretary Kerry was accompanied at the Strategic Dialogue by Ambassador Nancy Powell, Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, Admiral Samuel Locklear of the U.S. Pacific Command, Director John Holdren of the White House Office of Science & Technology Policy, National Aeronautics and Space Administrator Charles Bolden, U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Rajiv Shah, Export-Import Bank Chairman Fred Hochberg, U.S. Trade & Development Agency Director Leocadia Zak, and senior officials from the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, and Overseas Private Investment Corporation. External Affairs Minister Khurshid was joined by Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Montek Singh Ahluwalia; Adviser to the Prime Minister on Public Information, Infrastructure and Innovation Sam Pitroda; Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai; Home Secretary R.K. Singh; Secretary, Department of Science & Technology T. Ramasami; Secretary, Department of Space, Dr. K. Radhakrishnan; Secretary, Department of Higher Education Ashok Thakur and Ambassador Nirupama Rao.

Regional Strategic Consultations:

Reaffirming their shared vision for peace and stability in Asia and in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, the United States and India underscored

their continued support for enhancing regional connectivity, as well as for the continued intensification of India-US engagement through existing regional dialogue mechanisms, including the East Asia Summit process, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum and the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus. The two sides expressed their commitment to continue to consult closely on issues relating to the region both bilaterally and trilaterally, including in the India-US-Japan format, which has had four successful meetings.

The United States and India reaffirmed the importance of maritime security, unimpeded commerce and freedom of navigation, and the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes in accordance with international law. India welcomed the entry of the United States to the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) as a Dialogue Partner in November 2012, and the United States welcomed India's Observer status to the Arctic Council in May 2013.

Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry called for sustained commitment and support of the international community for a stable, democratic, united, sovereign and prosperous Afghanistan. The United States and India each reiterated their enduring commitments to support the Afghan Government and all people of Afghanistan through the transition process and beyond, in accordance with their respective Strategic Partnership Agreements. The two leaders emphasized the importance of ensuring that the international community continues to support free, fair, transparent and inclusive Presidential and Provincial Council elections in Afghanistan in 2014. They emphasized the need for continued efforts to enhance the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces and sustain the socio-economic development of Afghanistan.

The leaders acknowledged that success in Afghanistan requires, in addition to building up Afghanistan's capacity to defend itself, an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned reconciliation process. They agreed that the process should preserve the historic political, economic and social progress made over the past decade.

The two leaders also reiterated the importance of taking concrete steps to promote expanded private investment and trade in Afghanistan.

Security and Strategic Partnership:

The two co-chairs recognized that defense, counterterrorism, and science and technology have become important aspects of the relationship. They welcomed the fact that defense trade had reached nearly \$9 billion, and that U.S. and Indian military forces were continuing their professional exchanges, including through regular military training exercises, like the Army series YUDH ABHYAS, which took place in May, and the naval series MALABAR, planned for later this year. They welcomed the delivery of the first P-8I Poseidon for the Indian Navy in May and the first C-17 Globe master III for the Indian Air Force in June. Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry also acknowledged the efforts that the United States and India are making to transform defence ties beyond buyer-seller relationships and to pursue opportunities for technological cooperation for co-development and co-production of defence equipment.

Recognizing the shared challenges that democratic societies such as the United States and India face from terrorist groups, as well as the grave dangers posed by violent extremism, Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry welcomed the convening of the second Homeland Security Dialogue in Washington, May 2013. They reiterated the importance of closer cooperation and development of more intensive partnerships between the two countries in megacity policing, cyber security, global supply chain and transportation security, combating counterfeit currency and illicit financial flows, training of law enforcement agencies, and identifying products and technologies that support law enforcement. They also stressed the need for concerted efforts to address the challenge of terrorism in the region, including the dismantling of terrorist safe havens and disrupting all financial and tactical support for terrorism, and through strengthened cooperation in the Global Counterterrorism Forum. The two leaders reiterated their commitment to continue their cooperation on the Mumbai terror attack in November 2008, including through continued exchanges of information between designated agencies to aid investigations and trials relating to that attack.

Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry emphasized the need for the United States and India to develop stronger partnerships on cyber-security, including through the next iterations of the Cyber Security

Consultations, the Strategic Cyber Policy Dialogue, and the Information and Communications Technology Working Group. Secretary Kerry and Minister Khurshid reaffirmed the intent of U.S. and Indian law enforcement agencies to develop closer partnerships critical to the shared objectives of countering transnational crime and terrorist threats that impact both countries. To that end, both leaders welcomed the enhancement of existing dialogues to a formal India-US Working Group on mutual legal assistance and extradition, acknowledging the importance of continuing to find effective and efficient mechanisms to cooperate on our shared commitment in law enforcement.

Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry recognized the very successful partnership being built, through the Strategic Security Dialogue, on issues related to non-proliferation and international security. They reviewed the close cooperation of the United States and India to realize India's intention of joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group. Secretary Kerry reaffirmed the United States' support for India's full membership in these groups. The United States also welcomed India's March 2013 update to the Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment, and Technology (SCOMET) list.

Strategic Partnership in Commerce, S&T, Education, and Energy:

Growing trade and investment continue to drive the India-US partnership forward, and bilateral trade in goods and services has reached close to \$100 billion. The two sides welcomed the adoption of new regulations regarding foreign investment ceilings in several sectors of the Indian economy, and the creation of new Cabinet-level mechanisms to expedite investment in India's infrastructure. The co-chairs supported increased investment in mutually-rewarding opportunities in their vast and growing markets. The two sides will resume negotiations to conclude a Bilateral Investment Treaty/Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement as soon as India's revised model BIPPA text is ready.

Both governments reiterated their commitment to facilitating greater two-way trade and investment, including with respect to goods, services, and skilled professionals. Both governments also re-affirmed their commitment to strengthening the innovation climate in each country as

a means of promoting economic growth and other legitimate domestic and trade policy objectives. Noting the importance of technology to both economies, India and the United States discussed their cooperation under the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Working Group and reaffirmed plans for a follow on ICT Working Group Meeting in Washington this year. Both sides plan to discuss best practices and cooperation in ICT manufacturing and testing, cloud computing, **R&D in ICT** and other related areas. To take advantage of the benefits of cyberspace and to manage the increasing threats, both also agreed on the importance of deepening high-level discussions and cooperation on cyber security and internet governance through various mechanisms including the Cyber security Consultations and the Strategic Cyber Policy Dialogue.

The two sides welcomed the increased cooperation and communication between U.S. antitrust agencies and Indian competition agencies that help ensure markets are open and competitive. In September 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission and the Indian Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Competition Commission of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Antitrust Cooperation to promote technical cooperation and consultations on matters of competition policy and enforcement.

Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry welcomed the continuation of discussions under the Commercial Dialogue on standards cooperation and the expected launch of discussions on sustainable manufacturing. Minister Khurshid reiterated India's willingness to host the next meeting of the Trade Policy Forum (TPF) in India on mutually convenient dates and have a comprehensive engagement on the full range of issues under the TPF.

The two leaders recognized that India and the United States enjoy ever expanding bilateral cooperation in our science and technology relationship. Together, India and the United States are using science and technology to tackle global cross-cutting issues such as climate change, disease mitigation, water resources, and clean energy. Both countries facilitate leading edge research and are building public-private partnerships that support technology-based innovation and entrepreneurship. India and the United States look forward to the next

Joint Commission Meeting in 2014 to plan, coordinate, and provide strategic guidance to help advance our mutual science and technology endeavours.

The two delegations discussed the critical importance of energy to sustaining economic growth and securing prosperity, and acknowledged the robust and full range of cooperation under the India-US Energy Dialogue, co-chaired by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy and the Deputy Chairman of India's Planning Commission. India and the United States plan to continue their ongoing efforts to expand partnerships in clean energy and energy efficiency through the India-US Partnership to Advance Clean Energy (PACE) and under the multilateral Clean Energy Ministerial. Since 2009, PACE - Deployment has mobilized approximately \$2 billion in clean energy financing to India and PACE – Research has created innovative public-private consortia through the \$125 million Joint Clean Energy Research & Development Centre. They noted the decision taken to create a new Sustainable Growth Working Group under the India-US Energy Dialogue, and the growth of U.S. investment in India's energy sector. India and the United States welcomed additional efforts aimed at financing clean energy investments, promoting the development of smart grid technologies, energy efficient buildings, solar power, smart and efficient air conditioning and space cooling, and expanding off-grid access to clean energy.

The two sides noted the ongoing commercial discussions between NPCIL and Westinghouse towards setting up a nuclear power plant at Mithivirdi in Gujarat. They encouraged the two companies to expedite these consultations. They also took note of the ongoing consultations between General Electric-Hitachi and NPCIL on setting up a nuclear power plant in Andhra Pradesh. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the full and timely implementation of the India-US civil nuclear cooperation agreement.

The Minister and Secretary reviewed the good progress on cooperation between the United States and India on particle physics and expressed the desire to finalize an agreement by the end of this summer. They also committed to encouraging the conclusion of talks between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Indian Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) on a bilateral information exchange

arrangement, by fall 2013. The two sides also praised collaborative research and development under the India-US Civil Nuclear Energy Working Group, which will meet in Mumbai in July 2013 to discuss advancing cooperation in accelerator technology and other nuclear physics research projects.

The Minister and the Secretary welcomed the expanded work plan endorsed by the India-US Civil Space Joint Working Group in a number of areas, including measures that will improve the use of earth observation data to promote sustainable development and the compatibility-interoperability between the U.S. Global Positioning System and the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System. They applauded agreement by the Indian Space Research Organization and the U.S. National Aeronautic and Space Agency to explore further cooperative space exploration work, including future missions to the moon and Mars. They welcomed the announcement of NASA support through its Deep Space Network facilities to ISRO's Mars Orbiter Mission, and the ISRO-NASA technical discussions to integrate a U.S. L-band and Indian S-band synthetic aperture radar on an Indian spacecraft for earth observation studies. Both sides intend to cooperate bilaterally and in multilateral forums to promote efforts to ensure the long term sustainability of outer space. To this end, both sides plan to undertake discussions on areas of mutual interest such as space situational awareness, and collision avoidance as part of a Space Security Dialogue.

Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry welcomed the Higher Education Dialogue to be held on June 25, 2013. They reiterated their commitment to the Fulbright-Nehru Program for students and scholar exchange, and lauded the colleges and universities selected to receive funding under the second round of awards of the Obama-Singh Knowledge Initiative, for which the two Governments committed in 2009 to provide \$5 million each, over five years. The leaders also lauded initiatives such as the Raman Fellowships for placements of young faculty and researchers in U.S. universities under which a first batch of 126 fellows are scheduled to join U.S. institutions in the current academic session; the 'In Step' initiative for training of in-service teachers; and collaborations in technology-enabled learning, including Massive Open Online Courses.

They underlined the importance of developing further partnerships between U.S. and Indian educational institutions, and developing India's vocational training sector through collaboration with U.S. educational institutions. The two leaders welcomed the initiative to establish community colleges in India. In this context, the Minister and the Secretary welcomed the decision to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding between the All India Council for Technical Education and the American Association of Community Colleges, as well as additional institution-to-institution agreements to be signed on the margins of the Higher Education Dialogue,

To enhance people-to-people connectivity, the two leaders also welcomed the creation of new student programs, such as India's "Connect India" program and the U.S. "Passport to India" initiative. They noted the importance of education as a pillar of the strategic relationship, which not only enhances people-to-people connectivity, but also bolsters Indian institutional capacity to realize the demographic dividend promised by the significant increase of young people in India's population. Cooperation in education supports economic growth in both countries and fosters the innovation and entrepreneurship both nations need to advance together in the 21st century.

The two leaders welcomed the rich mix of public and private science and technology cooperation between U.S. and Indian institutions and partners and underscored the importance of science, technology, and innovation to the well-being and economic growth of our countries. They applauded the announcement of awards from the Millennium Alliance and the Science and Technology Endowment Board celebrating the joint collaborative and innovative spirit between our scientists and technologists. The two countries reaffirmed their commitment to future collaborations in a wide range of disciplines from physics and state-of-the-art telescopes, to increasing the role of women in science and technology, advancing health research by continuing their successes in understanding diabetes, and working towards development of a new rotavirus vaccine. The Indian side underlined its interest to deepen cooperation with the United States in monsoon studies and in developing an Integrated Ocean Drilling Program.

Global Issues:

Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry lauded the expansion of the successive rounds of the Strategic Dialogue to encompass a truly global strategic partnership. The co-chairs expressed appreciation for the success of the two countries in leveraging their respective areas of comparative advantage to jointly assist other partner countries across the globe.

Minister Khurshid and Secretary Kerry welcomed the ongoing trilateral cooperation in establishing Open Government Platforms in Ghana and Rwanda, eliminating preventable child deaths, and strengthening agriculture management and extension to expand food security among important African partners such as Kenya, Liberia, and Malawi, while also cooperating to empower women economically in Afghanistan. The two sides also welcomed the continuing bilateral consultations on peacekeeping and recognized the need to expand this senior official dialogue to cover the range of issues in the United Nations.

The two sides welcomed the decisions taken at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties held in Doha. They resolved to carry out the Durban Platform, including by developing a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties. They stressed the need for meaningful implementation of the mechanisms set up under the UNFCCC process. Additionally, the two sides agreed to enhance the existing India-US Global Climate Change Dialogue, and identify opportunities for further and significant bilateral cooperation.

Welcoming the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference in June 2012, the two sides reaffirmed that eradication of poverty is at the heart of the global sustainable development agenda.

The two sides welcomed continuing engagement on women's empowerment and the four meetings that have been held since the establishment of the India-US Women's Empowerment Dialogue in 2009. The Minister and the Secretary welcomed the opportunity to further cement India-US cooperation in these existing areas and explore additional areas of mutual interest, including in the fields of clean energy and women in science, technology, and engineering.

The two leaders endorsed the detailed sectoral fact sheets outlining progress achieved in a range of areas since the previous Dialogue in Washington in June 2012, and encouraged Departments and Ministries on both sides to continue to design and implement ambitious plans to further the partnership.

The two co-chairs expressed satisfaction at the consistent progress being made in the annual Strategic Dialogues towards deepening the India-US partnership. Secretary Kerry thanked Minister Khurshid for hosting the fourth round in New Delhi.

The next round of the Strategic Dialogue will be convened in the United States in 2014, on mutually convenient dates.



458. Official Spokesperson's response to a media query on the asylum request from Mr. Snowden.

New Delhi, July 02, 2013.

In response to a media query on the asylum request from Mr. Snowden, the Official Spokesperson said:

"I can confirm that earlier today our Embassy in Moscow did receive a communication dated 30 June from Mr Edward Snowden. That communication did contain a request for asylum. We have carefully examined the request.

Following that examination we have concluded that we see no reason to accede to the request."

Edward snowden, former National Security Agency contractor was responsible for revealing a massive U.S. global surveillance programme.



459. Press Release of the Ministry of Finance on the visit of Finance Minister to the USA.

New Delhi, July 11, 2013.

The Union Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram who is visiting the United States, met with top American executives and U.S. Senator Max Baucus, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee .

The Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram met Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and top management officials of a number of American companies with substantial investments in India. Discussions focused on the current business and investment environment in India. The companies included Microsoft, Lockheed Martin, Boeing and International Lease Finance Corporation (ILFC). The issues highlighted by the companies inter alia related to transfer pricing; impact of the Comprehensive Immigration Bill recently passed by the U.S Senate on future business prospects of Indian Information Technology (IT) companies operating in the U.S; and taxation among others.

The companies were appreciative of the measures taken to address concerns relating to Transfer Pricing. Finance Minister apprised the companies of the recommendations of the Arvind Mayaram Committee on enhancing FDI caps in many sectors, and the steps being taken to implement the recommendations. He emphasized the need for U.S companies to set-up local manufacturing bases in India, saying "it is in the mutual interest of both countries for India to become a large manufacturing economy".

The Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram also underscored Indian concerns about the provisions in the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill relating to skilled non-immigrant visas.

Finance Minister met with the Chairman of the US Ex-Im Bank, Mr. Fred Hochberg and other senior officials of the Ex-Im Bank.

The Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram met with Senator Max Baucus (D-MT), Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. They exchanged views on the global economic situation. The Finance Minister mentioned that while some concerns have been expressed about the current

business environment in India, the policies adopted by the Government of India are pro-growth and WTO compliant. He stressed that the Government of India is committed to ensuring a transparent, fair and non-discriminatory investment environment for foreign investors seeking to do business in India. During the discussion, Senator Baucus fondly recalled his first visit to India as a young student in the 1960s and his meeting with then Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.



460. Press Release of the Ministry of Commerce on U.S-India CEO forum Meeting.

New Delhi, July 13, 2013.

Top CEOs representing diverse sectors of India and US and senior Government officials from both sides deliberated at length issues of common interest and concern, and recommended a number of steps to further strengthen and deepen the bilateral business relationship between the two countries, at the US-India CEO Forum meeting held yesterday at the US Department of State in Washington DC.

The meeting opened with remarks from Union Finance Minister Shri P Chidambaram, and US Treasury Secretary, Mr. Jacob Lew; Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma and US Commerce Secretary, Ms. Penny Pritzker, and US Deputy Secretary of State Mr. William Burns. The CEO Forum Meeting was co-chaired on the Government side by Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission of India and US Trade Representative Mr. Michael Froman; and by Mr. Ratan Tata and Mr. David Cote, CEO, Honeywell, from the CEOs side. The Indian Ambassador to the US, Ms. Nirupama Rao was present in the meeting. US Deputy National Security Advisor Ms. Caroline Atkinson delivered the closing remarks and outlined the future agenda for the Forum.

The sectors discussed in the meeting included agriculture, agriculture value chains, water management, health and life sciences, energy, defense and homeland security.

Recognising the vital role that bilateral trade and investment plays in this global strategic partnership, the US-India CEO Forum was created in 2005 to provide a platform for the Indian and US CEOs to discuss issues of mutual interest and suggest action-oriented recommendations to both governments for consideration.



461. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the information provided to the Lok Sabha on the passage of the “The Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernisation Act, 2013” in the US Senate.

New Delhi, August 7, 2013.

On 27 June 2013, the United States Senate passed Bill No. S.744, “The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act 2013.” While the current Bill is not expected to impact adversely against foreign students, including from India, Indian IT industry has raised concerns over some measures in the Bill that relate to skilled non-immigrant visas, which, if brought into force, after the completion of US Congressional processes in both Houses, is likely to place more onerous requirements on H1-B/L-1 visa dependent firms including higher wages; enhanced audit by U.S. agencies; non-displacement guarantee/ additional recruitment notice requirements; and higher visa fees.

The concerns of Indian IT companies have been conveyed to the U.S. side at Ministerial levels during the recent meetings of Homeland Security Dialogue in May 2013, Strategic Dialogue in June 2013, and at the CEOs Forum in July 2013 by Home Minister, Finance Minister, Commerce & Industry Minister and External Affairs Minister. The Indian Embassy in Washington is working with IT industry to create more awareness in the US Congress on concerns of Indian IT companies regarding the Senate Bill.

Government is examining the Senate Bill with regard to its WTO compatibility. However, the matter can only be taken up before the WTO

Disputes Settlement body at an appropriate time once the Senate Bill becomes law.



462. Speech by National Security Advisor Shri Shiv Shankar Menon on “India and the USA” at Aspen Institute India.

New Delhi, September 20, 2013.

Mr. Gautam Thapar, Chairman, Aspen Institute India,

Mr. Tarun Das,

Ladies, Gentlemen and Friends.

I am delighted to be with you again. Aspen India has made major contributions to the transformation of India-US relations in many ways. The high quality Aspen India-U.S. Strategic Dialogue has helped to build the strategic partnership between the two countries. Many of you present today have been deeply involved in this relationship at crucial moments.

One week from today, PM Manmohan Singh and President Barack Obama will meet in Washington DC. I therefore thought that we might take stock of the India-US partnership, its present trajectory, and its prospects.

This will be Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s sixth bilateral summit with a U.S. President. His first summit in 2005 with President Bush built on the momentum of the previous years to establish a new, bold and transformative agenda for the relationship. Prime Minister’s visit in November 2009 as President Obama’s first state visitor, and President Obama’s own historic visit to India a year later, highlighted the bipartisan character of the relationship; its enduring merit based on shared values and interests; and, the commitment of the leaders to a sustained process of broadening and deepening the strategic partnership. Both leaders have spoken about the India-U.S. relationship as a defining relationship and as one of the most important relationships of the 21st century.

The Transformation

India-US relations have come a long way in the last decade. From a time when we dealt with each other formally, sometimes warily, we today have a full spectrum relationship, between our governments, our peoples and our institutions. I do not need to count the ways for this audience.

For India, the relationship with the US has been the most transformed relationship in the past ten years. What were once considered breakthroughs in the relationship, are now regarded as routine and normal. This is a sign of maturity in the relationship, even if it robs it of some of the excitement of some years ago. We also face the reality that we must now deal with new challenges in the years ahead.

The relationship has all the attributes of a strong and comprehensive strategic partnership. We have regular high level political dialogue. In recent months, we have had one high level visit every month. India and the US have strategic consultations on every major issue and region. We have a growing dialogue and partnership on non-proliferation, export controls and nuclear issues.

Our security cooperation includes multiple forms of engagement. Our defence relations are strong. We conduct defence exercises regularly. We are steadily moving to joint research, co-development and co-production of defence products through partnerships between our defence industries, as part of our strategy to develop India's defence industrial base and to increase the domestic share in our defence acquisitions.

Cooperation between India and the US beyond the public gaze in the fight against crime and terrorism has also been effective. The Homeland Security Dialogue since 2011 has been of mutual benefit in protecting our two countries. We have also begun exploring the potential of cooperative engagement in cyber and space security.

Our total trade in goods and services exceeds 100 billion dollars. It has grown every year through the past five years of a global economic crisis. We might each have reasons not to be fully satisfied with our economic relations but no one denies its potential and significance. The US is our single largest trading partner and is a source of critical technology, investment, and collaborations, with over \$ 11 billion worth of Indian investments in the US, and \$ 50 billion of US investment in India.

Some of our most innovative and rewarding partnerships are in the inter-linked domains of energy, health, higher education and science and technology. They often do not get the attention that they deserve, but are critical in their impact on the lives of our people.

As for our peoples, there are about 600 major and 1500 small and medium US companies in India, and over 100,000 Indian students in the US. When you see suburban developments around Delhi called 'Palm Springs' or 'Nassau County' you realise the extent of links at the popular level.

Drift?

Despite this range of relationships some today speak of drift in the relationship. I find this a rather strange way to describe a relationship where the two governments have thirty-two dialogue mechanisms meeting each year.

One reason for this perception may be the fact that it is now a full spectrum relationship, no longer focused on one big transformational idea like the civil nuclear cooperation initiative in 2005-8. To me that breadth is the strength of the relationship.

The impression of drift is also partly due to economic factors. It arises from the macro-economic situation. US friends mention concerns about economic reforms and specific policy issues in India. These concerns are not unique to the U.S. They are, first and foremost, of concern to Indians. Government is addressing all three sets of issues. Our IT industry, the locomotive of our economic partnership, which provides employment to 280,000 people in the US, also has genuine difficulties with certain discriminatory provisions of the Immigration Reform Bill.

Going Forward

Looking ahead, the potential for growth in the relationship is strong. This is particularly so in energy, defence, education, and in the quality and range of the strategic dialogues that we undertake.

Economically, as we go forward we will focus on opportunities, especially in the infrastructure sector; improve market access; negotiate a Bilateral Investment Treaty; pursue constructive solutions in the WTO that

addresses our key concerns; and, work to strengthen the global multilateral trade regime, avoiding its fragmentation or the growth of protectionism. There is much useful bilateral work being done in clean energy and this will certainly grow.

The civil nuclear agreement of 2008 is a symbol of our transformed relationship. It is a significant part of our strategy to meet long term power demand in India, which is expected to grow four times over in the next two decades. The two governments have resolved government to government permissions and understandings necessary to enable commercial negotiations between NPCIL and Westinghouse, and for the AERB to begin its independent evaluation of the safety of the power plant. It has been our consistent stand that the power plant should meet the highest standards of safety delivering power at a price that is competitive vis-a-vis other sources of energy.

I was surprised in the last few days to see several stories claiming that somehow Indian law would not apply to projects in India. Civil nuclear projects in India will naturally be subject to Indian law, including civil liability. Domestic and foreign vendors have sought clarifications on some points of that law, which are being examined.

The India-US bilateral relationship is embedded in a larger vision of a global strategic partnership. This decade has been a period of transitions, turbulence and challenges in an interdependent world, on a scale that has few parallels in history. We have experienced a long drawn out global economic crisis and volatile financial markets. Across the arc from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean, through South Asia, Afghanistan, West Asia and to Africa, there are a range of immediate challenges and long term structural changes. Our bilateral relations have stayed on a strong and steady course despite these rough seas, because of convergence on a broad range of issues that matter.

We have shared interests in a stable, secure, peaceful and prosperous Asia-Pacific. The United States is an Asia-Pacific power and can play a constructive role in advancing regional stability, integration and cooperation. We are working together and with other countries in the region to establish an open, balanced, inclusive and rule-based regional economic and security architecture. As we build our respective regional

partnerships, we deepen our own relationships with ASEAN. We have also launched a fruitful trilateral dialogue with Japan.

Neither India nor the United States see their relationship as directed against any other country. Nor does a strong India-U.S. partnership run against the course of India's relations with other countries.

India and the U.S. have promoted their shared interest in maritime security through strategic dialogue, diplomatic efforts in regional forums and our regional partnerships. We each affirm the principles of freedom of navigation and unimpeded commerce, in accordance with international law, and peaceful settlement of maritime disputes.

We consult closely on Afghanistan, and, though approaches may diverge sometimes, we have a shared vision for a stable, united, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan that is never again a source of terrorism, and that emerges as a hub of regional cooperation.

Both have important interests in the stability and peace of West Asia. For India, proximity, religious and cultural links, economic interests, energy security and the livelihood of six million Indians in the Gulf area make this a vital interest.

Our deepening strategic partnership does not mean that we won't have our differences. This is inevitable between countries in different circumstances, at different levels of development, and in dissimilar geopolitical situations. We are both democratic countries with a strong and vocal sense of independence, sometimes shading into exceptionalism. As democrats we know that autonomy of decision making and differences are not inconsistent with a strategic partnership. Where we have differences we also have the confidence and maturity to be able to speak to each other candidly and to deal with the issues.

In sum, the strategic foundations of this relationship are enduring. In my view they will become more relevant in coming years.

From our perspective, the US will continue to be a key partner for capital, technology, knowledge and skills in our development effort; a potentially important source of clean energy technology and hydrocarbons; an important partner in areas like defence technology, intelligence and counter-terrorism; an important factor in our space security and cyber

security; a key interlocutor in adjustments to the global security and economic architecture; a partner in the quest for a rule based, open international trading and economic order; and in our efforts to seek peace and stability in our extended neighborhood and globally.

And that is why I am a confident optimist about the India-US relationship.



463. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary on Prime Minister's Visit to USA and UNGA.

New Delhi, September 20, 2013.

Please see Document No 569



464. Prime Minister's statement prior to his departure for USA for a bilateral visit to the United States and to attend the UN General Assembly Session.

New Delhi, September 25, 2013.

Please see Document No 570



465. Prime Minister's response to media query on his bilateral visit to USA.

New Delhi, September 26, 2013.

The United States is one of our most important strategic partner and during President Obama's regime, we have taken several steps to widen and deepen this partnership in diverse fields. And during the present

visit, we will review the progress that has been made and also what further can be done to give added meaning and content to this partnership.

The United States is one of India's most important trading partners, important provider of investment and technology support for India's development and we need the United States on our side as we move to give new added trust to our development programmes. We will also review the international situation particularly with reference to international economic situation and other important areas like South East Asia, Middle East and West Asia.



466. Statement of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh after his Bilateral Meeting with President Obama.

Washington (D. C), September 27, 2013.

Prime Minister of India (Dr. Manmohan Singh):... .. I have always believed that India and America are indispensable partners.

During the time that I have been Prime Minister and particularly during the time that President Obama and I have worked together, I think President Obama has made an outstanding contribution to strengthening, widening and deepening of our cooperation in diverse fields.

When I came to America in 2005, in addressing the United States' Congress I said there are partnerships based on principles and partnerships based on pragmatism. I then said that in the case of Indo-American cooperation, both principles of our commitment to democratic values, rule of law and pragmatism, both combined to make us strong and durable partners. And I am very happy to say that during the last five years that I have worked together with President Obama, that process has got strengthened in every possible way.

India and America are working together to bring give our cooperation a new sense of commitment, widening and deepening it in diverse directions. We are cooperating in expanding the frontiers of trade, investment in technology. Our bilateral trade today is US\$ 100 billion.

American investments in India are US\$ 80 billion and they are growing despite the slowdown in the global economy.

Outside the area of trade, technology and investment, we are exploring avenues of cooperation in new areas like energy cooperation, clean coal technologies, energy-efficient technologies, cooperation in the field of environment, cooperation in the field of defence and security-related, cooperation with regard to intelligence gathering and counterterrorism. In all these areas India needs the United States to be standing by our side. And I am very pleased to know that President Obama has imparted a powerful impetus to that process of our two countries being on the same page.

The President briefed me about his initiatives both with regard to Syria and with regard to Iran; and I complimented him for his vision, for his courage in giving diplomacy yet another chance. India fully supports these initiatives because six million Indians live in the West Asia and the Middle East. They earn their livelihood. Their... (*Inaudible*)... an important role of sustaining our balance of payments. Therefore, anything that contributes to peace and stability in the Middle East, in Iran, in Syria, is something which is in the interest of the global economy. It is certainly in the interest of people in the region in which India is placed.

We have also discussed our relations and our approach to dealing with Afghanistan and Pakistan. I explained to President Obama the difficulties that we face given the fact that the epicentre of terror still remains focused in Pakistan. And I look forward to meeting with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif even though the expectations have to be toned down given the terror arm which is still active in our subcontinent.

Overall, I have come here to thank President Obama for all that he has done to strengthen, widen and deepen the cooperation between our two countries.

I explained to the President that India is a poor country. Our basic task is to improve the standard of living of our people, to get rid of mass poverty, ignorance and disease which still afflict millions and millions of our people, and in that struggle we want America to stand by our side. And in the President the United States has a leader who realises and

recognises the contribution that resurgent India can make not only to fighting poverty but also to global peace and prosperity.

Thank you



467. Media Briefing by Indian Ambassador in Washington DC on Prime Minister's Ongoing Visit (September 26, 2013).

September 27, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here. We have with us Ambassador Nirupama Rao. We had requested her to speak to you and give you a contextual background to tomorrow's meeting between Prime Minister and President Obama and she has agreed to that. We have requested her to speak for a few minutes and then she will be available to answer a few questions. She has another appointment at around 5 and so she has to leave. So of necessity we will have to be brief with this.

With those introductory remarks I would request Ambassador Rao to make her opening remarks.

Indian Ambassador to USA (Shrimati Nirupama Rao): Thank you Akbar. Good afternoon friends and sorry to have kept you waiting entirely due to the traffic in Washington.

As you know, this will be the third summit meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Barak Obama. You have seen the arrival statement by Prime Minister that was issued a few hours ago. That gives you the context and essentially tells you a little about the setting for the visit.

As you know also from your previous briefings, a great deal has been achieved in the relationship, in the strategic partnership between India and the United States in recent years. In the true sense of the word it is what has been termed a full-spectrum relationship. It is a relationship that obviously has bilateral relevance and substance, but it also has a

relevance that extends to the regional situation as also the larger global environment.

Prime Minister Singh and President Obama will meet, as you know, tomorrow morning at the White House, and their meeting will be followed by lunch. Thereafter, Prime Minister departs for New York for the meeting of the UN General Assembly.

When you look at the bilateral relations between India and the United States, I think it is worthy to note that this relationship has obviously a political aspect to it; this is a relationship between two of the world's largest and most important democracies. I am not saying it just for the sake of it, I think there is a true concordance of many interests here, shared interests and shared concerns definitely, apart from the fact that we share values also as democracies.

In terms of what we have achieved in the last few years, the strategic dialogue which, as you know, was instituted in 2010 has come to encompass not only trade and business areas but also our cooperation on homeland security, on defence cooperation, energy security, and higher education.

In fact in all the discussion and comments on the visit that I have seen from our learned friends in the media, I do not believe much attention has been devoted to the fact that education and our cooperation in education has become one of the pillars of our partnership today. I think this has enormous relevance and that is where I think the development dimension to this relationship becomes so important. That is because as a large developing country with the challenges that we face, our cooperation for instance in energy, our cooperation in education is, I believe, of the utmost relevance because it touches the lives of people in our country.

The Indian American community here, which numbers more than three million today, has also played a very crucial and very constructive role in cementing the ties and the good relations between the two countries. The community has really been mainstreamed into American life today. You can see what I mean by the fact that we have leading Indian Americans in politics, in the Administration, in the legal profession. You are aware of Congressman Ami Bera who is the third Indian American to have been elected to the House of Representatives after Congressman

Dalip Singh Saund in the 50s; and Mr. Bobby Jindal who is now Governor of Louisiana. Dr. Ami Bera is the third such Indian American elected Congress. We also have two Governors - I mentioned Governor Jindal in Louisiana and Governor Nikki Haley in South Carolina.

Just today, Judge Sri Srinivasan is being sworn in to the DC Court of Appeals. It is a very prestigious position and again goes to show how far the Indian American community has come in this country. They have been truly bridge builders between our two nations.

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh shared a deep understanding, a deep friendship; and they hold each other in high esteem. I think that certainly goes a long way to the promoting of understanding and also focus on our partnership, what we have achieved, to review what we have done so far in the last few years, but also to set the pace, the direction and to help accelerate the momentum of our cooperation.

Our trade and business ties have grown significantly in the last few years. Trade in goods and services amounted to, as you know, US\$ 100 billion in this last year. The services industry in India, particularly the IT industry, has been an engine of growth in this relationship, which is why the ongoing discussion about the comprehensive immigration reform in this country. That aspect of the reform that touches skilled non-immigrant visas has been receiving our close attention in the last few months. I am sure you will have questions to raise on that but I just thought I will flag that issue.

From the US side of course there are issues that have been raised from time to time about the investment and economic reform process in India, which we have sought to address in a candid and open and transparent manner. And I think this does go a long way to bridging of differences and enabling a better meeting of minds on some of these issues.

From our side obviously we would like the United States to understand the development challenges that we face, the situation in which we live in terms of the environment around us. And I believe the fact that the dialogue mechanisms between India and the United States have multiplied to such an extent is proof of the fact that we are discussing a whole gamut, a whole spectrum of issues of mutual concern - be they bilateral, be they regional, be they global. And that is where of course our dialogue for instance on terrorism and counterterrorism occupies such relevance,

our dialogue on maritime security, our dialogue on East Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and our cooperation in the whole theatre, in the whole, shall I say, space of the Indian Ocean and the Asia Pacific becomes very relevant. We have had of course high-level engagements this year which I think you will have taken note of. We had the Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi in June this year where US Secretary of State John Kerry visited India for discussions with our External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid. And subsequently in July this year we had the visit of Vice-President Joseph Biden to India also which you would have covered.

I believe I should stop here and take your questions because time is short and I wanted to keep more time for questions rather than give you just a statement.

Official Spokesperson: The floor is open for questions.

Q: You have not really talked too much about cooperation on the issue of terror. Now in the wake of the Jammu attacks particularly I wanted to know whether Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is going to raise India's concerns with terror particularly cross-border terror with President Obama? I ask that because there is a longstanding award announced by the US on the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba founder Hafiz Saeed which does not seem to have gone anywhere. Is India really looking to put more pressure on Pakistan Government perhaps through its relations with the US?

Indian Ambassador to USA: Obviously we have not let this matter go off the radar. My statement was brief so I did not dwell too much on what we have been doing on homeland security cooperation and counterterrorism issues. But this issue concerning the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, the activities of Hafiz Saeed are very much on the agenda of discussions that we have with the United States at every given opportunity. So, I do not see any diminution of our concerns on this issue or any staying away from raising these issues when the opportunity arises, and especially because the issue cross-border terrorism and the threat that we continue to face, our homeland in India continues to face, on this issue is a matter of very great concerns nationally for us as a country. And I believe the United States is aware of the depth and the profundity of our concerns on this issue. The fact is that Lashkar-e-Tayyiba is not just a group confined in its activities to the subcontinent or

to cross-border terrorism. They have become virtually a global terrorist combine and their activities affect lives and endanger security in more than one country. I think the United States is aware of that and is concerned about it.

Q: It is not only the Indian-American community but also you have played a great role. You are a household name on the Capital Hill as also among the Indian American community, and thank you for what you are doing for our great country India. My question is, when Prime Minister landed, we just saw a White House statement that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will be welcomed in the White House. What message you think is Washington sending to India when our Prime Minister has just landed and not even met with President Obama?

And what do you think about this upcoming meeting between Prime Minister and President, and the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in New York? Do you think their meeting will also be discussed tomorrow in the White House?

Indian Ambassador to USA: First of all, I would advise you not to let your imagination run riot.

The fact is that the White House did issue a statement about the impending visit of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif I believe on October 23. The US and Pakistan have a bilateral relationship. It is a longstanding relationship. Visits are exchanged from time to time. And I do not believe you need to let this get under your skin. Our relationship with the United States stands on its own merits. The depth, as I said, and the range and the extent of our dialogue and our relationship with the United States stands on its own, stands on its own merits. I do not believe that there is any reason for us to feel any lack of confidence or for us to be expressing undue concern about the fact that there is a visit impending by a democratically-elected Prime Minister of Pakistan to the United States. And there is something else about ...

Q: About the meeting between the two Prime Ministers.

Indian Ambassador to USA: I am not here to talk about that. I am here as the Ambassador to the United States. I will confine myself to India-US relations.

Official Spokesperson: Can I request each one of you just to ask one question please?

Question: Ambassador Rao, India for the first time has used pretty strong language on US surveillance in the IBSA statement that has said that it is a serious violation of national sovereignty and incompatible with democratic coexistence between friendly countries. Is this an issue that Dr. Manmohan Singh is going to raise with Mr. Obama that it is not right for strategic partners to be spying and snooping to this extent of planting devices on your Embassy? Is this going to come up tomorrow?

Indian Ambassador to USA: I cannot say specifically whether it will come up tomorrow, but I can inform you very unequivocally that we have raised this issue with the American side and they know of our concerns on this issue. I would not want to deny the fact that we have expressed our position, our concerns to the United States on this matter. In fact that given the level of friendship and mutual confidence between our two countries we need to understand why these things happen.

At the same time, let me also tell you that we cannot just go by what the media is saying on these issues. The two Governments need to sit down and discuss this in a dispassionate, in an objective way. Let me also tell you that on cyber related matters there is already an ongoing and a fairly, I would say, productive dialogue between our two countries.

Question: Madam Rao, how does India propose to take up its concerns regarding the changes in US visa norms which America plans to bring in which would affect India's highly-skilled IT professionals?

Indian Ambassador to USA: We certainly intend to take it up, as we had on the last few occasions when we have had the opportunity to have these high-level meetings with the United States. This comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill is still a work in progress. It is still before the House of Representatives and it has been dissected into several parts while being discussed. We really do not know what the final outcome, what the final shape, what the final content of this Bill would be.

But the portion that relates to non-immigrant skilled visas, which is where the matter that you raised comes in, is certainly something that we are keeping very closely under watch. That is because if these restrictions

were to become a reality, then the business model that many of our India-based IT companies follow in this country stands to be adversely affected. We certainly do not want to see that happen, neither do we want to see restrictions placed on the numbers of H1B visas that these companies can legitimately I believe seek when they do business in this country.

So, we have been very candid and very forthright in expressing our views. I myself had been a frequent visitor to Capital Hill to discuss these issues. I have spoken in the US media on this matter. And I believe that our concerns are understood by a lot of the interlocutors with whom we have had the occasion to discuss this. But what the outcome of the Bill will be at this moment is very difficult to say. And even if you were to ask your US interlocutors, they would not be able to give you an answer just now.

Q: Ambassador Rao, is there a sense that what was meant to be the showpiece of the Indo-US equation, which is the nuclear deal, is somehow lying in cold storage in the sense that it has not been operationalised, that nuclear commerce has not taken off, that liability laws of India have been a major issue? And are we going to see some sort of ...(Inaudible)...? We were expecting that it would be announced yesterday or today, that has not happened. Where exactly do we stand on this?

Indian Ambassador to USA: That does not mean it is not going to happen, first of all I want to say that. As far as civil nuclear cooperation is concerned, it is certainly not in cold storage because the two sides – the NPCIL and the Westinghouse Electric Corporation - just to give you an example are in active discussion about, as you said the Pre-Early Works Agreement and the small contract as it is called. And I think it is very near fruition, those efforts are very near closure. So, I would encourage you to believe and to hope that there will be good outcomes.

And please also understand, when it comes to a nuclear power plant and when it comes to all the technical and commercial aspects that need to be discussed and agreed to vis-à-vis any country - leave the United States aside for the moment - these things are bound to take time. It is a painstaking discussion process that has to be gone through. But I can

tell you one thing that progress, even if it has been slow, has been steady and has been sure.

Q: Madam, you spoke about ... (Inaudible)... India and the United States over a whole range of regional and global issues. But yet we differ on some very fundamental situations like for example Afghanistan, Syria and Iran. Do you see a bridging of differences or dissension on these three specific issues at tomorrow's talks?

Indian Ambassador to USA: That is what friends are for. We do not have to agree all the time on everything that we discuss. The point is that today when we sit down with the United States we have the ability to very transparently and candidly set forth what our concerns are on a given issue. I would not say that our minds do not meet on many of these issues.

Let us take Syria and the whole chemical weapons issue in Syria. We were very clear from the outcome that we are completely and unequivocally against the use of weapons of mass destruction, in this case chemical weapons, in Syria. And we have expressed our satisfaction with the fact that there is now an agreement to eradicate the chemical weapons in Syria, and that a process is already under way to make that effective and make that a reality.

Similarly when it comes to Afghanistan, take the dialogue between India and the United States on Afghanistan. We also had a trilateral dialogue, as you know among India, Afghanistan and the United States. And why do we have that dialogue? That is because the essential goal for all of us, all right-thinking countries - and I would obviously include India and also the United States in that category - like Afghanistan to be secure, to be stable, to be peaceful, to be freed of the threat of terror and the incidents of violence that have plagued it for so long in its recent history. So, as far as the aim is concerned, I do not think there is any difference, any contradiction here between India and the United States.

Next year you have a very crucial year in Afghanistan. You have the Presidential elections and you also have the drawdown and withdrawal of foreign troops. India and the United States have been in discussion about the 2014 situation. But the calendar does not end with 2014. There is 2015, there is 2016 and all the years after that. Obviously we have a

long-term perspective. We are in discussion with the United States about seeing how we can ensure that the fruits of development in Afghanistan that we have seen over the last twelve years are not in any way vitiated by the scenarios that confront Afghanistan today. How do we secure all the good and the progress that has happened in Afghanistan over the last few years? On that I think both India and the United States have a common concern about seeing that that good is not vitiated.

On Iran, I think on the nuclear issue concerning Iran India has been very clear in its position that Iran has the right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. But there are questions about its nuclear programme that the IAEA and the international community has addressed to that country which obviously need to be fully explained and clarified. But ultimately what India has always sought to say to our foreign friends and interlocutors is that these problems that confront that region, that confront Iran, must be solved through dialogue, and through discussion; and that military conflict and violence cannot be the way out of this situation.

Question: Madam Ambassador, you have mentioned that a major area of cooperation between India and the USA is education. Is Prime Minister going to take up that issue here? And what is going to be your major concern in the area of education?

Indian Ambassador to USA: It is not about concerns so much as priorities, let me say that. The occasion for that is provided to our Prime Minister and President of the United States is not only to discuss the way forward in the relationship but also to review the progress that we have made so far. In that context, the Higher Education Dialogue between the two countries, to my mind and I think to the mind of all observers, would be that we have been able to concretise areas of cooperation in the field of higher education particularly.

As you know, the median age in India today is about 28 and there are millions, I think over 200 million children, in school today in India after the Right to Education became a reality. Now every year the numbers of children moving, let us say, from Grade 8 to Grade 9 onwards would suggest that this challenge that we are going to face as far as providing higher education as also skill development and capacity building for these young Indians is going to be a major priority for the country, it is already a major priority.

And where the United States and India are discussing these issues is in the area of skill development and capacity building. Now, I remember when Vice-President Biden came to India he said the community college system here in the United States is one of the best kept secrets in this country, and everywhere in this country, wherever there are industrial conglomerations or factories or urban development, there is a network of community colleges that feeds the industry, that allows people to be trained.

Go anywhere. Even if it is an aircraft building industry, I went to Boeing the other day, I went to Seattle and I saw, there are many community colleges around the Boeing establishment there which train people in fairly high technology skills to take up jobs in these industrial establishments and that is really why we are very seriously looking at the community college example and experience in this country so that we can dovetail it. Of course we will have to adapt it to meet our requirements because we have our ITIs, we have our vocational training institutes and all already in our country. But we have already signed an MoU between the All India Council of Technical Education and the American Association of Community Colleges to set up about 200 community colleges in India, and work is already under way.

The second area is faculty development, particularly junior faculty development. We have the C.V. Raman Fellowships and others that look at faculty development and train young faculty from India for attachment and small capsules of training in the universities here.

The third area of course would be looking at how we can use the experience of online education. We already have online education in our country. We have the open university system and we have used space technology for online education. But today with the optic fibre connectivity that is coming up all over India, the concept of the massive open online courses, what they call the MOOCs in this country, has also been the subject of discussion between India and the United States. IIT Bombay has already signed an MoU with Edex, which is a MOOCs provider in Boston, to start work in this area.

So, there is the whole concept of empowerment involved here with education. That is why I think when we look at the strategic partnership

between India and the United States I think we need to also focus on these areas which really help change the lives of people.

Q: ...(Inaudible)... with the India Caucus both the House and Senate ...(Inaudible)... slowing down in the ...(Inaudible)...

Indian Ambassador to USA: First of all, I do not think there has been a slowing down in the activities of the India Caucus because I can tell you from personal experience that the members of the India Caucus are so focused on India. There has been a resolution, if you have seen, welcoming the visit of our Prime Minister, which has really been taken forward, let us say, by Senators like Senator Mark Warner who co-chairs the India Caucus in the Senate. I myself in my personal meetings with Congressmen and Senators from the Caucus have always found them extremely positive about the relationship. They work very closely with the Indian American community also in their constituencies. So, it has been a very good experience for me personally to understand how the Caucus has been able to really grow and also to stand up for so many issues that helped the partnership and the relationship go forward.

Coming to Prime Minister's meetings, tomorrow he is a meeting President Obama and, as I said, he has lunch with President Obama at the White House. Then he goes on to New York. Tomorrow evening he will meet with a group of American CEOs. As of now we do not have any meetings with the Congressional Caucus.

And please remember, it is a working visit, Prime Minister is making a working visit. So, time is of essence here. We have a limited time space in which to do a lot of things.

Q: Just a follow-up on the nuclear issue. Will the Pre-Early Works Agreement take care of India's nuclear liability law? **Indian Ambassador to USA:** I think we have torn this thing to threads already. But anyway, at this stage, the Early Works and the Small Contract is really going to look at the technical, commercial aspects on the basis of which you build future discussion. I am not going into this issue further. Please understand, and I tried to say this again and again I am sure I said in Delhi also, that on issues like liability, there is a law that Parliament has passed and there is no question of contravening, going beyond the four corners of that law. Please understand that.

Q: Madam, you mentioned in your remarks when answering one of the questions that things may look that they are moving slow but they are steady. Just to take that ... (Inaudible)... we have a strategic partnership. But is there a sense that somewhere ... (Inaudible)... in bureaucratic procedures, systemic problems and are these things actually coming in the way of or have affected the pace of progress of this partnership?

Indian Ambassador to USA: I think what is remarkable about this partnership is that you see it in living colour. I do not think there is anything that is hidden. I am not going to be getting into an argument with you about – is there a bureaucratic slowness or stagnation on either side. Bureaucracies will be bureaucracies. I do not believe that you can wave a wand and make everything perfect. What I want to emphasise is that there is political will and a sense of direction about where this relationship is headed, and it is headed in the right direction. It has achieved a great deal in the last few years, and it will continue I think to achieve the potential that it is meant to achieve in the years to come as far as trade, as far as economic engagement is concerned, as far as our defence and strategic cooperation, the dialogues that we have on various regional and multilateral issues. I think ultimately common ground is found even if there are differences that we have to reserve from time to time.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this event.

Indian Ambassador to USA: Thank you very much.



468. Joint Statement on Prime Minister's Summit Meeting with President Barack Obama.

Washington (D.C), September 27, 2013.

The Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh and the President of the United States of America Barack Obama met this morning followed by a working luncheon at the White House. Marking their third bilateral summit, the two leaders reflected proudly on the transformation of United States-India relations during the last decade, affirming that the partnership between the two democratic nations is stronger today than at any point in their 67-year history.

Rooted in common democratic values and strong people to people ties, the United States and India have developed a comprehensive global strategic partnership, both in name and in substance that has made their citizens safer and more prosperous.

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh pledged to make the next decade equally as transformative, challenging their governments to reach the full potential of this partnership, particularly in the areas of security cooperation, bilateral trade and investment, energy and environment, higher education, and global architecture.

The Leaders called for expanding security cooperation between the United States and India to address 21st century challenges in the areas of counter-terrorism, cyber, space, and global health security.

Applauding bilateral defense cooperation, including trade and military exercises, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved to date in defence relations. They emphasized the need for more intensive defense cooperation on both sides. The Leaders reaffirmed their desire to further strengthen defence trade cooperation endorsing a Joint Declaration on Defence Cooperation as a means of enhancing their partnership in defence technology transfer, joint research, co-development and co-production. President Obama encouraged the further participation of US firms in partnering India's efforts to enhance its defence capacities. President Obama also welcomed India's decision to participate in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) naval exercise hosted by U.S. Pacific Command in 2014.

Affirming their deep concern over the continuing threat posed by terrorism, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh stressed the need for joint and concerted effort, including dismantling of terrorist safe havens, and disrupting all financial and tactical support for terrorism. The Leaders decided to significantly expand information sharing and intelligence cooperation to address threats to their respective nations including strengthening the bilateral relationship to exchange information on known and suspected terrorists. The Leaders emphasized the importance of expanding homeland security cooperation to enhance exchanges on megacity policing strategies, securing the global supply chain and anti-counterfeiting efforts. India welcomed the U.S. offer of membership in the US 'Global Entry' Trusted Traveler Network Program, to facilitate expedited entry of Indian travelers to the United States.

Noting that two-way trade has increased fivefold since 2001 to nearly \$100 billion, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh agreed that there are no insurmountable impediments to bilateral trade increasing an additional fivefold. President Obama expressed confidence that the ongoing Indian economic reforms and policy measures to liberalize India's economy would accelerate economic growth, opening greater avenues for trade and creating jobs in both countries. In this respect, the Leaders recognized in particular the role and contribution of the Indian and U.S. Information Technology industry and the IT enabled service industry in strengthening India-US trade and investment relations.

The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to concluding a high-standard Bilateral Investment Treaty that will foster openness to investment, transparency, and predictability, and thereby support economic growth and job creation in both countries. The Leaders welcomed progress towards increased engagement by experts from both governments, underlining the need for expeditious progress to address all trade and investment policy issues of bilateral concern so as to remove obstacles and improve the business environment in both countries. In this respect, both sides agreed to consider establishing a Joint Committee on Investment in Manufacturing.

The Leaders also committed their officials to work toward a successful outcome at the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in Bali.

The Leaders welcomed the robust cooperation in cutting-edge scientific research and joint collaboration in science, innovation, and entrepreneurship, for the benefit of citizens in both countries. The United States welcomed the invitation by India for the United States to be Partner Country in India's Science and Technology Summit in 2014.

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh discussed ways to strengthen bilateral efforts to promote energy efficiency, clean energy, and address climate change.

In the civil nuclear power sector, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh noted that, with government-to-government procedures agreed, commercial negotiations between U.S. companies and the Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) are proceeding. They welcomed the announcement that NPCIL and U.S. nuclear company Westinghouse have concluded a Preliminary Contract to develop a nuclear power plant in Gujarat in India. Building on this, the Leaders urged NPCIL and U.S. companies Westinghouse and General Electric-Hitachi to expedite the necessary work to establish nuclear power plants in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. Both sides reaffirm their commitment to the full and timely implementation of the India-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement.

The U.S.-India Partnership to Advance Clean Energy (PACE), launched by the two Leaders in 2009, is expected to pave the way for energy to millions of Indian households. To expand the availability of clean energy resources to more people, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh endorsed the proposal to launch Promoting Energy Access through Clean Energy (PEACE), a PACE initiative, to rapidly deploy innovative renewable energy solutions to those who currently lack access to energy.

Recognizing that climate change is a defining challenge of our time and that there are mutual benefits to intensifying cooperation, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh announced the establishment of an India-U.S. Climate Change Working Group to develop and advance action-oriented cooperation, as well as to begin an enhanced dialogue focusing on working closely in developing an ambitious climate change agreement for the post-2020 period, and on strengthening bilateral efforts in this regard.

The two leaders agreed to immediately convene the India-U.S. Task Force on hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) to discuss, inter alia, multilateral approaches that include using the expertise and the institutions of the Montreal Protocol to phase down the consumption and production of HFCs, based on economically-viable and technically feasible alternatives, and include HFCs within the scope of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol for accounting and reporting of emissions.

The Leaders are committed to support the full implementation of the agreed outcomes under the UNFCCC with its ongoing negotiations. They strongly welcomed the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to mobilize political will through 2014 towards the successful adoption of a protocol, another legal instrument, or an agreed outcome with legal force under the convention applicable to all parties by 2015, during COP-21 that France stands ready to host. They also supported complimentary initiatives, through multilateral approaches that include using the expertise and the institutions of the Montreal Protocol to phase down the production and the consumption of HFCs, based on the examination of economically viable and technically feasible alternatives. They will continue to include HFCs within the scope of UNFCCC and its Kyoto protocol for accounting and reporting of emissions.

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh emphasized the dangers that high oil prices can pose to the global economy and the need to increase oil market transparency and emergency response collaboration, through closer coordination and bilateral dialogue.

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh believe that the United States and India should look to each other as partners of first resort in addressing global challenges.

The Leaders reflected on the important strategic partnerships the United States and India have formed with Afghanistan, reaffirming their commitment to supporting a smooth security and political transition. The Leaders recognized that violent extremists continue to pose challenges to Afghanistan's security and stability and, in this context, emphasized the need for coordinated international support to help build the capacity of Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. They noted that both

India and the United States will remain committed to contribute to peace, stability and development in Afghanistan during the critical transformation decade (2015-2024).

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh strongly condemned the September 26 terrorist attack in Samba in Jammu and Kashmir. They reiterated their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, and reaffirmed their commitment to eliminating terrorist safe havens and infrastructure, and disrupting terrorist networks including Al-Qa'ida and the Lashkar-e-Taiba. The Leaders called for Pakistan to work toward bringing the perpetrators of the November 2008 Mumbai attacks to justice.

In the spirit of their continuing non-proliferation cooperation, the Leaders reviewed the close cooperation of the United States and India to realize India's intention of joining the multilateral export control regimes. The President reaffirmed the United States support for India's early membership in these groups. Looking ahead to the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, India and the United States also will deepen their cooperation, including through the 2010 Memorandum of Understanding with India's Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership, to strengthen global nuclear security.

The Leaders stressed the need for diplomacy to resolve outstanding issues relating to Iran's nuclear program, and called on Iran to comply with its IAEA and UN Security Council obligations.

The two Leaders also deplored the use of chemical weapons in Syria, stressing that the global norm against the use of chemical weapons by anyone and anywhere must be maintained.

Consistent with the U.S. rebalance to Asia and India's Look East policy, the Leaders expressed a desire to partner more closely with other Asia-Pacific countries, including greater coordination with Japan, China and ASEAN, among others, including through the evolving institutional architecture of the region. The Leaders share a commitment to support regional multilateral institutions as they continue to develop into effective bodies built on international rules and norms that can address shared challenges.

Noting the contributions of Indian peacekeepers to global peace and stability for sixty years, the Leaders decided to expand their United

Nations peacekeeping cooperation, including capacity-building efforts with third countries. Reaffirming that in the years ahead, the United States looks forward to a reformed UN Security Council with India as a permanent member, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh agreed that both their nations bear a responsibility to ensure that the Security Council continues to effectively play the role in maintaining international peace and security envisioned in the United Nations Charter.

Building on ongoing consultations between India and the United States on East Asia, Central Asia and West Asia, and the trilateral dialogue mechanisms with Afghanistan and Japan respectively, the Leaders agreed to expand their consultations to include a dialogue on the Indian Ocean Region, to deepen coordination on cross-cutting issues including maritime security and conservation of natural resources.

The Leaders resolved to work together to end extreme poverty, including through expanding efforts to end preventable child deaths through the Child Survival Call to Action. Fifty years after the launch of India's own agricultural "Green Revolution," the Leaders applauded their countries' work together with African partners Kenya, Malawi, and Liberia, to provide capacity building and exchange best practices for food security.

Looking forward, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh recognized that increased cooperation in these areas will strengthen the United States-India strategic partnership, highlighting shared democratic values and the capabilities the United States and India have to work together across Asia and around the globe. The two countries have crossed a threshold in their relations where both recognize that successes at home and abroad are further advanced by their cooperation.

Today's meeting demonstrates that the interests of the United States and India continue to converge, and this partnership will indeed be a defining one for the 21st Century.



**469. Statement by Prime Minister to the U. S. Business Leaders.
New York, September 27, 2013.**

I welcome you all to this meeting, which you have come to attend at such short notice on a Friday evening.

In today's world, a strong two way economic and business partnership is the bedrock of a strong bilateral relationship. The business communities in both our countries have played a very important role in the development of the India-U.S. strategic partnership. Our cooperation is now truly broad-based.

Apart from trade and investment, we are constructively engaged in energy security, education and research, defence, homeland security and cyber security.

President Obama and I had a very productive meeting earlier today and I conveyed to him that, despite economic turbulence all around, our trade and investment relationship remained a high point of Indo-US engagement.

I am aware that the business community in the United States has some concerns about India's growth prospects, macroeconomic stability and the economic policy environment. Doubts have been expressed about our sincerity in this regard. This is a mistaken perception. I would like to use this meeting to correct it if I can, and also to understand your points of view.

We have an abiding commitment to fostering an economic environment that is open, predictable and transparent, and which is business and investment friendly. We are determined to restore the high momentum of growth of the past decade and maintain macroeconomic stability. We also know that achieving this means more and not less reforms.

The process of reforms that began in 1991 has benefited India both in terms of accelerated economic growth as well as rapid reduction in poverty. Virtually all political parties in India, national and regional, have been part of successive governments in India after 1991 and have supported the process of reforms. This gives us confidence about the future direction of our economic policies.

It is a fact that our growth rate has slowed down. We grew at an average of about 8% for a decade. Last year, our growth rate dipped to 5%. To some extent, this reflects the slowdown in the global economy and in all emerging markets.

We are committed to getting India back to a sustainable growth path of 8-9%. Indeed, the Indian people will not tolerate anything less. They have tasted the benefits of rapid inclusive economic growth and they want more, not less.

The fundamentals of the Indian economy remain strong. India's overall public-debt to GDP ratio has been on a declining trend from 73.2% of GDP in 2006-07 to 66% in 2012-13. Similarly, India's external debt is only 21.2% of GDP and short-term debt stands at 5.2% of GDP.

Our forex reserves stand at over US\$270 billion, and are more than sufficient to meet India's external financing requirements.

In order to restore growth, our Government has implemented a series of reform measures over the last year. We have established a special mechanism to speed up implementation of large projects, especially in the infrastructure sectors. Several decisions have been taken to remove impediments in the way of important projects.

We have taken steps to make India more attractive for Foreign Direct Investment. FDI limits have been increased in several sectors, including retail and telecom, and restrictions in the banking sector have been eased. The policy regarding FDI in defence has been clarified to indicate that FDI beyond 26% can also be considered on merits.

The results of our efforts will be visible in the second half of the year. We expect stronger growth in 2013-14 than in 2012-13. The second half of the year should see a distinct turnaround, partly because of the good monsoon and partly because of the steps we have taken.

We will contain the fiscal deficit to 4.8% this year. We are also confident of achieving our medium term objective of reducing the Current Account Deficit to 2.5% of our GDP. At the same time, we will make every effort to maintain a macro-economic framework friendly to foreign capital inflows to enable orderly financing of the Current Account Deficit.

A number of tax related concerns of US companies, with wholly owned subsidiaries in India, have been addressed. Some security related restrictions on electronic imports were perceived as disguised protectionism.

We have put these restrictions in abeyance and will work to find more acceptable solutions that address our legitimate security needs.

I also wish to assure you that India is committed to the protection of intellectual property. We recognize that investment and innovation in a country requires such protection. We have strong IPR legislation in India, consistent with our WTO obligations. We are continually trying to strengthen the enforcement mechanisms. There has been one solitary instance so far of compulsory licensing for an anti-cancer drug and there has been one instance when the Supreme Court of India rejected a patent extension claim on a legitimate ground.

I would like to use this opportunity also to urge you to oppose efforts to create barriers for Indian IT companies through legislative or administrative measures. These companies are the most ardent champions of India-U.S. relations. The IT and related services sector contributes 8% of our GDP and 25% of our exports. It employs three million people directly.

The inability of IT companies to operate in the U.S. market would not only affect our economy, but also the climate of opinion in India about the economic partnership with the U.S.

Many U.S. companies that have adapted to India, offering products and services that are competitive and innovative, have done very well. I hope you recognize the longer term opportunities that lie ahead. For example, we intend to invest more than a trillion dollars in the next five years in the infrastructure sector. The defence sector is another attractive area, because we will place priority on domestic procurement and encourage our private sector in this area.

I look forward to hearing from you on how we can further expand our economic relations.



**470. India-US Joint Declaration on Defence Cooperation.
Washington (D.C.), September 28, 2013.**

India-United States defence cooperation and engagement has increased significantly over the past decade, in step with the overall deepening of India-US relations. We continue to work towards achieving the full vision of expanded defence cooperation set forth in the 2005 New Framework Agreement.

In this context, India and the United States endorse the following general principles for fulfilling this vision:

- The United States and India share common security interests and place each other at the same level as their closest partners. This principle will apply with respect to defence technology transfer, trade, research, co-development and co-production for defence articles and services, including the most advanced and sophisticated technology. They will work to improve licensing processes, and, where applicable, follow expedited license approval processes to facilitate this cooperation. The U.S and India are also committed to protecting each other's sensitive technology and information.
- The U.S. continues to fully support India's full membership in the four international export control regimes, which would further facilitate technology sharing.
- The two sides will continue their efforts to strengthen mutual understanding of their respective procurement systems and approval processes, and to address process-related difficulties in defence trade, technology transfer and collaboration.
- The two sides look forward to the identification of specific opportunities for cooperative and collaborative projects in advanced defence technologies and systems, within the next year. Such opportunities will be pursued by both sides in accordance with their national policies and

procedures, in a manner that would reflect the full potential of the relationship.



471. Prime Minister's onboard media interaction during his return from USA.

October 1, 2013.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I came to the United States at the invitation of President Barack Obama. I had a very good meeting with the President. The end results have been put out in a Joint Statement and our officials have also briefed you about the outcome of that meeting. In New York, I addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations and I also had a useful talk with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Sheikh Hasina and the Prime Minister of Nepal. I believe the outcomes of all these meetings you have been briefed about by our officials and therefore I will not spend my time on going over the same territory over and over again. I will be very happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Q: Sir, you had a very successful meeting with President Obama and everyone in America believes that you share an exceptional personal rapport with the American President. My question is what is the specific outcome of your discussions with the President especially in the area of defence cooperation?

Answer: Well in the area of defence cooperation we are trying to move away from the buyer-seller relationship to a relationship based on co-production, based on co-research and the outcome of the deliberations on defence cooperation is in line with our own thinking. We would like our own domestic industry to get involved in domestic production. We would also like foreign direct investment to the extent of 26 percent to come into defence production. So, I think this is a step forward. And for the rest, we reviewed our cooperation in the area of civil nuclear

cooperation. There is now an early works agreement between Westinghouse and also our NPCIL. At the inter-governmental level, there are no irritants in the implementation. There have been important steps forward in cooperation in the field of knowledge initiative, in the field of education, in the field of energy, in the field of environment related issues. In all these areas, it is an ongoing relationship and we reviewed and we re-committed our two countries to work together to enhance understanding and cooperation.

Q: Sir, Indo-US economic relationship has deteriorated somewhat with US business lobbying with the US government to investigate Indian trade practices. Did you get any sense of the scale or reasons for this disappointment in the US? Will the Indian Government be taking steps to re-assure US investors in business on your return?

Answer: There have been US business concerns but very largely these are concerns which arise out of the slowdown of the Indian economy. When Indian economy was growing at the rate of 8 to 9 percent, I think everybody was quite happy even when there were defects in our policies, they were overlooked, and when the economy slows down people try to find fault and excuses. The President did not go in detail with me. He did understand our concerns but he also said that it is time that the CEOs Forum on both sides sat together to discuss these issues and to find out the meeting ground.

Q: Sir, you met Mr. Nawaz Sharif and you said you had useful discussion with him. I recall that after the beheading incident on LOC you had said that it can't be business as usual. Has that status changed?

Answer: It is at a stage in a sense that we are moving forward towards normalization of our relations and the first step has to be peace and tranquility on the line of control. And for that we have agreed that the DGMOs of the two sides will meet and work out arrangements. It will take time to find out what can be done and what is agreed upon is implemented upon. But these are all steps towards normalization of the relationship.

Q: Arunachal Pradesh is being given permission to build as many as 350 dams. The people downstream are worried about the eventuality of these high number of dams. Can this number be reviewed or reduced?

Answer: If you are referring to dams in Tibet, then we raised that matter with the Chinese Government every time I have been to China in the last three or four occasions. We have raised this matter with the Chinese Government. And as of now our understanding is that these are run-of-the-river systems, they do not involve storage and they do not interfere with the flow of water. We will, as we have in the past, keep on drawing the attention of the Chinese Government to have better cooperative arrangements to manage the rivers which are of inter-state concern.

Q: Sri Lankan sources in the UN told me that President Rajapakse was keen to meet you on the sidelines of the UN and with the Tamil coalition having a stupendous victory in the north of Sri Lanka. Should we not use that opportunity to ensure that there is more devolution of power in the Northern Province.

Answer: As far as the devolution of more powers for the Northern Province is concerned, our views are well known. On umpteen number of occasions, we have discussed with the Sri Lankan President the need to implement 13th Amendment. Therefore, our position is fully well known to the Government of Sri Lanka. As regards the meeting with President Rajapakshe, I would have no hesitation in meeting with him. He asked for a meeting on dates which were not convenient to me, because I came to New York only on the 27th and he asked for a meeting between 24th and 27th. So the meeting could not be arranged. There is no other reason.

Q: This is a question on your meeting with Sheikh Hasina. There is discontent in Bangladesh that we have not achieved to implement Teesta and Land Border Agreement. If you could enlighten us on your discussions?

Answer: Our relations with the Prime Minister of Bangladesh are very good. I am myself disappointed that it has taken us much too long to ratify the agreement and I have assured her that we still have time in the next session of Parliament we will make every effort to convince our opposition parties who have been a problem upto now to fall in line.

Q: This was your first interaction with Mr. Nawaz Sharif. Did you get the impression that he is the master of his own destiny or like your External Affairs Minister who said that he is being held back by the ISI and the Pakistan Army.

Answer: I very much hope that Nawaz Sharif succeeds. He is the democratically elected Prime Minister of a neighbouring country and he has said all the right things about Indo-Pakistan relations. So I sincerely hope and pray that he does succeed in carrying out his mission.



472. Address by the External Affairs Minister at the Kennedy School: 'India and the United States': A new partnership for progress.

Boston, October 4, 2013.

I am very grateful to Ambassador Burns, for his kind words and his introduction. I am delighted to be here with such a distinguished audience.

You are all very fortunate to be here at Harvard University. Many of my colleagues who studied here still nurture fond memories of their years here. The University has also contributed to many intellectual pursuits in support of the India-US partnership, which is sustained on our side by a broad consensus. This consensus exists despite the very fractious politics that exist currently in India.

While I don't want to elaborate upon the details of the transformation of our partnership with the US today, at least, not before an audience that is so well-informed, I want to mention a few important milestones of our partnership with the US.

Two points bear particular mention: the first of these is that the transformation has been truly extraordinary.

Let me give you two examples to illustrate this transformation: first, Indian and American firms are working to build nuclear power plants in India using US nuclear technology. And second, our militaries have rapidly developed the practice of regular bilateral exercises to the extent that India's military forces exercise more with US military forces than with any other partner.

The second point is that the transformation has been so rapid, and so overdue, that it appears entirely normal for us to be working together

across some 35 official dialogue mechanisms that are resulting in what we all an “all-of-government” partnership. So much is happening and so quickly that it seems almost inevitable that there is now a strong sense of expectation within Government and outside it that more ambitious and extensive areas of cooperation will commence between our two countries.

When ambitious and growing expectations do not match up with the pace of transformation on the ground, there is sometimes disappointment amongst people. But these are largely transitory matters, which change over time.

To bring a little perspective, it is worth recognizing that today, we in India have more goods and services trade with American firms than with most other partners. We import more American cultural products than from anywhere else, and our bilateral technological engagement is more intensive with the US than with any other country.

Blue chip US firms keep their competitive edge as a result of their partnership with India’s leading IT companies. They in turn earn their global recognition—and not to mention a significant proportion of the profits on their balance sheets—from their US clients. A senior representative of a leading US aerospace firm told us the other day that Indian IT firms have written over 3 million lines of code for one of their signature products, which, in a neat piece of synergy, are being purchased by Indian firms.

Today, bilateral investment flows move in both directions, with US Government estimates suggesting that between the year 2002 and 2012, Indian firms have brought in as much as 5 billion dollars, and US FDI stock amounted to around 28 billion dollars in India, as of 2012.

Another barometer of the relationship is a statistic our US colleagues cite to us. That is the fact that US strategic trade exports, or the export of products requiring specific licensing, to India amounted to 5.8 bn dollars in 2012.

Even in the instantly-symbolic sphere of security cooperation, our Air Force fleet today includes US-built heavy lift aircraft like the C 17 Globemaster and the C 130J Super Hercules. Our Navy has taken possession of state of the art P8I maritime reconnaissance aircraft—

becoming the first Navy in the world to do so—and our militaries train together regularly, helping us evolve new military capabilities and tactics.

Our strategic and foreign policy establishments consult each other on issues as wide-ranging as global energy markets to the regional situation in East Asia, West Asia and Central Asia. We have dialogues ongoing on cyber security, counter terrorism, health, science and technology, defence, and even in space and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. During Prime Minister's summit with President Obama last week, we have just agreed to begin consultations on the Indian Ocean, and a Joint Working Group on Climate Change.

All this, fifteen years ago, would not even have been possible to imagine, quite apart from being considered to be a new 'normal' in our partnership. There are of course issues in the partnership today that we are happy to try and address. Let's look at some trendlines on what the future might look like:

1. A more prosperous future: Vice President Biden said that bilateral trade had grown five times in the last decade. We agreed that there was no reason why we cannot replicate such growth in the decade ahead. Business, investment and trade are not merely pillars of our partnership, they also key drivers of a modern bilateral relationship. It is in our collective interest to recognize in this process the leading role of our private sector industry in creating the wealth that generates growth. We will also need to ensure that the regulatory and standard-setting role of the Government is best used to frame the rules of the road and ensure the flow of ideas between the State and business on both sides.
2. A strategic partnership in energy. This is an extremely important area of progress. India's energy relationships, including with Iran, are important issues, although our US partners are sometimes not happy with this aspect of our ties with Iran. If India's strategic dependence on limited sources of energy are diversified more broadly, this will be in the interests of both our sides.
3. Investing in people: India's demographic dividend can be meaningfully realised by harnessing the potential of its increasingly youthful population. For this, we need to provide

much more in terms of quantity and quality of health care, nutrition and through a quantum leap in educational opportunities. Partnerships in these areas is, again, not only strategically vital for India's future, which is of interest to us, but will also offer US partners beneficial partnership opportunities in education, healthcare, and even in creating India's second green revolution in agriculture.

4. Securing the future: As open, pluralistic societies, India and the US recognise the value of vigilance in the defence of our freedom. Recognizing the continuing threat posed to our open and pluralistic societies by terrorism and radicalisation must have our paramount attention. We recall the painful incident in April this year in Boston. This underlines the strategic imperative of enhanced cooperation between our countries. It is now important for us to focus on the sources of such terrorist groups and their ideology. Similarly, there is value in our defence partnership, which we want to upgrade beyond purchase to identifying areas in which co-development and co-production partnerships can be implemented.
5. So how does it grow further? The habit of consulting is very important; it is the phrase we use for the expansion of the partnership. The more we consult each other about issues, the better we will understand each other. As India's strategic interests enlarge and as the impact on us from the external world increases exponentially, we will need to expand our bilateral and multilateral conversations with the US

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I said, there are a few issues that separate us still, but we are working very hard to address these matters. On one side, there is a sense of something missing or incomplete, now that the India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement has been set in pace.

Businesses on both sides seem to have some concerns and there is a degree of negativity amongst some sectors of business. While there are always specific reasons for irritation amongst particular companies,

perhaps some of the negativity also emerges from the pessimism in India and the US about growth and economic prospects. Policy choices and legislative measures sometimes also add to a sense of alarm. But policy measures can be fixed, and sentiment does change. These issues were brought to the table during the meeting between President Obama and our Prime Minister also. As long as there is an overall sense of confidence in the intentions of the other side, long-term interests and opportunities should inspire us to look beyond short-term difficulties.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Having outlined the road ahead and suggested how to drive around a few potential pitfalls, let me also offer you a few ideas for making the journey a better and more rewarding one for both of us.

First, closer and more effective cooperation between us on terrorism is critical, especially as we continue to face regular outrages from beyond our borders. There is strong public support in India for this aspect of our partnership. This is, of course, one area in which we can separately talk seriously with Pakistan and ensure that it comes on board very seriously on issues on which the world has concerns.

Second, the relationship between us must continue to be seen to stand entirely upon its own merits. We have only recently stopped viewing each other from the prism of each others' relationships with third countries. In fact US policy makers have only recently stopped consideration of India in the context of India and Pakistan or India and China. The future transformation of our strategic partnership needs to be based on the strategic value that this partnership provides to both of us in the fulfilment of the strategic aspirations on both sides.

Third, there is an exciting opportunity to make defence cooperation a much stronger pillar of the relationship. We need to ensure that we can move defence ties toward co-design and joint production of defence material. The Joint Declaration on Defence Principles, announced during the Summit meeting between our Prime Minister and President Obama last week, should provide a much higher level of strategic focus to our defence ties.

Fourth, let us recognize that trade and economic cooperation must be about more than finding fault with each others' policies. Both of us need

significant investment in industry and manufacture and the jobs that they create. We must find ways to work more closely together in this context. As India industrialises, the scope for beneficial cooperation will only increase; our markets will become more attractive in terms of R&D, technology agreements, integration of manufacturing processes, and trade. All of this will keep us busy for a long time to come.

Fifth, as we realize the latent potential for much more investment in each other's economies, we must not allow differences in trade in goods or in the movement of services to dominate the discourse. At the same time, we have to create forums to discuss these issues openly and with a forward-looking approach.

Sixth, energy and education are strategic openings for the US to invest in the future of India. As many of our American friends remind us, enabling the rise of India is, or should be, a strategic end in itself for the US. Like defence, these are sectors in which more cooperation with the US actually helps expedite progress that is beneficial for both sides.

Seventh, we have begun to work together well in a number of multilateral fora. We appreciate the support of the U.S. for our membership in various multilateral export control regimes: this is a logical conclusion of the cooperation we have had following our India-US civil nuclear initiative. We also appreciate your support for a permanent seat for India in a reformed UN Security Council. Recent developments in Syria and elsewhere in the world are a clarion call for a reformed UN Security Council.

For our partnership to expand, it is important on both sides for the signalling to remain positive. If the U.S. has indeed placed a strategic bet on India's rise, it makes little sense not to push back counter-narratives from those working to make you lose that bet. Instead, we should get you to win that bet.

It is essential that we continue to invest in our engagement at the highest levels, ladies and gentlemen, because this partnership is really in our respective national interests. The India-US partnership is actually all about making our people safer and more prosperous and to jointly work together to address the challenges of an increasingly complex and troubled world. What could be more fundamental to the service of national interest than meeting these objectives?

Therefore it is in working towards addressing this strategic reality that our partnership will be defined in the decades ahead: as two democracies working together for development.

Thank you for your attention.



473. Press Release of the Ministry of Home Affairs on the Home Minister's inaugural address at the India-US Policing Chiefs' Conference.

New Delhi, December 4, 2013.

My distinguished colleague in the Ministry, Shri Mullapally Ramachandran, Your Excellency, Ambassador of the United States of America Ms. Nancy Powell, Mr. David Heyman, Assistant Secretary for Policy, US Department of Homeland Security, Shri Anil Goswami, Home Secretary, Ms. Sneha Lata Kumar, Secretary (Border Management), Shri Kurshid Ahmed Ganai, Additional Secretary, DGPs of the States, Chiefs of Central Police Organisations, other distinguished delegates, members of the media, Ladies and Gentlemen.

2. This conference is a key element in the expansion of our bilateral cooperation with the United States, aimed at securing our nations. As strategic partners, the more we can work with each other to enhance internal security, the more meaningful our partnership becomes to the ordinary citizen. I am therefore delighted to welcome you to this Conference on Security, Megacity Policing and related issues being organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India at New Delhi.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. I am happy to note that this Conference brings together Police Chiefs of many important Indian cities as well as some of their American counterparts to discuss and deliberate on important aspects of our common endeavour to secure our cities and our people.

4. Today countries like India and the United States are at the forefront of the effort to counter the relentless threat of terrorism and international crime. We are also unfortunately the leading targets of such trans-national terror groups and crime syndicates. All too often, attacks are launched from across sovereign borders, in a manner calculated to cause the greatest disruption of peace. It will, therefore, have to be the endeavor of all countries to fight this menace in all its forms and manifestations through partnerships based on genuine and result-oriented cooperation.
5. This was one of the central objectives that inspired our countries to establish the India USA Homeland Security Dialogue. It is as an important element of our growing bilateral security architecture. Indeed, the Homeland Security Dialogue was an outcome of the State Visit of President Obama in November 2010.
6. Securing our cities is a focus area of our Homeland Security Dialogue, for a simple and obvious reason. As we all know, major terrorist attacks typically target large and densely populated urban areas, intentionally trying to inflict maximum damage. Both our countries have lived through such terrorist carnage, during 9/11 in New York, and during 26/11 in Mumbai. Cooperation in Megacity Policing is intended to help each other enhance capacity, and to learn from each other, to provide an integrated security umbrella to megacities and large urban centres.
7. An efficient Megacity Policing system must serve as an effective deterrent against terrorists and their masters, who launch targeted attacks on the nerve centers of a country. Our objective must be to make our cities safe, and therefore our countries safe by reducing our vulnerability to such challenges.
8. Apart from countering terror attacks, there are other kinds of mass casualty events, and security challenges that are specific to urban centres. All societies work to mitigate such challenges and enhance emergency response capacity. Even though India and the US are at different technological levels in terms of security infrastructure and average urban population size, there are certain

commonalities to the challenges that all urban centres face. So also, there are solutions that some of police forces may have established that are innovative or unique, and may be replicable elsewhere. There is also a need for better integration of security inputs and information that different law enforcement agencies generate, as well as mechanisms by which regional and federal agencies work with each other. Some of our own challenges in this regard are not uncommon to our American partners, and perhaps the solutions that each of us are working towards can be relevant for each other. A conference such as this should enable us to enhance the flow of ideas to improve policing and law enforcement action in both our countries. Indeed, it was for these reasons that my counterpart, Secretary Napolitano, and I had agreed that one of the ways in which we could institutionalize cooperation in the field of Megacity Policing was to hold such a conference.

9. Ladies and Gentlemen, apart from improved policing techniques and operational mechanisms to share information, technology is a key input for policing. Increasingly, sophisticated technologies are being adapted, or even specifically developed, to assist Police Forces in early detection of crimes, identification of perpetrators, improved coordination among agencies, and expedited response time. The United States has consistently led the world in deploying technology in service of its people, and there is much that we can do together as partners to enhance the use of appropriate technologies for our police forces. But beyond the technological aspect of Megacity Policing, there is the human aspect, as well. Police Forces should also play a constructive role in providing necessary education and guidance to inculcate a sense of awareness and responsibility in the masses, so that the Police Force can defend us against terrorists and terrorist attacks, in a better manner.
10. I believe this Conference will exchange experiences and ideas in the areas of Megacity Policing including use of technology in providing effective policing and public safety. Synergy achieved would be a precursor to more vigorous cooperation and

collaboration between the law enforcement agencies of the two countries, leading to better synchronization of effort and operations in averting terrorist attacks and tracing such attacks quickly. It will also help us in more regular policing tasks, including securing our public spaces for all our citizens in particular, women and children, and in enhancing the efficacy of law enforcement agencies to act in coordination against international crime. I expect that this Conference will create new channels of interaction between India and the US, as well as new methodologies for our police forces on both sides to adopt to secure our cities. We hope that this Conference is the precursor to many more efforts to jointly develop our partnership to strengthen the security apparatus of both our countries.

11. Let me, in conclusion, reaffirm India's commitment to work as partners with the U.S. in bringing and applying State of the Art technologies to crime prevention, crime detection, forensic analysis, better communications technologies and traffic management tools, with the overall objective of making our cities safer, better organized and more orderly. I urge technology partners from both countries to join hands with each other, and with law enforcement agencies in India and the US, to create an institutional framework to deploy innovative technologies and enhance research to upgrade expertise in various fields of Homeland Security in the larger public interest.

I wish the Conference all success.

Thank you



474. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the conclusion of the India-US Homeland Security Dialogue.

New Delhi, December 5, 2013.

The first two-day India-US Homeland Security dialogue- Police Chiefs Conference organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs concluded in New Delhi.

Delivering the valedictory address at the Conference, the Union Home Secretary Shri Anil Goswami said that the movement of people, goods and ideas has always driven with the development of nations and provided opportunities for economic growth and prosperity. He said that the security measures should be designed to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods while securing the critical infrastructure.

Shri Goswami further said that the increasing use of digital networks and information and communication technology provides opportunities but also poses a security threat to data and computer systems. He said that there is a need for security co-operation between India and USA, which faces this challenge due to a larger number of computer and internet users in the two countries. In the area of cyber security, he emphasized the need to strengthen the security environment to facilitate e-commerce, e-banking and day-to-day activities covering the financial services, power industry, telecommunications industry and public services. He expressed his satisfaction on the deliberations in the Conference which focused on the need for a healthy combination of technology, building security infrastructure and the need to synchronize the domestic laws with the global standards. He said that the service providers play a very important role in the investigations of cyber crimes and most of the service providers are based in USA. It would be important to strengthen the process of legal assistance so as to speed up the investigations and promote legal mechanisms that encourage co-operation in cyber crime matter, he added.

The Home Secretary said that the great potential exists for co-operation not only between the authorities of the two countries but also between the technology and business partners, who are expected to play a crucial role in finding technology enabled solutions to the unique challenges of modern policing.

Shri Goswami said that the partnership in the areas of use of sophisticated technology, training and capacity building, forensics, solutions for chemicals, radiological, biological and nuclear threats, technological support system for underground metro stations tunnels, track security, behaviour detection and IT solutions to manage security contingencies need to be further strengthened.

During the two day Conference, seven brainstorming sessions covering Response to Mass Casualty Event; Maritime security and Law enforcement (passengers and Cargo security); Surveillance and Command Control in urban policing; Security and Law enforcement in Mass transit system; Lawful interception and investigations; Crime investigations and Forensics and Community policing were organized.

There were presentations by Police Chiefs and Senior Officers of the Department of Homeland Security from the US side and by Senior Police and Government officers from Indian side.

The conference was attended by U.S. delegation consisting of Police Chiefs from major cities and their technology partners. Important speakers from the USA were Mr. Stu Frome, Deputy Chief of Staff FLETC, Mr. Dan Oates, Chief, Aurora Police Department, Colorado, Mr. Michael P. Downing, Deputy Chief, LA Police Department, Mr. Erik Aubin, DHS CBP Attaché, Mr. Harold Hurtt, Assistant Director, DHS Mr. Daniel C. Clegg, FBI Legal Attaché, Mr. Art Acevedo, Chief, Austin Police Dept., Texas. The representatives of Indian delegation included Shri Madhukar Gupta former Union Home Secretary, Sh. Nehchal Sandhu, Deputy NSA, Indian State Police Forces, Para-military Forces, Technology partners, representatives from other law enforcement agencies and senior officers from MHA.



475. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on External Affairs Minister's visit to Bahrain and Foreign Secretary to the United States.

New Delhi, December 6, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here towards the end of the week with the weekend beckoning all of you. I would also like to welcome amidst us colleagues from other Services who are undergoing training and who have desired to be here to see how interaction takes place with you.

I have two announcements to make. While the weekend begins for you for the Foreign Ministry it remains a work in progress. Two of our senior officials are travelling over the weekend. First, the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid will be travelling to Bahrain tomorrow. This is his first visit as External Affairs Minister to Bahrain. He will of course hold talks with the leadership of Bahrain. In addition he will participate in the Manama Dialogue. As those of you who are following it know, the Manama Dialogue is an annual event which is conducted by the International Institute of Strategic Studies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain.

Bahrain is home to more than 350,000 Indian nationals who are resident there. That makes them the largest expatriate community in Bahrain. We have a robust economic relationship with Bahrain. Our trade with Bahrain is in the vicinity of more than 1.3 billion dollars, and this is all in non-oil sector.

Bahrain is part of the GCC where India has as many as seven million Indians resident. We source approximately 60 per cent of our oil from that region. Our trade cumulatively with the GCC is something in excess of 170 billion dollars. So, it is a region where we have very important interests and the External Affairs Minister's visit there is a reflection of that.

While he is there the External Affairs Minister has also convened a meeting of Regional Heads of Missions of India in that region. This is basically a brainstorming session where they will interact and see how the evolving situation in the region poses challenges and opportunities

to India. Finally, the External Affairs Minister is also expected to lay the foundation stone for the new Chancery Building in Bahrain. That is what I have in terms of the External Affairs Minister's visit to Bahrain.

The other announcement that I have is that again over the weekend Foreign Secretary Mrs. Sujatha Singh will be travelling to the United States from 8th to 11th December. This is part of the Foreign Office Consultations which she will hold with her counterpart Ms Wendy Sherman who is the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. This is to be held on the 10th of December.

This is her first visit as Foreign Secretary. So, it is also a familiarisation visit. She is expected to meet a wide array of officials from other government departments of the United States. For example, she will be meeting Ms Rose Gottemoeller, Acting Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security. She will be meeting the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Mr. James Dobbins. She will also be meeting with senior officials from the Department of Energy, Department of Defence, and Department of Commerce.

As is usual, when the Foreign Secretary travels she also interacts with think tanks which constitute an important element of our engagements in the United States. And she is expected to meet with members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives and some senior Senators.

I think I have exhausted my announcements and I am open for questions on anything that you would like to know.

Question: Are the dates for the visits of the new President of Maldives and Mr. Vigneswaran finalised yet?

Official Spokesperson: We are in consultation with the Government of Maldives on the exact dates. As you know, we announce dates only very shortly before. As I said, we had two announcements to make of two people who are leaving over the weekend. Going by that track record, do not expect us to answer your question in the affirmative so much in advance. And a corollary to that is that it is not likely in the next week, any of those that you have mentioned.

Q: What is our stand on the Air Defence Identification Zone dispute which is going on between Japan and China?

Official Spokesperson: Manish, I think this question has been asked before and I have answered in a way saying that when I have the answer to that if you would like the Ministry of External Affairs to pronounce on it. If there are matters of civil aviation, you would like to know what practices Indian Airlines are following, I would suggest that you address that question to those who handle Indian Airlines. As regards a generic answer, this has been provided by the External Affairs Minister yesterday and that is available in the public domain. I have nothing further to add to that.

Q: During the FS's visit to Dhaka, the Teesta and the LBA were discussed. What reassurance did she give?

Official Spokesperson: Foreign Secretary has had a fairly extensive discussion with the media after her visit. She has explained in great detail the parameters of her interactions with various leaders in Bangladesh. These are available on our website and I would urge you to have a look at that.

Q: During the Egyptian Foreign Minister's visit he had spoken of India and Egypt working together in terms of a new international order. But there is also a subtext of their working together in the immediate, evolving situation in West Asia. Are there any immediate engagements that you see where India would be more a participant than it has been, particularly in Syria and Egypt?

Official Spokesperson: The Egyptian Foreign Minister did make that point that he would like India and Egypt to engage more actively on a host of issues. One of the issues he listed out for example related to international disarmament issues. The other issue he mentioned was the Middle East Peace Process. We also feel that there is scope for us to coordinate and share views and opinions regarding the evolving situation in Syria.

Also, Egypt itself is in a transitory mode. There is a roadmap that has been outlined by the leadership there. And he did brief us about the situation there and how he sees it evolving. So, basically in the next few months there are issues in the Middle East which we intend to exchange views on. And Syria certainly is one issue where we are following very closely. We have already indicated our interest in participating in Geneva-2. We look forward to the United Nations Secretary-General consulting

everybody and finally putting out a list of invitations. Once that happens, we will let you know about where we stand on that.

Q: Will anybody represent India at the funeral of Nelson Mandela tomorrow?

Official Spokesperson: Ranjit, I think there is still some time before the funeral is officially held and visiting dignitaries being informed about arrangements that are being made. My understanding from the situation as it stands today is that our High Commissioner is in touch with South African authorities who have indicated to him that it is possible that they will work out a schedule whereby they will inform us of when they expect foreign visitors, dignitaries to pay tribute. And that is not tomorrow as you said. There is still some time. I think they have to work that out.

Once that is worked out and we are informed of it, please rest assured that there will be a high-level delegation from India which will go there. As you are aware, both the Prime Minister and the President have indicated the reverence that we in India hold Nelson Mandela in. His death is, as was indicated this morning, not only a loss for South Africa but a loss for India too and for the world. So, with this deep, deep reverence that we have for Mr. Mandela, you can be certain that there will be a very high-level delegation going from India. We will inform you once the dates are fixed and the arrangements are made about that.

Q: Is there any update on the situation over the detention of the Indian Captain in Togo? And has India obtained consular access? Can the visit of his family there be facilitated?

Official Spokesperson: Vishal, let me try and place this in context. Our Mission in Accra is overseeing activities in Togo, and our High Commissioner in Accra is concurrently accredited to Togo. We also have an Honourary Consul located in Lome. And since we came to know of this detention - I think it was on August 2 that our Mission came to know about this – our Honourary Consul has met the three Indian sailors who have been detained. He has also met the Minister of Justice of Togo, the Attorney General of Togo, the Minister of Security of Togo, and the Commander of the National Gendarme of Togo.

He has had access previously to the three Indian sailors including Captain Sunil James, and has pursued with his lawyer – there is a lawyer

appointed by the company which owns and manages this ship where the sailors were working – in unison with him they have met the three detained sailors and have had consular access. This is of course a matter of the past.

Now, after that unfortunate incident there has been a rather sad twist to this entire story that the child of Captain Sunil James passed away unfortunately. And this is a heart-rending story. Once this information was available to our High Commission, immediately they have once again taken the matter up and even as we speak, yesterday evening, a Consular officer from our Mission in Accra has travelled to Lome, he is there in Lome today. He hopes to meet the public prosecutor along with our Honourary Consul and also try and see if he could meet the judge, explain the current situation and request that on compassionate grounds if Captain Sunil James is allowed to be released.

We are pursuing this matter very vigorously with all seriousness. We understand the humanitarian dimensions of it. And please rest assured that we will try our utmost to see if we can unite this family in their difficult times.

Q: Akbar, in the last stage of WTO negotiation in Bali, the US State Department and the European Foreign Office are actively engaged in putting up their side of demand. How much interest the MEA is taking in this matter so that an amicable deal is struck not endangering India's food security and the livelihood of farmers?

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much Ashok, you have been following this matter for quite some time. Let me assure you that the Government of India works in unison on such matters. We do not work departmentally on this, we do not work Ministerially on this. We work as one representative of Government of India. Obviously given the technical intricacies of this matter, our Minister of Commerce is in the lead. He is being assisted by several officers including by officers from the Ministry of External Affairs.

Our view is well known. He is putting it very forcefully and forthrightly. And we have the entire nation with us, including you who have been very supportive of this always. We are a country of a billion. Please rest assured that we will ensure that our rights are not undermined in any way.

Q: If it is not too early, could you please tell us something about the visit of Afghan President?

Official Spokesperson: I did indicate to you previously during my last briefing that he is likely to be here between the 13th and 15th of this month. He comes here at the invitation of an educational institution outside New Delhi. That educational institution will be making announcements about the activities related to that part. But President Karzai is an honoured guest in India, he is a great friend of India. Every time he comes to India he will meet our top leadership. Arrangements are being made for his interaction with our top leadership. I understand that in addition there are other arrangements also including lectures in Delhi which announcements have been made.

We are fleshing out his programme and hopefully you will have this detailed programme very much in advance of that visit. Perhaps by Monday you would have a detailed programme of all his activities in Delhi as well as outside Delhi, and the media opportunities that you will have for outside Delhi too.

Question: Akbar, it has been nearly four months since INS Sindhurakshak was lost. Within hours, Russia had made an offer of cooperation in investigation and in joint probe and whatever help Russia could extend to India. The Russian offer has been repeated several times since then. India has neither accepted nor rejected the offer. The question is, when the Prime Minister met President Putin at the 14th Annual Summit and when our External Affairs Minister and Defence Minister also paid visits to Moscow, did this issue come up and what is India's stand on Russian offer on INS Sindhurakshak?

Official Spokesperson: Rajiv, I think you have only laid out one side of the story. You did lay out that this offer was made. India and Russia have a very expansive relationship in terms of our defence cooperation and we understand each other very well. This offer was made and it has been raised previously and a response has been indicated that currently we are in the process of undertaking our own investigations, once these are finalised we will take a call on how best to go about it further and that is when, if there is a requirement, we will take this up with our friends outside. So, this is a situation that we have responded to previously.

Unless you know otherwise, I am not privy to knowing whether the outcome of that enquiry is complete.

Question: On the Pakistani statements on Kashmir and Siachen, how is the MEA viewing the change in tonality and focus and emphasis, and the warlike statement which has been made, and also the demand that Indian soldiers vacate Siachen because they are polluting the virgin waters which flow into Pakistan from the glacier? How is the MEA viewing it? Is this an attempt to internationalise the issue once again and project that India-Pakistan talks on Kashmir are headed nowhere?

Official Spokesperson: Vishal, as regards your first question, I just told Ashok that we do not deal with it in silos, we deal with it across boundaries of Divisions, Departments, etc. Therefore, the Prime Minister of India is on record of responding to the statement that you referred to.

That leaves of course the second part of your question and that is regarding Siachen. As you are aware, both India and Pakistan had a dialogue process. Siachen is part of that dialogue process. The dialogue was interrupted because there were certain incidents which were not conducive to continuing a dialogue that was under way. What was then decided by the two Prime Ministers was that as a first step to normalisation of relationship there needs to be a meeting of the DGMOs to work out among themselves that they are able to ensure peace and tranquillity on the border, following which others will step in.

At this stage, the question of others stepping in and pursuing issues has not come about because the first step in that has not been taken. Once the first step in that is taken - and that is again may I repeat what was agreed between the two Prime Ministers, i.e., a meeting of the DGMOs - based on the outcome of that other steps would be opened up. So, at this stage space for other issues is constrained by a lack of movement on what the Prime Ministers agreed. I hope I have clarified.

With that we come to the end of this event.

Thank you



476. Intervention by the External Affairs Minister in the Rajya Sabha on the discussion on the arrest of an Indian Diplomat in USA.

New Delhi, December 19, 2013.

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID): Sir, I rise with a very heavy heart. But, I also rise with a sense and confidence that this House has expressed the feelings that each one of us has in his heart. We cannot be divided on an issue of such importance to us as a nation, as people and as human beings. It is no longer about an individual. It is about our sense of ourselves as a nation and our presence in the world. I only urge the hon. Members to share with me my sense of responsibility in circumstances in which responding in a disproportionate matter is easy. Saying things that you might regret later is easy. But, to keep my vision directed entirely on the immediate concern — which is the dignity, safety and comfort of someone who, today, for us is not just a representative of India, but I think a part of her heart and a part of her family — is more important.

I have met the officer's father who himself was a distinguished officer of the Indian Administrative Service. I saw a great fortitude, determination and a sense of rationality in him. I thanked him for it in very difficult circumstances the manner in which he stood by his daughter. And, I believe, that we too, from here, will stand not just by his daughter but our sense as a nation, as people and as human beings that what has happened is totally and entirely unacceptable.

I know the hon. Members used different words and one could search dictionary for the strongest possible word that would express our feelings of distress, disquiet and outrage. But, I do believe, this is time to go beyond words and to show some deeds. We have, immediately, reacted and taken some very specific steps about which I dare say there are some people who have said that we are overreacting and overreaching. But, I do believe, the general sense in the country and in this House is what we have done is appropriate. And, on the other, hon. Members have said that we must sustain steadily and get ourselves to the destination that we want to reach. I think, the most important and

immediate concern is to ensure that no further indignity is inflicted upon the young officer. And, we are taking immediate steps to ensure, legally, whatever is possible to implement.

In terms of giving a strong, unambiguous, direct message to the USA whatever I believe we were supposed to do, we did immediately. We can cavil and disagree about the extent of meetings that might have happened who should have met and who should not have met. But, I only want to urge one simple thing. Whatever we do, we are doing in a bona fide manner, with honesty, sincerity and with the overall interest of the nation and the person concerned.

If we appear, outside this House, on television channels, to be divided even on this — even if the division is a very minor one — we will look like a weak nation. Today we speak in one voice on this and I urge you, request you and I plead with you let that voice be one single voice. I will not let you down. This Government will not let you down, no matter how overarch your emotions may be. But, please reflect, for a moment, that we will do what is absolutely important and necessary and I have the confidence to say that we will overcome and we will succeed. But, I do want to share with the House and, I think, it is important to share with the House to understand that we are not overreacting simply because somebody has behaved in a manner that is adverse or hurtful to us. There is a history behind this.

And that history fortifies our position. It is not something that has happened out of the blue. It is not something in which the allegations may or may not be substantiated by the prosecution. It is not something in which the prosecution had the right to do something, and that is writ large in black and white. There is a history that this House must know. This is an issue which we would handle in due course in a larger manner. And I am glad that the Finance Minister is here; we have to consult the Finance Ministry on important changes that we want to make in the arrangements for people who go with our officials abroad and serve them as their employees. But that would come later.

There is also an issue of the Vienna Convention, the Convention that applies to our Diplomatic Missions. There is also a different Convention that applies to the Consulates. These are two separate Conventions. Be

that as it may, whatever further negotiations are required, that would come only later.

Today, our paramount concern, interest and determination is to be able to intervene effectively and specifically to ensure that the dignity of our officer is absolutely preserved.

Sir, the tragedy is that this is not a story in which only two countries are involved; this is a story in which individuals from our country are involved. It is not something that is being done suo motu by the American agencies, bad as it might appear. There is participation of somebody who holds an Indian Passport, somebody who offered their services to work with our diplomatic officials and somebody who sought employment and went to the United States of America, and the conduct of those people is now writ large. And in whatever we say to the United States of America, we would have to keep in mind why this happened in this manner, irrespective of who instigated it, who accepted it, who was not careful about the motives and the reasons why it was being done.

Sir, it goes as way back as June and July of the year in which our Deputy Consul-General found that this person who was working with her had suddenly disappeared. We tried to register a complaint with the relevant agency which looks after the employment in the Mission. But we did not get the cooperation that we needed. We, then, reached out to that lady's husband who was in India and that lady's husband who was in India was unwilling to give us cooperation to help us find that lady and, then, be able to talk to her directly. Then, the Deputy Consul-General received a phone-call from a lawyer who refused to identify herself, who offered a settlement which included obviously some terms which would have arranged for a permanent residence for the employee in the United States of America and also for a huge compensation. It became clear at that point that this was a conspiracy by which some people had virtually trapped our official into a situation where she would have to do something illegal in order to help those people remain in the United States of America. It is not the illegality she is accused of; it is the illegality she refused to subject herself to that brought about this unfortunate situation upon her.

On the 1st of July, on the 5th of July, the Deputy Consul-General registered a complaint with the New York Police Department for a crime

of aggravated harassment against her, and no action was taken by the New York Police Department on that complaint. Then, a complaint was filed in India. A complaint was filed in New Delhi against the lady who was working for her and her husband under Section 420. An FIR was registered in Delhi on the basis of the complaint that was made. That complaint, under Sections 420, 120, 403 and 408 of the IPC, essentially said that that lady and her husband – and I am not taking their names because they are not present here – had obtained an Official Passport and a US Visa with Government assistance with the intention of illegally immigrating to the United States of America. This is in the Fatehpur Beri Police Station and the FIR Number is 20130348.

Thereafter, we requested help from the U.S. Embassy in this matter. However, the U.S. Embassy could not or didn't provide any feedback. Thereafter, it was the husband of that lady who then filed a report with NYPD for theft of cash, Blackberry phone, two SIM cards, a metro card and documents such as contracts signed, receipt books-cum-working hour log, etc., etc., on the 22nd of June, 2013. We had already attempted to get access to that person. We were willing to cooperate with the agencies in the USA, but that was not done. The FIR had been registered here. Also, the High Court issued an injunction against the husband and wife from doing anything in this matter or proceeding in this matter against the Consul General.

So, we had done everything that was possible. On 15th of July, they had filed a writ petition against the Government. But, that writ petition was withdrawn. Therefore, all possible things that we could have done were done; we ensured that there was compliance with the law. The anti-suit injunction was granted by the Delhi High Court on 20th September, 2013. A non-bailable arrest warrant was issued by the metropolitan magistrate of south Delhi in New Delhi against that lady concerned on 6th December, 2013. This was forwarded to the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi requesting them to instruct relevant authorities in the U.S. to arrest and repatriate that person to India through the Consulate in New York so that the due process of law, prosecution, could be done in India. No action was taken in this regard. Instead of actually paying heed to our legitimate arrest warrant issued from a court in India which was served on them through proper process, on the 12th December,

2013, the Deputy Consul General was arrested by the Diplomatic Security Service, who then, in turn, handed her over to the marshals of the New York Police. She is now on bail and, of course, trial and hearings have started. We summoned the U.S. Ambassador on the 13th December, 2013, to express shock at the manner in which the DCG had been humiliated by the U.S. authorities. The MEA spokesperson immediately made a statement. I took up this matter as the first item with the U.S. Congressional delegation. I do believe that the response that we received was positive, was indicative of some sensitivity and some sincerity in responding to what I had said although they were not directly involved.

We have written to all Departments of State Protocol, the U.S. Consulates located in Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata, that the Consular identity cards issued by the State Protocol may be withdrawn and reverted to the MEA Protocol for review and processing no later than 23rd December, 2013. All current airport passes made available to the U.S. Consulates may be turned in to the State Protocol latest by 19th December, 2013. The State Protocol has been requested to obtain details of Indian staff employed by the U.S. Consulates and its associated offices with this information being sent to the MEA by 23rd December, 2013. Likewise, details of Indian nationals employed by the U.S. officials serving in the U.S. Consulates or its associated offices in domestic service duties of any description, together with copies of contracts including of emoluments paid and bank accounts in which these emoluments are being transferred, as well as the PAN in each case. Going forward, we have also requested the State Protocol to take no further action on applications for various clearances, approvals relating to issue of identity cards, clearances of personal effects, sales, purchases of cars, exemption certificates for duty-free import of liquor, food, etc. I don't think this has ever been done in this country in the past.

(Transliterated in Hindi) Maine kisi se itna bhi nahi poochha aur kisi bhi mananiya sadasya se itna aagrah bhi nahi kiya hai ki aap aage ke liye, jitney bhi samay ki hamko aavshyaktaa hai, aap America jaane se bahishkaar karein, maine aisa bhi nahi kaha. Main keh rah hon, yah hamari jimmedaari hai. Is jimmedaari ka nirvaah hum karenge, lekin agar hamein apni baat ko pahuchana hai aur agar hum ek bhasha, ek dhvani, ek awaz mein nahi bole, to main yah manata hoon ki hum kamzor padenge. Sir, yah mera daayitva hai, us mahila ko wapas laana hai,

uska samman fir se sthaapit karna hai. Vah main karke dikhaaunga aur nahi karke dikhaaunga to main aa kar aapke saamne.....(Interruptions)...



477. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Maldivian President, relations with the US and visit of the Saudi Arabian Labour Minister.

New Delhi, December 31, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Thank you very much for being here on the last day of the year. We thought we will complete the year by interacting with you one last time so that you do not feel left out, and begin next year on a new note. I have two announcements to make following which I am available for questions on those or on anything else. The first announcement relates to the first high-level visit that we would be hosting in the New Year and that is of the President of Maldives who will be visiting India on his first trip abroad. He will be here from the 1st to the 4th. As you are aware, His Excellency Mr. Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom was elected recently as the new President of Maldives. That he has chosen to visit India as his first destination abroad is a matter which we are gratified about because it indicates the robust relationship between our two countries. On the 2nd of January he will have delegation-level talks with the Prime Minister. Subsequently in the evening the President will host a banquet dinner for the visiting dignitary and he will also visit Agra ... (Inaudible) ... who have not seen it before. You are all aware that we have close cooperation with Maldives in a variety of areas. These include economic cooperation, defence, health, security, maritime cooperation including on piracy, drug trafficking, etc., and we have a common commitment to development, democracy and peaceful coexistence. We do hope it is normal for our relationship to be strengthened by high-level visits and we look forward to this visit of the President of Maldives to further strengthen our bilateral relations. In addition to that visit, we also will be playing host to the Minister of Labour from Saudi Arabia. Mr. Abdel bin Mohammad Fakeih will be visiting India from the 1st to the 3rd. Those of you who are following the issue of

Nitaqat in Saudi Arabia are also aware that he is the pointsperson on these matters in Saudi Arabia. His visit to India is largely to try and finalise, and hopefully sign an agreement regarding labour cooperation on domestic workers' recruitment. He is coming at the invitation of his counterpart here Mr. Vayalar Ravi who is the Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs. This is the first time that we are entering into an agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on labour-related matters. This stems from changes in Saudi law where they have brought domestic workers into the ambit of their law. We hope that this will be the stepping stone for our cooperation on other labour matters. Once this agreement is signed and finalised, we hope to work with them towards finalising a more comprehensive agreement on all aspects of our labour cooperation. I think I have exhausted the announcements that I have to make. So, we can begin with questions on issues that I have just mentioned and then move on to other issues which may be keeping you occupied otherwise.

Q: Akbar, are any meetings lined up for the visiting Maldives President with the Executives of GMR and the Tatas who have had problems during Waheed's time?

Official Spokesperson: My understanding of the issue of GMR and the Government of Maldives is that it is in arbitration and that will take its due course, and both the Government of Maldives and GMR have said that they will proceed on that lines. I have no idea of any specific meetings on that issue.

Q: Will the labour issue the Indian workers are facing in Saudi Arabia be resolved during the Saudi Arabian Labour Minister's visit?

Official Spokesperson: I think what you are referring to is the Nitaqat programme, and that we have been briefing you on from time to time. Let me try and encapsulate it for your information. We have about 2.8 million Indians resident in Saudi Arabia. From the beginning of this year when the Nitaqat programme was implemented, approximately a 130,000 plus have returned to Indiathrough various mechanisms. But in the same time the number of Indians who have gone there is larger. So, in essencour view is that through dedicated efforts by the Indian community there, responses by them there, taking into account the advice that was provided by our government through our Missions there, we have been able to overcome the difficulties that were being encountered there in a

transitory manner. This is a law which the Saudi Government had decreed for everybody, it was not a law for India alone. But I think we have been able to overcome those difficult times, and now we look to further enhance our bilateral cooperation with Saudi Arabia including in the field of labour cooperation.

Q: Akbar, are we looking to sign any new agreements during the visit? And is there a plan to pledge some developmental assistance?

Official Spokesperson: Manish, you know the answer to that is that announcements for these visits are made following the talks. We hope to have very intensive discussions between the President of Maldives and the Prime Minister of India following which if there are announcements - and there are always announcements of a nature which may be of interest to you because India and Maldives do have very very strong bonds and in any visit here there will be substantive outcomes - I request you to wait for those outcomes.

Q: Can we have some more details on this proposed agreement with Saudi Arabia about domestic maids?

Official Spokesperson: It is not only domestic maids, it is domestic workers. They include a variety of workers. For your understanding, the number of maids that go from India to Saudi Arabia is very restricted because we have fairly stringent requirements for that. I can explain to you in some detail about those requirements. But the point here is that approximately 25 to 30 per cent of Indian residents in Saudi Arabia would be covered by what they term as domestic workers. They include various types of domestic workers, I do not want to get into the details. So, this is significant in terms of the large number of people it will cover. What this agreement actually indicates is that following this we will try and work out a standard work contract which will stipulate requirements to be adhered to at the time of selection and emigration of those people outside India, their pay scales, their other requirements, etc. We are still in the process of that, but this is what will figure of that discussion.

Q: Given that the Saudis are now pushing their own locals into the market, is there any long-term assessment as to what the impact could be on us?

Official Spokesperson: In a generic sense?

Q: Yes.

Official Spokesperson: Let me just try to back off from today and tell you that in 20 years' time, over two decades, the number of Indian nationals resident in Saudi Arabia has grown from 450,000 to 2.8 million. So, this is a steady growth path. Also Indians have acquired a reputation of being a preferred community for the skills and discipline and dedication that they bring to their jobs in the entire Gulf, including Saudi Arabia which has the largest number of Indian nationals abroad in terms of Indian passport holders. As I said, 2.8 million, all of them virtually Indian passport holders, all of them I think. So, as we see this, given the way that Indians are perceived in the region we see that this steady growth process will continue.

Q: Is the President having a meeting with the industry? Is there any update on who he is meeting in industry? Also, is there anything on how much investment India has made in Maldivespost Waheed?

Official Spokesperson: I will answer both those questions following this meeting.

Q: This is about the Devyani Khobragade issue. On the first concurrent accreditation that she had from the UN as an Advisor, is there any update? Did the UN apprise the US State Department of that? If it had not, then why it had not done? And if it had, then why did the US State Department overlook it? And why did she not emphasise on that while she was being handcuffed?

Official Spokesperson: Dipanjan, you have asked an important question and let me try and answer all aspects of your question. While I think it is for the UN to make that formal announcement, having been an international civil servant myself I would find it extremely surprising if an international organisation does not periodically inform a host government about those who they have accredited. In this case the accreditation by the UN was done on 26th August. I would think that there are mechanisms in place, and my understanding is that there are mechanisms in the United Nations in place to periodically inform the host country about all those who have been accredited or have been granted access in various categories to the United Nations General Assembly. That is my understanding of where

we stand on that. As regards your question of why x, y, z was not done, let me try and explain that also. As diplomats we are aware of our ranks. The legal implication of all these is a matter for the lawyers to indicate. As far as she was concerned, she did repeatedly say that she was the Deputy Consul General of India in New York, and at no stage was she asked whether there were any other additional entitlements of hers. That would have helped her. Therefore, when the lawyers started checking these the way that is required to make a case, they did find this out and they did find what the legal position was. And this was not something that was, as I said, unknown to the host government in terms of information flow. So, let us not blame the victim in this regard for lack of information on the part of those who should have followed this up and had been preparing for this case for a long time.

Q: Sir, the 23rd was the last date for the US Embassy informing you of lots of other things about pay and allowances and American schools. Now since all that has not come, is this something that you have taken up with the CBDT that is the Finance Ministry? We have heard that there was one American diplomat who helped the Richard family to leave India. Has the Government of India, its different arms, been apprised of this and is there any follow-up action being taken on this?

Official Spokesperson: Shrinjoy, let me tell you that yes we had indicated timeframes for various actions. The timeframes where we could act, we have taken action. There is another set of issues which required submission of detailed information from the US Embassy and their Consulates here. They did get back to us and indicated that currently given the holiday season they required more time for a response to be provided because the sort of details that were being asked required a lot of effort of collation and collection on their part. And they had requested for some more time. Subsequent to that, we have set in motion a process regarding how we will further proceed on this. And that entails a group of specialist officials who are experts in a variety of subjects to follow this on a regular basis, if necessary on a day-to-day basis, and indicate how we should proceed on that matter. That is where we are. I think all I can say is that we are processing a lot of information, variety of thoughts. And make no mistake, we are serious about processing and pursuing this matter. What the outcomes of those are we will share with you when

that process is complete. But please do give us the time and the space to work on those issues. And let me tell you we have been working every day on these matters.

Q: Actually I want to go back to your answer to Dipanjan's question. You said it was much later that her lawyer found out the new information about her status as Advisor to India's Permanent Mission in New York. But why did MEA's Legal Department take so long to come out with this information?

Official Spokesperson: Valid question, but I did not say that her lawyer found it out. I said what the privileges and immunities of a rank and a title are, the nitty-gritty of these is what the lawyers try and determine. These immunities and privileges date back to 1946 when the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution approved by every member present there about the privileges and immunities of various ranks including the rank to which Devyani Khobragade was accredited to the United Nations. So, tracing the immunity attached to a rank is a process that the lawyers do. I did not say to you that it was x, y, or z's lawyer that did it. I said it was the lawyers. And let me assure you we have the best of lawyers in our International Law Department including a lawyer who is present in the Permanent Mission of India in New York. So, please do not try and interpret my words in a way which is different from what I said.

Q: Has Devyani been granted diplomat status by the US State Department? And there are reports today saying that the US will not apologise unconditionally and that the case will continue. Do you have to say anything on this matter?

Official Spokesperson: I answer only one question, so do not ask two. Let me try and answer the question. With regards the first thing, let me tell you that Devyani is a diplomat and will be a diplomat. What you are perhaps asking is about her status as an accredited diplomat with the UN which has been recognised by the United States. That process I think I would refer to you to the briefing last evening by the State Department Spokesperson. They have indicated that that process is on, they are examining it. And the outcome, when they communicate to us, we will certainly communicate to you. But as far as we are concerned,

she was, is and will remain an Indian diplomat.

Q: Sir, the US is trying to show that this was an incident on which the Indian reaction went overboard, and it was not such an instance earlier. I just want to know whether there is any initiative from the US at any level to resolve the issue and just remove the misunderstanding between the two countries. In between, some defence deals have also gone on. So, at diplomatic or political level is something is going on?

Official Spokesperson: Let me tell you the conversations we have do not reflect what you are saying. The conversations that we have reflect an understanding and a reflection of regret. And that reflection of regret has been communicated both by the US Secretary of State, various other interlocutors, including yesterday evening US time by their Spokesperson again, of what their position on this was. As regards whether we are in conversation with them...

Q: Has there been any initiative from their side? Is US taking any initiative?

Official Spokesperson: They said they are examining it. When they get back to us we will then respond to you.

Q: There are reports that US is not ready to apologise and that it will continue with the case. What is your response?

Official Spokesperson: I think in pluralist democracies there are different voices saying different things. As Foreign Office and as the Ministry of External Affairs we respond through the designated channels. In this case, I would again request you to look at what the designated channels have said yesterday, and those do not indicate what you are mentioning. They indicate that a process is on and we are awaiting the outcome of that process. We have been in conversation with them at a variety of levels, and they have not communicated to us that that process has completed and therefore they are not in a position to communicate the final outcome of that process. But in a pluralist democracy there are various channels which are operating simultaneously and there are some who may have different views on different matters and it is for them to express their view. We will go by what the State Department is communicating.

Q: The American Embassy employs a large number of Indian staff and the American diplomats also engage Indian staff as domestic helps. Are they obliged to pay them according to their own law or Indian law?

Official Spokesperson: I think you should ask this to them.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: On the details that we have asked for we are expecting their responses. We will analyse them and give you the outcome of those. Right now we have asked for information. And it requires this information to be carefully crosschecked with a variety of sources. We will then take this up and inform you. So, right now as was told earlier, we had requested for detailed information, and that detailed information is still awaited.

Q: Just moving ahead with the same question that he asked, we have accessed a few payslips and a few details of the pay that a Visa Clerk gets in the US Embassy or for that matter visa staff gets in the US embassy, and that is abysmally low. Does the US Embassy now stand in violation of labour laws because US Embassy is US territory and that they should be paying equivalent to what they pay any US national?

Official Spokesperson: Geeta, what you have accessed is available to you. What we are awaiting is an authorised set of information from the US Government which indicates to us what the information that we have asked for is. We await that information. As I said, we have already set up this group which will carefully monitor all these aspects, and we will respond when the information comes to us. You have accessed information, and I have no doubt that that information that you have accessed is correct. But let us await the detailed information that we have asked them for and that they have said they are in the process of collecting but there is an issue of timing on that. We will get back to you on that.

Q: Sir, on the US\$ 4,000 which was wrongly put in that column for salary of the domestic help, has the US reacted to that? Have we informed them? What have they said?

Official Spokesperson: As I said, every bit of information that we have has been provided to the US State Department. Also the lawyers are discussing these matters. And we have not yet got a final outcome of

what their response based on the information that we have transmitted to them is. And they have repeated this. We have provided information as and when we have got this, and we have sought their responses. They have been in conversation with our colleagues in Washington, and this we will take it that rather than go by information that is coming from a diversity of sources.

Q: Sir, is somebody in the USembassy in violation of Indian laws when they used diplomatic card or whatever to fly out Richard's family from India? Have we told them of this and have they communicated to us on that?

Official Spokesperson: This is information that was provided to us in terms of after the investigation began. We are ascertaining information on this matter, whether it is correct that this has happened because ultimately these requirements also entail taxes. And whether there was any infringement of Indian tax laws relating to purchase of tickets for non-diplomatic activities is a matter that will be pursued. We are ascertaining the information. We have some leads on this. Once we come to a conclusion on this, we will let you know. As I told you, we have a group of very very diligent and dedicated people working on all aspects of this.

Q: Sir, Geneva-2 is scheduled on Syria. Is Indiaparticipating in that?

Official Spokesperson: Our interest in developments in Syria is well known. In the recent past we have had contacts at official levels both with the Government of Syria as well as the main opposition in Syria that is the National Coordination Committee for Democratic Change. And we have evinced an interest in our participation. My understanding is that formal invitations for the Geneva-2 conference which is going to start on the 22nd January have not yet been issued by the United Nations. However, we have been informed fairly authentically that Indiawould be among those countries who would be invited to this conference, and therefore we are now in the process of preparing for the participation in that conference, and this will be formalised when we get a formal invitation.

Q: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Yasukuni Shrine some days ago and there are some negative responses by some countries. How do you think of this visit and the response by other countries?

Official Spokesperson: This is for the other countries and Japan to discuss and take it forward. Ultimately under the Vienna Convention, which all of you are very closely following these days, issues of two countries is for those countries to work together and resolve.

Q: Who is going to be the Chief Guest for the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and for the Republic Day? Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is very near. It is on the 7th of January. I think by this time a decision might have been taken as to who is going to be the Chief Guest for the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

Official Spokesperson: I must confess that since the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is organised by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs I am not aware, but I can find that out for you. As regards the Republic Day, this has still some time to go. We have traversed that before. Once we are ready, we will announce the name.

Q: Sir, the General Election in Bangladesh is scheduled for the 5th of January. Now it is clear that the Opposition is not participating. Do we have any comment on the legitimacy of this election?

Official Spokesperson: India and Bangladesh, the destinies of our two countries are intertwined. Therefore, we have an interest in the well-being of Bangladesh as they have an interest in our well-being because we have such a long border, there is so much of movement, people-to-people, activity, and we have a common cultural heritage. So, we have an interest in what happens in Bangladesh. And it should not be a surprise because it is legitimate to have that interest and they have a legitimate interest in our well-being. Effectively what we desire for the people of Bangladesh is their well-being. We would wish them to overcome their differences, to be able to resolve their differences in a manner which is peaceful, which is done through dialogue and through discussion. And the outcome should be acceptable to all the people of Bangladesh. We do not have any intention to interfere in the internal affairs of Bangladesh. But as a friendly neighbour and a well wisher we do hope that the people of Bangladesh and their leaders can arrive at a solution and at outcomes which enable the people there to realise their aspirations.

Question: Akbar, what is the status of the amphibious aircraft which Japan is going to sell us, and the status of the nuclear deal? And can we in the coming month during Shinzo Abe's visit expect a breakthrough on these two counts?

Official Spokesperson: On the first I must confess I need to find that out and once I find it out I will share. On the second one, when the Prime Ministers met last in Tokyo they had instructed their officials to work expeditiously for an early outcome. Since then there have been meetings between the officials. We are trying to reach as early a conclusion as possible. Whether that meets a timeframe that you may have in mind, I cannot answer that. But let me tell you, officials from both sides are working in accordance with the directions of their principals towards an early outcome.

Question: My question is pertinent to Indo-Pak relations. After the DGMOs' meeting, Pakistan has proposed a meeting between the Commerce Secretaries of the two countries. Has India taken any decision?

Official Spokesperson: What I would like to draw your attention to is that when the Commerce Secretaries met last as part of the resumed dialogue process - and this was in September 2012, since then they have not met - they agreed on what is called a sequential roadmap. That sequential roadmap remains in place. That sequential roadmap had provided for Pakistan taking the first step. And that first step was to notify the removal of all trade restrictions at the Wagah-Attari crossing. Subsequent to taking of this first step, there were other steps that India would take. So, there is a sequential roadmap available and we await Pakistan taking the first step as agreed between India and Pakistan at the Commerce Secretaries' level. Thank you very much and wish you a happy and eventful new year



(ii) South & Central America

478. Speech of External Affairs Minister on “India-Latin America & Caribbean: The Way Forward” at the CII India-LAC Conclave Valedictory Session.

New Delhi, December 10, 2013.

H.E. Mr Samuel Santos, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nicaragua

Distinguished Ministers, Vice-Ministers from Latin America & the Caribbean Region

Mr Dhruv Sawhney, Former President, CII

Mr Suketu Shah, Chairman, CII LAC Committee & Joint Managing

Director, Mukand Ltd

Mr Chandrajit Banerjee, Director-General, CII

Distinguished Delegates

I am truly delighted to be present at the concluding session of the CII India-LAC Conclave, which in my view is a very significant initiative by CII. I am very pleased to be in the midst of eminent leaders from India and the LAC countries who have demonstrated remarkable stakeholder interest in deepening India-LAC business ties through active participation in the deliberations and meetings held at this venue over the last two days.

In Spanish there is a famous saying “A buen entendedor, pocas palabras bastan “ meaning - To someone with good understanding, only a few words are necessary. So keeping with that let me try to give a snapshot of our relations with the Latin American countries and the Caribbean.

Very recently I had an opportunity to visit Brazil (October 2013). Before that I had covered some parts (Chile and Argentina – 4-10 February 2013) in the region of Latin America. I could clearly notice that the region is fast emerging as one of the major growth engines of the world. This dynamic region accounts for a combined GDP of US\$ 6.9 trillion, a trade turnover of US\$ 2.1 trillion and a population of 600 million people. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows into Latin America touched a new record high of US\$ 166 billion in 2012. The Global Financial Crisis that we all experienced in varying degrees has exposed the fault lines in the global

economy. However, during this period, the emerging economies came to the rescue of the global economy. The annual GDP growth rates of the region have been very encouraging indeed.

The LAC region is also endowed with immense supplies of natural resources such as fresh water, arable land, minerals and hydrocarbons. This region includes five of the world's most bio-diverse countries - Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Peru. India wishes to build a long lasting, enduring relationship with LAC. In many ways, India and LAC countries are natural partners because of their shared understanding of the values of democracy, rule of law, justice and equality.

The India-LAC business partnership has grown steadily over the last decade and more. It is a matter of satisfaction that our trade and investment relations with LAC region are growing rapidly. From a mere US\$ 2 billion in 2000 bilateral trade has crossed a record US\$ 46 billion in 2012. This marks a remarkable 20 fold increase in trade. We have Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with Mercosur (Southern Market) trade bloc and with Chile. However, the trade figure is not reflective of the true potential of our economic engagement. We need to do more and expand and diversify our trade basket.

I am very encouraged to see the increasing presence of Latin America in New Delhi. This will help to extend better consular services and faster issuance of Visas, a per-requisite for any business engagement. By taking the initiative to organise this Conclave we are making a serious effort to reach out to LAC Countries especially to the business houses and other enterprises so that businesses from both sides can see for themselves the enormous opportunities that exist between India and the LAC region. I am extremely pleased to say that the India-LAC partnership is one of the high points of South-South Cooperation initiatives.

LAC region is undergoing rapid integration process which culminated in the formation of CELAC (Community of Latin America and Caribbean States). In recognition of the growing importance of our mutually beneficial relationships with LAC region, the first India-CELAC Foreign Ministerial Meeting in the Troika format was held on August 7, 2012. The two sides have agreed to set up several institutional mechanisms to further strengthen and deepen our relations viz. CEOs Forum, Joint Business

Council, S&T Forum, Energy Forum, Agriculture Expert Group and Think Tank Forum. Further, India agreed to share its technology in e-governance, Tele-education and Tele-medicine and also offered to provide weather forecasting and mapping of mineral resources in LAC region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When we set out to explore the new possibilities in India-LAC business engagements, we need to be cognizant of the new paradigms that are shaping the global economy. I would like to add that new developments in India-LAC economic engagements will also have a big impact on global trade and investment flows. Therefore, the deliberations at this Conclave and the recommendations made thereof will no doubt have a key bearing on a gamut of international economic engagements..

I am happy to see that the partnerships that emerge from this event and other major India-LAC engagements are cross-cutting, involving both large and small and medium enterprises. New generation SMEs are in the forefront of industrial innovation and competitiveness, so we must direct ample attention to bringing SMEs from both regions on a common platform. We are also seeing a steady increase in Indian participation in projects in LAC countries, supported by co-financing schemes, Lines of Credit etc. Closer business engagements are also paving the way for seamless transfer of technology. I can see a growing appetite for Indian technologies that are highly 'Adaptive', 'Affordable' & 'Appropriate' to the needs of emerging and developing economies in the LAC region.

Government of India has played a major role in stepping up our engagement with the LAC region, through our 'Focus LAC' programme that got underway in 1997. This programme enabled Indian industry to target LAC markets for project exports, and export of industrial goods and services. I must add that the LAC Governments have also taken proactive steps to promote business linkages with India. Now the onus is on industry to take our bilateral partnership to a new high. Perhaps, businesses on both sides could consider creating business-enabling initiatives like an India-LAC CEOs Forum, Business Forums and the like. These forums will not only connect business leaders on a continuous basis, but also help companies identify the new business opportunities in India and LAC countries, and also gain a better understanding of prevailing business and investment regulations.

Ladies and Gentlemen

This Conclave is not about sharing ideas alone. Real business negotiations have taken place at this venue. Projects of large magnitude have been discussed and several proposals for M&As were evaluated. The deliberations and meetings centered on key and strategic areas like agriculture & food processing, pharmaceuticals & healthcare, power & energy, oil & gas, automobiles, auto components & transportation, infrastructure, mining and mining equipment, IT & BPO, machinery including material handling equipment, bio-fuels and chemicals, tourism, project exports, etc. (detailed programme and agenda attached given in folder)

While the decision makers participating in this Conclave are largely guided by the objective of enhancing India-LAC economic and business partnerships, there is a clear recognition on both sides that the India-LAC partnership itself has a high degree of global responsibility. Hence, this Conclave was also oriented to key global issues like the reform of international financial and monetary systems, democratization of international bodies like the UN, strengthening of global food and energy security, climate change mitigation, promotion of green growth, poverty alleviation and realization of MDGs, promotion of education and health across global societies, and so on. Taking cognizance of the pre-eminent role of this Conclave in meeting our national and international goals, we reaffirm our desire to organize this Conclave every year.

I once again thank our friends from the LAC countries for travelling great distances to participate in this Conclave, making this event such a big success. I thank every one of you for your great contributions to strengthen India-LAC partnerships.

Thank you!

Ladies & Gentlemen and Amigos



ARGENTINA**479. Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister of India and Foreign Minister of Argentina.****New Delhi, June 17, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good evening friends and thank you very much for coming for this media interaction. As is usual on these occasions I will request the Ministers to make brief opening remarks following which they have agreed to answer a few questions. I now request the External Affairs Minister of India Shri Salman Khurshid to make his opening remarks.

External Affairs Minister of India (Shri Salman Khurshid): Thank you very much and welcome ladies and gentlemen. My apologies that we are doing it a little bit late in the evening but we have worked hard all day. I am very grateful to His Excellency Mr. Timerman, Foreign Minister of Argentina, and his colleagues here who have worked very hard and stretched the hours a bit. So, we have sought your attention at this late hour. Thank you very much for coming here.

I am really happy to welcome my colleague the Hon. Foreign Minister, His Excellency Mr. Hector Timerman on his first ever bilateral visit to our country. I think that we were greatly deprived of his attention by his not having come here, but we hope that this will be made up now with more than one visit in the future.

This is the fourth round of the India-Argentina Joint Commission meeting. I am very grateful to my colleague the Minister for having accepted our invitation and having come here with a very large delegation which speaks of the seriousness and the determination and the commitment that Argentina has, which we reciprocate equally enthusiastically, to take this relationship to much higher levels. Our leadership on both sides have given us mandate which is that we have to build this to a strategic partnership. The work that we have done today I think will substantially contribute to meeting that objective.

In the course of today in the Joint Commission, both the delegations worked hard, had comprehensive discussions on a vast range of bilateral

issues focusing on areas such as trade and economy, science and technology, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, market access issues, defence, energy, and even space. We exchanged views on regional developments and multilateral issues in multilateral fora. I think I will be accurate in saying that we have convergence and we have congruence of issues and we can really be very very important partners in the affairs of the world.

Both sides reiterated our interest to expand the scope of trade and investment. We have some investments in Argentina and equally they have some investments here. But we do believe that US\$ 1.83 billion in trade is far short not only of the target of US\$ 3 billion that has been set up by us in October 2009 for the present year, but also we believe what we have achieved is far short of the true potential that lies between us.

The JC was agreed to tackle trade barriers such as regulatory frameworks, market access issues, some high tariffs, visas and work permits. Some of these issues may not necessarily be impediments, but what we have agreed is that we will examine them more closely to see whether it is only a perception or that there is any real difficulty, and if there is, as we move forward we can evolve into a better regime. The two sides have agreed to expeditiously implement the decisions that were taken here at this meeting. Both sides have decided to meet regularly on identified issues to find lasting solutions.

We reiterated our determination to strengthen the already ongoing cooperation in agriculture. We had a very strong presence of delegates in agriculture who met even before we gathered here today. And we see enormous potential of collaborating in agriculture, with Argentina becoming a major pillar of food security for India. Pharmaceuticals, both in terms of the trade in pharmaceuticals and also our offer to Argentina to give them the model of the Jan Aushadhi stores for generic medicines made available at low cost to ordinary citizens, and we will be very happy to have Argentina with that.

We are both culturally very vibrant societies and we have talked a lot about the possibility of collaborating in terms of culture, presentations, in terms of movies, film making, filming of Indian movies in Argentina where the landscapes are really spectacular, and indeed also looking at the

possibility of joint production, not necessarily only on Bollywood films but also in many other areas. I have suggested that we could work together on Rabindranath Tagore and the relationship he had with Argentina including with his friend Victoria Ocampo.

We are committed to setting up an Indian Cultural Centre in Buenos Aires as soon as possible. We are working both here as well as on their side. Academic linkages hopefully will see great strengthening over the next few months. The think tank forum has been established. And in 2014 we will do the Festival of India in Argentina for which very generously the Argentine Government has extended its support.

Finally of course it would be unfair if I spoke of our close collaboration and aspiration for working together and did not mention the remarkable football players that Argentina has. Maradona and Messi who visited India were enormously successful. I think they have triggered additional interest in the field of football sports. I hope that we will be seeing more of Argentine football here in our country. Hockey is another sport which is of common interest to us. We hope that both in hockey and football we can collaborate on coaching, on training, and perhaps exchange of young players so that both sides can pick up something as an additionality and as value addition.

We have exchanged views on regional developments, on multilateral issues, on common approaches for international peace and security. Argentina is currently holding a non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council. And we would look forward to working very closely with Argentina on the reform of the UN and other multilateral financial institutions but also on the day-to-day working and functioning of issues that come before the Security Council. We will be in regular contact otherwise too but certainly also with a view to collaborating and cooperating in the context of G20, and we hope that we can as developing countries add major content to G20.

I look forward to working with the Foreign Minister who, in the very little time that we have known each other, has become a very very good and a valued friend. His hospitality extended to us when earlier in the year I went to Argentina I cannot reciprocate with what we are offering here today. But we want you to know that you are for us a very valuable, true

friend, and I hope that during our time as Foreign Ministers we can leave an indelible mark on this valuable and important relationship between our two countries.

Thank you very much.

Official Spokesperson: I now request the Foreign Minister of Argentina to make his remarks.

Foreign Minister of Argentina (Mr. Hector Marcos Timerman): Thank you very much for your important definitions about the relation between our two countries. As actors, as protagonists on the world stage as concerns politics and economy, the meeting that was held today is an important step in having a strategic relation as was defined by the leaders of both countries during the visit of the President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner to the Republic of India.

We have had a long and important relation in agricultural business or in the agricultural industry. Argentina is very interested in diversifying its exports and appealing to the technical capacity that our country has. In this sense I would like to emphasise that recently Argentina was given the tender for constructing of radio isotopes. In an international competition our country was chosen for this and it is a great source of pride for us. It is a demonstration also that Argentina is a country with great technological advantage where agriculture is concerned.

We also believe that as has been explained to us today the importance that the development of pharmaceuticals that India has and we should see how we can use this development that the Indian Republic has for the benefit of our people so that our people also have access to health services, to good health services. And we are very interested in receiving all the information and the cooperation that you have offered to us today.

The interest of India to invest in Argentina also shows an increase in relations between the two countries. We have talked about investments in mining, in the access to innovative energies that up to now have not been developed in Argentina like shale gas. Argentina has one of the greatest reserves in the world as concerns shale gas. We are also interested in cooperating with India in space sector and in the nuclear sector. In these sectors both of us have made much progress.

In south-south cooperation, it is one of the bases in the way emergent economies can emerge and India is one of the leading countries in this group. South-south cooperation is important because it is the contribution that each one of the countries makes to the knowledge and development of other country. We have no other aspirations, only the contribution to a more stable and harmonious world where the economies and the societies of both countries will benefit. We do not have any geostrategic interest apart from this. It is simply the decision to create and to contribute a better world.

I am very happy that we have been able to bring here five projects for cooperation. If these will be analysed by India, I am sure that India will also cooperate with Argentina in aspects of this nature.

The Minister has also referred and I would like to reaffirm the importance of working together in international fora. This year we will have a G20 meeting and at the end of the year we are going to work for the conclusion for which we have been working since many years, but this year I hope we will reach a final conclusion of the Doha Round of the World Trade Organisation. But both countries and many others too share the feeling and the security that the Doha Round has to be a development round in order to achieve, in order to have trade but more just growth with norms that benefit all countries, the emergent countries and also the developed countries. For this reason the Doha Round is called the round for development. And it is not called the free trade development because many people want us to believe that when they talk about the conclusion of the Doha Round. In this sense I think that the position of India and Argentina will guarantee that the conclusion is a conclusion that has benefits for all countries, for developed countries as well as developing countries.

We see with a great deal of joy the leadership that India provides in multilateral forums like the IMF, the World Bank, the UN because we believe that India is a country which is committed to world peace and to harmonious development. In this sense Argentina celebrates the special relation with the Indian Republic. We are sure that in the next G20, as the in the past, we will work together in order to have concrete positions so the members of this summit can see for themselves that these decisions will be beneficial for our countries.

I think it is a new world now. The crisis in Europe, in the US, especially in Europe will last longer and will be solved much later. And this gives us an opportunity, to the emergent economies, to show that we can now be the guiding lights of economy, and we should continue with our efforts to maintain a growth rate of the world in keeping with the social necessities of our peoples.

I think this visit is just a show of my personal gratitude as Minister of the Argentine Republic for the interest that the Indian Republic has shown when you visited us in February. This will have an impact on the natural growth of the relations between our two countries not only in the economic sphere but also in the political sphere.

We are very far geographically but we are very close in the positions that we are taking in the international fora. Thus it has been an excellent day. We have done much work. We are satisfied. Yesterday it was raining a lot and I think the rain is a good sign for all of you. As an agricultural country we know what drought means and I know the importance of rain. I hope you will have a great year, much development, and that Indian agriculture should benefit for the quick arrival of the monsoon.

Thank you very much for your kindness, for having received us today. I hope we will see each other soon. I would like to end expressing my thanks in the name of the Argentine people and the Government for the constant and historic support that the Indian Republic has given to us in resolving peaceably, peaceful resolution of the Malvinas Islands. This is in the heart of all Argentines, and India has always been permanently a member of this alliance of nations that each day is growing bigger and which is annually petitioning in every forum that Argentina and Great Britain specifically resolve through negotiations this conflict which has been enduring for so long. For this reason alone it has been of great use to me to come here.

Thank you very much.

Q: Ministers, could you help us understand a little bit more about the kind of cooperation you talked about in sports, in football and hockey particularly? Has there been any concrete discussion on setting up a mechanism for exchanging coaches or training personnel?

External Affairs Minister of India: We have just begun the process. We have of course understandably focused on investment and trade which is really what we have started building upon. It is important that to have a sustainable relationship we must ensure that there is two-way trade of a much higher level, and that we have investments in both countries. As far as the field of sports is concerned, we are still relatively at the beginning, at the stage at which we are just beginning our engagement.

This is the process that we have done with other countries as well because India is still relatively modest in its successes in terms of world quality soccer and football. But what we are doing is that we will ramp this up gradually and I intend to speak to my colleague the Sports Minister. But to begin with we have the Boca Juniors club that is scheduled to come and play exhibition matches here in India at the end of the year.

Relationships need to be established. Discovery of each other has to be made. The Argentine polo team was here. If you are a polo fan and you go to the Jaipur Polo Club, you will see inevitably there are Argentine players, and what is more even Argentine horses. And that is a long way to come if you are a horse. It is a long way to come because not only of the arduous travel but then they have to be acclimatized to Indian conditions. But some of them have done remarkably well and I know that we could do a lot more in terms of collaborating on horses. But right now we have got enough on our plate. We will get to horses as well in due course.

Foreign Minister of Argentina: What can I tell you? It is true that the Argentine football is perhaps the best in the world. You know about it. They have Messi also. True! Messi plays in Spain. It is a game which is very popular all over the world. Argentina has been blessed with great football players. Part of my work makes it much easier for me that we have Maradona and Messi. And wherever we go we always discuss this issue - Maradona and Messi as well as polo. And they open doors for Republic of Argentina in the sense we are sure that the arrival of one important equipment, the equipment team from Argentina, Boca Juniors is going to set unprecedented steps for India. It is an honour and pride for Argentina that our sport is having a special mention in the relationship between our two countries. We are going to come here with the best of players to show the best quality of our teams and our sportspersons.

Question: I wanted to know whether the issue of Malvinas was discussed, which the Minister said it was and you were happy about it. Could you now elaborate on the pharmaceutical market access talks that you had, especially on the generic drugs that India has. Could you please elaborate on that?

External Affairs Minister of India: What I have offered to ... (Inaudible) ... sources and provide generic drugs at almost 1/3rd the cost of drugs which are in the market. We think that that is an experiment that could certainly be very viable and successful in Latin America. Therefore, we are offering that model to Argentina. But other than that we have an important trade link as far as the pharmaceuticals sector is concerned.

There are some local regulations in Argentina about export to Argentina of pharmaceuticals. We have been looking at that. Some of our pharmaceutical manufacturers have been talking about some difficulties. We have talked about those today in some detail and we have been reassured that there is not any discriminatory practice or any discriminatory laws that would add to our disadvantage. But it is important that we work with the industry to see and do some handholding to see that there is not any such problem. But as I said, if there is any problem at any stage, we will work together. We do not have to wait for the next Joint Commission. We will work together to ensure that that is taken care of.

There is also a desire that pharmaceuticals are manufactured in joint sector, pharmaceuticals should invest in Argentina, and of course the Argentine companies have invested in pharmaceuticals in India. So, obviously we can approach this from many angles. But the idea is that there must be availability and access as far as pharmaceuticals are concerned. We have recorded this in our minutes today. Whatever needs to be done further more for this, we will certainly do it. We see this as a major area of trade. We see imports from Argentina of soybean and of sunflower oil as a major import from Argentina. But there are many other things that we will explore. In the energy sector, as you said, we will explore. And I hope that over the next few years our trade profile is going to look much larger and greater and impressive than it does today.

Foreign Minister of Argentina: As I said earlier, I think that the development of pharma in India is very very important and it is very very encouraging that a country which is an emerging country should have such a high level of development in such an important industry such as the pharmaceutical industry. In Argentina the presence of Indian industries is very strong. Five plants have been established and seven are being established and they are being authorized. There is no restriction. They have the same sanitary restrictions which are also applicable to Argentine laboratories.

However, it is important to notice that if the process can be facilitated in some way to resolve certain doubts which the pharmaceuticals sector of India may have. In this sense we are going to work together with Indian authorities to resolve all these issues, one can make extra effort. We have decided to work together also in the pharmaceuticals sector.

As regards distribution of generic products, I think what the Minister has raised is very very important. He spoke about a model which is flexible and adaptable to the needs of emerging and developing economies. Access to medicine and access to pharmaceutical products is of vital importance for both the countries. Therefore, we hope that we will be able to see the project coming to its fruition. And we will see whether this whole process can be made flexible as per our economies, as per our administrative system of managing public health system. As you know, it is very well developed in our country but it also gives us more opportunity to see how the level of life can be improved. We are greatly satisfied to see this possibility of increasing the distribution of these medicines in those sectors which need this much more than any other.

Q: Sir, could you give us your comments on the Cabinet reshuffle today and how this should be seen, and whether this is the election cabinet ahead of the polls?

External Affairs Minister of India: One important item is that I am still here and that I did not get reshuffled.

We are now in the last year and obviously the emphasis now, all political parties have this but certainly we have it too now, is to look ahead one year at how we are going to build up our campaign. So, there are two elements. One is that we have to quickly wrap up the work that we still

have to do as far as government legislation is concerned - food security being one, land acquisition being another. There are many other legislations that are pending which relate to good governance and transparency in governance. We would like to see that those go through quickly so that there is some time for people to be able to see how they have worked on the ground. We hope that the Opposition will at least accommodate what is a legitimate democratic duty as well as an entitlement.

Because there had been some vacancies and the political side meaning the party side had to be strengthened, our leadership decided that some of our leaders would be pulled out and put in to the party. Many of us had periodically suggested that we were available to work in the party. But obviously the leadership decides who would fit in the best given the team that they are creating. We all will contribute from wherever we are but there are people who have to work 24x7 only in the party. And I think that is what is being done. Some outstanding faces have come to the party and I think it encourages us enormously, gives us tremendous amount of confidence. Whatever the Government is doing will get tremendous support from the party rank and file led by the new faces and the experienced faces that are in the party.

As far as the government ranks are concerned, there are again some very experienced people, some people who have worked with us in the past and we are very pleased to see them back in the government. It is a short time that they are in government because we are now in the final year but hopefully given their vast experience, they will provide us altogether an effective impetus for a successful final year of our five-year tenure.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction. Thank you ladies and gentlemen.



BRAZIL**480. Agreed Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Brazil-India Joint Commission on Political, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation.****Brasilia, October 15, 2013.**

1. Co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado, Minister of External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, and H.E. Mr. Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister of Republic of India, the Sixth Brazil-India Joint Commission Meeting was held in Brasilia on 14 and 15 October, 2013. The composition of both delegations can be found in Annex I.
2. Taking note of the tenth anniversary of the First Meeting of the Joint Commission, the Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the mechanism for strengthening political dialogue, reviewing bilateral cooperation and exchanging views on regional and multilateral issues. Both Ministers have positively assessed the progress made over the course of the last ten years and highlighted that the Joint Commission reflects the strategic nature and the vast potential of the bilateral relations, and agreed on the need to intensify efforts with a view to implementing initiatives to diversify the bilateral agenda.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

3. Minister Figueiredo expressed the satisfaction of the Brazilian Government with the outstanding results of President Dilma Rousseff's State Visit to India in March 2012, and reiterated the gratitude for the kind hospitality extended to the Brazilian delegation.
4. They reaffirmed the importance of the aforementioned State Visit to the further strengthening and deepening of the bilateral Strategic Partnership, based on the solid democratic values the two countries share and on their commitment to the promotion of economic growth with social inclusion to the benefit of their respective societies.

5. The two Ministers recognized the importance that both sides attribute to the Bilateral Strategic Dialogue as a mechanism for the exchange of views on their respective regional scenarios, as well as on their perspectives on issues of the international agenda.
6. They also highlighted the importance of exchange of high level visits for the implementation of the bilateral agenda and the identification of new areas of cooperation.
7. The two Ministers recalled that the coordination in multilateral fora and the ongoing cooperation in IBSA, BRICS, BASIC, G-4 and G-20 is an extremely important dimension of the Brazil-India Strategic Partnership. In this context, they expressed the willingness of the two countries to further contribute to the reform of the institutions of global governance with a view to making them more legitimate, representative and inclusive.
8. Recalling the ongoing cooperation within the G4, the Ministers reiterated that difficulties of the Security Council in dealing with international challenges, including current ones, have further highlighted the need for U.N. Security Council reform in order to better reflect geopolitical realities of the 21st century and make the Council more broadly representative, efficient and transparent. They recalled that almost 10 years ago, in the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit, international leaders committed themselves to an early reform of the Security Council. In this context, both Ministers underlined the need to intensify efforts to translate, at the latest by 2015, the existing agreement into concrete outcomes, as well as reaffirmed their full support for each other's candidature for a permanent seat in a reformed UN Security Council.
9. The two Ministers stressed the importance of joint efforts of the two countries in the G-20 and other international economic fora with a view to further inclusive growth and employment generation. They also emphasized the importance of the completion of the ongoing reforms of IMF governance as

indispensable for enhancing the Fund's credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness.

10. The Indian side congratulated the Brazilian side on the election of Mr. Roberto Azevêdo as Diretor-General of the WTO. Minister Figueiredo expressed once again his recognition for the support of India to the election of the Brazilian candidate. The two Ministers reiterated their intention to continue their cooperation in WTO issues. In this sense, they look forward to the 9th World Trade Organisation's Ministerial conference to be held in December 2013, and expect that it will be a stepping stone to the successful and balanced conclusion of the Doha Development Round.
11. Recalling, with satisfaction, the tenth anniversary of the formal launching of the IBSA Dialogue Forum, both Ministers reaffirmed that IBSA has succeeded in laying a strong foundation for multi-dimensional and multi-sectorial cooperation in a wide range of areas. Recalling the Brasília Declaration of June 2013 that constituted the IBSA Forum, the two Ministers underscored the IBSA's uniqueness as the forum which brings together India, Brazil and South Africa, three large democracies and major economies from three different continents, facing similar challenges and all three countries being developing, pluralistic, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious nations. The Ministers further stressed the renewed relevance of the IBSA Fund for Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger in successfully demonstrating the importance and viability of South-South cooperation through the implementation of a number of projects in several developing countries in Africa, Asia, Middle East and in the Caribbean, contributing to the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals. Both sides looked forward to having the 8th Trilateral Commission Meeting as well as 6th IBSA Summit at an early date.
12. The Brazilian side congratulated India for the successful organization of the IV BRICS Summit (New Delhi, March 2012). The Brazilian side also expressed its willingness to reciprocate the hospitality during the next BRICS Summit, to be held in 2014 in Brazil.

13. Minister Khurshid thanked Minister Figueiredo for hosting the meeting of BRICS Foreign Ministers in New York on 26 September. The two sides recognized salience of BRICS in coordinating, consulting and cooperating on global governance and contemporary issues of mutual interest. Minister Khurshid assured full support of India to Brazil's efforts in hosting the next Summit and furthering BRICS cooperation.
14. Brazil and India highlighted the importance of deepening mutual understanding and strengthening friendship ties between their respective government institutions and civil societies and business and academic communities. In this sense, the parties welcomed the joint initiative of the Brazilian "Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão – FUNAG" and the Public Diplomacy Division of Ministry of External Affairs of India in organizing the seminar "India and Brazil: A Partnership for the 21st century", held in Brasilia, in October 2013 with the participation of very knowledgeable speakers from both sides. The seminar provided the occasion for fruitful discussions on important issues in the bilateral agenda: Challenges and Opportunities of Global Governance; Challenges and Opportunities in the Strategic Partnership between India and Brazil; and the Historical bonds and transformative convergence in the relations between India and Brazil. It was also agreed that a reciprocal event would be organized in India next year.

AGREEMENTS

15. The Ministers welcomed the signature of a bilateral protocol to the "Brazil-India Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement" that amends its Article 26, regarding the exchange of information. The protocol is a further step in the global effort to establish an international financial system based on co-operation between countries, transparency and effective exchange of information in tax matters.
16. Both Ministers expect to exchange soon the notes on the ratification of the bilateral Agreement on Mutual Assistance on Customs Matters, which will strengthen cooperation between customs authorities, in order to enforce customs laws and

regulations. Such cooperation will contribute to the expansion of trade flows and will ensure the security of logistic chains.

17. Furthermore, they welcome the signature of the Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons, which will enhance prospects of a closer cooperation between Brazil and India in legal assistance matters.
18. The two sides also expressed satisfaction with the renewal of the Agreement on Cooperation between their respective diplomatic academies, the Foreign Service Institute and “Instituto Rio Branco”, signed in 2007. The agreement has offered so far a most valuable opportunity for the new generations of Brazilian and Indian diplomats to deepen mutual understanding and better know each other’s values and traditions. Brazil expressed its interest in implementing the new program for the interchange of professors between the two diplomatic academies, still in 2013.

ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS

19. The two Ministers analyzed the vast potential for further growth of the bilateral trade as well as the need for its diversification. Recalling the goal to attain US\$ 15 billion bilateral trade by 2015, which was established by H.E. President Dilma Rousseff and H. E. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during the State Visit to India in 2012, the two Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to support new initiatives with a view to identify possible obstacles to trade and to agree upon appropriate solutions.
20. In this context, they highlighted the Government of India’s initiative to create, in 2011, a High Level Committee, within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry , with a view to proposing actions for improving economic and trade relations between India and Latin America. They also welcomed the decision taken by the Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade of Brazil to elaborate sectorial studies on potential new areas for trade and investments in India.
21. With a view to diversifying bilateral trade, the two Ministers called for joint initiatives such as the promoting the exchange of business

missions between both countries. They expressed their commitment to encouraging their respective industrial sectors, in particular small and medium size enterprises to participate in each other's trade fairs, seminars and business conclaves in order to enhance trade flows. In this context, the Indian side reiterated its offer to the Brazilian side to become the Partner Country in India International Trade Fair (IITF 2014) to be held in Delhi on 14-27 November 2014. The Indian side informed the Brazilian side that in 2012-2013 more than ten business delegations have participated in trade fairs organized in Brazil in sectors such as Textiles and Apparels, Telecommunications and Electrical Engineering, Automotive Industry and Pharmaceuticals. The Indian side informed of the India-Latin America Conclave, in December 9-10, 2013 and invited the Brazilian side to participate. The Indian side also requested the support of the Brazilian Government in the organization of India Show, planned to be held in São Paulo in 2014, and coordinated by FICCI.

22. They also reported that there is a significant number of Indian companies investing in Brazil, with over fifty of them having a physical presence in Brazil, in areas such as oil, renewable sources of energy, mining, engineering and automotive services, information technology and pharmaceuticals, and welcomed the interest of Indian companies in establishing joint ventures in different sectors. The Brazilian side acknowledged the valuable contribution that the Indian Information Technology and Pharmaceutical companies are making in the development of Brazilian knowledge economy by generating skillful employment on one hand and bringing cost effective technology on the other.
23. The Indian side expressed its satisfaction with the Brazilian investments in India in areas such as urban transportation, IT services and equipment, footwear, infrastructure, energy and healthcare equipment. They highlighted the importance of having more Brazilian companies investing in India as well and shared the view that there is a need to improve the exchange of information of rules and regulations applied to foreign investments in both countries.

24. They further noted that the Trade Monitoring Mechanism has significantly contributed to the enhancement of bilateral trade and investments and expressed their confidence that the 4th Meeting of this mechanism, to be held in Brasilia, in November 2013, will play an important role to achieving the US\$ 15 billion goal for bilateral trade by 2015.
25. The Ministers expressed their support to the negotiation of a MOU on cooperation on services issues. They recalled that the Trade Monitoring Mechanism meeting in November 2013 will be an opportunity for furthering the discussions on the draft first presented by Brazil in April 2012.
26. Both Ministers reiterated their support towards greater dialogue and the expansion of contacts between the business communities of the two countries. In this context, the two Ministers underscored the importance of the Brazil-India CEOs Forum as a mechanism to further stimulate trade and investment relations between companies of the two countries, especially Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs). They also highlighted that the CEOs Forum should meet regularly and guide the process from the business point of view. The two Ministers expect that the two designated co-chairs of the CEOs Forum, Mr. Marco Stefanini from Brazil and Mr. K V Kamath from India, with the support of designated secretariats of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Brazilian National Confederation of Industry (CNI), would soon be able to arrange the first meeting of the Brazil-India CEOs Forum.
27. The Parties welcomed the resumption of discussions for deepening and expanding the Preferential Trade Agreement India-Mercosur and reaffirmed their expectation that the agreement will contribute increasingly to the diversification and expansion of trade between the two countries. Indian side requested Brazil's support in expediting the process.
28. Both Ministers supported the strengthening of the dialogue between their Governments in the area of trade negotiations.

MINING AND ENERGY

29. The Ministers welcomed the perspective of increased investments in each other's energy sectors. The Indian side informed about investments made by other Indian companies. The Indian side invited the Brazilian oil & gas companies to participate in the upcoming NELP X bidding rounds for oil & gas blocks in India.
30. The Indian company ONGC Videsh Limited which already has investments in oil blocks in Brazil, as well as cooperation with Petrobras, is a Level A tenderer in the forthcoming Libra Field Pre-salt Tender, scheduled for October 21st. Both sides expect that the success of this would lead to development of newer dimension in our bilateral cooperation in oil & gas area. The Brazilian company Andrade Gutierrez is considering alternatives to invest in hydro-electricity projects in India.
31. The delegations reiterated the importance of increasing the share of renewable sources in the global energy mix, and expressed interest in strengthening cooperation in the areas of biomass, hydropower, solar and wind energy technologies in addition to the ongoing initiatives within the IBSA framework.
32. Both sides expressed their mutual intent to deepen bilateral cooperation in civil nuclear energy. In this regard, the Indian side suggested that a delegation of Brazilian nuclear energy experts to visit India to discuss further concrete proposals in this sector.
33. The Indian side requested Brazilian side to expedite response on the proposed draft Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries on Cooperation in the field of Geology and Mineral Resources, forwarded in November 2012. The Indian side welcomed Brazilian side's interest in deepening cooperation between the Geological Survey of Brazil - CPRM - and the Geological Survey of India - GSI and suggested that it be included in the proposed MoU. The two sides also welcomed the signing of the Letter of Intent between the Ministry of Steel of India and the Ministry of Mines and Energy of Brazil for enhancing cooperation in the mineral sector with special focus on steel in February 2013 in Brasilia.

34. The Brazilian side expressed satisfaction with the election of New Delhi to host the 36th International Geological Congress in 2020. The Indian side thanked the support extended by Brazil.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING

35. Recognizing the high potential of bilateral trade in agribusiness and food processing, the Ministers committed themselves to discuss ways to overcome difficulties related to tariff and logistical barriers for perishable products. The Ministers expressed their expectation that the 4th Trade Monitoring Mechanism would undertake meaningful discussions to address such difficulties.
36. Similarly, both parts expressed willingness to enhance the cooperation in agriculture and animal husbandry, as well as in stockbreeding research and development, particularly between EMBRAPA and ICAR.
37. Both sides welcomed the decision to define the composition of the Joint Working Group, established in 2008 by the Memorandum of Understanding on Agriculture and Allied Sectors. It was noted that further action to implement initiatives under this MOU will be discussed during the forthcoming Trade Monitoring Mechanism meeting.
38. The Brazilian side requested the concerned authorities of India to expedite the issuance of sanitary certification of livestock products exported by Brazil, as well as the issuance of licenses for Brazilian importers of genetic bovine material from India.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

39. The two Ministers welcomed the positive results achieved at the first meeting of the Joint Commission for Scientific and Technological Cooperation, held in New Delhi in March 2012, and commended the adoption of the Program of Work on Scientific and Technological Development (2012-2014). They also commended the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between Brazil and India on Cooperation in the field of Biotechnology. Through these instruments, the countries were

able to launch two joint calls for projects, with a view to assuring financial support for scientific, technological and innovation research activities in areas such as Agriculture (including bioenergy), Biomedical and Health Sciences, Engineering (Nanotechnology and Materials), Geosciences (Oceanography and Climate change), Mathematics, Information and Communication Technologies, as well as and Renewable Energies. The projects will be jointly developed by Brazilian and Indian researchers. The Ministers noted with satisfaction that more than 90 proposals have been submitted so far.

40. The two Ministers took note of the outcome of the meeting of the Brazil-India Scientific Council, held on 27 September 2013, in Rio de Janeiro, as reported by the co-chairs Jacob Palis and C. N. R. Rao. The Council provides an important platform for the enhancement of the bilateral cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation, within the framework of the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, of September 2006.
41. Both sides stressed the importance of an early conclusion of negotiations to renew the Complementary Arrangement on Cooperation for the Expansion of the Brazilian Terrestrial Station for the Reception and Processing of data from the Remote Sensing Satellites of India. The renewal of the Arrangement will allow for the strengthening of the cooperation in space research in areas such as remote sensing, data reception from the Indian satellite ResourceSAT-2 and others that may come to be launched by India.
42. The Ministers welcomed the results of the Brazil-India Programme for Research in the Oceans, especially on topics such as observation of oceans and coastal areas, and welcomed the decision of the two countries to continue the collaboration on polar research within the IBSA Forum.
43. Still under the IBSA Forum, both sides marked the progress made in Scientific and Technological Cooperation in the topics of Health (HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis), Biotechnology, Traditional

Knowledge Systems, Alternative and Renewable Energy and Information & Communication Technology.

44. Both Ministers urged scientists, researchers and students from both countries to consider taking profit of the opportunities, such as the ones mentioned above, to promote the scientific development of Brazil and India in an innovative approach of South-South cooperation.
45. DEFENCE
46. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the development of the bilateral cooperation in defence. They recalled the importance of the Defence Cooperation Agreement, signed in 2003 and in force since 2006, to boost the bilateral partnership in this area. They agreed, moreover, to take the necessary steps to expand and intensify cooperation initiatives in defence, in particular through the exchange of military personnel, the conduction of joint exercises and the interchange of information on research and development of defence products.
47. They welcomed the results of the Third Meeting of the Brazil - India Joint Defence Committee, held in New Delhi on May 21, 2013. They reiterated the important role of the Committee in maintaining direct and frequent contact between both countries' armed forces, as well as in the monitoring of ongoing cooperation projects and identification of new initiatives.
48. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the significant results of bilateral cooperation in research and development of aircrafts. They welcomed the success of the integration of the Indian early warning mission systems, such as radars developed by the "Centre for Airborne Systems" of the Defence Research & Development Organization, in the Brazilian aircrafts EMB 145 AEW & C (Aerial Early Warning & Control), developed by Embraer. They expressed, in this sense, their desire to further expand cooperation in this area.
49. The Indian side welcomed the invitation extended by the Defence Minister of Brazil to his Indian counterpart and expected that the

visit could be organized in the near future at mutually convenient time through the diplomatic channel. They shared the view that the visit of the Minister of Defence of India would contribute to the enhancement of the dialogue in this field.

50. Both Ministers welcomed the participation of an Indian delegation at the latest edition of the “International Exhibition for Public and Corporate Security - LAAD Security” and the Indian willingness to participate in the next edition of the event, in April 2014, also in Rio de Janeiro. Brazil welcomed the invitation by India to participate at the “Fourth India Aviation” event, which will take place in March 2014 in Hyderabad. The Indian side also encouraged the Brazilian side to field their delegations to DEFEXPO and AEROINDIA as well.

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

51. Brazil and India stressed their full commitment with environmental and sustainable development matters. India congratulated Brazil on hosting the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June 2012, which was attended by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, as the head of the Indian Delegation. India welcomed the outcome of the Conference as reflected in the document “The Future we Want”, adopted by consensus, which expressed the international community commitment to promote an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for the present and future generations. Brazil acknowledged the constructive role of India in the negotiations, which led to a successful conclusion of the meeting. The Ministers renewed the willingness of Brazil and India to engage and cooperate in the development of the future Sustainable Development Goals.
52. Both sides highlighted the importance of the discussions on biodiversity at multilateral fora and agreed to continue their dialogue and cooperation on this topic, including through the coordination of positions at the Convention on Biological Diversity. Brazil congratulated India for the hosting and the outcomes of the 11th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological

Diversity (CBD COP-11) and the 6th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

53. Both sides welcomed the results of the 16th BASIC Ministerial Meeting that took place in Foz do Iguaçu in September 2013. The Brazilian side expressed its gratitude for the contribution of the Secretary for Environment and Forests of India, to the successful outcome of the BASIC Meeting. They reaffirmed the important role of BASIC, since its establishment in 2007, in building understanding on the climate change regime and the definition of a fair and effective world response to global warming, as well as its contribution to international financial, technological and technical management of actions on mitigation and adaptation in developing countries.
54. The Ministers noted the interest in concluding negotiations on a Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Cooperation in the near future.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

55. The Ministers took note of the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding on Technical Cooperation during President Dilma Rousseff's State Visit to India in March 2012. They also noted that the creation of the Development Partnership Administration, an agency linked to the Ministry of External Affairs of India, will enhance the opportunities for a broader dialogue and more intense collaboration between Brazil and India in issues related to technical cooperation.
56. The Brazilian side welcomed the participation of Brazilian nationals in cooperation activities organized by India. Recalling the excellent results of the Indian participation in different activities organized by Brazil in areas such as agriculture, sports and social development policies, among others, the Brazilian side reiterated its willingness to receive more Indian participants in its technical cooperation programmes.

57. The Brazilian side appreciated the Indian sponsorship of the training courses for more than 25 Brazilian officials to study in India in more than 20 different streams in last five years under its ITEC programme. These courses included areas such as diplomacy, renewable energy and energy efficiency, public administration, computer sciences, English proficiency, auditing etc.

SOCIAL AND HEALTH ISSUES

58. The Ministers stressed that economic growth with social inclusion is a common objective of Brazil's and India's societies. The Indian side expressed its gratitude, particularly for the contribution of the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger to the elaboration of its own anti-poverty programmes. The Brazilian side commended the Indian Government for the recent initiatives in this area, such as the National Food Security Bill, and proposed to continue exchanging experiences on the implementation of each other's programmes.
59. Brazil and India expressed their satisfaction with the results of the Third Global Conference on Child Labour that took place in Brasilia in October 2013, which has contributed to the efforts of achieving the goal of complete eradication of the worst forms of Child Labour by 2016.
60. The two sides underlined the interest in expanding dialogue on health issues, including by exploring possibilities of cooperation in areas such as laboratory quality control, organization of productive chains and medical research. The Brazilian Ministry of Health expressed specific interest in starting discussions with a view to exporting vaccines to India.
61. The Indian side requested the Brazilian side to look afresh into the proposed draft Memorandum of Understanding between India and Brazil on Cooperation in Traditional System of Medicine. This is especially relevant as there is considerable interest found among Brazilian people in Indian Traditional Medicine such as Ayurveda.

62. Both sides welcomed the expanding cooperation between the drugs regulatory authorities of the two countries, ANVISA on part of Brazil and CDSCO from India. This would be further strengthened by signing the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions during the forthcoming Meeting of the Trade Monitoring Mechanism meeting in Brasilia in November 2013.
63. Brazil and India have exchanged experiences and views on issues related to intellectual property and public health. The Parties highlighted the importance of this debate for both countries and agreed to establish a bilateral dialogue on intellectual property with a view to exchanging experiences and facilitating coordination on multilateral debates related to IP. Both sides agreed that bilateral talks on this subject could take place in the framework of the Trade Monitoring Mechanism.
64. Noting the close interdependence between peace, security and sustainable development, as reflected in the UN Charter, both Ministers called upon the international community to duly take into account the crucial role of food security and poverty eradication, essential components of sustainable development, in strategies for the promotion of sustainable peace and security.
65. Both Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the visit to Brazil, in April 2013, of the Indian delegation from the Ministry for Women and Child Development of India as part of the implementation of the Statement of Intent to Promote Gender Issues and the Protection of Women's and Children Rights, signed in New Delhi in March 2012, during the State Visit of President Dilma Rousseff to India.

EDUCATION

66. Both sides stressed the importance of education as a means to promote social and economic development and expressed their mutual interest in strengthening academic mobility between both countries.

67. Both Ministers expressed satisfaction over the creation of a Brazilian lectureship at Jawaharlal Nehru University, which will be initiated in the second semester of 2014. The lectureship is part of the efforts undertaken by Brazil to promote the Portuguese language as well as Brazilian culture and literature in India. The Indian side welcomed this timely initiative as it would contribute to increasing mutual knowledge between the respective societies.
68. Brazilian side appreciated the successful completion of two editions, first in Political Science and second in Defence Economics, of the short term chair of Indian Council of Cultural Relations established at FGV in Rio de Janeiro since 2012. The Indian side informed the Brazilian side that the process is underway to ensure the third edition to start on schedule in March 2014. The Indian side welcomed the establishment of the Centre for Indian Studies at the State University of Rio de Janeiro and offered to develop an active cooperation programme with the Centre in coming months.
69. It was stated that some Brazilian students willing to apply to Indian universities have been facing difficulties regarding the recognition, in India, of basic education certificates. The Brazilian side requested the competent authorities of India, including the Association of Indian Universities - (AIU), to establish a dialogue channel to resolve the issue at the earliest opportunity.
70. The Ministers welcomed the commencement of the implementation with India of Science Without Borders Program. Both sides expect to increase the exchange of visiting professors and the mutual attraction of young talents in areas of their common interests.

CULTURE

71. Both sides recognized the potential for further cultural cooperation and agreed to intensify efforts to ensure the full implementation of the Cultural Exchange Program (2012-2014), as well as of the Agreement on Audiovisual Co-Production (2007). The Indian side requested the Brazilian side to indicate its focal point for the implementation of the bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme.

72. Both parties expressed their satisfaction with the successful implementation of the Residency Program in 2013, in whose framework two Brazilian painters worked for two months in New Delhi with a view to intensify the cultural dialogue and the interchange among Brazilian and Indian artists.
73. They also welcomed initiatives of cultural promotion that are being implemented in 2013 in the fields of national cuisine music, literature, visual arts and cinema, such as the organization of the Brazilian Cuisine Festival in New Delhi and Indian Food Festivals in Brasilia and Sao Paulo in 2013. The Brazilian side expressed its appreciation at the initiative of the Indian Embassy in Brasilia to celebrate 'Hundred Years of Indian Cinema' in seven Brazilian cities, namely, Curitiba, Brasilia, Manaus, Goiania, Pirenopolis, Belo Horizonte and Sao Paulo.
74. The two sides noted that the Indian Cultural Centre established in Sao Paulo in May 2011 has been contributing to deepen people to people links. The Centre has regular classes of classical Indian dances (Odissi, Bharat Natyam & Kathak), Yoga, Hindi and gastronomy. They commended the initiatives organized by the Centre, which is also being availed for celebration of Indian and Brazilian festivals, organization of lectures, shows, seminars, workshops, movie and documentary screenings on diverse subjects like tourism, anthropology, religion, culture, art, history and has hosted more than 250 events and participated in dozens of events organized by other institutions. Under ICCR Scholarship Scheme and Ayush Scholarship Scheme, during 2012-13, three Brazilian Nationals have gone to India to study Indian literature, Odissi and Yoga.
75. Brazilian side reiterated its commitment to establish a Brazilian Cultural Centre in India soon.

TOURISM

76. Both sides agreed to encourage and facilitate the visit of tourists between both countries and demonstrated interest in exploring the possibility of joint investments in the hotel sector and in touristic infrastructure.

77. The two Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the growing tourism flows between their countries. Noting, however, that these flows remain well below their vast potential, they reiterated the importance of deepening the cooperation in this area. Recent figures show that 20 thousand Indian nationals visited Brazil in 2012 and 17 thousand Brazilians visited Indian in that period.
78. The Ministers noted that the bilateral Agreement on Air Services, signed in 2011, provides the legal framework to the establishment of direct flights between Brazil and India. In this regard, they took note of the plans announced by Air India to inaugurate in 2014 the first air route between India and Latin America, connecting Mumbai to Panama City, and encouraged the extension of such services also to South American cities.
79. The Brazilian representative reported that the Ministry of Tourism of Brazil, along with EMBRATUR, plans to strengthen the flux of tourism within the BRICS countries. In this regard, Brazil announced that special promotion activities for the Indian market are being developed and will be implemented in 2015.

SPORTS

80. Both parties agreed that the mega sporting events are opportunities for development and social inclusion, as well as allies in the fight against racial, ethnic and gender discrimination. They are instruments for the promotion of peace, international cooperation and rapprochement between partner countries, such as Brazil and India.

CONSULAR ISSUES

81. Both Ministers welcomed the conclusion of the negotiations to establish a consultation mechanism with a view to promoting coordination on consular and migratory issues. Such a mechanism will offer a forum for discussing each other's policies pertaining to consular matters, diaspora protection and migration, as well as address issues related to visas and work permits. In view of the importance and urgency of the issues to be dealt with by the mechanism, both Ministers agreed to hold its first meeting early in 2014, in New Delhi.

82. The Indian side commended the efforts of the Brazilian Government related to the issuing of Business visas, as discussed during the 5th Joint Commission Meeting in 2011. The Brazilian side underlined that, since the adoption of Normative Resolution 100/2013 of the Brazilian National Council for Immigration, in 9 May 2013, more than 50% of the requests for visas presented at the Embassy of Brazil in New Delhi have been submitted to simplified visa issuance procedures. Both sides agreed to monitor the new initiative and address the problems to enhance flow of people between the two countries which is bound to increase substantially as the partnership grows in all fields in the near future.
83. The Brazilian side informed the Indian side on the discussions that are taking place in Brazil in order to reform the immigration law through a Bill of Law to be introduced shortly in Congress that will have much more flexible and open mechanisms to deal with immigration issues and especially with visas for qualified workers and their families.

COOPERATION IN LEGAL ISSUES

84. The delegations of Brazil and India held a technical meeting to advance negotiations on the Agreements on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil Matters. The Ministers reiterated their interest in concluding negotiations on those agreements as soon as possible. They welcomed the Brazilian proposal to host a negotiating meeting in Brazil, or alternatively, by video conference.
85. Both sides welcomed the conclusion of their internal procedures and the entry into force of the Bilateral Extradition Agreement soon.

REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ISSUES

86. Both sides exchanged views on regional and multilateral issues. The Minister of External Relations of Brazil briefed the Indian side on the developments in Latin America and the Caribbean

while the External Affairs Minister of India briefed the Brazilian side on the developments in South Asia.

87. The two Ministers expressed deep concern about the ongoing violence and the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria. They called upon all parties to commit immediately to a complete cease-fire, to halt violence and to end all violations of human rights and humanitarian law. The Ministers reiterated that there is no military solution to the conflict and that it is time for diplomacy.
88. The Ministers expressed satisfaction with recent important developments that bring renewed hope for a peaceful resolution to the Syrian conflict. They welcomed the framework agreement for the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons reached by Russia and the United States. They further welcomed the news of the adoption by the UN Security Council of the resolution that requires the elimination of all chemical weapons on Syrian territory and endorses a peace process led by the Syrians.
89. They stressed that the elimination of chemical weapons and the political process aimed at resolving the Syrian conflict should be pursued in parallel. They also reiterated their support for the convening of an international conference on the Syrian situation as early as possible. They stressed that only an inclusive political process, led by the Syrians, as recommended in the Action Group on Syria Communiqué issued in 2012 could lead to peace, to the effective protection of civilians and to the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian society for freedom and prosperity. They expressed their full support to the efforts of the UN-Arab League Representative Lakhdar Brahimi in helping finding a political solution to the crisis.
90. The two Ministers welcomed the announcement of the resumption of negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis as an encouraging development. They reaffirmed that the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a prerequisite for building a sustainable and lasting peace in the Middle East region. In recalling the primary responsibility of the UNSC in maintaining international

peace and security, they noted the importance that the Quartet reports regularly to the Council about its efforts, which should contribute to concrete progress.

91. The Ministers expressed their concern about the reported practices of unauthorized interception of communications and data from citizens, businesses and members of governments, compromising national sovereignty and individual rights. They reiterated that it is important to contribute to and participate in a peaceful, secure, and open cyberspace and emphasized that security in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) through universally accepted norms, standards and practices is of paramount importance.
92. The Indian side expressed its gratitude for the warm and friendly hospitality received during their period of stay in Brazil.
93. Both sides agreed to hold the Seventh Meeting of the Brazil-India Joint Commission in 2014 in India, on a date to be mutually agreed through diplomatic channels.



481. External Affairs Minister's media statement at the Joint Press Interaction following the 6th India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting in Brasilia.

Brasilia, October 15, 2013.

His Excellency, Mr. Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado, Foreign Minister of Brazil,

Distinguished representatives of the Media,

I am indeed happy to be in this beautiful country Brazil. This is my first visit to Brazil in my capacity as the Foreign Minister of India. I am leading the Indian delegation for the 6th round of Joint Commission Meeting. I thank Foreign Minister His Excellency Mr. Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado for his hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

India-Brazil cooperation is extensive and comprehensive, and covers every important segment of interaction. This relationship exists at three levels: bilateral and plurilateral in such fora as IBSA, BRICS, BASIC and G-20, and in the larger multilateral arena such as UN (with our G-4 initiative), WTO, WIPO, etc. Interactions at the highest level between Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Brazilian Presidents Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff provided high levels of commitment and content to our bilateral relationship, and has led to the creation of an extremely diversified partnership, of which we saw evidence in the Joint Commission Meeting.

In the course of the day during the meeting, Foreign Minister Machado and I have concluded comprehensive discussions on the entire gamut of our bilateral relations. Foreign Minister Machado and I, were assisted by our respective delegations. In our discussions we agreed that our ongoing bilateral cooperation in all areas including trade and economic, education and culture, science and technology, environment, defence and space should be further strengthened to our mutual benefit reflecting the growing importance of our Strategic Partnership.

The coordination in multilateral fora and the ongoing cooperation in IBSA, BRICS, BASIC, G-4 and G-20 is an extremely important dimension of the Brazil-India Strategic Partnership. We reaffirmed to work together to further contribute to the reform of the institutions of global governance with a view to making them more legitimate, representative and inclusive.

Recalling the Brasilia Declaration of June 2003 that constituted the IBSA Forum, we underscored the IBSA's uniqueness as the forum which brings together India, Brazil and South Africa, three large democracies and major economies from three different continents, facing similar challenges and all three countries being developing, pluralistic, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious nations. We both look forward to having the 8th IBSA Trilateral Commission Meeting as well as 6th IBSA Summit at an early date.

We also recognized the salience of BRICS in coordinating, consulting and cooperating on global governance and contemporary issues of mutual interest. I assured Minister Figueiredo of India's full support to Brazil's efforts in hosting the next Summit and furthering BRICS cooperation.

During the JCM, we both reiterated our intention to enhance the scope of our bilateral trade and investments which presently does not correspond to its full potential. Our bilateral trade in 2012 was US\$ 10.6 bn and we need a lot of catching up to meet the trade target of US\$15 billion by 2015 set during the State visit of President Dilma Rousseff to India last year. In this regard we agreed to strengthen our economic engagement between our business communities through exchange of business delegations and participation in each other's trade fairs. We urged the two designated co-chairs of the Brazil India CEO's Forum to arrange the meeting of the Forum soon to look into all these aspects.

We both agreed to further stimulate bilateral cooperation in energy, agriculture, mining, defence, space, IT, pharmaceuticals and science and technology with joint collaborations and research. We reiterated that the successful mounting of the Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) programme with Indian radar by DRDO on the Brazilian EMBRAER aircraft is an excellent example of our ongoing cooperation in this sector. In the area of Space, India would be happy to provide data to Brazil from its RESOURCESAT-2 satellite. The JCM also discussed the possibility of Indian oil company OVL to acquire greater stakes in oil blocks in the pre-salt area of Brazil.

We both noted that there are a significant number of Indian companies investing in Brazil, with over fifty of them having a physical presence in Brazil, in areas such as oil, renewable sources of energy, mining, engineering and automotive services, information technology and pharmaceuticals. The Indian Information Technology and Pharmaceutical companies are making valuable contribution in the development of Brazilian knowledge economy by generating skillful employment on one hand and bringing cost effective technology on the other. We highlighted the importance of having more Brazilian companies investing in India.

The JCM noted with satisfaction good progress on consular issues. We both discussed the need for regularly addressing problems related to business visas and work permits through dialogue. During the JCM, two sides confirmed the completion of ratification process on Extradition Treaty, signed the agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons, exchanged notes on the ratification of the bilateral Agreement on Mutual Assistance on Customs Matters and signed the Protocol Amending the

Convention on the Avoidance of Double Taxation. The two sides also arrived at an agreed text on the MoU for setting up of a Joint Working Group on Consular, Migration and Diaspora matters. Such a mechanism will offer a forum for discussing each other's policies pertaining to consular matters, diaspora protection and migration, as well as address issues related to visas and work permits.

Our cultural links have received further impetus through the India Culture Centre in Sao Paulo. We congratulate the State University of Rio de Janeiro for taking the initiative to set up a Department of Indian Studies, and promise every possible assistance in making this project a success. Similarly, the proposal of setting up of a Chair of Brazil in the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi in 2014 is also a very welcome initiative from Brazilian Government side. We also agreed that both sides are going to work together on innovative ways to increase the exchange of visiting professors and the mutual attraction of young talents in areas of their common interests.

We wish Brazil all the success in hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016.

Foreign Minister Machado and I also exchanged views on regional developments and multilateral issues. We have a shared understanding that threats to international peace and security should be dealt with in a consensual manner. We further agreed that the challenges to climate change and the global economic situation should be addressed in a coherent and concerted way with greater commitment from the developed world. Both India and Brazil have reiterated to work closely on the reform of the United Nations, in particular, towards the common objective of expansion of membership in the permanent and non-membership category of the United Nations Security Council.

I look forward to working closely with Foreign Minister Machado in further enhancing our Strategic Partnership for the benefit of our two peoples. I extended an invitation to Foreign Minister Machado to visit India in the near future.



COSTARICA**482. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce on the visit of the Minister of Commerce and Industry of Costa Rica.****New Delhi, April 17, 2013.**

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Dr. D Purandeswari held three bilateral meetings and signed one important Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Costa Rica yesterday. She first met Ms. Daisy Maria Corrales Diaz, Costa Rica's Minister of Health. Followed by it, she met Mr. Alejandro Cruz, Minister of Science and Technology, Costa Rica. Then in afternoon, she met Mr. Luis Liberman, Vice President of Costa Rica. During the bilateral meetings, Dr. D Purandeswari discussed various issue of mutual interest to both the countries. The Indian Minister in particular raised issues concerning the problems faced by Indian community in Costa Rica in importing various food items from India. She also raised the visa problems faced by Indians, the problems in bidding by Indian pharmaceutical companies. Dr. D Purandeswari also raised the issue of inviting proposals under line of credit already issued by Government of India. A MoU was signed by India and Costa Rica in establishing an institutional mechanism for enhancing trade and commerce ties between both the countries to next level. A joint committee will be formed from Indian side. It will be headed by Commerce Secretary from the Indian side and the Minister for Trade from Costa Rica side. It was also proposed to hold at least one meeting in two years.



483. Media Briefing by Secretary (West) on Vice-President's Visit to Peru, Cuba and the UK.

New Delhi, October 23, 2013.

Deputy Secretary (XP) (Shri Biswadip Dey): Good afternoon friends. To my right is Secretary (West) Mr. Dinkar Khullar. To his right is Mr. Dammu Ravi, Joint Secretary (LAC). We are here today for the briefing on Vice-President's visit to Peru, Cuba and UK. Secretary (West) has agreed to take questions after his opening remarks. The questions will be limited only to the visit.

Secretary (West) (Shri Dinkar Khullar): Thank you Bishwadip.

As Bishwadip has pointed out, this is in connection with the visit of Vice-President to Peru and Cuba. Vice-President will be making a state visit to Peru and Cuba from October 26th to 30th, 2013. He will be accompanied by a Minister of State, four Members of Parliament, senior officials and a fair contingent amongst you.

I will begin with Peru. This is the first state visit to Peru after 15 years. The last state visit was when our former President K.R. Narayanan visited. The visit of Vice-President coincides with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries.

Vice-President will be received by his counterpart Ms. Marisol Espinoza, and will be meeting Foreign Trade and Tourism Minister and President of the Congress. Vice-President will be calling on President Humala.

The current President of Peru Ollanta Humala took office in July 2011 and has been keen to strengthen bilateral relations with India. Thus, Vice-President's visit to Peru should be seen as the beginning of a new process.

As part of the 50th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations, a Mini Festival of India will be held in Peru which will be inaugurated by the Vice-President on the day of his arrival.

Earlier this year Peru had issued a special commemorative stamp featuring Machu Pichhu and the Taj Mahal. Machu Pichhu is one of the World Heritage Sites in Peru.

The economic content of the discussions is likely to be significant given that Peru is the sixth largest economy in Latin America and its economic growth rate is said to be the fastest amongst the Latin American countries. Peru itself is endowed with rich and diverse mineral resources which could be of enormous interest to India. They also have reserves of hydrocarbons.

They are also members of a major economic alliance called the Pacific Alliance, which is an alliance on the western side of Latin America as opposed to Mercosur on the eastern side.

Our trade relations are flourishing. Our trade volume is around US\$ 1.1 billion, marginally in our favour. It is expected that the discussions, as I said, will seek means to enhance both trade and investment.

We will also expect to cover areas such as technical cooperation. We already have an ITEC programme ongoing with Peru. We will see how we can enhance or improve that. The subjects of science and technology are also likely to come up in our discussions.

At the political level, as I said this is a very significant visit and we have the privilege of having close contact on multilateral issues with Peru which I expect will figure in Vice-President's discussions.

I turn to Cuba. Vice-President will be in Cuba on 29th and 30th of October. He will proceed from Lima to Havana. It seems odd but it is true that this is the first VVIP state visit from India in the history of our bilateral relationship. This is despite the fact that we have very old enduring relations with Cuba.

As you know, we have a special historical relationship being founding members of the Non-aligned Movement. The first meeting between Pandit Nehru and Fidel Castro in New York is very well known, as also the famous encounter between President Fidel Castro and Mrs. Indira Gandhi at the NAM Summit in 1983 in New Delhi. In fact some of you may say that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh did visit Cuba in 2006, but that was on a multilateral engagement. It was not a bilateral engagement. That is why I said this is the first VVIP bilateral visit.

The Vice-President's programme in Cuba will include his interaction with his counterpart the First Vice-President of Cuba Mr. Miguel Diaz-Canel

Bermudez. As you know, former External Affairs Minister Shri Krishna visited Havana last year in June, and this year in May the Foreign Minister of Cuba Mr. Rodriguez Parrilla visited for bilateral talks. These two are in a sense preparatory to this VVIP visit, and work has been done to prepare adequately for Vice-President's visit and programme. He will be calling on President Raul Castro during his stay in Havana.

As with Peru, India and Cuba always maintained close contacts in multilateral fora. It is of some relevance and importance from the point of view of the visit at this time that Cuba is currently holding the Presidency of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) a group of 33 countries in the region. So, it is significant that our visit is taking place at a time when they have the Presidency.

As far as our economic relations, which again are important for us, with Cuba are concerned, the bilateral trade is not very significant. It is only about US\$ 40 million. There are a number of reasons why trade with Cuba has not been able to grow commensurate with our political relations, some of it of course relating to the fact that they come under this embargo of US which makes it problematic for shipments and things like that.

But we do have a significant economic engagement despite that. We have provided them credit. We have written off US\$ 62 million debt in 2008. We have extended a further line of credit of US\$ 120 million to Cuba, of which at present US\$ 12.7 million has been utilised for three projects – one is a milk powder plant, one is a chemical bulk blending plant, and one is modernisation of an animal vaccine plant.

We have great interest in Cuba with some areas of their specialisation. They have great expertise in the area of biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. Their health schemes are very well-known. They provide doctors all over the world as a matter of fact as you may be knowing. So, this is an area we are looking to see how we can collaborate. It is likely that there will be a visit to a biotechnology centre as part of the programme. But we will brief you more on that as and when the visit takes place.

The other area in which we have benefited greatly from our engagement with Cuba is their excellence in sports. They provided us with coaches, notably in the field of boxing which has enabled us to win medals in the

Commonwealth and Olympic Games. So, we will see how this too can progress.

Finally, like elsewhere in the Latin American region, there is interest in hydrocarbons. OVL is already involved in Cuba and in fact was granted eight offshore oil blocks and has already invested US\$ 130 million in the project.

I will leave it at that. That gives you a brief background of what we are doing. As we go along in the visit, of course we will brief you on developments as they take place. Thank you.

Q: Could you give a sense of India's investment in the hydrocarbons sector in Peru? In your introductory remarks you spoke about cooperation on multilateral issues. What are those issues which are going to be discussed during the talks?

Secretary (West): The exact investment in Peru in terms of hydrocarbons perhaps JS (LAC) will know; I cannot give you the figure offhand. But I will get it to you at some suitable stage. As far as the multilateral issues that are expected to be discussed, we normally discuss issues such as what is happening in the United Nations and fairly obviously the reform of the United Nations is a subject which is likely to come up.

I would not wish to pre-empt what Vice-President might like to discuss but I expect that the UN Security Council will come up for discussion. There is a possibility of discussions of other international institutions. They may want to have our views on subjects such as G20 of which we are part. But I am only conjecturing at this stage. This will be left to the Principals to decide what they would like to discuss.

Q: I just wanted to get a sense that out of 33 LAC countries, how many of them have declared support for India's candidature for a permanent seat in the Security Council. Is there any rough estimate?

Secretary (West): Let me ask JS (LAC) to respond on that.

Joint Secretary (Latin America and Caribbean)(Shri Dammu Ravi): I do not think there is a very significant opposition to India's candidature. We have seen it from the last time. On the non-permanent membership almost all countries have supported India. But on the permanent

membership there are three countries which are part of the Coffee Club – Argentina, Mexico and Columbia. Barring these, most countries have no problem with India's candidature.

Q: Is there any proposal from Cuba for visa on arrival?

Secretary (West): No, I do not think there is a proposal for visa on arrival. We are discussing, I think, the possibility of diplomatic visa exemption. Bilateral arrangement for exemption of visas on diplomatic and official passports is something we discuss, but visa on arrival I do not think there is any such proposal.

Q: Has the Archaeological Survey of India ever been invited to take a look at Machu Pichhu which was shut down for some reason some time ago? I am not very clear whether it is open to tourism. And also, Cuba is a beautiful country. Havana is a very pretty town. I do not know how many more tourists Cuba has been getting after Ek Tha Tiger was shot there and so on. But the last time I was there, I thought the place needed a whitewash. Since Batista went home, I think the Communists forgot to give it a whitewash!

Secretary (West): Machu Pichhu is not closed down actually. It is open to tourists at present. Whether Archaeological Survey of India has been or is likely to go there, I can only inform you that Secretary (Culture) is likely to be there on a visit around the same time as the Hon. Vice-President and he may explore possibilities of what we can do together with Machu Pichhu. So, I will leave it to Secretary (Culture) because he will be there.

As regards your second question, it is true that tourism from India to Cuba would not be very large. But I think that is a common problem because of distance also and accessibility.

On improvement in their facilities, Cuba has gone through difficult economic times - first with the Soviet Union collapse and the implications, and more recently with their problems arising out of the passing on of Mr. Chavez who was a great supporter of them. So, indeed they are going through difficult times but they are changing. If you are on the visit with us, I am sure you will discover and I am told by my colleagues that President Raul Castro is working to change the system also, not just improvements in the facades but also in the main system.

Q: What are you expecting from Peru, Sir?

Secretary (West): ... (Inaudible)... the discussions that we are having both at the political and the economic level. I think if we hold something back to see what happens in the discussions, then we can tell you. We have a number of things in the pipeline. I would prefer to report on them only at the conclusion portion of the visit in Peru. I do not want to preempt what will be discussed and what may be outcomes which I have not anticipated. But there will be some definite outcomes.

Q: What are the issues between Peru and India?

Secretary (West): Frankly there are no major issues that we have to discuss. Our bilateral relations are excellent. It is a problem-free relationship. What we do in this kind of relationships is, the purpose of the visit is to, as I said, enhance, expand the areas, whether it is political, of which some of the areas of discussion I mentioned to you. We will obviously, as I said, discuss multilateral issues including wider Latin American issues.

On the economic side we will discuss trade and investment. I specifically referred to India's interest in minerals and hydrocarbons. We will be discussing technical cooperation programmes, for instance what we can offer. ITEC is one area. The other area is IT. There are possibilities. The cultural festival is part of the visit. And I referred to science and technology. We already have an agreement on science and technology. We are likely to operationalise it in some form or the other. So, these are the broad gamut of issues that I expect to be discussed in Peru.

Q: This is about the UK. Would the issue of the UK Visa Bond which is being proposed for certain countries including India, be raised during the visit?

Secretary (West): Let me clarify this. Bishwadip had already alerted me that I was remiss in not including UK in my initial observations.

UK is not a bilateral visit by Hon. Vice-President. The Hon. Vice-President will be delivering a public lecture in UK. So, the engagement with the Government will be protocol related only. There will be no bilateral discussions. So, I do not expect that this subject will come up. That means, it is not going to come up at all because we are not going to have bilateral talks.

Q: What is this lecture going to be on?

Secretary (West): This is at Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies on 'Citizenship and Identity'.

Q: Mr. Secretary, I believe India is making an effort to win over the last frontier, the Latin America, an area that we have sort of neglected over the years. There is a view that this is a reaction to the fact that China is a major investor in the region especially in Peru. It has very close and military and economic ties with Peru. What are the other things that we have planned in this direction? Secondly, I believe Bollywood is a big part of the Peru and Cuban festivals. Is that correct?

Secretary (West): I can easily respond on the basis of what he tells me that Bollywood is indeed part of the Festival. But as you would know, that is not an exclusive preserve of Peru or anywhere. Every festival which we are doing abroad has a component nowadays of Bollywood. I have just come back from Brussels where we inaugurated Europalia which also had a Bollywood component. I think that is a common feature, it is not specific.

Your first question is a more substantive one. I would not like to call Latin America necessarily the last frontier. But you have got a point that perhaps in the earlier years when our diplomatic footprint was not so widespread, Latin America did not receive as much attention. But I think this is turned around quite some years ago. I do not think this particular visit on which I am briefing you can be treated in any way as a kind of a path-breaker. It is a very important visit from the point of view of Peru and Cuba.

But the fact of it is that we have extensive exchanges going on at all levels. I referred to the fact that EAM has been there last year. As you may know, EAM was in Brazil just a week ago. And I did make a reference to the fact that the President of India visited Peru fifteen years ago. So, it is not as if we are opening up, it is not as if we are waking up today to Latin America. It has been going on for some time.

Large amounts of investments have been taking place. Private investment has been flowing. I referred to hydrocarbons, I referred to minerals. So, I would not go so far as to say we are reacting to the Chinese. I think Chinese and us have similar interests in the area and so we find ourselves

both going there. I do not think there is a kind of race for the gold medal going on between us.

And of course our interests differ just as they do in other parts of the world. Our interests do not necessarily relate only to natural resources. I mentioned mining because it is of some interest, but it is not our exclusive area of interest. India is active in a number of other fields. I mentioned IT for instance. All over Latin America we have been setting up these IT centres. So, that is absolutely different from the Chinese model, similar to what is going on in Africa.

Since I am referring only to this visit, I would only say this much. But there is a lot more going on in Latin America. There have been lot of visits. EAM for instance has travelled widely to a number of countries in Latin America. And it is a part and parcel of the foreign policy game.

Q: Could you give us the names of the four MPs accompanying the Vice-President?

Secretary (West): I can give you the names now that they have been given to me.

They are: Hon. Smt. Renuka Chaudhary, Hon. Smt. Supriya Sule, Hon. Shri T.K. Rangarajan, and Hon. Shri Shashi Bhushan Behra.

Q: Mr. Khullar, one of the reasons why the trade between South America and India, tourism between South America and India is comparatively low is because of the lack of adequate shipping facilities. To go to Havana one had to go from Delhi to Dubai, Dubai to Sao Paolo, Sao Paolo to Rio or somewhere else, and then stuff like that. Studies have shown that if we have a direct, shorter route by sea, the trade will multiply several fold.

We are paying special attention to Africa and we have India-Africa Summits. We hosted I think three or four of them. But we do not seem to have a similar thing with South America. Is not it time that we thought of doing something about it, Mr. Khullar?

Secretary (West): Yes, your first point about shipping and infrastructure basically to facilitate trade is well taken. However, times have considerably changed. In the old days we used to say that the easiest way to start trade between country A and country B was ask Shipping

Corporation of India to start a shipping line. That is no longer relevant in today's world. We are not confined to choosing Shipping Corporation. It is a globalised transport industry. As long as you are able to get links, you are able to reach. Distance is indeed a problem. It adds to costs, very simple. But it adds to everybody's costs. Therefore, we should be trading more.

But our trade is not as dismal as it appears. Trade and the number of people who are going there now for investment has increased significantly. We have in fact on December 9th and 10th, I think we have a conclave. CII is organising a conclave with Latin America. So, it is a purely economic initiative with Latin America and expected to be attended by a large number of countries at a pretty high level, much like the conclaves which are done with Africa.

As regards Africa, you are right we have this India-Africa Forum Summit. We have had two actually, one here and one in 2011 in Ethiopia. That has given us a lot of resonance. We have benefited from it. I suppose at some stage we may take a look at it for Latin America.

But I think the conclave process for instance with Africa much precedes the summit process. The conclaves started the ball rolling in a sense and it moved towards it. I am sure my colleague who deals with Latin America will take your idea on board, and we will see where we take it. But at present we are working through these bilateral engagements.

Deputy Secretary (XP): With that we come to the end of this press briefing.

Thank you



484. On-board media briefing by Vice President enroute to Frankfurt on his visit to Peru, Cuba and United Kingdom.

October 25, 2013.

Under Secretary (XP): A very Good Morning to all of you and welcome onboard on what is the first ever Vice Presidential visit to Peru and Cuba. Hon'ble Vice President has kindly agreed to interact with you. As is the practice he will first make his opening remarks following which he will take a few questions.

Vice President: Thank you every one, I think you have the minutes already. Let me start with the good news we have 44 hours of flying ahead of us, in three to four segments. I am sure Air India would take good care of every one. At this stage I am not sure what I should be saying. These are two countries far away from India but nevertheless important countries. Peru on the west coast of South America, is increasingly a major factor in global economy, I think it is somewhere 5th or 6th in terms of its GDP growth rates and other things, and an important source of minerals, something that we are looking at very closely.

That is one, the other is Cuba, a very well know country in India, long years of association with us on the Non-Aligned front, on the third world agenda front and innumerable political matters. So I am myself surprised that we have had so few high lever visits, of course Prime Minister had been there recently though it was for an international conference - the Non Aligned conference. But Cuba is a particularly friendly country and we have had very warm and very cordial relations with Cuba. Its also in many ways unique, in the sense that it has sailed its craft in adverse weather for a very very long time but it speaks volume for their skills that they have not only survived , they have done well. They have certain niche areas of competence which are of relevance to us . They have done some excellent work in sports medicines, general areas of medicine, bio technology, in numerable things but I am also waiting to educate myself on these things. This is broadly the agenda.

We are making a stopover in Frankfurt which is obligatory in technical terms. The plane cannot fly the entire distance, the crew must take the

obligatory rest time. On the way back we are stopping over in London. Again it's a stop over but I had a long pending invitation from a Centre in Oxford to give a lecture there. So I am using this occasion to fulfill that obligation. That is it, I don't think I have anything more to say at this stage.

Q: Your Excellency, is this a routine diplomatic visit or is there any specific agenda you are carrying so far.

Vice President: *Dekhiye*, all visits are specific visits. Diplomacy is only the instrument or the vehicle in which you do it. This is a normal thing but we have to realize one thing increasingly, we are living in a world which is contracting. There is no such thing as a far off country. Economically South America is as relevant to us as once upon a time Australia used to be relevant or irrelevant. I remember when I went to Australia as High Commissioner in the beginning of 1985, a very distinguished predecessor left a note for me. It said 'there is neither substance nor prospect in the relationship, enjoy your stay'! Well nobody will agree to it today, even I did not agree to it after a few months there. So every country has a potential of being a partner in cooperation and that is true of Caribbean countries, that is true of South American countries. And last but not the least, every sixth person on the globe is an Indian and no matter where you go you will find an Indian community and touching base with them, establishing contacts with them, I think, has become part of the national agenda. So in each one of these places we will come across Indian communities, some of them are even Indian business communities which shows that the potential for business is being explored very seriously.

Q: *When most of government's focus is on 'Look East Policy'; what message a tour of Latin America sends out?*

Vice President: 'Look East' does not mean, you don't look West; you don't look North, you don't look South. 'Look East' was a specific instrument grafted to take advantage of a situation which was emerging in South East Asia, where we had very old ancient relationships but the idea was to give it new content. And those of you who were with me on the visit to Vietnam, I mean, at one stage the relationship with Vietnam were purely political. Today Vietnam is a vibrant business centre where Indian business community is doing well. Same holds for Singapore,

same holds for Thailand and same for Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines. So there is no such thing as a one track focus. As a major country and as a major economy we will look at all corners of the world and we are very clear why we are looking at all corners of the world, whether it is the west coast of Canada or the west coast of South America.

Q: Latin America and Caribbean region is emerging as important region is the world and also an arena of competition for emerging Asian powers. How do you see our engagements in the region and what is distinctive about our engagement in the region and what are the key decisions that you foresee will accelerate this engagement?

Vice President: You see the reasons of engagements are multiple, there is not one reason for engagement. These are big countries; some of them are huge economies. I mean we think South America is a small place but if you just look at the size and distances, one of the biggest countries in the world is Brazil - look at the map, just see the size of Brazil, the resources of Brazil; same holds for Argentina. On the west coast, Chile – a major source of minerals of various kinds; Peru again same; Venezuela - a major oil producing country. So in each one of these countries there is political engagement because they are important members of the international community, there is economic engagement. With many of them there is either BRICS or Non Aligned engagement. So it's all of a comprehensive basket of considerations

Q: *During your visit would you raise the issue of restructuring of the UN and India's need for support for that? This high level visit to Peru and Cuba is taking place after fifteen years; after this would there be need for increased contacts with them and frequency of these contacts would indeed increase?*

Vice President: *Two things: first, UN restructuring has been consistently on the country's agenda for many years; Wherever we go, we talk about it, we are convinced that the UN which was structured in 1945, is inadequate to meet the needs of today: The political developments that are taking place in the world make this clear; Therefore UN is a on-going exercise. This is not going to happen today or tomorrow, because those who have power are not going to give up so easily.*

The second question was why this visit is taking place after such a long time? The Government has too many issues at hand; It does not mean

either the President or the Prime Minister, or I or the Foreign Minister visit; Depending on the occasions the visits take place; somewhere commerce minister goes, or Finance Minister or HRD Minister or Science and Technology Minister. Where there is the question of terrorism, Home Minister goes; This is a regular activity. For top level visits there is greater effort involved; you have to seek the convenience of others, One cannot dictate dates, Such things happen daily in the Foreign Office. Each country has its own priorities, Once has to keep a balance among the dignitaries you want to invite; all cannot be from one country, or one region, this causes gaps, this is unavoidable. This does not happen to us only, this happens to all the countries.

Q: Sir, in your times in Foreign Ministry, the emphasis of diplomacy was more ideological, political and now it's more economics & trade. China seems to have stolen the march. What your advice will be on how to counter balance this situation. Second question, we would like you to share your memories of your meeting with Fidel Castro when he came here for NAM in 1983.

Vice President Well I am not in agreement with your first question. Our thrust in diplomacy was always comprehensive. It was political, it was economic. *The question was our requirements and our capabilities. In 1947 our requirements were different. If you pick up a newspaper from 1947, you will find that along with the major news, there would also be news of food ships arriving. That was the time when we did not grow enough food. That time the population was 370 million. Now see what is the population. The requirements keep changing. In requirements in sixties, seventies or eighties were different and policies change and adjust accordingly. Now requirements are totally different, our capabilities have increased, so our engagements too have gone up.*

Your second question was about President Castro. President Castro was the star of the conference in 1983 because he was the outgoing Chairman of the NAM. And therefore all importance had to be given but Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, I was working in Ministry of External Affairs then, her instructions were very specific, whatever his requirements may be, they all have to be looked at very carefully and considerately. He was a personality in his own right, remains a personality in his now right.

Q: My question is that the countries you are visiting are culturally very rich and so is our country, India. So do you think ...(inaudible)..... to connect these countries culturally. What is the idea?

Vice President: No, the cultural agenda has always been the principal item in the external relations of India. Because we have much to share with the world and other countries are very happy to share our cultural repertoire with them. So that is one side of it, economic engagement is on the other side of it, political engagement is the third side of it. They don't overlap, they don't contradict. On the contrary they are mutually supportive. If we can back up our economic effort with cultural effort, which is in today's terminology called as soft power, so much the better. We had lot of it. Similarly with political, if there is convergence of views, it helps bring economic relations together. I mean each one of these streams are not contradictory, they are mutually supportive. What takes precedence at a point of time is a matter of situational adjustment.

Q: Sir, *Specifically are we looking at trade in these Latin American countries?*

Vice President: *I will also explore the possibilities and get briefing from the ambassador. My general impression is that our economy needs resources. In South America OVL, which is our flagship carrier in the energy areas, is extensively involved. It is involved in Venezuela, it is involved in Cuba, it is involved in Mexico. Similarly our companies which are looking for mineral products are involved. I know in Chile, in Peru, may be some other countries. There are a whole range of other products which we are importing including some agricultural products from South American countries. I remember a long time back the President of Mexico was visiting India, there is a particular tree which is found in Mexico which grows very quickly and our agricultural scientists had concluded that if you can get that kind of sampling here it would be very beneficial in our afforestation programs. So Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made a specific request to the President to bring some saplings. And he did bring the samplings.*

Under Secretary (XP): With that we come to the end of this interaction. Thank you all.

Vice President: Well ladies and gentleman, enjoy your flight, enjoy the stop over in Germany.

Thank you



PERU

485. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Culture on the Festival of India in Peru.

New Delhi, October 28, 2013.

Indian cultural festival in Peru was formally announced on Friday with the India-Peru Literature Festival. This Gala Indian Cultural Festival also coincides with the visit of the Vice President of India Shri Hamid Ansari, who would be undertaking the highest ranking bilateral visit since year 1998 from India to Peru. The Festival would manifest many elements of long, rich and diverse Indian cultural heritage and would be the largest Indian cultural festival ever held in Latin America and the Caribbean. This reflects the special place that Peru enjoys among Indians.

The Festival features:

- Indian classical dance festival
- Indian Film Festival
- Indian Literary Festival

Highly reputed Indian writers namely Shri Arun Kamal, Shri H.S.Shivaprakash, Shri K. Satchidanandan, Shri Purshottam Agarwal, Shri Shyama Prasad Ganguly and Smt. Karabi Deka Hazarika participated in the symposium on India-Latin America: Literary Exchanges and Influences and Contemporary Literary Trends and their Challenges in a Multilingual Society in addition to a session on poetry reading. Several noted Peruvian Writers including Mr. Jose Leon Herrera, Mr. Pablo Carreno Cabrejos, Mr. Jose Ignacio Lopez Gaston, Mr. Marcel Velaquez Castro and leading poets, Mr. Carlos German Belli, Mr. Mario

Montalbetti and Mr. Marcos Martos would be participating in the Literature Festival. The Literature Festival is being coordinated by the Sahitya Academy.

The Indian Dance Festival in Peru is titled Nrityarupa, the mosaic of Indian dance which encapsulates the experience of Indian dance as it has evolved in various parts of the India. In so doing, it offers a glimpse of the great mosaic of cultures that constitutes the Indian Nation, and demonstrates in a creative, kinetic form their dynamics in relation to each other. Six dance forms representing the diversity of India's culture have been chosen for this presentation to audiences in Latin America: Bharatanatyam of Tamil Nadu, Kathak, pre-eminently the dance of northern India; Odissi, from Odisha in eastern India; Manipuri from north-eastern State of India; Kathakali of Kerala at Southern tip of the Indian peninsula; and Chau which covers a wide swathe of territory in eastern States of the Union. One seamless presentation of these dances has been visualized leading to a jubilant finish. The Indian Dance Festival is being coordinated by the Sangeet Natak Academy.

The Indian Film Festival would feature old and new Indian films and classics. The Indian Films being screened include Raja Harishchandra (mute), Taare Zameen Par (Hindi), Ghare Bhaire (Bengali), Ardh Satya (Hindi), Bobby (Hindi) , A Wednesday (Hindi) and Kahbi Haan Kabhi Naa (Hindi). The Indian Film Festival is being coordinated by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The Festival of India was formally inaugurated by the Vice President of India Shri Hamid Ansari. The inaugural function was attended by the Peruvian First Vice President Mrs. Marisol Espinoza and a number of senior dignitaries from the Indian and Peruvian side.

The Festival of India in Peru is being coordinated by the Ministry of Culture in association with the Sahitya Academy, the Sangeet Natak Academy and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Indian Culture Secretary Shri Ravindra Singh who is in Peru to mark the occasion said that the Festival is expected to bring the Indian and Peruvian people closer to each other and will enhance people to people contact.



CUBA

- 486. On-board media briefing by Vice President enroute to Frankfurt on his visit to Peru, Cuba and United Kingdom.
October 25, 2013.**

Please see document No. 484



- 487. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Culture marking the opening of Three-Day Festival of India in Cuba.
New Delhi, October 29, 2013.**

Indian cultural festival in Cuba will be formally inaugurated by the Vice President of India Shri Hamid Ansari on Tuesday in the Theater Mella in Havana with the Sangeet Natak Academy's Dance Festival called Nrtyarupa. This Gala Indian Cultural Festival also coincides with the state visit of the Vice President of India Shri Hamid Ansari. The inaugural function would be attended by the Cuban First Vice President and a number of senior dignitaries from the Indian and Cuban side. The Festival would manifest many elements of long, rich and diverse Indian cultural heritage and would be the largest Indian cultural festival ever held in Latin America and the Caribbean. This reflects the special place that Cuba enjoys among Indians. The Festival would be held from October 29 to 31, 2013.

The Festival features over three days would include:

- Indian classical dance festival at the Theater Mella, Havana;
- Indian Film Festival at the Charles Chaplin Cinema, Havana;
- Indian Literary Festival at the Casa del Alba, Havana
- Indian Food Festival at the Hotel Nacional Havana

The Indian Film Festival would be held in the Charles Chaplin Cinema Theater. The inaugural film screened would be Ek Tha Tiger which was

filmed in Cuba. Other films being screened include Raja Harishchandra (mute), Taare Zameen Par (Hindi), Taal and Parineeta (Hindi). The Indian Film Festival is being coordinated by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The Festival of India in Cuba is being coordinated by the Ministry of Culture in association with the Sahitya Academy, the Sangeet Natak Academy and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Secretary, Union Ministry of Culture Shri Ravindra Singh who is in Cuba to mark the occasion said that the Festival is expected to bring the Indian and Cuban people closer to each other and will enhance people to people contact in a long standing friendship.



488. India-Peru Joint Statement issued on the occasion of the visit of Vice President of India to Peru, October 26-28, 2013.

Lima, October 29, 2013.

1. In the framework of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Peru and India, the Vice President of India, Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari, accompanied by a high level delegation, paid an official visit to Peru from 26th to 28th October, 2013.
2. During his visit, the Vice President of India had a special meeting with the President of the Republic of Peru, H.E. Mr. Ollanta Humala Tasso. Shri Ansari conveyed the greetings of the President of the Republic of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee and extended an invitation to President Humala to pay an official visit to India. The invitation was accepted with pleasure and it was agreed that mutually convenient dates would be finalized through diplomatic channels.
3. The Vice President of India held detailed discussions with the First Vice President of Peru, H.E. Ms. Marisol Espinoza and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, H.E. Ms. Eda Rivas Franchini. He also had a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism, H.E. Ms. Magali Silva. In addition, he visited the National

Congress of Peru where he met the President of the Congress, Mr. Fredy Otarola and members of the Peru-India Parliamentary Friendship League.

4. The Vice President inaugurated the Festival of India in Peru. He also launched INCHAM, the new Indian Chamber of Commerce in Peru.
5. The talks covered a wide range of issues pertaining to bilateral, regional and global matters of mutual interest and were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere. The Governments of Peru and India reaffirmed their commitment to deepen the high degree of mutual understanding and cooperation that exists between the two countries, and to further consolidate and strengthen the existing ties between them in various fields, especially trade, investment, defense, education, culture, science and technology.
6. The two sides stressed the importance of promoting bilateral political dialogue, including through the continuation of high-level contacts, in order to take their relationship to a higher level. Accordingly, they agreed to establish a Joint Commission, chaired jointly by their Ministers of Foreign Affairs, with the objective of strengthening political, security, judicial, human resource development, economic, technical, scientific, social and cultural cooperation, and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to this effect. It was further agreed that their senior officials will meet in Lima in the second half of 2014 to decide on detailed modalities for beginning the work of the Joint Commission and prepare for its first meeting.
7. The two sides noted with satisfaction the impressive increase in bilateral trade which was over US\$ 1.1 billion in the year 2012. They agreed on the importance of promoting greater business meetings and trade missions between the two countries. They also expressed their desire to continue exploring new opportunities for augmenting bilateral trade, as well as the importance of increasing cooperation in the area of investments, to the benefit of their economic sectors specially the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.
8. The two sides underlined that a Free Trade Agreement between Peru and

India will have a positive impact on increasing prosperity and well-being of the people of both countries. The Peruvian side welcomed the Indian initiative of undertaking a comprehensive study on this important subject that will have far reaching implications for both countries. Keeping this in view, they both agreed to continue to work towards holding negotiations in near future.

9. On the other hand, they also agreed that early conclusion of their ongoing negotiations on instruments to promote and protect bilateral investments would greatly assist the businesses of both sides.
10. Both sides reiterated their willingness to identify concrete actions and projects that generate a structured exchange of experiences, at the level of South-South Cooperation.
11. It was also agreed to define a set of priority areas for the implementation of cooperation programmes, both in the application of information technologies and technological innovation to increase development opportunities, as in the use of science for equality and social and digital inclusion in Peru (e-education, e-health, IT software and solar energy, among others).
12. The Government of Peru welcomed the willingness and goodwill of the Department of Science and Technology of India to collaborate in the exchange of experience and good practices necessary to implement projects in Peru under its Science for Equity, Empowerment and Development (SEED) programme, focussed on development issues and social inclusion.
13. In reiterating its gratitude to Government of India for the establishment of the Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) in Lima, the Government of Peru expressed its hope for an early implementation, which will contribute towards the training of key technical personnel in the country for the management and implementation of these technologies. The Government of India assured the Government of Peru that the process to establish the CEIT was in its final stages and it will become operational soon.
14. Peru expressed its appreciation to India for regularly providing technical training to Peruvian citizens under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC).

15. The two sides signed an Exchange Programme on Cooperation in the Field of Education which will promote initiatives designed to create coordination mechanisms to facilitate the funding of scholarships, projects and/or joint agreements for the enhancement of human resources of both countries.
16. The two sides underlined that India and Peru are cradles of great civilisations. In this context they both underscored the importance of further deepening bilateral cultural relations through cultural exchanges and cooperation in diverse art forms such as painting, dance, theatre, literature, craft, etc. as well as holding of cultural festivals in each other's countries from time to time. With this objective, the Cultural Ministers of the two sides signed a Letter of Intent for enhancing cooperation in the fields of museology, conservation of movable cultural properties and dissemination and promotion of cultural heritage of each other's countries.
17. The two sides concluded their negotiations and signed a Defence Cooperation Agreement. This will enable the enhancement of cooperation between Peru and India in the fields of defence and defence technology through establishment of appropriate mechanisms.
18. At the multilateral level, both governments reiterated their commitment to democracy, peacekeeping and security, renunciation of the threat or use of force, peaceful settlement of disputes and respect for international law and principles of the United Nations. They affirmed that terrorism cannot be justified in any form for any cause or for any reason. Both countries agreed to maintain a high level of coordination and cooperation, particularly on issues of mutual interest, such as the reform of the United Nations Organization and mutual support of candidatures presented to international organizations. Peru reiterated its support for India's claim for permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council.
19. The Vice President of India congratulated Peru for its impressive economic growth and the leading role it has played within the "Pacific Alliance" and other regional integration schemes.
20. The two Governments expressed their satisfaction with the celebration this year of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Peru - India diplomatic relations, and the organization of various

activities to commemorate this. This occasion, has provided a further opportunity for strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation between them. They particularly appreciated the visit to India in April 2013 of a parliamentary delegation from Peru, the first ever between the two countries, and agreed to encourage more such exchanges.

21. Equally, both governments underscored the need to strengthen "people to people" relations between the two countries and agreed to explore the possibility of promoting sister-city relationships between the most representative cities in their respective countries.
22. The Government of Peru thanked the Government of India for organizing the Festival of India in Lima on the occasion of the official visit of Vice President Ansari.
23. At the end of the visit, the Vice President of India expressed his appreciation to the Government of Peru for the warm welcome and hospitality received during his official visit to Peru.

List of documents signed during the official visit of Vice President of India to Peru, October 26-28, 2013

October 29, 2013

Sr. No	Document	Signatory from Indian side	Signatory from Peruvian side	Remarks
1.	Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Peru on Cooperation in the field of Education	Mr. Jitin Prasada Minister of State for Human Resource Development	Ms. Eda Riva Franchini Foreign Minister of Peru	The exchange programme encourages exchange of research material, teaching aides; organization of joint conferences, training programmes; twining of institutions; setting up chairs on contemporary studies; providing of scholarships for higher education
2.	Agreement on Defence Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the	Mr. Manpreet Vohra Ambassador of India to Peru	Ms. Eda Riva Franchini Foreign Minister	Aims at enhancing cooperation in the prevention of spread of weapons of mass

	Government of the Republic of Peru		of Peru	destruction and tackling non-conventional threats like drugs & piracy; exchange of training expertise and personnel for military courses and collaborate in the spheres of defence equipment exports for mutual benefit
3.	MoU between Government of the Republic of India and Government of the Republic of Peru on Establishment of a Joint Commission	Mr. Manpreet Vohra Ambassador of India to Peru	Ms. Eda Riva Franchini Foreign Minister of Peru	India and Peru agree to establish a Joint Commission which will be an intergovernmental consultation mechanism at the Foreign Ministerial level to promote, strengthen and diversify bilateral relations
4.	Letter of Intent between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of India and the Ministry Culture of the Republic of Peru for Cooperation in the fields of Museum Development, Conservation of Movable Cultural Property and Dissemination and Promotion of Cultural Heritage	Mr Ravindra Singh Secretary, Ministry of Culture	Mr. Luis Jaime Castillo Vice Minister of Cultural Industries	Heritage & Cultural Agree to create specific cooperation programmes for exchange of experiences and training of specialists in the Museum sector; organizing international temporary exhibitions for dissemination of information on cultural heritage of both countries

Lima

October 28, 2013

* Media reports said that besides boosting trade and strengthening economic ties, India and Peru decided to enhance cooperation in the defence sector and work towards South-South cooperation and reform of the United Nations Security Council. The reports said that the senior officials would meet in Lima in the latter half of next year to decide on the modalities for beginning the work of the commission and preparing for its first meeting. The commission, is part of efforts to promote bilateral dialogue in order to take the relationship to a "higher level."

According to Secretary (West) Dinkar Khullar, the Peruvians were keen on training for their defence personnel in India. Slots had been offered in the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington. Also, since the Peruvians had large Russian military equipment, they looked forward to India being able to supply spares. Peru reiterated its support for India's claim for permanent membership in an expanded United Nations Security Council. Both countries agreed to maintain coordination on matters of mutual interest such as reform of the UN and support for each other's candidatures presented to international organisations.

489. Media Briefing by Secretary (West) on Vice-President's ongoing Visit to Peru.

Lima, October 30, 2013.

Under Secretary (XPS): Good evening friends. Welcome ... media briefing. To brief you on Vice-President's ongoing official visit to Peru as well as his official engagements of the day we have with us Hon. Secretary (West), Shri Dinkar Khullar. To the left of him is Joint Secretary (Latin America & Caribbean Division) Shri Dammu Ravi. We will begin with opening remarks of the Hon. Secretary following which the floor will be open for questions.

Secretary (West) (Shri Dinkar Khullar): First let me apologise for keeping you up but I can only tell you that we have come straight from the President's Palace, and as a result of traffic and so on we have got a little late. Let me proceed with briefing you. We briefed you before we left; the Vice-President briefed on the flight, so you are fairly au fait with what we are going to do. But I will try and cover what we have done in the course of today.

There was of course the Festival of India inaugurated on Saturday. All of you are aware of that; I know that you have done coverage of that.

Today was the main day of engagement. The meetings began with the meeting with the President of the Congress. This is a unicameral legislature here and the President of the Congress along with the Vice-President of the country as well as other members of their Parliament or members of their Congress received the Vice-President in the morning, following which we had bilateral talks with the Vice-President and the Foreign Minister. Vice-President and Foreign Minister both participated in the bilateral talks. These talks proceeded for about an hour after which we signed agreements details of which have been conveyed to you, the four agreements that were signed thereafter.

In the afternoon there was a call by the Trade and Tourism Minister on Vice-President. I think I mentioned to you that trade and economic aspects of the engagement are important items on the agenda. Of course just recently and we are coming, as I told you, straight from a meeting with the President. So, in short the Vice-President has had an engagement

at all levels in the Government as we would expect. The meetings were generally marked by warmth, appreciation of the value that they attach to relations with India. I think the words we used earlier were that this is a new beginning, I think this was reflected in the engagement across the board today.

I would now turn to giving you some idea of what is the substance of the discussions that have taken place. Trade and economic cooperation was an important aspect of the debate. In all the meetings this was covered in detail - investments by Indian companies here as also investment by some Peruvian companies. I think there are three who have some investments in India. But the expectation is that this will increase.

Just for background in case I forget later, before all this started there was the inauguration of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in the morning, before we left, that was done at the hotel.

One of the important aspects which has been projected by the Peruvian side and which is reflected in the Joint Statement which has been circulated is the keen interest that the Peruvian side have evinced in a Free Trade Agreement with us.

As you would see from the Joint Statement, this is something which is at the exploratory stages only at this point of time. A study has been commissioned by the Ministry of Commerce and we are awaiting the evaluation of the study before we are in a position to respond. I am mentioning it only because the Peruvian side attaches a great deal of importance to this and it was emphasised in all the meetings that we had.

We have also responded that we would like to respond after doing the exploratory phase. It is a possibility that can be considered, but right now we are not in a position to commit anything on this. I think this is important for you all to know lest the impression be conveyed that it is something which is already done. It is very much a work in progress and it will take some time. The Trade Ministry will have to talk directly with them.

Areas of cooperation that were identified on the bilateral front other than this were science and technology, information technology, education,

and innovation. It is actually quite interesting that again across the board the entire leadership of the Peruvian side focused a lot on the aspects of education, technology.

In fact, the whole question of development and feeling that the Peruvian Government, as Vice-President has noted in one of his observations, in fact has pretty similar view of ours as an overall policy. What he called the social philosophy of the two Governments tend to converge because they too have been talking in terms of inclusive growth, the need to address issues of poverty and inequality and issues of development. As you all know, this is very much the agenda of our own Government back in India.

In fact, there was great resonance on this particular broad social philosophy. But how do we achieve it? I think the decision was taken to establish a Joint Commission. One of the MoUs that were signed was to establish a Joint Commission, and the Joint Commission has been earmarked the job of working on these various areas of bilateral cooperation, following on some of the agreements that were signed today, as also these broader subjects that I mentioned to you – innovation, education, IT.

In fact, some suggestions have been made that the senior officials should meet to implement these ideas as early as the first half of next year. But I think it has been left to diplomatic channels to decide when the senior officials would meet. But the Joint Commission established, as you know, at the level of EAM and Foreign Minister would be the vehicle for translating the discussions into actual programmes.

I think of all the agreements signed - I am not trying to diminish the value of any of the others - I think the Joint Commission agreement is a landmark kind of decision that we have signed an agreement to establish a Joint Commission which will then oversee the entire progress of bilateral relations between our two countries.

On the agreements, I will quickly go through them in case they have not been indicated to you. We signed a Letter of Intent for cooperation in the field of museology, conservation and promotion of cultural heritage of each other's country. We have signed a defence cooperation agreement to promote exchanges and training and collaboration in defence technology.

In fact specifically the President in his conversation with the Vice-President raised the issue of possibility of exchanges in the defence field for training. He mentioned it more than once. The Vice-President conveyed to him that we have offered some slots for training in our Defence College in Wellington.

Then we had this Joint Commission, I have already mentioned to you. Finally the Educational Exchange Programme was also signed. These are the four agreements that were signed.

While bilateral agenda was obviously very strong and a major aspect of the visit, we did also cover multilateral issues. I think Vice-President made it a point to mention that this is an area in which there is scope for effective cooperation. We have broad similarities on issues concerning global matters. On this I would just briefly touch upon the issues we talked about. One is I think referred to in the Joint Statement. The UN Security Council, they have reiterated their support for India's permanent membership.

Two issues in fact in particular in which we found that there were shared perceptions were the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. As you know, Peru has been a victim of both of these. In fact in their case they think that these issues have been linked also. So, we found them extremely close to our own viewpoint on the issues of terrorism and drugs.

Vice-President raised it and he got a positive response that yes we share this and we should be seeing how we can take this up more effectively in the multilateral forums. You know the CCIT has been pending for years together. It was referred to. But I do not think we are specifically seeking support for any agreement. What we were saying was that this is an area in which we have clear common interests to address these issues. Again we found great resonance on this. So, terrorism and drugs were talked about. There also was talk of possible regional cooperation. They were talking about cooperation between regions.

Vice-President did make reference to our association with Latin America as a whole as an investment destination, as a trade partner, as CELAC. So, there are a lot of areas in which we ourselves see our engagement with the region as a whole. They would also like to see their own region

relate to regions across the Pacific and things like that. These are of course things that will go on. But this was referred to, so I should make a mention of this.

Finally there was an invitation extended on behalf of our President to the President of Peru to visit India. He expressed his desire to visit India at his earliest. I think the details will be worked out through diplomatic channels. But I think he said more than once in response that he was greatly looking forward to a visit to India and would in fact consult his Foreign Minister on when he could do so.

The President, just to indicate the importance that he attached to the visit, had with him for the engagement both the Foreign Minister and the Trade Minister. The third is the Education Minister who spent five years in India as a student because her father was an Ambassador. So, he had basically had three Ministers with him for the engagement with VP. I think that is a signal of the importance that they attached to VP's visit on this occasion.

All in all, we get the impression that the visit has gone very well. It has been very well received. I think they are looking to India for a number of things. We have offered cooperation in all those areas. We see it as a mutually beneficial relationship which now should be taken forward after what has been a gap. In the first decade of the present century there has not been too much engagement. So, this will set the pace in a sense for what we will do in the future.

The agenda, as you can see, is fairly wide. We did of course convey the IT centre which I mentioned to you in my earlier engagement that would be from them and that the IT centre will be established in the course of this year.

I will leave it at that and ask Dammu if he has anything to add.

Joint Secretary (LAC)(Shri Dammu Ravi): I have nothing to add.

Secretary (West): Okay, then I will leave us open to any questions.

Q: *When you had a talk on economic cooperation, while the Indian companies did show interest in investing in Peru, did the Peruvian companies show any interest in investing in India?*

Secretary (West): *Yes, of course, they spoke about it, there is already investment by three companies; I think our Ambassador has more details on it.*

Joint Secretary (LAC): In Maharashtra there is AGE Peru which manufactures soft beverages. It has invested about US\$ 50 million. There is another Peruvian company, a fast food chain, that is in Mumbai. And then there is a company Resemin, which specialises in manufacturing of mining machinery. These are already there.

Q: What is the value of total investment?

Joint Secretary (LAC): It is about US\$ 30 million from their side.

Secretary (West): We also have told them after all that our companies are looking for resources. So, many of those companies have invested in mining and so on. So, it will be a process which will get under way. The very fact that three Peruvian companies are already established is quite an achievement. They are not looking for resources, they are looking for markets obviously. But let us see. They did mention the possibility of both trade and investment in both directions.

Q: Is there any chance for having any direct flights between the two countries to promote tourism and all?

Secretary (West): I think there was a reference made by both the Trade and Tourism Minister and the President to increased people-to-people contacts, growth of tourism, and that naturally if trade grows then tourism will grow. There was a mention also of the possibility of a flight, that we could have direct connections. But at this point of time I think this is just at a very incipient stage. I am not aware of any serious thought as yet of any direct flights. It will have to be still the indirect route.

Q: *Has it been implemented in the education sector? Would the Universities start? How will this happen?*

Secretary (West):

This is happening in broad terms. We have EPP. We signed it with a number of countries. It is an enabling agreement. There are various possibilities. Basically it would be exchange of students. We have offered scholarships also, they have asked for it and we have offered also.

Exchange of teachers is also possible; Exchange of visiting professors among the universities. People going, visiting professors from one university to the other, research collaboration, will happen. According to the agreement; this is a general agreement and enabling agreement;

Q: On defence cooperation, can you give any details? And is there any such agreement with any other Latin American country?

Secretary (West): The defence cooperation agreement, in concrete terms I mentioned to you what has been talked about. This is at present giving some slots in these colleges. I understand that already we have a Peruvian attending the National Defence College course. We have offered two slots in the Wellington Staff College. But this is not as if it is being offered after this. These offers we have made and this will be part of the engagement in this agreement. Other than that I do not think there are any specifics we have come down to. As I mentioned to you, what has been decided or what our Vice-President has proposed and was accepted by his counterpart was that now that these agreements have been signed, it was now left to the senior officials meeting of the Joint Commission to actually lay down what are the concrete, this is only a catalyst.

At Vice-President level you do not go about deciding ki yeh slot hoga aur yeh cooperation hoga. Obviously experts will have to meet. The Defence Ministry under the aegis of the External Affairs Minister there will be a senior officials meeting in which we will have representatives of all the Departments under MEA and we will then have people coming down with concrete ideas ki kya ho sakta hai. Defence cooperation agreement in Latin America perhaps Dammu will add.

Joint Secretary (LAC): We do not have it with many countries but significantly with Brazil that has been active for a long time. Of course, Brazil we moved ahead in terms of having joint collaborations, one of which is the mounting of Indian radar on a Brazilian aircraft MVR which is a very successful joint venture between the two.

With other countries in the region, we have with Ecuador where we were able to give Dhruv helicopters in a commercial deal with Ecuador and they have been successfully flying. With Colombia we have a defence cooperation agreement but again nothing much is happening beyond

selling some equipment like surveillance and night vision equipment and all that. But again this Latin American region, in terms of defence cooperation it is not much as compared to other regions but it is slowly growing. We will have to see how far we can take it forward.

Secretary (West): But our Defence Ministry is interested that they sign this agreement. So, obviously experts will talk and will decide where it will go.

Q: Anything from agriculture was said there between the two countries? Anything on agricultural investment or industrial themes?

Secretary (West): Nothing in specific. Obviously no agreement has been signed on that. Agriculture was discussed in the context of trade. It came up in the context of trade because Peru itself is a major agricultural exporter of some specialised items which not all of us were aware of. For instance, one of the largest exporters we discovered of artichokes. They are exporting grapes actually already to India, specialised, large red grapes as was explained to me. So, in terms of trade in agricultural products, the possibility of them being able to export to India came up. But other than that, specific agricultural cooperation did not figure in as any item specifically for discussions.

Q: No allied industries?

Secretary (West): You mean food processing, etc.

Q: Yes.

Secretary (West): No, frankly it did not come up in today's discussion. But you see that there is some fast food chain and beverage chain which is already established there. I would only guess that obviously these products, for instance these vegetables of the upper end of the market, if they can be got there and then be converted into value-added products within India, there is possibilities of investment arising out of that because these are products which are not in India and as yet do not have such a major market and possibly this could be developed.

Q: What is the progress in FTA?

Secretary (West): I think I already responded on that. But let me once again clarify that progress on FTA would be there if there is a decision to do an FTA. As yet there has no decision been taken to proceed.

Q: But they have shown some positive interest.

Secretary (West): Yes indeed. Indeed they have shown positive interest. Having shown positive interest we have responded, as you would have seen, that there is a study which is commissioned by the Commerce Ministry to evaluate what are the possibilities. That study has been concluded and now it is being studied by the officials of the Commerce Ministry, and they will take a view.

We have agreed that based on this we will look forward to the possibility. We are after all doing FTA negotiations with other countries, other regions. So, we will see how it can be done. So, we are exploring possibilities of how this would progress. It has been suggested that the Commerce Ministers are likely to meet later this year - they meet often, as you know – in Bali in this particular case in a multilateral meeting. And perhaps the two Commerce Ministers, the Trade Ministers will be able to take this forward.

Q: Have they invited Indian President also?

Secretary (West): No, actually it is the other way round. We have invited their President because, as you know, the last visit was of our President. President Narayanan came in 1998. So, in terms of protocol it will be for the President of Peru now to go to India for which an invitation has been extended by our President, and has been conveyed to the President this evening and he has very warmly accepted it.

Q: Any discussion on gold trade in the meeting?

Secretary (West): No, we did not discuss gold.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you said that this is a landmark visit and will set the trend for the future with the region and the state that we have sort of ... (Inaudible)... We would like more details about that.

Also, I would like to know what was discussed on this thing called innovation. You mentioned that IT education, innovation, and science and technology were the four subjects. What precisely was discussed in innovation? Finally, this Letter of Intent on museology is what that would entail.

Secretary (West): Just to tell you on the specific question of innovation, education, S&T, and IT, once again I would draw your attention to what

I said earlier. What has been discussed is no specifics and it is neither expected. As you would all know, at the Vice-President level they do not go into specific details of what they are going to do. They lay down broad parameters within which the officials are then expected to work. So, as I said, in this particular case we have already got a Joint Commission. A decision has not been finally taken but a proposal has been made by them for a meeting of the senior officials as soon as the early 2014.

Whether that works out, I cannot guarantee right now. But the intention is to convert it. And I think specifically this was a proposal of Vice-President in response to a number of ideas that were being thrown up that let the officials come down with concrete results. I cannot give you what areas for instance innovation is required in. That will be defined by what they need and what we are able to supply or the other way round, vice versa.

Letter of Intent on Museology is part of these exchanges. We normally sign these cultural exchange programmes with various countries. I think the Culture Ministry is presently interested in a more concrete kind of cooperation. You are aware that Vice-President visited a museum here. While he was there, they are very well-known, they have a very ancient civilisation like our own and there is scope of cooperation between the museums. I think this is a new area of interest of our Culture Ministry and which is reciprocated by them. Is there anything more on the Letter of Intent?

Joint Secretary (LAC): Specific issues are not there but I think broadly what they mean is the maintenance of museums, learning from each other's experience and also in terms of the conservation techniques of their artefacts that are there. In those areas they would like to have exchanges and they will be able to discuss.

Secretary (West): When we visited this museum yesterday, I think even our Secretary Culture was explaining that there are several things obviously that they thought that these are good ideas which could be transposed to us. Similarly if they come and see what we are doing, they may be able to do it. That is the idea to move it to specifics. Otherwise, what tends to happen in cultural exchange programmes is that they become so diffused, you do not know. But this one is very specific.

As I said, my first observation, by saying it is a landmark legislation I begun by the premise that we have had a period of relative quiet in the bilateral relationship. That has changed significantly and in that sense this is a landmark. And it is a fact that we have got a number of areas which have been discussed as potential areas of cooperation. You know, I think all of you know that in bilateral engagements when discussions take place there are many areas discussed, not all of them fructify into tangible outcomes. But here there were very specific areas and they have mentioned things. It will really be for the Joint Commission to now convert this into a reality. So, it is only the idea at this stage, and that I think in itself is a landmark.

Q: Talking about the specifics of defence cooperation, what we have before us talks about tackling non-conventional threats like drugs and piracy. Piracy is interesting, what we can do in that area. Also it talks about collaborate in the sphere of defence equipment exports. We would like you to fill in on the details.

Secondly, we were under the impression that something in the area of hydrocarbons would also potentially emerge. Is that an area we are still looking at?

Secretary (West): Let me clarify since I mentioned hydrocarbons. Hydrocarbons did not figure specifically in the discussions today. I can be quite clear on that. We did discuss minerals certainly, but hydrocarbons did not figure. Hydrocarbons will really depend on the interests of individual companies. I think I mentioned to you in the context of the Cuba visit that OVL will really take a call on where it wants to go. It is already spread very widely over Latin America. So, that will depend as a commercial decision on OVL. But it did not come up. Just to clarify that.

On the defence cooperation side, any defence cooperation agreement will obviously have a component on possibility of export of equipment. That will depend, there are possibilities. It could be just things like spares. He mentioned to you just now like in Ecuador a commercial deal was reached on helicopters. This would be highly speculative of me to try and venture into what kind of equipment will be done. This is also a sensitive subject as you know and the Defence Minister would be able

to answer that question rather than me. But what was specifically discussed was the possibility of exchange and this I mentioned to you what has been said about the possibility – attending courses and so on, the soft side of defence cooperation can be discussed. The hard side of defence cooperation finally will be discussed between the Defence Ministries of the two sides.

On piracy, they do not have the same problem because the problems are on our part. Peru is very active, Latin Americans are very active in the United Nations and in multilateral forums. If they are and they have some experience in this, why should not we talk about them? It is a problem for us. It may not be a serious problem for them. But they may also think that maybe it will come to them. If the pirates get troubled there, they may head out elsewhere. So, it is just an area which has been discussed. I do not think as if it is some concrete item of piracy. Drugs was specific. It was a discussion which proceeded for some time.

Q: In the case of defence, I think their interest is significantly emerging from the fact that they also have very large Russian equipment.

Secretary (West): Yes. That is why I mentioned spares.

Q: So, they feel their spares and training could be an area of interest.

Secretary (West): On this again my recommendation is that you wait till Defence tells you what they are going to do.

Under Secretary (XPS): Thank you friends. With that we come to the end of this briefing.



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO**490. Speech of Union Minister of Culture Smt. Chandresh Kumari Katoch at the Joint Press Meet with Lincoln Douglas Minister of Arts and Multiculturalism, Government of Trinidad and Tobago.****Port of Spain, November 4, 2013.**

"I am indeed delighted to be in your beautiful country. I thank you for receiving me and the excellent arrangements made for my visit. Our two countries have a long history of diplomatic relations and my visit should enable enhancement of the cultural ties and people to people relationships between our two countries. I have had the opportunity to visit Tobago yesterday and the visit was culturally enriching and I had a feeling of deep satisfaction after meeting so many of your country men. I have had a long and intimate relationship with your country since the late 1970s when my brother Shri Gaj Singh Jodhpur was high commissioner of India to Trinidad and Tobago. During this visit I have had cordial and constructive discussions with the President of Trinidad and Tobago, the Foreign Minister, the Minister of Arts and Multiculturalism. In the evening I will be visiting Divali Nagar to participate in the Dipavali celebrations and will be meeting the Prime Minister on the sidelines.

\Diplomatic relations between India and Trinidad have been cordial and constructive. In the UPA government several high level visits have been exchanged between our two countries. The Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh ji visited Trinidad in 2009 for the CHOGM summit and the Prime Minister of Trinidad Smt. Kamla Prasad Bissesar visited India in 2012 for bilateral meeting leading a 160 member delegation. There have been several ministerial level exchanges in recent years.

India Trinidad cultural relations are symbolized in the cultural agreement signed between our two countries in 1987. In pursuance of the cultural agreement, a cultural exchange program for 2012-14 was signed in January 2012. The main features of the cultural exchange program are:

- a. exchange of exhibitions
- b. exchange of performing artists

- c. exchange of cultural anthropologists
- d. exchange of cultural delegations
- e. encourage signing of long term cultural agreements between institutions
- f. exchange of radio and TV programs and documentaries
- g. organize festivals of feature and documentary films

Under the cultural exchange program the Indian science exhibition was inaugurated in may 2012 by the secretary culture. The national council of science museum (NCSM) has signed an MoU with National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST), T&T as part of the cultural exchange between India and Trinidad and Tobago. India had also proposed to convene a festival of India in October 2013 but the dates could not be firmed up.

Our two countries have celebrated 50 years of diplomatic relations between India and Trinidad and Tobago from August 24 to 31, 2012. various events like the visit of Trinidad and Tobago band 'Dil e Nadan' in Delhi and visit of Trinidad and Tobago carnival costumes designer to India for designing various costumes for events including the Surajkund Mela which was organized in February 2013 have taken place.

Following my discussions with the authorities of Trinidad and Tobago the roadmap for enhanced cooperation has been identified as follows:

- a) **A new cultural agreement between the two countries will be formulated to replace the 1987 agreement so that the agreement can best capture the modern developments in the culture sector;**
- b) **The cultural exchange program for 2014-16 will be formulated based on the cultural agreement that will be developed in the coming days;**
- c) **An invitation has been extended to minister Mr. Lincoln Douglas to visit India along with a delegation of performing arts to discuss the contours of**

collaboration and sign the agreement at a mutually convenient date;

- d) The festival of India in Trinidad and Tobago which could not be held in October 2013 will now be held in October 2014 under the new cultural agreement;**
- e) Collaboration will be extended to Trinidad and Tobago authorities for setting up a sugar museum in Port of Spain;**
- f) Assistance will also be extended to the Trinidad and Tobago authorities for collaboration in archives maintenance;**
- g) I will be taking up the request of the authorities of Trinidad and Tobago for collaboration in film development with the ministry of information and broadcasting and the construction of a cultural center in Divali Nagar with the ministry of external affairs.**

I bring to you the good wishes of millions of Indians on the festive occasion of Dipavali.”



VENEZUELA

491. Joint Media Interaction of External Affairs Minister and Foreign Minister of Venezuela.

New Delhi, December 20, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Welcome to this joint media interaction.

As is usual, I will request the two Ministers to make their opening remarks following which they have agreed to answer a couple of questions. May I begin with requesting the External Affairs Minister of India Shri Salman Khurshid to make his opening remarks.

External Affairs Minister (Shri Salman Khurshid): Distinguished colleagues, members of the media, His Excellency Mr. Elías José Jaua Milano, the Foreign Minister of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela:

This is indeed my pleasure to be welcoming His Excellency the Venezuelan Foreign Minister on his first ever trip to India and of course a very impressive delegation that includes ten Vice-Ministers. And this is for the second session of our bilateral Joint Commission Meeting.

I will make my comments short and sweet. At least the sweet part is what reflects the conversations that we have had. There were prolonged conversations, we were meeting with friends after a long time, and there was so much for us to share about our two countries and what we can do together.

In the course of the day in this round of Joint Commission Meeting the Foreign Minister and I, assisted by our respective delegations on either side, have concluded comprehensive discussions on the entire gamut of bilateral relations. The meeting itself was focused on several areas that included trade, economy, energy, science and technology, culture, health and agriculture.

The two sides also exchanged views on regional developments. We had insights provided on multilateral issues and regional development. And I am really glad that on a vast number of these issues there is a complete meeting of minds.

During the JCM the two sides reiterated our interest to intensify economic engagement. And this will be done by diversifying the bilateral trade. And that will be obviously to our mutual benefit. The trade bilaterally is now at US\$ 14.5 billion. Venezuela has become our largest trading partner in Latin America and I congratulated the Foreign Minister for this.

Apart from the energy sector, where obviously there is a high point of our engagement, potential exists also for Indian exports and investments in project exports, health, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, auto parts, heavy industry, engineering, power, space technology, ICT, textiles, agriculture and allied activities, and of course culture and education. And I was very pleased to hear from the Minister with a cheerful smile about how wonderful Bollywood films are.

The two sides agreed also to expeditiously implement the decisions that have been taken at the Joint Commission Meeting today. We have also agreed further to build a forward-looking relationship by broadening and deepening the engagement that is already there to great satisfaction, and better leveraging existing complementarities between our two countries. And this is across the key areas of mutual interest.

India and Latin America are both known for the cultural vibrancy of our societies. Therefore, it is very satisfying to note that we are going ahead in the area of a greater cultural interface by signing a cultural exchange programme later this afternoon.

We have exchanged views on regional developments, obviously, and on multilateral issues. Our cooperation is progressing and evolving in the United Nations, at the G20 and other financial institutions globally.

I look forward to working closely with His Excellency the Foreign Minister on our common objective of enhanced engagement between India and Venezuela for mutual benefit of our peoples.

May I now invite His Excellency Mr. Elías Jaua to make his remarks.

Foreign Minister of Venezuela (Mr. Elías José Jaua Milano): *(translated from Spanish to English)* Thank you very much, Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid, for your warm welcome to the Venezuelan Delegation, and the excellent work that we have performed yesterday and this morning to move forward in the group of topics that you have already mentioned.

However, first of all I would like to thank the Indian media for the gestures of solidarity, the affection of the people and the Government of India vis-a-vis the Venezuelan people on the sad occasion of the passing of Commander Hugo Chavez. In the memory of our people it is very fresh, the statement made by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the moment of the passing of Commander Hugo Chavez.

At that time on behalf of the people of India he said, "I feel deeply sad by the early passing of His Excellency President Hugo Chavez. The people of India join me in conveying its deepest condolences to his family, to the Government and the people of Venezuela". Those sincere words of a sister nation will no doubt be an encouragement for our people to

overcome the pain that meant the passing of our Commander Hugo Chavez. Thank you, Mr. Foreign Minister, thanks to the Indian people and the Government of India for your affection with our country on the occasion of such a sad moment.

It is in this period that President Maduro has sent us today. He has sent nine Vice Ministers, a number of Directors of public Venezuelan institutions headed by myself as Foreign Minister of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. In the past we have thousand reasons to have a co-operational relation with India, today we have another one - to honour this statement of affection that President Chavez expressed between the two nations.

We have had a very thorough exchange of views regarding the international situation, especially on the coincidences that India and Venezuela have had in the last year in the framework of international fora, political, economic and trade fora. Those coincidences that we have had are the results of shared principles. India and Venezuela believe in a world of peace. India and Venezuela believe in a world where sovereignties and dignities of people are respected, their political and development models are respected. India and Venezuela believe in the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs of the countries. And we reject military intervention in countries as well.

In this regard, we value highly the positions that we have had within the WTO and the importance that India is part of the most important bloc of the emerging economies such as the BRICS, and today Venezuela present here is also attending as temporary President of Mercosur, as a driving force of a new economic space that we have just created in the ... (Inaudible) ... Summit. In some we are talking about 400 million people between the Mercosur and the ... (Inaudible) ... schemes which are no doubt a space for trade and production. And it is part of what we have come here to propose, a rapprochement beyond the bilateral relations.

In the field of bilateral cooperation, the Foreign Minister has already mentioned the issues. We can only add specifically the Venezuelan people that we have come here to increase agricultural production in Venezuela, to produce the food Venezuelan people have a right. But we need to produce the food in our own country. We have come here to

know more about the White Revolution that has transformed India into one of the largest milk producers in the world. Its management model that we have come here to know more about through our Vice Minister of Food Production, also to look forward for transfer of technology for support, educational support, to give content to the distribution of computers. Thanks to the Bolivarian revolution, we are giving computers to children.

We have come here to look for investments, transfer in the field of small and medium size companies in the shoe area, in textiles to increase production in Venezuela. Also we have come here to look forward to cooperation with the Bollywood so that the new industry, movie industry in Venezuela there has been ... (Inaudible) ... over the last few years can find a place to train its scriptwriters, technical people, and so on and so forth.

Just to mention a few areas which are the more crucial, as well as the field of health, to increase the supply of drugs and generic drugs to our population, to fight speculation with essential goods such as pharmaceuticals for the health of our people. And we have come here also to reiterate to the people of India our assurance, our willingness to be a secure energy supplier for the industrial development of India, and to improve the quality of life of the people of India, to increase even further the supply of oil.

Almost 130 million barrels of oil we have sold to India, to its people, to foster its development. We are also working in the production of oil jointly between the Venezuelan and Indian companies in our blocks in ... (Inaudible) ... almost 40,000 barrels a day in the largest oil reserve on earth, which is the Orinoco belt. We are also working on the joint training of technical professionals in the field of energy production. We have come here to ratify this alliance at the highest possible level. And we have also come beyond energy to commit ourselves to work further in an alliance in a wider front as President Maduro has requested. In this regard we have worked with a number of documents. We have explored a number of possibilities that will see conclusion in the coming years.

Also, we want to thank you for your congratulations on the victory of December 8th. It was a heroic victory, a victory of peace, a victory against

the economic warfare unleashed against our country, a victory of democracy, and a victory of the deep awareness planted by Commander Chavez in our people. We conveyed these congratulations to Venezuelan people that today is very joyful after these popular triumph during the municipal elections.

Thank you very much from Venezuela to the Indian people.

Official Spokesperson: We will now have a couple of questions.

Q (Mr. Sachin Badolia, UNI Varta): Sir, Venezuela is one of the largest exporters and producers of oil and India is one of the biggest consumers. In your meeting, what specific points have been discussed to enhance the oil trade between the two countries?

Venezuelan Foreign Minister: *(translated from Spanish to English)* I mentioned this already, India has become the third major customer of Venezuela in the field of purchasing of oil. After the US and China, the next is India. These are the major markets of Venezuelan oil. This year we attained the record number of 130 million barrels. We are selling 500,000 daily to India. And we are producing jointly close to 40,000 barrels a day. Today, we have moved forward in a new field for joint production, the Karimova field, within the ... (Inaudible)... Faja to increase production in this area.

And as oil production in the Orinoco Faja which is the largest oil reserve on earth, we increased this production. We also increased our supply of oil to the people of India. Likewise, we have reaffirmed, today we are going to sign a document for the construction of the naphtha production plant in Venezuela in the Faja itself. So, these are joint investments geared to producing the fuel and the raw material required for energy demanded by India and its impressive development, industrial, scientific and technological development.

Q (Mr. Kartikeya Sharma, Headlines today): My question is to you Mr. Khurshid. Our counterparts in America have stated that the legal charges will not be dropped, which means that the case will continue to have a legal life of its own. So, how do you respond to this diplomatic row in the context that our position was that charges must be dropped? Now the case will have a legal life. So, how do you respond to that?

External Affairs Minister: I am not sure that I can really respond to different voices that emerge, authoritatively or otherwise, from different levels within India or from the United States of America. I believe my duty and entitlement is to be in conversation with my counterpart Secretary Kerry. At the lower level, lower than that level, there has been contact between the State Department and the Foreign Secretary.

I do believe that so long as we are in conversation and that is a meaningful conversation, Secretary Kerry spoke to the NSA the day before late in the night, and we have a readout of that conversation as well. I think that what could be done from our side in immediate reaction and response to the situation, we have already kept you informed in the media. What we had to do in order to ensure that we take all the steps that call for in order to protect the dignity and the comfort of our diplomat posted in New York, I think also have been accomplished. Now for me to react to anything said by anybody about the status of the case would perhaps be unfair and uncalled for.

When we get our conversation to a logical conclusion and there is an outcome one way or the other, we will be very happy to share that outcome with you. One thing about diplomacy is that some parts of diplomacy have to be done in public view and some parts of diplomacy have to be done with certain degree of discreetness till such time as the diplomatic conversations are concluded. And that is how we see this situation.

I am conscious of the fact that this is a valuable relationship between two countries and a relationship in which enormous investments have been made not just by governments alone but by private sector, by groups of individuals, by organisations, by individuals. And when we deal with each other we have to keep in mind that entire gamut of different dimensions of our relationship. And I think that goes for both of us.

If we are conscious of this, I am sure that they are equally conscious of this. If we think it is important to preserve that relationship, I am sure that they think as well that it is important to preserve that relationship. The only question is, what you do when something happens that is irksome, that is hurtful, that is unacceptable. You have got to find a solution. And I hope that we will find a solution.

Let me get back to you when my conversation is completed.

Official Spokesperson: With that we come to the end of this event.
Thank you



492. Press Release of the Ministry of Culture on the signing of India-Venezuela Cultural Exchange Programme.

New Delhi, December 20, 2013.

India and Venezuela here today signed a Programme on Cultural Exchange. The programme was signed by the Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, Shri Ravindra Singh and Minister of State for the Promotion of Cultural Economy, Ministry of People's Power for Culture, Venezuela Mr Javier Sarabia after delegation level talks between the two countries. Programme on Cultural Exchange shall be valid for three years. Thereafter, it shall be renewed automatically for a term of three years at a time unless either Party gives in writing an advance notice of its intention to terminate.

According to the Programme of Cultural Exchange both the countries have decided to:

- (i) Promote the exchange of bilingual publications (traditional and contemporary stories).
- (ii) Participation of the Republic of India in the Venezuela's International Book Fair on a reciprocal basis.
- (iii) Facilitate, in accordance with their domestic legislation, the customs and tax conditions in order to provide assistance to the International Book Fairs in their respective countries.
- (iv) Encourage the participation of Venezuelan and Indian poets and writers in the literature festivals organized by both countries.
- (v) Encourage the participation of the Republic of India in the Venezuela's World Festival of Poetry.

- (vi) Make an issue of the magazine "Actualidades" (a CELARG publication) on the Republic of India or on Indian writers.

According to the Programme of Cultural Exchange, in the field of Film and Media, both the countries undertake to:

- (i) Promote the participation of Venezuelan film works at international movie exhibitions organized by the Republic of India.
- (ii) Encourage the participation of Indian movies in the National Film Library and community rooms of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.
- (iii) Organize movie exhibitions through their Diplomatic and / or Consular / Missions in both countries.
- (iv) Organize Fora for the purpose of exchanging expertise between the film makers and representatives from both countries.
- (v) Invite personalities and new film makers to give lectures at the National Lab of Film and Media in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.
- (vi) Encourage the institutional links between the Autonomous National Center of Film Making of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Institute of Cinema and Television of the Republic of India.
- (vii) Encourage the acquisition of Distribution Rights of Indian film works by the film distributor Amazonia Films.
- (viii) Promote the participation of Venezuelan film works at Indian international film festivals, and the participation of Indian works at Venezuelan movies festival.

According to the Programme of Cultural Exchange In the field of Image and Space Arts, both the countries undertake to:

- (i) Boost the exchange of knowledge with specialists in the field of drawing techniques with natural pigments, specialists in dying with natural inks, as well as the use of enzymes.
- (ii) The Institute of Image and Space Arts expresses its interest in receiving groups of six (6) specialists to organize workshops together with local specialists in the Venezuelan communities.
- (iii) Participation of two (2) artists, lecturers and/ or specialists to the events organized by the Institute of Image and Space Arts.
- (iv) Exchange of knowledge for the purpose of training in the two states of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela with the help of a photographer or specialist from the Republic of India, a group of thirty people consisting of students, artists, and members of the community in general.
- (v) Invite one photographer and /or specialist in photography for the purpose to participation in an event organized by the Fundación Centro Nacional de la Fotografía de Venezuela- FUNDACENAF (Foundation National Center of Photography in Venezuela), for the purpose of encouraging the photographic creation, the community management of photography, the curatorial and museum experience, the use of new means and technologies for the promotion of photography, its preservation or creation of data bank and photo files.

According to the Programme of Cultural Exchange, in the field of Stage and Music Arts, both the countries undertake to:

- (i) Participation of a Venezuelan theatre company in the New Delhi's Festival to diffuse the Venezuelan theatre in the Republic of India.
- (ii) Exchange of six specialists belonging to a Kathakali theatre group for the purpose of organizing

workshops and presentations in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela during one week.

- (iii) Participation of one dancer or couple of dancers from the Republic of India at the International Dance Festivals “Solos y Duetos” (Solos & Duets).



INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-VII

EUROPE

493. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on the conclusion of talks for an India-EU broad based Trade and Investment Agreement.

New Delhi, March 5, 2013.

India and Portugal today agreed for the need for an early conclusion of the India-EU Broad based Trade and Investment agreement (BTIA) Negotiations. The Union Minister for Commerce, Industry and Textiles Shri Anand Sharma in a meeting with Mr. Paulo Portas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal said that “intensive engagements on part of the two sides are a reflection of their desire to finalising a balanced trade agreement at the earliest. However, ambitions have to be balanced and tempered and a sequential approach has to be followed to ensure early closure of negotiations”. He further conveyed to the Portuguese Minister that the agreement will lead to an increase in the opportunities for market access in both goods and services for both sides. The India-EU BTIA negotiations are underway with fifteen rounds having been completed, with the last meeting at the Chief Negotiators level being held on 29-30th January this year here. The Ministerial level talks are likely to happen next month.

The Portuguese side wanted to understand the current status of Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement (BIPA). Shri Sharma informed that the Finance Ministry is presently engaged in reviewing the Model Text.

Shri Sharma also said that both India and Portugal are working towards the conclusion of the Agreement on Visa Free Travel for Diplomatic/ Official Passport Holders. “Such an agreement would be useful for both sides for facilitating official level exchanges between the two countries,” said Shri Sharma.

On the issue of business visa, Shri Sharma proposed that apex business chambers of both the countries should be empowered to endorse business visa application which should be honoured by the authorities for grant of long term business visas. He also expressed happiness over the fact that India and Portugal are ready to sign the Social Security Agreement.



ALBANIA

- 494. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Finance on the signing of an agreement between India and Albania for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on Income Tax etc.**

New Delhi, July 8, 2013.

The Government of India signed here today an Agreement for Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital (DTAA) with Government of Albania. The Agreement was signed by Dr. Sudha Sharma, Chairperson, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), on behalf of the Government of India and Mr. Fatos Kerciku, Ambassador, Republic of Albania on behalf of the Government of Albania.

The DTAA provides that business profits will be taxable in the source state if the activities of an enterprise constitute a Permanent Establishment (PE) in the source state. The Agreement provides for fixed place PE, building site, construction & installation PE, service PE and agency PE.

The Agreement incorporates para 2 in Article 9 concerning Associated Enterprises. This would enhance recourse to Mutual Agreement Procedure to relieve double taxation in cases involving transfer pricing adjustments.

Dividends, Interest and Royalties & Fees for Technical Services income will be taxed both in the country of residence and in the country of source. The low level of withholding rates of taxation for dividend (10%), interest (10%) and royalties & fees for technical services (10%) will promote greater investments, flow of technology and technical services between the two countries.

The Agreement further incorporates provisions for effective exchange of information between tax authorities of the two countries in line with latest international standard, including exchange of banking information and supplying of information without recourse to domestic interest.

The Agreement also contains an Article on Assistance in Collection of Taxes. This article also includes provision for taking measure of

conservancy. The Agreement incorporates anti-abuse (limitation of benefits) provisions to ensure that the benefits of the Agreement are availed of by the genuine residents of the two countries.

The Agreement will provide tax stability to the residents of India and Albania and will facilitate mutual economic cooperation between the two countries. It will also stimulate the flow of investment, technology and services between India and Albania.



BELARUS

495. Foreign Office Consultations held between India and Belarus.

New Delhi, July 23, 2013.

The fourth round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Belarus were held in New Delhi on 23 July. The Consultations are to be followed by the sixth meeting of the India-Belarus Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation on 24 July in New Delhi. Delegation level talks were held between H.E. Mr. Valentin Rybakov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Belarus and Shri Ashok K. Kantha, Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs. Mr. Dmitry S. Katerinich, Minister of Industry of Belarus also joined the talks during lunch. Mr. Katerinich and Mr. Rybakov also met Hon'ble Minister of Coal Shri Sriprakash Jaiswal.

The entire gamut of bilateral relations was reviewed during the talks. Both sides agreed on measures to boost trade and economic relations to their full potential. Fertilizers formed an important part of the agenda, with India expressing interest in long term arrangements for the supply of potash fertilizers from Belarus, which is one of the major suppliers in the world. Opportunities for cooperation were also discussed in sectors like pharmaceuticals, science and technology and new areas of niche and innovative technologies.

In regional and international matters issues of common concern were covered and views were exchanged on the current international situation. Both sides agreed to continue close cooperation in international fora such as the UN and NAM.



496. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry on the signing of a Protocol to Boost Trade with Belarus.

New Delhi, July 24, 2013.

The 6th Session of the India-Belarus Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation was held today here. The session was co-chaired from the Indian Side by Dr. E.M. Sudarsana Natchiappan, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and Mr. Dmitry S. Katerinich, Minister of Industry of the Republic of Belarus.

Highlighting that the meeting is yet another step in the direction of strengthening trade and economic relations between the two countries, Dr. Natchiappan said that “sectors like pharmaceutical, fertilizers, information technology and research & development offer tremendous potential for cooperation between India and Belarus.” Elaborating on the fertilizer sector, the Indian Minister conveyed that “India is looking for long-term contracts for supply of potash to meet its growing requirements.” He also added that Indian companies can also look for “opportunities for setting up joint ventures in Belarus for production of potash-based fertilizers.” The Belarusian side recommended India to determine an Indian counterpart deputed to negotiate on the long-term cooperation agreement, take decisions and signing of the agreement for the full volume of the deliveries. The JSC “Belaruain Potash Company” and an Indian counterpart to be nominated by the Government of India should finalise the volumes, terms and conditions of the long-term cooperation agreement for MOP deliveries to India within specified time period.

The two Ministers also signed a Protocol after the Meeting. It was decided by both the sides that necessary steps will be taken to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Textiles, India and the Belarusian State Concern for Manufacturing and Marketing of Light Industry Goods on Cooperation in the Field of Textiles, Clothing and Fashion Industries.

The Republic of Belarus also asked India to recognise Belarus as a market economy country. The Indian side responded that the matter is under active correspondence between the sides. India is considering the issue of grant of market economy status to Belarus within the framework of India's Antidumping Rules. The Indian side stated that the matter is being examined positively and the official decision would be taken before the next session of the Commission.

The Belarusian side flagged the issue related to the introduction and long duration of action of antidumping duties on a number of products of the petrochemical complex: tire cord fabric manufactured by JSC "Grodno Azot" and acrylics fibers manufactured by the plant "Polymir" of the OJSC "Naftan". Belarus advocated for revocation of the antidumping duties on these goods and expressed the intension to maintain the export of the products to India, mostly of interest to Indian consumers.

Both the sides also agreed to create a Certification Centre of Belarusian companies and professionals in the field of software at the earliest possible time. The Belarusian Side will provide a draft concept of the Certification Centre of Belarusian companies and professionals in the field of software to initiate negotiations with the Indian Side.

The Belarusian delegation proposed to hold the 9th meeting of the Business Council "India-Belarus" in 2013 to promote the collaboration of business representatives, as well as agreed to define the dates of the National Exhibition (exposition) of the Republic of India during 2013-2014 in Minsk.



497. Press Statement of the Minister of Culture Smt. Chandresh Kumari Katoch at a joint press meet of India and Belarus Culture Ministers.

New Delhi, New Delhi, October 18, 2013.

Culture Minister Mr. Barys and I have just concluded a far reaching 3 year Cultural Exchange Program (CEP) between India and Belarus. The program envisages deeper and closer collaboration in various areas of cultural engagement between our 2 countries and shall be operational from 2014-16. Together, India and Belarus represent the world's largest and youngest democracies. Our relations have grown steadily since Belarussian independence in 1992 and there is great potential for forging closer cooperation in many areas.

Our leader late Shri Rajiv Gandhi Ji had visited Minsk in 1985 and his visit was a watershed for India's engagement with Belarussian people. There have been a number of senior level visits between our 2 countries including visits by the vice president of India and speaker of the Lok Sabha to Belarus and 2 presidential visits from Belarus to India.

Indian culture and tradition is liked and practiced by a number of people in Belarus. The embassy of India in Belarus has been encouraging teachings of yoga, Indian classical dances as well as Hindi. India provides 4 scholarships for learning various aspects of Indian culture to people of Belarus every year - one for learning Hindi in India is also given by government of India to Belarus every year.

India has developed a strong tradition of training Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program which was started in 1993 by the ministry of external affairs under which currently 40 scholarships are provided to Belarussian professionals for training in many areas including proficiency in English language and information technology. Nearly 228 professionals from Belarus have availed of these scholarships. India-Belarus cultural links have remained strong. The signing of the new cultural exchange program for 2014-16 will expand the relationship into new areas of collaboration and cooperation.

The cultural exchange program will strengthen bilateral cultural relations between India and Belarus, this will enable mutual exchange of cultural

troops, theater groups and exhibitions from art museums from both countries. Under the aegis of this agreement, institutional collaborations between the national library of Belarus and the national library of Kolkata can be developed.

It also provides for exchange of research, documentation and research publications through national archives, archeological survey of India and national libraries. This exchange of research documentation will enable knowledge transfer in both countries.

The CEP will enable collaboration in international music, dance and folk lore festivals and in exchanging audio and video materials, photographs, slides, publications in the field of performing arts. It seeks to establish direct links and exchanges between cultural establishment, artistic institutions, artistic unions and artists.

The CEP also provides participation in international film festivals and organization of cinema weeks in both countries. You would be aware that Indian films are very popular in many countries given their quality and artistic brilliance.

Excellency, you have had a long and illustrious career with cinema and video production. It is time to bring back Indian cinema to Belarus on commercial lines. Cooperation in the areas of films and tourism offer immense opportunities to both countries. It is also proposed to hold days of culture in each other's countries at regular intervals, i.e. Once in every 2 years.

I also envisage mutual exchange of visits of journalists and mass media experts in both countries.

As the first culture minister of India visiting Belarus, it shall be my constant endeavour to promote and develop the cultural engagement between our 2 countries.

I have extended an invitation for minister Barys to lead a senior delegation to New Delhi for promotion of Belarussian culture in India.



BELGIUM

498. Remarks by External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid at the Inauguration of Mahatma Gandhi Bust in Antwerp (Belgium).

Antwerp, January 30, 2013.

Your Excellency, Governor of Antwerp, Mrs. Cathy Berx,
Minister-President of Flanders region Mr Chris Peeters,
Ambassador of India Mr Dinkar Khullar,
Honorary Consul General of India Mr Marc Huybrechts,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply honoured that on this day I have the privilege to dedicate to the people of Antwerp the Bust of Mahatma Gandhi. I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Hon'ble Governor who I am told has not only made available the premises of her office for this purpose but also taken personal interest in the installation of the Bust. Let me also express my deepest gratitude to all others who have worked and contributed to this effort.

Antwerp shares a special affinity with Gandhiji. It is home to a large Indian community, many of whom originally are from Gujarat, his birthplace. In fact, here at Antwerp, Gandhiji's concept of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' i.e. the whole world is one family is most pertinent. I understand that a bust of Mahatma was installed at the Albert Park in Antwerp in 2006 and was stolen in unfortunate circumstances in 2010. The fact that the city has very promptly replaced the old bust with a new one and decided to place it in the very heart of the city is a testimony to the deep love and respect among the denizens of this historic city for Mahatma Gandhi.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although remembered for his struggle for India's independence and revered by we Indians as the "Father of the Nation", Mahatma Gandhi was a world citizen. His message of peace and of truth and non-violence

are universal values that have inspired generations of leaders around the world. His ideas and principles remain relevant even today, particularly, as we continue to grapple with the threats of intolerance, violence, terrorism and wasteful consumption around the world.

The power of peaceful means to seek justice; the effectiveness of non-violence in countering force; respect for diversity within and between societies; fighting social prejudice and promoting social reforms; conservation of nature; probity in public life and simplicity in personal life are enduring ideas that can help address many ongoing problems in the contemporary world.

Today is the 65th death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Let me conclude with one of my favourite quotes of the Mahatma. He once said, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world". He demonstrated the power of his message through his life and by his actions. I hope that the bust we have installed today will be a source of inspiration to all those who pass by to reflect on Gandhiji's message.

Thank You



499. Media Briefing by Special Secretary (AD) on President's visit to Belgium and Turkey.

New Delhi, October 1, 2013.

Deputy Secretary (XP) (Shri Bishwadip Dey): Good afternoon friends. Welcome to today's press interaction on President of India's state visit to the Kingdom of Belgium and the Republic of Turkey.

Let me first introduce my colleagues on the dais. On my right is Mr. P.S. Raghavan, Special Secretary (Administration). To his right is Mr. Venu Rajamony, Press Secretary to the President. To his right is Mr. Rahul Chhabra, Joint Secretary (Central Europe). To my left is Ms. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Director (Europe West).

Let me now request Special Secretary (Administration) to brief you on the visit.

Special Secretary (Administration) (Shri P.S. Raghavan): Thank you, Bishwadip.

Ladies and gentlemen of the media, as Bishwadip said, the President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee will be paying a state visit to Belgium from 2nd to 5th October, and to Turkey from 5th to 8th.

As far as Belgium is concerned, this will be the first visit by an Indian President to Belgium. It will also be the first state visit hosted by His Majesty King Philippe of Belgium since his accession to the throne in July 2013.

The President will be accompanied by a high-level delegation which includes the Minister of Shipping, Members of Parliament, senior officials of course, and Vice-Chancellors of some major Indian universities.

To very briefly run through the programme in Belgium first, the President will arrive in Brussels on the evening of 2nd October. There will of-course be a ceremonial welcome at Egmont Palace - Egmont Palace is something like a Hyderabad House - on the morning of 3rd October. He will jointly chair delegation-level talks with the Belgian Prime Minister. He will be visiting the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies of Belgium. In the evening he will address the Indian community at a reception hosted by the Ambassador. He will of course meet with His Majesty King Philippe who will host a lunch for him at the Royal Palace.

The highlight of the President's visit to Belgium is the inauguration of Europalia India 2013-14. The President would be inaugurating it jointly with His Majesty King Philippe in the evening of 4th of October.

The Europalia festival is organised by Europalia International, of which the patron is the King of Belgium. It is partly funded by the EU and by the Belgian government. India is the partner country for 2013-14 for this prestigious biennial function. The dates are 4th of October to 26th of January, 2014.

The Europalia India festival will include over 300 events showcasing Indian art and antiquities, music and dance performances, cinema, theatre, literature, philosophy, as well as cuisine; and will be hosted at multiple venues in Belgium, France and the Netherlands.

The Eurotopia festival is held every two years and it comprises a grouping of artistic and cultural events through a multidisciplinary programme. It is a festival organised primarily in Belgium but also with some other neighbouring countries. Recent festivals showcased Russia, China and Brazil, and this year it will be India.

Coming to bilateral relations between India and Belgium, they have been cordial and very close. We have had a totally trouble-free relationship. The importance that both sides attach to our relationship can be seen from the series of high-level visits that have taken place in the past.

The then King of Belgium visited India in November 2008. The Belgian Prime Minister came here in 2006. Our Prime Minister was in Brussels in October 2010. Of course that was in the context of the India-EU Summit. His Majesty King Philippe in his capacity as the Crown Prince has been in India on four Economic Missions – in 1995, 1998, 2005 and 2010. In the last one of them in 2010, he was accompanied by an 82-member delegation of officials, captains of industry, and Belgian businessmen.

In fact the visit of the Crown Prince of Belgium to India leading an Economic Mission has become a traditional event. And this year, since the Crown Prince Philippe has now become King Philippe, his sister Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid would be leading the Economic Mission to India next month.

There has been all-round progress in bilateral cooperation between India and Belgium through economic and commercial ties and increased interaction in education, science and technology, culture and people-to-people relations. The two countries work closely together in the international arena as well. Belgium has been supportive of India on issues of particular importance to us, especially in the context of our claims for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. In fact Belgium was one of the co-sponsors of the G4 resolution in the UNGA. It has also been supportive of creating an exception for India in the NSG.

As we all know, Belgium plays a very important role within the EU, and Brussels actually also houses a number of EU and other multilateral institutions.

In our bilateral relations, as I already mentioned, the main focus has been trade and economic relations. Belgium is in fact the second largest trading partner of India in the European Union after Germany, with a bilateral trade turnover of over US\$ 15.5 billion in 2012-13. The figure in fact had reached US\$ 17.5 billion a year ago. Because of the general recessionary trends in Europe there has been a small drop in the bilateral trade this year. Much of the bilateral trade, about 75 per cent, is in the gems and jewellery sector, and we feel the need to diversify our trade to include other sectors where we do have comparative advantages. So, we are looking at areas like ICT, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and automotive parts.

Belgian investments in India have also been on the rise in recent times. Over the last 12-year period it has touched about half a billion dollars. Of course, both India and Belgium agree that there is tremendous potential for further investments, particularly in infrastructure areas such as railway, energy, ports, construction, and also in ICT areas, electronics, software, and biotechnology. Particularly, bilateral cooperation in science and technology has been an important aspect of our relationship. Space technology, nuclear science and astronomy are particular areas of interest.

Belgium has advanced technologies for nuclear energy generation, nuclear waste disposal and management. There is an agreement that Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and its Belgian counterpart have signed in 2012 covering cooperation in the management of nuclear waste, advanced research reactor system, and collaboration in connection with IAEA projects.

Indian population in Belgium is about 18,000 persons of Indian origin of whom roughly half are Indian citizens. We have Indian students in Belgian universities pursuing courses of education in engineering, medicine, basic sciences and economics.

Academic exchanges are building between the two countries. I mentioned that the President's delegation includes Vice-Chancellors of major Indian universities. They are in touch with counterpart universities and we hope that they tie up useful arrangements in the course of this visit.

Coming to Turkey, after his State visit to Belgium the President would be visiting Turkey from October 5th to the evening of October 7th. This would be the third visit by an Indian President to Turkey. The previous two had been by Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma in 1993 and Shri K.R. Narayanan in September 1998.

To give brief details of the programme, President will be arriving in Istanbul in the morning of October 5, will be conferred an Honorary Doctorate by Istanbul University. There will be a visit to Cappadocia the next day where he meets the Governor. After his arrival at Ankara on 6th afternoon, the President will address the Indian community. He will lay a wreath at the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. He will be received by the President of Turkey. Foreign Minister will call on the President. And the President of Turkey will host a banquet in honour of the President.

Turkey and India, as I am sure you know, are linked by historical bonds of civilisation, philosophy, culture and language. The historical connections start with the exchange of diplomatic missions between the Ottoman Sultans and the Muslim rulers of the subcontinent in the year 1481-82. We have, as a result of these interactions, a great cultural overlap. I have a statistic here which says that there are about 9,500 words which are common in Hindustani and the Turkish language. The name of Urdu language can be traced back to the Turkish language.

Among the common elements in our cultural traditions is the Ottoman architect Mimar Yusuf who came to India and entered the service of Akbar, and he is reputed to have had a hand in the buildings of Agra and Delhi, especially the Taj Mahal. We know of course about the Sufi philosophy of Maulana Rumi, which had resonance with India's own traditions of Sufiism.

As in the case of Belgium, we have had a number of high-level visits exchanged between Turkey and India. The Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey visited India in 2008. President Abdullah Gul visited us in February 2010. Our own Vice-President visited Turkey in October 2011. And our External Affairs Minister was there very recently in July 2013.

We of course recognise the geographical and geopolitical importance of Turkey as a strong democratic and economically growing nation at the crossroads of Asia and Europe. Turkish leaders have noted the

democratic ideals of India, the secular nature of its polity, its emerging economy, and our position in regional and international politics.

In the economic and commercial area we see Turkey as among our important partners in the region. Two-way trade touched US\$ 7.25 billion in 2011. There has been a slight dip in the next two years and that again is because of the recessionary trends in Europe. But we see the headline trend in trade as in the upward direction. In fact as far back as in 2008 when our trade was only US\$ 3 billion we had set a target of US\$ 5 billion by 2010, which as you see we have surpassed easily.

More than 100 Indian companies have registered businesses in Turkey with investments in areas ranging from infrastructure and automobiles to IT and consultancy services. Prominent Indian companies with a presence in Turkey include GMR which won a bid for construction of the Istanbul airport; Tata Motors, Mahindra and Mahindra, Reliance, Aditya Birla group, Ispat, Tafe, Wipro, Dabur India, etc. Turkish companies also have a presence in India in the infrastructure and oil and petrochemical sectors.

We have a joint commission on trade and economic cooperation which is co-chaired by the Commerce Ministers of the two countries. A meeting of this joint commission is due perhaps later this year or early next year. We have an agreement for avoidance of double taxation, an agreement for protection and promotion of investments. As in the case of Belgium, cooperation in the cultural and educational sectors has been particularly vibrant in recent years. Again, the high-level delegation of academicians who will be on the President's delegation hope to establish connections and arrangements with their counterpart universities in Turkey.

Indian culture, films, dance, yoga, Ayurveda and Indian cuisine have been very popular in Turkey. ISRO launched Turkey's first nanosatellite on a PSLV vehicle in September 2009.

Indian nationals, not a very large number. There are only 200 Indian nationals in Turkey, most of them are in Istanbul working in commercial organisations. India and Turkey are members of the G20. Turkey incidentally is the only Eurasian country which is a member of NATO. We are both countries which see ourselves as victims of international terrorism. A joint statement against terrorism was issued when President

Abdullah Gul visited India in February 2010. We believe that the President's visit will provide an added impetus and momentum towards consolidation and strengthening of the broad-based, multifaceted and comprehensive partnership both with Belgium and with Turkey.

This is what I would call an opening statement. We would of course be happy to field questions. I would like to request the Press Secretary to the President Mr. Venu Rajamony to add to what I said.

Press Secretary to President (Shri Venu Rajamony): Thank you. Good evening friends. Ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to be back here in MEA and to be interacting with all of you.

The Secretary has given a very comprehensive description of the state of bilateral relations and set the context for the visit. I would just like to add a few points on behalf of the President.

The President of India is greatly looking forward to his forthcoming State visits to Belgium and Turkey. Both the countries are familiar to him and he has visited them many times in the past. The President's last visit to Belgium was in his capacity as External Affairs Minister when he went for a conference of the Indian Heads of Missions to the European Union member states on May 30, 2007.

His last visit to Turkey was in his capacity as Finance Minister when the annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank were held in Istanbul from October 3 to 5, 2009. The President has not visited Ankara before. So, this would be the first time he would be visiting the capital city of Turkey.

The leadership of both Belgium and Turkey are familiar to the President. He has interacted with them, the present King of Belgium as well as his father, the previous King, on the occasion of their previous visits to India. He has also interacted with the Turkish leadership, both the President and Prime Minister, during their visits to India. The President attaches the highest importance to India's relations with Belgium and Turkey. He has very carefully chosen a delegation comprising the Minister of Shipping Mr. G.K. Vasan, and five Members of Parliament to accompany him from different political parties. The Members of Parliament are: four from the Congress, one from the BJP, and one from the Biju Janata Dal. They span both the Lok Sabha as well as the Rajya Sabha. There is a mixture of men and women, and there is an emphasis on youth if you look at the

whole delegation. Those of you who are travelling with the President will all have opportunities to meet them and interact with them during the course of the tour.

As has been already mentioned by the Secretary, the President is taking with him an education delegation, which includes the Chairman of the UGC as well as Vice-Chancellors of leading universities of India – the Delhi University, the Jawaharlal Nehru University, the University of Hyderabad, the Director of the Centre for Media and Governance, Jamia Millia Islamiya. The decision to take this delegation is in line with the emphasis the President has placed within the country on improving the quality of higher education and the need for Indian universities to establish global linkages for mutual benefit.

Many of you might recall that the President had convened a conference of Vice-Chancellors of Central Universities in the Rashtrapati Bhavan after a gap of almost ten years and announced that he would be doing it every year. A conference of Directors of National Institutes of Technologies (NITs), of which like Central Universities the President is the Visitor, is also scheduled to be held in the Rashtrapati Bhavan this November. So, the President hopes that cooperation in higher education can emerge as an important pillar of our partnership with both Belgium and Turkey.

The President is particularly happy that India's largest festival of culture abroad in recent years is going to be inaugurated jointly by the King of Belgium and himself as part of the Europalia festival. He hopes this festival will offer the Belgian people a glimpse into the uniqueness of Indian culture. It would be a journey into India's past through the prism of the present. He hopes the festival will greatly help expand understanding and cooperation between the two countries and be a catalyst for greater people-to-people contacts.

The President hopes to use the opportunity of this visit to hold wide-ranging discussions with the King of Belgium as well as the Belgian Prime Minister on all aspects of our bilateral relationship and to examine how the relationship can be provided significant new impetus especially in the economic and commercial fields.

The President views Turkey as a country, as mentioned by Secretary, with whom India has had historic and civilisational links. Turkey's War of

Independence and the life and message of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was an inspiration for India's national movement. The President sees his visit to Turkey as an opportunity to inject new dynamism into the relationship, to renew high-level political contacts, and to encourage Turkish participation and investment in Indian infrastructure. He would also in particular like to encourage joint collaboration between Indian and Turkish companies in areas like Afghanistan and Central Asia.

Thank you. I would be happy to take any additional questions you may have.

Q: Mr. Raghavan, in India the President is the Head of State whereas the Prime Minister is the Head of Government. When our President goes abroad, is there any difference between the kind of importance attached by the host governments to an Indian Head of State and an Indian Head of Government? And what are the diplomatic nuances involved in that?

Special Secretary (Administration): I think basically your question relates to the Constitution of India. It does not relate to relations with other countries. The Constitution of India gives the President of India a position, the Constitution of India gives the Prime Minister of India a position. It is well defined. Other countries, when they receive the Prime Minister of India or the President of India deal with it in terms of this. This is not unique either. Many many countries have a similar constitutional relation between their Head of State and Head of Government. For the rest, I do not see how I can answer your question.

Press Secretary to President: If you want I can just add one small point. If you look at the nature of the delegation, the President always travels abroad with a Minister of the Government along with him, accompanying him. And that is to reflect the fact that the Government is totally with him and he has a representative of the Government assisting him and aiding him in his discussions. And of course the fact that he takes a Parliament delegation with Members from different political parties indicates that he is there as a representative of the whole country, of the entire political spectrum. And in that sense he interacts with his counterparts wherever he goes as the Head of State, as the designation of his position itself is reflected.

The Ministry of External Affairs equally provides support to the President and Prime Minister on all visits abroad, as you can see. And the diplomatic agenda rarely differs. All the important issues which need to be discussed are discussed during the President's visit and all important issues which others have to raise with us are also raised during the President's visit. And at all times, like on all issues of national importance, on foreign policy too there is very close communication between the President and Prime Minister at all times.

Special Secretary (Administration): That is again as laid down in the Constitution of India. Press Secretary to President: Indeed.

Q: Could you give us the names of the Members of Parliament accompanying him? Is the Minister of Shipping accompanying the President as a Minister-in-Waiting or will anything related to shipping be discussed there or is any MoU or agreement likely to be signed?

Press Secretary to President: I have the names. The Minister is Mr. G.K. Vasan. There is Dr. Prabhakar Kore, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha from the BJP. There is Mr. Baishnab Parida, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha from the Biju Janata Dal. There is Ms. Priya Sunil Dutt, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, Congress. There is Mr. Deepender Singh Hooda, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, Congress. And Mr. Zafar Ali Naqvi, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, Congress.

Special Secretary (Administration): On your question on Shipping Minister, as Mr. Rajamony said it is traditional for the Government to be represented by a Minister. Of course, shipping is one of the areas where there will be interaction. I do not think there is going to be an agreement on shipping but it is an area which is of bilateral interest to both countries vis-à-vis India.

In other areas, as I mentioned, the Indian universities and the UGC are going to be interacting with a number of their counterpart universities and institutions there. And we hope that they will work out some

arrangements which may result in some, but this is something that as we reach there we will be better aware of.

Q: Mr. Rajamony, you have talked about Afghanistan and Central Asia as important geographical locations for both Turkey and India. As far as

Afghanistan is concerned, in 2014 the international forces are withdrawing from Afghanistan. So, the Turkish forces may remain there as a military power in Afghanistan. India has huge investments in Afghanistan. Both Presidents of Turkey and India are former Foreign Ministers. What kind of meetings are going to take place regarding Afghanistan? And as Central Asia is a source of energy for both the countries, I would like to learn the details of the meetings regarding that.

Another question I would like to ask is about the civil aviation. As we know, the Turkish Airlines has applied for the expansion of their flights to India almost one year ago. In this visit of President, will there be any kind of talks on this civil aviation agreement?

Press Secretary to President: As far as Afghanistan and Central Asia are concerned, Afghanistan in particular, clearly India and Turkey share a lot of common interest in ensuring that there is peace, there is stability, there is political continuity and the environment for economic progress and development. As you mentioned, India has very major investments in Afghanistan. We have very major interests in Afghanistan. Similarly Turkey. Turkish forces are going to stay back. Turkey has maintained an active interest in what is happening in Afghanistan.

So, it is an area where there is scope for India and Turkey to work together, particularly in the private sector where Turkish companies are all big in infrastructure globally. We are welcoming their participation in India. There are a large number of Indian companies in Turkey. The Secretary has mentioned that in his briefing. So, all this offer ideal grounds for much greater collaboration between the two countries. Certainly this would be a very important topic of discussions.

Similarly Central Asia is an area which in many ways binds both our countries together. It has always bound us together historically and culturally. Here again there would be great scope for both of us to work together. And these are issues which would come up in the discussions when the President is there and when he meets the leadership of Turkey. I think what emerges from the discussions is something which can be talked about only after the meetings are actually held.

Special Secretary (Administration): On civil aviation, these are actually commercial discussions that are going on between the airlines of both

countries. All I can say at the moment is that these discussions are ongoing. I cannot tell you whether something will happen during the President's visit. But as I said, this is primarily a commercial discussion that is going on between the Turkish Airlines and its counterpart in India.

Press Secretary to President: To add to that, irrespective of the discussions between the two airlines, what is indisputable and what both countries agreed on is the need for much greater connectivity between the countries. We need much more flights between the countries. We would like to have greater number of tourists from Turkey visiting India, from India visiting Turkey. And considering the history that we share and the commonalities in culture that we share, we need to have much greater movement of people between the two countries. And better airline connections are an absolutely critical ingredient for making sure that that happens.

Q: The fulcrum of power in the Islamic world has now moved away from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to Turkey and Iran now. And the West has been always wary of this kind of a combination historically. In what way actually it helps India and what it means for India?

Secondly, we have been quite wary about and have been very sensitive about the Chinese presence in the PoK. There is a heavy Turkish presence also in the PoK. They have actually opened their ... (Inaudible)... Muzaffarabad after the earthquake and they are very actively involved in the Kashmiri refugee camps also in the PoK. But it has never raised our hackles.

Special Secretary (Administration): I think even by a large stretch of the imagination you cannot say that deals with the President's visit to Turkey and Belgium. The role of Islam, the fulcrum of Islam, these are all very large questions which are the subject of debate in other fora and I do not want to get into it here. I do not see why we should dwell on these subjects at this press briefing.

Deputy Secretary (XP): Since there are no other questions, we come to the end of this event.

Thank you



500. Interview given by the President to Euronews prior to his state visit to Belgium and Turkey.

New Delhi, October 3, 2013.

Euronews (Ms. Chiara Reid): Mr. President, thank you very much for welcoming us into your house and for participating in this Global Conversation, a conversation in which we hope we shed some light on some of the most crucial issues at the heart of India today.

You have been at the forefront of Indian politics for six decades. You participated in the very creation of the modern Indian state. And now, since last year, as its President you have a unique insight into the challenges that lay ahead.

Let us take a look at the forthcoming engagement. You are about to embark on a trip to Brussels, the heart of Europe. What is your mission in this trip?

President of India (Shri Pranab Mukherjee): First of all I would like to express my deep gratitude to His Majesty the King for inviting me to visit beautiful Brussels.

Though I had been there, as it is an important centre of economic activity and many others, on earlier occasions, but as Head of the State, as the President of the Republic, perhaps mine is the first visit ever by an Indian President to Belgium. Of course recently we have started having high-level contacts. We had the privilege of welcoming His Majesty Albert II sometime in 2008. Even the present King His Majesty Philip visited when he was Crown Prince and led a very substantial delegation to have discussions with Indian leaders on many aspects of Indo-Belgium bilateral relationship. Therefore, I would like to reiterate India's commitment to build up a deeper relationship with Belgium.

Euronews: You are coming for a cultural event as well, Europalia, this magnificent show of all what is Indian culture and arts.

President of India: Of course. And this is one of the most significant aspects of our relationship. As you know, India is the oldest civilisation of the world. Though as a nation state our experiment is comparatively new, but India is the home of the oldest civilisation.

Euronews:...(Inaudible)... goes back many many years.

President of India: And the essential ingredient of Indian civilisation is it is pluralistic. Respect for pluralism, acceptance of diversity, trying to find out underlying unity and convergence amidst this diversity are the trends of the Indian culture. Therefore, in this festival in which we are participating - it is a huge participation I would put it in this way because - more than 200 artistes from different parts of India will participate. Seven very important exhibitions, 15 musical performances, seven dancing groups led by eminent performing artistes are participating in it. And we would like to convey the depth of our culture which conveys the message which I have just now spoken – unity amidst diversity, convergence in differences.

Euronews: That is a great message. But you are coming to Europe at a time when both India and the EU are grappling with great economic difficulties. We heard a lot about the Euro crisis. But India's problems have taken us by surprise. You are supposed to be the future, the smart industrial powerhouse, one of the so-called BRICS countries. So, what happened there?

President of India: First of all I would like to express my views on this issue. I am fully aware of it because I myself was involved.

When the crisis began, the first financial crisis in 2008, of course there was the delayed impact in India but just at that time I had to bear the additional responsibility of heading the Finance Ministry because my predecessor and also my successor Mr. Chidambaram was then shifted from Finance Ministry to Ministry of Home Affairs because of some urgency. And with my substantive responsibility as Foreign Minister, I had to bear the additional responsibility of Ministry of Finance as I had past experience. I served as Finance Minister of Mrs. Indira Gandhi when she was Prime Minister in the 70s and 80s for a number of years. Therefore, I had to face this problem.

And my immediate concern was, as you have said, the great problem of India, very substantial. Indian GDP was growing at a fast rate of around 9 per cent plus. But when I took over I found out that there was on a fortnightly basis sliding down of the GDP growth. Naturally before that the first summit when George Bush who was the President of USA took

place of G20 countries. And this new output emerged to tackle the problems. In the G20 it was agreed upon by a broad consensus that there should be requirement of providing stimulus package to address the current problem.

From hindsight we can say that we did not understand the depth of the crisis at that point of time. So, immediately we had to rush, and like most other countries we provided stimulus package to ensure that fastest sliding down of the GDP growth leading to unemployment could be arrested.

Frankly speaking, we could not recover from that shock. I am not talking of India but also the whole world. In India we got some temporary relief because in the year from 9 per cent GDP growth we had registered a 6.7 per cent. But in the remaining two years, we registered high growth of 8.7 and 9.3. But again from the third year it started sliding down. That is because the problem is at the root. And in that root there is a commonality of the problems of Eurozone and ourselves, and most of the emerging countries, and some of the developed countries also that our borrowing is not matching our mobilisation of the resources.

Therefore, though the symptom was visible in four smaller countries in Europe – Portugal, Ireland and Spain...(Inaudible)...that is high sovereign debt. How to bridge the gap? It required radical reforms. Many of the European countries did it even taking the risk. I salute them. They were politically sagacious enough to take the risk of losing the elections but resorted to required reforms.

Q: And do you think India will do that too?

President of India: India has already started doing it.

Q: But there is more need for reforms, do you think?

President of India: I am coming to that point. We shall have to also keep in mind the size of Indian population, the level of uneven development. Most of the advanced countries, their manufacturing sector is highly developed. Service sector and manufacturing sector's contribution to the GDP is very substantial. But in India we cannot afford to adopt that model because I have to feed 1.2 billion plus people.

Therefore, I shall have to emphasise on agriculture, I shall have to emphasise on the development of rural India which is about more than 70 per cent of our total population, of the huge population of 1.2 billion plus people. Therefore, our developmental strategy to some extent will have to be country specific as we do believe each and every country has specific problems which ought to be addressed in the context of the socioeconomic conditions prevailing in that region.

The third point, to resolve the problem of Eurozone, you know even during the tenure of the previous IMF Director Dominique measures were taken. And Christine Lagarde subsequently through IMF the package came out. But in almost half a dozen meetings of G20 apart from the summits which took place at the level of the Finance Ministers. I participated and on behalf of India I extended my whole support, because my economic development and progress is closely linked with Euro. Europe is too serious not merely for Europe but the world economy.

First a simple example I am giving you. Europe is the second largest export destination of India, second largest source of foreign investment. Therefore, and what has happened, one of the major reasons, when the demand in these advanced economies weakened, whether it is North America, whether it is Japan, whether it is Europe which account substantially for our export and foreign investment, their economy became weak. Naturally it will have its own implications to us. But we have to address it and at the same time we will have to take care of our own domestic problems.

But I do agree that in today's context when the world is becoming economically integrated and global economy is no longer a dream but a reality, we shall have to work collectively but it will give you the country-specific requirements and the strategy which ought to be developed in the context to address the particular situation.

Euronews: Talking rightly about cooperation, the EU and India are strategic partners and there is a free trade and investment agreement on the table since 2007. If it was complete, it would affect positively the lives of over 1.8 billion people. How do you think we can kick start this now?

President of India: Of course now I cannot directly respond or directly act on it but my advice to my colleagues in the Ministry would be that fifteen rounds of negotiations have been complete. I was also closely monitoring it when I was in the Ministry of Finance. Large number of areas of agreement we have reached. There are only a very few areas of differences. We should narrow down those differences and this Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement should be concluded so that we can get benefit, as you have said, of 1.8 billion people.

Euronews: Are these areas you still have to tackle for example the amount of red tape that there is in India or the requirement of controls for imports of ...

President of India: What I feel is that there are certain areas where there is a conceptual difference. But at the same time, we have done it with ASEAN, we have done it at bilateral level with a large number of countries. But mere doing it with ASEAN or attempting to do it within the framework of SAARC, is not same, European Union is most important. And that is why, as I mentioned, from 2007 we have already completed fifteen rounds of talks. These are the areas of differences but I am not going into the nitty-gritty. What I want to emphasise is that we must resolve and reach the agreement sooner than later.

Euronews: Yes. We heard a lot in the last twelve months about another issue, violence against women in India. Is the media do you think giving us the real picture because there is quite a difficult picture of India portrayed abroad? Do you think they are giving us the real and faithful picture or there is another side to this story?

President of India: One point has to be kept in mind. Some of these events are really disturbing as the incident in December of the last year. Many times I have described that it shook the national conscience. It was an incident affecting an individual or a couple of individuals, but it shook the conscience of the nation. Thereafter there has been a series of debates and discussions. But this media exposure to a considerable extent is because of the fact that Indian women are normally shy, especially the rural, and this type of events had to swallow and... (Inaudible)... Earlier they did not report it. But nowadays these are being adequately reported. In one way it is good. Though for the time

being it is projecting a distorted image of India, but at the same time we cannot ignore the ground reality. If it happens, it will have to be addressed and it will have to be recognised that it has happened.

But what I can assure you is that all the measures which we have taken already and which we are contemplating, one of the basic objective of our inclusive growth is empowerment, empowerment of weaker sections, empowerment of women. In our local bodies, more than three million elected local representatives participate in the decision making of local developments including primary education, primary health, economic development of the area concerned. One-third seats are reserved for only women. Right now when I am speaking before you, more than 1.2 million women chiefs of these local bodies are exercising their authority.

Euronews: Yes, because that is true, you have to give women more clout, more education and more clout. Also men, do not men need to be re-educated a bit?

President of India: That is absolutely needed - awareness-building, education, creating consensus. That is why I have...(Inaudible)... and I have asked my countrymen to reset our moral compass because India is always known for respect for women. We deify them. Our important deities are women.

Euronews: And you had one of the first women leader of a country Indira Gandhi to whom you were very close. And you predecessor in your position now was also a woman.

President of India: Even historically I can say very mighty empress was a woman. Delhi was ruled by Sultana Razia. During the regime of Jahangir, another very important Mughal ruler, the actual ruler was Nur Jahan his wife.

Euronews: But there is a gap between this educated urban women and the women in the rural areas and necessarily that gap needs to be bridged.

President of India: In the example that I gave you, that gap is being rapidly bridged in the rural areas because in the local self government of the rural areas, as I pointed out, where the 1.2 million women chiefs are running the local units. They are not English educated. Many of them are educated, but most of them are brought up in Indian tradition. And they

know how to rule, how to implement their decisions, how to take the correct decisions, and they are doing so. But at the same time, as I pointed out, as a nation we must respond to this and correct it.

Euronews: After a decade of relative quiet we have seen an increase of violence at the Line of Control with Pakistan. We know it is in the news on the front pages these days. You are the Chief Commander, Supreme Commander of the army as the President. Do you have an idea of how can you stop this escalation of violence, and do you think you will see peace between Pakistan and India in your lifetime?

President of India: Our Prime Minister has made a very important statement in the UN General Assembly. He has also extended his hand of cooperation to Pakistan Prime Minister who used the same forum just a day before. Prime Minister has pointed out that India is ready to cooperate with Pakistan for restoration of peace, normalcy, and solve all outstanding issues including the problem of Jammu and Kashmir, through bilateral discussions.

In 1971 when Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was Prime Minister of Pakistan, India entered into an agreement which is known as Shimla Agreement. In that Shimla Agreement, India ceded all the occupied territories which Indian Army during the war captured. Ninety-one thousand imprisoned soldiers, prisoners of war, were returned. This was just to show the goodwill that in our basic foreign policy we do not have any territorial ambition, we do not have any ambition to export our ideology to any country or we do not have any commercial interests.

Euronews: It has been like that always for India. Even in the old Indian history it has always been like that.

President of India: Yes. Therefore, we want to have good relations with our neighbours. When I was Foreign Minister, more than often I used to say that I can change my friends if I like but I cannot change my neighbours if I like. I shall have to accept the neighbour the way he is. He is my neighbour. Whether I like it or not does not matter. Therefore, it is for me to decide whether I live with my neighbour in tension or in peace. We opted for peace.

Therefore, I myself visited Pakistan. When Benazir was assassinated, I offered to reach there but because of their other domestic at that time it

was under General Musharraf. And we have good relations with Nawaz Sharif at the personal level also and Prime Minister is going to meet him. But one point is to be understood. No country can compromise its territorial integrity. That is not possible.

Second thing is terrorism. Terrorist activities must be curbed. And state-sponsored terrorism can never be accepted. Therefore, repeatedly we are saying, please dismantle the terrorist outfits which are located in your area.

Euronews: India says that this is state-sponsored terrorism and of course Pakistan says it is not state-sponsored terrorism.

President of India: It may not be. But non-state actors, that is the phrase they used, then I responded by saying that non-state actors are not coming from heaven. Non-state actors are coming from territory under your control. And not now, in 2004 Pakistan agreed that their territories will not be allowed to be used by forces inimical to India.

Euronews: India is going to vote next spring. Major General Elections are coming up. I know you cannot talk about party politics in your position today. But you are a senior politician. You have seen so much of Indian politics. So, can you tell me really briefly what you think are the key issues that are going to win or lose the elections?

President of India: Various issues are being projected by various parties. India is a multiparty democratic system, largest functional democracy of the world. Our total electorate is nearly 800 million and about 60 per cent of them exercise their voting right regularly. I have tremendous faith and confidence on the political wisdom of Indian electorate. They know which outfit is to be chosen by them to further their interests, economic development, inclusive growth, maintenance of law and order, protection of internal security and protection from external threat. So, Indian electorate are fully aware of their responsibility, and I am confident that they will exercise their right very wisely.

Euronews: But will they vote thinking about those issues you just said? Will they vote thinking about the economy, the inclusiveness, and the employment; or will they vote for example with their stomach? You did a very huge food plan to distribute food to everybody. Is this a way also to

...

President of India: No of course, there are certain important programmes which will be debated and that is a strategy of our economic development. When I was talking of the inclusive growth, it is just not an empty phrase. How could we achieve the inclusive growth? Inclusive growth we could achieve by empowering people, empowering people through entitlement and entitlement through legal enactment, legal guarantee. We have given this guarantee in respect of the job in the rural areas. We have given this guarantee to education up to the age of 14 years, universal education. We have given this empowerment to the Indian people. More than two-thirds of them will be provided backed by legal guarantee with certain quantum of food at subsidised price – 66 per cent of the population of 1.2 billion - which is called food security. Of course, these important flagship economic programmes are being debated, and people express their view during the General Election.

Euronews: I just asked you about this because I read in The Economist, they kind of criticised that plan because it would cost a lot, one per cent of the GDP. Actually the money could have been better spent according to this magazine, if it was devoted to sanitation, health, building roads, instead of distributing five kilos of cereals to 70 per cent of the people.

President of India: One does not cancel the other. Nothing prevents from improving sanitation, nothing prevents from improving health, education. Currently when we are talking of this, apart from this Food Security Bill which has been passed, in more than 1.2 million elementary schools we are providing food to 10.8 crore people. One crore is equal to 10 million. 10.8 crore children are being fed regularly.

Therefore, what I am talking of is that we want to achieve inclusive growth, and inclusive growth of course requires that there must be food, there must be education, there must be health and sanitation. We shall have to move for inclusive growth and inclusive growth could be achieved by providing food, education, health, sanitation because after all policy-makers of India are to take care of 1.2 billion plus people and it is a huge task. Therefore, our developmental model cannot be framed in the context of other countries' developmental model. It must be in the context of the socioeconomic conditions prevailing in India.

Euronews: And do you think it is important in this election to have a charismatic leader in order to win it?

President of India: Whether a leader is charismatic or not depends on whether he or she is able to catch the vote. Charisma is tested by them. Here I can tell you as a political activist that always we talk during the election of a wave or wind. But wave or wind can be found out only once it is over. When it is coming or when it is blowing, nobody can say where the wind is blowing or the wave is moving.

Euronews: Let us move to another question. I want to if I could now tap into your incredible historical perspective. If anyone has lived through all the pages of India after Gandhi, you have. We do not have time for a history lesson. But just tell me one thing. If the founding fathers of India - Gandhi, Nehru - were here today, would they be reasonably content with what they see?

President of India: Of course. When we became independent there was disunity. When we drafted our Constitution in the Constituent Assembly, there was a serious debate. A part of India which was separated as a result of this Partition Agreement adopted a Constitution where a religion was declared as state religion. In that context we adopted a secular Constitution. Preamble of the Indian Constitution says, 'a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic'. That is the character of Indian state. And to form this state, to unite India into a federation, and to strengthen it ...

When India became independent, fifty years prior to that Indian economy grew at the rate of annual average GDP growth of one per cent. From 1900 to 1950, Indian economy grew at one per cent. In the next 29 years it grew at 3.5 per cent. But in the next 20 years, its average growth was more than six per cent. Last decade it is about eight per cent. Hardly we could manufacture anything. But the manufacturing base which we have developed over the years is substantial. Rate of literacy was less than one-third. And today it is more than three-fourths even including the UN literacy. Disease, average life expectancy was below 30. Today it is more than double.

Therefore, these are the areas where the founding fathers would surely feel satisfied. But at the same time they will feel not satisfied because we have to reach much a greater height and which we are striving to do.

Euronews: I come from a nation also that is quite young. I am Italian. When Garibaldi and Cavour made Italy, they said the difficult thing is now to make the Italians, not to make Italy the unity but to make the citizens, to make them feel Italians. And for India it is a bit the same. The States, as you said, were not united before Independence. Do you think you have made the Indian people feel part of one nation today?

President of India: Substantially, yes.

Euronews: Do you have any regrets?

President of India: No.

Euronews: And what keeps you awake at night today?

President of India: I would like to see that the higher scale which we have to achieve, we achieve that higher scale soon; India takes its rightful place in the comity of nations as one of the most prosperous, developed country which protects human rights, which includes the development of one and all, which is the old maxim of ours.

Euronews: One more thing... (Inaudible)... I think you do not have a Twitter account, this social media, this new thing. But we have launched... (Inaudible)... a request so that they could ask you a question. And some people wrote to us begging us to ask you a question. I would like to put to you just one question from a young Indian man Tanmay Kumar, a student in economics in Delhi. He would like to ask you, has the way politics was done in India changed over time, and what is the most conspicuous change do you think?

President of India: There has been substantial change in India. From a highly backward country, India has moved to the category of one of the leading, emerging, developing economies.

Euronews: But the question was about the way we make the politics, the way politics are made, the electoral campaign, the way politics function. You have seen so many General Elections. Do you think there is one change that is change enough?

President of India: Every election in India is a landmark election in the sense that it has thrown new leaders, it has thrown new issues, it has addressed new problems which the growing economy, growing country, growing society faces.

Euronews: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President of India:

Thank you



501. Concluding remarks by the President of India at the lunch hosted by President of the Senate and the President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Belgium Parliament in Brussels during his State Visit to Belgium.

Brussels, October 3, 2013.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to convey my sincere gratitude for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to me and to my delegation. It is a singular honour and privilege to address this distinguished gathering in the Belgium Parliament. This Parliament, in more than 180 years of existence, has played a vital role in enriching the democratic fabric of Belgium.

India is no stranger to Belgium. Our relationship dates back to early eighteenth century when traders from Belgium, under the flag of the Ostend Company, established settlements in East and South India. It is said that Belgian chandeliers, mirrors and crystal ware can be found in places as diverse as palaces and ancient synagogues in India. For us in India, Belgian glass is synonymous with all that is perfect, beautiful and prestigious. The blood of our people is mixed with Belgian soil. During the First World War, more than one lakh thirty thousand Indian soldiers fought in the battlefields of Belgium and Northern France and more than eight thousand five hundred made the supreme sacrifice. Cemeteries in West Flanders pay tributes to these brave soldiers, many of whose names are carved in stone, at the imposing Menin Gate in Leper.

Today, India and Belgium are two vibrant democracies sharing common ideals and principles. Democracy, rule of law, freedom of speech,

independent judiciary, free press and protection of human rights are fundamental values to which our two societies are wedded. In addition, India and Belgium are multi-cultural societies and our federal set-up provides for respect and promotion of rights and freedom of various communities and regions. Our historical ties and our shared values provide us with a strong foundation for our relations.

I am happy that our countries have been expanding and deepening their partnership. Belgium is now India's second largest trading partner within the EU. In spite of the global crisis, our bilateral trade increased by more than forty per cent between 2007 - 2012. Our investment flows have also steadily increased in the last few years with Indian investment in Belgium exceeding Belgian investment in India . I hope that Belgian companies will actively consider taking advantage of our growing economy. I am glad to note that the Indian community in Belgium is contributing to the Belgian economy.

Belgium's strengths in the financial and service sector, creative industry, digital economy, and research and development are well developed and widely recognised. Culture and education are two natural areas where closer cooperation between us can benefit our peoples. I am happy to note that several Memoranda of Understanding have been signed between our academic institutions during this visit . I deeply appreciate the keen interest of the people of Belgium, and the support extended by the Government of Belgium, in organizing Indian cultural festivals in this beautiful country.

Tomorrow, I will be inaugurating Europalia-India festival along with His Majesty, the King of Belgium. This festival will showcase rich and diverse Indian culture in its multiple facets. I am confident that the cultural events will be appreciated by the people of Belgium.

India today is passing through an important phase in its history. The boundless energy and creativity of its youth has provided India with unprecedented opportunities. India is an ancient civilization but a young nation. Out of the 1.2 billion people in India, approximately 400 million people are between the ages one to fourteen. By 2030, we will have a dynamic work force of seven hundred million with an average age of thirty five. This will constitute a substantial proportion of the world's work

force. We look forward to leverage these opportunities through our friends, such as Belgium, for economic prosperity and progress of our people.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I request you to join me in a toast:

- To the health of His Majesty King Philippe and Her Majesty Queen Mathilde;
- To the health of His Excellencies Presidents of the Senate and the House of Representatives and honourable Parliamentarians;
- To the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Belgium; and,
- To friendship and cooperation between India and Belgium.



502. Opening remarks by the President at the delegation level talks with Prime Minister of Belgium.

Brussels, October 3, 2013.

Your Excellency Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo,

I thank you for your warm words of welcome. It is indeed a pleasure to visit Brussels and to have the opportunity to interact with you.

I thank you for the overview of India-Belgium relations. I deeply appreciate your gracious hospitality and the excellent arrangements made by your Government for the State visit. Allow me to introduce the members of my delegation.

Excellency,

We appreciate your personal commitment to the relations between India and Belgium. Our bilateral relations have acquired a degree of focus and purpose, in particular, in the recent years. We appreciate your role and

contribution. I am confident that under your leadership and able guidance, India-Belgium relations will reach new heights.

There is a new dynamism in our relationship. I am confident that both countries will devote full attention to taking the partnership forward in all the areas in which we are engaged.

Excellency,

We fondly recall your visit to India in 1998 as Minister for Economy and Foreign Trade, accompanying the then Crown Prince on an economic mission.

Excellency,

We highly value our friendly and very cordial relationship with Belgium, which is one of our closest partners in the European Union. India-Belgium relations, based on our shared values and interests, such as the rule-of law, freedom of press, protection of human rights and independence of judiciary, have grown considerably in recent years. Our two countries are open, multi-lingual and pluralistic societies. These provide the basic foundation on which we can seek to build our relations.

High level visits between India and Belgium have provided the much needed impetus to strengthen our overall bilateral relations. We have had the opportunity to receive His Majesty King Albert II in November 2008 and the then Crown Prince in March 2010. Prime Minister of India, too, visited Brussels in December 2010 for a bilateral summit meeting. These visits have successfully advanced our common agenda in a number of areas. Within a short span of less than two years, after the formation of your Government, the Foreign Ministers of both our countries have exchanged visits. A high level business delegation led by Princess Astrid is scheduled to visit India in November this year.

Cultural exchanges between India and Belgium have increased in the recent times. We deeply appreciate the support extended by the Government of Belgium and by the Royal family for organization of Indian cultural festivals. I am happy to jointly inaugurate Europolia.India festival with the King of Belgians. This festival will be the largest Indian festival outside India. These festivals greatly help to expand understanding and cooperation between our two countries and would be a catalyst for enhanced people-to-people contacts.

Excellency,

The last few years have seen a difficult economic environment in Europe and elsewhere. While the momentum in bilateral trade could not be sustained in 2012, we hope that it will regain momentum in 2013 and that we will be able to achieve the target that we set for ourselves - to double our bilateral trade from • 8.8 billion in 2008 in the next five years.

Excellency, if I may elaborate,

In 2012, our trade was • 12.15 billion making Belgium our second largest trade partner in goods sector within the EU, behind Germany. However, this is much below the potential.

I am also happy to note that the Indian nationals engaged in diamond trade in Antwerp are contributing significantly to the Belgian economy. The diamond sector is the largest component of our bilateral trade. However, we need to continue our efforts to both increase and diversify our trade and investment relationship. There is potential for diversification into areas such as life sciences, green technology, pharmaceuticals, infrastructure development and information and communication technology. Belgium with its proven expertise in these fields can become an important partner. Cooperation in these areas must be intensified in the coming years.

I am happy to note that we have reinstated the regular meeting of the India - Belgium and Luxembourg Economic Union (BLEU) Joint Commission. It is an excellent forum for exchange of views on various areas of bilateral economic cooperation, and we should strive to hold its meetings in regular periodicity.

It is also our hope that an early finalisation of the India-EU Broad-Based Trade and Investment Agreement will, in turn, give further impetus to bilateral trade and investment, which is all the more pertinent in the context of current global economic challenges. We look forward to Belgium's support for bringing the negotiations to an early conclusion.

Excellency,

India and Belgium cooperate very closely in international institutions. I thank you for your support for India's candidature to a permanent seat of an expanded United Nations Security Council.

I would also like to acknowledge Belgium's upfront support for creating an exception for India in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to enable us to enter into international cooperation in the area of civilian nuclear energy.

I hope that Belgium will continue its constructive approach and will support us in our efforts to become a full member of the four arms control regimes - NSG, MTCR, Wassenaar Arrangement and Australia Group. A clear public stance by Belgium on this issue would be in line with our excellent cooperation.

Excellency,

Belgium has well-recognized expertise in certain areas of Science and Technology and we feel that there are immense possibilities for cooperation in these spheres.

Excellency,

Cooperation in education has to emerge as one of the important pillars of our partnership. We should explore the possibilities of increasing academic exchanges between Belgian universities and renowned universities of India. I am happy that some MoUs will be signed between India and Belgian Universities today.

We should encourage greater people-to-people contacts between our countries as it will facilitate business and cultural exchanges between our likeminded countries and deepen our relationship.

Excellency,

India views European Union as one of its principal partners with whom we have developed an intensive and multifaceted relationship. We are having annual summits since 2000 and the relationship was elevated to the level of strategic partnership in 2004.

Before I conclude, let me reiterate that we attach high priority to our relationship with Belgium. Our shared values make us natural partners. We need to progress by taking concrete actions which bring direct benefits to our citizens. This is the only way we can widen the base of our partnership and impart it greater sustainability. It is in this light that we need to define our future interactions.

Excellency, I very much look forward to continuing our exchanges.

Thank you



503. Speech by Dr. Karan Singh, President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations at the inauguration of Europalia-India Festival in Brussels.

Brussels, October 5, 2013.

Your Majesties the King & Queen of the Belgians, Hon'ble President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of the European Council Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Belgium Mr Didier Reynders, Ambassador Dinkar Khullar, President Europalia International Count Jacobs de Hagen, General commissioner Baron Philippe Vlerick, Baroness Kristine De Mulder, Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I greet you all on behalf of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations which is the Indian partner in Europalia-India and the main sponsor of all the rich & varied exhibitions and performances which will play out over the next few months in Brussels as well as in the other European cities.

India and Belgium, and indeed the European Union, are federal multi-cultural pluralist societies unified by a civilizational history. India's partnership with Europalia International to hold the europalia. india festival in Brussels, the capital of both Belgium and the EU, is therefore uniquely appropriate. I am delighted to be here today at the inauguration of europalia.india 2013-14, which is by any measure one of the most ambitious festivals of India to be held abroad in the recent past. For almost two years now, europalia. India has dominated our thoughts and it is gratifying to see our efforts bear fruit, bringing to Belgium and to Europe a taste of India's rich and colourful culture.

As a civilization, India goes back to at least five thousand years, and it is obviously not possible to create a comprehensive package that covers every aspect of India and its culture in a single festival. I do believe, however, that the festival programme we are presenting, will succeed in

highlighting the diversity that is India. We have a major exhibition, cultural performances, visual art projections including films, literary events, a food festival and music ranging from the classical to the contemporary and from the urban to the rural. In the process we have tried to open windows to India which we hope will leave the viewer intrigued and wanting more. The distinguished presence of both our Heads of State has added a special dimension to this occasion.

Today's inauguration itself, after the traditional and auspicious beginning by the Gundecha Brothers, will go on to present a medley of classical and folk dances and end with a major exhibition tracing the depiction of the The Body in India Art and Thought through antiquities, contemporary pieces, audio-visual material & specially commissioned works, many of them never exhibited abroad before.

I take this opportunity to thank all those in my country and yours who have worked so hard to bring this project to life, and commend them for their efforts. I am sure that europalia. india will succeed in illuminating the fascinating enigma that is India, and in generating deeper and more widespread interest in this ancient civilization which has contributed so much to humanity over the millennia.

I will end with a verse from the upnishads which has come down to us through the vast and winding corridors of time. It exhorts us: "Let us work together, let us achieve together, let us enjoy together; let there never be any hatred between us".

Au revoir et merci beaucoup



FRANCE

504. Opening Statement by External Affairs Minister at the Joint Press Interaction after his meeting with French Foreign Minister.

Paris, January 10, 2013.

Your Excellency, Minister Laurent Fabius,

Distinguished Representatives of the media,

I am happy to be here today in the beautiful city of Paris to meet with Minister Fabius. This visit is yet another reflection of the broadening bilateral engagement that characterizes our Strategic Partnership.

Foreign Minister Fabius and I had very cordial, comprehensive and fruitful discussions today. We reviewed our cooperation in defence, space and civil nuclear energy and counter terrorism, which are important pillars of our bilateral relations.

India and France share the same values of liberty, equality and fraternity. Our excellent bilateral relations with France are marked by mutual trust. They encompass trade, investment, defence, security, counter terrorism, space, nuclear energy, education, culture, science & technology and people to people contacts.

Above all, there is a high degree of political understanding and convergence of views. This was evident during the meeting of our Prime Minister with President Hollande on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit in Los Cabos in Mexico in June 2012 which continued the tradition of regular and close contacts. We look forward to welcoming President Hollande to India in the near future.

We extend our congratulations to the scientists of both our countries on the successful launch of the Indo-French joint scientific satellite, Megha Tropiques, in October 2011. Megha-Tropiques satellite is in good health and data from all the four scientific instruments on-board are received in India and France. Megha-Tropiques has become the first of the eight-satellite constellation for Global Precipitation Measurement (GPM) coordinated by NASA.

We look forward to the launch of Satellite for ARGOS and ALTIKA (SARAL) in the first quarter of 2013. This is another India - France joint satellite to study sea surface altitude.

In the civil nuclear field, our Government remains committed to the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project. Both sides are committed to ensuring the highest levels of safety in the project.

Both India and France are resolutely opposed to Terrorism. We reiterated our commitment to continue to cooperate in the fight against terrorism.

Though affected by global economic slowdown, economic and commercial relations between our two countries are steadily growing in recent years. Yet there remains considerable untapped potential for further growth. We invite French investments in our infrastructure, food processing industries, hi-tech and green technologies.

We believe that an early conclusion of the Broad-based Indian-EU Trade and Investment Agreement would significantly contribute in enhancing trade between our two countries.

In the field of Science and Technology, we appreciate support of French Government to the bilateral cooperation in the field of Science & Technology, through CEFIPRA (India-France Centre for Scientific Research), which is celebrating its silver jubilee this year and serves as a special vehicle to take forward such cooperation. We have agreed that the great potential for increased S&T collaboration and CEFIPRA should be realized soon. With regard to French collaboration in IIT, Rajasthan, I am happy to note that the Letter of Intent has been signed.

I thanked Foreign Minister Fabius for the support of the Government of France for the extension project of Maison de L'Inde, which is the most sought after hostel for Indian students and research scholars. The construction on the Project has started and is expected to be completed in the next two and a half years. Under the extension project 72 new rooms would be constructed on land donated by the French Government.

We also discussed the situation in our respective regions and agreed to continue this dialogue at all levels.

I thanked Foreign Minister Fabius for the support of French Government to India's increasing role in world affairs. France has been consistent in

voicing support for India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council and also India's inclusion in other international fora, including the multilateral export control regimes. We share common views on most regional and global issues.

I take this opportunity once again to extend my thanks to Minister Laurent for inviting me and my delegation to Paris for this very fruitful meeting.

Thank you



505. External Affairs Minister's interview to *Le Figaro*.

January 11, 2013.

("India hails the exemplary partnership with France" by : Pierre Rousselin and Alain Barluet)

Le Figaro: What is the purpose of your visit to Paris?

I am preparing for the visit of French President to India next month. It is a visit that we are awaiting with impatience, and we would like it to be very productive. We have made a list of countries that are a priority for India, and France is among those on the top of the list.

Le Figaro: Why France?

I am tempted to respond 'Why not?' Frankly, it is with France that we have accomplished the maximum progress. We have an exemplary strategic partnership. In the domain of armament, we have wished to diversify our supplies which were dependent on the Soviet Union. We have found in France an interested partner possessing the technology which we need.

Le Figaro: What is the status of the discussions on contract regarding the sale of the Rafale?

To this question, I'll say that the best French wines mature slowly. It is not like a Coca-cola that is gulped down. We have made our decision, a decision taken after long reflection, and difficult to take due to the heavy

competition. We are very satisfied about it. It concerns the purchase of 126 Rafale aircrafts. The details of the contract are under discussion. The talks are advancing well and I hope that they will come to conclusion very soon.

Le Figaro: Can we expect an announcement during visit of François Hollande to India in mid February?

I cannot say if this will be ready for signature at the time of the visit. It is a contractual agreement which is not necessarily tied up with the visit of the President. Many other agreements are in the pipeline. For example the nuclear accord that has been negotiated with Areva, and which is at an advanced stage. The questions of security raised by the tsunami in Japan have to be resolved, and this has an effect on the unitary cost of the energy produced. All this is being examined on an expert level and a final accord is at hand. In the cultural domain, we have signed a letter of intention for the creation of an Institute of Technology in Rajasthan. We have also evoked the question of commercial exchanges and we consider that there is progress to be made before the Presidential visit takes place. I have therefore asked for the support of France for the conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement between India and the European Union as this will give a boost to our exchanges. As far as investments are concerned, we have asked for a close examination of the bilateral accord for dissipating the uncertainties that could be from one angle or other, an obstacle to investments. In a general manner, we share the same perception on global affairs. We have, each one of us, our own friends, but it is with France that we share the most.

Le Figaro: What have you thought of the statements of Mr. Arnaud Montebourg, Minister for Productive Reforms, implying that Indian investments were not welcome in France?

When we are addressing a national public, it could happen that the concerns of internal politics are not properly understood outside the country. This being said, I have not observed that there is in reality any opposition to Indian investments in France or to French investments in India. This is not a subject of disaccord between us.

Le Figaro: The tragic affair of this young lady raped and killed in a bus recently has revealed the precariousness of the status of

women in the society, as well as the politico-legal lacunae. These inequalities and discrepancies do they not constitute an impediment to the development of an emerging country like India?

It is a tragic and sad story that has shocked even more as it took place in a neighbourhood in Delhi where the police are present, and not in a remote region. But it is not something that happens on every street of every city in the country. Any incident like this one is one too many. It is horrifying and unacceptable. But luckily, this is not an endemic situation even if the statistics concerning rape are a cause of concern. We have very strict laws but we realise that their implementation has to be improved and accelerated. We are determined to act with firmness and rapidity. But one should not think that India could be represented by this horrible incident. Some 50% of elective posts are reserved for women. They are in high positions in enterprises, banks, sports, politics and medias.

Le Figaro: Does India, as an emerging country, see Europe as a continent on the decline?

When one questions me on India, I respond that it is for us to take our destiny in hand. The world is ready to welcome India in the big league. Do we want that? I would say that Europe should also decide as to what it wants. Your contribution to all the domains is remarkable. You are going through a difficult period. It would be necessary to tighten the belt for a few months or for a few years, and be attentive towards working and stocking your revenues. We can only wish you success, as our growth depends on what happens in Europe.



506. Media Briefing by Joint Secretary (Europe West) and Indian Ambassador to France on French President's Visit.

New Delhi, February 12, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good Afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming for this afternoon's briefing. As you are aware, we are going to have a very important visitor in Delhi and the focus of the briefing today will be on that.

The President of France will be coming here on the 14th. For that I have here with me our Ambassador in France Mr. Rakesh Sood on my right, and Joint Secretary (Europe West) Mrs. Ruchi Ghanashyam. I will request Joint Secretary (Europe West) to make an initial statement and some opening remarks regarding the visit of the President of France. Following that the floor will be open for questions relating to this visit. After that, as usual, I will also be available to take any other questions that you would like.

If I may clarify again, we will begin with the visit of the President of France and questions and answers related to that visit and subsequent to that if you are interested in any other questions. If that is clear, let me request the Joint Secretary (Europe West) to make her opening remarks regarding the state visit of President Hollande to India.

Joint Secretary (Europe West) (Ms Ruchi Ghanashyam): Thank you so much, Akbar.

President Hollande of France is coming to India at the invitation of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. This is a state visit and it will be on 14th and 15th of February, 2013. He is accompanied by Mrs. Valerie Trierweiler, as also a high-level delegation which includes several key Ministers of his Cabinet, senior officials, business people and of course the very important media. This is his first bilateral state visit to Asia. During the course of his visit, he would be in New Delhi and in Mumbai.

The India-France relationship was upgraded to a strategic partnership in 1998. With this and the ongoing interactions and engagement that we have with France, we have a multifaceted relationship which covers areas such as defence, civil nuclear energy, space and counter terrorism.

We have very good and fruitful exchanges and cooperation going on with France in a number of areas apart from this as well.

The civil nuclear energy cooperation is an important area for both countries. We remain fully committed to our civil nuclear energy programme and also to taking the Jaitapur nuclear project forward. Discussions will take place on this between the two leaders.

On defence cooperation, Indian and French defence forces have a very good defence cooperation that is going on. Exchanges and visits to the defence establishments are carried on on a yearly basis. There have also been joint exercises between the Army, Navy and the Air Force. On MMRCA, Rafale was chosen after a rigorous, thorough and fair competition purely on merit. Negotiations are ongoing. The status of negotiations is likely to be discussed between the two leaders.

On space, we have established also very good cooperation between the two countries. The progress made is satisfactory and both countries are working towards further expanding in the coming years for mutual benefit. The Indo-French satellite Megha-Tropiques for studying tropical atmosphere was successfully launched by India's PSLV on October 12, 2011. At present the data products are distributed to the global scientific community for validation.

Satellite with ARGOS and ALtiKa (SARAL) is another India-France joint satellite to study sea surface altitude, and it is also expected to be launched soon. Both these space joint ventures are seen as a significant contribution to the global community's understanding of weather and climate change. A very important seminar was held recently on the 5th and 6th of February between the two sides, CNES of France and ISRO, in Bengaluru. This discussed the future areas of cooperation between the two countries in this very important area of our collaboration. Economic and commercial relations with France are also important and growing. We are both focused on expanding our bilateral trade and investments. This is an area where both countries want to expand and achieve faster progress. Provisional trade figure for 2011-12 was US\$ 8.89 billion.

Another very important area of cooperation and collaboration between India and France is science and technology. Here the Indo-French Centre

for Promotion of Advanced Research, it is called CEFIPRA for short, has established a strong partnership over the past twenty five years. It completed twenty five years last year. There are 800 PhD and post doctoral students who have benefitted from this bilateral cooperation. The collaboration has led to 1162 research publications in peer-reviewed journals; and it has generated 18 patents. So this is an important area for exchange between the French and Indian scientists.

Education is another area where we want to expand our collaboration and cooperation further, higher education in particular. Both sides feel that there is good scope for such expansion of cooperation. We do encourage having greater student exchanges between the two countries. IIT Rajasthan is one of the projects on which we are working together and making progress. So that is another important bilateral collaboration between the two countries.

Cultural exchanges and cinema this is another interesting and important area. France had organised 'Bonjour India' and India had organised 'Namaste France'. The second edition of 'Bonjour India' is being organised by the French Government in the first quarter of this year. India will also organise 'Namaste France' at a mutually convenient date in the future.

This year is also 100 years of Indian cinema during which we look forward to associating with a number of festivals in France. And it is going to be another year for promoting better understanding of India through our culture and through cinema. So these are some of the ongoing interesting and important areas of collaboration and cooperation.

In conclusion I would say that we enjoy with France a very close and special relationship. We want to extend to President Hollande a very warm welcome for his first visit to India. We have worked out a very comprehensive agenda for our discussion which will include, apart from bilateral issues, multilateral and regional issues. We consult with each other on important international issues. We do hope that President Hollande and his Delegation will have a very pleasant and enjoyable stay in India.

Official Spokesperson: Now the floor is open for any questions that you may like to ask on this visit.

Q: My question is to the Ambassador. Could you tell us something about the Jaitapur civil nuclear cooperation? What is the present status of the negotiations and when are we going to see the fruition of the agreement between India and France?

Indian Ambassador to France (Shri Rakesh Sood): I can try and explain to you the kind of discussions that we have been engaged in on Jaitapur. First of all are the discussions between Areva and NPCIL because as you know in India it is the NPCIL which is the operator and Areva is the manufacturer of the reactor. These negotiations started in 2010 in real earnest. But then because of the Fukushima disaster, the negotiations went into slow motion while the French authorities reviewed implications and lessons learnt out of Fukushima and what implications there would be for building more security, safety measures into the EPR. Once that exercise was completed, they have shared the full results because just as we have the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, they have their own regulatory agency called the ASN. So it was a more than 1600 page long document which they shared with us. Our scientists, engineers have been through it and after that then the negotiations have resumed based on all of this together.

There are certainly issues pertaining to costs. There are issues because we have certain local expertise because we have built our own reactors though not of the same size. But as you know we have a certain experience. So while we would like to take benefit of the new technologies that are inherent in the EPR that Areva has designed, we would also like to take this opportunity to upscale our own technological capabilities in our private sector and public sector.

The French also have certain concerns regarding our Nuclear Liability Law. So, as recently as February, in the week beginning 4th of February, we had one French team which was in Mumbai for discussions regarding the liability law; and we had a second French team which was in Mumbai for discussions pertaining to how much of work can be done by the Indian private sector etc., in order to reduce costs while maintaining the same degrees of efficiency. So that is roughly where these discussions stand. It is still something which is ongoing. I do not think that we are at a stage where we can say, "Okay, all the discussions have now been concluded". All I am saying is that this is roughly the play in the

negotiations and the discussions which are ongoing. But as the Joint Secretary mentioned, India is fully committed - and I think that is a statement that you have heard at the highest levels in India that we are fully committed - to developing our civilian nuclear energy potential, and certainly therefore do this project which is an extremely important part of it.

Q: This question can be to whoever chooses to answer this. Will official talks also touch upon two issues - one the turban ban in France and also on the case involving an Indian national whose child was allegedly raped by a French consular official? Does the Government believe that it is a fit case for it to take up this matter?

Joint Secretary (EW): On the turban issue, this starts from an Act of the French Government of 2004. To be precise, it is the Act of 15th March, 2004 on Conspicuous Religious Symbols in Schools and it prohibits the wearing of conspicuous religious symbols in French public schools. So this is an issue which is applied without discrimination in France. No matter which religion a person is from, they cannot display conspicuous religious symbols in public schools. But that does not apply to private schools or to universities. We have taken this up with French authorities on occasions. Most recently a French delegation had come which discussed with us this issue again. The important thing is that we are in dialogue with the French Government on this and also the French Government is in dialogue with the leaders of the local Sikh community in France. So this is a matter that is part of our ongoing discussions.

As for the case of the French national, the matter is sub judice, as you are aware. So at this stage we will have to go by whatever the law states.

Q: I have a specific question on defence cooperation. France and India are discussing joint development and production of short range, quick reaction missiles. Has any agreement been finalized?

Indian Ambassador to France: Yes, we have this cooperation project called the SRSAM or Short Range Surface to Air Missile. Both sides agreed some years ago that they would undertake joint R&D, design and so on. And I think the cooperation in design and R&D has proceeded very satisfactorily. Now will come a decision in due course about how to make this a reality. But yes, the fact that we have had these joint R&D

projects with them is well known and we have been working together with them on this.

Q: We are rolling out the red carpet for the French President on Valentine's Day. What is the new spark in India-France relationship? What does the new French President bring to the table which his predecessor did not? And on trade and investment can we expect some new initiatives?

Indian Ambassador to France: As the Joint Secretary has described, what we have with France is something called strategic partnership. The term strategic partnership is not used lightly in this context because I think in all the sectors, as Ruchi has explained, in all the key sectors like defence, civil nuclear energy, space, aerospace and so on, we have significant ongoing cooperation projects with France. All these are highly sensitive sectors and that is a fact. Now in addition to that you talked of trade and investment. I think in addition to that the bilateral trade has been in my personal view, I think it should be higher. And I am quite sure that both sides will commit themselves to expanding the gamut of bilateral trade between the two countries. Ruchi mentioned a figure of close to about nine billion Euros two years ago, which I think is much less than the actual potential. The potential would be much larger.

Second is the question of French investment into India. Here I was told the French Embassy in Delhi carried out a little study because we were getting different kinds of figures. The figures which we have from the RBI which are figures pertaining to investment coming directly only from France. Those figures are roughly to the tune of about three billion Euros. However, French companies as you know, there are many global French companies and many of them root their investments into South Asia through let us say Singapore or Dubai or other centres. And then of course there are the profits generated by the companies which get redeployed into the Indian operations and so on. So if you look at that, then the actual French investment into India according to the study that the French Embassy has put out, is nearly five times as large, which would make it very significant. But there are about 800 French companies that operate in India and are supposed to employ a total of more than 200,000 people. So it is a fairly significant economic, commercial presence. Virtually all the CAC Quarante, like we have the NSE 50 or

things like that, the phrase they have is CAC Quarante, which is their 40 large companies, virtually all their CAC 40 companies have significant presence here, and some have been here for more than a 100 years.

In addition I may add that Foreign Minister Fabius has recently appointed Paul Hermelin who is the CEO of one of France's biggest IT companies called Capgemini. Capgemini employs about 40,000 people in India alone, and it is not just the largest French employer in India. There are others as well. So Paul Hermelin will be accompanying the delegation. He has been appointed as a Special Envoy by the French Foreign Minister to develop economic relations, to focus on developing economic relations with India. And obviously he is a person who knows India quite well, having come to India in the early 1990s. His India operations, as I said, have now expanded to a payroll strength of 40,000. In addition we also have the CEO's forum between India and France which is intended to promote private sector to private sector cooperation. So you have a French CEO and an Indian CEO, and the French co-chair is a person by the name of Bertrand Collomb who heads a very famous large industrial group called Lafarge which has very large cement interests in India. They are one of the world's biggest cement producers. And on the Indian side the CEO is Dhruv Sahani of Triveni. They have met recently in November and they have come up with some ideas to further expand business-to-business or industry-to-industry cooperation.

Q: *My question is to the Ambassador. In the case of nuclear energy and fighter planes, are you expecting some thing? What is the new development? Are there going to be some agreements or only it is being discussed?*

Indian Ambassador to France: *The negotiations on these matters are not conducted on the bases of time line or deadlines. In these matters many sided detailed discussions are focused. It is not the cost that remains to be discussed. There is the aspect of technology. It also concerns our ability to absorb technology. Their laws are involved. These issues are discussed in separate groups, then an overall view is taken, which naturally includes element of cost, terms of financing. These are quite complicated acquisitions, what forms of financing would be and where the financing come from. After all this it looks that the negotiations are going the right direction. It does look that negotiations are stalled, but*

we are convinced that these are progressing in the right direction. It is hoped that these negotiations would reach their right destination.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, you described the state of negotiations about the nuclear industry. Could you do the same about the fighter Rafale deal?

Indian Ambassador to France: I think the broad parameters you are aware that the RFP as was issued for which Rafale was then identified and the discussions have opened up with Rafale . Some aircraft, the first eighteen aircraft are supposed to come from France. After that gradually we will have greater and greater value addition being undertaken in India. By the time the last of the 126 aircraft rolls in, 80 per cent of the value addition is supposed to have been done in India. These are hugely complex pieces of equipment, so it is not just the cost, it is technology transfers. You know we have an offsets policy. How does Dassault implement the offsets policy and all the rest of it? So I think this is where the negotiations are and I think if you want detailed answers to some of this, perhaps the Ministry of Defence might be a more appropriate forum from where you could address these to the Defence Ministry. But I think according to the information that I have both from the Air Force and the Ministry of Defence, I understand that the negotiations have been proceeding smoothly and we hope that we will be able to bring them to a satisfactory conclusion.

Q: My question is to the Ambassador. In the context of JNPP you mentioned the EPR technology. But the EPR technology is both untested and unsold by France. There are already apprehensions being raised about Jaitapur going the Enron way and also whether Jaitapur is going to be a guinea pig for the French. Your take!

Indian Ambassador to France: EPR is a new technology, there is no doubt about it. There are currently three EPR reactors which are being setup - in China, in Finland and in France. All three are in the process of construction. It is not yet operational and which is one of the things that also makes EPR currently the latest, the most sophisticated technologically advanced Nuclear Power Reactor, so I do not think it is fair to say Jaitapur is a guinea pig. I think well before Jaitapur comes on stream, the three that are already under construction and in different stages of construction would have already come on stream and I think

Jaitapur will probably benefit from all the lessons learnt from the other three, on which work has begun in recent years.

Q: The cultural relationship between India and France has been an ongoing process for more than fifty years when cinema has influenced Indian cinema. Truffaut and Ray you know that kind of stuff and the French run 20 cultural centres across India, which is more than anybody else I suspect. Now what is the state, one or two movies belonging to Satyajit Ray, they are misplaced or something happened, I cannot remember the details, are you aware of anything being done about that? And what does the Indian diaspora do to promote relations between the two countries because I find the French are giving awards to Shivaji Ganeshan, Satyajit Ray and to Amartya Sen tomorrow.

Indian Ambassador to France: I think that this year, as Ruchi mentioned, is 100th year of Indian cinema. And the French are also extremely excited about it. There are at least over a dozen known film festivals, beginning with Cannes which is of course the most famous and most well known which takes place in the month of May. I have had discussions with the Cannes Film Festival authorities. We started these discussions last year in May. And this year India will be the special country of honour for the Cannes Film Festival. Not just for Cannes, as I said there are about a dozen other film festivals; there are some organizers who want to do a special festival of Indian women film directors; there are others who do film festivals for short Indian films, documentaries. So they are doing a special focus section on Indian documentaries in their festival. This is the Clermont Ferrand festival. In Deauville there is another film festival; they are doing another special focus section on Indian films. We recently had a film festival in Northeastern France in a place called Vezul. There we had Indian films. And wherever we have these Indian films, there is also Indian participation by Directors, actors etc. So I think we are going to see an enormous amount of focus on films.

In addition there will be other cultural events which the different museums in France keep organizing like the Musee Guillaume. Every year they do an Indian summer which continues over a period of three, three and a half months. In Sons Pompidu we have a set of Indian events that are planned. In addition to that, as I said, in 2013 there will be a lot of focus

on Indian cinema and everything that is associated with it whether it is young film makers, women film directors, new Indian cinema, classic Indian cinema etc. And all of these will find presence not just in Cannes, but in over a dozen film festivals in France.

Q: Ambassador, this cooperation, counterterrorism kind of cooperation that India has sort of started with France in Mali, is this a kind of slightly sort of moving away from the neighbourhood? Is this a new sort of phase in counterterrorism cooperation as it were of India's commitment of some amount of forces, some amount of money there and training of the Malian forces?

Indian Ambassador to France: Counterterrorism is one of the pillars of the strategic partnership between India and France along with our cooperation in space, defence and civil nuclear. When we talk of the India-France strategic partnership, we talk of four important pillars of this, as I said, civilian nuclear energy, defence, space and counterterrorism. And counterterrorism has been there for a number of years. It is not something new with Mali or any such thing. And this involves cooperation between the relevant agencies in both countries. There is a regular dialogue; there are exchanges of visits; there are exchanges of information. Certain concerns that we have, we share with them. We ask them to help us with whatever information they have. Sometimes they have better capabilities in certain sectors, and so they are open with us. Sitting in the region in which we are, naturally they have certain interests here and concerns. So they ask us in turn, share what they have, and then we see how much more we can add to their store of knowledge so that we can both develop better capabilities both collectively as well as individually to tackle the issue, the scourge of terrorism which is something which both our countries are strongly committed to fighting against.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, in terms of the relationship between India and France regarding the African continent, India goes for investments and the French goes for the antiterrorism acts but still India's interest has been trade, is there any kind of a serious discussion on this especially in Sudan, now we have involvement in Mali, then in Libya. So there is now quite a good presence of France which maybe India would like to assess the situation there.

Indian Ambassador to France: First of all, I think yes, India's economic, commercial presence in Africa is now growing, as you know, particularly after when the Prime Minister had gone and we had the India-Africa Summit. And that is exactly what the purpose of the India-Africa Summit was, to act as a catalyst to bring about greater Indian economic presence in Africa. France, as you know, as a colonial power has always had strong economic, commercial interests in Africa. So it is not as if France only has counterterrorism interests. Even today France has very significant economic and commercial interests in Africa. And I am quite sure that when President Hollande is here he would certainly take this opportunity to brief us on his assessment because, as you know, recently he paid a day-long visit to Mali and the French soldiers are still there. And he would like to brief us and we would naturally be interested in listening to him.

Another area of cooperation that we have which is also linked to this whole counterterrorism is, our people have cooperated together in combating piracy at sea. And in this also we have a strong active cooperation between Indian and French authorities.

Q: As you said, there are issues regarding cost in the negotiation for EPR supply. There are reports that the French are demanding 20 per cent over what India wants to pay for these EPRs.

Indian Ambassador to France: I do not think we are going to resolve these negotiations by discussing percentages like this here. I think we should leave it to the concerned experts on the French and Indian side to work out what is the best possible price and what is the best possible deal.

Q: A few years back some French universities and institutes began to offer overseas students the option of medium of instruction in English because they realized that language was a big barrier. Do you see an increase in the number of Indian students in universities and institutes in France now?

Indian Ambassador to France: I cannot say that there has been a very large increase but the number of Indian students going to France let us say five years ago was about 1700 a year. Today it is about 2400 a year. For Indian students, as you know, the most attractive destinations

have always been English-speaking countries rather than other languages. But the French are, as you very rightly said, conscious of it particularly in some of the management schools and so on. Now they are also developing courses in English. Some of their best known management schools like HEC which is a management school, and some others on social sciences they are running bilingual programmes. So there are more and more Indian students that get attracted to Paris or to France. But I think the numbers will probably need to grow much larger as our relationship becomes deeper and wider.

Official Spokesperson: I think we have had a fairly extensive briefing on this issue and we will bring this to a close now. If you give us a minute or so I will request my colleagues to leave since they have to attend other meetings, and then I will come back in case you have anything else that you may like to ask. So just give us a break for few minutes. Thank you very much.



507. Prime Minister's Statement to the Media during the State Visit of President of France.

New Delhi, February 14, 2013.

Your Excellency, President Francois Hollande,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome President François Hollande on his State Visit to India. India is his first Asian destination for a bilateral visit. This demonstrates the importance of this relationship to our two countries.

India regards France as one of its most valued strategic partners. France has given us strong and steadfast support at difficult moments. Our relationship is defined by the breadth and diversity of our cooperation, as well as by the intensity of our dialogue. The Joint Statement that is being released today reflects the broad range of activities that is covered by our mutually beneficial engagement.

Today, President Hollande and I exchanged views on a number of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of common interest. We reviewed progress on the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project and reiterated our commitment to its early implementation as soon as the commercial and technical negotiations, which have made good progress, are completed.

We expressed satisfaction with the progress in our defence cooperation, which is poised to reach a qualitatively new level. Discussions on the MMRCA contract are progressing well. We have also concluded negotiations on the Short Range Surface to Air Missile, which, once approved by the Government, will be co-developed and co-produced in India. There is a welcome shift from defence trade to co-development and co-production of advanced defence items in India, which will help expand our domestic production base and strengthen the India-France strategic partnership.

We also agreed to further strengthen our counter-terrorism and intelligence cooperation.

France has been a longstanding partner in our space programme. In September 2012, I was happy to witness ISRO's 100th mission, which successfully put a French satellite in orbit. Later this month, ISRO will launch the integrated SARAL satellite carrying the ALTIKA and ARGOS payloads from the French National Space Agency.

Both President Hollande and I agreed on the need to reinvigorate our bilateral economic engagement by harnessing the enormous synergies between our two economies. We welcome the appointment of a French Special Representative for the economic relationship with India. We also look forward to the recommendations of the India-France CEOs Forum to energize our economic relations.

A Broad-based India-EU Trade and Investment Agreement, currently under negotiation, would open new opportunities for trade and investment between our two countries. I have requested President Hollande's support in ensuring an early conclusion of a balanced and mutually beneficial Agreement.

Culture is as strong a binding force as any between India and France. The second edition of "Bonjour India" is being organized currently in India. The new Cultural Exchange Programme that was signed today

and the decision by French film festivals, including the Cannes festival, to celebrate the centenary of Indian cinema will further strengthen our cultural relations.

President Hollande and I also had productive discussions on regional and global issues. France and India share similar worldviews on many issues, including on the need to stabilize the global economy and combat terrorism. We also discussed the situation in Mali. As part of our support to the Malian defence forces and the African-led International Support Mission, India has announced an assistance of 1 million US dollars at the Donors Conference held recently in Addis Ababa.

I once again welcome President Hollande to India and look forward to working with him to further expand and deepen our special bilateral relationship.

Thank you



508. Joint Statement issued by India and France during the State Visit of President of France to India.

New Delhi, February 14, 2013

1. At the invitation of Prime Minister of India, the President of the French Republic paid a state visit to India on 14-15 February 2013. Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mr. Francois Hollande had detailed and useful discussions on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.
2. Reaffirming that, fifteen years after the launch of the Franco-Indian strategic partnership in 1998, the bilateral relationship has been steadily strengthening, widening in scope and has reached exemplary level, the Leaders agreed on a robust framework for its future development.
3. France and India have similar vision based on common shared values, relating to democracy, rule of law, civil liberties, fundamental freedoms and respect for human rights.

4. Reaffirming their independence and strategic autonomy, France and India confirmed their commitment towards a strengthened multilateralism. They seek a world at peace, in accordance with the UN Charter.
5. With the support of both Indian and French people, France and India will take their relationship to even higher heights across the board, in a long term perspective.
6. As global strategic partners, India and France consult each other on all international matters in a spirit of mutual understanding, respect, trust, and support, taking account of respective security interests.
7. France and India reaffirm the need to reform the United Nations, and, in particular, the UN Security Council so as to make it more representative. France expresses anew its support to India acceding to a permanent seat in an enlarged UNSC at the earliest. France also reiterates its support to India joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group and other export controls bodies.
8. On the 100th anniversary of the First World War in 2014, France will pay tribute to the Indian armed forces, in remembrance of their soldiers who fought and died for France's freedom.
9. The Leaders agreed to give further impetus to the Strategic Partnership;
10. In the field of defence, the Leaders reaffirmed their continued interest to enhance bilateral cooperation which is an important pillar of their strategic partnership and reflects their common determination to work for global peace and security.
11. The Leaders welcomed the ongoing exercises between their Armies (Shakti), Navies (Varuna) and Air Forces (Garuda) and confirmed their willingness to further bilateral defence cooperation, by continuing to conduct such interactions.
12. The Leaders reiterated their desire to cooperate in high technology programmes and projects in the defence sector which would

include joint research and development and transfer of technology. In this connection, the Leaders noted that the projects for the Scorpene submarine and upgrade of the Mirage 2000 are moving forward and steps are being taken for early finalization of the SRSAM Project. Both sides noted the progress of ongoing negotiations on the MMRCA programme and look forward to their conclusion. The Leaders reaffirmed their interest in continuing their cooperation in combating piracy in the Gulf of Aden and other areas.

13. In space, the Leaders agreed to move forward, after the success of Megha-Tropiques satellite launch in October 2011 and the upcoming SARAL satellite launch. Both satellites contribute significantly to environmental and maritime survey purposes.
14. As next step, the Leaders acknowledged the ambitious follow-on space cooperation proposals drawn by the space agencies as an outcome of successful Science Seminar and Research and Technology Workshop held at Bangalore during February 5-6 2013.
15. In the field of energy, the Leaders expressed satisfaction in regard to ongoing collaborative projects in R&D on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and agreed to further strengthen bilateral civil nuclear scientific cooperation. Recalling the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 4 February 2009 between NPCIL and AREVA for setting up of 6 x 1650 MWe EPR units at Jaitapur, the Leaders reviewed the status in regard to the first two EPR units and noted that NPCIL and AREVA were engaged actively in techno-commercial discussions. They expressed hope for the expeditious conclusion of the negotiations. It was emphasized that the Nuclear Power Plant at Jaitapur would incorporate the highest safety standards.
16. On climate change, the Leaders agreed to remain engaged under the Durban Platform for favour an ambitious, development-oriented, inclusive response, in preparation for equitable and comprehensive outcome under the UNFCCC at COP21.

17. In the security and counter terrorism fields, close consultations and cooperation have been established. No compromise is possible with terrorists. India and France are determined to support each other when facing this scourge. Cross border terrorism needs to be addressed at the multilateral level by supporting initiatives in the framework of the UN such as the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
18. In this context, the two sides recognized that terrorism poses the main threat to Afghanistan's security and stability, as well as the need for joint concerted efforts and cooperation by countries of the region to effectively counter it, including dismantling terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens, beyond Afghanistan's border, disrupting financial and tactical support being provided to terrorist groups. The Leaders expressed commitment to the key principles for a peaceful interafghan dialogue : acceptance of the Afghan Constitution, renunciation to violence and breaking links with terrorism. They expressed support for free, fair and transparent elections in 2014 and 2015. Both sides agreed that Pakistan must abide by its commitment to expeditiously bring all the perpetrators of Mumbai terror attacks to justice. Both Leaders also reiterated their strong support for ongoing efforts aimed at defeating terrorism in Mali, preserving Mali's territorial integrity, re-establishing a fully sovereign democratic government in Mali, and to contributing strongly to Mali's national reconstruction and sustainable economic development.
19. Both sides shall act with utmost dedication in the fight against the illicit traffic of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances through a specific bilateral agreement. We shall also expand our dialogue to high-tech criminality and cyber-threats.
20. The Leaders agreed to encourage closer people –to-people contact, through inter alia, easing mobility and human exchanges and promoting education, science and cultural cooperation as well as expanding trade and investment.
21. To this end, both sides have decided:

- to promote an ambitious and balanced Free Trade Agreement between India and the EU based on reciprocity and mutual benefit which will boost our bilateral economic relationship;
- to establish an annual bilateral dialogue between the two Finance Ministries on economic and financial issues;
- to foster comprehensive sustainable urban development cooperation, including infrastructure, transport, water, waste management as well as urban planning;
- to give an impetus to the cooperation on railways between Indian and French railways; a Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Railways and SNCF (French National Railways) has been agreed in this regard;
- to facilitate and support investments from French companies into India and Indian companies into France which contribute to growth and employment in both countries;
- to foster people mobility between the two countries. To that end, both sides noted the progress in the negotiations of a bilateral agreement on people mobility and migration, with a view to conclude them as soon as possible;
- to build up an ambitious education plan, including twining of higher education institutions, mutual recognition of degrees, research collaborations and training of teachers. A Letter of Intent and several agreements between Indian and French Universities and Institutions have been signed in this regard. We encourage greater student exchanges between both countries;
- to bolster research, technology and innovation between our research institutions, universities and business. To that end, we decided to launch the “Raman-Charpak Fellowship” which will enable exchange of doctoral

students between the two countries and, in order to broaden the scope and depth of future engagements in science, technology and innovation, we have concluded several memorandum of understanding and letter of intent between Institutions. Both sides noted with satisfaction the silver jubilee celebrations of the bi-national Indo-French Centre for the Promotion of Advanced Research. It was also noted with satisfaction that France will be the partner country for the 2013 Global Technology Summit to be held in New Delhi;

- to encourage even deeper cultural links through i.e. the “Bonjour India” festival of France and the “Namaste France” festival of India at a future date and a new cultural exchanges program as well as museum and heritage cooperation. India will be the Guest Country at the “Festival de Cannes” in 2013 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Indian Cinema. The “Musée du Louvre” will organise an exhibition in India around 2016.

S.No	Name	French Signatory	Indian Signatory	Remarks
1.	Cultural Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic for 2013-2015	Mr. Laurent Fabius, Minister for Foreign Affairs AND Ms. Aurelie Filippetti, Minister for Culture and Communication	Smt Chandresh Kumari Katoch, Minister of Culture	Both sides have agreed to: (i) Intensify cooperation in cultural and intellectual areas (ii) Foster exchanges between artists, architects, cultural stakeholders, students, teachers, researchers, sportspersons in order to encourage Indo-French Projects Encourage people-to-people contacts
2.	Letter of Intent on the Intensification of Cooperation in the Fields of Education, Higher Education and Research between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic	Ms. Genevieve Fioraso, Minister for Higher Education and Research	Shri M.M. Pallam Raju, Human Resource Development Minister	The LoI covers areas of University and Scientific Cooperation and Enhancement of Cooperation in Education including Technical and Vocational Education Training and institution of consultation mechanism.
3.	Statement of Intent for long-term cooperation in Space	Mr. Yannick d'Escatha, President, Centre National d'Études Spatiales	Shri K. Radhakrishnan, Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation	ISRO and CNES have jointly identified the following means to pursue further cooperation including possibilities through Missions, Payloads and Applications; exchange of young Scientists and Professionals in France and in India; conducting thematic workshops etc.,

<p>Joint Statement to follow-up and strengthen co-operation in the railway sector between the Minister of Foreign Trade and the Minister of Transportation, Sea and Fishing of the French Republic and the Minister of Railways of the Republic of India</p>	<p>Ms. Nicole Bricq, Minister for Foreign Trade AND Mr. Frédéric Cuvillier, Minister of Transportation, Sea and Fishing</p>	<p>Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal, Minister of Railways</p>	<p>Aims at strengthening cooperation in the field of upgradation of railway stations, high speed corridors and the modernisation of the railway network</p>
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B. Documents on Science and Technology and Education signed on the sidelines of the meeting:

1. Letter of Intent towards a Memorandum of Understanding between Delhi University and Sciences Po, Paris

The Sciences Po - Delhi University partnership aims at creating a large student (master and PhD) and scientists exchange programme opened to a large number of colleges and departments. The partnership also aims at accompanying the reform movement of Delhi University, through the creation of a credit transfer system, thus supporting Delhi University's internationalisation

2. Memorandum of Understanding on a scholarship programme involving Michelin, Ecole Centrale de Nantes and a consortium of Indian Institutions of Higher Education

The partnership between Michelin, a major investor in India, Ecole Centrale de Nantes and a consortium of Indian Institutions of higher education (IITs, Institutions of National Importance, and Central Universities) aims at funding scholarships and fellowships for students at the master's and doctorate levels to undertake a course of studies at the Ecole Centrale de Nantes

3. Memorandum of Understanding on the ERASMUS MUNDUS Program entitled "Heritage" between 8 European institutions and 7 Indian Institutions, coordinated by Ecole Centrale de Nantes and IIT Madras

The partnership between 8 European Institutions of higher learning led by Ecole Centrale de Nantes and a consortium of Indian Institutions of higher education led by IIT Madras, will allow the funding of student and scientist mobility for the next three years, through EU funds with an emphasis on engineering and scientific projects.

4. Letter of Intent towards a scholarship programme between HEC (Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales) and IIM (Indian Institute of Management) Bangalore, funded by French corporate Altran (innovation and high tech engineering consulting)

The agreement between long term partners HEC and IIM Bangalore, with the support of French corporate group Altran, aims at strengthening the ties between the two institutions by starting a "Professional Mentoring Scheme" for those students participating in their existing exchange programme.

5. MoU General Framework Agreement CNRS - Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore

Both CNRS and IISc are willing to cooperate in the fields of research, development, education, training, transfer of technology and dissemination of knowledge on long term non-commercial basis. They recognize the importance of establishing a close cooperative relationship with a view to the further development of both institutions. This agreement aims to facilitate exchange of Scientists and faculties, and new research projects.

6. MoU AREVA PhD Grant fellowship agreement with IIT Bombay

AREVA SA and Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT B) have agreed to enter into a framework agreement to collaborate for R&D projects in a variety of domains relating to AREVA's Research and Development activities. This collaboration covers mainly development of products and services in the field of nuclear fuel cycle, Nuclear reactor design and construction, Renewable energy and Energy storage for deployment and industrialisation of these technologies. AREVA will finance and support IIT B PhD students who would work on the R&D projects, through this AREVA PhD Grant fellowship agreement.

7. MoU between Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Embassy of France:

The MoU aims at collaboration in teaching and training in French Language.

8. Agreement of Partnership between Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) And Ecole Centrale de Nantes (ECN), France on Academic and Research Collaboration

The Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) and the Ecole Centrale de Nantes (ECN) are mutually interested in enlarging and broadening their cooperation and establishing collaboration in academic and research-related activities.

9. Letter of Intent on the second phase of a support fund for student and faculty mobility between ParisTech and a consortium of seven IITs

The Lol aims at exchange programme of Under Graduates and post Graduates and joint research.

10. Letter Of Intent Between St Gobain Research India And Indo-French Centre For The Promotion Of Advanced Research

The aim of the Lol is to create a new innovation programme called “sustainable habitat for hot and/or humid climates”. The main topics covered by this program will be:

- o Sensing and monitoring building and analyzing energy consumption of various buildings in various climates and characterize building energy envelop.
- o Develop Sustainable and affordable building materials solutions, including but not limited to cooling methods and lighting, with alternate and regionally available material solutions.

11. Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique)

This MOU is aimed at Cooperation between the two institutions which may be established within any field of mutual interest related to science and technology.

12. Letter of Intent between INSERM – AVIESAN (Alliance pour les sciences de la VIE et de la Santé) and Institut National du Cancer, French Republic and Max Institute of Health Education and Research, Republic of India

INCa and Max Institute of Health Education and Research desire to enhance bilateral projects on cancer research (for instance in the areas of epidemiology, biochemistry, proteomics, and genetics of cancer) and public health.

13. Letter of Intent for an Indo French Laboratory on liver diseases-Inserm and Institute for Liver and Biliary Sciences, Delhi

This Letter of Intent sets the general understanding of the two institutions to set up this Indo-French International Associated Laboratory entitled “Transcriptomics and Metabolomics for the Development of Indo-French Research on Severe Liver Diseases” during the year 2013, after completion and signature of the dedicated agreement establishing the terms and conditions of its implementation.

14. General Framework Agreement Oseo- Technology Development Board (TDB)

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aims to establish a collaborative framework under which Oséo and TDB may carry out activities related to the exchanging of best practices and the setting up of coordinated measures to foster technological exchanges and innovation collaborations between companies, organizations and institutions of France and India. These activities can include, but are not limited to : Exchanges, Facilitation of relations among companies, organizations and institutions, Funding of collaborative innovation projects, Coordinated financial instruments

15. Letter of Intent between Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS - Paris) and the Chennai Mathematical Institute, towards an exchange programme involving students, academics and researchers

- 16. Letter of Intent between Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS - Paris) and the Delhi University, towards an exchange programme involving students, academics and researchers**
- 17. Double Master's degree between Ecole des Mines de Nantes and University of Petroleum and Energy Studies (UPES)**

C. Agreements signed separately during the visit:

18. Credit Facility Agreement (CFA) for the Bangalore Metro Rail Project, Phase-I, between Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance of India, and AFD, the French Development Agency.
19. MoU between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and the French National Railways (SNCF) on Technical Cooperation in the field of Railway Sector

New Delhi

February 14, 2013



- 509. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry on the meeting between Minister of Commerce and Industry Anand Sharma and French President Hollande.**

New Delhi, July 9, 2013.

The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Anand Sharma held bilateral talks with his counterpart, Ms. Nicole Bricq, the French Minister for Foreign Trade, in Paris. Shri Sharma requested the French Minister to encourage French companies to participate in key sectors in India such as infrastructure, transport, high technology and energy. The Indian Minister stressed the need for the French Government to provide strategic support to French industries interested in doing business with India while assuring that the Government of India was committed to providing a

conducive and positive policy environment for foreign investments in several key sectors. Shri Sharma also stressed the need for strong French support at the political level for early conclusion of the India-EU BTIA which would contribute to growth in bilateral trade and investment. He also invited the French Minister to visit India at her earliest convenience.

Earlier yesterday, the Indian Minister inaugurated the 6th Session of the India-France CEOs Forum along with the French Minister for Economy and Finance, Mr. Pierre Moscovici. Addressing the Forum, Shri Sharma highlighted the strong growth fundamentals of India which remain rooted in deep democratic values and urged the French investors to enhance their engagement of Indian firms and investment in India to develop a win-win partnership in keeping with the elevated political relations between the two strategic partners. Shri Sharma also emphasised the need for the larger French companies to support the French SME sector in developing its presence in India.

Outlining the provisions of India's National Manufacturing Policy (NMP), the Indian Minister told the French CEOs about the opportunities of investment being created in the green field integrated and self-governing National Investment and Manufacturing Zones (NIMZs) both along and outside the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. Shri Sharma also addressed issues raised by some French CEOs, the most important being the issue of patent protection in India. He clarified that India's Intellectual Property laws were completely TRIPs compliant and India has used the TRIPs flexibility with far greater restraint than a number of other countries, including some developed countries.

On the Novartis case, Shri Sharma explained that it was ruling by the highest Court and not an executive pronouncement. The French Minister for Economy and Finance said that India's growth potential was well understood in France as was exemplified by the presence of more than 700 French companies in India. He also stated that France supported signing of the India-Europe Broad-based Investment and Trade Agreement (BTIA) in the spirit of mutual benefit.

Shri Sharma also held meetings with CEOs of French companies with a large presence in India including La Farge and Capgemini. The French

CEOs apprised Shri Sharma of their future plans in India and offered suggestions to further improve the investment climate.

Shri Sharma stressed the shared global and strategic vision of India and France while thanking the French President Mr. Francois Hollande for the keen interest shown in India-France commercial relations. Shri Sharma earlier yesterday attended a reception by the French President on the occasion of the 6th Indo-French CEOs Forum meeting.

Shri Sharma met the French Foreign Minister, Mr. Laurent Fabius, where they exchanged views on a range of issues and regional and global developments which were of common interest to both the countries. They also discussed ways to capitalise on the excellent political understanding between India and France to enhance bilateral commercial and economic relations.



ITALY

510. Press statement on the Italian Marines issue.

New Delhi, March 12, 2013.

1. The Ministry of External Affairs received a note verbale from the Embassy of Italy in New Delhi late in the evening of 11 March 2013 regarding the Supreme Court decision of 18 January 2013 on the Italian Marines issue. The note verbale conveyed, inter-alia, that Italy deems that there is an existing controversy with India concerning the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea of 1982 and the general principles of international law applicable to the Enrica Lexie incident. They have requested the Indian government to set up a meeting at diplomatic level in order to reach an amicable solution of the said controversy. A request had earlier been received in this regard on 6 March 2013. The Italian request of 6 March 2013 is under examination.

2. Meanwhile, by the note verbale dated 11 March 2013, Italy has informed that “since a controversy between the two States has been established, the two Italian Marines, Mr. Latorre and Mr. Girone, will not return to India on the expiration of the permission granted to them”. It may be recalled that the Supreme Court of India in its Order dated 22 February 2013, had permitted the two Marines to leave India on the express undertaking given by the Republic of Italy, and under the terms of the Order, they are required to return to India within a period of four weeks to face legal proceedings in India.
3. Government of India states firmly that it does not agree with the position conveyed by the Italian Government on the return of the two Marines to India. The Italian Ambassador was summoned by the Foreign Secretary today and Government of India's position on this matter was conveyed to him in the strongest of terms. It was conveyed to him that India expects Republic of Italy as a country that is committed to the rule of law to fulfil the sovereign undertaking given by it to the Supreme Court of India. It was only following this undertaking that the Supreme Court allowed the two Marines to travel to and remain in Italy for a period of four weeks and return to India under the care, supervision and control of the Italian Republic. It was conveyed to the Italian Ambassador that the Italian Government was obliged to ensure their return to India within the stipulated period as per the terms of the Supreme Court Order.



511. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson.**New Delhi, March 14, 2013.**

Official Spokesperson: You may like to ask any questions, those who have not asked any questions before.

Q: Hi, I am from AFP, I would like to know about the Italian Mariners and the recent Supreme Court order. There is one thing we would like you to clarify as the Ambassador enjoys the diplomatic immunity. So, what difference does it make and can we restrict its (inaudible)

Official Spokesperson: What is your question?

Q: Because if he enjoys diplomatic immunity, how does Supreme Court's order makes sense?

Official Spokesperson: I would suggest you please read the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and indicate to me what aspect of that has been impeded. So, we have not heard from anybody else except from you that there is some element of the Vienna Convention that may have been impacted on. Unless you specify to me which aspect has been.

Q: The question our bureau has been asking

Official Spokesperson: Please tell me which aspect, let us be very specific, I have here with me the Vienna Convention.

Q: For instance, if he wants to leave tomorrow.

Official Spokesperson: For instance, I do not answer to hypothetical questions

Q: The Italian Foreign Minister has issued a statement or answered a question saying that they have solid reason to proceed in direction of international arbitration that the Indian government has been consistently and amply apprised of all its needs to know about our reasons as do many of our partners. Your reaction please.

Official Spokesperson: As far as we are concerned, you know, the first step in terms of inter-state relations or public international law is that agreements ought to be respected and we expect that Italy too respects

the agreements that their Ambassador voluntarily submitted to the highest court in India. That is the issue at stake. Everything else takes secondary importance because for us agreements need to be respected or abided by and we look forward to Italy as a country with a history to ensure that agreements are abided by, agreements which they have provided to us through solemn assurances.

Q: Sir, Article 32 of the Vienna Convention says that if a host country in which a diplomat enjoys diplomatic immunity initiates legal proceedings, then he cannot claim diplomatic immunity from the conduct ...of that particular place. In this particular case, does it fall under this particular Article?

Official Spokesperson: You have quoted the article that your friend was raising and I think I am grateful to you for having responded to her question because she did not know the article. That is the answer to her question.

Q: Sir, as far as MEA is concerned...

Official Spokesperson: Please this is not as far as MEA is concerned – this is being adjudicated by the highest court of India. Please understand and I am certain, they are aware of all the legal niceties. It is not for us to decide on this. They take into cognizance every aspect of law both international and domestic and as you just explained the rationale stems from what you have explained is the basis for decision making on their part.

Q: I believe that Ambassador has been asked to reply by March 18, 2013, so will you wait for their reply or will New Delhi have a dialogue with Italy?

Official Spokesperson: As part of our ongoing efforts following what the Prime Minister has said in Parliament yesterday, we have initiated a study of our interactions with Italy. At the end of that internal process, we will take further action that is appropriate taking into account all aspects of our relationship.

Q: *Kerala Government has blamed this directly to your failure. There was direction from the Supreme Court, despite this you allowed them to go and now you are unable to bring them back. Now you blame it on*

double game. You should not have allowed them to go. The Kerala government asks a straight question, Prime Minister is asked in the House, what will be your answer? Our two people are killed and their two persons were in our custody and you let them go, why?

Official Spokesperson: *I will try and answer it in English as all of you know, I am not very fluent and cannot capture the nuances of an answer in Hindi. I can speak Hindustani. Unfortunately I cannot answer this question in Hindi since there are complications in it.*

I think you have to understand that as an executive authority, we abide by the rulings of court. Our views on this matter were expressed to the court and we abided by the outcome on that. It is not in our nature to get involved in inter-ministerial or centre and state disputes because that is not the way the Ministry of External Affairs works. We represent India in its totality and therefore, we will not get involved in inter-bureaucratic disputes. So, may I request you and anybody else in future please desist from asking us inter-Ministerial questions! What you have raised is an issue which was discussed extensively in the Supreme Court. All the record is available. I would suggest that you please have a look of who took what position and satisfy yourself on that basis. But I do not think, this is neither the occasion nor am I the appropriate person to respond to intra-mural views on a matter of national importance.

Q: inaudible.

Official Spokesperson: All I said was that we have initiated a study which reviews in a comprehensive manner all aspects of the bilateral relationship and based on the outcome of that study and as the situation evolves you will see our response. The first step we have taken previously was in responding quite clearly reaffirming the views of the Supreme Court of India and assurances that were provided by the Italian Ambassador himself. If there are other further steps, these will be the outcome of what I have indicated to you, is an ongoing process.

Q: If you could just explain the technicalities. The Supreme Court's decision of asking the Ambassador not to leave the country. Now, will he be not allowed to leave the country if he wants? Will he be stopped at the airport?

Official Spokesperson: I have answered previously that we do not get into hypothetical questions. That situation has not arisen and therefore, I am not at liberty to respond to a hypothetical question which may lead to something. I have indicated to you clearly and I would reiterate that no aspect of the Vienna Convention has been impacted on. Therefore, at this stage everything else is moot. We would not like to further get into hypothetical assumptions or hypothetical situations. As and when situation develops, of course, you will be the first to know about it.

Q: You said it is not in our nature to get into inter-Ministerial. Which is the other Ministry?

Official Spokesperson: It was not a Ministry. He was mentioning about the Kerala Government. Ultimately the issue is these are between two organs of a state. We in the Ministry of External Affairs represent India as an international entity. Therefore, we will not get into disputes or differences or views. It is normal in any organization or any state that different people have different views and those views finally are reconciled and a decision is taken by those who are authorized to take that decision and in this case it is the Government of India. That Government of India was represented by a lawyer who represented several Ministries. He did not represent 'A' Ministry by itself or 'B' Ministry. Ultimately the Union of India that took that decision and I represent, as far as I am concerned, the external aspects of that decision.

Q: External Affairs Minister, Salman Khurshid said that after the notice of the Supreme Court, the Ministry will do everything possible to comply, to guarantee that notice will be respected, is it like that?

Official Spokesperson: Of course, who in the Government of India is going to say that I will not abide by the decision of the Supreme Court of India. After all the Supreme Court is the epitome of our superior judiciary. The question of anyone not abiding by it does not arise. So, I hope that is clear to you and to everybody else here. As of today, I have again said, we do not see any impact on the Vienna Convention. As regards whether somebody has to travel, there are different Ministries and different organizations of the government of India which handles these aspects and our aspects, we will handle.

Q: When is Mr. Basant Gupta expected to arrive in Rome?

Official Spokesperson: If he hasn't taken off from here how will he arrive in Rome. He is very much here in Ministry of External Affairs, I also indicated to you we are thoroughly reviewing the entire expense. A study is underway of the situation as it is today is being examined carefully.

Q: Does the diplomatic immunity cover the offences of deception and fraud and contempt of Court?

Official Spokesperson: I don't know which of those things that you listed is an offence and under what sections etc and I am not the right person to get involved in an interpretation of the Indian Criminal Procedure Code. As regards diplomatic immunity at this stage I have responded what the Supreme Court orders stems from which is that if diplomatic agents willingly submit to the jurisdiction of the court, then that jurisdiction applies and that's what he was mentioning in the article that he was referring to. As regards anything further we will take it as it happens. We will all go by, as you are aware, as a country which has signed the Vienna convention.

Q: So far any communications received by SriLankan Govt regarding the arrest of 60 fishermen today at Pachkedu?

Official Spokesperson: Yes, I have news that I can share with you and that is, it is not 60 fishermen let me try and recollect the information. They were 19 fishermen in four boats who were arrested yesterday and they were taken to Talaimannar and our Consul General in Jaffna, he is right now in Talaimannar, is trying into gain Consular access to them.

Separately, in another incident today, 34 fisherman with five trollers have been apprehended and these were apprehended, by my information, at a different place and that is Delft islands.

We are now talking to the Sri Lankan authorities on that matter. Separately, based on these two incidents the Ministry of External Affairs did summon the Sri Lankan Deputy High Commissioner today and has emphasized the following:

That they should be treated in a humane manner; The Sri Lankan authorities should exercise restraint. There should not be any violence against them and as per our understanding we hope that swiftly and

expeditiously these fishermen, as there is an arrangement between Sri Lanka and India, are returned to India.

Question: You are saying that submitted the jurisdiction of the Indian court then that immunity does not stand and on the other hand you are saying that the Vienna Convention has not been impacted. So what slipped between.....(inaudible)

Official Spokesperson: There is no slip because you are not looking at the other aspects of the Vienna Convention that your other colleague has looked at. I would suggest please read the Vienna Convention, the answers are available there and that's why I am confident in saying what I am saying, the aspect that he referred to relates to jurisdiction. There are other aspects relating to enforcement etc. I would suggest that you have a look at that those executional elements. And look I am not an international public lawyer, however my idea is to try and explain to you the broad contours of the situation and that I would suggest please read those aspects of the Vienna Convention that some of your colleagues may have read and understand this.

Question: Is India satisfied with the cooperation received from the Italian authorities on the investigation into August Westland Deal?

Official Spokesperson: I do not have an update on that but we have previously said that of course we would want assistance, we would want more information, we would want as much information as possible so that we try and pursue this matter at our end. This is something which we have said previously and I don't see a change in that as yet.

Question: In Nepal the ten month long political stand off apparently seems to have ended with formation of Chief Justice led Government. So as a close neighbor and as country that has a huge interest in Nepal, how do you respond to that political development. And given the situation, the division of the political parties regarding this Chief Justice led Government, do you see possibility, prospect of election held a second time?

Official Spokesperson: Modern technology has its perils. I am waiting for a response so if you give me a minute I will walk out and come back and answer your question. There is an answer available but I am not able to access it.

Sometimes it is better to use the traditional and conventional methods.

Yes, on your question, I would like to say that the GOI welcomes the formation today of the interim election govt. led by the Chief Justice of Nepal Rt. Hon. Khil Raj Regmi. We commend the people of Nepal and the political parties representing them of finding a way out of the impasse of the past few months. The formation of the Interim Election Government in Nepal comes at a critical juncture in Nepal's quest to hold constituent assembly cum parliament elections which is essential to consolidate the democratic gains made by its people and institutionalize a strong multi party democracy in Nepal. We hope that the Interim Election Government with the support of all the political parties and the people of Nepal will move forward in the spirit of the political agreements reached with regard to the election. India stands behind the people of Nepal in their efforts to build a stable democratic and prosperous Nepal and will continue to extend all possible cooperation to the people and Government of Nepal in accordance with their aspirations and priorities and shortly we will release the statement that will be available on our website.

I think with that we will end this discussion.



512. Statement in Lok Sabha by External Affairs Minister on return of two Italian marines to India accused in the killing of two Indian fishermen.

New Delhi, March 22, 2013.

Madam Speaker,

I rise to inform the house on recent developments on the issue of return of two Italian marines to India accused in the killing of two Indian fishermen.

In response to concerns raised by the Members of the House, Hon'ble Prime Minister had made a statement on 13 March 2013 on the matter regarding the decision by Italy not to send back two Italian marines accused in the killing of two Indian fishermen. Prime Minister had stated,

inter alia, that the Government has insisted that the Italian authorities respect the undertaking they have given to the Hon'ble Supreme Court and return the two accused persons to stand trial in India. The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Shri Kamal Nath had also stated during the Zero Hour on 13 March 2013 in the Rajya Sabha that all issues raised by Members in this matter will be addressed and answered at a time and in a manner which the Chair may decide.

It would be recalled that the Supreme Court in its Order of 22 January 2013 allowed an application by the two Italian marines, Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone and permitted them to travel to Italy and to remain in the Republic of Italy for a period of four weeks. The Order, inter alia, stated that the marines shall travel to Italy, remain in Italy and return to India under the care, supervision and control of the Italian Republic. On return, they shall once again be bound by the conditions contained in the Order passé by the court on 18 January 2013. The Republic of Italy gave an undertaking to the court that the Italian marines will be kept under its constant custody, supervision and control during this period and took full responsibility for securing the return of the Italian marines to New Delhi on or before the expiry of the period permitted by the court.

Earlier the Supreme Court in its order dated 18 January 2013, in a writ petition filed by the Italian marines and the Republic of Italy raising several jurisdictional issues, had ruled, inter alia, that India has jurisdiction, the matter will be put before a Special Court to be set up by the Union of India in consultation with the Chief Justice of India to try this case and to dispose of the same in accordance with the provisions of the Maritime Zones Act, 1976, the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the provisions of UNCLOS 1982, where there is no conflict between the domestic law and UNCLOS 1982.

A communication was received by the Ministry of External Affairs from the Embassy of Italy in New Delhi late in the evening of 11 March 2013 conveying, inter alia, that Italy deems that there is an existing controversy with India concerning the applicability of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 and the general principles of international law applicable to the Enrica Lexie incident. For these reasons, it requested the Indian Government to set up a meeting

at diplomatic level in order to reach an amicable solution of the said controversy, and conveyed that “since a controversy between the two States has been established, the two Italian Marines, Mr. Latorre and Mr. Girone, will not return to India on the expiration of the permission granted to them”.

On 14 March 2013, the Attorney General of India filed an Affidavit before the Hon'ble Supreme Court conveying these developments in this matter to the Hon'ble Court. The matter was heard by Hon'ble Supreme Court on 18 March 2013. The next hearing is scheduled for 2 April 2013.

Our position has been conveyed in clear terms to the Italian Government. The Supreme Court has affirmed that India has the jurisdiction to try the case even as it has given another opportunity vide its judgement of 18 January, to the petitioners to raise the issue of jurisdiction by adducing evidence before the Special Court to be set up for trial of this case. The Italian requests for diplomatic or expert level meetings to consider the issue of jurisdiction or referring the case to arbitration or any other judicial mechanism cannot be accepted. I have made it clear that the Republic of Italy is bound to honour the solemn commitment that it has made to the Supreme Court to ensure the return of the marines to India within the time period permitted by the Supreme Court.

Following this, we were informed through a diplomatic approach that the Government of Italy would be willing to send the two marines back to India as per its commitment. It sought from India clarifications regarding the conditions applicable to the marines on their return and the provisions regarding the death penalty that could be applicable in this case which was an Italian concern. Notwithstanding the pending proceedings, the Government has informed the Italian Government that the two marines will not be liable for arrest if they return within the time frame laid down by the Supreme Court of India, and shall once again be bound by the conditions contained in the order passed by the Court on 18th January 2013; and that, according to well settled Indian jurisprudence, this case would not fall in the category of matters which attract the death penalty, that is to say the rarest of rare cases. Therefore, there need not be any apprehension in this regard.

These clarifications will also be placed before the Hon'ble Supreme Court appropriately. Following the clarification, we have a confirmation that the

Italian Government is arranging for the return of the two Italian marines within the time frame permitted by the Supreme Court.

I am glad that the matter has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion and the trial of the marines will now proceed as per the directions of the Supreme Court in its order of 18 January 2013.



GERMANY

513. Media briefing by Foreign Secretary on Prime Minister's visit to Germany.

New Delhi, April 8, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here today for this special briefing on the Prime Minister's forthcoming visit to Germany.

We have here with us Foreign Secretary who will make a few opening remarks and then the floor will be open for questions. Along with Foreign Secretary we also have Additional Secretary (Europe West), Ms Ruchi Ghanashyam, who will assist the Foreign Secretary. If you have any specific questions you can also direct them to her.

Now without much ado I will ask Foreign Secretary to make his opening remarks.

Foreign Secretary (Shri Ranjan Mathai): Thank you.

Prime Minister will be paying a bilateral visit to Germany from 10th to 12th April to participate in the second round of Intergovernmental Consultations with Germany. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation including Ministers and senior officials. India has this form of engagement – the Intergovernmental Consultations - only with Germany.

The first round of the Indo-German Intergovernmental Consultations took place in New Delhi on May 31, 2011. And from Germany's side, in Asia the Intergovernmental Consultation format is used with only two other

countries and they are Israel and China. Germany also has such meetings with its other European partners.

Chancellor Merkel when she came to India in 2011 was accompanied by five of her key Cabinet Ministers and three Ministers of State. The idea of the Intergovernmental Consultations is for Indian and German Ministers to meet and discuss their respective areas of cooperation and thereafter to report to the two Heads of Government on the progress achieved and the plans for the future in their respective areas. In addition to the Ministers accompanying PM, the National Security Advisor who will be part of the Delegation will address security-related issues and hold a strategic dialogue. In the course of his visit, Prime Minister will also symbolically bring what is called the 'Days of India in Germany', which is a long series of events in that country, to a close.

India and Germany decided to celebrate the 60th anniversary of our diplomatic relations between the two countries, they were established in 1951, through year-long festivals in each other's countries. Chancellor Merkel did the soft launch of the 'German Year in India' on May 31st, as I said, when she was here. The 'Days of India in Germany' was launched the next year on May 11, 2012 in Hamburg when Commerce, Industry and Textiles Minister Shri Anand Sharma was present at the Hamburg port. On that day they were also celebrating the 823rd anniversary of the port itself. The 'Days of India in Germany' festival had four focus areas – Trade and Investment, Science and Technology, Education including Vocational Education, and Culture. A series of events were held all over Germany in each of these areas.

PM will also call on the President of Germany, President Gauck. Relations between India and Germany have traditionally been cordial and close. Bilateral relations were upgraded to the level of strategic partnership in May 2000 during the visit of German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer to India after an Agenda for Indo-German Partnership for the 21st Century was agreed on.

In the last two decades the economic relationship has expanded manifold. India and Germany had set a trade target of Euros 20 billion to be achieved by 2012. We came very close to this target in the last year but there has been a slowdown which had its impact and in fact in 2012 our trade contracted by around ten per cent.

Germany is also a significant investor in India. It is the eighth largest foreign direct investor in India and it is a crucial source of technology in several areas. I would say that our cooperation in the area of science and technology is one of the central pillars of our strategic partnership. There are at present more than 150 joint S&T projects and 70 direct partnerships between Indian and German universities in the field of science and technology. Cooperation in this particular field has emerged as a focus area for both our countries.

India and Germany also have an expanding relationship in the field of education, especially vocational education and training, an area in which German expertise is well recognized. The German scholarly tradition has also played a major role in introducing Indian art, culture, literature and philosophy to a wider world.

We look forward to discussions on various issues pertaining to our relationship, and we believe the second round of Intergovernmental Consultations will be another landmark in our relationship with Germany, which is growing swiftly in several important areas. Thank you.

Question: Sir, would any agreements be signed during this visit and if so what are the areas in which those agreements will be signed? Secondly, would a discussion on free trade agreement with the EU form part of the agenda? The Germans are saying they want a compromise on the issue of import duty on their luxury cars. What is the thinking in India about this?

Foreign Secretary: As I said, we have made progress in a number of areas of bilateral cooperation and we will be entering into some agreements and memoranda of understanding. The full details will be available when we complete the visit. But broadly the agreements would be in the areas of education including vocational education, science and technology, and clean energy. These will be the three areas. As far as the trade and investment agreement with the EU is concerned, we are of the view that the early conclusion of the India-EU agreement would open up new economic opportunities for both sides, and certainly that applies to the way in which we approach our economic engagement with Germany. Our negotiations have reached an advanced stage. In fact I am informed that there will be another round of negotiations in Brussels perhaps around the 15th of April, and that is when the negotiations will

be taken forward. But we certainly will be discussing the matter with the German side. We expect a strong political thrust from Germany for an early conclusion of the agreement. Certainly the issue of cars is one of those which will be discussed by our side with the EU counterparts in Brussels.

Q: Is defence going to be on the agenda then? If so, what would be discussed on defence?

Foreign Secretary: In the sense that defence is part of the overall relationship. The Defence Ministers will not be participating in the IGC itself. But of course in the discussions with the Germans there would be a reference to the fact that we do have a fairly substantive defence relationship between our two countries. But formally on the agenda perhaps no, because the composition of the delegations on the two sides are focused on the issues which they will be taking up.

But broadly I would mention that Germany is a participant, we had a defence agreement with Germany, as you may recall in 2006 and since that time there is a regular system of consultations and dialogues between our two Ministries. And there is a Higher Defence Council which is headed by the Defence Secretaries of the two sides. So, that is the place where most of the discussions on defence take place. In our Joint Statement there is a reference to defence technology cooperation between the two countries.

Q: Three, four years ago I remember reading in the papers that India made an offer of five or ten billion Euros to the European Union when they were going through a financial problem. What is the status of that? Did they use it? Secondly, the last time one was in Berlin one saw lots of Indian students doing a diploma in Max Mueller Bhavan in Pune and find admission in universities in Berlin and other places. And because they get a bursary or the university administration would help them make enough money, they continue to be students for years and years. Does that still continue? Are you in a position to say something about that?

Foreign Secretary: On the second, I will say definitely not. When I come back from Germany I may be able to share my experiences with you. But I will say that the Germans have given a great deal of emphasis to cooperation in the field of education and certainly the pattern of students

going for education particularly in the field of science and technology, higher technology courses, has been quite ... I am not aware of the specifics which you are referring to of their bursaries continuing indefinitely. It does not sound very much like the German pattern of keeping control over these things. But I will certainly come back with better information on this.

I believe what you are referring to was an IMF facility which our Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, during an IMF meeting had looked at. Yes, we made a commitment but that was not a specific contribution but making available a facility should it become necessary. That was I think only a year and a half ago.

Q: Will there be discussion on G-4? Taking into consideration the opposition of Italy, there shall be talks with Germany?

Foreign Secretary: Yes, the G4 proposal will be discussed. The External Affairs Minister will in fact be reaching Germany before the Intergovernmental Consultations for a separate bilateral meeting, before he joins the IGC. And certainly in that this subject will come up as to how we can jointly take forward the G4 proposal. And while considering the G4 proposal we will of course be looking at the modalities in which it can be taken forward, which means also considering ways in which we can deal with those groups within the UN system who have a different view.

Question: What is the status of our nuclear negotiations with the Germans? Is this a part of the Intergovernmental Consultations? Is the nuclear cooperation kind of thing not on the anvil?

Foreign Secretary: It is not a part. It is not being discussed.

Q: Germans are masters in heavy machinery and infrastructure building technology. Are they willing to share the expertise with us or transfer their expertise to us?

Foreign Secretary: Certainly there have been between our companies and German companies very many transfer of technology agreements over the years. We have also made presentations to the German side on investment possibilities in India including in the field of infrastructure.

Interestingly the MD of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) was in Germany about two or three weeks ago and he made a series of

presentations on the scope and the potential of the DMIC as a good area for investment, particularly in the infrastructure industries and technology-intensive industries for Germany. Though, as you know, the DMIC is being constructed as a collaborative venture with Japan, but certainly the townships which will come up in the corridor will be areas of possibilities for cooperation with many foreign partners. And certainly Germany is one of those whom we have been targeting very specifically. I myself did a small presentation to a group of Germans here on the DMIC a year ago. And following the visit of, as I said the DMIC MD, this will be taken forward.

Certainly in the area of science and technology, one of the focus areas for our attention is high technology and bringing high technology from Germany to India. We have a Joint Working Group between the two countries on heavy industry. One of the new themes which are being talked about is electric mobility. Actually what it means is electric transport. The Germans have done a lot of advanced work on new forms of transport using electrical power transmissions. So, I think there is good potential for technology transfer from Germany.

Q: On trade, last year there was a decline in trade. The FTA with EU has been lingering. Can we expect something at bilateral level to boost the trade?

Foreign Secretary: I think in fact the trade was growing very rapidly till last year, in fact very substantially. As I said, the target of 20 billion Euro had almost been achieved. We will certainly look to bilateral elements in the trading relationship, as I said, through the technology transfers, through investments which will accelerate trade also. But the BTIA will be an additional feature to push forward our trade relationship. May be you would like to add something.

Additional Secretary (Europe West)(Ms Ruchi Ghanashyam): During the 'Days of India in Germany', a number of trade promotion events have also been held which also we hope will add to the Indo-German trade efforts.

Q: There has been some concern in India about the austerity measures that Germany is imposing or has been able to sell to the rest of the European Union because this is starting to affect our trade exports and

our current account deficit. Will we be raising concerns about German macroeconomic policies and Eurozone?

Foreign Secretary: The situation in the Eurozone will certainly form part of the discussions between the Prime Minister and Chancellor Merkel. Whether it can be put specifically in those terms, I am not quite so sure. But certainly our focus in the G20 whenever we have met has been that the need of the hour is in fact to get growth back on track. And I think that would be the emphasis in our discussions including matters relating to Eurozone and macroeconomic policy.

Q: Are we on the same page in terms of how growth should be revived?

Foreign Secretary: In the G20 forum, yes, I think broadly there is agreement on the possibilities of expanding growth globally, and the countries in the Eurozone certainly have to play their own part in that.

Q:: ...(Inaudible)...

Foreign Secretary: Yes, definitely Afghanistan will be featuring in the discussions. We have had interesting exchanges with Germany. As you know, Germany is a part of the ISAF and it has had a contingent in Mazar in the past. As the drawdown continues Germany like the other countries would like to ensure that the future of Afghanistan is not marked by uncertainty and instability. So, there would be a good scope for discussion on what it is we need to do politically and in the field of economic support to the Government of Afghanistan to maintain an area of stability.

Q: Germany is one of the few stable countries inside Eurozone. They are major investors abroad. But as far as investments into India are concerned, by their own admission Germans say it is not up to the mark. So, during the bilateral talks, what are the measures that both the countries could discuss or will be discussing to promote inbound investments into India?

Foreign Secretary: Certainly the Prime Minister would use the opportunity of his discussions with the German Chancellor and in the Intergovernmental Consultations to clarify the steps taken by India to improve the investment climate in our country and to emphasize that the reform process is on track and that a number of steps have been taken

including setting up a Cabinet Committee on Investment. The kind of measures which the Government has already taken. I cannot second guess what the Prime Minister might say about the future - that I will be able to brief you when we come back - but certainly the very large number of steps which we have taken in the past would be clarified. And we would hope the Germans would take due note of these changes.

I may also mention that as part of the investment promotion, we have also had a series of visits abroad by the Finance Minister to a number of countries. So, this is part of an ongoing engagement with the world at large and we certainly do regard Germany - Europe as a whole but Germany specifically - as potentially a country which could invest much more heavily in India.

Q: Sir, already some apprehensions or concerns have been expressed over the proposed India-EU agreement both from some political parties as well as from a section of the industry, specifically on the dairy products. Can you assure that both the concerns are being duly addressed during the negotiations?

Foreign Secretary: Yes, absolutely. I can say that whatever are the requirements to protect India's interests, those will be taken. I am not specifically aware of the concerns you mentioned relating to dairy, but we did have a discussion regarding pharmaceuticals which had been mentioned in some press articles. We must state that the Ministry of Commerce which is leading these negotiations is fully aware of the requirements which we have under the TRIPS and that will be the basis on which we proceed.

Q: Sir, Germany appears to be keen to do something in the renewable energy sector in India and apparently some discussions are on on Green Energy Corridors in India. Could you give us some details on that?

Foreign Secretary: They have been interested in supporting the Green Energy Corridors which is a scheme to permit the transmission of power renewable energy sources through the grid so that you connect up these sources. I believe there is a figure of one billion Euros which has been committed to supporting Green Energy Corridors over a period of years. These will of course be taken up case by case by the industries concerned. But Germany, yes, is keen to support the concept of Green Energy Corridors.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Foreign Secretary: What I said is that nothing has been formally signed yet but this is the kind of discussions which have been held.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Foreign Secretary: As I mentioned, the External Affairs Minister would be there. Commerce, Industries and Textile Minister would be part of the delegation. Minister for Science and Technology Shri Jaipal Reddy, Minister for New and Renewable Energy Shri Farooq Abdullah, Minister for Human Resource Development Shri Pallam Raju will be part of the delegation.

Q: Nearly entire Europe is economically sinking except Germany. Is there any paradigm shift in our foreign strategy?
Foreign Secretary: I am not sure the whole of Europe is sinking when we had very fruitful discussions both with the President of France who certainly did not convey that his country was sinking. I think this is a matter of perception. The slowdown in growth is a matter of concern certainly. But I think it would be difficult to conclude that the whole of Europe is sinking.

Official Spokesperson: Foreign Secretary has agreed that he will answer a couple of more questions on anything else.

Q: Sir, I just wanted to know your reaction to the New York Times' story today about this secret deal between the United States and Pakistan on drone strikes, that the Pakistanis will allow these drone strikes to happen as long as they avoided the terror training camps in POK.

Foreign Secretary: We will need to see whether this report is in fact authentic.

Q: Was the Government caught unawares on this situation that there was a secret deal between the US and Pakistan? And what is the Government's prognosis on the situation?

Foreign Secretary: As I said, this is a newspaper article and it needs to be substantiated. At this stage it would be speculative for me to comment beyond that.

Q: In London there is a couple who have been wrongly accused of molesting their child and have been handed over to the Social Security

Authority. And the couple wants the Indian Foreign Ministry to intervene. In fact I spoke about this to you on Saturday also. Is there any reaction to that, Sir?

Foreign Secretary: I do not think we have received anything directly from the couple but we are awaiting a report from our High Commission. We are aware of it and certainly we have seen the same reports which you have. So, we are awaiting a detailed report from our High Commission as to what exactly is the situation and what can be done.

Q: Sir, as you know there is much anxiety about the Nitaqat law which is being implemented in Saudi Arabia. Can you say at what stage are the discussions with the Saudis and whether a Ministers' team will visit Saudi?

Foreign Secretary: I think at this point the Minister for Labour under whose charge it comes in Saudi Arabia, is not in the country. He should be back perhaps in a week's time at which point we will take up a proposal for a discussion with him at Ministerial level.

Q: How do you view the evolving situation in Korean peninsula?

Foreign Secretary: We have expressed our views earlier on two occasions when a missile launch took place and when North Korea carried out a nuclear explosion, very strongly criticizing those actions and asking North Korea to ensure that it did not take steps which would create further tension and instability in that region. We are watching the situation very carefully. My colleague the Joint Secretary dealing with East Asia was in fact in North Korea, he has just come back. We will conduct a review as to what exactly is the situation and what do we need to do.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction.



514. Prime Minister's statement before his departure for Germany for the 2nd India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations.

New Delhi, April 10, 2013.

I will be visiting Germany from 10 to 12 April 2013 at the invitation of the German Chancellor, Dr. Angela Merkel, for the second round of India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations. This will be my third bilateral visit to Germany and our fifth bilateral summit since my first visit to Germany in 2006. I will be accompanied by Ministers of New and Renewable Energy; Science & Technology; Commerce, Industry and Textiles; External Affairs; and Human Resource Development.

The Inter-Governmental Consultations, first held in May 2011 in Delhi, provide a useful forum for discussions on the full spectrum of our relationship and have helped advance Indo-German cooperation in a broad range of areas. We attach high importance to our strategic partnership with Germany, which rests on solid foundations of shared values, centuries-old intellectual and cultural engagement, expanding opportunities for bilateral cooperation and growing convergence on international issues.

Germany is our largest economic partner in Europe and one of our key global partners for trade, investment and technology. I intend to seek greater trade and investment ties with Germany, as we continue to take steps to boost domestic investments, attract foreign investors and spur the economy back to its long term growth potential of 8%. Germany is also a key partner for us in areas like infrastructure, manufacturing, science and technology, higher education, vocational training and clean and renewable energy. We expect to sign a number of agreements and Memorandums of Understanding in these areas. I will seek Chancellor Merkel's support for an early conclusion of a balanced India-EU Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement. I will also propose that Europe keep its doors open to Indian investors and professionals.

Germany plays a key role in the global economy and, in particular, in stability and growth in the Euro Zone, which has an important bearing on the Indian economy. At a time of persisting global economic weakness

and uncertainty, I look forward to discussing these issues with Chancellor Merkel. We will also discuss our shared interests in United Nations Security Council reforms and a broad range of global developments, including with respect to Afghanistan, West Asia and the Asia Pacific region.

During the visit, I will call on the President of Germany, H.E. Mr. Joachim Gauck. I will also participate in the closing ceremony of the 'Days of India in Germany,' which was organized to mark the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Germany.

India remains committed to a close, cooperative and mutually beneficial partnership with Germany.



515. Prime Minister's remarks at the closing ceremony of the Days of India in Germany.

Berlin, April 11, 2013.

Your Excellency Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle,
Your Excellency former President Richard von Weizsäcker,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am fully delighted to join you for the closing ceremony of the Days of India in Germany. It is a privilege to mark the end of wonderful celebration that was launched by Her Excellency Chancellor Angela Merkel in Delhi in May 2011. This series of events have been a tribute not just to sixty years of our diplomatic relations. They have also been a fitting reminder of the longstanding people-to-people relationship between the German people and the people of India.

Indeed, ladies and gentlemen, our bilateral relationship today is built on the foundations of centuries of association between our two peoples. As that great son of Germany, Prof. Max Mueller, reminded us more than a century ago, our two nations have been bound together by many strands

that go deep into the recesses of our mind. We in India continue to celebrate the life and learning of Max Mueller. His expansive praise of India endeared him to the leaders of our national movement. Max Mueller once remarked : “If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions, I should point to India.”

In our ancient land that has rediscovered itself as a modern nation, such intellectual explorations filled us with a sense of pride. In so doing, Max Mueller contributed, like so many great scholars of his time, to a new consciousness that became the foundation of our national movement and struggle for independence.

Events such as the Days of India in Germany are, without doubt, meant to entertain. But, they are also meant to enlighten and educate. I do sincerely hope that the programmes undertaken as part of this series have served all three purposes – to entertain, educate and enlighten. I am also happy that we are marking this event in this great historic city of Berlin, a city of extraordinary history and character, of resilience and regeneration. Berlin’s transformation from a city at the edge of a great divide into one at the centre of Europe’s integration is a symbol of Germany’s international role and responsibility; of its contribution to the great European project; and of a future for Europe defined by unity, not by division.

Ladies and Gentlemen

These are difficult times, not just for Europe, but for the entire world. I am confident, however, that with national measures and collective efforts, Europe will overcome its present economic challenges. The world needs a successful, open and prosperous Europe. We in India too have a stake in Europe’s economic recovery, its growth and its role in world affairs.

The trials of the global economy have led to repercussions in India as well and our economic growth has slowed down in the past two years. In response, our government has considered several measures to revive the engines of growth. In a country of India’s size, diversity and complexity, intense debates on the policy choices we make are inevitable. But these debates have not stopped us from taking some

hard decisions in the long term interest of our country and our people. In fact, we welcome the debates for the value that they add to our policies and thus make them more durable.

Looking to the future, we have set ourselves a target of over 8% annual growth for the Twelfth Five Year Plan. This is the rate of growth India recorded over the past decade and is, I believe, our potential rate of growth in the near future. We are confident that we can return to that growth path. Our economic fundamentals are strong. The spirit of adventure, enterprise and innovation in India is thriving. The opportunities for investment abound. Our government's resolve to spur investments, attract foreign investors and boost economic growth remains unwavering. Towards this end, we have sought to make India more attractive to investors both at home and abroad and German investors have a special place in our hearts.

In recent months, we have introduced strong measures to achieve fiscal consolidation and further strengthen macroeconomic stability. We have taken steps to accelerate implementation of major infrastructure projects. Our message to the world is clear: India remains open and welcoming to foreign investment. We are aiming to attract an investment of nearly one trillion dollars in infrastructure over the next five years. I hope German companies and companies from across Europe will make good use of these opportunities and help accelerate our growth process to our mutual advantage.

India's concern is not merely its rate of growth, but also the quality of that growth and living conditions of our people both in health and education. We want our growth to be inclusive and sustainable. This is not just a social and political imperative, but also a sound economic underpinning for sustained long term growth. Therefore, we have placed a special emphasis on livelihoods, food security, healthcare, education, skill development and on clean and renewable energy.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In our quest for strong and sustainable growth, Germany is one of India's most important partners. It is not merely because of German excellence in science, technology, production and organisation. It is more because we share a relationship of comfort, candour and confidence, which rests

on shared values and draws upon centuries of intellectual, cultural and philosophical exchanges. In every area of our national development goals – infrastructure, manufacturing, clean energy, science and technology, higher education and skill development – I see enormous opportunities for fruitful partnerships between our two countries.

This is amply reflected in the ten agreements that have been signed today, which include collaboration on a unique and potentially transformative green energy corridor in India and a joint fund for collaboration in higher education.

India and Germany also share common aspirations for their place in a reformed United Nations Security Council. Both of us support the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We are engaging on a Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement between India and the EU, and we consult closely in the G-20 on the directions of global economic recovery. We seek a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. We also share the goal of a stable global order, including in the rapidly transforming Asia Pacific region.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today's is a world of inter-dependent prosperity and shared vulnerability. This is a world not of declining and rising powers, but of broadening opportunities and more widespread hope. This is an age when change is rapid, but transformation can also be quick. This is an age that calls us to connect, to engage and to embrace each other.

Ladies and Gentlemen

On his first visit to Germany in 1956, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru spoke about the hopes for his country, his confidence in Germany and his optimism about India-Germany relations. In the long distance that we have travelled since, our two countries have redeemed that vision. I am confident that in the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century, India and Germany will continue to seek new pathways to a closer partnership for our people and for the benefit of peoples of this planet.

I want to thank everyone in India and Germany, in and outside the government, who have worked hard on these celebrations and this ceremony. I am privileged to be here this evening and I have no doubt that this celebration will be a foundation for an even closer partnership

between our two countries in the years to come. This is the aspiration, hope and confidence that has brought me to this historical city of Berlin.

I thank you Ladies and Gentlemen.



516. Statement by Prime Minister to the Media following the conclusion of 2nd round of India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations in Berlin.

Berlin, April 11, 2013.

Your Excellency Chancellor Angela Merkel,
Distinguished delegates to the Inter-Governmental Consultations,
Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media

I am delighted to be back in Berlin. I thank Chancellor Merkel for hosting this Second Round of the Inter-Governmental Consultations. She has been as gracious in her hospitality, thoughtful in her views and deeply committed to the India-Germany Strategic Partnership as I have known her to be over the past eight years.

Our relationship draws strategic strength from our shared values, sensitivity to each other's aspirations and interests, a comprehensive bilateral relationship and growing international engagement. The high level of bilateral engagement in recent years has substantially and tangibly raised the quality of our cooperation across a broad range of areas.

Economic ties have been a defining feature of our relationship. Germany is one of our largest economic partners globally. I encouraged increased German participation in India's rapid economic growth and our plans to modernize and upgrade our manufacturing and infrastructure sectors. Our Infrastructure plans entail investment of a trillion dollars in the next five years. I also sought continuing openness and support to growing Indian presence in Germany, including in the services sector. We agreed on the importance of an early conclusion of a balanced India-EU Broad Based Trade and Investment Agreement.

We look forward to expanded defence cooperation anchored in technology transfer, co-development and co-production in India. High technology commerce would benefit from further easing of German export controls for India. The agreement today on scientific collaboration on technologies for civilian security adds a new dimension to our growing security cooperation. I am very happy that, following our discussion, we have agreed to set up a High Technology Partnership Group.

Inclusive growth, empowerment of people and sustainable development are key national priorities in India. Many of the agreements signed during this visit not only support these objectives, but also reflect the extraordinary breadth and diversity of our relationship. For instance, the Joint Declaration of Intent for development of Green Energy Corridors in India could be a milestone in our shared commitment to address 21st century challenges.

We agreed that the persisting weakness in the global economy require concerted global response to stimulate recovery without adding to fiscal and financial risks. I am optimistic about European recovery and stability. I expressed our appreciation for Chancellor Merkel's leadership in dealing with the challenges in the Euro Zone. I also shared our government's resolve to restore India's own growth to our long term trend line of 7.5% to 8 %.

Chancellor Merkel and I agreed to continue with our efforts through the G-4 for the reform of the United Nations Security Council to reflect the current realities. We also emphasised the importance of sustained international support to Afghanistan through its transition to a stable, peaceful and democratic future. We called for an end to violence in Syria and a peaceful resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue. We underlined our shared interest in peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region, including on the Korean peninsula.

Our discussions today have reinforced my conviction in a strong and vibrant future for the strategic partnership between our two democracies. Germany and India are factors of stability and prosperity in two key regions of the world. I have no doubt about the bright prospects of our partnership.

Thank you



517. Joint Statement on the Further Development of the Strategic and Global Partnership between Germany and India.

Berlin, April 11, 2013.

1. During the second round of Indo-German intergovernmental consultations held today in Berlin Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh discussed the state of the Strategic Partnership agreed in 2000 and reaffirmed their commitment to further enhancing cooperation over a broad spectrum. They agree to continue with the successful format of regular intergovernmental consultations chaired by heads of government and with the participation of relevant ministers as well as to add as required other formats to the existing wide range of consultation architecture instruments.
2. The Indo-German cooperation opens up excellent prospects for developing both countries to the benefit of their peoples. Germany and India share the view that new initiatives in the area of trade, bilateral investment, energy, energy security, the environment, culture, education, training, research, technology and defence can catalyse and activate the great potential of their bilateral ties.
3. The Indo-German Consultative Group provides valuable input for bilateral cooperation. Both heads of government appreciate the intensive and productive work done by its members and are pleased that the Group is to continue its activities.
4. Germany and India are determined to further expand their cooperation in higher education, research and technology – dynamic core areas of the Indo-German Partnership – and to open up new and innovative areas of cooperation. To this end, Germany and India have agreed for a new jointly funded programme entitled “Indo-German Strategic Partnerships in Higher Education” (IGSP), which aims to intensify existing partnerships between German and Indian institutions of higher education. The programme will focus on establishing joint research projects that will include joint supervision as well as

student and academic exchanges in this context. The Indian side appreciates the Dr Angela Merkel scholarships for Indian law students, 50% of whose funding comes from the Jawaharlal Nehru Award prize money received by the Federal Chancellor in 2011 and 50% from the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service – DAAD), as well as the German Chancellor Fellowship Programme, which will offer India an additional 10 fellowships a year.

5. Both sides expressed their appreciation over the current level of engagement between India and Germany in the fields of Science and Technology. The collaboration in the areas of Advanced Material Science and High Energy Physics enabled through Indian participation in the synchrotron facility at DESY and FAIR project in Germany was a significant element of this partnership. The implementation of industrial research and development projects through the binational Indo-German Science and Technology Centre was noted as another successful instrument of cooperation between the two countries.
6. Expressing their continued commitment to intensify and further enhance the level of Science & Technology collaboration, both sides agreed to launch a new strand of cooperation on Civil Security Research covering areas of mutual interest like natural disaster management; health outbreaks; urban security and protection and rescue of people through support of joint projects.
7. Both sides noted the recent opening of the German House for Research and Innovation in New Delhi. They expect it to give their cooperation in the field of research and technology a further boost. The two countries have agreed to jointly fund the Indo-German Centre for Sustainability (IGCS) established at IIT Madras. The activities of the Centre are directed towards building resilient systems in the face of climate change as well as enhance strategic knowledge in key areas of climate change. It will conduct research, technology development, training and knowledge dissemination including social and institutional barriers that can

also help towards developing policy guidelines in a set of priority areas relevant to the changing climate system. The IGCS at IIT-Madras will host visiting scientists and researchers from German universities for four years under support by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The research projects to be undertaken at IGCS will be funded by the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India.

8. Both sides are pleased with the success of their vocational training partnership under the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two Governments on 31st May, 2011. In this context German and Indian companies are involved in developing practice-oriented training and supporting training of trainers on the basis of dual vocational training standards. The present cooperation will continue and be expanded on vocational training in key sectors such as setting up of an Advanced Training Institute as Centre of Excellence on Energy-Efficient Construction Technology and other Institutions of higher vocational learning.
9. With a view to promoting and intensifying personal contacts and intercultural skills, Germany is cooperating with India's Ministry for Human Resources Development and the Kendriya Vidyalaya Schools (KVS) to support German teaching in Indian schools under its Schools: Partners for the Future (PASCH) initiative and its "German in 1,000 Schools" programme.
10. Both sides consider the "Year of Germany" in India and the "Days of India" in Germany an unqualified success. The programmes organized in this connection have built important bridges between our societies and contributed to mutual understanding. They have also been an important catalyst in enhancing awareness of the cultural diversity, academic achievements, technological progress and economic opportunities in both countries.
11. Both sides want to follow up on the great interest generated by the travelling exhibition Urban Mela with its "CitySpaces" theme – the core focus of the "Year of Germany" in India – by launching an Indo-German urbanization forum. This would enable topics

such as urban planning, architecture, mobility, transport, the supply of goods and infrastructure to be discussed in a variety of working groups.

12. Close trade and investment relations are a core dimension of our partnership and of great importance for the development of both the Indian and the German economy. Both Governments will strongly back a further intensification of Indo-German business cooperation. Both sides would encourage cooperation in the field of rare earths on mutually beneficial terms. Both Governments recognize that expanding high technology trade and cooperation is key to deepening the strategic content of their relations. Both sides agree to consult regularly on advancing this objective and to this end form a High Technology Partnership Group including both government and business.
13. The Indian Government's planned "Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor" (DMIC) offers ample scope for cooperation as well as a host of investment and business opportunities over the years ahead. During the Intergovernmental Consultations in May 2011 in New Delhi, vocational and educational training featured as an area of further co-operation between the two countries. India sought Germany's cooperation in taking up a pilot project on skill development in the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. The new corridor planned between Mumbai and Bangalore likewise opens up interesting prospects for Indo-German cooperation.
14. Both sides emphasize that freedom of movement for business visitors and professionals is important for the sustained growth of trade and investment flows. Both sides agreed to work together to facilitate such movement between the two countries.
15. Germany and India recognize the important role that cooperation on electric mobility can play in reducing energy consumption, improving the environment, transforming industry and building an eco-friendly industrial society. They intend to support the sustainable and sound development of their electric vehicle production sectors by facilitating exchange and cooperation in

the area of electric vehicle technologies, production and market development.

16. Both Governments recognize that there is immense potential for cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises in Germany and India. It is these enterprises that guarantee growth, innovation and jobs. Both sides appreciate the success of the Indo-German Manager Training Programme which links SMEs from both countries thus enhancing the understanding of the respective business culture. Both sides believe that joint research and development projects involving medium-sized companies and business-oriented research establishments in both countries are of great importance. Both Governments accordingly intend to promote through their national programmes Indo-German research and development cooperation activities by companies and research establishments aimed at developing new marketable products, processes and technical services.
17. Both sides agree to further intensify their exchange of views and experiences related to natural and man-made disasters.
18. Both countries underlined the importance of enhancing cooperation in the tourism sector and noted that India and Germany have significant potential for enhancing tourism traffic between the two countries. They agreed to encourage and facilitate the visit of tourists to each other's countries. In this regard they requested tour operators, travel agents, hoteliers and airlines to participate in each other's tourism fairs and events. India proposed to hold the 7th Joint Working Group on Tourism Cooperation between India and Germany in Delhi on a mutually convenient date.
19. Both sides recognize the role that norms and standards play in opening markets and see Indo-German cooperation in this area as beneficial to both the Indian and the German economy. They plan to extend their cooperation also to the areas of conformity assessment and product safety. Both sides accordingly agree to set up a working group on quality infrastructure.

20. Germany and India have a shared interest in the creation of decent jobs offering employee rights, social security and adequate protection in case of sickness as well as appropriate incomes as per legislative enactments of each country. They both want to see fair and safe working conditions. They are keen to continue their good cooperation at G20/ASEM meetings of labour and employment ministers and support the ILO recommendations on Social Protection Floors. Both sides also agree to share their best practices in the field of corporate social responsibility.
21. Both sides commend the energy policy dialogue under way in the Indo-German Energy Forum (IGEF), which is coordinated by the Indian Ministry of Power and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, as well as the opening of an IGEF Support Office in New Delhi. Under the auspices of IGEF an "Excellence Enhancement Centre" has been established for bilateral cooperation on sharing of best practices in the area of enhancing efficiency of thermal power plants. There are plans for private sector to participate to an even greater degree in the 6th Indo-German Energy Forum scheduled for the first quarter of 2014 in New Delhi. The ongoing policy dialogue between the relevant ministries will likewise be continued and expanded. This concerns in particular cooperation projects in the field of enhancing efficiency of thermal power plants, renewable energy and energy efficiency.
22. Since 2008 Germany and India have intensified their cooperation in the area of agriculture, food and consumer protection and are pursuing their dialogue in this connection in the bilateral working group. A new cooperation project is planned on plant variety protection and seed legislation by the working group to promote sustainable agriculture.
23. Germany and India note the urgent need to find effective and viable solutions to the pressing problems of climate change and its consequences for humanity. This includes mitigation and adaptation strategies designed to support the continued economic and social development in developing countries.
24. Both sides commend the ongoing cooperation between the two countries in these areas and are keen for it to continue. Both sides

- agree that issues relating to climate change protection should be discussed at the Second Indo-German Environment Forum planned for 2014 in New Delhi.
25. Germany and India look forward to continuing their successful cooperation in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) context. Both sides agreed that this cooperation may be enhanced to facilitate preparation of a roadmap for CDM in future and design and support for nationally appropriate mitigation actions.
 26. Germany and India reaffirm that they will continue their successful development cooperation in a spirit of partnership. Assisting projects with innovative approaches in the mutually identified priority areas of energy, environment and sustainable economic development support India's inclusive development and poverty reduction programmes. It also contributes to achieving global development and addressing climate change issues.
 27. Germany and India are committed to extending the role of renewable energy in their national energy strategy. Development of renewable energy is thus a major focus of bilateral cooperation. In this regard, the integration and evacuation of renewable energy into their respective national grids plays a pivotal role with major technological and physical challenges. To support India in addressing these challenges, the German government expresses its intention to assist the establishment of "Green Energy Corridors" in India through technical as well as financial development cooperation. They welcomed the commissioning of a solar energy project of 70 MW capacity in March 2013 at Sakri, Maharashtra in India with soft credit support from the German side.
 28. Germany and India recalled their cooperation in the UN Security Council during 2011-12 and agreed to continue to collaborate in strengthening and reform of the United Nations and the multilateral system. In this context, they reaffirmed their commitment to continue their efforts through the G-4 to reform the United Nations Security Council by expansion of both categories of its membership, and underlined their support for each other's candidature for permanent membership of an expanded Security Council.
 29. As members of United Nations Human Rights Council, Germany and India will seek to develop mutual understanding of positions

and encourage initiatives so as to promote and protect human rights.

30. By collaborating on joint projects, Germany and India intend to contribute to a stable and peaceful future for Afghanistan. In this connection both sides emphasize the importance of the regional Heart of Asia process, in which India coordinates confidence-building activities in the area of investment and trade promotion, activities which Germany supports. Both sides have further agreed to hold bilateral consultations on political issues, and social and economic development including cooperation in the sphere of trade and investment and capacity-building in various (economic) sectors.
31. Germany and India express satisfaction at the deepening comprehensive bilateral relations between India and EU and recognize that both India and EU, as long-standing strategic partners, are committed to working together to reinforce the relationship in all areas.
32. The leaders underline their strong commitment to a successful outcome to the EU India negotiations for a broad based, ambitious and balanced Free Trade Agreement that will generate jobs and growth in both countries and their hope for final agreement in 2013.
33. Germany and India will seek to intensify consultations within the G20 and strengthen the G20's role as the premier forum for international economic and financial cooperation.
34. Both sides will therefore make strenuous efforts to achieve a consensus on trade facilitation by a balanced package of issues this year at the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference so as to ensure there is still a prospect of bringing the Doha Round to a conclusion.
35. Both sides agree to intensify further their exchange of views and experience on combating terrorism as well as their practical cooperation in this connection, also in the Indo-German Working Group on Counter-Terrorism as well as multilateral forums.

36. Both sides are in favour of holding regular consultations on issues relating to international cyber policy.
37. In the light of new security challenges both sides are keen to intensify their security policy dialogue and exchange of views. Both sides expressed their keenness to enhance cooperation in the defence sector through dialogue and exchanges on matters of mutual interest, including in the area of defence technology collaboration.
38. Both sides recognize the importance of an effective national export control systems conforming to the highest international standards. Both heads of government want the bilateral dialogue on export controls and international export control regimes to continue. Germany welcomes the ongoing intensified dialogue between India and the various export control regimes (NSG, MTCR, AG and WA). Both sides agree to continue working together to prepare the ground for India to accede to the export control regimes as a full member and thereby strengthen the international non-proliferation regime.
39. Germany and India reaffirm that they will work together for a world without nuclear weapons, for universal and non-discriminatory global nuclear disarmament and a reduced salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. Both sides agree to cooperate in strengthening global non-proliferation efforts. They noted the contribution of initiatives such as the Hague Code of Conduct against Missile Proliferation and the Proliferation Security Initiative during the last decades and the potential for advancing them in the future. Both sides support the IAEA's Safeguards System including the Additional Protocol as the international verification norm. They participate in the discussions on a Draft International Code of Conduct on Outer Space with a view to its adoption as an agreed document of universal adherence. Both sides agree to hold regular consultations on disarmament and non-proliferation issues.
40. Both countries stress the importance of national and international efforts to reduce risks of nuclear and radiological terrorism. They

reaffirm their shared commitment to promoting the full and effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons and Biological and Toxic Weapons Conventions and coordinated efforts to promote their universalization. Germany attaches high importance to the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In this context, India reiterated its commitment for its unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. Both sides express their full support for a multilateral, non-discriminatory and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and call for the commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

41. Noting the recent talks in Almaty between Iran and the E 3 + 3, both sides stress the importance of a diplomatic resolution to the Iranian nuclear issue and urged Iran to fulfil all relevant international obligations and take the necessary steps to restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. They condemn the North Korean nuclear test conducted on 12 February as a violation of DPRK's international commitments and call upon the DPRK to respect its international obligations as set out in several United Nations Security Council resolutions in this connection and to take urgent steps to deescalate the situation.

List of documents signed on the sidelines of 2nd round of India-Germany Intergovernmental Consultations

April 11, 2013

Renewable Energy

- MOU between Solar Energy Centre and Fraunhofer Institute for cooperation and exchanges in various areas including solar photovoltaic; solar thermals systems; hydrogen and fuel cells.

Science & Technology

- Programme of Cooperation between Dept. of Biotechnology of India and Helmholtz Association in the area of development of future natural drugs.

- Supplementary MoU on Research Framework of the Indo-German Centre for Sustainability at IIT, Madras under the National Climate Action Plan.

Railways

- MoU between Deutsche Bahn and Indian Railways for cooperation in the field of freight, passenger operations, infrastructure building and management; development of modern competitive railway organization.
- MoU between DB System and Centre for Railway Information Systems for cooperation in the field of information systems related to railways.

Vocational Education & Training

- MOU between Hof University of Applied Sciences & Integrated Association of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises of India (SPV formed by Faridabad Small Industries Association) to develop specialized vocational training course.
- MOU between Manipal University, Manipal, India & Bavarian Universities Consortium represented by Hof University of Applied Sciences of Germany to establish the Indo-Bavarian Integrated Bachelors and Masters Programme in August 2013.
- MoU between Infosys Ltd and Bertelsmann Stiftung to support Vocational Education and Training in India.
- MOU between PSG Institute of Advanced Studies & Professional Training Centres of the Bavarian Employers Association (BFZ)
- Contract agreement between Cairn India and TUV Rheinland to set up a state-of-the-art vocational education training facility in Rajasthan.



518. List of documents signed during the official visit of Prime Minister to Germany for the 2nd India-Germany Intergovernmental Consultations.

April 11, 2013.

List of documents signed during the official visit of Prime Minister to Germany for the 2nd India-Germany Intergovernmental Consultations

1. Joint Declaration of Intent between Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Federal Foreign Office of Germany regarding promotion of German as a foreign language in India
Indian: Dr. M. Mangapati Pallam Raju, Minister for Human Resource Development.

German: Ms. Cornelia Pieper, Minister of State in the German Foreign Office Cooperate in introducing B.Ed programmes for German language. Also scholarships would be awarded for Masters degree programs and for short stays in Germany with the goal of improving mutual trust and intercultural relations.

2. Intergovernmental MoU between India & Germany on Cooperation in the field of Higher Education
Indian: Dr. M. Mangapati Pallam Raju, Minister for Human Resource Development.

German: Ms. Johanna Wanka, Federal Minister of Education and Research Intends to facilitate people-to-people exchanges. This includes students, academics, and project collaborators.

3. Joint Declaration of Intent on Indo-German cooperation in the area of Civil Security Research
Indian: Shri Jaipal Reddy, Minister for Science & Technology

German: Ms. Johanna Wanka, Federal Minister of Education and Research The Indo-German research cooperation in this new area intends to fund 5 pilot projects in 2013 with the identified priorities being natural disaster management, biological risk situations, urban security, protection & rescue of people and social aspects of civil security research.

4. Joint Declaration between Department of Agriculture & Cooperation of India and the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, acting according to its mandate for the bilateral "Kooperations Program" of the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection and the National Seeds Association of India and the German Association of Plant Breeders. Indian: Ambassador of India

German: Dr. Gerd Muller, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection. Aims at strengthening cooperation in:

- i) plant variety protection
 - ii) conservation of plant genetic resources.
 - iii) cooperation between Indian and German agricultural research institutions and seed companies.
5. Joint Declaration of Intent by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution of India and Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology of the Federal Republic of Germany on the Establishment of an Indo-German Working Group on Quality Infrastructure for Cooperation in Standardisation, Conformity Assessment and Product Safety. Indian: Foreign Secretary

German: Anne Ruth Herkes, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology. Aims to strengthen bilateral cooperation in standardization, conformity assessment and product safety through advancing bilateral economic and technical cooperation, intensifying dialogue and promoting coordinated activities in international organizations. Also provides for establishing and Indo-German Working Group Quality Infrastructure.

6. Joint Declaration of Intent between Germany and India on Indo-German Development Cooperation regarding the Establishment of Green Energy Corridors Indian: Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Minister for New and Renewable Energy.

German: Ms. Gudrun Kopp, Parliamentary State Secretary. Aims at fostering increased use of renewable energy in India through technical and fanatical cooperation by way of integrating additional renewable energy generation capacity with the national grid. The Technical cooperation would be implemented through the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and KfW intends to provide concessional loans of up to Euro one billion over the next six years.

Berlin

April 11, 2013



519. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Labour & Employment on the meeting between Minister of State (L&E) and Federal Minister of Health of Germany.

New Delhi, April 29,, 2013.

A Bilateral Meeting was held between India and Germany here in New Delhi today to appraise the German side of the achievements in the implementation of Labour welfare measures taken by India. The Indian side was lead by Mr. K. Suresh, Minister of State for Labour & Employment while the 17 member German Delegation was headed by Mr. Daniel Bahr, Federal Minister for Health, Germany.

Welcoming the German Delegation Shri Suresh said the Government of India is conscious of the fact that true development cannot take place without inclusive growth. Development is not worth mentioning if it does not cater to the basic needs of the downtrodden and poor class.

The minister detailed about 'Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008, the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and the massive programme of skilling 500 million people by 2022. He said RSBY has already reached out to more than 34.4 Million families covering about 110 Million persons. More than 5.2 Million workers have visited the hospitals and availed the hospitalization facilities under the scheme. He also placed on record the appreciation of the Government of India to

Government of Germany for the technical support given under the project Indo German Social Security Programme through GIZ India in making the project a success.

The German side inquired about the framework of RSBY and its impact on the lives of workers. They were also informed of the new initiatives taken to augment the base and applicability of RSBY smart card. They also showed keen interest to foster exchange of programmes between the two countries in this regard.

The Germans were also told of the skill development measures taken by the ministry and it was said that in the last five years the number of Industrial Training Institutes have been doubled to 10000. All the Government ITIs are being upgraded under various Schemes. Under the Skill Development Initiative, 1422 short term employable courses covering 73 sectors to increase employment and employability have been developed. India and Germany are collaborating in the area of skill training.

Shri Suresh wished a fruitful visit of the German delegation and hoped of the continued cooperation between the two countries in the coming future.



520. First Meeting of India-Germany High Technology Partnership Group.

Berlin, September 10, 2013.

1. Foreign Secretary Mrs. Sujatha Singh and State Secretary in German Foreign Office Harald Braun today chaired the India-Germany High Technology Partnership Group in Berlin. The group will further deepen the bilateral relationship in high technology cooperation. During the meeting today, both sides exchanged views on strengthening trade in high technology and on issues related to export control and non-proliferation and preparations for the expanded second round, including line ministries and a high level business segment, which is to take place in New Delhi during the first semester of 2014.

2. The creation of this group goes back to the decision made by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during the Second Indo-German governmental consultations in April 2013 in Berlin, where both Governments agreed to expand trade and cooperation in high technology.



GEORGIA

521. India-Georgia Foreign Office Consultations. Tbilisi, July 16, 2013.

Foreign Office Consultations between India and Georgia were held on 15-16 July 2013 in Tbilisi. The Indian side was led by Mr. Ajay Bisaria, Joint Secretary Eurasia Division in the Ministry of External Affairs and the Georgian side was led by Ms. EkaAkobia, Director of the Department of Asia, Africa, Australia and the Pacific Rim in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. The last round of these consultations was held in March 2010 in New Delhi.

The sides comprehensively reviewed bilateral cooperation in all sectors of mutual interest and also discussed regional and international issues. In the bilateral sphere, the Indian side held thematic dialogue with the participation of Georgian MFA representatives dealing with bilateral political, economic, cultural, consular and legal matters. The sides agreed to work towards streamlining the bilateral visa regime procedures for various categories of visas with a view to promoting business, tourism, etc. and decided to conclude bilateral agreement on visa free travel by diplomatic and official passport holders of both the countries. The Indian side handed over a packet of draft consular agreements to the Georgian side for its consideration. The sides also reviewed cooperation in international fora including the UN and multilateral organizations. H.E. Mr. David Jalagania, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs hosted a working lunch in honour of the visiting Indian delegation during which the sides have exchanged views on global and regional security issues.

During the visit, Mr. Ajay Bisaria also held meetings with H.E. Mr. Ilia Kvitaishvili, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and with H.E. Ms. Ketevan Botchorishvili, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia. During these meetings, the sides discussed prospects for cooperation, including India's investment activity in Georgia. Both sides have agreed to promote mutual investments.

Prior to these consultations on the same day, the Indian Ambassador designate to Georgia Dr. Suresh Babu handed over copies of Letter of Credence to the Deputy Foreign Minister on his concurrent accreditation to Georgia.

The Indian side expressed its gratitude to the Georgian side for the warm hospitality extended to the delegation members during their stay in Tbilisi.

The next round of Consultations will be held in New Delhi.



HUNGARY

522. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of External Affairs Minister to Hungary.

New Delhi, July 15, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for coming here for this interaction. As is usual I have an announcement to make. Following the announcement, if there are any questions on that I will be happy to answer, otherwise on any other thing that you would like to ask. The announcement relates to the visit of the External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid, to Hungary. The External Affairs Minister is currently in Hungary for bilateral talks with his Hungarian counterpart Mr. János Martonyi. Also, he is preparing for a high-level visit from Hungary later during the course of this year. We expect the Prime Minister of Hungary to visit India before the end of this year, and the talks are related to that visit too.

As you are aware, India and Hungary have traditionally very good relations. Hungary was amongst those countries which supported India's

permanent membership in an expanded Security Council. They also has been forthcoming in their support at the NSG for the waiver for the civilian nuclear agreement in 2008.

We have approximately an investment of US\$ 1.5 billion in Hungary. About 8,000 Hungarians are employed in Indian companies. Also, my understanding is that while the bilateral trade is something like US\$ 650 million, it is weighted in favour of India with Indian exports outweighing imports from Hungary.

As a measure of the extremely cordial relations between India and Hungary, the External Affairs Minister has also been invited in a rare and special gesture to address all their Heads of Mission who have gathered in Budapest. He will be addressing the annual conference of all Hungarian Heads of Mission in Budapest on Indian perspectives and Indian approach to foreign policy. This is a signal honour. This is the first time that a Foreign Minister from Asia is invited for this sort of an opportunity to speak to Hungarian Heads of Mission.

Apart from that, the External Affairs Minister will also be inaugurating an exhibition of Amrita Sher-Gil. Amrita Sher-Gil is the daughter of India and Hungary. One of her parents was Hungarian and the other was Indian. The External Affairs Minister looks forward to strengthening these aspects of our relationship.

I think that is all I have in terms of the announcement to make. If you have any questions on this I will answer, otherwise on anything else.

Q: ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: I think I mentioned to you that we expect the visit of Mr. Viktor Orbán, the Prime Minister of Hungary, later this year to India. Therefore, it is traditional for us to work towards any agreements that we have for such a visit. That said, as you are also aware, Hungary is an important member of the European Union and of course they will discuss among other things the free trade agreement discussions that are going on between India and the EU.



523. Media Statement by External Affairs Minister during his visit to Hungary.

Budapest, July 15, 2013.

Relations between India and Hungary are historic, friendly and multi-faceted. The very fact that I have been invited to address the Annual Conference of Hungarian Ambassadors speaks of the high level of mutual trust between our two countries.

This morning, I had excellent discussions with my host Dr. Janos Martonyi on all issues of bilateral, regional and international concern. We also agreed to closely coordinate our position on all regional and international issues.

The forthcoming visit of H.E. Prime Minister Viktor Orban to India in October this year is going to set a new milestone in our bilateral ties. Several new agreements are likely to be signed further strengthening our bilateral cooperation. Warm welcome awaits H.E. Prime Minister Orban in India. I will have the pleasure of calling on him tomorrow to further discuss the details of this visit.

Our economic and commercial engagement is gradually increasing with Indian investments in Hungary reaching a record level of USD 1.5 billion. Our people-to-people contacts are deep-rooted going back to several centuries. This afternoon, I am going to inaugurate an exhibition celebrating the birth centenary of Amrita Shergill, who is an important link between our two nations. Keeping these historic bonds in mind, we opened an Indian Cultural Centre in Budapest two years ago, which I believe is extremely popular.

I am confident that my visit and discussion with Dr. Janos Martonyi this morning would contribute to further deepening of our bilateral ties. I am profoundly thankful to Hungarian authorities for their generous hospitality.



524. Media Statements by Prime Ministers of India and Hungary following their delegation level talks.

New Delhi, October 17, 2013.

Your Excellency Prime Minister Viktor Orban,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome Prime Minister Viktor Orban on his first ever visit to India. I appreciate his strong personal commitment to deepening the relations between our two countries, which have traditionally been very close and friendly due to the remarkable history of cultural and people-to-people ties.

Today, there is much that brings our countries together. Like India, Hungary is a thriving democracy. It is a dynamic economy at the heart of a transforming Central Europe and a member of the European Union. Indian investors are increasingly finding a home in Hungary. In our own ways, both our countries are making important contributions to security and development in Afghanistan. Hungary has also been supportive of concerted global action for combating terrorism. All this gives us reason to work closely together for strengthening our relations.

Prime Minister Orban and I had very productive discussions today in which we reviewed the entire spectrum of our relations. We agreed that we can substantially expand our economic relations by leveraging our complementary strengths, India's large and growing market and Hungary's membership of the European Union.

We welcomed the work done by the Joint Economic Committee, which met earlier this week and identified priority areas for cooperation, including information technology, pharmaceuticals, auto components, healthcare, tourism, energy, engineering goods and food processing, among others. I also sought Prime Minister Orban's support for an early conclusion of the India-EU Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement, which would enhance trade and investment flows between India and Hungary.

We have a very productive collaboration in Science & Technology, which has been benefited from the annual contribution of one million Euros each to a Joint Strategic Research Fund. Today, we agreed to enhance

our annual contribution to the Fund to 2 million Euros each. This would enable us to undertake new projects involving high-end technologies.

We have also agreed to strengthen our cooperation in the area of defence technology. Hungary possesses advanced technology in niche areas of defence industry and can become a reliable partner in our efforts for defence modernization.

India appreciates Hungary's support on international issues, including our candidature for a permanent membership of the UN Security Council and the 2008 decision of the Nuclear Suppliers Group on civil nuclear cooperation with India. I have sought Prime Minister Orbán's support for India's full membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and other multilateral export control regimes.

As I mentioned in the beginning, India and Hungary share strong cultural bonds. Hungary has an admirable tradition of scholarship in the field of Indology. We will continue to nurture this important strand of our relationship through continued support to Indian studies through fellowships and exchanges. I am confident that the activities planned under the Cultural Exchange Programme 2013-15 would contribute to strengthening our cultural relations.

Prime Minister Orbán and I also exchanged views on a range of regional and international issues. We both recognized that terrorism and extremism pose a common threat to modern democratic societies like India and Hungary. We noted the need to create a global normative framework against terrorism and agreed to deepen our cooperation in this regard.

I look forward to working closely with Prime Minister Orbán for expanding and deepening our bilateral relations.

Thank you.

Prime Minister of Hungary (Mr. Viktor Mihály Orbán): Ladies and Gentlemen, may I just share some of my feelings I have gathered during this visit in your wonderful country.

First of all, may I just congratulate the leadership of India for providing such impressive economic results in the recent decade which, especially looking at this development from the European Union, can be classified as magnificent.

In the world which has suffered, I am speaking about the European world which is suffering, of the crisis especially in the Eurozone and around the Eurozone, fighting for even a minor economic growth generation and generating some more fresh air for our economy, it is really something promising to have a look at the Indian economy and the figures which are really convincing to all of us.

This kind of progress you have made, Your Excellency, in the recent years is clear evidence to all of us that your nation is getting more and more new global power, and in the future we have to look India from that angle and from that point of view.

May I just say thank you very much for all the dignitaries of India who were kind to accept us and to share your thoughts to us. May I just say thanks to the Indian investors as well in Hungary, especially two major companies of Indian economy, who already have signed a strategic cooperation agreement with the Hungarian Government, serving as a flagship to the Indian investors in Hungary?

May I just underline the point which was done by the Prime Minister that we Hungarians support India's ambitions of obtaining permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council. This is not just a point of the present Hungarian Government but that was earlier and that would be the future because it is not a party but it is a very much national point of view of Hungary.

Gentlemen, may I just add another point. I try to explain everywhere here in India that of course we have some difficulties inside the European Union Economic Zone but at the same time I kindly ask all of you to identify your region which is called Central Europe and which reformed itself, it is containing four or five countries with 80 million people - I am speaking about the Central European region - which has reformed deeply itself and over the crisis and has the greatest potential inside the European Union for growth. So, when you would like to take into consideration your possibilities in the European Union, some special attention should be deserved by the Central European region.

We have a cooperation of four Central European major countries, the so-called Visegrad Group - the Polish, the Czech, the Slovakian, and the Hungarian governments - and we have the regular summit of these

four Prime Ministers. I have the mandate to invite the Prime Minister of India to visit one of our summits in the future. I hope that he would be in a position to accept our invitation, and I am happy to see him somewhere in Central Europe. Now I am the President of that group anyway. Now Budapest is the capital of our cooperation but it changes every year. I hope in Central Europe we have a chance soon to see each other.

One other point I would like to make, ladies and gentlemen, is the long-term foundation of our partnership because we Hungarians think that money is important, business is important, politics is good, but human relation is even more important. Therefore, the Hungarian Government do express how committed we are to have a longstanding, long-term partnership. We would like to provide a solid foundation for that. Therefore, we are offering 200 Hungarian state scholarships yearly to the Indian students to come to Hungary and build up a common trust and a better future for both the nations, for India and for Hungary.

Again thank you very much Your Excellency Prime Minister to accept us providing that excellent experience for all the Hungarian Delegation.

Thank you



525. Prime Minister's banquet speech during the State Visit of Prime Minister of Hungary.

New Delhi, October 17, 2013.

Your Excellency Prime Minister Viktor Orban,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me immense pleasure to extend a very warm welcome to Prime Minister Orban and his delegation on their visit to our country.

Your Excellency, you happen to be in India during a season of festivals. Let me say that your presence amongst us in this festive season adds greatly to our joy. We wish you a very pleasant, productive and enjoyable stay in our country.

Your Excellency, notwithstanding the difficulties that faced you when you took over the reins of your country, you have led with great skill and resolve in guiding Hungary out of its crisis and back on to a path of growth. In doing so, you have only exemplified the spirit for which your country is well-known.

Through the last half century and more, the people of India have borne witness to the resolve of the Hungarian people. The most recent occasion was in the momentous years of 1988-89, when they succeeded in restoring democracy in Hungary and ending an era of division in Europe. We have seen with admiration and joy Hungary's rapid transformation since then.

In this, your first visit to India, and in your broader "Eastern Opening", you have demonstrated that opportunities in our integrated world are determined not by size or distance, but by imagination and initiative.

Your visit builds on the remarkable tradition of cultural ties and affinity between our people. Hungarian scholars of Indology have made invaluable contributions to Europe's rich scholarship on Indian traditions, culture and heritage. Sanskrit was introduced in a Hungarian University in 1873. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, who invited many Hungarian scholars to Shanti Niketan, was himself enraptured by the beauty of the waters of Lake Balaton. And, this year, we are jointly celebrating the centenary of the noted painter Amrita Sher-Gil, who was a daughter of India and Hungary.

These traditions of affection and goodwill between our people, together with our shared democratic values and the rich possibilities of our economic partnership, provide an enduring foundation for our partnership. Our relations have remained on a steady course through the tumult and change in Europe and the world. The growing presence of Indian companies in Hungary is indicative of the promise of our relationship. We also value the support we have received from Hungary in international forums. All this leads me to believe that Hungary and India can find great opportunities in each other and also be each other's bridge to Europe and Asia.

With these words, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now request you to join me in raising a toast to:

- The good health and well being of His Excellency Prime Minister Orban;
- The progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Hungary; and
- The everlasting bonds of friendship between India and Hungary.



526. List of Documents signed during the State Visit of Hungarian Prime Minister to India.

New Delhi, October 17, 2013

List of Documents signed during the State Visit of Hungary to India, October 17, 2013

1. Letter of Intent on Indo-Hungarian Strategic Research Fund between Department of Science and Technology of the Republic of India and National Innovation Office of Hungary Smt. Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. Mihaly VARGA, Minister of National Economy.

Both the countries are committed to provide a total of Euros 2 Million each annually for Indo-Hungarian Strategic Research Fund for collaborative research activities, including a mix of bilateral research projects and scientific symposiums.

2. Cultural Exchange Programme Smt. Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. Zoltan Balog, Minister of National Resources

The CEP is for cooperation in the field of Art and Culture, conservation techniques of Museum materials, exchange of curators/ exhibit designers, scientists, conservators

3. MoU between The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Human Resources of

Hungary on Cooperation in the Field of Traditional Systems of Medicine Smt. Santosh Chowdhary, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare

Mr. Zoltan Balog, Minister of National Resources.

Aims to enhance the use of traditional system of medicine and promote mutual exchange of information and experts for training of practitioners, paramedics, scientists, teaching professionals and students in traditional medicines.

4. MoU on Air Services between Government of India and Government of Hungary Shri K. N. Srivastava Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Mr. Peter Szijjarto, Ministry of External Economic Relations And Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister's Office.

Replaces the existing Air Services Agreement signed in 1966 by an updated and modern agreement in order to meet the actual needs of the people and the future growth in civil aviation.

5. MoU between the Ministry of Defence of the Government of the Republic of India and The Ministry of Defence of Hungary concerning Cooperation in the Areas of Defensive Aspects of Microbiological and Radiological Detection And Protection Shri Avinash Chander, Scientific Advisor to Defence Minister, Mr. Zoltan Balog, Minister for National Resources.

Aims to facilitate transfer of know how, experience and technical information in the areas of biological, radiological and chemical warfare

6. MoU on Cooperation in the field of Sports between The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of India and The Ministry of Human Resources of Hungary Shri Dinkar Khullar, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Peter Szijjarto, Ministry of External Economic Relations and Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister's Office.

Aims to encourage cooperation between sports organizations and institutions (sport clubs, sport associations, national sport federations, sports umbrella organizations, training centers, public institutions for sport science and research as well as universities) of the two countries.



- 527. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson and Additional Secretary (International Organizations) on the UN General Assembly Session, visit of the Foreign Minister of Latvia, External Affairs Minister's visit to Canada and Prime Minister's Special Envoy Ashwani Kumar's meetings in Tokyo in connection with the visit of Emperor of Japan.**

New Delhi, Sept 18, 2013.

Please see Document No 568



MACEDONIA

- 528. Press Release of the Ministry of Finance on the signing of the Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income with Macedonia.**

New Delhi, December 17, 2013.

Republic of India and Republic of Macedonia signed the new Agreement for the avoidance Of Double Taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion (DTAA) with respect to taxes on income . The Agreement was signed here today by Mr. Salman Khurshid, the Minister of External Affairs on behalf of India and Mr. Nikola Poposki, the Foreign Minister of Macedonia on behalf of the Republic of Macedonia. Once the DTAA enters into force, it will provide relief to taxpayers from double taxation and thereby, stimulate the flow of capital, technology and personnel between both the countries and will further strengthen the economic relationship between the two countries.

The Salient features of this agreement are as under:

- The agreement provides relief from double taxation to residents of India earning income in Macedonia and residents of Macedonia earning income in India.

- The agreement provides that taxation of dividend, interest and royalty in the source country will not exceed 10 %.
- The agreement provides for taxation of business income in the source country if the taxpayer has a permanent establishment there
- The agreement provides for taxation of capital gains from securities in the source country.
- The agreement has a 'limitation' of benefit article which provides that the benefit of this agreement will not be available to entity which has formed mainly to obtain benefits under this agreement.
- The agreement is based on international standard of transparency and exchange of information and provides for exchange of information (including banking information)concerning taxes.
- The agreement has a specific provision that the requested Party shall use its information-gathering measures to obtain the requested information even though that Party may not need such information for its own tax purposes.
- The agreement provides for the representatives of the competent authority of the requesting Party to enter the territory of the requested Party to interview individuals and examine records.
- The Agreement provides for mutual assistance in collection of taxes due in other country.
- This agreement is expected to boost economic relationship between India and Macedonia.



MALTA**529. Press Release of the Ministry of Finance on signing an Agreement on Avoidance of double Taxation with Malta.****New Delhi, April 15, 2013.**

The Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) and the Protocol between the Republic of India and Malta for the avoidance of double taxation and for the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income is in force since 8th February, 1995. Both India and Malta have renegotiated the Agreement to bring in line with international standards, change in domestic laws and changed economic scenario.

On 08th April, 2013, India and Malta had signed the new DTAA at Valetta, Malta. The Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) was signed by the Smt. Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs of India and Dr. George Vella, Foreign Minister of Malta. Once the DTAA enters into force, it will stimulate the flow of capital, technology and personnel between both the countries and will further strengthen the economic relationship. It also provides tax stability and reduces any obstacles in providing mutual cooperation between India and Malta.



NORWAY

530. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of External Affairs Minister to Norway.

New Delhi, June 11, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. Since we had not met for quite some time in this format I thought it would be useful to have our usual interaction. As usual, I will begin with an announcement that I have to make following which you are free to ask me questions on that first and subsequently on anything else that you would like.

This relates to the visit of the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid to Norway. Even as we speak the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid is traveling to Norway. He will be there from the 11th, that is today, till the 13th.

His visit perhaps focuses on three elements. Number one element is his bilateral meetings with his counterpart Foreign Minister Eide. Also he will meet senior officials in the Norwegian Government including Prime Minister Stoltenberg. This meeting will take place on the 13th.

Next, following our membership of the Arctic Council, Foreign Minister Eide has invited Mr. Khurshid to visit Tromso, which is the place where the Fram Centre for Environment and Climate is located as is the Secretariat of the Arctic Council. He will actually fly with Mr. Khurshid today to Tromso. Subsequently tomorrow both Mr. Khurshid and the Foreign Minister will also go to Svalbard.

Svalbard, as you are aware, is an archipelago where India's research station Himadri is located. Right now we have four scientists working at the research station. Those of you who have been following it are aware that it was initiated in 2007 and inaugurated in 2008. Subsequently we spent about three million dollars on our research activities related to that centre, and we intend to enhance this. During the next five years an amount of about 12 million dollars is expected to be spent on research through this centre.

Right now there have been about 170 Indian scientists who have written on this matter, and there are 18 Indian institutions who are focused on research related to climate through the Arctic. The idea of providing you this entire information is that we are extremely interested in the Arctic region and intend to play an active role in the Arctic Council too. That is the second area of focus of the External Affairs Minister while he is in Norway.

The third one is related to investments. As you are perhaps aware, Norway has amongst the richest Sovereign Wealth Funds. This is a government pension fund. It has about 700 billion dollar resources at its disposal. In April earlier this year we had officials from the Sovereign Wealth Fund visit India. They had discussions with our senior officials including the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission and the Finance Minister. The External Affairs Minister intends to take this discussion forward and to see how we can facilitate greater investments into India including in the infrastructure sector through the Sovereign Wealth Fund that Norway has. So, broadly these are the three major issues in the External Affairs Minister's visit to Norway.

I think with that I will stop. We could begin with questions related to the announcement and then if you have any other questions I am willing to answer them.

Q: Besides climate, what are the other areas on which this research is focusing?

Official Spokesperson: We have detailed information available, and we will pass it on to you, on various aspects of glaciology, climate change, and environment. While this research is being coordinated by one Department there are other Departments too including the Earth Sciences Department which are focused on this. I will pass that information, which is largely of scientific nature, to you at the end of this briefing if that is what you want to know.

Question: Can you brief us about India's contribution to the Seed Bank in Svalbard?

Official Spokesperson: I must confess that I am not a scientist and I am aware of only the diplomatic dimensions of this. But if you would require any further information, I would suggest that you deal with

concerned Departments because these are directly handled by those Departments whether it is Science and Technology or Earth Sciences. But I would suffice it to say that our interest in Svalbard region dates back prior to Independence because the Treaty of Svalbard was signed in 1920 and we acceded to this in 1923. We are among the ten countries who have the opportunity to set up stations there, and we are amongst the limited number of countries who are original signatories to the Treaty of Svalbard. But I am afraid I do not have the details of the exact investments that we have in Svalbard.

Question: Could you explain this 1920?

Official Spokesperson: I thought the date would be as evident as possible. 1920 would mean British India. As you would perhaps recollect, even in the United Nations we are an original member prior to Independence. It was the norm then that if a Dominion was interested in any activity, it could accede to a treaty. And that was what we had done way back in 1923 as regards the Arctic Council and as regards the United Nations in 1945.

Q: Any discussion on enhanced cooperation in the oil and gas sector with Norway? Also on a related note, any discussion on India's role in the Arctic Council with Norway?

Official Spokesperson: On the oil and gas sector, yes, because we see this as a possible area of growth between India and Norway. Perhaps you are aware that Norway is the third largest exporter of oil after Saudi Arabia and Russia. Also it has expertise in deep sea oil extraction. So, there will be areas of cooperation, and with that we could learn from Norway some of the best practices that they adopt in that area.

India's role in the Arctic Council is laid down as an Observer. There are clear norms of what Observers can do. They participate in the subgroups where much of the work is done. At this stage that is what is provided for in the Arctic Council. We are grateful to Norway for having supported our membership there. But at this stage we will take it in terms of our scientific and technological interest in the Arctic region. That was the basis for our request for Observership, which we are grateful has been accepted by the Arctic Council.

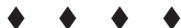
Q: You mentioned that the... (Inaudible)... in April and they were interested in infrastructure.

Official Spokesperson: I think I did not say what you are saying but please go ahead.

Q: Are there any projects that have been identified as such?

Official Spokesperson: Let me tell you that officials of the Fund did come here in April. They had discussions, I said, with the Planning Commission and with the Finance Ministry. They are investing in Indian companies, several of them, but they have not yet invested in infrastructure. It is our hope that as they expand their portfolio for investment in India, even infrastructure would be one of those areas.

If there is no other question on the visit, let us move on with anything else that you would need to ask questions on. Let us go issue by issue.



PORTUGAL

531. External Affairs Minister's opening remarks at the press interaction with Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal Mr. Paulo Sacadura Cabral Portas.

New Delhi, March 4, 2013.

Your Excellency Paulo de Sacadura Cabral Portas,

Your Excellency Minister of State for Culture Mr. Jorge Barreto Xavier,

Friends from Media,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome His Excellency Mr. Paulo de Sacadura Cabral Portas, Minister of Foreign Affairs on his first official visit to India.

Foreign Minister Portas and I have had very cordial discussions today. They were comprehensive and fruitful.

India's relations with Portugal are warm and friendly and have grown over the years. Periodic high level visits between our two countries have

given a boost to our bilateral relations. India and Portugal have cooperated closely in multilateral forums on a range of global issues.

Our linkages date back to many centuries. We share commonalities of history and culture. Portugal is home to the third largest population (70,000) of Persons-of-Indian origin (PIOs) in Europe. The Indian community has been contributing to furthering of cultural ties and in forming a unique and positive bond between our two countries. We have discussed ways to further strengthen the people-to-people contacts, and noted that the signing of the Social Security Agreement between our two countries during this visit will further these contacts.

The conduct of the third Lusofonia Games in Goa towards the end of the year will, we hope, enhance the engagement of sportspersons from India and the 11 other countries who will participate in the games.

Friends,

Both India and Portugal are resolutely opposed to terrorism. We share common views on this global menace. We reiterated our commitment to continue our cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

I conveyed deep appreciation of the Government of India for the positive support extended by Portugal on the extradition of Abu Salem wanted in connection with criminal cases dating back to the Mumbai blasts of 1993.

We expressed satisfaction of the fact that the bilateral trade in 2012 has been resorted to pre-global economic crisis levels of 2008-09. We also acknowledged that our bilateral trade has considerable potential for growth and that the partnership is currently below potential. We noted with satisfaction that many companies from India and Portugal are already active in bilateral business partnerships in both countries. Indian IT companies have already set up operations in Portugal, and there are greater prospects of diversification of investments to other sectors also.

We also discussed the economic situation in the European Union and India. We expressed confidence that Europe which is one of India's largest trade partners will return to a positive growth path.

The presence of His Excellency the Minister of State for Culture with us today offered an opportunity to review the ongoing bilateral cultural ties.

We noted that the bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) is facilitating greater exchange of cultural resources, and also agreed to put the CEP to effective use and realize its full potential.

Our discussions on the multifarious regional and global issues reiterated the fact that Portugal and India share similar worldview. We look forward to continuing our bilateral dialogue on these issues.

With these words, I once again extend a very warm welcome to Foreign Minister Paulo Portas and Minister of State for Culture Jorge Xavier, and wish them a very pleasant stay in India.

Thank you



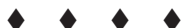
ROMANIA

532. List of documents signed during the visit of Foreign Minister of Romania to India, March 7-8, 2013.

March 08, 2013.

List of documents signed during the visit of Foreign Minister of Romania to India, March 7-8, 2013

S.No	Name of Agreement	Signatory	Remarks
1.	Joint Statement on establishing an Extensive Partnership between India and Romania	<p>Indian signatory: Shri Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister</p> <p>Romanian signatory: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Titus Corlatean</p>	The Joint Statement aims to have regular political dialogue, more frequent inter-governmental exchanges, heightened Parliamentary contacts and a more dynamic civil society interaction. It aims to further deepen political, economic and commercial ties between the two countries and enhanced cooperation in all fields including S&T, higher education and research, defence, civil nuclear energy, space and agriculture.
2.	Agreement between India and Romania for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	<p>Indian signatory: Shri Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister</p> <p>Romanian signatory: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Titus Corlatean</p>	The DTAA between the Republic of India and Romania is in force since November 14, 1987. Both India and Romania have renegotiated the Agreement to bring in line with international standards, change in domestic laws and changed economic scenario. Once the amended Agreement enters into force, it will stimulate the flow of capital, technology and personnel from India to Romania and vice versa. It also provides tax stability and reduces any obstacles in providing mutual cooperation between India and Romania.



RUSSIA**533. India - Russia Foreign Office Consultations.****Moscow, March 20, 2013.**

1. Comprehensive Foreign Office Consultations between India and Russia were held in Moscow on March 19, 2013. Shri Ranjan Mathai, Foreign Secretary and H.E. Mr. Andrei I. Denisov, First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation led delegations of senior officials for the talks.
2. The two sides reviewed the progress in bilateral relations since the last India-Russia Summit in New Delhi in December 2012. Strategic sectors of cooperation such as nuclear energy, hydrocarbons and defence were discussed, along with other issues of bilateral significance in the economic, consular, protocol and cultural areas.
3. A comprehensive exchange of views on regional and global issues also took place. Both sides discussed in detail the situation in Afghanistan, Syria, Iran and other regions. Shri Mathai and Mr. Denisov also assessed bilateral cooperation in multilateral fora including UN, SCO, BRICS and G20 - particularly the next BRICS Summit in Durban and the 2013 G20 Summit in St. Petersburg.
4. They agreed that close consultations between the two Foreign Offices on a broad range of subjects would continue through the year.



534. Press Release of the Ministry of Home Affairs on the signing of the Indo-Russian Regulation defining the Structure, Functions and Procedure of the Joint Commission.

New Delhi, April 11, 2013.

The Government of India and Government of Russian Federation have signed on April 10, 2013 in Moscow a Regulation defining the structure, functions and procedure of the Joint Commission which has been established by an Agreement signed on December 21, 2010 in New Delhi in the field of Emergency Management.

Shri Sushilkumar Shinde, Union Minister of Home Affairs and Mr. Vladimir Puchkov, Minister of the Russian Federation for Civil Defense, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters have signed this agreement.

The agreement will enable both the countries to help each other in the field of prevention and elimination of the consequences of emergency situations. It will further strengthen the bond of friendship between the two countries and enhance the Indo-Russian Co-operation.

The Indo-Russian Commission will ensure the implementation of the Agreement which was signed on December 21, 2010 in New Delhi for catalyzing cooperation in the field of Emergency Management and contribute to the well being and safety of the people of both the countries in the event of disasters and also to exchange mutually beneficial scientific and technical information in the area of Emergency Management. The meetings of the Joint Commission will be alternatively held in India and Russia.



535. Extract from the Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson relevant to the visit of External Affairs Minister's to Moscow to attend the Inter-Sessional Meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission.

New Delhi, April 23, 2013.

The second item is, following this meeting External Affairs Minister will also visit Moscow. The visit is largely focused on the inter-sessional meeting of the India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission. As you are aware, the External Affairs Minister chairs this from the Indian side and Mr. Rogozin the Deputy Premier of Russia is his counterpart chairperson from the Russian side.

They are likely to have discussions on the entire gamut of our bilateral relations in terms of trade, economic, commercial, science and technology matters, and of course cultural cooperation. Of course when the External Affairs Minister is there he will also take the opportunity to meet with other senior members of the Russian leadership including his counterpart the Foreign Minister of Russia, Mr. Lavrov.

I think I have exhausted in terms of the announcements to make. I will first take questions related to these and then I will take any other questions that you may like to ask. If you have questions related to the two announcements that I have made, we will take those first.

Q: This is about the Foreign Minister's visit to Moscow. Can you just give some details as to what kind of agreements, if any, are going to be signed? I know the IRIGC is not a platform meant for that but is there any kind of protocol or MoU or agreement? And is he meeting Putin?

Official Spokesperson: To the first question my answer is, as you are aware, the IRIGC process is a process which is annual in nature. However, you would recollect, when Mr. Rogozin was first appointed the Chair of this process from the Russian side he did come over to India and there was an inter-sessional meeting. This was sometime in the first half of last year. It was followed subsequently by a full-fledged meeting. So, with the External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid taking over the chairmanship from his predecessor, we are following the same pattern. And this is an inter-sessional meeting. We do not expect any

outcomes in terms of documentation or MoUs for these meetings. However, we hope that there will be a frank exchange of views. India and Russia have been meeting at very senior levels on a regular basis and we hope that this is a continuum of such meetings.



536. External Affairs Minister's interview to Kommersant (Russian Daily Newspaper).

Moscow, April 30, 2013.

Kommersant/ by Sergei Strokan

Indian Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid has made a working visit to Moscow. The central event in the course of the visit was his meeting with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin – co-chairman of the Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation. On the eve of the talks Salman Khurshid, co-chairman of the Commission from the Indian side, spoke to Kommersant's correspondent, Sergei Strokan, about the future prospects of bilateral cooperation.

Mr. Minister, this is your first visit to Russia. What do you expect from the meetings in Moscow?

A deep, strong and diverse relationship has developed between Russia and India. The strategic partnership provides for the holding of annual summits, the content of which is provided by the Russian-Indian Intergovernmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation. In order for the relations to develop, it is necessary to carry out a huge amount of preparatory work on a full range of issues. It is this, in particular, that we intend to do in Moscow.

But recently there have arisen simultaneously in our relationship several negative elements associated with the delay in handing over the aircraft carrier Vikramaditya to the Indian side, the withdrawal of licenses from AFK "Sistema" in India, and the disagreements

over nuclear cooperation in the framework of the “Kudankulam” NPP project. Can one say that the relations between the two countries do not have any problems?

There are no problems in a relationship only when nothing is happening. But as the relationship develops inevitably issues arise that require joint decisions. We have been working intensely on the issues that have been discussed in the Press over the last year and that had become a source of concern. Presently, we do not feel that there are problems that we cannot solve. We are waiting for the aircraft carrier Vikramaditya to be transferred to us. As regards the “Kudankulam” NPP, the final preparations are underway for the launch of its first power-generating unit. The second power-generating unit is 90% ready for operation. Apart from that, negotiations are being held on the construction of the third and fourth power-generating units.

In Russia today there are voices calling into question the mechanism of tenders for concluding deals in the military-technical sphere. Critics talk about their lack of transparency and elements of corruption. Is it not time to recognise that tenders in the sphere of Military-Technical Cooperation have outlived their usefulness?

In a free society there are always different opinions. Some of them are quite superficial, some are affected by distrust and cynicism, and therefore it is not worth spending too much time discussing them.

But let me answer you to the point. We in India, as we move towards a more open market economy, have acquired extensive management experience. In this process the mechanism of tenders was also established, realising the principle of free competition in obtaining government contracts.

Moreover, the fate of any one deal should always be decided within a specific context. In some cases the deals are concluded within the framework of direct intergovernmental agreements, in others – on the basis of tenders. But I do not think that any problems should arise in the case of the tenders for Russian companies in India. Many of them have participated in tenders with success.

Does it mean that intergovernmental agreements cannot replace tenders?

There are strategic spheres in which intergovernmental agreements are still important. But in open societies, such as ours, it is important that there be transparency and public scrutiny, provided for by tenders.

India has proposed that Russia take part in the implementation of the ambitious project to build the Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor. How important are Russian investments?

The concept of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, in the implementation of which Japan has largely been involved, presupposes the participation in it of many countries. It is impossible for a single country to realise the project by itself, therefore we have approached Russia and we hope that she will respond. After all, Russia has a lot of experience of working in India.

One of the key areas of cooperation is power engineering. India is trying to get Russia's participation in the "Sakhalin-3" project, in addition, the company ONGC Videsh Limited is interested in the development of the oil fields in Siberia. How do you envisage the prospects of such cooperation?

The details should be discussed by technical experts, but I can confirm that ONGC Videsh Limited is truly interested in working in Siberia and the Arctic. This is one of the promising areas of investment and cooperation.

In recent weeks relations between India and China have deteriorated in connection with the long-standing territorial dispute. The current situation has even been compared with the year 1962 when armed conflict broke out. How do you intend to solve the problem, considering that Beijing is taking a tough approach and does not intend to give in?

I do not think that we should talk about it in terms of "softness" or "toughness". This is a localized, specific matter that should not negatively impact on the entire complex of Indo-Chinese relations. The controversy relates to the sides' different views on the so-called Line of Actual Control. So, being aware of the enormous public attention to this issue, we should not artificially aggravate the situation. The issue must be resolved by negotiation.

Does this mean that you exclude the possibility of an armed conflict?

Absolutely.



537. Press Release of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry on the 7th India-Russia Trade and Investment Forum on Pharma, Tourism, and Services.

New Delhi, September 22, 2013.

A high level delegation of 120 Indian business leaders led by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Anand Sharma discussed various business opportunities with their Russian counterparts at India-Russia Trade and Investment Forum at St. Petersburg on Friday. Special focus was on the three round tables on “Pharmaceutical and Medical Industry”, “Tourism and Medical Tourism” and “Trade in goods, services and innovative products”. On his return to India yesterday, Shri Sharma said “we discussed and noted the emerging opportunities in both the countries and we are hopeful that the three Round Tables have identified in detail the specific projects where we shall be cooperating.”

At the forum Pharmaceutical sector received major attention as India is looking at the opportunities that the 2020 Pharma programme offers. Shri Sharma sought regulatory simplifications for Indian companies who not only want to have market access but also look for establishing manufacturing base in Russia. In recently concluded 19th India Russia Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation (IRWGTEC) meeting in Moscow Indian side had conveyed the details of barriers in the trade of pharmaceutical products to Russia. These barriers included substantial delay in all approvals and dossier evaluation due to insufficient number of competent specialists, huge number of backlog of dossiers accumulated by the Russian health authorities, lack of information about stage of approval etc. All this leads to avoidable delay in supplies, commencement of production, and launch of new product in the market. Shri Sharma said that “as Indian pharma companies are keen to establish manufacturing bases in Russia, it is imperative that Russian government should address their concerns in an expeditious manner.”

Fertilizer sector has also attracted Indian interest for setting up manufacturing in Russia. Production of Phosphate and Potash in Russia by way of JV with Indian Fertilizer entities was discussed. There exist complementarity between availability of fertilizer resources in Russia and growing fertilizer demand in India which should result in strategic partnership in this field. AKRON and ORGSINTEZ, the two Russian companies are in discussion with IFFCO as they have Potassic and Phosphatic resources. Both side discussed the need to support the proposal of M/s AKRON of Russia for setting up of facilities for production of Phosphate and Potash in Russia by way of JV with Indian Fertilizer entities. Furthermore, In January 2013, Secretary (Fertilizer) met the Russian Ministry of Industry and Trade and Russian fertilizer companies to explain new investment policy changes in urea production in India and invite them to invest in India under the new policy. A non-paper was also shared with the Russian side. During this visit Shri Sharma was informed of Russian companies expressing interest in the proposition and companies on both sides are expected to identify opportunities for investment in urea production in India.

The Forum in its 7th edition with specific purpose of 'encouraging discussion among the businesses of the two sides to increase economic engagement for common benefits' concluded that fresh initiatives need to be taken to further exploit complementarities in other sectors such as fertilizers, industrial machinery, diamonds etc. Other new areas such as automobiles, electrical equipment, chemicals, mining and processed foods need to be explored as they have immense potential in both countries. Another area identified for focused approach between India and Russia is IT Services. This conclusion is an endorsement of the sector that have been identified in Joint Understanding & Intention on Possible Plans and Priority Investment Projects for Enhancing Indo-Russian Economic & Investment Cooperation Under which a total of 15 high value, high tech projects have been selected for special attention for ministerial supervision. Some of the projects are

- The establishment of India-Russian Joint venture with "Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd." (HAL) as joint centre of development the helicopters.
- Production of Nitrogen Tetra Oxide for Space programme

- Possible future cooperation between MMTC and ALROSA for long term supply of rough diamonds
- ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL)'s prospects for further hydrocarbon collaboration with Russian energy companies
- Joint project of Ranbaxy Laboratories Limited (RLL) and Government of Yaroslavl region
- Participation of Russian companies in urea production in India under new investment policy.
- Plant construction for manufacturing butyl rubber with capacity of 100000 tons per year at the production site of "Reliance Industries" in Jamnagar (India).

Shri Sharma also met Mr. Alksey Ulyukaev, Minister of Economic Development and took forward the discussion that he had with Mr. Dmitry Rogozin, Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Denis Manturov, Minister of Industry and Trade a day before. This visit assumes significance as the Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh is likely to visit Russia next month.



538. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary on Prime Minister's visits to Russia and China .

New Delhi, October 19, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon.

As you are aware, today we have the Foreign Secretary here to brief you on Prime Minister's forthcoming visits to Russia and China. Along with her are the nodal officers in the Ministry who handle each of these countries. On Foreign Secretary's right is Mr. Gautam Bambawale who is Joint Secretary (East Asia) who handles China as our main contact person relating to all diplomatic efforts with China. On my left is Mr. Ajay

Bisaria who is Joint Secretary (Eurasia) who is our Ministry's point person dealing with Russia, among other things.

I will request Foreign Secretary to make her opening remarks following which she will answer in a sequential manner first questions on Russia, then questions on China, and then if there is time she is willing to answer questions on anything else if any of you are interested.

I hope you all know the ground rules. Some of you may be new here. One question per person will be allowed. So, please choose your question carefully. There will not be seconds allowed for anyone. Otherwise, maybe we will have two hundred questions directed at us. We hope to have this interaction for forty minutes. I would also request you to put your mobile phones in silent mode so that they do not disrupt the proceedings.

I will now request Foreign Secretary to make her opening remarks.

Foreign Secretary (Shrimati Sujatha Singh): Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh will, on the first leg of his two-nation tour, be paying an Official Visit to Moscow from 20th to 22nd October, for the 14th Annual India-Russia Summit.

The practice of having an Annual Summit between India and Russia was institutionalized in 2000 with the signing of the Declaration of the Strategic Partnership between India and Russia. The annual event exemplifies the special and privileged strategic partnership between our two countries.

Our Prime Minister is no stranger to Russia. This is the tenth summit that he will attend, the fifth in Moscow. He has also been in Russia as recently as June at the G20 summit in St. Petersburg.

Russia has been a steadfast friend and partner for over six decades. It has been a source of our defence needs, space program and high technologies. It has extended friendship and support through challenging times in India's history. This partnership is today a key priority of India's foreign policy.

The relationship is supported by an elaborate, multilayered and very effective mechanism which allows us to broaden and deepen our interaction continually. In the run-up to the Summit, we have had intense exchanges. This year, External Affairs Minister, Shri Salman Khurshid,

has visited Moscow twice. The last visit was in October 2013 for the nineteenth session of the Intergovernmental Commission which is co-chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Rogozin. EAM also had a very productive meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov.

Home Minister of India, Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde, has visited Moscow in April. Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Anand Sharma, has visited thrice in the past year to energize trade and economic ties and business-to-business links. Our National Security Adviser too visited Russia thrice during this year, while the Russian National Security Adviser visited India in January 2013.

The Chairperson of the Russian Federation Council visited India in February 2013. In addition, we have had numerous official level engagements. For instance, we have Foreign Office Consultations with Russia on seventeen different subject areas, reflecting the convergence in our approaches on regional and global issues.

What this robust exchange indicates is a deep, rock-solid and time-tested relationship with one of our closest global partners. Today India-Russia cooperation is truly multidimensional covering the fields of defence, energy, space, high technology, trade and economy, science, culture and people-to-people exchanges.

Russia is a key partner for us in the field of defence. In recent years our military technical cooperation has evolved into joint design, development and production of defence systems such as fifth generation fighters and multirole transport aircraft. Earlier this year, we received our stealth frigate INS Trikand and we are now awaiting the commissioning of INS Vikramaditya next month. Our Armed Forces are holding the INDRA 2013 exercise in Rajasthan as we speak.

The Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant exemplifies our close cooperation in the field of nuclear energy. Unit-1 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant has been completed and attained criticality in July this year. Unit-2 at Kudankulam should be ready in the first half of 2014. On Units 3 and 4, our companies are finalizing documents.

Last year witnessed a 24.5 per cent rise in bilateral trade, crossing US\$ 11 billion in 2012 for the first time. Investment is also emerging as an

important focus of our bilateral ties. Russia is an important partner in the field of hydrocarbons, and OVL is participating in two projects – as 20 per cent partner in the Sakhalin-1 project and as 100 per cent owner and operator of Imperial Energy in the Tomsk Region.

Coming back to the visit program, the Prime Minister will be arriving in Moscow on October 20th. October 21st is the main engagement day where he will meet President Putin for official talks and a working lunch. On the same day the Prime Minister will be conferred with an Honorary Doctorate by the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.

As is customary, a Joint Statement will be issued at the conclusion of the talks touching on bilateral as well as global issues. We expect a few agreements to be signed in diverse areas such as science and technology, energy efficiency and standards. Also, on the margins of the Summit we will have a meeting of the newly reconstituted CEO's Council.

Following the visit to Russia, Prime Minister will pay an official visit to Beijing from 22nd to 24th October, 2013. This is the Prime Minister's second bilateral visit to Beijing. Previously he had visited China in January 2008. Also this is the second bilateral meeting between the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Li Keqiang during the course of this year. You would recall that Prime Minister Li Keqiang was in India for a visit in May 2013. This is the first time since 1954 that the Prime Ministers of India and China will have visited each other's country in the same calendar year.

The programme for the visit is broadly that Prime Minister will reach Beijing in the evening of 22nd October, and will be received ceremonially the next morning at the Great Hall of the People by his Chinese counterpart. They will then have discussions both in limited as well as delegation-level format. Premier Li Keqiang will host a banquet lunch.

PM will also be meeting the Chairman of the National People's Congress Zhang Dejiang in the afternoon. In the evening, Prime Minister will be hosted by President Xi Jinping at a banquet dinner. On 24th October, the Prime Minister will address the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China. He will then be meeting former Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, followed by lunch. So, as you can see, he has a rather tight schedule in Beijing.

The meetings with the Chinese leadership have a broad agenda and are likely to cover all aspects of bilateral relations in addition to regional and global issues of importance.

India and China have an elaborate architecture of engagement and dialogue which covers the entire gamut of bilateral relations. Prime Minister had met President Xi Jinping on the margins of the BRICS Summit in Durban in March, 2013. Also this year itself the External Affairs Minister has met his counterpart on four occasions, in Beijing as well as on the margins of multilateral summits.

The Defence Minister visited China in July. The Special Representatives held their 16th round of talks on the boundary question in June at Beijing. The Strategic Dialogue at the level of Foreign Secretary and Chinese Vice-Minister was held in August, 2013. We have also had the first India-China Dialogue on Afghanistan, and the first India-China Dialogue on Central Asia. The intensity and breadth of the interactions is reflective of the importance that both countries place on the relationship.

Maintenance of peace, tranquility and stability on our border is an important factor in our bilateral ties, and it is expected that this would be an important aspect of the discussions as it is also the fundamental basis on which the rest of our bilateral relationship can proceed and grow.

Prime Minister has on several occasions previously emphasized that there is sufficient space in the world for both India and China to meet their developmental aspirations. Therefore, even as we pursue our economic and social goals we have expanded our bilateral ties. In particular, economic exchanges have emerged as an important underpinning of our bilateral relations.

Both India and China aim to achieve their commonly set target of US\$ 100 billion in terms of bilateral trade by 2015, and are striving to ensure balance of trade flows. The possibility of Chinese investment in India through the mechanism of an industrial park is being explored. During the visit of Prime Minister to Beijing, the second meeting of the India-China CEOs Forum is also taking place, and PM and PM Li Keqiang are expected to receive the recommendations of the CEOs to expand economic linkages.

2014 is the 60th anniversary of the enunciation of Panchsheel and has been designated as the Year of India-China Friendly Exchanges. Measures relating to people-to-people exchanges during the next year are also areas where we see possibilities of greater cooperation. The first India-China Media Forum was successfully held in New Delhi, and we intend to have this as an annual feature. We are also pursuing avenues of cultural cooperation.

At the culmination of the visit a Joint Statement will be issued summarizing the major areas in our bilateral ties. It is also expected that some agreements would be signed on issues which we are currently working on and hope to conclude during the visit.

Both the visit to Russia and to China manifest the priority we place on regular high-level interactions in our engagements with these two very important countries.

Official Spokesperson: We will now open the floor for questions relating to Russia. So let us focus right now on Russia.

Q: Madam Foreign Secretary, we are keen on acquiring on lease a second nuclear submarine from Russia. What is the status? Is this deal going to be finalised during this summit? And are you going to invoke the warranty clause with respect to INS Sindhurakshak which expires in January 2014?

Official Spokesperson: Rajiv, before I give this to Foreign Secretary to respond, I would like to know which of the two questions you want answered. If you ask two questions, we will choose one. I have already said that. So, please be very clear. Just choose one question.

Q: The submarine one.

Foreign Secretary: As you are all aware, defence cooperation is an important pillar of our multifaceted, special and privileged strategic partnership based on longstanding and time-tested friendship over six decades. This cooperation is progressing ahead to mutual satisfaction, and we expect this to continue to be the case

Q: Madam, you said that Russia and India will sign an agreement on energy efficiency. I am unable to understand what this agreement is going to be. Could you please clarify this point?

Foreign Secretary: I am going to ask my Joint Secretary to elaborate.

Joint Secretary (Eurasia) (Shri Ajay Bisaria): It is exactly what the name suggests. There is an agreement and a discussion on cooperation between the two sides in the area of energy efficiency. And that includes exchange of technologies, exchange of information, and exchange of experts to have greater effectiveness in terms of mutual cooperation. This is under discussion.

Q: Madam, my question is regarding the regional security. This is one of issues of prime importance especially post 2014. How does India assess this regional security especially in Afghanistan with the two major powers?

Foreign Secretary: As very close strategic partners, Russia and India consult each other on all issues of mutual interest. What will happen in Afghanistan, especially in the context of the drawdown of forces in 2014, is something that is of great interest to both Russia and to India, and we continue to consult very closely with each other on this subject at various levels including at my level.

Q: This is regarding the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs has said after his meeting with Mr. Khurshid that India's request to become a member of the SCO has been already processed. Is India's participation in the SCO on the agenda of this summit?

Foreign Secretary: I would not like to pre-empt what is on the agenda and what is not. We are already Observers at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and we will see how our participation goes in the future.

Question: Your Excellency, you told us that some negotiations will happen with regard to Units 3 and 4 of Kudankulam. Can you explain at what level these negotiations will be? Are you going to sign a contract? When should we expect the signing of this contract?

Foreign Secretary: As you are aware, an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including the nuclear power plant at Kudankulam, already exists. Contracts for specific units are concluded at the level of companies. And our companies are in discussion on Kudankulam 3 and 4. We hope to conclude specific contracts in the near future.

Q: In your opening remarks you referred to the multirole transport aircraft. And also there is a plan to coproduce passenger transport aircraft. What is the status of these two major projects between India and Russia?

Foreign Secretary: As I have indicated, defence cooperation is one of the very important aspects. You would be knowing, over the past couple of years Russia has delivered a nuclear-powered submarine, three world-class stealth frigates, Su-30MKI fighters, T90 tanks, and other equipment to our armed forces. We are making good progress on our joint development and production projects such as the fifth generation fighter aircraft and the multirole transport aircraft.

Q: About multirole transport aircraft?

Official Spokesperson: That is what she said - making good progress.

Q: Madam, the economy and trade have been an area that has been a bit of a problem in bilateral relations. Are there any new initiatives that are happening on this visit that will enhance the levels of bilateral trade?

Foreign Secretary: I do not agree that it has been an area of problems. This is one of the areas that has seen excellent progress because India-Russia trade grew from US\$ 8.85 billion in 2012 to US\$ 11.04. And this has represented a growth of 24.5 per cent over the past one year. If this pace is maintained, our trade would cross US\$ 20 billion in 2015. So, you are aware that the global economic environment remains difficult and this has affected trade with many of our other partners. But notwithstanding this slowdown in the global economic environment, our trade with Russia has actually grown by 24.5 per cent. So, this is something that we look forward to continuing to sustain.

There are various other areas that require more focused attention. We need more active business-to-business relations. Efforts by both countries to liberalise the trade environment are on. We appreciate the fact that there is probably a need for better flow of information between our businesses about each other's capabilities, achievements and opportunities. We have suggested a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between India and the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia, which we hope would be initiated soon.

Mutual investment is an emerging area between companies in India and Russia in areas such as chemicals, pharmaceuticals, automobiles,

telecommunications, infrastructure, fertilisers and energy, to name a few areas. So, we see this as something that is developing very well and continues to be a promising area.

Q: Madam, you are talking about cooperation with Russia in hydrocarbons. Do you expect any new agreements during the visit in this regard?

Foreign Secretary: Russia is a major energy producer while India is one of the fastest-growing energy consumers. ONGC Videsh Limited has large investments in Sakhalin-1 and Tomsk, and is considering new investment opportunities in oil and gas, in projects in Siberia, in Russia's Far East and in the Arctic Shelf with companies such as Rosneft, Gazprom and Novatech. And we are hoping to have successful conclusion of these endeavours when the time is right. So, energy cooperation whether it is nuclear energy or oil and gas sectors are an important dimension of our strategic partnership. In the oil and gas sectors, cooperation has been progressing very well. But newer areas definitely need to be explored.

We have brought to the Russian side's attention OVL's keen interest in newer projects including joint exploration of the Russian Arctic zone which is very rich in minerals. Many of these issues were discussed in the meeting of Working Group on Energy which met on the eve of the last IGC earlier this month. Being large investments and long-gestation projects, these kinds of transactions do consume time as well as a lot of effort. You may also be aware that our companies have recently signed long-term deals in supply of energy to India. Both sides are keen to continue and deepen this aspect.

Q: Madam, about Kudankulam 3 and 4, you said 'in the near future'. Does that near future include during the visit now? What about the concerns expressed by Russian companies over the liability clause in the nuclear liability Act?

Foreign Secretary: Near future means near future. Let us see, because the companies continue to be in discussion, and all these issues continue to be in technical and legal discussions. Whether they are liability issues, financial issues, insurance issues, these continue to be in discussion.

Official Spokesperson: I do not see anyone else with questions on Russia. So, we will now move to questions on the other topic, Prime Minister's visit to China.

Q: Madam, in the last visit of Li Keqiang to Delhi we were made to understand that Tibet was the issue that was raised by China to put in the Joint Statement. Are you prepared to talk anything about Tibet in this visit of the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to China?

Foreign Secretary: India's stand on Tibet is really well-known and there has been no change in this. So, I do not see what your question specifically refers to. Let us leave it at that.

Q: We have a huge trade deficit with China - US\$ 30 billion plus - and the plan is to have a US\$ 100 billion thing in the next two, three years. The Chinese have problems letting us in in pharmaceuticals and several other things in which we are interested. Is this likely to be taken up when the Prime Minister goes to China? And is there any possibility of India and China conducting the bilateral trade in their respective currencies?

Foreign Secretary: You are right that the adverse trade deficit that India faces in its exchanges with China is an issue of concern which we have raised with China on several occasions at several levels. This is something that can be dealt with by enhancing Chinese direct investment into India. In fact this May, during his visit to India, you will be aware, the Chinese Premier had proposed establishing a Chinese industrial park in India where Chinese companies could cluster together; and India takes this proposal very seriously.

Right now, even as this press conference is going on, a team from China - from their Ministry of Commerce and the China Development Bank - is in India to discuss this subject with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. We will be showing them some possible sites for an industrial park or zone. The same time is also discussing with the Department of Commerce a five-year trade development plan which will seek to ensure more balanced trade. So, it is quite possible that the two Prime Ministers will discuss these issues because this is an ongoing matter that continues to be raised from our side whenever we meet.

Q: Madam, there is an element of uncertainty between the two countries due to frequent incursions and tensions at the border. How will India address it politically? What will be our approach in Beijing?

Foreign Secretary: As you know, there exists a boundary question between India and China, and the Special Representatives of India and China are discussing and tackling this issue. They have had sixteen rounds of discussions so far. In 2005 they succeeded at arriving at the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Resolution of the Boundary Question. They are now discussing the framework for a resolution of the boundary question. Let us give them time to work on this issue. In the meantime, we need to see how the matter progresses.

Q: Madam, which are the cities identified for this Chinese industrial park?

Official Spokesperson: Not cities, States.

Foreign Secretary: There are several States that would like to see this investment taking place. Amongst them are: Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Q: Madam, India has always voiced concern over the Brahmaputra because China is the upper riparian country. Will the issue figure during the talks?

Foreign Secretary: As a lower riparian State on many trans-border rivers that we have with China, the Government of India has been expressing its concern on the utilisation of the waters of such rivers to the Government of China including at the highest level. We have actively engaged China on this subject. The Chinese Government has explained to us their perspective on this issue. As you are aware, we do have a mechanism with China for discussing many of these issues. It is called the Expert Level Mechanism (ELM) between the Ministries of Water Resources of the two countries. We have been receiving valuable hydrological data from China on some of our trans-border rivers. We will continue to discuss this subject with our Chinese interlocutors.

Q: We hear that a Border Defence Cooperation Agreement is going to be signed. Could you give us a few details about this agreement? I believe there are some CBMs that are being proposed. What are these CBMs likely to be?

Foreign Secretary: As I stated in my opening remarks, there are a number of agreements which we are hoping to sign in Beijing. I do not want to go into the details since these will be outcomes from the discussions that actually happen between the two Prime Ministers. But let me assure all of you that we will brief you extensively during the course of the visit including on all the agreements or documents that may be signed.

Q: Madam Foreign Secretary, Indian citizens from Arunachal Pradesh are regularly facing this problem of stapled-visa issue. Will there be any talks on the visa liberalisation issue so that it can solve this problem forever?

Foreign Secretary: I have already told you that there is a boundary question between India and China, and that we are in discussions at the level of Special Representatives on how to discuss and deal with this issue. There have been several rounds of discussions, and they have arrived at the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles. They are now discussing the framework for resolving the boundary question. Let me again reiterate that we need to give them time to work out this issue. In the meantime, I wish to reiterate the Indian position that Arunachal Pradesh is an integral and inalienable part of India.

Q: Madam, the way Pakistan and China are talking about nuclear plants, will India speak to the Chinese Premier that it could be a dangerous game?

Foreign Secretary: I am going to answer your question in Hindi =, I hope it is OK.

Q: Sure.

Foreign Secretary: This is a concern for India. However, I do not wish to prejudge what the two Prime Ministers will discuss. Let us wait for their talks to be over, and I would be happy to brief you then.

Official Spokesperson: If there are no more questions on this visit, are there any questions on anything else?

Q: Is there any word on whether or not the Prime Minister will be visiting Colombo for the CHOGM Summit?

Foreign Secretary: The Government of Sri Lanka has extended an invitation. The Government of India has not yet taken a decision. This decision will be taken closer to the date keeping in view our foreign policy priorities, our international obligations, and our national interest.

Q: Mrs. Singh, my question also pertains to Dr. Manmohan Singh attending or not attending the CHOGM Summit. Madam, how relevant is the Commonwealth? This is a larger question. If it is still relevant as an entity, surely the argument would extend that it would be important for the Indian Prime Minister to attend it rather than, as some would say, succumb to domestic coalition compulsions as the case may be and not go.

Foreign Secretary: The Commonwealth is a relevant institution. It is a relevant institution that has 53 or 54 member countries at last count. Any institution that has so many member states cannot but be relevant in terms of meeting leaders from all parts of the world and speaking to them about our mutual concerns.

Foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy. I think that is something that should never be forgotten. It is meant to protect our domestic interests. And as I said, any decision that will be taken will be taken keeping in mind our national interest, our foreign policy priorities, and our international obligations.

Q: Madam, has any country, specifically US or UK, contacted India about the seizure of MV Seamen Guard near Tuticorin and the arrest of its crew?

Foreign Secretary: The vessel in question is owned by an American firm but is flagged in Sierra Leone. The vessel was stopped by our Coast Guard in consideration of issues relating to the presence of arms, ammunition, and armed guards on board without the necessary authorisation. The crew and guards are currently cooperating with the police investigations that are ongoing in Tamil Nadu. Cases have been filed with regard to our Arms Act and the Essential Commodities Act. Basic information on this case has been shared in routine course with US Embassy representatives. We have no issue with sharing details with any diplomatic representatives, should it be required.

Q: Madam, the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister has asked if the issue of civilians being injured in Pakistani unprovoked firing will be taken up with Pakistan. How will India address that issue?

Foreign Secretary: The question of incidents on the Line of Control is always taken up with Pakistan. We have a regular ongoing conversation with Pakistan on this. You know that our DGMOs are in regular touch. So, if there are any casualties on our side, we do take it up.

Q: Madam Foreign Secretary, you have just returned yesterday from the Maldives where you met several leaders of multiple parties there. There are still some concerns being expressed by the Maldivian Election Commission over whether the elections will even be held tomorrow because of certain issues with the electoral rolls and so on and so forth. What was your sense based on your communication with the multiple leaders? What is our position in case the elections do not get held tomorrow?

Foreign Secretary: My visit to the Maldives was in the context of the very close relationship that exists between India and the Maldives. You are aware that relations between the two are intertwined at a variety of levels whether it is the economic level, whether it is the security level, whether it is the people-to-people level, very close and ongoing contacts. India's interest is in seeing a stable, a peaceful, and a prosperous Maldives. And to this end, we believe that a transparent, a fair, and a free, democratic, political process is exceedingly important in bringing about a stable, a prosperous, and a peaceful Maldives. We believe that the first round of the elections that has seen an 88 per cent turnout of voters indicates the high expectations of the people in Maldives in seeing the results of their vote actually being translated into reality.

In the course of my visit I met various interlocutors in the Government of Maldives as well as the political parties, and all of them were of the view that the democratic political process needed to be supported so that free and fair elections could be held. It is our hope and our expectation that this process is taken forward, that it is carried forward, and that we have the inauguration of the President taking place on the 11th of November as provided for in the Constitution of the Maldives.

Q: Madam, following Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Nawaz Sharif's meeting in the US there was a decision that the two DGMOs would meet on the LoC question. Has a timeline been set for the DGMOs' meeting at all?

Foreign Secretary: At this juncture we have no information on a date when the DGMOs will meet.

Q: Madam, this is regarding the Augusta Westland case. Middleman Ralph Haschke has been arrested in Switzerland. Have the agencies in India gotten in touch with the Ministry of External Affairs, and will the Indian Government be looking for access or extradition of Haschke?

Foreign Secretary: We are aware of the developments that have taken place. CBI's investigations are ongoing presently, and they will take decisions as required. If required to facilitate, our Mission will facilitate.

Official Spokesperson: With that we come to the end of this interaction. Thank you very much.

(the text in italics is free translation of the Hindi text)



539. Prime Minister's interview to Russian media ahead of his official visit to Russia for the India – Russia Annual Summit 2013.

New Delhi, October 19, 2013.

India has taken a position on Syria close to that of Russia. Does it mean that we can expect a greater synergy between Russia and India on major international issues, particularly on the situation in the Middle East? What steps should be taken by Moscow and Delhi in this direction?

India and Russia have traditionally shared similar perspectives on regional and global issues, which constitute an important pillar of our strategic partnership.

The conflict in Syria is not only a tragedy for the people of that country, but also threatens the stability and security of the region and can have

broader economic and security consequences beyond the region. The use of chemical weapons, irrespective of who used them, highlights the dangers inherent in the conflict.

India has always held that there is no military solution to this conflict, and has consistently maintained that external military intervention will only exacerbate the conflict. We worked together with Russia on this issue when India was a member of the UN Security Council. There is an urgent need to promote a political settlement to the conflict, addressing the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. It is essential that the Geneva-2 Conference be convened at the earliest. I applaud the efforts of President Putin and the Russian Government in promoting a political settlement to the conflict and fully support the framework that Russia has worked out with the United States for a time-bound elimination of chemical weapons in Syria.

1. Tell us of your favourite memories from previous visits to Russia. What do you like most about the country?

I have been visiting this beautiful and historic country for several years now, and I have had the privilege of seeing a number of cities like Saint Petersburg and Yekaterinburg, in addition to Moscow. I have always admired Russia's rich heritage in culture, art and architecture. I have great respect for the genius and resilience of the Russian people. But what has struck me most has been the warmth and friendship of the Russian people towards India, which the Indian people fully reciprocate. Russia has been a longstanding and special partner of India. This relationship is unmatched in terms of understanding, trust, confidence and warmth. I value greatly my close and friendly relations with President Putin, and I look forward to my visit to the dynamic city of Moscow once again for the 2013 Annual Summit with President Putin.

2. India has expressed its wish to engage with Customs Union, created by Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. What are the Indian interests in Customs Union?

We value our economic cooperation with Russia, as well as with Belarus and Kazakhstan. India has signed Free Trade Agreements or Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements with several

countries, such as Thailand, Singapore, ASEAN and Japan, and we are negotiating a Broad Based Trade and Investment Agreement with the European Union. A Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between India and the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia will go a long way in enhancing economic relations between India and your Customs Union. Trade and investment links between India and Russia, in particular, would benefit greatly, and would complement various other measures that both countries are taking to promote two-way business linkages.

3. What are your expectations as far as the next BRICS summit is concerned? What should be done to make the structure and the mechanisms of the group more effective? What is the Indian attitude towards accepting new members to the BRICS?

President Putin has been the principal architect of the BRICS grouping. This is an important initiative in our multi-polar world. I am delighted that BRICS has become an important international forum for coordination and consultations on pressing economic and political issues of common interest. A number of new initiatives have been undertaken, including the establishment of a New Development Bank with initial subscribed capital of US\$ 50 billion, and a contingency reserve arrangement of US\$ 100 billion. These are significant measures to promote trade and investment in emerging markets. BRICS countries also meet on the margins of G-20 Summits to coordinate their position on issues being taken up in the Summit. Last month, on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit in St. Petersburg, we held an informal meeting of BRICS leaders.

I look forward to the next BRICS Summit in Brazil taking forward these discussions. As regards our membership, South Africa has recently become a member of BRICS, and there are currently no proposals for expanding the grouping further.

4. What is your assessment of the two major Russian-Indian projects in the field of military-technical cooperation - the 5th-generation fighter and the multi-purpose transport plane? When are the first models expected to be ready for test-flights and induction to the IAF?

We see the Fifth Generation Fight Aircraft and the Multi-Role Transport Aircraft development as two flagship projects in India – Russia military-technical cooperation. These projects symbolize the transformation of our defence cooperation from a buyer-seller relationship of the past to one that now also involves joint design, development and production of advanced defence platforms. These projects also symbolize the high degree of trust and synergy India and Russia enjoy in the defence sphere. I am happy that both projects are progressing well, and the preliminary design phase of the projects has been completed this year. Various complex and technical stages remain, including detailed design and development of prototypes, before series production can commence. We are keen that the entire process takes place as quickly as possible, so that these state-of-the-art aircraft can be inducted into the Indian Air Force.

5. Several agreements are expected to be signed during your visit to Moscow. Which of them will allow you to evaluate the visit as successful? What is the most important, so to say, “Number 1” field of modern Russian-Indian cooperation?

India and Russia enjoy a truly multi-dimensional relationship covering mutual political understanding, energy cooperation, defence ties, growing trade and investment, cultural and education linkages as well as warm friendship at the level of our people. I understand that agreements in many of these fields would be concluded during my visit to Moscow. However, it would not be appropriate to term a visit or a Summit as successful based on the signing of an agreement, or even attempt to categorize them inter-se. I believe all the documents that we sign are important and contribute to the strengthening of our special and privileged strategic partnership in various fields. What is most important is the commonality of approaches to international issues between India and Russia, and the mutual friendship and trust that we enjoy, which permits us to undertake joint cooperation ventures in all fields.

6. Last year Indian officials mentioned Russia among the countries that were supposed to be granted simplified procedure of getting a tourist visa on arrival. When can Russians expect this decision to be approved?

We are keen that Russian citizens face no impediments in their travel to India. India has already implemented a fairly liberal visa regime for Russian tourists and business travelers. In December 2010, the two countries signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement on simplification of requirements for mutual travel by certain categories of citizens of the two countries, including tourists. I am delighted that the number of tourist visas issued by us in Russia grew by 22% last year, and has increased by 55% during the first 9 months of this year. I hope this trend continues in the future. As regards the proposal of visa on arrival for Russian citizens, no decision has been taken as yet.

7. According to the Road map on nuclear cooperation signed by India and Russia several years ago both sides expressed the intention to construct up to 14-16 nuclear power reactors in India. The first one is already in the final commissioning stage at Kudankulam NPP. The second one will be completed soon. But the negotiations on commercial contracts for the Blocks 3 and 4 stalled. Are the plans for the rest 12-14 NP Blocks still valid? For four years now India has been promising to name another site for a nuclear project, apart from Kudankulam. When will it happen at last?

Civil nuclear cooperation is an important area of our bilateral partnership with Russia. We deeply appreciate Russian assistance in development of nuclear energy in India when others had shunned nuclear commerce with us. I am pleased that Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant Unit 1 achieved criticality in July this year and should begin to provide electricity to the grid soon. Kudankulam Unit 2 is in an advanced stage of construction. Indian and Russian companies have been holding negotiations on finalizing arrangements for Kudankulam units 3 and 4, and I am confident that these contracts would be finalized shortly. India remains interested in expanding nuclear power production in cooperation with Russia, and is committed to the full implementation of the Roadmap signed during the visit of President Putin to India in March 2010. We have already designated Haripur in West Bengal as an additional site to Kudankulam for constructing nuclear power plants in cooperation with Russia. We have also assured our Russian friends that an alternate site would be allocated, in case Haripur is not found feasible. I am confident

that cooperation in nuclear energy production between our two countries will continue to deepen.

8. Russian-Indian trade is supposed to touch the target of \$20 bln by 2015. Do you feel this plan is realistic? What should be done to overcome the existing obstacles and accelerate the growth of bilateral trade up to the existing potential? Are there any novel prospective projects that will push forward our economic cooperation, like for example the proposal of the ONGC for the construction of India-Russia oil pipeline?

India-Russia trade grew from US\$ 8.85 billion in 2011 to US\$11.04 billion in 2012, representing a growth of nearly 25%. If this pace is maintained, our trade could cross US\$ 20 billion in 2015. While we face the challenge of a difficult global economic environment, I am optimistic about the prospects for our trade and investment relations. We are encouraging greater and more active business-to-business relations, including through the India-Russia CEO's Council and the India-Russia Trade and Investment Forum. Our Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation has placed high priority on expanding economic relations. We would like better flow of information about each other's business capabilities, achievements and opportunities. We are keen to enhance mutual investments in areas such as chemicals, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, telecommunications, infrastructure, fertilizers and energy. There is continuous effort to identify new areas of economic cooperation. The hydrocarbon sector is an area of priority. We are looking to enhancing our participation in the Russian oil and gas sector. We are examining the feasibility of a proposal for direct surface transportation of hydrocarbons from Russia to India. We have also proposed a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between India and the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia, which we hope would be initiated soon.

9. The intensity of the Russian-Indian cultural ties is still lagging far behind bilateral contacts in defence and other fields. Can we expect any positive breakthrough in this regard, especially to facilitate the comeback of Bollywood films to the Russian screens? Do you personally like Russian cinema and literature? Could you name your favorite Russian books and movies?

India-Russia cultural ties are based on a strong foundation of mutual understanding, respect, affinity and appreciation for each other's arts, culture, music, dance and cinema. Last December, we signed a Cultural Exchange Programme for 2013-15. Between September and December 2013, we are holding a Festival of Indian Culture in Russia, involving performances by 6 troupes in 10 cities across Russia. We have an active Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Centre in Moscow and there are similar Russian cultural centres in India. We also hope that India movies would become more accessible in Russian theatres.

Russian literature is well-known and has been very popular in India. Russian authors such as Fyodor Dostoevsky, Lev Tolstoy, Anton Chekhov, Ivan Turgenev and Mikhail Lermontov are widely read in India. Russian movies such as "Burnt by the Sun", "Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears" and "Anna Karenina" have won acclaim in India and globally.

10. The unique family of the Roerichs is a spiritual bridge between Russia and India. Their Kullu museum is a monument of world importance. The Russians have time and again called on your government to take the IRMT under its wing. Can we expect the Central authorities to be more active in protecting the heritage of the Roerich family and taking part in the development of the Memorial Trust?

The heritage of the Roerichs in India is a valuable joint legacy and we will continue to take all necessary steps to see that it is properly cared for and developed.



540. Prime Minister's Statement to the Media following the 14th India-Russia Annual Summit.

Moscow, October 21, 2013.

Your Excellency President Vladimir Putin,
Distinguished Representatives of the Media.

I am very pleased to be back here in the historic and vibrant city of Moscow for the fourteenth bilateral Annual Summit.

At the outset, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to President Putin for his contribution in giving new direction and content to India-Russia relations as also for starting this very useful practice of Annual Summits between our two countries.

The depth, diversity and dynamism of our cooperation testifies to the fact that ours is truly a Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership. We also have a high degree of convergence on global developments and we collaborate constructively in international forums.

Our discussions today were characterised by the warmth, goodwill and trust that permeate all aspects of our partnership. President Putin and I agreed that our strategic partnership remains a matter of the highest priority for our two nations, based on our shared belief in the enduring value of this relationship, both for our mutual benefit and as a factor for global peace and stability.

We expressed satisfaction with the progress in our bilateral cooperation, including in defence, energy, high-technology trade, investment, space, science, education, culture and tourism. We noted that despite the fragile global economic environment, our bilateral trade grew by nearly 25% last year to reach 11 billion US dollars. We resolved to promote investments and facilitate closer cooperation in a number of areas with great potential, such as oil and gas, energy, information technology, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, fertilizers, and mining. I also sought President Putin's support for the launch of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement with the Customs Union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

The Kudankulam nuclear power project is an important symbol of our strategic partnership. We look forward to commercial power production from Unit 1 very shortly, and the completion of work on Unit 2 next year. I conveyed to President Putin our commitment to fully implement the road map on civil nuclear cooperation that was signed during his visit to India in 2010. We have directed our officials to resolve all outstanding issues at the earliest.

Our defence cooperation continues to be strong, and we expect that Russia will remain a key defence partner for India as we move into a stage of joint design, development, and production of key defence platforms.

We exchanged views on several major regional and global issues. India welcomes the joint Russia-US framework for the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons and I thanked President Putin for his personal efforts towards securing a peaceful political settlement to the Syrian conflict. India has a direct interest in peace and stability in the entire West Asian region. We also agreed on the need for a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and expressed hope for progress in the ongoing discussions with Iran.

India and Russia share similar perspectives on developments in our extended neighbourhood. Terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking emanating from this area endanger security and stability in our region and beyond. We have agreed to intensify our coordination and cooperation for promoting security and development in the region. We also emphasised our shared interest in a peaceful and stable transition in Afghanistan next year.

I congratulated President Putin on the successful conduct of the St. Petersburg G-20 Summit. Our two countries will continue to work closely together at various multilateral platforms, including the BRICS, the G-20, the East Asia Summit, and the United Nations.

Our people-to-people contacts remain strong. Between September and December 2013, ten Russian cities will host a festival of Indian culture. I believe that such activities will further cement the strong ties between our people.

The extraordinary history of our relationship and the warmth and goodwill between our peoples gives me great confidence that we will successfully exploit our growing convergence of interests and expanding opportunities for cooperation and take our strategic partnership to even greater heights. I thank President Putin for a very successful Summit.

Thank You



541. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary and India's Ambassador to Russia on Prime Minister's visit to Russia.

Moscow, October 21, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good evening friends and thank you very much for being here despite all the hectic activities you had all through the day.

I have asked Foreign Secretary to give you a flavour of what has happened. You have a lot of documentation with you. So, she will just speak to you about what were the main issues, etc.

We also have with her Ambassador Ajai Malhotra in case you have anything specific on Indo-Russian bilateral relations which require some historical background information that you want. Further to his right is Mr. Ajay Bisaria, Joint Secretary (Eurasia). So, we have here with us everybody who has worked on this for the last few months. Without much ado I will request Foreign Secretary to make her opening remarks, and then the floor is all yours.

Foreign Secretary (Shrimati Sujatha Singh): Good evening friends. You already have a lot of documentation. So, I thought I would just give you a bit of a flavour of how the meetings went today.

As you know, first there was a speech that the Prime Minister made. He received Honourary Doctorate from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. He was very warmly received, given standing ovation. He gave a very beautiful speech, very warm, very emotional in terms of tracing the history of relations between our two countries over

the past six decades. You have seen the speech. He talks about Russia having stood by India at moments of great international challenge, when our own resources were limited and our friends were few.

I think this thread of historical continuity is something that has run through the meetings today including in the present that President Putin gave to our Prime Minister, which is a very interesting present on which I will ask the Ambassador to come in when I have finished my opening remarks.

So, after he got this Honourary Doctorate and he made this speech, we had our meeting. It was first in a restricted format where we discussed all the main issues between India and Russia; and then we had it in a delegation-level format. This went on for close to four hours. So, you can imagine it covered the entire spectrum of issues on which India and Russia have very close cooperation.

In many ways our relationship with Russia is truly a strategic partnership. It covers very critical areas. It covers critical areas of civil nuclear energy, defence, space, then you have hydrocarbons, economic and a very close identity of views, close congruence, let me use the word congruence, of views on various political issues in various regions of the world, very friendly atmosphere, very constructive.

The Prime Minister has met President Putin twice already this year. This is his 10th summit with Russia and, as I said in my earlier briefing, fifth time he has come to Moscow.

On the nuclear issue, it is our expectation that Kudankulam-1 will be connected to the grid tonight, three hundred megawatts of power. Kudankulam-2 we hope will be operational next year. On Kudankulam-3 and 4 there are legal issues and both the leaders have asked the experts to deal with these.

On defence, there is satisfaction at all that is happening. It has been a very important year, significant year. We finally have the INS Vikramaditya which has completed its sea trials. It is going to be arriving in India. And the extent of cooperation over there, as a matter of fact when we were having the briefing they said that the people who had worked on it in Russia had such a high degree of pride in the work that they had done that they were reluctant to let it go. So, that was interesting. You do not

have this kind of partnership with every country. Between Russia and India it is really quite special.

You have already had delivery of one of the frigates. And then you have the fifth generation fighter aircraft, the multirole transport aircraft. And it is a relationship that is slowly but surely transforming from a buyer-seller relationship to co-design, co-development and co-production. And that is of course a very good sign, including on helicopters.

On hydrocarbons, we are cooperating in many parts of Russia. There is the OVL, Sakhalin, Arctic, there is Imperial Energy, Tomsk. We are even thinking in terms of a pipeline that will connect ultimately from Russia to India. This might well be some years in the future but still we have a vision. And I think that it is important to have something that you work towards with your trusted strategic partners. And something like this when implemented will be truly transformational.

On the economic side, you have the CEO's Council second meeting today in the morning. The CEOs also meet the Prime Minister later in the evening. You must be aware that in a very adverse economic environment when our bilateral trade with many of our key partners has gone down, with Russia it has actually increased by 25 per cent, which is saying a lot.

Tourism is up. Apparently tourist figures are going to be up by 70 per cent this year. And the CEOs who met PM were very gung-ho about potential, it is very favourable economic environment, about the prospects for investment and trade, pharmaceuticals, IT, fertilisers, medicine. So, all that is going well.

On the political front we discussed Syria. We expressed our appreciation of Russia's role, and Russia welcomed the possibility of India's participation in Geneva-2. You would have seen the Joint Statement, some very hefty paragraphs on counterterrorism. It shows you the level of trust we have in each other.

We discussed Afghanistan. We are discussing Afghanistan with them at various levels in terms of the drawdown that is going to happen in 2014 and how to prevent the effects of the terrorism from spilling over.

We cooperate very closely in multilateral fora - in the UN, G20, BRICS, SCO. All this was appreciated. And I think that President Putin and like

old friends now, they have been dealing with each other for ten years, and that came through very strongly in the course of the meetings today.

That is what I have to say. Would you like to add about that interesting bit of what the President presented to the Prime Minister that goes back to the history between our two nations, about 110 years back?

Indian Ambassador to Russia (Shri Ajai Malhotra): Yes, thank you.

As the Foreign Secretary very correctly pointed out, I think that our Prime Minister and President Putin go back a long way. It is truly like two old friends meeting. I think today he made a very special gesture in giving beyond the normal protocol a gift to our Prime Minister. Even the Protocol was not aware of it. But he had personally identified and brought together these two, three little items.

First of all, one was an art work in the sense that it was an art print really of the then Tsarevich, the future Nicholas-II, when he was still the Prince. He had visited India in December 1890 - January 1891. He spent two months in India. He visited the 30 largest cities of India including Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Delhi going up to Shimla, Banaras, etc. So, there was a work of art showing him with one of the Maharajas whom he had met.

I should tell you that he was quite friendly with the Maharajas including those in the Punjab. For example, the Maharaja of Kapurthala, the Maharaja of Patiala, these were all friends with the Russian royalty. So, this was an art work showing the then Tsarevich and his visit to India.

Along with it was a map of India. The Czars in fact from the 16th century onwards were great collectors of all sorts of museum artefacts and museum material. If you go to St. Petersburg and even here you will find very fine and old collections of works from India, either ethnographic or museum material including books in Russian of people who visited India and came back. So, on the basis of the information they collected, they had a map of India. So, the other part was a map of India.

Q: How old is that map?

Indian Ambassador to Russia: It would be from, as I said, between 1891 and 1900.

And while giving it he also recalled the history. If you know, we talk of our relations starting from 1947 when we established diplomatic relations

with Russia four months before India became independent, but actually the relationship goes way way back. Even in terms of diplomacy, the first Russian Consulate General opened in Bombay in the year 1900. President Putin mentioned this also. This is all very interesting because in the earlier Soviet period we used to kind of black out memory of the contacts during the Czar's period and earlier.

If I can just digress for a minute, in fact the oldest part of our relationship goes back to 1469 when the famous traveller from Tver...*(Inaudible)*...visited India. He came almost 30 years before Vasco da Gama came here. He wrote a book about it. That is why we know about it. There were travellers coming even earlier. Anyway, there were big communities of Indians. We had a community of 200 Indians living in Astrakhan who were there from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

In addition, as an example of this, President Putin gave also a coin from the period of our Mughals because there was trade between India and the Mughals. As I said, the Indian community in Astrakhan even now is well remembered and was there for a good 300 years. There were about 200 Indian merchants there. So, these were the three of the gifts that he gave.

Foreign Secretary: I think he also talked about the Russian Consulate that was set up.

Indian Ambassador to Russia: I could give you more information but it lessens the interest.

Foreign Secretary: The Russian Consulate that was set up in Mumbai, he said that they had a little bit of trouble in setting up the Consulate, they were not getting the necessary approvals.

Indian Ambassador to Russia: To give you very briefly the background, in 1857 was what we call our First War of Independence or the British would call the Sepoy Mutiny. The first application for opening a diplomatic mission in India was made by the Russian foreign office by the Czars in 1858. And the British wanted to keep it off because they did not want this kind of contact between Russia and India. It was a great game as it is well-known. Otherwise,...*(Inaudible)*...read about that in

history ...(*Inaudible*)... They tried very hard when the Tsarevich was coming saying, look, the son of the Czar is coming, he is going to go around here, you must announce to open.

But even then they did not. Then as a result of that visit in 1891, they opened it in the year 1900. Then in 1903 they moved them to Calcutta because Calcutta became the capital. Then they left them there because they moved in 1911 to Delhi. But the permission remains for them to be in Calcutta. Basically the British were trying to make it a little difficult for them because they did not want this kind of contacts. But in many senses, whether you look at academic interaction, I was telling the Foreign Secretary, in terms of universities teaching Sanskrit in the middle of the 19th century, we had three Russian universities which taught Sanskrit and had Professors of Sanskrit.

This is just to give you an idea. There are a lot of strong linkages that go back a long time ago which now are becoming a little more open and spoken about. I think President Putin's giving these gifts also was recognition of that that this is also a part of our history and we need to acknowledge it. But it was very touching that he should think of these things, that he should study it himself and give them and explain to Prime Minister personally what these gifts meant.

Official Spokesperson: The floor is now open for any questions you may have.

Q: You mentioned something about helicopters co-development. This is the first time one has heard about it. Can you elaborate on that?

Indian Ambassador to Russia: I can mention that last year in December the Sun Group had tied up with Russian Helicopters and an agreement that was signed last December for doing the spares and manufacture of both Kamov and Mi helicopters.

Q: Civil transport?

Indian Ambassador to Russia: These are civilian. Defence we are already doing. HAL was set up with Russian assistance, let us not forget that, and has been doing it for a long time. The Mi-17V-5s that we use are all really either bought from here or assembled up here. And these were the ones that really were used including just now when we had

problems in Odisha and Uttarakhand. The ones that really helped us out were the Russian helicopters which were delivered against last year's contract.

Q: This is private thing?

Indian Ambassador to Russia: Yes, this is private sector.

Q: Could you tell us something, Foreign Secretary, about the discussions on Iran, what was actually said?

Foreign Secretary: We discussed the situation relating to the issue of nuclear energy, and we were both agreed that Iran has a right to civilian nuclear energy, and that whatever had to be decided really had to be decided through dialogue between all the concerned parties.

Q: While discussing the issue of combating terrorism and punishing the guilty, was there any mention of Pakistan? It concerns India most.

Foreign Secretary: We discussed issues relating to the region. In this context, yes, the issue of Pakistan did come up and the issue of terrorism did come up.

Q: Why has there been no major step forward in energy, the nuclear plant in Tamil Nadu? There is no new defence agreement. In that sense there is no new step forward, as you say. I do not want to use that word but it looks more like a very smooth, cordial but routine visit. Why is it so?

Foreign Secretary: Not at all. I would not agree with that. There has been such steady and good progression. There are many issues that are under discussion, and there are many issues that have been brought to fruition. The very fact that you have Kudankulam-1 being connected to the grid today and Kudankulam-2 due to go on stream next year, discussions ongoing, and so much that is happening in the defence field; you remember how long we have been talking about INS Vikramaditya, the very fact that it is complete **Question:** What about the announcement?

Foreign Secretary: These are all works in progress and I think each summit takes us a little closer and starts us off on new initiatives as well. So, this is all ongoing.

Ajai, would you like to add something to that?

Indian Ambassador to Russia: What I could add is really if you see, as Foreign Secretary has said, these are done in phases. One will come on line, you will be linked to the grid hopefully by midnight tonight, as the President said within hours. Any minute it should be happening. Two will take a little more time. You have probably till July, August next year when it would be done and then it could be linked to the grid. Three and Four are also very much on.

As you know, we have our roadmap which we agreed to in the year 2010, and that has been reaffirmed publicly by our hon. Prime Minister and by President Putin in the statements they made to the media. So, this is going on. There we are down to a word or two really and our lawyers are just trying to work it out so that we can move ahead on 3 and 4. But in any case, you have enough time. It is not as if it has to be done now because you will only start on that when you finish off number 2.

What is important to note is that we have said that we are going ahead and that that roadmap will be implemented, which means even we will be looking beyond 3 and 4. So, I think that is an important point to make, including perhaps even other sites. So, I must say at this moment nothing demands that if you have not worked it out to everyone's satisfaction. But even as we speak, discussions are going on. I think it is a question of a little bit of time.

Foreign Secretary: Let me add to that. There is an agreement between GAIL and Gazprom to supply 2.5 million tonnes of gas each year for 20 years. And this might go up, it might be one million tonnes extra also some years down the line. And the very fact that you are setting up a Joint Study Group to look at the prospects of a gas pipeline between Russia and India, these are visionary projects. So, you cannot say nothing new is going on. Something is always coming up.

Indian Ambassador to Russia: If I may supplement on oil and gas, I think oil and gas is a very important area of our cooperation. OVL's largest investments abroad are in Russia. Let us get that story right. In Salkhalin-1 2.5 billion dollars we have put in. We have invested 2.1 billion dollars in Imperial Energy, and after that another 480 million dollars. So, that makes it 2.58 billion. If you total the two together, it comes to a little over 5.1 billion dollars India has already invested in Russia.

The investment we have done in Sakhalin-1 has been a grand success. The investment we have done in Tomsk is now on the way to being one because they have changed the mineral extraction tax. They have dropped that. That earlier used to be a 24 per cent tax which has been dropped for all of Western Siberia. As a result, the type oil reserve in Tomsk is now available for proper exploitation.

And we have now identified a technology partner who will help us exploit that and I think you will find a huge...*(Inaudible)*... what was a situation when we just about had our head above the water would be now a situation where there would be fairly significant returns from our ownership of Imperial Energy.

I shall point out that this is the only company anywhere in the world where OVL owns 100 per cent. It has about 900 employees including about 12 Indians in the town of Tomsk. And this is the biggest investment in that area. So, these are important things. 5.1 billion dollars of Indian investment in oil and gas is up here. Let me add that we are looking for more opportunities. We are looking at Novatech, we are looking at cooperation with the Rosneft in terms of investment, and we hope one of these at least should be able to come through. Managing Director of OVL is in town and has some meetings today. I think you will hear many more indicators of a very positive nature on oil and gas cooperation in the coming months if not weeks.

Q: Madam, you mentioned that there is some 'pretty hefty paragraphs on combating terrorism'. Given the high degree of shared perceptions on drawdown in Afghanistan, probably...*(Inaudible)*...blow back from that. Are there any ideas about how to frame a strategy or how to share this, maybe bring in other nations in the region so that it will become an effective sort of bloc or an effective voice in ensuring that an adverse result does not an outcome does not happen in Afghanistan?

Foreign Secretary: The first step is always consultations. And this is something that we are doing with our strategic partners. It is also something that is being discussed within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. So, you discuss with each other, you discuss what your perceptions are, you discuss what the challenges are, and then we take it from there as it goes.

You cannot already begin to talk in terms of hypothetical situations even before they arise. But you are in close touch and every time that you have a chance and opportunity, you discuss and exchange ideas. For instance we are going to have on the 10th of November a RIC meeting. So, this would be one of the issues that is discussed. So, amongst all the ongoing issues, you keep having consultations. That is basically to my mind what strategic partnerships are about.

Q: My question is to the Ambassador. On Kudankulam 3 and 4 that it is down to just one or two words. I just wanted to ...

Indian Ambassador to Russia: But these are important words.

Question: Yes, obviously, you are on record. I just wanted to understand from you, do we safely conclude that India's liability law is no longer an issue with the Russians or the concerns which the Russians had on it have been adequately addressed, and what we are essentially doing are dotting the i's and crossing the t's?

Indian Ambassador to Russia: I think this can be responded to only when it is actually concluded. Before that, anything would be really guessing. Let us wait till the deal is done. We will obviously let you know and the whole world know as soon as it is done. At this moment I do not think one would be correct in saying anything more.

Q: Madam Foreign Secretary, in the Joint Statement there is a huge chunk devoted to economic cooperation and investments and so on. It is quite extensive. And also on energy cooperation, there is this talk about setting up more reactors after the 3 and 4.

Foreign Secretary: Russia is one of our most important partners in the field of civil nuclear energy. Our cooperation with Russia goes back several years. And as part of our ongoing objective of meeting a greater proportion of our energy needs from nuclear energy, Russia would be a natural partner. So, it is in that context that you really have to see it.

Q: You said that there will be more reactors after 3 and 4. When will they be done?

Foreign Secretary: Let us see. Let us get the 3 and 4 done first. Then we will have more.

Q: This is going back to 'a word or two'. The fact that we have come down to a word or two, is that a development of the last two, three days or has that been the case for a much longer period?

Foreign Secretary: These are issues that are presently under negotiation, and I suggest we leave it that and we see how it turns out.

Q: You have mentioned of information technology and security. Is it...*(Inaudible)*... understand that cyber security, in the Joint Statement you mentioned that it is behind combating terrorism. So, any fresh thoughts after Snowden episode out here?

Foreign Secretary: Snowden did not figure in the discussions, that much I can tell you. Cyber security is something that we are all concerned about. And it is something on which we would like to interact with our strategic partners also. So, it is in that context.

Q: You said Snowden did not figure.

Foreign Secretary: Did not. emphasise 'not'.

Q: Madam, you spoke about nuclear cooperation. Any talk about cooperation on fast breeder technology because most of these kind of reactors are megawatt plus...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: Not in the course of today.

Indian Ambassador to Russia: Not today. In fact we do have a very robust dialogue which takes place at the technical level. So, this is in the context of research and development in nuclear technology. There is an ongoing dialogue but, as Foreign Secretary said, it is not part of today's discussions.

Official Spokesperson: With that we come to the end of this event.

Thank you



542. Joint Statement on the 14th India-Russia Annual Summit: Deepening the Strategic Partnership for Global Peace and Stability.

Moscow, October 21, 2013.

1. The Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh, paid an official visit to the Russian Federation on 20-22 October 2013, at the invitation of the President of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Vladimir V. Putin. President of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Vladimir V. Putin and Prime Minister of India, H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh held talks in Moscow.
2. The President of the Russian Federation and the Prime Minister of India welcomed the continuing momentum of high-level bilateral contacts and intense dialogues that had taken place during the year, between the National Security Councils, the Foreign Offices and the various Ministries and Departments of the two countries. They discussed priority areas of bilateral cooperation and noted common positions on current international and regional issues. Both sides stressed their continued commitment to promote and strengthen in every possible way their special and privileged strategic partnership.
3. The sides noted a number of productive visits held this year at ministerial level to promote bilateral cooperation. These included the visits to Russia of H.E. Mr S Khurshid, External Affairs Minister (in April and October, 2013), H.E. Mr S K Shinde, Home Minister (in April, 2013), H.E. Mr A Sharma, Minister of Commerce & Industry (in April, June and September, 2013), and H.E. Mr P Chidambaram, Finance Minister (in July 2013).
4. The sides welcomed the enhanced bilateral parliamentary exchanges and particularly, the visit by Chairperson of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation Ms Valentina I. Matvienko to India in February, 2013.

Promoting trade and investment ties

5. The sides expressed satisfaction at the record level of bilateral trade of over US \$ 11 billion reached in 2012.

6. The sides agreed that investment collaboration was an important component of economic cooperation, which could also help in increasing bilateral investment and trade. They welcomed the identification of priority investment projects on both sides as an outcome of the first meeting of the India-Russia Working Group on Priority Investment Projects. They noted the successful outcomes of the 2nd session of India-Russia Working Group on Modernization and Industrial Cooperation held in Moscow, where both sides acknowledged their mutual desire to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in areas like civil aviation; chemical and fertilizer industry; mining; and automobiles.
7. The sides welcomed increasing business interactions, as demonstrated by the successful traditional round table "Russia-India Business Dialogue" organized in the framework of the 17th Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum on June 20, 2013, and the seventh India-Russia Forum on Trade and Investment, also held in St. Petersburg, on September 20, 2013. They also welcomed the two meetings in 2013 of the reconstituted Chief Executive Officers Council, which was working out sectors and opportunities for greater business cooperation.
8. The sides underlined the significant potential for cooperation in such sectors as oil and gas, pharmaceutical and medical industry, infrastructure, mining, automobiles, fertilizers, aviation, as well as in modernization of industrial facilities located in the two countries.
9. The sides stressed the importance of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation (IGC) functioning as a key mechanism for developing bilateral interaction in the economic and investment fields. They noted the positive outcomes of the nineteenth session of the IGC held in Moscow on October 4, 2013.
10. The sides agreed to work towards the creation of a Joint Study Group for studying the possibility of signing a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and

the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. They noted that this matter was currently under the consideration of the Eurasian Economic Commission.

Energy cooperation

11. The sides reaffirmed their commitment to implement the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of India on the Enhancement of Cooperation in Oil and Gas Sector concluded on December 21, 2010.
12. The sides noted the importance of cooperation in order to organize long-term supplies of hydrocarbons to India from Russia, conducive to strengthening India's energy security and diversification of energy exports from Russia through LNG supplies to India. The sides expressed satisfaction with the dynamic development of cooperation between JSC Gazprom and Indian companies to organize long term supplies of LNG to India from the Gazprom Group portfolio.
13. Both sides also agreed to explore the possibilities of direct transportation of hydrocarbons from Russia to India through the land route. The sides agreed to set up a Joint Study Group in this regard.
14. The Indian side expressed OVL's interest in participating along with Russian companies in exploration for hydrocarbons in the Arctic region.
15. The sides welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Efficiency between FSBO Russian Energy Agency of the Ministry of Energy of Russia and the Bureau of Energy Efficiency of India.
16. The sides noted with satisfaction the progress in regard to the commissioning of Unit-1 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant and agreed to take necessary steps to expedite the completion of Unit-2. The sides also agreed to expeditiously finalise the General Framework Agreement and the Techno-Commercial

Offer for Units- 3 & 4 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant. The sides reaffirmed their commitment to the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on cooperation in the construction of additional nuclear power plant units at Kudankulam site as well as in the construction of Russian designed Nuclear Power Plants at new sites in the Republic of India, concluded on December 5, 2008; the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the use of Atomic Energy for Peaceful Purposes and the Road Map for the Serial Construction of the Russian designed Nuclear Power Plants in the Republic of India, concluded on March 12, 2010.

17. The sides emphasized the need to facilitate cooperation among power sector companies of both the countries for modernization of existing power plants and construction of new power plants in India.
18. The sides expressed satisfaction with the signing of the Vladivostok Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific, 2014-18.

Cooperation in Science and Technology

19. The sides noted with satisfaction progress in various on-going scientific sectors, including cooperation in Basic Sciences under DST-RFBR program and the Integrated Long-Term Program (ILTP).
20. The sides welcomed the creation of new institutional mechanisms by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Science and Technology of India. These mechanisms would support Indo-Russian R&D projects with potential for technology development and generation of new intellectual property. These projects would be in conformity with national priorities of both countries, as identified under 12th Five Year plan of India and the Federal Targeted Programme

“Research and Development in Priority Fields of Science and Technology Complex of Russia in 2014-2020”.

Education Sector Cooperation

21. The sides agreed to expedite finalization of the intergovernmental agreements on recognition of education documents and academic degrees in the general and the medical fields of study. They noted the constructive discussion in Moscow in October 2013 on the issue of medical degrees.

Cultural Cooperation

22. Both countries, possessing a rich cultural heritage and guided by the centuries-old traditions of friendship, agreed to make extensive use of each other's culture and arts, and the mutual lively interest in these. The sides expressed satisfaction at the ongoing implementation of the Cultural Exchange Program 2013-2015 between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, signed on December 24, 2012. They favoured further cooperation in the field of culture and the arts, including interaction between the major museums of both the countries.
23. Both sides commended the high level of goodwill and mutual appreciation of culture at the people-to people level. They welcomed the increasing people-to-people contacts between the two countries, including the flow of tourists, which increased by over 20 percent in each of the past two years.
24. The sides appreciated the organisation of the Festival of Russian Culture in India in 2012 and the ongoing Festival of Indian Culture in Russia in 2013. They also agreed to continue holding regular Russian cultural festivals in India and Indian cultural festivals in Russia.

Inter-Regional Cooperation

25. The sides recalled the Agreement for Cooperation between States and Regions of India and Russia (2000) and expressed support for enhancing exchanges between regions of both countries. The

leaders also encouraged city-to-city/sister-cities cooperation with a view to promote multifaceted engagement in economy, culture, health, education and public policy at a sub-regional level between the two countries.

Exploration of Outer Space

26. The sides expressed their commitment to further cooperation in space activities of mutual interest.
27. The sides supported cooperation between Russia and India within the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and agreed to advance it in a pragmatic and steady manner. In particular, they expressed mutual interest in coordinating actions with reference to the current endeavour of the Committee to work out guidelines related to ensuring the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

Military and Technical Cooperation

28. The sides emphasized that the traditionally close military and technical cooperation between the two countries was a crucial element of the strategic partnership and reflected the high level of trust between the two states.
29. In the context of the 13th meeting of the Russian-Indian Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation scheduled in Moscow later this year, the sides commended regular bilateral contacts and military and technical cooperation, as well as the joint INDRA exercise conducted by the Armies of the two countries in October 2013. The sides emphasised the scope for enhancing service-to-service exchanges, training cooperation and regular exercises between their armed forces.
30. The sides welcomed the delivery of the Russian-built frigate Triakand to India in 2013, licensed production of Su-30MKI aircraft and T-90S tanks in India, as well as successful completion of the trials of the aircraft carrier Vikramaditya. The sides took note of the progress made in the field of joint design, development and production of high-technology military equipment and

implementation of projects such as the construction of the fifth-generation fighter aircraft, multi-role transport aircraft and BrahMos supersonic missile. The sides agreed to enhance cooperation in the fields of rocket, missile and naval technologies and weapon systems.

Coordination on International and Regional Issues

31. The sides re-affirmed their desire to build a more stable, secure and fair system of international relations based on equal partnerships between states, the rule of international law and respect for the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. They agreed to continue interaction with a view to strengthening the central role of the UN in maintaining international peace and security and ensuring steady social and economic development. The sides welcomed the scope of their cooperation within the UN and agreed to further coordinate approaches on a broad range of international and regional issues.
32. Both sides reaffirmed the need for UN Security Council reform in order to make it more representative and effective in dealing with emerging challenges. They agreed that any expansion of the Security Council should reflect contemporary realities. In this regard, the Russian Federation reiterated its strong support to India for a permanent seat in a reformed UN Security Council.

Combating Terrorism

33. The sides recalled the Moscow Declaration between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India on International Terrorism signed on 6 November 2001 and reiterated that international terrorism is a threat to peace and security and a grave violation of human rights and a crime against humanity. Both sides affirmed the need to join efforts of all states to defeat terrorism. They condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and agreed that there should be no tolerance for sheltering, arming, training, or financing of terrorists.
34. In multi-ethnic and democratic societies such as India and the Russian Federation, terrorist acts perpetrated under misleading

slogans are in reality attacks on the freedom and democratic values of our societies and are aimed at undermining the territorial integrity of our nations. Such acts may have international linkages extending across and beyond the borders. States that provide aid, abetment and shelter for such terrorist activities are themselves as guilty as the actual perpetrators of terrorism.

35. Both sides reaffirmed the obligation of all states to vanquish terrorism from their territories and areas under their control. They need to irreversibly shut down terrorist networks, organizations and infrastructure, and show tangible movement in investigating and bringing quickly to justice all those responsible for acts of terrorism.
36. Both countries further agreed that there cannot be ideological, religious, political, racial, ethnic, or any other justification to acts of terrorism. Incidents such as the Mumbai Terror Attacks or Beslan terrorist attack, which resulted in the death of numerous innocent civilians cannot be justified on any grounds.
37. The sides reaffirmed the UN's central role in combating international terrorism, and expressed their intention to make an active contribution to counter terrorism under the auspices of the UN. They also called for a speedy conclusion of the negotiations on the draft UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. The sides also agreed to continue to address these issues in the format of the bilateral Joint Working Group on Countering International Terrorism.

International Information Security

38. The sides expressed concern at the growing threat of the use of information and communication technologies for criminal and terrorist purposes, as well as for purposes that are inconsistent with the UN Charter. In this context the sides noted the need for adoption by the international community of the universal rules, norms and principles of responsible behaviour of states in the use of Information and Communication Technologies. They agreed to deepen their bilateral consultations and cooperation

on global issues related to the use of Information and Communication Technologies. They also decided to accelerate consideration of the proposed intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of international information security. The sides also stressed the necessity to observe the principle of non-interference in internal affairs as well as human rights in Internet, including the right to privacy, in accordance with respective domestic legislation.

Cooperation in the field of Disarmament and Non-proliferation

39. Russia and India consider as their common task preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means. They emphasized the importance of step-by-step progress in the field of disarmament with the participation of all stakeholders to uphold international peace, security and stability.
40. The sides welcomed the bilateral consultations on Arms Control and Non-Proliferation which were held in New Delhi in May this year and gave the opportunity to exchange views on a whole range of topical issues. They agreed to strengthen multilateral export control regimes as important components of the global non-proliferation regime. Russia took into positive consideration India's interest in full membership in MTCR and Wassenaar Arrangement. The Russian side reiterated readiness to assist and promote a discussion and positive decision in the Nuclear Suppliers Group on India's full membership in the NSG, and welcomed India's intention to seek full membership. India stressed its determination to actively contribute to the international efforts aimed at strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime.
41. While recognizing the unalienable right of all states to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes Russia and India stressed the need for countries to comply with their respective non-proliferation obligations. The sides advocate the central role of the IAEA, and in particular its safeguards system, in the international activities aimed at the usage of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with the requirements of the respective legally-binding safeguards obligations of states and the Statute of this organization.

42. Both sides support international efforts to ensure that outer space is used for peaceful purposes. Both legal instruments and appropriate and inclusive confidence-building measures can contribute to this end.

Enhancing Security Cooperation in Asia and the Asia Pacific

43. The sides noted that the role of the Asia-Pacific region in international affairs is on the rise and supported further regional integration and cooperation for sustainable global growth.
44. The sides agreed to closely interact in order to discuss the framework principles of strengthening security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, based on universally accepted principles and norms of international law, openness, transparency and equality. They agreed to play an active role in multilateral fora to encourage further dialogue on equal and undiminished security and developing mutually beneficial cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, in accordance with the agreement achieved at the East Asia Summit (EAS) held on 9-10 October 2013 in Brunei Darussalam.
45. The sides consider the EAS a key forum for strategic dialogue between leaders of member states on pressing issues as to the political and economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.
46. The sides agreed that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) contributed significantly to ensuring peace and stability, economic development and prosperity in Eurasia. The Russian Federation commended India's active participation in the SCO as an observer state and reiterated its strong support for India's bid for full membership of the SCO.
47. The sides are committed to further intensifying political interactions between China, India, and Russia. In this context, they attach great significance to the next meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the three states, which is to take place this November in New Delhi. The sides also see it as essential to continue consultations concerning regional security at the level of High Representatives of China, India, and Russia.

48. The sides noted the role of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) as an important mechanism aimed at creating favourable conditions for trade and investment cooperation and developing regional integration in the Asia-Pacific. Russia reaffirmed that India's potential membership in APEC would facilitate further development of a dialogue on addressing key issues of regional and global trade. Russia reiterated its support towards India's accession to APEC upon achievement of consensus within APEC on expansion of its membership.
49. The sides expressed committed to further strengthening the ASEAN Regional Forum, a key tool for practical cooperation in maintaining peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, to increasing its contribution to the global effort to combat terrorism and cross-border crime, including in the field of ICTs. The sides voiced their intention to promote further development of multilateral military cooperation in the region, to coordinate measures and provide, on a mutual basis, support within the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus format).
50. The sides reaffirmed their commitment to further advance, in order to ensure peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, cooperation and coordination within the interstate associations existing in the region, including the Asia-Europe Meeting Forum, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, Asia Cooperation Dialogue.

Cooperation among BRICS countries

51. India and Russia appreciated the outcome of the Fifth BRICS Summit in Durban (held on March 27, 2013). They noted the increased role which BRICS played in the efforts of the international community aimed at bringing the world economy to the path of strong, sustainable and balanced growth. India and Russia stand for strengthening of BRICS as a mechanism for a strategic and ongoing coordination of the activities undertaken by the member states on a growing range of international political and economic issues.

52. The sides confirmed their full support for the eThekweni Action Plan adopted at the BRICS Summit in 2013 and expressed determination to contribute actively to its implementation.
53. India and Russia stressed the importance of developing all aspects of multilateral cooperation within BRICS as the most solid basis for further strengthening of diverse ties among its members. The countries support the projects for establishing the BRICS Development Bank and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement among BRICS states. The Indian side agreed to consider the Russian proposal to develop a Strategy of Multilateral Economic Cooperation of BRICS member states. The sides expressed confidence that the forthcoming BRICS summit in Brazil will help strengthen the role of BRICS on the international stage.

Situation in Syria

54. The sides expressed the strong belief that the crisis in Syria should not be resolved by force, and could be settled only through political means. Both countries expressed support for the early convening of an "International Conference on Syria" (Geneva-II), to take forward the Geneva-I Communiqué adopted in June 2012, which will bring all parties to the conflict to the negotiating table. The Indian side commended Russia's role in working towards a diplomatic solution to the Syrian conflict. The Russian side stated that it would welcome India's participation in Geneva-II. Russia and India support the process of placing Syria's chemical weapons under international control and their destruction in accordance with the decision of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) of 27 September 2013 and the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention; the UN Security Council Resolution of 2118 is pertinent in this regard.

Stabilization of the Situation in Afghanistan

55. The sides approved the efforts made by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to begin an Afghan-led dialogue on reconciliation with the armed opposition forces, provided that these groups should

respect the principles adopted by the international community, namely, to recognise the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, to renounce violence and to sever ties with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations. The sides considered it necessary to extend the sanctions regime introduced by the UN Security Council against the Taliban as one of the most important tools for fighting terrorism.

56. The sides were pleased to note that there was a growing understanding in the world of the essential role played by the states neighbouring the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as well as by the countries and organizations in the region. The sides strongly called for the development and improvement of interaction within the existing frameworks of regional cooperation, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and dialogue within RIC and the Istanbul Process.
57. The sides recognized terrorism as the major threat to Afghanistan's security and stability that jeopardizes peace in the region and in the whole world. Therefore they stressed the regional aspects of terrorism and extremism, emphasizing the necessity of joint and coordinated efforts and cooperation between the states of the region, especially taking into account the expected drawdown of international forces in 2014, in order to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including elimination of terrorist safe havens and cutting off financial support to terrorism.
58. The sides expressed concern about the scale of illicit drug production in Afghanistan and underlined that revenue from drug trafficking were one of the main sources of financing terrorist organizations. The sides agreed to continue taking effective measures to combat illicit drug trafficking of Afghan origin and to focus on permanent and active support for the Paris Pact initiative.

Iranian Nuclear Program

59. The sides expressed concern about the situation around Iran and its nuclear program. They confirmed their support for a comprehensive and permanent settlement of this situation, through political and diplomatic means, by establishing a dialogue. They recognize Iran's right to continue using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with its international obligations. The sides urged Iran to comply with the provisions of the corresponding resolutions of the UN Security Council and cooperate with the IAEA.

Multilateral Economic Cooperation and Financial Reforms

60. The sides stated that there were still numerous challenges relating to the growth of the world economy. They considered it necessary to boost multilateral cooperation in order to tackle these. They attach particular importance to the G20 as the primary forum for international economic cooperation. India highly appreciated the Russian G20 Presidency as well as the outcomes of the Saint Petersburg G20 Summit. They stressed that the continuous implementation of its recommendations with respect to the decisions aimed at speeding up world economic growth, midterm fiscal consolidation, higher employment, liberalization of trade and promoting development will facilitate the solution of the key global economic issues. Russia expressed gratitude to India for the significant contribution towards success of the Saint Petersburg Summit.
61. Russia and India stressed the necessity to create a more representative and legitimate international financial architecture. They agreed that the primary task in this connection was to complete the Fifteenth General Review of IMF Quotas not later than in January 2014.
62. The two sides stressed that the G20 policy coordination process needs to pay more attention to monetary policy in the reserve country currencies in order to protect the international financial system and to prevent destabilization of financial markets.

Environment and sustainable development

63. The sides welcomed the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development “Rio+20” (held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on June 20-22, 2012) and stated that it was necessary to work consistently to implement its decisions. They attached great importance to addressing purposefully the global climate change problem and stressed the importance of boosting international efforts aimed at drafting a new comprehensive and balanced climate change agreement by 2015.
64. The India- Russia Annual Summit was held in an atmosphere of traditional friendship and mutual understanding. The Prime Minister of the Republic of India expressed gratitude to the leaders of the Russian Federation for the hospitality and warm welcome in Moscow and invited the President of the Russian Federation to India. The invitation was accepted with pleasure.

**543. Address by Prime Minister at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.****Moscow, October 21, 2013.**

Acting Rector Professor Viktor Kirilov,

Distinguished Faculty Members of the Faculty

Dear Students and Guests,

I consider it a matter of great honour that the Moscow State Institute of International Relations has decided to confer an Honorary Doctorate on me. I am conscious of the rich history of this great institution and its enormous contribution to Russian and international diplomacy. Your gesture today is yet another indication of the abiding affection of the Russian people for India and the strength of relations between our two countries, which I have experienced personally in many decades of public life.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Relations between India and Russia are built on abiding links of commerce and culture, which go back many centuries. In the 20th century, which was an era of momentous change for both our countries, our political leaders, intellectuals and artists engaged with each other and influenced each other's thoughts and ideas. One only has to glance at the rich correspondence between Leo Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi to get a sense of how formative the thinking of Tolstoy was for Gandhiji's practice of non-violence.

Following India's independence and consistently since then, India and Russia have built a sound relationship befitting the challenges of the modern age. India has benefited enormously from Russian support in every aspect of India's national development efforts – be it the development of heavy industry, the power sector, our space programme or in meeting our defence needs. Most importantly, Russia has stood by India at moments of great international challenge, when our own resources were limited and our friends were few. Beyond all the assistance that we have received, it is this last fact that Indians will never forget. And it is for these reasons that the people of India regard Russian friendship and support as something particularly precious. It is for these same reasons, ladies and gentlemen that, over the past six decades, no country has had closer relations with India and no country inspires more admiration, trust and confidence among the people of India than Russia.

At the beginning of the last decade of the last century, both our countries went through a difficult period of political and economic change. While Russia showed great resilience and resolve in regaining its place in the world, India opened itself and became more deeply integrated with the world economy. Neither of us allowed these changes to derail the course of our relationship. Indeed, by the dawn of the new century, India and Russia had not only restored the direction and regained the momentum of their relationship, but had also given it a new character. This was in recognition of the enduring values of this relationship, which enjoys complete political consensus and enormous public goodwill and support in India.

This distinguished audience would be more than aware of the substance of the cooperation between India and Russia. Russia was the first country

with which, in 2000, India signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership and began the process of annual summits. Our defence relationship with Russia is unmatched by any other relationship. The soon to be commissioned aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, the nuclear submarine INS Chakra leased to us by Russia and the joint development of the fifth generation fighter aircraft and the Brahmos Cruise Missile are examples of the scale and sophistication of our collaboration.

Russia offered us partnership in nuclear energy when the world still shunned nuclear commerce with us. I take particular joy in informing this august audience that the first unit of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant, built with Russian assistance, went critical in July this year and that the second one should be commissioned early next year. The Indian oil company ONGC's largest overseas presence is in Russia. Our largest science and technology cooperation programme is also with Russia.

Even this brief overview of the fruits of our cooperation should be enough to justify fully the description of our relationship as a special and privileged strategic partnership. Observers may well ask how we can take this relationship to greater heights. I am convinced that while the strength and the intensity of our relationship will remain undiminished, it must also adapt itself to the changing times so that we can address the full range of current opportunities and challenges. I am also sure that, as in the past, we shall face these challenges together.

At the bilateral level, while Russia will remain an indispensable partner for our defence needs, our future defence partnership must be increasingly based on technology transfer, joint ventures and co-development and co-production. We also see Russia as a key partner for our energy security. We have an ambitious long-term plan of cooperation in nuclear energy. The programme of cooperation in hydrocarbons that we are drawing up will further intensify our partnership in oil and gas and renewable energy sources.

The sustained expansion of our trade and investment flows has added a new dimension to the relationship. We should harness the full potential of our two economies to impart even greater depth and dynamism to it. The unprecedented level of growth in tourism between India and Russia not only brings us economic benefits, but also deepens the contact between our peoples.

At the regional and global level, India and Russia share many equities. While both of us have developed broad-based and diversified patterns of relationships, one of the fundamental foundations of India's foreign policy is our partnership with Russia. We are both impacted by developments in our common neighbourhood, making our strategic partnership even more relevant than ever before. I see four areas as being of particular importance in this context.

Firstly, developments in Central and South-Central Asia are of relevance to the security of both Russia and India. As India revitalizes its historic links with Central Asia, we look forward to working more closely with Russia in the region. Our cooperation can play an important role in advancing peace, stability and economic development in Afghanistan. It can be equally effective in combating the shared challenges of extremism, terrorism and narco-trafficking. Coordination of our policies in this shared neighbourhood has served us both well and we should continue to pursue it more closely in the future.

Secondly, peace and stability in the Gulf and West Asia are in our shared interest. For reasons of proximity, security, energy supplies and the livelihood of more than six million Indians living in a region which is also a major destination of our exports, peace and stability in the region is particularly vital for India. We applaud President Putin's role in seeking a political settlement in Syria and welcome the framework agreement worked out by Russia and the United States for a time-bound elimination of chemical weapons in Syria. We also value the Russian contribution to efforts for a peaceful resolution of the equally important Iranian nuclear issue.

Thirdly, we regard Russia as an important partner in shaping an inclusive, cooperative and rule-based regional security architecture in the Asia Pacific region, which is the focus of India's Look East Policy.

Finally, as the world becomes increasingly multi-polar and emerging economies grow in strength, cooperation between Russia and India in multilateral forums, including the Group of 20 and BRICS, will assume greater importance. We have converging interests in non-proliferation, cyber security and space security. We also appreciate Russia's support for India's membership of international export control regimes and permanent membership of an UN Security Council.

From our perspective, a strong, secure and prosperous Russia, fulfilling its international responsibilities, is in the interest of India and the world as a whole. Equally, a strong and broad-based partnership between Russia and India will be of great benefit to our two countries and can be a force of stability and prosperity in Eurasia and beyond.

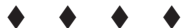
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our shared interests, our growing opportunities for cooperation, the history of our relationship, our abiding comfort with each other and the warmth and goodwill between our people ensure that our strategic partnership will continue to grow in strength and relevance in this changing world. As I conclude, Ladies and Gentlemen let me take the opportunity to give credit where it is due and emphasize that this owes a great deal to the vision and leadership of President Vladimir Putin, whose personal commitment to the relationship has led us to seek new heights in our relations. Every visit to Russia reaffirms to me the abiding comfort and confidence that mark our relationship. Every handshake reveals the warmth of the ties between our two people. Together, they create an unmatched platform for the future. I am looking forward to my meeting with President Putin this afternoon as yet another opportunity to take our special and privileged strategic partnership to even greater heights.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Once again, I thank you and the members of this great institution for the honour you have done me today and for this, unique opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

Thank you



544. List of Bilateral Documents signed during 14th India-Russia Annual Summit.

October 21, 2013

S.No	Name of the Document	Details/Scope	Indian Signatory	Russian Signatory
1.	Treaty between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation on Transfer of Sentenced Persons	The Treaty shall facilitate the process of social rehabilitation of persons sentenced in the other country by providing them the opportunity to serve out their remaining sentences (under certain conditions) in their country of nationality. It is expected to boost consular cooperation between the two countries.	Smt. Sujatha Singh, Foreign Secretary	Mr. Alexander Kononov, Minister of Justice
2.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Bureau of Energy Efficiency of the Republic of India and Federal State Budget Organisation "Russian Energy Agency" of the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Energy Efficiency	The MoU shall enhance cooperation in the field of energy saving and energy efficiency, including through joint implementation of activities and projects by organisations/companies of both the countries. The forms of cooperation envisaged include exchange of best practices in smart grids, energy audits, energy efficient building designs, industrially efficient technologies, etc.	Shri Ajai Malhotra, Ambassador of India to Russian Federation	Mr. Kirill V. Gadzatev, Deputy Director General, Russian Energy Agency
3.	Memorandum of Understanding in the field of Standardization and Conformity Assessment between Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) [Republic of India] and Federal Agency on Technical Regulation and Metrology (GOST-R)	The objective of this MoU is to facilitate closer technical cooperation in the field of standardization through exchange of information, practices and expertise. It is expected to have beneficial effects for trade and commerce where standards/conformity assessments form an integral basis for transactions.	Shri Ajai Malhotra, Ambassador of India to Russian Federation	Mr. Gregory Alkin, Head, Federal Agency on Technical Regulation and Metrology (GOST-R)

4. Programme of Cooperation in the Fields of Science, Technology and Innovation between the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India and the Ministry of Education & Science, Government of Russian Federation for the period 2014-2017	The Programme aims to deepen cooperation in the field of innovation and S&T through implementation of Joint Programs and projects/exchanges involving educational, R&D and industrial institutions. The joint projects may also facilitate transfer of technology. The broad areas of cooperation include 'sunrise' sectors such as IT, nano-technology, environmental sciences and alternate energy. This Programme shall also reinforce the existing robust exchanges between the scientific institutions of the two sides.	Smt. Sujatha Singh, Foreign Secretary	Mr. Dmitry Livanov, Minister of Education and Science
5. Programme of Cooperation in the Area of Biotechnology between the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Education and Science, Government of Russian Federation for the period 2014-2017	The Programme aims to broaden cooperation in the field of biotechnology and encourage industrial R&D & related investment flows. This is intended to be achieved through implementation of Joint Programs and projects/exchanges, etc.	Shri Ajai Malhotra, Ambassador of India to Russian Federation	Mr. Dmitry Livanov, Minister of Education and Science



545. Press Release issued by the Ministry of Defence regarding Commissioning of INS Vikramaditya in the Indian Navy.

New Delhi, November 16, 2013.

Marking a new high in India-Russia strategic cooperation, the Defence Minister Shri AK Antony today commissioned the completely refurbished 44,500 tonne carrier Admiral Gorshkov into the Indian Navy as INSVikramaditya at an impressive ceremony at sub zero temperature in the wind- swept Sevmash Shipyard in the beautiful city of Severodvinsk in Russia. Snow flakes kept falling as the ceremony was held.

Speaking at the event, Shri Antony said INS Vikramaditya would significantly enhance the reach and capability of the Indian Navy. He said, the country has a rich maritime history and the Indian Ocean has guided our fate over the centuries.

“India’s economic development is dependent on the seas and safeguarding the nation’s maritime interests is central to our national policy. Aircraft carriers have been part of the Indian Navy’s force structure since our independence and have effectively served the country over the past five decades or so. The induction of ‘Vikramaditya’ with its integral MiG29K fighters and Kamov-31 helicopters, not only reinforces this central policy, but also adds a new dimension to our Navy’s operational capabilities. The meaning of ‘Vikramaditya’, which literally translates into “Strong as the Sun” is complemented by the Ship’s motto –”Strike Far, Strike Sure”,hesaid.

Reflecting the mood at the ceremony, Shri Antony said, ‘the event realizes the vision of capability-based transformation of the Indian Navy that was conceived more than a decade ago’. Calling it a Red Letter Day in the history of India- Russia cooperation, Shri Antony said this relationship remains a matter of the highest priority for both nations for our mutual benefit and as a factor of global peace and stability.

“The successful culmination of Project 11430 truly symbolizes the time-tested Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between our two great nations. The Project has propelled the strategic partnership between our nations to a new level. The relationship between our two countries based on mutual trust and belief has withstood the test of time

and the result is for the entire world to see in the form of 'Vikramaditya'. As the ship sails into its home waters in the Indian Ocean Region, INS 'Vikramaditya' will be a befitting tribute to our long-standing relationship", he said.

Describing the Project 11430 as a unique one, Shri Antony said, it was a challenging task for both the Russian and the Indian sides and congratulated the entire team for converting the 'Dream Project' into a reality. "The transformation of INS 'Vikramaditya' is an engineering marvel, which has tested the professionalism, capability and perseverance of the Indian Navy and the Russian industry, especially the Sevmash Shipyard", he said and expressed confidence that all possible support would be extended by Russia to ensure that the ship serves India effectively and efficiently for the duration of its expected operational life cycle.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief of Naval Staff Admiral DK Joshi said the INS Vikramaditya will bridge the time-gap that may come up between the INS Viraat and the Indigenously built aircraft carrier Vikrant. It will also help achieving our medium term goal of operating two aircraft carriers.

A large number of dignitaries including the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Mr Dmitry Rogozin and Defence Minister Mr Shoigu, the Chief of Naval Staff Admiral DK Joshi, the Indian Ambassador to Russia Shri Ajay Malhotra, the Defence Secretary Shri RK Mathur, the DG

Acquisition Shri SB Agnihotri were present on the occasion..

Mr Rogozin said INS Vikramaditya symbolises the close friendship between India and Russia and expressed confidence that it will grow in the coming years.

About INS Vikramaditya

INS Vikramaditya, the floating airfield has an overall length of about 284 meters and a maximum beam of about 60 meters, stretching as much as three football fields put together. Standing about 20 storeys tall from keel to the highest point, the sheer sight of this 44,500 tonne mega structure of steel is awe inspiring. The ship has a total of 22 decks.

With over 1,600 personnel on board, INS Vikramaditya is literally a 'Floating City'. With a capacity of over 8,000 tonnes of LSHSD, she is capable of operations up to a range of over 7,000 nautical miles or 13000kms.

To enable this 44,500 tonnes floating steel city to cut through the choppy seas with speeds of up to 30 knots, she is powered by 08 new generation steam boilers generating a total output power of 180,000 SHP. These boilers power four enormous propellers, each greater in diameter than twice the height of an average male. Such a four propeller - four shaft configuration is another first in the Indian Navy.

The power generation capacity onboard is about 18 megawatts enough to cater to the lighting requirement of a mini city. An extensive revamp of sensors including fitment of Long range Air Surveillance Radars, Advanced Electronic Warfare Suite makes the ship capable of maintaining a surveillance bubble of over 500 kms around the ship.

The ship has the ability to carry over 30 aircraft comprising an assortment of MiG 29K/Sea Harrier, Kamov 31, Kamov 28, Sea King, ALH-Dhruv and Chetak helicopters. The MiG 29K swing role fighter is the main offensive platform and provides a quantum jump for the Indian Navy's maritime strike capability. These fourth generation air superiority fighters provide a significant fillip for the Indian Navy with a range of over 700 nm and an array of weapons including anti-ship missiles, Beyond Visual Range air-to-air missiles, guided bombs and rockets.

The ship is equipped with state of the art launch and recovery systems along with aids to enable smooth and efficient operation of ship borne aircraft. Major systems include the LUNA Landing system for MiGs, DAPS Landing system for Sea Harriers and Flight deck lighting systems.

The heart of the operational network that infuses life into the combat systems onboard the ship is the Computer aided Action Information Organisation (CAIO) system, LESORUB-E, with the capability to gather data from ship's sensors and data links and to process, collate and assemble comprehensive tactical pictures. This state of the art system has been specifically designed keeping in mind the essential requirement on the carrier for fighter control and direction.

One of the most prominent equipment fitted on the super structure is the Resistor-E radar complex. Resistor-E is the automated system designed for providing air traffic control, approach/landing and short range navigation for ship borne aircraft. This complex along with its various sub-systems provides navigation and flight data to ship borne aircraft operating at extended ranges from the mother ship. The precision approach guidance system aids the fighters on approach to be directed down to a distance of 30 meters short of flight deck. INS Vikramaditya also boasts of a very modern communication complex, CCS MK II, to meet her external communication requirement. Installation of Link II tactical data system allows her to be fully integrated with the Indian Navy's network centric operations.



546. Press Release of the Ministry of Defence announcing the first ever India-Russia Air Force Exercises to be held in 2014.

New Delhi, November 18, 2013.

Meeting just two days after the successful commissioning of the much-awaited aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya into the Indian Navy, India and Russia today agreed to expand the range of their strategic partnership in a significant manner at the 13th Meeting of the India – Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC) which was co- chaired by the Defence Minister Shri AK Antony with his Russian counterpart Mr Sergey Shoigu in Moscow.

The meeting held in an atmosphere of cordiality and warmth, decided that the two countries will hold joint Air Force level exercise for the first time besides a joint Navy Exercise in the Peter the Great Bay in the Sea of Japan, both in 2014. It may be recalled that the Armies of the two countries had recently held Exercise Indra in Rajasthan recently and the focus was on anti-terrorism. The two Ministers agreed that there is a need for further cooperation at all levels, especially in view of the regional and global challenges and to fight the menace of terrorism jointly. Both

sides reviewed the situation in West Asia, especially in Syria and the evolving paradigm in Afghanistan.

In order to give a new impetus to the relationship which has gathered momentum over the years, the two sides agreed that the time has come to expand the cooperation not only in product design and development, which has made significant progress over the years but also to involve various echelons of the Defence establishments in strategising policies and cooperation in the fast changing global security scenario.

Referring to Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA) and Multi-role Transport Aircraft (MTA), Shri Antony said, the two projects are significant because they symbolise going-past the relationship of buyer-seller. He said both sides must give their best at all phases of the execution of these two projects- design, development and production.

Mr Shoigu assured that the Naval Aviation specialists will train Indian pilots fully for take-offs and landing on INS Vikramaditya and in all probability it will be held in Goa.

The Meeting also reviewed issues relating to T-90 tanks and SU-30 projects.

On the issue of after sales support, both sides felt that they should sign long-term maintenance support agreement.

Earlier in the morning, Shri Antony and the members of the Indian delegation drove down to Poklonnaya Gora (Bow-Down Hill) at Victory Park and laid a wreath at the World War-II Memorial. He was also presented a ceremonial guard of honour.

The Indian delegation included the Defence Secretary Shri RK Mathur, Secretary Defence Production Shri GC Pati, Indian Ambassador to Russia Shri Ajay Malhotra, Air Marshal S Sukumar, Vice Admiral NN Kumar, Lt Gen Narendra Singh and DG Acquisition Shri SB Agnihotri.



547. Message of Prime Minister to the Russian President on the terrorist attack in Volgograd.

New Delhi, December 30, 2013.

Excellency,

I am outraged and pained to learn about the dastardly terrorist attacks against civilians in the city of Volgograd. On behalf of the people and Government of India, and on my personal behalf, please accept our deepest condolences on the loss of lives and injuries in these ghastly attacks. Our prayers go out to the families of all the victims.

India strongly condemns these terrorist strikes against innocent civilians. These attacks are a grave violation of human rights and an unconscionable crime against humanity. We stand resolutely together with the people of Russia in the face of these horrible acts of terrorism.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

H.E. Mr. Vladimir V. Putin

Manmohan Singh

President of the Russian Federation, Moscow



SAN MARINO

548. Press Release of the Ministry of Finance on Tax Information Exchange Agreement signed between India and San Marino.

New Delhi, December 20, 2013.

India and San Marino signed a Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) at Rome, Italy yesterday. The Agreement has been signed on behalf of India by Mr. Basant K. Gupta, Ambassador of India to Italy with concurrent accreditation to San Marino and Ms. Daniela Rotondaro, Ambassador of San Marino to Italy on behalf of San Marino.

Salient features of the agreement with San Marino are:

- The agreement is based on international standard of transparency and exchange of information.
- The agreement provides for exchange of information that is foreseeably relevant to the administration and enforcement of the domestic tax laws.
- The agreement has a specific provision that the requested Party shall use its information-gathering measures to obtain the requested information even though that Party may not need such information for its own tax purposes.
- The agreement provides for exchange of banking and ownership information.
- The agreement provides for the representatives of the competent authority of the requesting Party to enter the territory of the requested Party to interview individuals and examine records.

- The Agreement is expected to further strengthen tax cooperation between India and San Marino.



SWITZERLAND

549. Press Release of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on the Indo- Swiss Bilateral Meet held at Geneva.

New Delhi, May 21, 2013.

With the aim of giving further impetus to cooperation in the field of healthcare, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad and Minister of Health Switzerland, Mr Alain Berset held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of World Health Assembly at Geneva yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Azad said that friendship between India and Switzerland goes as back as Independence of India, strongly rooted as it is in shared values of multi-culturalism, democracy and rule of law. Recalling the historic ties between the two countries, Shri Azad said that a treaty of friendship between India and Switzerland was signed at New Delhi as early as 1948, soon after India's independence.

Emphasizing the special nature of relationship between the two countries, Shri Azad said that many high level visits have been exchanged in the recent past and that many bilateral institutional arrangements like Indo-Swiss Joint Commission, Swiss- India Chamber of Commerce, Indo-Swiss Joint Committee on Science & technology, etc. exist to further cement our strong relations. Shri Azad noted that in the continuum of strong Indo-Swiss bilateral cooperation, an MOU between the two countries will be inked soon to further broaden the scope of bilateral ties.

“Considerable progress has been made in this regard and an MOU in the field of health is being signed to promote bilateral cooperation between the two countries”, Shri Azad said.

The major areas of cooperation will be as under:

- i) Non-Communicable Diseases including controlling the associated risk factors of tobacco use, harmful alcohol use, unhealthy diet, etc.
- ii) Communicable Diseases and Anti- Microbial resistance
- iii) Universal Health Coverage

- iv) Maternal & Child health
- v) Sexual & Reproductive Health
- vi) Health & Medical Research
- vii) Therapeutic Products
- viii) Electronic Medical Records
- ix) Global Health Governance

Shri Azad noted that these areas are of immense significance for India, considering the enormous public health challenges that we are faced with. Highlighting the role of Indian generic Drug industry to make available affordable medicines across the world, Shri Azad exuded confidence that Switzerland will extend full support to India on global platforms in order to carry forward our pursuits of providing high quality generic medicines at affordable prices.



TURKEY

550. Media Briefing by Special Secretary (AD) on President's visit to Belgium and Turkey.

New Delhi, October 1, 2013.

Please see Document No 499



551. Interview given by President Pranab Mukherjee to CIHAN, the Turkish News Agency.

October 4, 2013.

1- FIRST VISIT AFTER 15 YEARS BY AN INDIAN PRESIDENT. GENERAL PURPOSE AND AGENDA OF THE VISIT? MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION?

There have been many State visits between India and Turkey. Two Indian Presidents have visited Turkey and my visit will be the third one. There have been an equal number of visits from the Turkish side. President Abdullah Gul visited India in 2010 and I am now returning the visit. Our Vice President Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari visited in October 2011 and our External Affairs Minister in July this year.

Both India and Turkey are committed to develop the partnership. My visit highlights the importance that India gives to improving our bilateral relations with Turkey. It is my hope that the visit will give an impetus to all aspects of Indo-Turkish relations and new thrust areas will be identified during my interactions and those of my delegation in Turkey.

Mr. G. K. Vasan, Minister of Shipping and a five-member multi party delegation of Members of Parliament, including Vice Chancellors of leading Indian Universities among others are to accompany me.

2- TWO EMERGING ECONOMIES, WHAT FIELDS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION ARE AIMED?

India-Turkey trade had increased steadily, reaching over US \$ 7 billion in 2011, well surpassing the target set for US\$ 5 billion for 2010.

Investments are increasing in both directions. More than 100 Indian companies have registered businesses in Turkey in the form of joint ventures, trade and representative offices. Indian companies have interest in infrastructure projects as well as in the automobile sector, energy and steel. The number of Turkish companies in India is also increasing, including in the Roads and Highways sector and construction of pipelines.

Institutional arrangements in terms of Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation (JCETC) and a Joint Business Council (JBC) exist between the two countries. Additional agreements for cooperation in Science and Technology and Medium Small and Micro Enterprises are expected to be concluded while I am in Turkey.

3- BOTH CULTURALLY VERY CLOSE NATIONS, WHAT SORT OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL COOPERATION IS AIMED WITH VISIT?

India and Turkey have been closely connected by historical bonds of culture, philosophy and language since time immemorial, and this offers one of the firmest foundation on which to build the edifice of our engagement. A whole range of activities support our interaction in the cultural arena; this includes institutions for cooperation between the Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) and our state broadcasters Doordarshan and Prasar Bharti, in the field of Archives, as well as for twinning agreements between some of the historical cities of India and Turkey.

4- EDUCATION AS A FIELD OF COOPERATION? STATE SCHOLARSHIPS TO INCREASE ACADEMIC EXCHANGE?

In both our societies, youth forms an important part of our demography. Accordingly for our youth, the future global citizens of the world, it is incumbent on us to make the best possible opportunities available to them.

Education, research and innovation have been identified as priority areas and I am happy to note that the leading universities of India and Turkey will be signing five agreements for cooperation during my visit. Scholarships in professional and vocational fields are offered by the Government of India to Turkish nationals, and there already have been institutional tie-ups to take such cooperation forward.

5- TOURISM? CIVIL AVIATION'S IMPORTANCE IN TOURISM? TURKISH AIRLINES ROLE. POSSIBILITY OF INDIAN CIVIL AVIATION MINISTRY'S PERMISSION TO TURKISH AIRLINES TO INCREASE FLIGHTS.

Given our shared cultural heritage in today's modern world, connectivity becomes a sine qua non for enhanced interaction between our two countries. Not only should there be physical connectivity but also through exchanges in other fields like music, films, visual and performing arts and media, all of which are critical for increasing people to people contacts, trade and economic relations.

There has been a steady increase in tourist visiting each others' countries. There is a need to encourage such interaction. With increased people to people contacts, there would certainly be a need to increase connectivity, from both sides.

6- DEFENCE SECTOR. BOTH HAVE STRONG ARMIES IN THEIR REGIONS. HIGH LEVEL MILITARILY VISITS EXCHANGED IN LAST YEARS. ANY POSSIBLE COOPERATION OR EXERCISE TOGETHER?

Defence cooperation is indeed one of the areas in which there is potential to expand interaction with Turkey. During the visit of the Turkish PM Erdogan to India in November 2008, both Prime Ministers agreed to enhance cooperation between two defence forces through military to military contacts and training exchanges. A bilateral Defence Cooperation Agreement has been proposed to be signed, and is under consideration with the Turkish side for some time now.

7- CENTRAL ASIA AND AFGANISTAN ARE COMMON NATIONAL INTEREST FOR ENERGY CORRIDORS AND STRATEGY. ANY POSSIBLE COOPERATION ?

India believes that Afghanistan can play its historical role as the hub of inter-regional trade, stemming from the country's strategic location at the crossroads of West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia. A strong, self-sustainable and viable Afghan state in the post 2014 situation warrants developing alternate corridors of trade, transport and energy, thereby enmeshing Afghanistan in a network of mutually inclusive trade channels and assisting the transformation of Afghanistan from being an aid based economy to a trade based economy in the coming years. This, of course, is contingent upon Afghanistan having smooth transit and access to the regional markets and sea ports through its immediate neighbours.

At a multilateral level, India, Turkey and other regional countries have come together under the framework of the Istanbul process to present a new vision of cooperation and confidence building for the region, with Afghanistan at its centre and consisting of regional countries, supporting countries and international organizations. India is actively participating in all the CBMs and leads the CBM on Trade, Commerce and Investment Opportunities. India also hosted the successful “Delhi Summit on Investment in Afghanistan” last year to attract foreign investments into Afghanistan.

For stability in Afghanistan, it is essential that the international community remains engaged in Afghanistan and supports it in this process of transition and transformation. It is also essential that the root cause of problems in Afghanistan, which is terrorism emanating from beyond the borders of Afghanistan, is tackled firmly.

India and Turkey have both had extensive contacts with the Central Asian region through the ages. India and Turkey have in place a dialogue mechanism to exchange views on Central Asia. India and Turkey have a shared interest in the stability and security of Afghanistan and Central Asia. Indian companies are open to collaborating with Turkish partners on joint projects in the region. India intends to participate in energy cooperation projects, and in the development of regional transportation corridors.

8- CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES OF TURKEY SECOND LARGEST IN THE WORLD. TURKEY'S ROLE IN INDIA'S NEXT 15 YEAR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS.

India has opened its infrastructure development needs to global companies and is seeking state of the art technologies from across the world. Anticipated requirement is of an expenditure to the tune of US\$ 1 trillion over the next five years for which investment expertise and technical knowhow are welcome. India welcomes Turkish companies to participate in such projects. There have been initial breakthroughs. Turkish companies already have a presence in India, and I understand, they have participated, in collaboration with Indian companies in some sectors like our National highways, constructing a dam in Jammu & Kashmir and the cargo terminal at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International

Airport, and vice versa, leading Indian companies have invested in infrastructure in Turkey with Istanbul airport being just one example.

9- SYRIA. AS INDIA HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN UN, WHAT'S INDIA'S STAND TO BRING PEACE IN SYRIA?

The continuing violence in Syria and the humanitarian crisis arising out of it are of deep concern to us. India has consistently called upon all sides to abjure violence so that conditions can be created for an inclusive political dialogue leading to a comprehensive political solution, taking into account the legitimate aspirations of the people of Syria. India's policy on Syria has been guided by its long standing ties with the region as well as its vital economic, energy and diaspora interests.

We believe that there can be no military solution to this conflict. The reported use of chemical weapons in Syria is a matter of deep concern. India has consistently supported the complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapons worldwide. India has welcomed the framework agreement reached between Russia and the US on the time-bound safeguarding and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles as well as the recent steps taken by Syria to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention. We hope that the recent peace efforts will lead to early convening of the proposed 'International Conference on Syria' (Geneva-II), under the auspices of UN, which will bring all parties involved in the Syrian conflict to the negotiating table for peaceful resolution of the crisis.

10- What is India's approach to bilateral relations with Pakistan?

India desires peaceful, friendly and cooperative relations with Pakistan, which requires an environment free from terror and violence. India is firmly resolved to combat and defeat the terrorist menace that continues to receive encouragement and reinforcement from across the border. We have consistently stressed the need for Pakistan to honour its solemn commitment of not allowing territory under its control to be used for terrorism directed against India in any manner. Pakistan must also show determined action to dismantle the terrorist networks, organizations and infrastructure operating from territories under its control.

There is expectation from the people of India that Pakistan will show tangible movement in investigating and bringing to justice quickly those

Pakistanis responsible for the Mumbai terrorist attack in November 2008, including those whose trial is presently underway in Islamabad.

11- How does India plan to address the issue of Kashmir with Pakistan?

India remains committed to the resolution of all outstanding issues with Pakistan, including those pertaining to the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir through a peaceful bilateral dialogue as mutually agreed under the Simla Agreement of 1972. For this dialogue to progress meaningfully, an environment free from cross-border terrorism and violence along the Line of Control is an essential prerequisite



552. Media interaction of President on board his flight en-route from Brussels to Istanbul.

October 05, 2013.

Press Secretary to President (Shri Venu Rajamony): Good morning friends. As is customary, the President will bring out some opening remarks first and then receive questions from all of you.

President of India (Shri Pranab Mukherjee): Friends, I have just concluded a very satisfying visit to the Kingdom of Belgium. The warmth of the reception and the meticulous attention given by the Government of Belgium to every aspect of my programme reflected the strength of our bilateral relationship with Belgium.

As a rare gesture the King received me at the airport, which is an expression of special interest in India developed over the years through his numerous visits to India. His exceptional affinity and deep knowledge about India and our culture were reflected in his address at the lunch hosted by him in my honour.

In my meeting with His Majesty King Philippe, and the Prime Minister, His Excellency Elio Di Rupo, we recognised the depth of our bilateral, political and economic relations. Both leaders emphasised the importance that Belgium attaches to its relations with India.

They reiterated their support for reform of the United Nations institutions and for India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Belgium has also supported our efforts for developing civil nuclear cooperation.

Our economic partnership with Belgium is of particular importance as it has emerged as India's second largest trading partner within European Union. We discussed a number of important areas of economic cooperation including some in the pipeline.

We noted our important joint efforts in development and modernisation of India's railway sector, cooperation in nuclear waste management and in science and technology.

We identified possibilities of extending the existing cooperation between port authorities of our countries to more advanced areas of port management. In this aspect we noted the commonality between the riverine ports of Antwerp and Kolkata which could be exploited through bilateral cooperation.

Belgium has expertise in some niche areas which are priority sectors for India. I asked the Belgian leaders to encourage enhanced investment in India particularly in sectors such as ports, roads, railways, clean technology, aerospace, and pharmaceuticals.

I have always placed emphasis on improving the quality of higher education in our country promoting collaborations to strengthen research infrastructure in India and to encourage innovation in our academic institutions. Belgium has world renowned academic infrastructure in higher education, especially innovation.

In the view of the benefits to India from enhanced academic cooperation, a high-level academic delegation of some of the top Indian universities accompanied me during the visit - Chairman UGC; Vice-Chancellors of Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Hyderabad University; and Director-General for Media and Governance, Jamia Millia University. I am particularly satisfied with the conclusion of the five agreements between universities of India and Belgium and am confident that it will give an impetus to research and innovation in both the countries.

I am confident that our interactions during my visit would further enhance our bilateral engagements. Princess Astrid of Belgium will lead one of

Belgium's largest economic missions to India in November this year. We greatly look forward to the visit.

It was a great pleasure to inaugurate jointly with His Majesty King Philippe the Europalia India festival which is the largest Indian cultural festival outside India in recent years. By showcasing the various forms of our art and culture over the next four months, Europalia India will enable the people of Europe glimpse into our past through our present. More importantly, it will offer a window into our future.

India, a relatively young nation of a billion plus people confidently forging into future, is striving to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth. The potential benefit of cooperation between India and Europe is tremendous and I am confident that Europalia India will unleash a necessary energy to exploit it.

During my talks with the leaders of Belgium I was assisted by Minister. Vasan, Members of Parliament who are accompanying me, and also senior officials of the Ministry and our Embassy.

Thank you.

Press Secretary to President: Questions please!

President of India: Confine your questions to the statement. If you go outside, I would not be able to...(Inaudible)...

Q: Excellency, you had extremely successful and useful discussions with the King and the Prime Minister in Brussels. What is the specific outcome of these discussions for the country, especially with regard to bringing investment from Belgium to India?

President of India: Belgium has certain specialisations. I have given some instances. And Belgium's cooperative...(Inaudible)... can be ascertained. It was one of the first countries after signing the civil nuclear cooperation agreement with USA when we had to have the waiver at Nuclear Suppliers Group, Belgium was one of the countries which extended its cooperation. Therefore, it would be very useful for us if we can build up collaboration with them in managing the nuclear waste which is a major problem to all the nuclear power countries.

Q: Sir, you spoke about the riverine port management. What would be the roadmap for the two governments now? What would be the ideal timeframe where some kind of bilateral cooperation can be achieved?

President of India: Already some steps have been taken by Shipping Minister Shri Vasan. And since last year, all officers of the Kolkata Port are being trained in Antwerp by their counterparts. So, cooperation is all being built up. The basic problem of the riverine port is siltation and how to de-silt it and how to make it operational, so that larger ships can come in.

Q: Sir, there is a lot of worry about the United States Government which is in a crisis over debt ceiling and there could be a huge spill over, many commentators have expressed it, on India and other parts of the world. Considering that you have spoken about the economic crisis and the fact that we have not fully come out of the crisis, which you said in your interview to Euronews yesterday, did you discuss with the Prime Minister about the prospect of the impact of this US crisis on Europe and on India?

President of India: Generally US economy has its influence over the world economy as it is the most powerful economy of the world. But on this particular issue the proper response should come from the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, not from me. How they are going to handle it, what is their assessment of the situation, how far they consider gravity of the situation, it is for the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister to respond.

In general terms I can say that we would like to have economic recovery faster. But surely in a globalised economy like ours it does not depend simply on our efforts; the external environment should also be conducive.

Q: Sir, you said I should not divert from the Belgium thing but there is one question that relates to you. Back home Opposition says that the Ordinance on convicted MPs and MLAs was withdrawn because of you and not because of Rahul Gandhi.

President of India: I cannot comment on the views of the Opposition. Whoever wanted to seek appointment with me I gave them. BJP leaders met me; Aam Aadmi Party leaders met me; I received various representations; I had a discussion with the Prime Minister. And what transpired, every one of you know it. Cabinet is the mother of the Ordinance, and the Cabinet in its meeting, which took place on 2nd of October in the evening, decided to withdraw the Ordinance. So, this is

the fact. In between who is responsible, how responsible, to what extent responsible, these are all speculations of individuals. I have nothing to do with it.

Q: Sir, during your visit to Belgium, was there a sense of a consciousness among the Belgian Government and the European community that India is beset by terrorism and the new thing one is talking about strengthening ties, relations. In this area, what can be the level of cooperation?

President of India: Most of the European countries and Euro itself they are signatories to the United Nations resolutions to fight against terrorism. So, there is a commonality in the ground. And in the bilateral discussions also we emphasised on it. And everybody condemns terrorism.

Q: Mr. President, a recent survey has shown that Indian universities are match to the world universities as such. So, we have had here a number of educational agreements. Do you think that will help us improve our standard and overall performance?

President of India: In various aspects that is why I brought the experts here. Otherwise also our universities are having contacts with their counterparts in the advanced countries. Therefore, these various aspects of higher education are discussed among themselves including the exchange programme to explore the possibility of e-lecturing through the technological instrumentality which is available to us and to those countries. All these aspects are being discussed. The basic approach is that there should be share of information, exchange of views in the areas of research and innovation if we want to build up the knowledge-based economy and society.

Q: Mr. President, at the farewell lunch that the King gave to you yesterday he made a reference to you as a consensus builder in India. Was he alluding to your possible role that you might be asked upon to play in a post-election scenario in India?

President of India: Hold on! Do not bring those issues! What he talked of, I presume because I do not know what he was going to say in the luncheon meeting, perhaps what he said is about the role I played as Leader of House and as a leader of the Government in running the coalition government. So, let us confine it to that. But that chapter is over on 25th June, 2012 when I resigned from the Government, and on 25th

July when my membership of Parliament was over. Now I am the Constitutional head, and my duties are completely determined by the Constitution.

Thank you



553. President Pranab Mukherjee's acceptance speech on being conferred *Honoris Causa* by the University of Istanbul.

Istanbul, October 5, 2013.

Rector of Istanbul University Professor Dr Yunus Soylet,
Dean faculty of Political Sciences, Professor Dr Emra Cengiz,
Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by extending to the friendly people of Turkey, warm greetings and good wishes from the people of India, the Indian Government and from my own self.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Istanbul University for honouring me today with the Doctorate, *Honoris Causa*, in Political Science. I am privileged to receive this honour from Istanbul University which, like the city itself, is steeped in history and has been a bridge connecting two disparate land continents and civilizations. I am indeed proud and privileged to be here.

There is a 200 strong Indian diaspora in your beautiful country, which is a vibrant community in its own right. Their ethos, experience and expertise help in cementing stronger ties of friendship, goodwill and mutual understanding between our peoples. I thank the Government, Universities, employers and people of Turkey, who have extended their hand of friendship to our diaspora here. This people-to-people link is a great asset in the building of closer bilateral relations between our two countries.

The statement read out by the Dean of Political Sciences, Professor Dr. Emra Cengiz, explained that the conferment of the Honorary Degree, Doctor of Letters, *Honoris Causa*, to me was on account of my achievement as someone who has spent decades in political life and contributed to governance and democracy in India. While I am humbled by this honour, this recognition, in my view, is due to the Indian nation and its people.

India is a developing economy. It has pursued a democratic model of governance to provide opportunity for the development of every individual. India's democracy is an inspiration to the forces of liberty around the world. When we started our journey of democracy in 1947, we were a new nation with a handful of challenges. We have overcome trials and tribulations and grown in strength to be a vibrant democracy today.

Our democratic foundation is built on the three pillars of Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary. The Parliament is a sacred institution that reflects the will of the people. The Members of our Parliament are the chosen representatives of the people who carry their hopes and aspirations and resonate their grievances. The accountability of the Executive to the people for its actions is exercised through the Parliament.

We share with Turkey a deep commonality in our respective political structures. The success of our democratic institutions lies in responding to the challenges of our time and the hopes and aspirations of our people. They have to usher in the change and achieve the progress that we desire in our two countries. A key factor that can contribute to its achievement is Good Governance.

Nations are according this goal more importance than ever before because of its inseparable link to social welfare and public good. Absence of good governance has been identified as the root cause of many of the serious deficiencies in societies. It robs the citizenry of their security, and of their social and economic rights, ironically established for their welfare and collective good.

Good governance is critically dependent on the existence of some fundamental pre-requisites. At the core is the inviolable adherence to rule of law and delivery of justice. From these principles would emanate

the existence of participatory decision-making structure, transparency, responsiveness, accountability, equity and inclusiveness. This would particularly imply the existence of a corruption free society and the presence of adequate avenues especially for the marginalised sections to have a definitive role in decision-making. In brief, good governance means the existence of an elaborate architecture that has the good of the people as their only foci.

Stability, growth, progress—all this could only be achieved if we set the right priorities and execute bold policy measures to achieve them. I believe good governance ought to be the essential, the most basic philosophy with the rule of law and justice being the most important tenets of good governance.

Three days ago, on 2 October, we marked the 144th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Indian Nation, who shaped our liberation struggle and for whom Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founding Father of your great nation had a special affection. We are aware that political leaders from both countries have an abiding mutual admiration and empathy as well as respect for Mahatma Gandhi. His philosophy of tolerance and self-restraint had a big impact on how India has administered itself over the past six and half decades with democratic governance. The value system propounded as part of his philosophy included sincerity of effort, honesty of purpose and sacrifice for the larger good.

As I look around the world as someone who has lived on this planet for close to eight decades and as a Gandhian, I ask myself whether the ideals of patriotism, compassion, tolerance, self-restraint, honesty, discipline and respect for women are prevalent to the extent that they should be. I have endeavoured in my private and public life to contribute to these very ideals, which I believe, are the very essence of being human.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, despite challenges, and occasional setbacks, India is no longer defined by her problems but by her achievements and the opportunities it offers. We have become a trillion dollar economy, the largest in Southeast Asia. We also have the largest middle class in the region. The last decade has seen India emerge as one of the fastest growing nations

in the world. During this period, our economy grew annually at an average rate of 7.9 per cent. We are self-sufficient in food grains production, the largest exporter of rice and the second largest exporter of wheat. However, achieving equitable economic growth is still a challenge. So also is the complete elimination of poverty, although a declining trend in the poverty rate is clearly visible.

Rapid creation of employment opportunities is an essential aspect of good governance. It is the approximately 350 million middle-class Indian citizens that have put India on the world map over the past two decades or so. In my Address to the Indian nation on the eve of 15th August, which marked the 66th Anniversary of our Independence, I referred to the need to provide our citizens entitlements backed by legal guarantees in terms of right to employment, education, food and information. We also need to ensure that these entitlements lead to real empowerment of the people. It will be essential to develop and sustain robust delivery mechanisms to make these legislations work.

Our trajectory of high level growth will need to be sustained. Our continued success will need to be earned. In spite of our achievements during these transformational decades, there remains much work to be done. Indeed, sustaining India's transformation will require the hard work and diligence of the country's people, and particularly, good governance that its leaders have to steer. We will have to also strengthen the rule of law and good governance practices. We will have to ensure harmonious relations among our diverse ethnic and religious groups which, in a secular polity, is of supreme importance for nation building.

Friends,

We have learnt the difficult way that unless there is peace at our borders, development, and harmony cannot be achieved. India and Turkey live in extremely difficult geographies, and both of us are aware of the grave challenges to our security, internal as well as external. However, I am sure you would agree that India's commitment to peace is unflinching. We continue to sustain moderation, pluralism and tolerance in our society.

I certainly hope that with all this, in 2047—after one hundred years of independence—my vision of an India fully transformed into a democratically mature, stable and peaceful nation with freedom and

opportunity for all will become a reality. It will be an India that is economically prosperous at all levels of society. In 1947, with an India coming into being after two centuries of colonial rule, many would have thought this vision as being far-fetched, but as envisioned by our national leaders, I am proud to say that today, this is a future well within our reach.

I am happy that the idea of 'India' has withstood the vicissitudes of time and presented itself as a secular, socialist, democratic republic, one that is non-aligned, non-violent and peace-loving as envisioned by the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Our friends around the world, like Turkey, have contributed to making such an idea become a reality.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I am reminded of the Nobel laureate Indian poet and philosopher, Rabindranath Tagore whose work, Geetanjali, includes these lines which summarize my hopes and dreams for a successful and fully developed India ready to take its rightful place in this world:

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee
into ever-widening thought and action –

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

Thanks you



554. Speech by President Pranab Mukherjee at the State banquet hosted in his honour by the Turkish President Abdullah Gul.

Ankara, October 7, 2013.

Excellency,

During the last three days that I have been privileged to be in your beautiful and friendly country I have felt the warmth and welcome of the Turkish people. Today your amity and goodwill are manifest with this invitation to me to share a meal with you. The warmth that I have perceived in our interactions today is reflective of the potential that exists for bringing our two countries closer. I accept this as a tribute to our shared cultural, linguistic, social and civilizational experiences. For me and my delegation, it has been a privilege and pleasure to be here and to learn firsthand about Turkey, its people, its history and its grandeur. I thank you, Excellency, for having invited me for this visit.

I look forward, Excellency, to welcome you in my own country, India. I assure you that the shared similarities between our two countries - Turkey and India – in hospitality, in welcoming guests and in our cuisine which you would have experienced while you were in India 3 ½ years ago, will equally enrich your visit. Our countries share bonds that go beyond a mere sharing of cultural heritage, arts and cuisine.

As two emerging economies with congruent interests in several cross cutting areas, we should aim to reap the benefits of closer interaction. Our developing societies can engage across sectors; we are looking forward to enhancing academic exchanges and people to people contact. Being members of the G-20, we interact closely on issues affecting the global community. We are at historical cross roads; the decisions we take today will influence the future of this relationship.

Excellency, it is my ardent hope that as two independent nations we will work together to make this world a better and safer place to live in and take our bilateral relations to greater heights of cooperation and mutual understanding.

I am carrying back very fond memories of my visit to Turkey. Excellency, please join me in raising a toast for your health, and the progress and

prosperity of the Turkish people. Let us rededicate ourselves to making our two countries focal points that will usher in peace and stability for our respective regions, and for the world as a whole.



555. Media briefing by President En route from Isanbul.

October 7, 2013.

Press Secretary to President (Shri Venu Rajamony): Good evening friends. The President will make the opening remarks and then take your questions.

President of India (Shri Pranab Mukherjee): Friends, I have completed a fruitful state visit to the Republic of Turkey.

It was the first visit by an Indian President in 15 years. The President and Prime Minister of Turkey expressed appreciation of the visit. I was very warmly received at all places of my visit. I am particularly grateful to the Istanbul University, which is one of the oldest universities in the world, for having conferred on me an honorary doctorate in political science. This is not just a personal honour but an honour for India and all Indians.

I visited Capadocia, one of Turkey's World Heritage Sites, and am very impressed by the natural beauty of the area as well as the range of tourist attractions in this country.

My meeting with President Gul and Prime Minister Erdogan were warm and cordial. Foreign Minister Davutoglu also called on me. I had extensive discussions on bilateral, multilateral and global issues with Turkish leaders. We agreed that there were a number of commonalities in our worldview as well as on developments in our neighbourhood.

We decided that India and Turkey should initiate comprehensive dialogue mechanisms for exchange of perspectives on all areas of our interest. This could cover our cooperation in the United Nations, G20 and other multilateral groupings as well as global issues like climate change, sustainable development, food security and energy security.

Both President Gul and Prime Minister Erdogan agreed with me that terrorism is a menace threatening the world and we need to deal with it both individually and collectively. I briefed the leaders of Turkey on our problems with terrorism, particularly cross-border terrorism. I also briefed them on initiatives that our Government has taken to promote friendly relations and peace with Pakistan.

We agreed that terrorists wreak wanton destruction and have no religion, nor friends. Prime Minister Erdogan said that Turkey would like to learn from the experiences of India in dealing with terrorism, which he said was a menace which Turkey was also experiencing.

We agreed that it was important to support democracy and development in Afghanistan. Turkey appreciated our significant role in capacity building and development projects in that country. Like India, Turkey is also involved in a range of developmental activities in Afghanistan, and Prime Minister Erdogan confirmed that it would continue to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan even after 2014. We agreed to build on this convergence of views.

We expressed satisfaction at the growth in our economic cooperation both in trade and investment. We felt, however, that there was considerable potential to further expand the cooperation. We decided to convene soon the Joint Economic Committee in New Delhi to address all aspects of our economic cooperation.

We noted the adverse Turkish balance of trade with India and agreed to work on means of addressing it, including through enhanced investments in India by Turkish companies and tourism exchanges. In this context I briefed the Turkish leadership about our ambitious plan to invest about US\$ 1 trillion in infrastructure over the next five years, and invited Turkish companies which have great strength in these areas to participate in these projects. Indian and Turkish companies could also explore joint venture opportunities in third countries. IT was identified as a promising area for this.

We concluded five inter-governmental agreements during the visit, for cooperation between our national broadcaster and their Turkish counterpart on science and technology cooperation, on cooperation between our medium and small-scale industries, and exchanges between our national archives.

I briefed the Turkish leadership about India's efforts for full membership of the four export control regimes and stressed our impeccable record on non-proliferation. We agreed that Turkey and India would continue consultations and discussions on this matter.

Foreign Minister Davutoglu conveyed to me that Turkey would be supportive of India, but would need to work with other NSG members on this matter.

I had mentioned in my remarks after the visit to Belgium, my effort to promote the level of research and innovation in our academic institutions. I am happy that four prominent Indian universities concluded six memoranda of understanding with their counterparts in Turkey with a view to promoting faculty, students and research exchanges.

I extended an invitation to President Gul to visit India. While accepting it, he spoke of his respect and affection for our country. Prime Minister Erdogan also asked me to convey to our Prime Minister the pending invitation for him to visit Turkey.

I believe that in the course of my interaction with the Turkish leadership we have made progress in a number of areas. Turkey is an important country in its region and among the emerging economies in the world. There is significant potential for expanding our cooperation in all fields, and we intend to maintain a robust dialogue towards peace and across all sectors and at all levels.

Thank you.

Q: Excellency, traditionally Turkey is perceived to be closer to Pakistan. During your talks with Turkish leaders, some miracle happened. First they did not mention about Kashmir. Second they did mention about terror attacks in Pakistan. Is it your diplomatic success or really Turkey is now moving closer to India?

President of India: Every country has its own approach towards each and every other country. But this much I would like to say that I briefed them about our initiatives on Pakistan and also the requirement which has been repeatedly placed before the Pakistan leadership. I also mentioned the last meeting between the two Prime Ministers at the margin of the United Nations. But this is the situation which we shall have to recognise.

While talking on terrorism there was convergence of views, which I have mentioned in my statement, that terrorists have no religion, no country, no respect for borders. Their only aim is to continue wanton destruction of everything. And we have also recognised that this is not confined to one country or one region; it appears to be a menace to the international peace and stability.

Q: Sir, recently Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was also in Turkey ... (Inaudible)... he expressed publicly and first time he said ... (Inaudible)... having good relations with India. He had a detailed discussion with the Turkish leadership. Now are you confident that Turkish leadership would prevail upon the Pakistan leadership so that India's concerns can be addressed?

President of India: Our effort in respect of Pakistan that it is essential that bilateral issues are to be resolved between India and Pakistan themselves within the framework of Shimla Agreement. Therefore, the question of any third country intervention on this issue does not arise. And India has never sought any foreign country's intervention in this matter (Inaudible)...

Q: Mr. President, Turkey had not been very supportive of India's bid for UN Security Council membership, and has been part of a small ginger group, which includes China and Pakistan, which opposed India's membership in UNSC. Did you after your discussions get an impression that Turkey's view might change?

President of India: Every country has its own angularity and approach towards the United Nations reform, how it should take place, when it should take place. And in the open-ended working group which is functioning from 1995 till date, almost 28 years, it has not been possible to find a common ground about the date, time, and broad contours of the reform of the United Nations. Therefore, there were no new areas to discuss except in general terms.

Q: We saw in this instance how Turkey perhaps dramatically has taken a view to strengthen ties with India during your visit. But should such an impression gain ground that our relations with Pakistan will always come up whenever we are trying to strengthen ties with various countries,

what would you say? Given its relations with Pakistan, it is not satisfactory. Should that come between relations with other countries?

President of India: Our relation with other countries is not specific to any country. We do not believe that relationship between two countries, bilateral relationship ... (Inaudible)... in the context of a third country

Q: Sir, in recent times we have witnessed increasing friction among different institutions of our democracy. In the latest instance you had the Supreme Court talking about Representation of People Act and the Government trying to bring an ordinance to overturn the Supreme Court judgment. How do you look at this increasing friction among the institutions and do you think that judiciary is overstepping its jurisdiction?

President of India: Umpteen number of times I have stated that each institution should function within its limitations which have been determined by the Constitution. Every institution derives its authority from the Constitution itself. And in a living, dynamic, multiparty system, there may be occasions when various institutions act in a particular way, but we have the capacity and flexibility in the system to adjust the friction and to avoid any crisis.

Press Secretary to President:

Thank you



UKRAINE

556. Fifth Session of the India-Ukraine Inter-Governmental Commission.

New Delhi, November 13, 2013.

1. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed, chaired the Fifth Session of the India-Ukraine Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological, Industrial and Cultural Cooperation held on 13th November 2013 in New Delhi. The Fourth Session was held in Kyiv in June 2012. The Ukrainian delegation was led by Mr. Ihor Mykolayovych Prasolov, Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine. He was accompanied by a 15-member official and 12-member business delegation from Ukraine.
2. The talks were held in a friendly and constructive atmosphere. The Session reviewed the current status and future prospects of cooperation in trade and investment, heavy/light industry, fertilizers, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, mining and metallurgy, science and technology, energy (coal, nuclear), transportation, agriculture and food processing, education, culture and tourism. A Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in Joint Ventures and Research and Development in Pharmaceuticals and Bio-pharmaceuticals between the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India, and the State Administration of Ukraine on Medicinal Products was signed on 13th November 2013 in the presence of the two Co-Chairmen.
3. Mr. Prasolov and delegation also held a meeting with Dr. E M Sudarsana Natchiappan, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry of India. The Ukrainian Business Delegation held an interactive session with Indian business community organized by the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
4. In focus were issues being faced by Indian pharmaceutical companies in exporting their medicines to Ukraine and visa concerns of Indian nationals, particularly Indian businessmen.

Pharmaceuticals constitute the bulk of India's exports to Ukraine amounting to about US\$ 375 million per annum. The Ukrainian side agreed to address the concerns of Indian pharmaceutical companies operating in Ukraine. Both sides also agreed to work on an agreement on simplification of visa procedures to ease movement of business people and tourists.

5. India and Ukraine agreed that there was vast untapped potential to increase trade beyond the existing level of US\$ 3.2 billion. They felt that removing the temporary obstacles of visas and those facing the pharma sector would help India and Ukraine forge a truly comprehensive partnership.
6. The two sides agreed to hold the next session of the Commission in Kyiv in 2014 on mutually convenient dates.



UNITED KINGDOM

557. Media Briefing by Joint Secretary (Europe West) and Indian High Commissioner to UK.

New Delhi, February 15, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good Afternoon friends. Thank you very much for coming here on what has been a long day for many of you. We do appreciate your effort to come in at this time. The idea was to try and give you a glimpse of a forthcoming visit and that is the visit of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to India. I have with me here our High Commissioner Dr. Jaimini Bhagwati on my right, and on my left is Joint Secretary (Europe West) Ms Ruchi Ghanashyam who you had met only recently when we had a briefing on the visit of the President of France. So you will be having sort of two briefings from Europe of major visits.

What we will do as is usual is to have Ms. Ruchi Ghanashyam make a few opening remarks and then the floor is open for questions relating to

the United Kingdom. Today we will not take any further questions on any other issues given the lateness of the hour and that we have taxed all of you to come at this stage, and you have all been very gracious to come. With those brief ground rules, let me ask Ms. Ghanashyam to speak. And as always the interaction will be limited to one question per person. Over to you Ruchi.

Joint Secretary (Europe West)(Ms Ruchi Ghanashyam): Thank you Akbar.

Once again let me also thank you for coming here at this late hour. My apologies as well for making you work so late.

His Excellency Mr. David Cameron, Prime Minister of the UK, will be paying an official visit to India from February 18 to 20, 2013 with 19th February, 2013 as the main day of engagement in New Delhi. Apart from New Delhi, he will also be visiting Mumbai. He will come with an accompanying Delegation including CEOs of leading business houses; likely to have some Vice Chancellors of some reputed universities, dignitaries and senior officials.

In New Delhi, PM Cameron will hold delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh on the 19th of February at Hyderabad House. He will also call on Hon. President. He would be in Mumbai on 18th February the day before his visit to Delhi. There are some other elements of the programme which are evolving because we are working out the schedule and other logistics. Those are in the process.

India and UK have a vibrant economic relationship. UK continues to be among India's major trade partners particularly in Europe. The two-way merchandise trade during 2011-12 rose to US\$ 16.157 billion, which is up 27 per cent from US\$ 12.56 billion in 2010-11.

On the investment front, UK's total FDI in India as of October, 2012 from April 2000 was US\$ 17.08 billion, constituting approximately about nine per cent of total FDI. India has continued to maintain its strong position as an investor in the UK during 2010-11. About 700 Indian companies have operations in UK with over 70 of them listed on the London Stock Exchange. The Tata Group is the largest private manufacturing sector employer in UK.

We also have a very useful and vibrant relationship in the education and research sector. A large number of Indian students visit UK to study in the many reputed universities in UK. And we value UK as a partner in this area especially in academic and research exchanges. An India Institute was launched at the University of London's Kings College on 26th January, 2012, and it is said to be a centre for global engagement with contemporary India.

We also have a growing and very useful cooperation with UK in the area of counterterrorism. And that is our joint effort to fight terrorism. The last meeting of the Joint Working Group was held recently in India on 20th November, 2012. There are also other engagements with UK in this. The first India-UK Cyber Security Dialogue was also held in London on 18th and 19th October, 2012. In the area of defence we have multifaceted cooperation with the UK.

Energy is an important area of our relationship. Oil and natural gas is one of the top sectors of FDI from UK into India. And there is considerable scope for India-UK partnership in this sector especially in non-fossil and renewable sectors. Those are also important areas that we have with UK.

We have a very useful multifaceted and vibrant relationship with the UK. UK supports India's permanent membership at the UN Security Council, and is an important interlocutor for India in the EU, G8, G20 and also in the global context. We wish Prime Minister Cameron and his delegation a very pleasant stay in India.

Thank you.

Official Spokesperson: Before I open the floor for questions I would just like to tell you that once the programme is finalized and all elements are in place, we will issue an advisory which will indicate what is the complete nature of the programme and what are the opportunities available for the media. But that is still sometime to go, perhaps over the weekend or perhaps certainly by Sunday we should provide that. With that, we are now ready to answer any questions that you may have.

Q: Is the United Kingdom raising the issue of the Vodafone tax demand? If so, what is the stand that India is going to take given that there is a Supreme Court case on this issue?

Indian High Commissioner to UK (Dr. Jaimini Bhagwati): As you know, the Finance Minister was in the UK, and some of these issues including the Vodafone issue was raised. My understanding from what our Ministry of Finance has indicated - and it is only my understanding, so the blame is mine if I do not fully and accurately reflect what they have said - it seems that there are some discussions going on between that particular company and the relevant officials of the Ministry of Finance. And the sense I got is that it is moving in a right direction which would be acceptable to both sides.

Q: Sir, India has served a show-cause notice on Agusta Westland of the UK for cancellation of contract for the VVIP helicopters after reports of corruption that had been established by Prosecutors in Europe. Is India asking assistance from the UK in the matter of investigation of this deal? Is India asking the UK for information and assistance for probing the allegations of corruption in this deal?

High Commissioner to UK: In the recent past we have formally checked with the UK side, and as of now they have given us an interim response. So we are still waiting to further check with them if they have any information.

Q: What is the interim response, Sir?

High Commissioner to UK: The interim response very specifically is that they want to wait for the investigation in Italy to be completed and for them to know more details about the investigation in Italy before they can respond to anything that we have asked them.

Q: Do you have any idea on who the CEOs would be, how many they would be? And is the business aspect in Delhi or in Bombay?

High Commissioner to UK: The business aspect is both in Mumbai as well as over here. I may not have the full laundry list, if I may call it that, of the people. But I can assure you that these are the major companies both over here and over there. For instance from the Tata Group I believe the new Chief Mr. Cyrus Mistry may be involved. I do not want to give specific names only because, as JS (XP) mentioned, some elements of the programme are still being worked out. It might be premature; we do not want to embarrass anyone. So from their side, the British Petroleum, a large company, did a large investment here and so on. There will also

be a business engagement which is, as you know, for summit-level visits, orchestrated by our leading Chambers of Industry and Commerce. So they will also put together a programme.

Q: UK recently hosted a trilateral meeting with Afghanistan and Pakistan. How do we view this trilateral? Have we had any conversation with the British Government on the details of this particular meeting?

High Commissioner to UK: I do not think today is the time when we are looking at bilateral issues to get into neighbourhood issues. But responding very specifically to your question as to whether there have been contacts after the latest trilateral meeting took place in London on the 3rd and 4th of February at the Prime Minister David Cameron's country resort called Checkers, their National Security Advisor spoke to our National Security Advisor, their Foreign Secretary that means Foreign Minister spoke to our Hon. External Affairs Minister. So they have been keeping us fully involved. And my sense is that in the discussions that will take place on the 19th this topic will figure too.

Q: Some of the UK firms are yet to be paid for the CWG dues and this issue has also been raised in the UK Parliament. Has there been any discussion that the UK has initiated afresh on these payments that are due to UK companies?

High Commissioner to UK: I must confess that in the time that I have been in UK, no formal reference has been made to us about these dues. My sense is that this is happening at a legal and at a company-to-company level. I may be wrong, but it is not through our good offices that any request has been forwarded to anyone.

Question: You have talked about defence cooperation would you please shed more light on what kind of defence cooperation is there between India and UK?

High Commissioner to UK: Sure. I am going to talk a little broadly here in the sense that we are in discussion between the relevant specialized agencies, for instance DRDO and the counterparts on the UK. Beside, we are looking at, we may not have yet arrived at, some elements of cooperation are already on. For instance in the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear areas there may be at some point of time an understanding which would be reached within the ambit of a letter of

arrangement that the DRDO has with its counterpart. Similarly in the area of submarines I believe the relevant agencies have been in touch. Now you will pardon me, but I am not an expert in some of these issues in the defence area but I just gave the two as examples.

Q: If I could just explore a bit more deeply the answer on Agusta Westland, you say that the UK has provided an interim response and that response is essentially that they await the outcome of the Italian investigation. Is India satisfied with that response? And what is the truth of the rumours or the reports of the Letters of Rogatory about to be sent?

Official Spokesperson: Let me answer the first part. Nobody is ever satisfied with an interim response. Everybody would want a full-fledged response. It is pretty obvious that we would like a full-fledged response. On the issue of Letters Rogatory, as you are aware the Letter Rogatory is a legal process which has to go through our CBI and that is the nodal point for all such matters. And also these are largely quasi-judicial processes which are initiated through investigative agencies. So, as far as we in the Ministry of External Affairs are concerned, we would only be a channel if this is triggered off. At this stage I have not heard as of today anything on that.

Q: Would you like a full response?

Official Spokesperson: Of course, everybody would like full responses from everybody who we have asked.

Q: Sir, are we looking at Britain for investment along townships along the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor? And is there any proposal for a Delhi-Bangalore corridor as well? Are we looking at something like that with British help?

Official Spokesperson: Maybe you are saying Chennai-Bangalore.

Q: Bombay-Bangalore.

High Commissioner to UK: If I may just add one more specific element, before I come to your question about Corridors, as far as India-UK defence cooperation is concerned, you may know that HAL Bangalore is currently manufacturing a HAWK Advanced Jet Trainer Aircraft under license from BAE. Now coming to your question about first Delhi-Mumbai, yes, various UK companies - and I can remember one from the top of

my head, is ACON - are engaged. Your question was specifically on financing. I am not entirely sure about the financing arrangements. As you can understand in today's day, a company which is based in country X has shareholders in countries Y, Z and so on. So I am not quite sure about financing. But in terms of consultancy services, there are several British Companies which are helping out and on a commercial basis on the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. There is also a thought and at this stage I think we will just call it a thought about a Mumbai-Bangalore Economic Corridor. It is still a thought. So the two sides are thinking about it. And let us see where we get with it.

Q: How many times have you written to UK for a response on Augusta Westland and how many times have they responded?

High Commissioner to UK: As Akbar said, I do not want to get into how many times because I might get the precise time wrong. Let me just submit that yes, we have been in touch with the UK side, yes, the UK side has said that they are waiting for the investigation in Italy to be fully complete so that they know exactly what is happening. And as Akbar said, we would like to get a fuller response from all the authorities outside. Even as domestically I am sure Government is concerned and is taking the necessary action. And as he said in External Affairs Ministry and therefore in the field ... (Inaudible)... called the High Commission, we will wait for the relevant authorities in India to let us know how to take it forward.

Official Spokesperson: Just to add to it, apart from writing, we have also had a meeting on this with the concerned officials in the UK Foreign Office.

Q: In the month of?

High Commissioner to UK: I do not want to hazard a guess, because just in case. Since we have now come into February, probably in January but I cannot say immediately from the top of my head, it might have been the beginning of February or whenever it was.

Joint Secretary (EW): If I may correct..., No, it was earlier. But let us not get into that.

Official Spokesperson: Yes, we do not know the exact dates right now off hand.

Q: Is it possible to be a little more specific about what sort of information you have heard from UK Authorities? You said we have formally checked but what exactly?

High Commissioner to UK: The specific question, to my understanding, was that is there an investigation at the UK end? And their response was that they are waiting for the investigation on the Italian end to be made known.

Q: If you do not mind can you just give just sound bite on Maldives? Already you have issued a statement. So just we wanted a sound bite.

Official Spokesperson: I must confess, I can do it but I am not prepared for it right now because we have mentioned at the beginning of it that this will be restricted because of course then there are others' who have pet themes to follow up on.

Q: Is Letter Rogatory the only way to get information on issue?

Q: Sir, through what format have you really asked UK to give us a response?

Official Spokesperson: As far as what is the Letter Rogatory, this is way beyond my understanding because I am not a legal person. So please let us not get into it. I suggest that you ask the CBI, which is the nodal agency in such matters, is this the only way or there are other ways. Now as regard what way we have asked, we use diplomatic modes of communication which is Note Verbale and also follow-up meeting in the Foreign Office.

Well welcome to the Ministry of External Affairs for the first time that I have seen you here but you are welcome to ask any question.

Q: Thanks. It is not the first time but it is the first time in a while. I just wanted clarity, from the question that you would ask the UK about the Augusta Westland I just wanted to clarify, from their answer, is it clear whether or not they have started their own investigation into the issue or was the answer like we will look into this after we get the full report from Italy?

Official Spokesperson: I think it would be unfair for us to try and summarise the diplomatic nuances in the way you are trying to do that. Please bear with us, we do not have that formal request here with us,

the way we thought of it and the way they responded. So it would not be proper for us to try and summarise it. Please understand that. We were focused on the bilateral relationship in its entirety here, but if you would like to add anything.

High Commissioner to UK: There is nothing further to add. Akbar has said it. Your question is very specific because it will then entail, which day did we send the Note Verbale, obviously it is difficult for us to remember the exact date; which day did they respond and so on; and what if any action has been taken by the UK side, post that communication to us. So I think it would be improper to say the least to start commenting at that level of detail.

Official Spokesperson: If there are no more questions....., then thank you very much



**558. Joint Statement on the India-United Kingdom Summit 2013
- India and The UK: A stronger, wider, deeper partnership.**

New Delhi, February 19, 2013.

1. India-UK Summit talks were held in New Delhi on 19 February 2013 during the official visit to India of the British Prime Minister, the Rt Hon David Cameron, MP.
2. The British Prime Minister expressed his warm appreciation for the welcome extended by the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, and the Government and people of India to him, his Ministerial colleagues, and to his delegation, which included the largest British trade delegation ever to visit India, leaders of the UK-India CEO Forum, members of Parliament, and university Vice Chancellors. During his official engagements in New Delhi, Prime Minister Cameron also called on the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, and the UPA Chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi.
3. The two Prime Ministers and their colleagues reviewed the progress made since the previous Summit in 2010 on building a

stronger, wider and deeper relationship across the range of India-UK interests, based on shared culture, values and strategic interests. They agreed that, while substantial progress had been made on the ambitious targets set in 2010, there was considerable potential for expanding the relationship further, in particular in the area of trade and investment, and they agreed on the importance of an approach which supported business.

Economic Growth and Cooperation

4. Trade between Britain and India has grown strongly since the last summit. In 2010 and 2011, trade grew an average of 23%. This year the economic climate has been tougher. But the leaders remain committed to working to substantially increase trade and investment between India and the UK.
5. The leaders welcomed the growth in two-way investment between India and the UK since the last Summit, which is creating jobs and growth in both countries. The UK is now the 3rd largest investor in India and India is now the 5th largest investor in the UK. The leaders welcomed major Indian investments into the UK and major UK investments into India since the last summit.
6. The leaders noted the signature, in October 2012, of an Amending Protocol of their Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC). This will provide tax stability to Indian and UK residents, and will facilitate mutual economic cooperation between the two countries. It will also stimulate the flow of investment, technology and services between India and the UK. Both countries are committed to the fight against tax evasion and avoidance and are strong proponents of transparency in tax matters.
7. The leaders met the members of the UK-India CEO forum and noted the recommendations for the further development of business partnerships, including in advance manufacturing and R&D, education and skills, healthcare, and infrastructure and energy.
8. The leaders underlined their strong commitment to a successful outcome to the EU-India negotiations for a broad based, balanced,

and ambitious Free Trade Agreement that will generate jobs and growth in both countries, and their hope for political agreement in 2013.

9. The two leaders encouraged a renewed focus by the governments and businesses of both countries for further and deeper partnerships to exploit fully the potential for stronger cooperation between the two countries.
10. The leaders welcomed the development in cooperation on infrastructure since the last summit. They noted the UK's interest in cooperating with India for the development of a new Bengaluru-Mumbai Economic Corridor (BMEC). The leaders agreed to examine and evolve the modalities and content of a feasibility study of this project concept through mutual discussions and to work out a roadmap for a possible partnership in this area.
11. The leaders underlined the importance of cooperation in the field of health and welcomed the conclusion of an over-arching MOU at the government-to-government level to strengthen cooperation in this sector, and look forward to cooperation between the UK's National Institute of Clinical Excellence and the Indian Department of Health Research, and between the Medical Health Regulatory Authority and the Drug Controller General of India.
12. The leaders welcomed the proposals by UK providers to support primary healthcare training in line with the objectives of various Government of India schemes/initiatives, encouraging further initiatives to follow the new pilot in Kerala and initial scoping study in Tamil Nadu; and nursing and midwifery training in coordination with national nursing centres.
13. The leaders welcomed the rapid expansion of India-UK research and development cooperation which is helping to generate and develop high quality and high impact research partnerships leading to new knowledge creation. The co-investment made by both countries in supporting joint research activities has risen from £1m in 2009 to over £100m today. Recent additions in the collaboration agenda include advanced manufacturing, bio-

energy, smart grids, energy storage, next generation wireless systems and applied mathematics.

14. The two leaders welcomed the recent understanding on a new India-UK development partnership.
15. They agreed to work together to develop the global post-2015 development agenda, which should be ambitious and practical, with the aim of eradicating poverty - wherever it exists – and ensuring adequate means of implementation for developing countries.
16. Energy security is a major issue confronting both the UK and India and the two leaders agreed to cooperate to face this common challenge. The leaders welcomed the extensive collaboration in the energy sector including on oil and gas, renewable energy, energy efficiency, the power sector, and business leadership on low carbon technologies. They welcomed the substantial British investment in India's energy sector. They also welcomed the growth in research and development partnerships on renewable energy, smart grids, forecasting and integration of renewable energy in the transmission grids, and new sources of energy and associated technologies. Both sides agreed to explore ways to deepen policy, commercial and research collaboration on energy, biofuels, and environmentally friendly technologies.
17. Both countries are net importers of energy and have strong demand for imported LNG. The two leaders agreed to work closely to address this issue through joint cooperation by forging partnerships, including commercial partnerships, to diversify LNG supply sources and to develop natural gas infrastructure in each other's countries.
18. The two leaders agreed to open a dialogue between relevant agencies working in the field of petroleum conservation in both countries in different sectors of the economy. The two countries would promote joint cooperation through activities where the exchange of knowledge, technology and experience in the field of fuel conservation could bring mutual benefit to both countries.

19. The two leaders agreed, respectively to encourage Indian Public Sector Undertakings and UK oil and gas companies to explore the possibility of upstream oil and gas sector investment in India, the UK and in third countries, with a view to sourcing hydrocarbons to meet their energy requirements. Security
20. The UK and India stand together in the fight against terrorism. The two leaders welcomed the strong cooperation they have developed in this field since 2010, and which recently contributed to ensuring a safe and successful London Olympic Games. Condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, the two leaders agreed that all terrorist networks, wherever they exist, must be defeated. They called upon Pakistan to bring to justice the perpetrators of the Mumbai terror attacks. The two leaders committed to work closely together to prevent terror attacks, strengthen the international counter-terrorism architecture, and exchange best practice in areas such as transport security, security of vital civil infrastructure installations, responding to terror attacks, and countering extremism. They also agreed to cooperate on joint training of their counter-terrorism forces.
21. The UK and India agreed to deepen their cooperation on cyber security, building on the comprehensive bilateral cyber dialogue held in October, 2012, and the subsequent Joint Statement on Cooperation between India and the UK on Cyber Issues. The two leaders agreed to hold the second round of dialogue at mutually convenient dates in March/April 2013. The two leaders announced a programme for the sharing of expertise on cyber security including; police training exchanges in cyber forensics; a joint workshop on cyber security research, and a cyber trade and skills event to be held in the first half of 2013. The two leaders also announced the establishment of a joint task force to exchange and share information to address malicious cyber activity originating in and affecting each other's cyber space. The two leaders welcomed the UN General Assembly Resolution on the formation of a CSTD working group on enhanced cooperation and agreed to consult each other on the discussions in the working group.

22. The two leaders expressed their commitment to working towards a world free of nuclear weapons. They agreed to hold regular consultations on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. In recognition of the threat posed by terrorists gaining access to WMD materials, India and the UK agreed to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Security.
23. India and the UK's civil nuclear cooperation has gone from strength to strength since the Joint Declaration in 2010. It now includes innovative nuclear research projects and the export of advanced civil nuclear technology and exchanges between scientific institutions. Both leaders expressed interest in cooperation with regard to India in the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership. In recognition of their commitment to enhance bilateral cooperation further, both leaders agreed to begin negotiations on a civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement.
24. Prime Minister Cameron committed the UK to make available to India the cutting edge British technology, civil and military, that the UK currently shares with its top international partners, in accordance with international obligations. The leaders agreed to work actively together to achieve India's ambitions to join the major export control regimes (Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Group; Australia Group; Wassenaar Arrangement).
25. The leaders noted the close and traditional interactions and exchanges between the Armed Forces of India and the UK, and welcomed initiatives being taken to enhance such exchanges to the mutual benefit of both countries. The two leaders also welcomed the regular conduct of exercises between the Armed Forces of both countries.
26. The leaders noted that, under a letter of agreement signed in September 2011, Indian and British scientists are working together to develop technologies for Defence and Security. Taking forward this engagement, the UK Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) is paired with the India's Defence

Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Three Collaborative Projects were initiated in 2012 and a new project has just been agreed to work together on Chemical and Biological Defence.

27. The leaders welcomed the UK and India's close engagement during India's recent tenure on the United Nations Security Council. The two sides agreed to continue this close co-operation on UNSC matters in a new bilateral, and institutionalised, format. Prime Minister Cameron reaffirmed the UK's commitment to a reformed United Nations Security Council with India as a permanent member. Both Prime Ministers called for an open, effective and efficient United Nations, and welcomed their shared commitment to working actively through the United Nations to preserve international peace and security. The leaders welcomed deeper engagement on UN peacekeeping matters, and looked forward to enhancing this further through practical and policy co-operation.
28. The two leaders welcomed increased collaboration in foreign policy. The UK and India have a shared vision for peace, stability, democracy and prosperity.
29. The two leaders also discussed a range of other international security matters of concern including the conflict in Syria and Iran's nuclear programme. The leaders reaffirmed their belief in the peaceful resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomacy and underlined the need for Iran to comply with the provisions of the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and to extend its full cooperation to the International Atomic Energy Agency.
30. Both Prime Ministers agreed to deepen existing India-UK strategic consultations on developments in West Asia / Middle East.
31. The two leaders welcomed the international community's continued commitment to Afghanistan in the form of development and security assistance during this period of transition and transformation. The two leaders also encouraged the international

community and Afghanistan's neighbours to promote foreign investment, market access, private sector development and development of infrastructure in Afghanistan to make Afghanistan economically self-reliant.

32. The two leaders recognised that the main threat to Afghanistan's security and stability is terrorism which also endangers regional and global peace and security. In this regard, they emphasized the need for joint and concerted efforts and cooperation among regional and other countries to address the challenge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the dismantling of terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens, as well as disrupting all financial and tactical support for terrorism.
33. The two leaders supported the efforts made by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish a peaceful inter-Afghan dialogue. They agreed that the process must be Afghan-led, inclusive and transparent and meet the key principles enunciated by the international community: renunciation of violence, breaking of all ties with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, and acceptance of the Afghan Constitution, including its provision for the human rights of men and women. In this context, they noted the contribution of the UN Security Council anti-terror sanctions regime.
34. The two leaders agreed upon the need to sufficiently build the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces so that the gains made over the past few years are not diluted.
35. The two leaders agreed to establish a new Joint Working Group as a mechanism for a regular bilateral dialogue on peace, security and development in Afghanistan.
36. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the values and principles of the Commonwealth. Both sides agreed to work together to further strengthen the wide-ranging links that bind member states. They noted progress made in the reform and renewal of the Commonwealth. Both sides reiterated the importance of democracy and development as key pillars of the Commonwealth.

People-to-People

37. The two leaders agreed on the importance of quality education for all their citizens. The leaders noted the recognition and respect in India for the UK as a centre for excellence in education and learning. They expressed interest in further enhancing the mobility and exchange of students between India and the UK. Prime Minister Cameron reaffirmed that Britain warmly welcomes Indian students to the UK.
38. The leaders acknowledged the significance of collaboration in education and took note of the results of the recently concluded India-UK Education Forum meeting on 30 January 2013 in London. The leaders also noted that institutional links are progressing very well between the two countries under the UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI).
39. The leaders recognised the important role of the British Council in providing English language training in India. Both leaders noted the need to build capacity for the training of English language teachers in new methodologies in partnership with the State Governments and the CBSE over the next five years, in coordination with Government of India and its national agencies.
40. The leaders welcomed the British Council's programme to provide digital English language materials for use by millions of learners in India. They also welcomed the agreement between the British Council, INTEL and the State Government of Uttar Pradesh with the objective of reaching a further 4 million English learners.
41. The leaders welcomed the progress of the UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) since its inception in 2006, noting that more than 1025 partnerships had been supported in different areas, including over 380 in the second phase of UKIERI from 2011, in the four vital strands of leadership, innovation, skills and student mobility.
42. In addition to the UKIERI partnerships, the leaders welcomed the increase in direct university to university collaborations.

43. The leaders welcomed support from UKIERI and directly from business for increased work opportunities in India for British students and new graduates under the Study India Programme.
44. The two leaders welcomed that Indian Higher Education regulators will actively explore the possibility of creating an enabling environment, by introducing the necessary bridging mechanism, through which Indian nationals holding a Master's degree from an accredited and recognised British University are able to pursue higher education or gain employment in India, after completing the necessary formalities of eligibility and equivalence.
45. The leaders welcomed the partnership between the UK Open University and the Government of India, supported by the British Council and UKAID, to provide training for 1 million teachers using web-based and other innovative technology.
46. The leaders welcomed the UK-India partnership to support secondary education through the Government of India's Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) to universalise access to secondary education with emphasis on quality and equity. UK support will enable young people to access secondary education in India in larger numbers.
47. The leaders affirmed their support for a strong partnership in skills development and noted the opportunities in the delivery of vocational skills in all sectors to their citizens. They agreed to take this forward, including by working towards an MOU between the Ministry of Labour and Employment in India and relevant UK departments and agencies.
48. People to people links are central to the relationship between India and the UK. The two leaders reaffirmed that both countries welcome all legitimate travellers, whether students, tourists, visitors, business people or qualified workers. They underlined their commitment both to facilitate strong people-to-people exchanges and to cooperate to secure their borders and cooperate on migration issues. The two leaders agreed to continue their ongoing discussions on visa, migration and people mobility issues of concern to both sides.

49. The two leaders expressed their appreciation for the contribution of the Indian diaspora in the UK, including in Parliament, government, business, healthcare and education.
50. Cultural diplomacy between India and the UK is an important mechanism for strengthening bilateral relations, through organisations such as the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the British Council. The two leaders welcomed in this respect; chairs established by ICCR at Edinburgh Napier University and King's College London; a partnership with the South Bank Centre for the Alchemy Festival; and partnerships with the Edinburgh Festivals.
51. The leaders welcomed the British Council's plans to deliver their 5-year arts and culture initiative – ReImagine - to build new creative connections between the peoples of the UK and India.
52. The leaders welcomed the Leadership Training Programme (LTP) for in-service museum professionals in 2012, under the landmark MOU signed in 2010 between the Ministry of Culture of the Government of India and British institutions. This has paved the way for further capacity building programmes and the exchange of best practice between the cultural institutions of both countries.



559. Prime Minister's Media Statement during the visit of Prime Minister of UK to India.

New Delhi, February 19, 2013.

Your Excellency Prime Minister Cameron,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome Prime Minister David Cameron on his Official Visit to India. Prime Minister Cameron's strong personal commitment and leadership has imparted a strong momentum to the strategic partnership between India and the U.K. His first visit to India as Prime Minister in 2010, a few months after he assumed office, laid the foundation of our Enhanced Partnership for the Future, which is defined by a high level of economic and technological cooperation and close coordination on many common regional and global challenges.

This morning, Prime Minister Cameron and I reviewed the entire expanse of our bilateral relations. We expressed satisfaction with progress in our economic engagement, while stressing the need to do more to take the relationship to a new level. We discussed ways to generate higher growth in our trade. I invited increased British investments in India, including in infrastructure and energy. We have asked our officials to explore British participation in India's National Manufacturing and Investment Zones and in a possible industrial corridor in the Mumbai-Bangalore sector.

I have sought Prime Minister Cameron's support in ensuring an early conclusion of a fair, balanced and forward looking Broad-based India-EU Trade and Investment Agreement, which will open new opportunities for trade and investment between our two countries.

We discussed the prospects of enhanced cooperation in the development of the defence industrial base of India through greater emphasis on technology transfer, co-development and co-production.

I also conveyed to Prime Minister Cameron our very serious concerns regarding allegations about unethical means used in securing the 2010 contract for Agusta Westland helicopters. I told him that we have sought an explanation from the company by February 22 to examine if the contractual provisions on unethical practices and the Integrity Pact have

been violated. I have sought full assistance from the U.K. in this case. Prime Minister Cameron has assured me of the cooperation of his Government in the investigations.

Education and science and technology are special areas of India-UK cooperation. I have impressed upon PM Cameron the need for a visa regime that facilitates greater movement of people between our two countries so that this cooperation can be further energized.

I thanked Prime Minister Cameron for the UK's support for India's full membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and other multilateral export control regimes. We have also decided to commence negotiations on a bilateral Civil Nuclear Agreement.

Prime Minister Cameron and I also had very candid and productive discussions on regional and global issues. We shared our perspectives on the security and political transition in Afghanistan. I conveyed India's enduring commitment to assist Afghanistan through the transition and beyond, by supporting its economic growth and regional economic integration and helping develop its capacity for governance, development and security in accordance with our strategic partnership agreement with Afghanistan. We also had productive discussions on other issues in our immediate neighbourhood, including Iran and West Asia. We agreed to further intensify our cooperation in combating terrorism. We have also increased our engagement on cyber security.

Prime Minister Cameron and I agreed that in keeping with our strategic relationship, it is important for our two sides to consult closely and remain sensitive to each other's interests.

Prime Minister Cameron's visit is another milestone in our bilateral relations. It has been a pleasure working with him and I look forward to continuing our mutual partnership.

Thank you

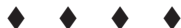


560. Prime Minister's Condolence message on the passing away of Baroness Thatcher, former British Prime Minister.

New Delhi, April 9, 2013.

"I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing away of Baroness Thatcher. On behalf of her countless admirers in India as well as the Government of India and on my own behalf, I write to convey to you our sincerest condolences.

Baroness Thatcher was a transformative figure of global standing. Her skill, character and resolve, which she brought to her job as Prime Minister, have left an indelible impression in many areas of British public life. While the United Kingdom registered important progress under her leadership, we in India also remember her for her notable contributions to strengthening India-UK relations. Our thoughts and prayers in this difficult moment are with you and the family of Baroness Thatcher. We pray for peace for the departed soul."



561. Foreign Office Consultations between India and the United Kingdom.

London, June 21, 2013.

Foreign Secretary Shri Ranjan Mathai visited London on June 19-20, 2013 for the annual India-UK Foreign Office Consultations.

On June 19, Foreign Secretary held Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with his UK counterpart, Permanent Under Secretary Sir Simon Fraser on all aspects of India – UK relations. Discussions included a detailed follow up of the decisions reached during UK Prime Minister's visit to India in February 2013. The situation in India's neighbourhood, including Afghanistan and Pakistan, Middle-East/West Asia and East Asia was discussed. The two sides noted that frank exchange of views helped promote better understanding of each other's positions towards the shared goal of obtaining peace, security and stability in the region and beyond.

The dialogue held during Prime Minister Cameron's visit to India in February, 2013 marked an important step towards further consolidating the India - UK Strategic Partnership. It was noted that trade and investment engagement between the two countries holds considerable promise. In this context, they reviewed the progress made on major economic and commercial issues including the joint feasibility study for the Bengaluru-Mumbai Economic Corridor.

The two sides underscored the importance of their ongoing cooperation in counter-terrorism and cyber security and looked forward to the next round of senior expert level bilateral dialogues in these areas of shared concern. Recalling the understanding reached during UK Prime Minister's visit to India in February 2013, it was agreed to take forward consideration of an agreement on civil nuclear cooperation. The UK side reiterated their commitment to raising bilateral cooperation on high technologies to a new higher level and expressed support for India's membership of multilateral export control regimes. The two sides also discussed cooperation in higher education, scientific research energy and health sector. Both sides emphasised the importance of people to people contacts.

On June 20, Foreign Secretary Mathai called on National Security Adviser Sir Kim Darroch and the Minister of State at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office Rt Hon Hugo Swire. The two sides expressed satisfaction at the outcome of the Foreign Office Consultations and hoped that the momentum of the multifaceted bilateral engagement would be further augmented by means of senior official level dialogues on specific mutually agreed themes in the coming months.



562. Press Release of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on the visit of Commerce Minister Anand Sharma to London.

New Delhi, June 25, 2013.

Shri Anand Sharma, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry visited UK on 23-25 June to review bilateral trade and investment and taking part in investment promotion events. He met Dr. Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, Mr. Oliver Letwin, Minister for Government policy in Cabinet office, Mr. Gregory barker, Minister in charge for business engagement with India and First/Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland.

In his meetings with both Dr Vince Cable and Mr Oliver Letwin , Shri Sharma expressed serious concerns over the news reports referring to a proposal to categorize India as high risk country entailing cash bonds from visa applicants. Dr Vince Cable informed the Indian Minister that he had discussed the issue with the British Home Secretary who had assured that there was proposal mooted for a pilot which has not been considered by the British Government. Shri Sharma suggested that given the strategic India–UK partnership a formal clarification to this effect would be in order to dispel any apprehension and avoid confusion.

The ministers reviewed progress on feasibility study of Bengaluru Mumbai Economic corridor, as envisaged in Joint Statement of India UK summit meeting in February 2013, and exchanged the Terms of Reference of study. Both sides agreed to establish Joint working group on the BMEC project for carrying out the co financed feasibility study and to explore the modalities technology and equity participation by UK. The British side showed keen interest in studying the financial structures being considered under the ongoing DMIC project and the governance structures for the NIMZs. This project is being projected as the cornerstone of India-UK partnership.

Shri Sharma emphasised that both sides should review the progress of work of Joint working groups under JETCO to leading to the bilateral JETCO meeting in the second half of this year. He invited UK minister to visit Central Manufacturing technology institute Bengaluru and NIMZ near Pune during the latter's visit to India.

Both sides discussed steps for early conclusion of India EU BTIA. The Indian Minister emphasised the need for pragmatism in harvesting the agreements made till now on various issues and realising the benefits of adopting incremental approach for conclusion of the agreement. He explained that the Indian offer is robust, balanced and fair and that the BTIA would be the most ambitious trade deal for both India and EU.

Shri Sharma explained the long term investment opportunities made available by National Manufacturing policy and the NIMZs being established as Greenfield, self governed Industrial townships having single window clearance and several incentives.

Shri Sharma, alongwith UK Minister Gregory Barker, addressed a gathering of 200 British and Indian CEOs in Belfast and explained the steps taken by the Indian government to further improve the investment attractiveness of the business environment. He and Lord Green UK minister for trade and investment also addressed a meeting of British businesses about the long term growth prospects of Indian economy and the bilateral business relations.



563. Official Spokesperson's response to a question on reports about UK Visa bond.

New Delhi, November 5, 2013.

In response to a question on reports about UK visa bond the Official Spokesman stated:

"We have seen the Press Release on the subject. I would like to say that soon after media's reports on the proposed visa bond scheme came to the Government's attention earlier this year, we responded promptly by raising the matter with the UK Government. Our views on the subject were conveyed to the UK Government at different levels, including by Hon'ble Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Anand Sharma in his meetings in June 2013 during his visit to London. These were once again discussed during the India-UK Comprehensive Dialogue on Visa Related Issues held in London in July 2013.

We are happy to learn that UK Government has taken on board our concerns as well as concerns expressed by other quarters.

UK and India have a strategic partnership. People-to-people contacts provide strength and durability to our long standing warm and friendly ties with the UK.”

On August 13, the Spokesperson of the MEA answered question in this regard:

Q: Sir, what is the update on the UK visa issue, the 3,000 pound fee that they were planning to impose? Are we taking any reciprocal steps?

Official Spokesperson: My understanding of this is that when we had the last consultations with the UK, this was in the last week of July in London, this matter was raised by our delegation although we had not received any communication from the UK about what you are saying. But that said, we also had seen news reports on this matter. So, we had raised this matter with the UK delegation and articulated our concerns, if this were true.

We were told at that stage that no final decision has been taken on this matter and this is something that they are working through their internal processes. At that stage we informed them that should they intend to proceed further on this, it would be useful to have bilateral contacts at senior levels. That is my understanding of the situation. We rechecked with them following news reports after that meeting, and were told that the situation remains as it was when they communicated to us last.



* It may be recalled that in June India was put on a list of “high risk” Asian and African countries whose citizens would be required to deposit Pound 3000 cash bond when applying for a UK visa. The money was required to be forfeited if a person overstayed his visa. The move was targeted only at people from non-white Commonwealth countries as part of the British Government’s resolve to drastically cut down on immigration levels. The British Home Office said these countries posed “the most significant risk of abuse” by their citizens. The Home Secretary Theresa May said the move was part of the government’s policy to make the immigration system “more selective.” This issue was also taken up by the Minister of Commerce and Industry Anand Sharma with the British Government during his visit there in June 2013. (See Document No 562)

INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-VIII

INDIA AND THE UN

564. Joint press statement on Meeting of India-U.S. Joint Working Group on UN Peacekeeping.

New Delhi, February 14, 2013.

The India-U.S. Joint Working Group on UN Peacekeeping, which was given greater impetus by the meeting between President Obama and Prime Minister Singh in November 2010, held its 10th meeting in Washington on February 13, 2013. The Indian delegation was led by Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary for United Nations Political Affairs Pavan Kapoor, and comprised officials from the Indian Ministries of External Affairs, Defence, and Home Affairs. The U.S. delegation was led by Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Esther Brimmer, and comprised officials from the U.S. Departments of State and Defense.

At the meeting, India and the United States advanced a number of goals laid out in the Declaration of Principles the Joint Working Group agreed upon in 2011. The Joint Working Group also continued in-depth consultations on UN peacekeeping issues, and explored an agreement on a set of Principles of India-U.S. Cooperation in the Area of Training UN Peacekeepers and institutional arrangements between their peacekeeping institutions. Both sides welcomed the open and comprehensive nature of the discussions, and agreed the talks helped advance their shared commitment to supporting and strengthening United Nations peacekeeping operations, and their mutual interest in assuring the success of UN peacekeeping missions. Both sides agreed that the 11th meeting of the Working Group will be held in New Delhi in 2014.



565. Statement by India at the Closing Plenary of the UN Conference on Arms Trade Treaty

New York, March 28, 2013.

Mr President,

The road to this final session of the Conference has been a long one and we thank you for having guided this process all through in a skilful manner and for ensuring some improvements in the final draft as compared to the draft of July 2012 which served as the basis of our negotiations. However, in the view of the Indian delegation the final draft falls short of our expectations and a number of other key stakeholders in producing a text that is clear, balanced and implementable and able to attract universal adherence.

At the commencement of this Conference India had made clear that the ATT should make a real impact on illicit trafficking in conventional arms and their illicit use especially by terrorists and other unauthorized and unlawful non-State actors. The provisions in the final draft on terrorism and non-state actors are weak and diffused and find no mention in the specific prohibitions of the Treaty.

India has stressed consistently that the ATT should ensure a balance of obligations between exporting and importing states. India cannot accept that the Treaty be used as an instrument in the hands of exporting states to take unilateral force majeure measures against importing states parties without consequences.

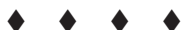
The relevant provisions in the final draft do not meet our requirements. There is a fundamental imbalance in the text which is flawed as the weight of obligations is tilted against importing States. As an importing state we will take measures to ensure that the treaty does not affect the stability and predictability of defense cooperation agreements and contracts entered into by India.

India has been an active participant in these negotiations. Underlying our participation in these extended negotiations was the principle that member states have a legitimate right to self-defence and our belief that there is no conflict between the pursuit of national security objectives and the aspiration that the Arms Trade Treaty be strong, balanced and

effective. This is consistent with the strong and effective national export controls that India already has in place with respect to export of defence items.

While India has negotiated in good faith and in an open and transparent manner with respect to its essential interests, the final draft has the tell tale marks of behind- the- scenes carve outs of exclusive interests of a select few countries, such as egregiously excluding non-state actors or arms transfers as gifts or loans, thus seriously diminishing the value of a multilateral Treaty negotiated in the UN. We have stressed that universal adherence to this Treaty would not be possible unless all stakeholders were on board and this includes major exporting as well as importing states.

The final draft text will be examined carefully and in detail. Our Government will undertake a thorough assessment of the ATT from our defence, security and foreign policy interests. Our participation in this session does not in any way prejudice our position on the substantive aspects of the Treaty and should not be construed as our endorsement. We would wish this to be reflected in the record of this meeting and the Conference.



566. Statement by Shri Ranjan Mathai, Foreign Secretary at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Geneva, June 18, 2013.

Mr. President, Secretary General of the Conference, Excellencies,

1. It is an honour to address the Conference on Disarmament. India has been a member of the CD since its inception. We value very much its role as the world community's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. The CD fulfils a unique function by bringing together all the militarily significant states. It is also a forum that brings together all states possessing nuclear weapons. If the CD did not exist there would be a need to invent one,

especially if we are to make progress on the path towards global nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons - a priority enshrined by universal consensus in the Final Document of the first Special Session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly, which in fact established this Conference.

2. The mandate of this Conference is to undertake negotiations on treaties of universal application. India supports the early commencement of substantive work in the CD. The Conference must proceed with the adoption of a Programme of Work. This body works on the principle of consensus and rightly so as matters that come up for negotiation fall in the domain of national security. But the same principle also affords member states the opportunity to protect their interests during negotiations. Therefore, it is unfortunate that this Conference has been prevented, on one unconvincing pretext or another, from commencing substantive work - in the immediate context on an FMCT or for that matter on issues that command strong support from members of this Conference, be it on Nuclear Disarmament, Negative Security Assurances or on Measures to Prevent the Weaponization of Outer Space. This Conference should be allowed to fulfil its mandate as a negotiation forum by commencing such negotiations on the basis of an early decision on its Programme of Work.
3. India has been consistent in its support for global, non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament. We associate ourselves with the statement on Nuclear Disarmament made by Zimbabwe on behalf of the G-21 last week. India's Working Paper tabled as CD 1816 in 2007 contains specific proposals, based on the key principles of the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan for achieving nuclear disarmament in a time bound manner. India is convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and

confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. Progressive steps are needed for the de-legitimization of nuclear weapons paving the way for their complete elimination. For over three decades, the UNGA has voted in favour of a resolution, sponsored by India, calling on this Conference to negotiate a Convention on the Prohibition of Use of Nuclear Weapons. As a nuclear weapon state, India has a doctrine of Credible Minimum Nuclear Deterrence underlined by a No-first Use posture. We have also supported a Global No-First Use Treaty.

4. Without prejudice to the priority India attaches to nuclear disarmament, we support the negotiation in the CD of a non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty banning the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that meets India's national security interests. India is a nuclear weapon state and a responsible member of the world community, and would approach these negotiations as such. There is an agreed mandate for the commencement of such negotiations. We do not favour reopening this mandate. India's support for FMCT negotiations is consistent with our interest in strengthening the global non-proliferation regime; an FMCT would add a measure of strategic predictability and would be a base line for future global nuclear disarmament efforts. Therefore blocking FMCT negotiations for an open ended nuclear build up would be a matter of concern not just for India but for the international community as a whole.
5. India is a major space faring nation with wide ranging interests in Outer Space. Our growing space interests are vital to our national security interests as well. We accord priority to the issue of Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, including the safety of assets in space. The international legal framework on space security needs to be strengthened to enhance the security of space assets for all space users and to ensure the long term sustainability of Outer Space. While universal and non-discriminatory transparency and confidence-building measures can play a useful complementary role, and indeed India is

participating in efforts led by, among others, the EU in this regard, they cannot substitute legally binding instruments in this field.

6. India supports international cooperative efforts that strengthen multilateral approaches and institutions in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. For its part India has actively contributed to strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda - at the UNGA, the UNDC, and the IAEA and at the OPCW. India has stepped up its engagement with the multilateral export control regimes with a view to membership of those regimes. We support efforts of the UNSC's 1540 Committee, in particular in addressing the challenges of clandestine proliferation. India hosted a 1540 workshop on building new synergies for nuclear security in Delhi in November last year. We contributed to the success of the Nuclear Security Summit, the CCW and BWC Review Conferences last year and the CWC Review Conference in April this year.
7. I am conscious that there is impatience with the current stasis in the CD. Questioning the relevance and authority of established multilateral disarmament frameworks is misplaced when in fact the current impasse is more due to the obstacles placed in its path rather than any inherent institutional deficiencies. It is incumbent on all of us to enable the Conference to fulfill its mandate for negotiating multilateral treaties that can be implemented universally. We are convinced that the CD has the membership, the credibility and the rules of procedure to discharge its mandate as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.
8. We were privileged to hold the Presidency of the Conference during the first session. In our view, the best way to revitalize this Conference is to allow the commencement of substantive negotiations. In this regard, we hope that our collective efforts will bear fruit in the near future. Mr. President, It has been an honour today to speak during the Presidency of Iran.

Thank you



567. Visit of Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), to India.

New Delhi, September 4, 2013.

The Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), Mr. Filippo Grandi visited India, 03-04 September 2013, to review the humanitarian assistance programme with top level officials in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) led by Mr. Navtej Sarna, Additional Secretary (International Organizations). The two sides exchanged views on a wide range of issues, including the recent developments in the West Asia region. Mr. Sarna presented a cheque for US \$ 1 million, as part of India's annual contribution to UNRWA, primarily for provision of food and medicines to the displaced people in the refugee camps under UNRWA's various programmes. Mr. Grandi expressed his sincere appreciation for India's consistent support to the Palestinian people.

India has traditionally provided strong political support to the Palestinian cause at the bilateral, regional and international level. Additionally, it has been contributing economic and technical assistance to the Palestinian people, both bilaterally and through UNRWA.

UNRWA provides services and assistance to more than five million Palestinian refugees in West Asia in the form of education, health care, relief, community support and emergency response in times of armed conflict.



568. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson and Additional Secretary (International Organizations) on the UN General Assembly Session, visit of the Foreign Minister of Latvia, External Affairs Minister's visit to Canada and Prime Minister's Special Envoy Ashwani Kumar's meetings in Tokyo in connection with the visit of Emperor of Japan.

New Delhi, Sept 18, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends. Before I begin, let me introduce some of my colleagues who have joined us today. On my right is Mr. Navtej Sarna who is Additional Secretary (International Organisations). On his right is Mr. T.S. Tirumurti who is Joint Secretary (United Nations) dealing with economic and social issues. On my left is Mr. Pavan Kapoor who is Joint Secretary (United Nations) dealing with political issues. The idea is that they will give you a sort of understanding of what the 68th session of the UN General Assembly will be.

But before that, I have a few announcements to make. I will take questions only on those announcements in the beginning. Subsequent to that there will be this briefing related to the United Nations General Assembly session. After that if any of you have questions, you are welcome to ask me on issues which are not covered either in my announcements or in their responses.

One final thing is that we will have a separate briefing on the Prime Minister's visit to the United States, and his activities in the US as well as the UNGA. That briefing will be on the 20th by the Foreign Secretary. So, I would suggest you to please keep your questions on those aspects for a later date. You can now focus on the issues that we are now touching upon.

Also, as all of you know, each one gets one chance. So, choose your questions carefully. There will not be a second round of questions because given the number of people who are here we would not be able to accommodate anybody more than once. With those preliminary remarks, let me make the announcements that I have.

The first announcement is, as those of you who are following our advisories are perhaps aware, the Foreign Minister of Latvia Mr. Edgars Rinkevics is in New Delhi. Actually this morning he signed a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement with India. The Indian signatory was the External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid.

With the signing of the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, India and Latvia now have the economic architecture in place for deepening and expanding their bilateral relations. We had previously signed a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement in 2011, and this fits in with that. We hope that the present bilateral trade, which is approximately 177 million, will increase following this agreement.

My next announcement relates to the visit of External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid to Canada. The External Affairs Minister will be travelling to Canada from the 21st to the 23rd of this month. The visit is primarily for the first round of the strategic dialogue between India and Canada.

If you could recollect, when Prime Minister Harper visited India last year, in perhaps November, there was an agreement that the External Affairs Ministers will meet annually for a strategic dialogue. And this is the first round of that strategic dialogue.

This will be held between the two Foreign Ministers - External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid and his Canadian counterpart Mr. John Baird – in Toronto on the 22nd. Subsequently, External Affairs Minister will also travel to Ottawa where he will meet other senior Ministers including the Minister for Economy, the Minister for Trade, Immigration and Natural Resources. From there the External Affairs Minister is scheduled to travel to the United Nations headquarters to join in during the United Nations General Assembly.

The last announcement that I have to make is that Dr. Ashwani Kumar, who is the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister to Japan, earlier today met the Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe in Tokyo. The Special Envoy is on a three-day visit to Tokyo as part of preparations for the visit of Their Majesties later this year to India. As you are aware, the Emperor and Empress of Japan are to visit India the end of November. The appointment of Mr. Kumar was to ensure that their visit is given adequate importance and focus; and he is working towards that end.

He also used the opportunity of his meeting with the Prime Minister to reiterate Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's invitation to Prime Minister Abe for the annual summit which is to be held in New Delhi. During the next two days, the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister will also meet the Foreign Minister and the Minister for Economy and Trade, who was recently in India, as you are aware. He is separately also interacting with captains of industry to promote greater economic engagement between India and Japan.

That brings me to the conclusion of my three announcements. If any of you have questions on these, I will take them now.

Q: With regard to the visit of Their Majesties' of Japan, has the itinerary been finalised yet? I see that we have Delhi and Chennai on the agenda so far. I just wanted to know if there is a visit being considered to Imphal perhaps with the relevance of the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Imphal falling next year and the great significance to the people of Japan ... (Inaudible)... maybe up to 50,000 soldiers falling fighting ... (Inaudible)... Had Mr. Kumar been speaking to his counterparts about that?

Official Spokesperson: I do not have a readout of what exactly he spoke. Because the meeting was about an hour ago, I do not have a readout of that. That said, many of your colleagues here are aware of the time that we take to announce the itinerary. And I think they are all very comfortable that we announce these specific schedules perhaps less than a week before the visit. So, we are quite some time ahead in those terms. Once we finalise those, we will certainly make it public.

Q: Do you anticipate that it will actually be considered? Given the gravity of the anniversary perhaps to both countries and the fact of different participations in the war, it will be a significant milestone for Their Majesties' visit surely.

Official Spokesperson: I am certain the Japanese side will take into account what you said and we too will take that into account. But my point is that at this stage this was the first meeting of the Special Envoy who is on a three-day visit. I do not have a readout of what exactly was covered. Should we have that, we will certainly share it with all of you.

Q: When is Mr. Shinzo Abe coming to India?

Official Spokesperson: I just mentioned that we have reiterated that invitation for an annual summit. I did not indicate that he has accepted and the dates have to be finalised. Once that is done, we will let you know. Right now the principle focus and the primary visit that we are focusing on is the first ever visit of the Emperor and Empress of Japan to India. And any visit from Japan at a senior level will only be after that. So, our primary focus is end November, early December for the visit of Emperor and Empress of Japan which we are looking forward to.

If there are no more questions on this, I will request my colleague Mr. Navtej Sarna to speak to you for a short while about the issues related to the United Nations General Assembly and then the floor will be open for questions on that. Navtej.

Additional Secretary (International Organisations) (Shri Navtej Sarna): Thanks Akbar, and good afternoon friends. Good to be here with all of you. Let me start by giving you the basic structure of the forthcoming 68th UN General Assembly Session.

The high-level segment is essentially what we are going to focus on because I think that is of primary news interest and also involves the involvement of Heads of Government, Heads of State, Foreign Ministers. The high-level segment of this year's Session is going to be from the 24th of September to the 1st of October. The General Debate carries on for three more days, to be exact from the 23rd to the 4th of October.

This year's session is going to be presided over, that is the President of the General Assembly for the next one UN-year so to speak, is going to be John Ashe, who is the former Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda. So, he will be presiding over the entire session.

Those of you who have been to these sessions and covered earlier sessions would know that the Heads of State, Heads of Government speak followed by Foreign Ministers. I will leave the details of PM's visit for Foreign Secretary's briefing. He will be speaking on the 28th. The External Affairs Minister is going to be in New York for the high-level segment. He is expected to reach there late on the 23rd evening, and will take part in the high-level meetings which are there going to be held as part of the UN Session, as well as several high-level meetings which various groupings and countries organise, utilising the presence of the dignitaries from different countries in one place in New York.

Just to give you an idea of these high-level meetings both within the UN and without the UN system but which will take place in that one week and which we hope to attend at different levels, those which we can at the level of External Affairs Minister certainly so, others at the level of Foreign Secretary, and yet others at the level of various other Ministers or delegates who would be travelling there.

I think it is important to underline that this year the high-level meetings also have a kind of connection between them which comes out of the theme of this General Assembly Session. The theme is going to be "The Post 2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage". So, these high-level meetings are really going to be first time in a way that the entire international community is going to be focusing on the development agenda post-2015 in a concentrated, cross-cutting way. Not to say that we have not been talking about this for the last couple of years in different places, but here it will all sort of come to a head and hopefully a path forward will be charted.

So, the high-level meetings begin on 23rd September. The first one is a high-level meeting on disability on development. It is going to be followed the next day, that is on the 24th of September, by the inaugural meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. This forum is the result of a direct decision taken in the Rio+20 Conference last year. And this is the first time that this forum is going to be meeting to see how to take this sustainable development agenda forward in keeping with the decisions that were taken at Rio+20 and thereby also imply that in keeping with the principles which are enshrined in Rio+20. This is a very very important aspect, particularly from the point of developing countries, from the point of India, that in the development process we stick to the Rio+20 political consensus and not try to chip away at it and not try to create new consensus and change the goalposts as we go along.

The third high-level meeting is going to be the special event on Millennium Development Goals. This takes place on the 25th of September. As you know, the Millennium Development Goals are supposed to come to an end 2015. Clearly much remains to be done on the MDGs. In some we have moved, not only as a country but as the world. There are many others in which we have not moved as fast as we wanted to. These are

of critical importance to us, critical importance to developing countries. And we need to understand what is going to happen to them in 2015. Do we just drop them and move on or do we find a mechanism in which we are absorbed into the agenda that is worked out later? There is going to be a high-level dialogue on migration and development. Migration is another very important issue and this is going to take place on the 3rd and 4th of October. Besides that there is going to be a high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament. This is not development-related but it is a very important issue, again a very important issue for India. This will take place on the 26th of September.

There are other grouping meetings which are important. There is going to be a G77 Ministerial meeting, group of developing countries. There is going to be a NAM Ministerial meeting which again is traditionally extremely important for us. And there are going to be other smaller group meetings. There is a meeting of the BRICS Foreign Ministers. There is a meeting of the IBSA Foreign Ministers. And there is a meeting of the G4 Foreign Ministers. G4, as you know, is the group consisting of India, Japan, Germany and Brazil formed for the purpose of UN Security Council reforms.

So, these will take place all in a concentrated space of three or four days, and we will try to present India's positions at each of these meetings at the highest level possible.

The External Affairs Minister would also be having a series of bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the UNGA. This is always a very very difficult process of scheduling because we have to match schedules of various Foreign Ministers coming in and out of New York, and there are other commitments. But I think we are fairly confident that he would be having a series of very substantive meetings with Foreign Ministers. Some of those I have on my list –Foreign Minister of China, Foreign Minister of Egypt, Foreign Minister of Libya, Foreign Minister of Palestine, a meeting with the German Foreign Minister, and possibly also with the Foreign Minister of the UAE. As I said, these are always subject to last minute scheduling problems. More may happen. So, we are tying these up and I thought I should give you a heads-up that these are in a fairly advanced stage of planning, what we are looking forward to.

Besides that, of course the External Affairs Minister would be having other bilateral events in terms of bilateral US events, which we can talk about maybe later when you have the other bilateral briefing.

In any case, the 68th General Assembly Session is going to broadly follow up a number of important issues which were touched upon or we have been working upon in the previous one. Briefly to recap the 67th, it was a very important year for us, very important General Assembly Session for us not only because the General Assembly but because at least for part of the year we were still on the UN Security Council. And during our last few months, which fall into the 67th GA calendar, we did take up some very important issues which would be good to keep in mind.

We took up for instance during our Presidency in November, 2012, the whole issue of piracy which has been a very big issue for India and several other countries. And we brought it to the fore and not something which just happens off the Coast of Somalia. But we are sure that it has a number of related issues, humanitarian aspects, and political aspects. And this became the theme of a debate during our UN Security Council Presidency. We even managed to get a Presidential Statement out which set into focus several important concepts which deal with this modern-day challenge.

Also, as Chairman of the Counterterrorism Committee we brought focus on another aspect which is crucial for India's security and that is the global financing of terrorism. We did it by holding an unprecedented number of meetings of the Committees which deal with the financing aspects to bring greater and greater focus on these issues because, as you know, one of the most important things in counterterrorism is cooperation at a global scale, information sharing, and cooperation among the law enforcement and other agencies.

We also focused on UN Security Council reforms in a big way. We managed to ginger up the process, so to speak, by working with the L69, which is a group of developing countries interested in Security Council reforms, and coming up with a common text between the L69 and the C10, which is the negotiating group for the African group. And this common text showed that there was possibility of coming together

of two groups which people thought were locked into different positions. And India played a critical role in that.

We kept up the G4 process. There was a G4 meeting last year at the Ministerial level. Then there was a G4 follow-up at the Director-Generals' level in Brazil in April this year, which I attended, which gave a greater impetus to what the G4 could be looking forward to do; and we hope to do that in this Ministerial meeting again.

We kept on pushing the Chairman of the Negotiating Group, Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan to move towards a negotiating text, with limited success not because of his own desire not to do so but we were faced with a set of circumstances and political realities emanating in the previous Presidency which made it a bit difficult for him to move. But we are satisfied reasonably with the fact that the reform process we kept on the front burner, and we would continue to do so in the session to come.

We also focused on our development priorities in helping set up the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. As you know, Rio+20 also mandated the international community to produce a set of Sustainable Development Goals. What these goals are going to be, how are they going to be negotiated, how are they going to be implemented, is all still an open question. But where it is being done is an Open Working Group. So, we pushed proactively with a set of developing countries to have this group set up, and most importantly to make sure that this Group takes decisions only by consensus. Four meetings of this group have now been held, and we have another four meetings coming up, and another five I think in the next year which will be working on these goals. This is just by way of a report card on some of the important issues that we were now finishing with this session.

The coming session, because of the high-level impetus given to development, I think is going to be very importantly focused on this 2015 Development Agenda. I have seen some material every year in the Indian press on this. I think it is something which is going to define our development paradigm in a globalised world. We cannot be following different paradigms from the rest of the world. We do get impacted. I think it is very important to focus on this and try to understand what is happening on this.

Let me very briefly tell you the process that has happened so far on this. One, I have already mentioned there is this Rio+20 process, which said make Sustainable Development Goals, have a high-level political forum. That is one aspect.

The second aspect is actually the high-level panel which was set up by the UN Secretary-General which consisted of the President of Indonesia, the Prime Minister of UK, and I think the President of Liberia. The high-level panel report was produced. Frankly speaking, we were a bit concerned that this high-level panel report should not miss out concerns of developing countries and should not miss out on our concerns. So, we very actively engaged through the year with our interlocutors on these issues, and kept underlining our concerns. To a large extent, I would say, these concerns were met. Not in whole, certainly. But we see openings there in that report in which we can now push our agenda. And this is only because of a very constant and a very persistent engagement that we kept up with our interlocutors on this.

The third activity that has been happening on this is a UNDP-sponsored process in which they have undertaken consultations I think in about 50 countries with different groups – students, labour unions, the industrial lobbies – to see what is important for that country and that is feeding into the Secretary-General's ...

All these three rivers so to speak have to come together somewhere. And where do they come together? What India wants? We want that they should come together in an intergovernmental negotiating process in which there is a level-playing ground, in which developing and developed countries can sit down together and have a genuine negotiation.

It has to be different from the MDGs. MDGs sort of came from the sky. There is a modern day Ten Commandments - you will do this, you will do this, you will do this, you will do this. That is fine because most of the MDGs were good. The one that was really good was that the developed countries would help finance these things, and that is the one that has not been met.

But this time we want that everything that we agree to is actually negotiated. So, we are hoping that with these high-level summits, these

high-level events, these various streams will come together; an intergovernmental process will be announced, and will be actually set up, start work next year, by which time we would have done some amount of preparatory work on the Sustainable Development Goals, we will have some idea what to do with the remaining aspects of the MDGs and then we would take it forward.

Which direction do we want to take it forward? We want to keep the focus on poverty eradication - poverty eradication without qualifications. We hear things like, okay we will eradicate extreme poverty, or we will eradicate poverty as long as it does not impact on environment, or we will eradicate poverty in a sustainable fashion. Now, these are all very loaded terms. In a country like India and several other countries where poverty is an everyday reality, you want poverty eradication, period. You do not want it with qualifiers. We want it with if we know it can be done with economic growth. So, poverty eradication and economic growth, these are the crucial things and means of implementation.

And it is very important that your development agenda is not only for developing countries. Your development agenda should cover all countries. Your development agenda for instance should cover consumption patterns in developed countries because consumption patterns in developed countries impact upon our environment, impact upon various other things. Your development agenda should also cover reform of the world's governing institutions, financial and political as far as we are concerned.

So, there are a huge number of priorities we have in this. Today is not the day but as we go along if any of you want to seriously pursue these aspects, we would be very happy to provide you with material or with briefings.

This is going to be a major focus for us during this. Hopefully, as the months of next year go on and we actually move through an intergovernmental process, things will begin to come together. That is one of the things which I wanted to explain at length.

I will touch upon some of the other aspects which will continue to be our focus whether in our statements, in our bilateral meetings, in our support of resolutions. UN Security Council reform is going to be really on the

table again. We are going to work with the next President GA, Ambassador John Ashe, who we expect would have a more constructive role than the previous President. And we hope that the intergovernmental process which has already done nine rounds will now actually make that quality jump. He has got a sort of text in which he has put various people's positions. But what he does not have is an actual text which can be negotiated, what is called in the UN lingo a Concise Working Document (CWD). So, what we need is a CWD on the table.

We will continue to lobby with the African Group because without the 53-member African Group coming on board, you are not going to get those votes in the General Assembly for reform. And we really need to take the message of the C10 and L69 common text to the African Group back into the capitals so that they get the political support of moving towards reform.

We are going to work with CARICOM, the Caribbean countries. They have come up with a very encouraging move a few months ago in which they have said yes we must have reform. They are willing to work with the African Group, they are willing to work with L69, and they are willing to move this to negotiations.

We are going to continue to work with G4. Here I think there is a lesson to be learnt from what happened in Brazil, which we would like to take forward in India frankly, because Brazil said that this is not something which should be left to New York, or should be left to the negotiating rooms. This needs outreach. This needs people to need writing about it, people need talking about it. So, after the G4 meeting they had a seminar of about a 100 people of largely media, academics and so on. And I was amazed that it resulted in about 60, 70 articles coming out. I was also amazed at how little the public out there knew about what was going on. So, we would like to take a lesson of that. We will be working with one of our think tanks and we are going to be probably setting up something on a smaller scale. I think that is something on which we would like all of you to be involved and to be part of

The other issues which are going to be pushed, besides UN Security Council reform, are issues of ...(Inaudible)... concern to us are: peacekeeping for instance in which India continues to be a major player,

as you all know. The nature of peacekeeping is changing. The nature of decision making regarding peacekeeping is causing us concern in many ways. The nature of conflicts is changing. The classical role of peacekeeping is being eroded. And the peacekeepers are being asked to do more and more under difficult conditions. We have a concern as a major troop-contributing country. We have been pushing these concerns. We will continue to highlight these in various fora.

Terrorism is going to be ongoing subject which we will be following up. And of course there is going to be focus on the disarmament aspects where we have traditional resolutions to offer. There is going to be focus, although the main focus is in Geneva but when it comes back to New York, on human rights aspects. And you already know that we have an election coming up which is going to be the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the UN Board of Auditors in November this year.

I am just going to stop there because I can see that I put some of you to sleep. So, I will stop there and maybe the questions will help revive the audience.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you Navtej. And all of you: arise, awake and stop not! Now the floor is yours.

Q: *Sir, There will be both Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister in the General Assembly. Is there a possibility of their meeting?*

Official Spokesperson: *We already told you in that on the 20th September the Foreign Secretary will herself brief you and tell you about the Prime Minister's engagements. My point is very clear. We will answer about Prime Minister's engagements on the 20th. So, please be patient and give us the space and time to respond to this, and we will respond to this.*

Q: What will be the thrust of Prime Minister's address to UNGA?

Additional Secretary (IO): This is going to be difficult one to answer at this stage because work is constantly going on on the Prime Minister's Address.

Q: Talking of the UN Security Council reforms, when you say we are going to continue lobbying with the African Group, would there be some

outreach or bilateral meetings in New York itself since so many African Ministers and others are going to be there?

Additional Secretary (IO): The way it works is that we have had a special delegation go down to the African Union Summit earlier this year where this was a major piece of conversation and major lobbying with each of the African Heads of Delegation. That is the right place to lobby. What happens in New York is almost a very technical-level negotiation which constantly goes on between the Missions and between negotiating groups, say the L69, and this is at Ambassador level. But I get your point. It is something which we will utilize every possible opportunity even in New York when our people are there. That is because what is being seen in New York in General Assembly statements at the Head of State, Head of Government, Foreign Minister level, is that the large majority of speakers who is in favour of UN reforms. We have to note those, we have to take those, and then we have to get down to the technical level and say this is what you are pushing, your President, your Prime Minister, and this is where we need to now get our heads together. So it is a constant process, Manish.

Q: On the counterterrorism issues, there are many organizations or persons being directly named from the UN Security Council and the member states are not taking appropriate action as they are supposed to take. Is it a matter of concern? How would you focus on this in United Nations General Assembly or which forum will you raise this concern?

Additional Secretary (IO): We have been raising this when we were in the UN Security Council as Chairman of the Counterterrorism Committee. And this is something which we talk about every time we talk about terrorism that there are red lines, there are UN sanctions, and these must be respected, and these should not be allowed to be watered down from what have been accepted at an international level. We do not believe in minor distinctions on this in which people can be allowed to cross these lines depending upon political exigencies. I think this is something that we are constantly talking about. You are right, we will be talking about it in the Committees when it comes to discussing terrorism, and we will be talking about it in our general statements and our bilateral dialogues.

Q: This is regarding the same point you have raised about the global financing of terror. I think my country Syria has been inflicted by terrorists at the moment and more than 2000 dollars are being paid for each Al-Nusra recruit. So, there is a good amount of money spent. How do you think it is relevant in these talks at the UN when they interpret the law according to their own ...?

Additional Secretary (IO): I mentioned it more in a thematic context, not pertaining to one particular arena of activity. It is very important thematically to accept these concepts and to decide to work together because this is not an on-off thing that today one part of the world is in trouble so we get activated, next we keep quiet for the next five years and so on. We have to have an international comprehensive effort, which is why India has been proposing for several years a Convention on Counterterrorism at the UN. And we are trying to push it, get it off the ground, and get it negotiated, and we are faced with all sorts of technicalities which are slowing it down. So, certainly we are going to be discussing the financing aspects, the cooperation aspects in all the terrorism bodies. We are no longer on the Security Council at the moment but there will be several occasions where we can. As far as Syria is concerned, I think that is a subject of another debate; and when and how the UN comes into it is going to be something which we are going to have to see.

Q: Sir, you are saying that we want to eradicate poverty without any qualifiers. Could you please elaborate how you would sell this 'no qualifiers, no sustainability, no environment concerns' at UNGA? You know our development record so far on MDGs is very very poor even if you compare it to South Asia. So, what is going to be our explanation?

Additional Secretary (IO): I do not think that our MDG record is that poor in two or three of those very critical MDGs. Some, yes we need much more to do. What I meant when I said we want to eradicate poverty without qualifications, it does not mean that we want to do it like that on our own. But certainly we do not want the goal of poverty eradication in international dialogue to be dimmed by putting on qualifiers. People say that people are poor here because you do not take care of environment. No. I think it was said by one of our former Prime Ministers that poverty is the biggest polluter. So, it is actually the other way around. That is

what I meant. Certainly we are committed to Rio, we are committed to sustainable development but we are committed to a balanced approach. The economic, the social, and the environmental pillars of sustainable development should move together. You cannot leave out one at the cost of the other. That is what I meant.

Q: This question is related to the previous one. You said a high-level panel is preparing a report and you have to see that India's major concerns are not missed out. What are these concerns which you see missing out?

Additional Secretary (IO): The high level panel has already given its report to the UN Secretary-General. Based on that, the UN Secretary-General has now given his report. So, our purpose in our conversations has been, and this is our position also, that the high-level panel report is a report which should be a good input. It should not be the end result because we have not had a chance to negotiate it. It is an input which will go into the negotiations. Concerns there were - I will give it to in a simple one-sentence form - we do not want the development agenda to be converted into a governance agenda.

The development agenda must remain a development agenda; it must retain its focus on poverty eradication and economic growth; and it should be for everybody; and it should have in itself means of sustaining the implementation. Basically like in Rio you had the two things of you need technology assistance and you need financing. How are you going to save the environment? So, you need technology sharing, you need financing, you need means of implementation. So, you cannot have governance which is global and financing which is domestic. We have to balance these. I must say that our conversations with the various interlocutors helped to introduce certain sense of balance, a little more balance in the recent report that we have seen from the UN Secretary-General. But now we would like to get it to the negotiating table and then make sure that. Not only India, there is a large majority of countries that are developing countries and they have their concerns also.**Question:** You spoke about a lack of implementation. Any bright ideas from our side whether it is CBDR or ...?

Additional Secretary (IO): You took the words out of my mouth. CBDR is a very important Rio+20 or in fact a Rio principle. This Common But

Differentiated Responsibilities in itself builds in the two aspects that I have mentioned about technology cooperation and sharing as well as financing. So, it is very important to keep the debate on Sustainable Development Goals as well as on the broader post-2015 development agenda on the Rio+20 principles, which means essentially CBDR, but not only.

Official Spokesperson: If we have no more questions on UNGA, let us move on to other aspects.

Q: Sir, His Highness Aga Khan is here in Delhi and he is meeting many dignitaries. Can you just throw some light on the purpose and outcome of the visit?

Official Spokesperson: Dr. Suman, the visit is ongoing. So, you would appreciate that I cannot indicate about the outcome. The Aga Khan Foundation has been actively supporting a lot of activities in Delhi and outside Delhi related to restoration for example, related to poverty alleviation. The Aga Khan Foundation is an important partner, with whom we do interact on a regular basis to promote socioeconomic development. In that context he is visiting India. We will of course let you know the outcome once all his meetings are over. I hope that clarifies the situation. Right now, even as we speak, he is inaugurating part of the restoration work of the Humayun's Tomb.

Q: My question is related to the ongoing war crimes trial in Bangladesh in which several Jamaat-e-Islami leaders have been convicted - some got life term, some death sentences. However, several countries and international human rights organisations have criticised the process citing its various shortcomings and drawbacks. I just wanted to know what India's take on the issue is. Do you think it is Bangladesh's internal matter or do you have a certain opinion on that?

Official Spokesperson: I think even that statement that you said is an opinion. That said, I think we have said it previously that while this is an internal matter for Bangladesh and for the Bangladeshi people to decide on, we do understand that given the horrific crimes that were committed by those who are now being tried, we do understand and take into account the aspirations of the Bangladeshi people to try and bring a closure to

this by ensuring that justice is provided. As regards what the procedural issues are, this is for the Bangladeshi people to decide and come to a decision on.

Q: Akbar, this is on Bangladesh, the question which was just asked. This relates to a more specific event. As you know, one of the convicts who was convicted in the 1971 war crimes case was given a lifer and he appealed to the Supreme Court of Bangladesh and the Supreme Court enhanced that punishment to capital punishment. As you know, these are the kind of cases which triggered the Shahbag Square demonstrations and the unrest there in the civil society. The question is, on this particular specific case do you have a reaction, does India have a take on this particular specific thing, and how does it impinge on the forthcoming elections there.

Official Spokesperson: Good try!

I think I have already responded to our generic view on the issue and on how we see it. On the specifics I responded to him by saying that we will not get into the process of this nor will we get into each and every specific case. But we have confidence in the justice system in Bangladesh and that it will deliver justice to the people of Bangladesh.

Q: Al Qaeda has given direction to its cadres not to attack Hindus and Muslims in Muslim-dominated countries. How do you see this development?

Official Spokesperson: You know our view on Al Qaeda that it is a terrorist organisation, that we are against terrorism, that we would like to see it extinguished. What it says is not a matter for us to respond to because as far as we are concerned it is evil personified.

Q: On the sidelines of UNGA, will India raise this issue with Italy of noncooperation in the Italian marines' case? Or, will you raise this matter in any form there?

Official Spokesperson: I do not think why we should raise it separately. We are in contact with the Italian Government. In fact, just today, for your information, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, who is the Special Envoy of the Italian Government, met with the External Affairs Minister. We have explained to him that this is a case which relates to legal process. We as

diplomats can try and facilitate an interaction between a legal viewpoint which the Italian Government has and another legal viewpoint which our Government has. But this is ultimately a legal issue. We have suggested that we will facilitate interactions on this matter, and Mr. De Mistura, it is my understanding, has agreed to stay back, and the process is on. So, why do we need to interact somewhere else on this? We are interacting with them on a regular basis.

Q: When the matter is sub judice, how do you consider it an interactive process? How do you further engage with the Italians on this when the matter is being considered by our courts?

Official Spokesperson: That is right, the matter is sub judice. But I do not think anybody is questioning that the judiciary has to decide on this. Ultimately what they are discussing is what process to adopt. And in that there can be different opinions between different viewpoints on this. I started by saying that this is a legal process. All we as diplomats can do is to try and facilitate direct interaction or understanding of each other's legal views. If things are required, it will go to a legal process and be clarified. But if things can be worked out between the two parties who are lawyers on both the sides, perhaps we can take it forward. So, the issue is not that anybody is intervening in the legal process. The issue is only to perhaps translate what is in the legal view of a group of lawyers to another group of lawyers. That is where we are in this.

Q: On the four marines who are in Italy, India has been insisting that they be sent back to further the investigations. Staffan de Mistura today very clearly said that Italy is not going to send them back. Anything on that front? The Indian Administration and the Government has been insisting that they be sent back, but the Italian Government is only talking about the three options that they have given to India and are really not moving on at least looking at sending the four marines back.

Official Spokesperson: Geeta, as they say, half knowledge is always dangerous. You are talking of three options; there are other options also that are being considered. You will understand that this is an iterative process. I cannot get into outlining what options are there on the table, but there are several options including the three you said and others too.

Q: Recently the Foreign Secretary visited Nepal. If there is election in Nepal in November will India give actual support to the election?

Official Spokesperson: Our support to the election process in Nepal is largely logistical in nature, and we have already begun that process. That process entails provision of, for example, vehicles for the Election Commission. We provided vehicles for the Election Commission. We also are committed to a larger number of vehicles also for the security services. That is because an essential ingredient of an election process is to ensure safe and peaceful environment for the voters and in that context the Nepalese Government had requested us to provide vehicles, which we are in the process of providing additional vehicles. We have provided one set of vehicles and the rest are in the process and we hope to provide them by October.

Q: On Sushmita Banerjee case, anything on the probe that is going on? The Deputy Foreign Minister was here yesterday and he spoke to the Foreign Secretary.

Official Spokesperson: On the sad case of Dr. Sushmita Banerjee, things have evolved in the probe since we last met. While it was initially for us very distressing that an Indian woman was killed brutally, we now find that it is taking a disturbing turn. And that is that the Governor of Paktia Province has indicated to our Ambassador that those who are involved in this, based on arrests made since we last met here, seem to be what he described as Pakistani Taliban, and the indication was that they were based from areas beyond Afghanistan borders. This is extremely disturbing for us. But we have left the investigation part in the hands of the investigating authorities in whom we have full confidence. And this is what they have shared with us so far. We understand that six to seven people have been arrested. What is coming out from them is what has been shared with others too, and they have shared it with us. We will follow this case with laser-like precision because this is something extremely disturbing. **Question:** Can you clarify India's position on participation in Commonwealth's Heads of Government meeting slated sometime at Colombo?

Official Spokesperson: Our view has been that we will take a call on this in due course. And this has also been reflected elsewhere including

by the organisers. We will take a call well in time and we will also inform you on this.

Q: Any readout on ...(Inaudible)...

Official Spokesperson: This is a Ministry of Defence issue and this is your second question.

Q: What is your reaction on firing in Poonch by Pakistani side in Mendhar.

Official Spokesperson: I have always said that what happens on the border is for the sentinels of the border to respond to and they will respond. You have heard me say this several times. Nice try again!

Q: This is relating to Iran's rupee-trade agreement with India on crude oil exports. Has Iran expressed any apprehension on payment by Indian side in rupee terms? I believe there was some kind of agreement that for some imports of crude India will be able to pay 100 per cent in rupees, but they no longer want to go ahead with that.

Official Spokesperson: This is your take on it I understand.

Q: This was a report in newspapers.

Official Spokesperson: My point is that I do not know whether the Iranian Government ever told this that they were willing to take 100 per cent. My understanding is that there is a percentage agreed to between Iran and India in terms of how we will pay for crude. And that is, 45 per cent and 55 per cent. The rest is your take on it.

Thank you very much.



569. Media Briefing by Foreign Secretary on Prime Minister's Visit to USA and UNGA.

New Delhi, September 20, 2013.

Official Spokesperson (Shri Syed Akbaruddin): Good afternoon friends and thank you very much for being here this afternoon. As you are aware, this would be an interaction relating to the Prime Minister's visit to the United States.

We have here with us Foreign Secretary Mrs. Sujatha Singh, who will be speaking to you initially. She will make an opening statement following which she will be willing to answer any questions. These questions, as is usual, we will focus on the visit. At the end of it if there is still time, she is willing to take a few questions on other issues. But the primary focus, as usual, will be on the briefing and that is on the Prime Minister's visit to the US.

On Foreign Secretary's right is Mr. Vikram Doraiswami who is Joint Secretary (Americas), and he will assist her in case there are any detailed queries that you would like to ask.

With those introductory words I would request Foreign Secretary to make her opening remarks.

Foreign Secretary (Shrimati Sujatha Singh): Good afternoon.

As you are all aware, the Prime Minister is visiting the United States from Thursday, September 26 to Monday, September 30.

The Prime Minister will meet President Obama on September 27 at the White House in Washington DC. The meeting will be followed by a press availability and a working lunch. PM will be accompanied by the External Affairs Minister, who will join his delegation in Washington DC.

On September 27 evening, PM will reach New York. He will address the General Debate in the forenoon of September 28. PM and EAM will use the opportunity afforded by the UNGA Session to have bilateral meetings with some of their counterparts. I understand that you have been briefed by Additional Secretary Navtej Sarna about the programmes involving PM and EAM in the United Nations in New York. Therefore, I will focus my remarks on the bilateral visit to the United States.

This will be PM's third summit meeting with President Obama, following an exchange of state visits first in Washington DC in 2009, second in New Delhi in 2010. The two leaders have also met frequently on the margins of other multilateral events.

PM's visit caps a period of heightened exchanges at a high political level. It takes forward a recent momentum in bilateral exchanges of visits, including the visit of Secretary Kerry and Energy Secretary Moniz for the 4th Strategic Dialogue in June, and Vice President Biden's visit in July, as well as visits by a number of our senior Ministers including our Finance Minister, Commerce Minister, Home Minister and the Human Resources Minister, as well as Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, in the last six months. At the senior official and other levels, there have been over 55 exchanges of visits in the year so far.

This working visit between PM and President Obama is intended to signal that the relationship has reached a stage of maturity. There has been positive progress recorded in a wide array of areas, through existing mechanisms that cover over 33 separate dialogue structures.

We expect that the summit-level meeting will reaffirm political commitment to the ongoing effort on both sides to intensify our strategic partnership. It is an opportunity to underline at a high political level, the strategic vision that brings our countries closer together.

We anticipate that the meeting will focus in particular on reviewing our bilateral cooperation, touching upon the following key pillars:

1. Energy: This includes clean energy, our expanding partnership in hydrocarbons, as well as our effort to develop our partnership in peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Both sides will also review progress in implementation of the civil nuclear initiative that is a pillar of our strategic partnership.

2. Security: Continuing to deepen our defence relationship, which already includes joint military exercises, and acquisition of military hardware. We will explore ways of expanding our defence ties beyond a buyer-seller relationship to a joint partnership in design, development and production of defence material. We are also interested in intensifying cooperation between our Home Ministry and the US Department of Homeland Security to enhance capacity building including in policing of

large cities, partnerships in security technologies, combating counterfeit currency, and in securing ports, airports and land border terminals.

3.Trade and Economic relations: This is a key pillar of the relationship, with a combined total of US\$ 100 billion in goods and services trade. Both sides are working at a senior official level to address issues of concern on each side, in areas ranging from manufacturing, trade, investment, innovation as well as with regard to issues relating to non-immigrant visas for our highly skilled IT and ITES workers.

4.Strategic consultations: We now have wide-ranging consultations with the US on regional and global issues. This includes consultations on East Asia, Central Asia, and West Asia, as well as trilateral dialogues with Afghanistan and Japan. We look to consolidate and build upon such dialogues, including on the Indian Ocean region.

Apart from this, the President and the Prime Minister will also discuss regional and global issues, including the situation in West Asia, South Asia and also our expanding cooperation with the regional institutions in Southeast Asia.

In closing, let me add that a visit such as this is focused not merely on deliverables but also on establishing and reaffirming the strategic benefits that each side derives from this relationship.

I will be happy to take your questions now.

Q: Madam, are we going ahead with the nuclear pact between Westinghouse and NPCIL? If that pact goes through, how will it square with India's civil nuclear liability legislation?

Foreign Secretary: Discussions are ongoing between NPCIL and WEC, and it is our hope that these discussions will be closed successfully. The fact of the matter is that all contracts with foreign companies are subject to the Indian Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act and Rules. The contracts have to be consistent with Indian law and there is no question of Indian law being violated or diluted. As a government company, NPCIL will follow government stipulations that all contracts it concludes with foreign partners will be consistent with Indian law.

Q: Madam, this is almost the last year of Prime Minister's ten-year tenure and he is going to meet President Obama. There are three issues that

he has been consistently pursuing - nuclear cooperation, FDI in retail, and climate change - he has been telling him many times. Do you think that there will be any conclusive talk between President Obama and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in this visit?

Foreign Secretary: I think what we must realise is that all this is something that progresses with each meeting that takes place, with each summit that takes place, and all the meetings at official levels also that discuss these issues. You have raised three specific issues: each of them has been progressed in various ways at various points of time.

On the civil nuclear initiative, the Government is committed to taking it forward. We feel that it is essential to expanding India's energy options and to contribute to our energy security. Nuclear power is an essential element of our overall energy basket, and we are determined to take forward the civil nuclear initiative so that our country is able to benefit from the expansion of nuclear power.

On the issue of climate change, we intend to enhance our dialogue with the US on issues relating to climate change. I can tell you that the Working Group that the EAM and Secretary Kerry agreed to establish in June this year will seek to find ways of working together in a practical manner to meet a shared, overall objective of reducing the impact of climate on human activity while securing space for our developmental and economic objectives.

On FDI in retail, it is part of the ongoing liberalisation of the Indian economy and that is an ongoing task. That is an ongoing objective, and these things take time, as we all know.

Q: Madam, the American nuclear companies have raised certain queries. They have expressed doubts about Indian nuclear liability law. ...*(Inaudible)*... those companies agreeing to India law, India has decided to go ahead with initial works agreement. Do you think the American companies will ultimately agree to Indian law?

Foreign Secretary: I think I have already answered this question to some extent. Any company, whether it is a foreign company or whether it is a domestic company, has to follow procedures that are consistent with Indian law. All contracts have to be consistent with Indian law. There is no question of Indian law being violated or diluted. That is the bottom line.

Q: My question is about the nuclear issue but not about the liability law. It is very symbolic that Dr. Manmohan Singh will go in September to Washington and in October to Moscow. They will discuss nuclear cooperation between our countries. What is the difference between the approach of the Indian side in the activation of nuclear cooperation with old partner Russia and new partner USA? It is not about liability law but in general.

Foreign Secretary: I think you have to see that with whichever country we have cooperation in civil nuclear issues, we are basically trying to achieve the same objective. We are trying to build nuclear power plants that will contribute to our energy security, and doing it in a manner that enhances our energy security.

Q: Madam, I just want to understand, you said both leaders will discuss the concerns concerning the non-immigrant visa for highly skilled manpower. What are some of the concerns, if you can throw some light on that?

Foreign Secretary: I think the concerns are fairly well known that Indian IT companies have a certain business model and that the procedures that are presently being discussed in Congress would make it very difficult for this business model to be continued successfully. So, what we are trying to do basically is to flag our concerns in the manner in which this is going to impact on our highly-skilled non-immigrant workers. We are trying to flag the fact that some aspects of the proposed immigration reform would adversely impact visas for highly-skilled non-immigrant workers.

Q: A meeting is expected between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Mr. Nawaz Sharif ...

Official Spokesperson: We are talking of the US now. There are others who have questions.

Q: It is in that context. The US had announced a Rewards for Justice Programme on Hafiz Saeed. But there has really been no action on Hafiz Saeed who definitely seems to be one of the biggest bone of contention between India and Pakistan talks and relations. So, is that an issue that India will be flagging with the US again in some way?

Foreign Secretary: You are talking about a US programme for Hafiz Saeed. I do not see why I need to get into that at all. We have concerns relating to terrorism. We have concerns relating to terrorism which have been very explicitly stated by the Prime Minister, and we flag this to our strategic partners to tell them what our concerns are.

Q: Madam, could you elaborate on the regional security component of the discussions, particularly Afghanistan? What the key elements of those discussions will be and whether Indian ...*(Inaudible)*...NATO troops be discussed?

Foreign Secretary: You are right. 2014 is a very significant year as far as Afghanistan is concerned. When you are looking at the regional security situation, you are looking at a complexity of factors and different scenarios that might unfold. We continue to seek clarity on the upcoming security and political transitions with the partners with whom we are in contact in the run up to 2014 which will see the drawdown of US and other ISAF troops.

Q: Madam, when Mr. Obama came to India he told the Indian Parliament that he would love to see India as a permanent member of the Security Council. Efforts have been going on for more than twenty years now but things are not moving forward. Is the expansion of the Security Council likely to figure in the Prime Minister's talks with Mr. Obama and other people he is going to meet?

Foreign Secretary: The expansion of the UN Security Council, the permanent membership, continues to remain an important priority for India. The Prime Minister would be taking up this issue with key interlocutors, including at the UN General Assembly.

Q: Madam, I want to bring you back to the regional and global issues. You said there will be a discussion on Afghanistan in particular. There are certain issues where India has raised the concern of talking to the Taliban and their opening office in Doha, while also you have stressed on a proactive role for original players. How do you see the mechanism working with India, Iran and neighbouring country of Afghanistan, post 2014?

Foreign Secretary: The situation in Afghanistan is a fairly complex one. We believe in a process of dialogue in Afghanistan which is Afghan led,

Afghan owned, and Afghan controlled. This has been our bottom line. In its process of transition - whether it is the political transition, whether it is the security transition or whether it is economic transition – we believe that the Afghan Government needs to be supported in its efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation. Whoever the players are, as long as they are willing to work within the parameters of the Afghan Constitution, need to be supported. India is doing its part in the reconstruction and economic development of Afghanistan. You are aware that we have a fairly sizeable aid programme that has managed to win hearts and goodwill in Afghanistan, in all people in Afghanistan, and we intend to continue with that and give whatever support that is within our capacity to give.

Q: Madam, the Prime Minister will be meeting President Obama ...*(Inaudible)*... They have a huge subsidy under the US Farm Bill. Will the Prime Minister take up this issue with Obama? Indian farmers are suffering on account of the huge subsidy given in US.

Foreign Secretary: I think that there are specific forums to take these issues forward. At this point of time it is not possible to go into great detail as to what the Prime Minister is going to take up or not take up. But our position is very clear. We have communicated the concerns that we have relating to agriculture and food security at the other fora that we have with the United States. So, the US is well aware of what our position on this is. Whether it will figure in this meeting between the Prime Minister and President Obama, I cannot foresee at this point of time.

Q: Madam, you have mentioned the second point that Prime Minister will discuss about ...*(Inaudible)*... policing in the large cities. Will you explain something on that?

Foreign Secretary: Whenever we talk with strategic partners on various issues of mutual interest, we like to share best practices, we like to explain a little bit about what each of us is doing and whether there is something that we can learn from each other in this process. So at a very general level, I guess that is what we will be looking at.

Q: Madam Secretary, from what you mentioned I understand there will be a discussion on cooperation on border security. Will that touch upon the issue of security on border in the northern parts of India including Ladakh?

Foreign Secretary: When we are talking about border security, we are talking about our check posts on the border. We are talking about the integrated customs check posts; we are talking about mechanisms at the border to facilitate people crossing across the border and improve services there. And this is one of the subgroups for cooperation in the Homeland Security Dialogue. It has nothing to do with the aspects that you mentioned.

Q: *Madam, In the US when the Prime Minister meets Nawaz Sharif there shall be talks on three issues.*

Official Spokesperson: *We are still in Washington and then we shall go to New York, Please wait for a short while.*

Q: Madam, there have been a number of issues you have covered. There is one other issue that I have seen quite widely reported about and that is refrigeration gases. There is a move to sign an agreement to say that India will phase out the use of certain refrigeration gases which have an impact on the climate. I know there has been some pushback and some interest groups in India are saying that this will tie India into buying patented gases from DuPont and other US companies. I am interested to know what the state of affairs is.

Foreign Secretary: I presume you are talking about HFCs. We are discussing the issue of HFCs with the United States. While discussing it, we will not only be looking at the international understandings on HFCs that we have in the context of the UNFCCC, Rio+20, and G20. But also we will discuss this bilaterally with the US in order to develop a better mutual understanding of each other's positions. You may be aware that bilateral India-US Task Force on HFCs was established in 2011. And we think it would be useful to convene a meeting of this task force to discuss all relevant issues related to HFCs in the bilateral context.

Q: This sounds like it is a work in process and not something we are going to see signed during the bilateral. Would that be a correct reading of what you just said?

Foreign Secretary: It is a work in progress. We have to see what happens.

Q: Madam, besides the IT professionals visa and this skilled or non-skilled workers visa, will they discuss about the students visa also? Nowadays there is a big problem for students also to get US visa.

Foreign Secretary: There are fora, like I said there are 33 standard dialogues between India and the United States. So, many of these issues which can be very technical in nature would be discussed at one of these groups. We have a consular dialogue and we take up these issues at the consular dialogue, probably not at the Prime Minister's level.

Q: Will the talks revolve around cyber security issues also? After the NSA's snooping, the prism and all the concerns across the world we have, will that also be part of the discussions in Washington?

Foreign Secretary: Like I said, there are several dialogues that are ongoing between India and the US. And if you waited for a summit to raise every single issue on which you want to have discussions, they you would be waiting for a very long time. So, it is already being discussed at the appropriate fora.

Q: Madam, will PM meet Mr. Nawaz Sharif? If they meet, what will we talk about? Dawood Ibrahim, etc., etc?

Foreign Secretary: The Prime Minister's programme is still in the process of being firmed up. So, I cannot really confirm to you whether he will meet Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif or not. On what he will talk about, he has to meet him first. So, let us see.

Q:...*(Inaudible)*...

Foreign Secretary: *Please see, As the prime minister said,* there are certain harsh realities on the ground. The harsh reality on the ground is that we continue to face acts of terror by groups operating from Pakistan and from territories under Pakistan's control. There are also many persons indulging in hostile propaganda against India who continue to roam around freely in Pakistan. And despite repeated commitments from the highest levels in Pakistan, and very positive statements like you have said, we see very little actual progress in the efforts to bring those responsible for the Mumbai terror attacks to justice. So, these are certain harsh realities that we have to deal with. So, let us see what happens.

Q: Madam Foreign Secretary, I just wanted to crosscheck this. You mentioned that the Prime Minister's programme in New York is still not finalised. Apart from the possible meet with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, you mentioned that he would be engaging in other bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the UNGA. Could you throw some light on who are some of the other leaders he might be meeting?

Foreign Secretary: There are certain bilateral meetings that are in the process of being firmed up. But since his entire programme is still in the process of being firmed up, I cannot confirm to you which are the specific meetings.

Q: Madam, I know you will not be confirming the bilateral meeting but Bangladesh Foreign Minister has announced yesterday that on 28th September there will be a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the UNGA. I am not asking about the details of what the Prime Minister would say. But I have another question. Prime Minister probably will inaugurate a 400 kv power transmission line by which India would be supplying power to Bangladesh. It would be a big event for both the countries and Prime Minister would be inaugurating it perhaps. Have we invited anybody from Bangladesh or would Prime Minister be talking to Bangladesh PM on this issue?

Foreign Secretary: First let me agree with you, it is a very big event. We see this as a milestone in our cooperation with Bangladesh and there are certain discussions on as to how to commemorate this. I do not want to go into details right now. They are still being worked out.

Yes, we hope that there will be a meeting between the Prime Minister and Bangladeshi Prime Minister in New York.

Q: Madam, you met the Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister earlier this week in Delhi and we were told cryptically that events related to Afghanistan would be discussed on the margins of the UNGA. Could you elaborate on what these events concerning Afghanistan would be?

Foreign Secretary: You know that the relationship between India and Afghanistan is a very close one. Our ties go back centuries. We have close historical, civilisational ties. India is one of the closest friends that Afghanistan has. These meetings are part of an ongoing process where

we touch base from time to time to discuss progress on the various projects that we have going between us, and to exchange views on what further needs to be done. So, that has to be seen in that context.

Q: Madam, since you have already said, and Dipu Moni yesterday said, that there will be a bilateral between the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh, could you elaborate on what kind of talks may materialise and what is the agenda between Bangladesh and India? Since Teesta agreement has not been made possible and the land boundary agreement has also not been made possible, is there anything else which can come up in this discussion?

Foreign Secretary: We have such close relations with Bangladesh that our ties span an entire gamut of issues. Despite the fact that neither the Teesta waters nor the land boundary agreement has gone through, you must know that we remain deeply committed to delivering on these agreements. So, there will be plenty to talk about whether it is our cooperation on the economic side, lines of credit, supply of power, any number of issues in keeping with the very close nature of relations between our two countries.

Q: Madam, I just wanted to know whether you could shed some light on Prime Minister's visit to Washington, whether the issue of Indian purchases of Iranian crude would come up and specifically what level of Indian purchases would be compliant with US sanctions on Iran?

Foreign Secretary: It is very difficult to say what is going to come up and what is not going to come up. They are meeting for a limited period of time and if they are going to discuss every single issue that all of you have asked me whether they will come up or not... I think that on this entire question of purchases of Iranian crude, that is something that we do with Iran. I am not sure that we would want to raise it from our side. If the United States wants to raise it, it is welcome to.

Q: Madam, Secretary (R)'s office has written a note to large parts of the Government – military, even your Joint Secretary (North) – about Ladakh-type intrusions in three places in Bhutan. Since Bhutan is a very friendly country and we also have Indian soldiers there, is there anything the Indian Government is doing about it? There has not been one report but several reports.

Foreign Secretary: Shrinjoy, I am coming back to headquarters after six years overseas and I am really surprised to be faced with a question about what Secretary (R) may or may not have written to ..

Q: A copy is with me, if you want to see.

Foreign Secretary: I do not want to see the copy because even if you showed me the copy I would not comment on internal communications between Ministries or organisations in Government of India. You should not be having that copy as a matter fact, especially if it is classified.

Q: Can I ask another question?

Foreign Secretary: No.

Official Spokesperson: You have used up your chance.

Q: Madam, recently there were news items that Iranian Oil Minister has asked Indian Ambassador that they would not be accepting entire payments in rupees, and also on the fact that they are not willing to sign the production-sharing contracts with the Indian companies, also on their stand on not selling cheap gas to India. Then we also had this tanker issue with Iran. Are we seeing a hardening stance from Iran? And what is happening on the imports side? Are we planning to maintain at the last year's level or cut them?

Foreign Secretary: We have a longstanding energy partnership with Iran which we greatly value, and it has proved to be very reliable as well. In recent months we have evolved a system of payment for crude oil imported from Iran that envisages payment of some parts of imports in Indian Rupees. That is the factual position as of date.

Q: India has started paying the entire amount in Rupees to save on the foreign exchange and the Oil Minister had also written to the Prime Minister saying that it will help in saving foreign exchange in their dialogue.

Foreign Secretary: As of now the situation is that we pay part of it in Rupees and the rest has to be decided on as to how it is to be paid because there are difficulties relating to the payment. So, let us leave it at that.

Official Spokesperson: Thank you very much. With that we come to the end of this interaction. Thank you.

(text in italics is unofficial translation)



570. Prime Minister's statement prior to his departure for a bilateral visit to the USA and to attend the UN General Assembly Session.

New Delhi, September 25, 2013.

I leave today for Washington for a bilateral summit meeting with President Obama on 27th September. I will, thereafter, travel to New York to address the General Debate of the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Over the past decade, our relationship with the United States, which is one of our most important relationships, has transformed into a global strategic partnership.

The intensive, high-level bilateral visits over the last few months reflect the strong momentum of our engagement. We have also registered impressive progress in our cooperation across the full spectrum of the relationship.

We see the US as a long-term partner in our development efforts, and in fostering a global environment that is conducive to our growth. For India, the US remains a key source of technology, investment, innovation and resources, and one of the most important destinations for our goods and services. We have productive and deepening partnerships in trade and investment, defence, counter-terrorism, intelligence, internal security, cyber security, civil nuclear energy, environment, health, higher education, space, science and technology and culture. People-to-people contacts are a strong feature of our engagement. We have also launched development partnership in third countries.

My visit is an opportunity to review our joint efforts and chart a course for our future cooperation.

I also look forward to discussing a broad range of global and regional developments, and how we can work together to advance our shared interests.

The UN General Assembly will focus this year on the follow up to the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, which marked the 20th anniversary of the Earth Summit. The General Assembly will also look at drawing up the global development agenda after 2015, which is the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set in 2000. Despite successes on many parameters, the world as a whole is unlikely to meet the MDGs, and it is important that we sustain our efforts. I will emphasize the importance of maintaining poverty eradication and inclusive development at the core of the post-2015 development agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals that are expected to be drawn up as part of the follow-up to the Rio+20 Conference should ensure a holistic approach to sustainable development objectives, ensuring a balanced treatment of its economic, social and environmental dimensions as well as universal applicability.

The UN General Assembly will also meet at a time of enormous political upheaval, particularly in West Asia, coupled with a global economic slowdown that has now affected even the emerging economies. I will convey our strong conviction that global challenges are best addressed through multilateral approaches, with the United Nations at its centre. I will also stress the pressing need for early reform of institutions of global political and economic governance, particularly the United Nations Security Council, so that the UN can play an effective and credible role. The year 2015 will mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, and it would be a fitting occasion to conclude the ongoing reform efforts.

During my visit to New York, I also look forward to bilateral meetings with the leaders of some of our neighbouring countries, including Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.



571. Joint Press Statement on the Ministerial Meeting of the G4 Countries (Brazil, Germany, India and Japan) in the margins of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly.

New York, September 26, 2013.

1. The Minister of External Relations of Brazil, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, the Minister of External Affairs of India and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan met in New York on 26 September 2013, in the margins of the opening of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, to exchange views on Security Council reform.
2. The Ministers underscored that, almost 70 years after the creation of the United Nations, reform of the Security Council is long overdue. They agreed that difficulties of the Security Council in dealing with international challenges, including current ones, have further highlighted the need for U.N. Security Council reform in order to better reflect geopolitical realities of the 21st century and make the Council more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and thus to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions. The Ministers recalled that almost 10 years ago, in the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit, international leaders committed themselves to an early reform of the Security Council. The Ministers stressed the need to intensify efforts to translate, at the latest by 2015, the existing agreement into concrete outcomes.
3. Recalling previous G4 joint statements, the Ministers reiterated their common vision of a reformed Security Council, taking into consideration the contributions made by countries to the maintenance of international peace and security and other purposes of the organisation, as well as the need for increased representation of developing countries in both categories, in order to better reflect today's geopolitical realities. The G4 countries reiterated their commitments as aspiring new permanent members of the UN Security Council, as well as their support for each other's candidatures. They also reaffirmed their view of the importance of developing countries, in particular Africa, to be

represented in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of an enlarged Council. In this context, the Ministers emphasized the importance to enhance dialogue and outreach with African countries on Security Council reform and commended the initiative of the Government of Japan in having convened the first Japan-Africa Summit Meeting on U.N. Security Council Reform in June. In addition, the Ministers noted with appreciation the directive of CARICOM Heads of State and Government in February 2013 calling for 'greater urgency in achieving lasting Security Council Reform' and the initiative of CARICOM to reinvigorate the Intergovernmental Negotiation process.

4. The Ministers recognized the need for greater involvement of civil society, the media and academia on the discussions about the reform of the Security Council and in this context, they welcomed the Brazilian initiative of hosting a seminar, in April this year, to broaden the debate on the urgency and inevitability of the reform of the United Nations Security Council.
5. The Ministers also discussed the outcome of the ninth round of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. The Ministers emphasized the important role the Chairman of the intergovernmental negotiations, H.E. Ambassador Zahir Tanin, has played in the negotiations, notably reflected in his letter dated 25 July 2012 to the President of the General Assembly, and welcomed anew his recommendations therein. In this context, the Ministers reiterated that, given the overwhelming support by member states for an expansion of the Security Council in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, this should be a key parameter in the negotiation process among member states. They called for the drafting of a concise working document as the basis for further negotiations, in line with the recommendations of the Chairman.
6. The Ministers welcomed the decision by the General Assembly to immediately continue the process of intergovernmental negotiations in the informal plenary of the 68th Session, building on the progress achieved and the recommendations made by

the Chairman. The Ministers underlined the need to achieve concrete progress in the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly and, in this context, expressed their commitment to continue to work in close cooperation and in a spirit of flexibility with other Member States and Groups of Member States, in particular Africa, in genuine text-based negotiations.

7. The Ministers expressed gratitude for the efforts made by the President of the 67th General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremic and the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiations, H.E. Ambassador Zahir Tanin. They looked forward to working closely with H.E. Mr. John Ashe, the President of the 68th General Assembly, and the Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations in order to bring about the urgently needed reform of the Security Council.

Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado

Minister of External Relations of Brazil

Guido Westerwelle

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany

Salman Khurshid

Minister of External Affairs of India

Fumio Kishida

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan



572. Statement by the Prime Minister in the General Debate of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly.

New York, September 28, 2013.

Let me first of all congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. We wish you every success and we assure you of our fullest co-operation.

At a time when the world is facing multiple challenges, there is renewed attention on the role of the United Nations in advancing international peace, security and prosperity. However, never has scepticism about the UN's capacity to do so been higher, or the external environment less propitious for multilateralism.

Nearly seven decades of the work of the United Nations hold one simple lesson and that is this: we are most successful when we adhere to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, basing our decisions on the widest possible consent and balancing equitably the needs and responsibilities of nations at different stages of development.

In these seven decades, the world has changed in fundamental ways. Asia and Africa are independent and resurgent. Countries are now not only more interdependent, but also face new and increasingly complex challenges. For multilateralism to remain relevant and effective in the future, multilateral institutions need to be reformed urgently.

The place to begin is right here.

The UN Security Council must be reformed and restructured to reflect current political realities. More developing countries should be included as both permanent and non-permanent members.

Multilateral Financial Institutions should also enable an enhanced voice for developing countries in their decision making structures.

Multilateral efforts must guide our quest for peace and security, wherever they are threatened. And the centrality and contribution of the UN system to development must be restored.

These objectives require the building of a new international consensus, suited to our time and rooted in today's realities. It is only such a plan of

action that will enable the UN to meet the twin tests of legitimacy and effectiveness and efficiency.

We commend your choice for the theme of this session. Setting the stage for the post-2015 Development Agenda is especially important as we deal with a lingering global economic slowdown and continuing volatility in financial markets. These have imposed disproportionately heavy costs on developing countries and vulnerable groups within them.

Growth and inclusive development are naturally important for all our countries. They require a supportive international economic environment, enhanced investment flows, including from multilateral development banks, transfer of technology, and an open multilateral trading regime.

But the problems of over a billion people living in abject poverty around the world need to be attacked more directly. Poverty remains a major political and economic challenge and its eradication requires special attention and a new collective thrust. This priority should anchor the post-2015 Development Agenda, which should be shaped by the member states so that it enjoys the broadest possible support and acceptance.

Issues of peace, security, human rights and governance are important and need to be addressed. But we will fall short of realizing an ambitious post-2015 development agenda if we focus merely on governance issues at the cost of robust economic growth.

This agenda should not be merely about reprioritizing domestic spending, but also about fostering genuine international partnership between the developing and developed countries to bring about change. All of us need the policy space necessary to set our own domestic priorities. No one knows the condition of developing countries better than the developing countries themselves.

It is, therefore, important that the UN set clear and concise goals and provide practical and well-defined means of implementation, including adequate flow of resources and transfer of technology, taking the views of developing countries fully into account.

A meaningful post-2015 agenda must place equally high priority on food and nutrition, health, education, infrastructure, water, sanitation, energy and discrimination against women. Especially critical is women's equal

access to economic opportunities, and that they do not become victims of violence or targets of prejudice.

In India, we have sought to promote inclusive development in multiple ways. Legislation has broadened access to education and secured rural livelihoods. We are now building the world's largest programme for food security. Digital technology is being harnessed to improve the delivery of public services and benefits to the people.

India is proud of its partnerships with developing countries. Using modest resources, we have built strong ties with Africa and the Least Developed Countries. We are committed to building 100 institutions in Africa, have offered capacity building support including thousands of scholarships, and made available concessional assistance of over 9.5 billion US dollars. India and Africa are engaging through the India-Africa Forum Summit process. We also look forward to participating actively in the 3rd Conference on the Small Island Developing States in Samoa in 2014 and contributing to its outcome.

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our times. We must summon the necessary political will for crafting a robust global response to climate change on the basis of equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

We are deeply concerned about the future of West Asia, a region with which India shares deep bonds of history, and one that is critical for our energy security as well as the livelihoods of nearly seven million Indians who work and live in the region.

The increasingly lethal conflict in Syria is not only a tragedy for the people of Syria, but also threatens stability and security in the region and beyond. It has been made worse by the use of chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons, whosoever may have deployed them, must be condemned in the strongest terms. India supports strongly the elimination of chemical weapons material and equipment in Syria.

There is no military solution to this conflict. We must intensify efforts to end the conflict and seek a political settlement. It is essential that the Geneva-2 conference be convened at the earliest.

We are encouraged that direct talks have resumed between Israel and Palestine. India supports an early realisation of a sovereign, independent,

viable and united State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognised borders side-by-side and at peace with Israel. We also remain committed to the Palestinian quest for full membership of the UN.

In our own region, Afghanistan prepares for a historic political, security and economic transition. The international community must support the people of Afghanistan through this transition and beyond in combating terrorism, preserving the progress of the past decade and creating a stable, united and prosperous Afghanistan.

Terrorism remains a grave threat to security and stability everywhere and extracts a heavy toll of innocent lives around the world. From Africa to Asia, we have seen several manifestations of this menace in the last few days alone. State-sponsored cross-border terrorism is of particular concern to India, also on account of the fact that the epicentre of terrorism in our region is located in our neighbourhood in Pakistan.

Speaking from this podium yesterday, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan spoke of making a new beginning. I reciprocate his sentiments and am looking forward to meeting him tomorrow. India is committed sincerely to resolving all issues with Pakistan, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, through bilateral dialogue on the basis of the Shimla Agreement. However, for progress to be made, it is imperative that the territory of Pakistan and the areas under its control are not utilized for aiding and abetting terrorism directed against India. It is equally important that the terrorist machinery that draws its sustenance from Pakistan be shut down. There must be a clear understanding of the fact that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and that there can never, ever, be a compromise with the unity and territorial integrity of India.

We need to renew our commitment, especially here at the UN, for concerted, cohesive and continuing global action against terrorism. There can be no tolerance for states sheltering, arming, training or financing terrorists. Nor can they absolve themselves of the responsibility to prevent their territories from being used to launch acts of terrorism.

The increasingly complex challenges to international peace and security require a new international consensus to be built, whether it is in cyber security, non proliferation or terrorism. This year, 25 years after Prime

Minister Rajiv Gandhi put forward a comprehensive Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapon-free and Non-violent World Order, we must strengthen efforts against nuclear proliferation and pursue time-bound, universal, non-discriminatory, phased and verifiable nuclear disarmament. We must also guard against terrorists and non-state actors gaining access to sensitive materials and technologies.

Two years from now, the United Nations will be seventy years old. Every new state that was born during this period took its place in this Assembly not just with pride but also with hope. 2015 will be a moment to celebrate our successes and to ensure that the UN is ready for this century by completing the much needed reforms of the United Nations and its Security Council, by developing an ambitious and balanced post-2015 Development Agenda and by demonstrating our capacity to cooperate effectively for durable peace and security in this world.



**573. Statement by Ambassador D.B. Venkatesh Varma,
Permanent Representative of India to the Conference on
Disarmament , at 2013 Meeting of States Parties to the
Biological Weapons Convention,
Geneva, December 9, 2013.**

Madam Chair,

Let me join other colleagues in congratulating you on the assumption of the chair of the BWC Meeting of States Parties for 2013. I am sure that with your vast experience on BWC issues and your diplomatic skills, you would be able to lead this meeting to a successful conclusion. You could be assured of India's full support in the discharge of your responsibilities. I also congratulate the two Vice Chairs on assuming their posts.

India associates itself with the statement made by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. As the world mourns the passing of President Nelson Mandela, a strong advocate of world peace and reconciliation, we convey our deepest condolences to the delegation of South Africa.

Madam Chair,

India attaches high importance to the BWC as the first disarmament treaty banning an entire class of weapons of mass destruction. Through this instrument, 170 States Parties to the treaty have pledged never to “develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire or retain” biological weapons and have committed not to use in any way and under any circumstances biological agents or toxins not consistent with prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes. These important commitments have been reiterated by the successive Review Conferences including the 7th Review Conference in 2011.

India remains committed to improving the effectiveness of the BWC and strengthening its implementation and universalization. We believe this is necessary in view of the new challenges to international peace and security emanating from proliferation trends, including the threat posed by terrorists or other non-state actors seeking access to biological agents or toxins for terrorist purposes. It is the responsibility of States Parties to ensure that their commitments and obligations under the Convention are fully and effectively implemented. We believe that only a multilaterally agreed mechanism for verification of compliance can provide the assurance of observance of compliance obligations by States Parties and act as a deterrence against non-compliance.

Madam Chair,

We have made a good start to the new inter-sessional process with extensive discussions on the three standing agenda items and the biennial item during the meetings held under your and Algeria’s leadership in the past two years. India has contributed to the success of the Meeting of Experts held in August 2013. We hope that sustained progress on these discussions will be possible during the rest of the inter-sessional period, in keeping with the letter and spirit of the decisions of the 7th Review Conference. We would like to reiterate that the mandate of the current inter-sessional process is to promote common understanding and effective action on the issues on its agenda; any decisions with regard to the operation of the Convention should be taken by the next Review Conference by consensus. Let me now briefly state India’s broad position on the issues to be covered in this meeting.

India believes that the standing agenda item on review of S&T developments is important for States Parties to keep pace with the rapid developments in biological science and technology which might impact the implementation of the Convention. It is important that these discussions cover all ongoing high-risk dual use research. For example, it is important to review all ramifications of the recent advancements in scientific understanding related to H5N1, H7N1, H7N9, MERS as well as other BSL 3&4 pathogens. The measures taken to mitigate biological risks should be proportional to the assessed risk and not hamper legitimate peaceful activities including international cooperation. Further, peaceful activities such as vaccine development, which are important for developing countries for meeting their public health needs, should not be unnecessarily highlighted as posing a risk for uses contrary to the provisions of the Convention. India looks forward to continuing discussions on Codes of Conduct and education and awareness raising in order to address issues related to biorisk management. India would also be willing to make a contribution to the discussion on exploring the best way of conducting S&T review under the Convention in the run up to the next Review Conference, recalling the Working Paper submitted by India at the last Review Conference.

India continues to attach high importance to the full and effective implementation of Article X of the Convention. We believe that the measures suggested by the Non-Aligned Movement in its Working Paper submitted at the Meeting of Experts this year should be given due consideration. While legitimate peaceful uses should not be hampered, India is not in favour of unregulated transfers. In this context, we believe that strengthened implementation of Article III would ensure that the cooperation envisaged under Article X is not abused. At the same time it is important that factors like lack of technical capability in developing countries are not used to hamper international cooperation, such as by denying new and advanced technology to developing countries. We look forward to the ISU's report on the operation of the database established in pursuance of the decision of the 7th Review Conference.

The standing agenda item on national implementation provides a ready platform for States Parties to share and learn from their national experiences in the implementation of the Convention. We have always

emphasized the responsibility of States Parties to fully implement their obligations under the Convention and adopt requisite national measures to this end. India has a broad based regulatory framework to prevent the misuse of biological science and technology, including effective export controls matching the highest international standards. We also support assistance to States Parties for strengthening their national systems for bio-safety and bio-security.

On the biennial item regarding CBMs we wish to underline that the effort should be to look at ways and means to increase the number of States Parties making CBMs submissions. Our delegation will be open to looking at constructive suggestions in this regard that could be included in this meeting's report since this is the last year of consideration of this agenda item. We would like to stress that CBMs are an important transparency measures to enhance trust in implementation of the Convention, but CBMs or voluntary measures for demonstrating national implementation cannot be an alternative to an effective multilaterally agreed mechanism for verification of compliance. Only such a mechanism can provide the assurance of observance of compliance obligations by States Parties and act as a deterrence against non-compliance. India is in the process of finalizing its CBMs submission for 2013 which will be submitted to the ISU shortly.

Madam Chair,

Before concluding, let me place on record our appreciation for your efforts in undertaking wide consultations with various Groups and delegations in preparation of this meeting. We also welcome your efforts for greater involvement of all States Parties in our meetings as well as on universalization of the Convention. We welcome the accession of Cameroon, Nauru, Guyana and Malawi to the Convention in 2013. We also convey our appreciation to the ISU for its efforts in support of our common objectives.

Thank you



INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS-2013

SECTION-IX

INDIA AT THE UN:

- (i) Security Council
- (ii) General Assembly

(i) Security Council

574. Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri Permanent Representative, at the open debate on UN Peacekeeping: A Multidimensional Approach at the UNSC.

New York, January 21, 2013.

Mr. President,

At the outset let me thank you for organizing this debate on the important subject of peacekeeping and its crucial role in building peace in post-conflict situations.

India is proud to have been associated with UN peacekeeping from its very inception. As a country that has contributed more than 100,000 peacekeepers to virtually every United Nations peacekeeping operation in the past six decades, we have an abiding interest in UN Peacekeeping. During our Presidency of the Security Council in August 2011, we had also organized a debate on UN Peacekeeping. Even today India is one of the largest contributors to major Peacekeeping missions, and we remain committed to this global enterprise.

I also wish to convey our deep appreciations to the Secretary General for his presence today and his useful briefing on the subject.

Peacekeeping has been a critical activity of the UN in maintaining international peace and security. Its collaborative character infuses it with a unique legitimacy that defines its strength.

The core values of UN peacekeeping explain its enduring relevance. Principles of consent, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defence and in defence of the mandate have all outlived the many transitions that peacekeeping has witnessed from truce-supervision missions of yesteryears to multi-dimensional mandates of today.

Today's debate on the multidimensional nature of peacekeeping underscores the evolutionary nature of peacekeeping in ample measure.

Mr. President,

Peacekeeping often gets deliberated as a standalone exercise rather than as a contributory endeavour that imparts strength to the larger

peace enterprise. This reflects the substance of its currency. In order for peace to be sustainable, enduring and lasting it is imperative that all components of the comprehensive peace enterprise contribute in achieving peace.

In this regard, I would like to draw the Security Council's attention to the Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2011/17) issued in August 2011 that called for meaningful engagements with the TCCs, integration of field expertise and experiences in peacebuilding strategies, and in the drafting of mission mandates.

The nature of mandates will continue to shape the practice of peacekeeping. My delegation has often spoken strongly, in favour of a tiered and inclusive mandate-making process to ensure that mandates are updated, flexible, and in tune with the ground realities. In-depth consultations with troop and police contributing countries should be an integral part of the mandate generation process. A fair assessment of mandates with corresponding resources will inject a sense of realism into expectations with respect to mission objectives and achievements.

Unfortunately, resource allocation has failed to keep pace with the mandate expansion, and peacekeeping missions are called upon to do more and more with less and less. This has added to operational challenges faced by peacekeepers and missions are overstretched due to shortage of personnel and equipment. Resources accorded need to be commensurate with the mandates and efficiency measures should not compromise operational necessities.

A reference has been made to UNMOGIP. Suffice to point out that UNMOGIP's role has been overtaken by the Simla Agreement of 1972 between India and Pakistan, signed by the Heads of the two governments and ratified by their respective parliaments. In times of austerity, we need to address the question whether the resources being spent on UNMOGIP would not be better utilized elsewhere.

Mr. President,

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding are two sides of the same coin. Critical peacebuilding tasks such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), security sector reform (SSR), rule of law, basic governance, institution building, and support to the democratic processes

are all premised on peacekeepers proactive involvement. Our strategies and approaches, therefore, should be geared to capitalize on these strengths. UN Peacekeeping, in-fact, makes all of this affordable at a fraction of the cost involved in similar endeavours elsewhere.

Two- thirds of UN's field presence comprises of uniformed personnel. They respond to a complex set of challenges in a holistic manner. In this context we should synergize the keeping-of-peace and the building-of-peace. Their mutual- complementarities should be harmonized rather than being zoned as the civilian versus military.

Functional necessities should guide us in developing programmatic contents and budgetary outlines. The propensity to create new structures, mechanisms, and positions that only add additional bureaucratic layers need to be discouraged in the current context.

Partnership is peacekeeping's central pillar. All stakeholders of the process have a duty to enhance dialogue and mutual understandings. The triangular cooperation framework, in this regard, offers a viable site to engender and consolidate this partnership.

The representative character of peacekeeping and its reform process is the key to its across the board acceptability. It is imperative that the work on this reform process is not the prerogative of a few but is representative across the board.

Finally, Mr. President, my delegation is happy that a resolution has been adopted today that will strengthen the peacekeeping framework.

I Thank You, Mr. President.



575. Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative in the Security Council Open Debate on “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question.

New York, January 23, 2013.

Mr. President,

1. At the outset, please allow me to express our appreciation to you Mr. President, for convening this quarterly open debate on “the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”. I would like to thank Special Coordinator Robert Serry for his comprehensive briefing on recent developments in the Middle East, particularly on the Palestinian question. I would like to join others to welcome the participation of Foreign Minister of the Observer State of Palestine, H. E. Dr. Riad Al Malki in today’s debate and thank him for his statement. I also would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Israel for his statement.
2. Mr. President, amidst unprecedented transformation of the Arab World, the continuing stalemate in the Middle East Peace Process, is clearly not in the interest of the region. There have been no direct talks between Israel and Palestine, for more than two years. Efforts of the international community including those of the Quartet towards resumption of direct talks between Israel and Palestine have yielded no results.
3. Against this backdrop, the overwhelming vote in the General Assembly on November 29 last year, upgrading the status of Palestine to a non-member state is a positive development. It is a decisive achievement for Palestine in the history of its long and arduous struggle to reach its final goal of an independent and viable Palestinian State. India, which has always played a proactive role in garnering support for the Palestinian cause in multilateral fora, co-sponsored this resolution. India will continue to support Palestine’s bid for full and equal membership of the United Nations.

4. Mr. President, developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territories since the historic vote in the General Assembly have been most unhelpful for the Palestinian cause. The intensification of settlement activities by Israel, despite widespread international condemnation, in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are creating new realities on the ground, thereby threatening the very premise of a two-state solution. We join others in urging Israel to end the settlement activity in order for the Palestinian side to come to the negotiating table.
5. Mr. President, settlements, roadblocks and the related infrastructure of occupation continue to cause severe hardships to the Palestinian population. These are also adversely affecting the normal functioning of Palestinian state institutions. The Palestinian Authority is facing a severe financial crisis. The financial crisis could erode the significant progress made in building Palestinian state institutions, if immediate attention is not given to the issue. There is an urgent need to support the Palestinian Authority to meet its budgetary shortfalls.
6. The blockade of Gaza is in its sixth year. It is affecting essential services, economic activities and infrastructure development. While Israel has taken several measures to allow flow of essential goods into Gaza, these cannot be a substitute for lifting the blockade. Recent hostilities in Gaza are again a stark reminder to the international community of the dangers, that continuing stalemate in the Peace Process can bring about. We hope both parties will continue to uphold the ceasefire agreement and implement its provisions in good faith.
7. The recent rapprochement between various Palestinian factions is indeed welcome. We hope that efforts towards promotion of reconciliation will bear fruit soon, leading to the formation a Unity Government, holding of elections, reunification of Palestinian state institutions, and measures for reconstruction and development of Palestinian society.
8. Mr. President, India has a long history of solidarity with the Palestinian people. India was the first non-Arab State to recognize

the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in 1975 and in 1988 became one of the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine.

9. India has also extended material assistance to the Palestinian Authority since its establishment and has been a partner in the socio-economic development of Palestine in its quest for a life of dignity and self-reliance. Our assistance has been for humanitarian relief, development projects, establishment of educational and training facilities, budgetary support etc. This year, India has pledged an amount of US\$ 10 million as budgetary support to Palestine. India also contributes US\$ 1 million annually to United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Following the three MoU's signed during the visit of President Abbas to India in September 2012, India is in the process of implementing projects in the fields of Information & Communication Technology, Vocational Training and Construction of Schools. In addition, India is implementing development projects in Palestine with Brazil and South Africa as partners in IBSA.
10. India supports a negotiated solution resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders with East Jerusalem as its Capital, side by side and at peace with Israel as endorsed in various United Nations Security Council Resolutions and the Quartet Road Map. Let me also state here that progress on Lebanese and Syrian track remains critical for lasting peace in the region. We remain hopeful that environment conducive for direct talks can be achieved in the near future. India stands ready to play its part in our collective endeavours to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.
11. Lastly, Mr. President, we remain seriously concerned at the deteriorating security situation and continuing violence in Syria. We strongly condemn all violence and violations of human rights irrespective of who their perpetrators are. We also condemn in the strongest terms the terrorist acts that have been and continue to be committed in Syria. We urge all the parties to stop violence and engage in an inclusive national dialogue in

order to resolve the conflict through peaceful means based on the internationally approved political and legal basis including the UN Security Council resolutions 2042 and 2043 and the Joint Communique of the Geneva Action Group.

I thank you



**576. STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HARDEEP SINGH PURI,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE , AT THE OPEN DEBATE
ON PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT
AT THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.**

New York, February 12, 2013.

At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate on the Protection of Civilians in armed conflict. I would also like to thank the Secretary General for his incisive briefing earlier in the day and the High Commissioner for Human Rights Ms. Navanethem Pillay, and Director for International Law and Cooperation of the ICRC Mr. Philip Spoerri for their briefings.

Mr. President,

The Right to Life is one of the fundamental rights enshrined in the constitutions of a vast number of UN member-states, including my own. It is, in fact, the foundation of any social order. Unfortunately, situations of armed conflict continue to wreak havoc and put lives of innocent civilians at risk.

At the same time, Mr. President, the instances where civilians are at the greatest risk today do not involve nation-states, but non-state actors and belligerents who are not necessarily combatants under international humanitarian law. This makes the task of the international community and this Council, in particular, so much more difficult as it needs to act within established principles of international law.

Mr. President,

Civilians have always suffered the most in conflicts. Notwithstanding the development of International Humanitarian Law and UN Security Council mandates, civilians continue to suffer even today. Even more unfortunate is the fact that civilians or non-belligerents suffer a disproportionate share of the casualties as compared to belligerents. It is they who bear the brunt of violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Protecting civilians encompasses tasks that are both preventive and remedial. Conduct of warring factions towards civilians, challenges of impunity, weak or absent state authority, political will of the international community, and lack of the means necessary to reverse the spiral of violence together make this task that much more difficult.

India, a partner of UN peacekeeping from its very inception, has contributed through ideas and resources to global efforts towards protecting civilians. Our soldiers have been at the forefront in translating Security Council mandates into actions in challenging circumstances. Our troops and police personnel have always upheld the mandates and protected civilians. Our peacekeeping experience brings to the table, a quantum of experience in actually protecting civilians in peacekeeping missions that is unique in its relevance and in its variety and depth.

Mr. President,

UN peacekeepers have been playing a key role in protection of civilians from the scourge of war. But we must not lose sight of the fact that the protection of civilians is, first and foremost, a national responsibility and requires institutions and conditions in which the institutions can function. Peacekeepers, in spite of their best efforts, cannot possibly “protect everyone from everything.” To do that, it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of the States and their national institutions to enable them to fulfill their responsibility to protect their populations.

Since 1999, the Security Council has provided for protection of civilians in the mandates for peacekeeping Missions. However, mere addition of words and sentences to the mandates alone will not enable peacekeepers to fulfill protection mandates.

Protecting populations is a resource intensive enterprise. It needs

sufficient personnel, proper equipment and suitable capacities. Political will of the international community and its ability to provide adequate resources is critical to the success of Missions in fulfilling their protection mandates. Civilians are protected best in an eco-system of peace where all its elements work and contribute in tandem. Security Council's efforts should therefore address multiple dimensions of a conflict in a comprehensive and proportionate manner.

Protection of civilians needs to respect the fundamentals of the UN Charter and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Member States. We must also be clear that the United Nations has a mandate to intervene only in situations where there is a threat to international peace and security.

We firmly believe in accountability of those who mandate. Their responsibility does not end with the generation of mandates. They should be held accountable if unachievable mandates are generated for political expediency or if adequate resources are not made available. It is equally important that the principles of protecting civilians must be applied in a uniform manner by all parties to a conflict.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to stress that Council's responsibility to protect civilians does not end with a military or police response. Civilians require humanitarian wherewithal for survival. In this process multiple stakeholders should be involved, not just the military. An engagement between warring factions in a conflict situation in a nationally owned and inclusive political process is of paramount importance. This inclusive approach to national reconciliation, anchored in state sovereignty, is the only way to move forward to ensure the protection of civilians in an effective, pragmatic, and enduring manner.

Thank you, Mr. President.



577. Extempore remarks by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative at the Arria Formula Meeting of the UNSC on “The Security Dimensions of Climate Change”.

New York, February 15, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you very much for giving me the floor. Given the shortage of time, I will be brief.

At the very outset, let me say that climate change is one of the most serious challenges confronting us today. My country, perhaps more than anyone else, is subject to its vagaries, and is one of the most vulnerable.

We, therefore, call for concerted and very strong action of by the global community in cooperation and collaboration with each other. These actions need to be based on the principles of common but differentiated responsibility and equity. Developed countries must own their historical responsibility and undertake real and significant emission cuts, and provide finance and technological support, especially to the most vulnerable countries, the small island developing states and the least Developed Countries.

We recognize that the sea level rises pose an existential threat to the small Island Developing States and coastal societies. We are particularly aware of the gravity of the situation given the number of islands, over a thousand, which are there within the territories of India.

Having said this, Mr. Chairman, I want to strongly align myself with the Statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Fiji on behalf of the G-77 and reiterate what has been said by the G-77 on several occasions. The issue of climate change rests squarely in the UN FCCC and the UN General Assembly.

The UN charter provides for clear division of functions between the General Assembly and the Security Council. These must be fully respected.

We, therefore, want to reiterate what has been made clear many a time that by merely adding the words security dimension, it does not become a matter fit for discussing in the Security Council.

Mr. Chairman, in 2007 your country (UK) organized a thematic debate on climate change in the Security Council. In 2011 my colleague from Germany organized a thematic debate there.

I very much thank H.E. the Ambassador of Pakistan which is a strong and founding member of the G-77, for having ensured that this time it was only an Arria formula meeting.

Thank you very much.



578. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Acting Permanent Representative, Debate on “situation in Afghanistan” at the UN Security Council.

New York, March 19, 2013.

Mr. President, I join others in thanking you for scheduling today’s debate on the situation in Afghanistan in the context of the renewal of UNAMA’s mandate and would like to congratulate you for assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to thank the UN Secretary General for his briefing and thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for his statement.

Mr. President,

Looking ahead at the timelines for ISAF withdrawal and elections in Afghanistan, it is important that the commitments flowing from the major international conferences in Bonn, Chicago and Tokyo and at the regional level in Istanbul and Kabul for peace, security and development in Afghanistan, are implemented in word and deed. These are also essential for creating an enabling environment towards Afghanistan’s fiscal sustainability and self-reliance.

It is particularly worrying that the overall security situation remains volatile in the country amidst the ongoing simultaneous security, political and economic transitions. Even after over a decade of ISAF's presence and concerted efforts of the international community, Afghanistan continues to face an existential threat from terrorism. We are yet to isolate and root out the syndicate of terrorism, which includes elements of Al Qaeda, Taliban, LeT and other terrorist and extremist groups that operate with impunity from safe havens across Afghanistan's borders. Indeed, as NATO draws down from Afghanistan claiming 'Mission nearly Accomplished', judging by the latest acts of terrorism and violence, there is no sign a similar 'drawdown' on the part of terrorist outfits across the border.

Whatever happens in Afghanistan has and will continue to affect security in our region and the world. We have not forgotten the terrorist havens that wreaked havoc as Afghanistan descended into chaos in the 1990s. And obviously, we do not want that to happen again. The UNSG report rightly notes that Afghanistan will only be able to achieve the stability, growth and prosperity that its people aspire to, and deserve, if there is peace.

As Afghanistan looks forward to holding Presidential and Provincial elections in April, 2014, we need to bear in mind that short-sighted approaches and quick-fixes guided by political expediency could be a recipe for unmitigated disaster. It is, thus, imperative that any political settlement must be driven by Afghans so that it is acceptable to all sections of Afghan society and does not jeopardize the hard won gains of the last 10 years. A single-minded focus on the elections and constitutionalism would vindicate the 2004 Constitution, the most widely debated with the maximum consensus to date, consolidate democracy, institutionalize elections, and provide the legitimacy and political and moral strength to the Islamic Republic to negotiate with the Taliban and advocates of an Islamic Emirate, and the international community, from a position of strength, and guarantee the post-2001 gains for new and older generations of Afghans.

It is for this reason also that the internationally-accepted red lines must be respected in whatever reconciliation models are being considered. So also, actions in support of the political transition should not undermine

Afghan institutions of governance. We all need a credible government after 2014 as well.

But most of all, we are yet to see any evidence that supports the notion of a dividing line separating Al Qaeda from other terrorist and extremist groups, or indeed, that these groups and those who support them have either had an epiphany or made a strategic reassessment of their objectives. To us, it makes little sense to draw lines of distinction that most of these groups or their sponsors are themselves not prepared to do, either in word or deed.

Mr. President

India remains engaged with like-minded countries having the shared goal of peace, security and development in Afghanistan. In pursuit of this, India has held a dialogue with the US and Afghanistan in New Delhi and China and Russia in Moscow last month.

We firmly believe that Afghan ownership and leadership is critical for cementing the foundations of lasting peace and stability in the country. The Afghan people should be able to choose their destiny in an environment free from coercion and outside interference. Security is the key ingredient for accelerated socio-economic development, which could also be a catalyst in strengthening the voices of moderation and tolerance in the Afghan society. India has taken a number of initiatives in this regard.

The Delhi Investment Summit of June, 2012 last year was an important endeavour in focussing regional and international attention towards investments in Afghanistan and their potential in providing economic development and stability to Afghanistan during the transition period.

India has also taken initiatives to promote bilateral trade and investment in Afghanistan by measures like the elimination of base line customs duties on virtually all imports from Afghanistan and the investment in Hajigak iron ore reserves.

Enhanced regional cooperation and regional integration are imperative for bringing in much needed foreign investments in Afghanistan, ensuring its economic viability and spurring economic growth. Conscious of this imperative need, India has taken the lead in the commercial

Confidence Building Measures under the Istanbul process. Within South Asia, SAARC remains an important vehicle for strengthening regional cooperation.

Afghanistan is strategically located as a land bridge linking South Asia with Central Asia and the Middle East and an important conduit in tapping into vast energy resources of Central Asia. Projects like TAPI gas pipeline would benefit all of us and have the potential to usher in rapid transformation in our region.

Mr. President,

Afghanistan and India are natural strategic partners by virtue of geography and a common vision of peace and cooperation in the region. India remains committed to support Afghanistan during the crucial period of transition till end 2014 and thereafter. The implementation of the Strategic Partnership Agreement of October, 2011 between our two countries has already been set in motion with the convening of the first meeting of the Partnership Council last year.

India is assisting as best as it can in Afghanistan's reconstruction and development. India has pledged up to \$ 2 billion in development and humanitarian assistance. The projects under consideration are in line with the projects suggested under the National Priority Programmes of the Government of Afghanistan. The pace and nature of the utilization of the present and future Indian assistance is being determined by the preference, comfort level and absorptive capacity of the Afghan government.

Afghanistan needs assistance and support to build its capacity to help it overcome the toll that three decades of externally-inflicted conflict have imposed on it. India has been assisting Afghanistan to rebuild the foundations of its society through scholarships for its young and training programmes that seek to help its democratic institutions brace for the multiplicity of challenges that it faces.

Mr. President,

India remains unwavering in its commitment to assisting the people of Afghanistan in their endeavour to build a peaceful, stable, democratic and prosperous nation.

As we approach critical timelines for transition in near future, the international community must continue to work with renewed vigour and unity of purpose towards strengthening efforts of the Afghan government in seeking solutions that are inclusive and led by the Afghan people themselves.

We believe that the UN has a central role to play in coordination of international assistance. There is no substitute for the coordinating role of the UN in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. We appreciate the leadership of SRSG Ján Kubiš and the good work done by UNAMA. It must continue to work in close consultation with the Afghan government.

Thank you



**579. STATEMENT BY MR. AMIT KUMAR, COUNSELLOR
DURING THE OPEN DEBATE UNDER THE AGENDA ITEM
- WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY AT THE UNITED
NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.**

New York, APRIL 17, 2013.

Thank you, Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank the UN Secretary General and the SRSG Zainab Hawa Bangura and the civil society representative Ms. Saran Keita Diakité for their detailed briefing.

Mr. President,

Women bear a disproportionate brunt of the armed conflict, even though they are in most cases not directly engaged in combat.

The adoption of UNSCR 1325 provides the framework for women to play an important role in resolution of armed conflicts through participation in peace building processes and post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

Mr. President,

Allow me to make a few comments on this important issue. First of all, the need for greater coherence between DPKO and UN Women can hardly be overemphasised. This is necessary not only for operational effectiveness but also for optimal utilisation of resources.

There is need to avoid making standardised prescriptions when dealing with situations of armed conflict. The specific causes and characteristics of each armed conflict vary. So will possible approaches and solutions. The UN peace keeping and political missions should be provided the necessary flexibility to deal with specific situations.

It is also important to recognise that some structural changes can take place only in the mid to long-term. These include encouragement and consolidation of democratic ideals and practices, and effective improvements in the socio-economic conditions.

The task of capacity building and strengthening government institutions, including in the area of security and justice, is therefore extremely critical for sustainable peace. UN support and guidance are crucial but ownership by the State concerned is equally important for institutions to be sustained.

We support UN efforts to deploy greater number of women protection advisors and gender advisors in its Missions. The mandate provided by UNSC on Women Peace and Security also necessarily requires more resources for effective sustained results.

Mr. President,

Promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls in armed conflict continue to pose a pressing challenge. There should be zero tolerance for gender-based violence and sexual violence. All cases of gender-based violence must be promptly investigated and their perpetrators prosecuted.

We would, however, urge caution in drawing generalized linkages between sexual violence and issues such as exploitation of mineral resources, internal displacement and so on, based on specific country experiences, as the report of the Secretary General contained in document S/2013/149 suggests. It is pertinent to mention here that the

report itself points to the presence of armed conflict as the consistent backdrop in all these situations.

It is also critical that the mandate provided by the Security Council should be observed and the report remain focused on the situations of armed conflict on Council's agenda. The so-called 'situations of concern' are not part of this mandate.

Mr. President,

While UN peacekeeping missions have provided critical support for gender-related issues in countries emerging from armed conflict, we agree with the Report that it is also important to pay adequate attention to SSR and DDR processes to avoid risk of relapse.

We agree with those who call for increased deployment of female military and police personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and for appropriate training to enable UN peacekeepers to effectively discharge their responsibilities.

India stands ready to make available more female formed units at the disposal of the DPKO for deployment as required.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me reaffirm India's commitment to positively contribute to UN efforts in the area of women and peace and security.

I thank you



580. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative in the Security Council Open Debate on “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question”.

New York, April 24, 2013.

Thank you, Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your Presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. I also would like to express our appreciation for convening this quarterly open debate, which will allow the Council to take stock of recent developments in the Middle East, including the State of Palestine. I would like to thank Under Secretary General Jeffrey Feltman for his comprehensive briefing.

2. Mr. President, the Middle East Peace Process is passing through its most difficult phase in recent times. For more than two years, the parties have not held any official meeting. Efforts of the international community, including that of the Quartet, have failed to make any impact on the ground. In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, intensification of settlement activities is fast eroding the very foundation of a two-state solution. The plight of ordinary Palestinians is worsening everyday due to roadblocks and related infrastructure of occupation that put restrictions on the free movement of persons and goods.
3. The blockade of Gaza has also continued causing a great deal of hardships to Palestinians. The plight of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails requires immediate attention. Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority is facing one of the worst financial crises that threaten to erode the progress made in building Palestinian state institutions. If the present situation persists, the international community will risk a serious destabilization in the region. It is therefore imperative that efforts aimed at breaking the deadlock and resumption of peace process are reinvigorated.
4. Mr. President, any political process in order to be meaningful must put an end to Israeli settlement activities. Continuing

settlement activities are a violation of international law and harmful to the peace process. We join others in urging Israel to stop settlement activities in order for the Palestinian side to come to the negotiating table.

5. Mr. President, we have noted that Israel has recently taken some measures to allow flow of essential goods into Gaza. Still the continuing blockade remains in force, and is adversely affecting essential services, economic activities and infrastructure development. We continue to call for complete lifting of the blockade. The parties should also fully implement the provisions of the ceasefire agreement reached in November 2012.
6. Mr. President, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in its recent meeting in Brussels last month underscored the urgent need of closing the Palestinian Government's financing gap, estimated at \$1.2 billion for the current year. In this context, it is important that international community continues to support financial needs of the Palestinian authority.
7. Mr. President, since the time of Mahatma Gandhi, India's support for the Palestinian cause has been strong and unwavering. India was the first non-Arab country to recognize the State of Palestine in 1988. Since then, India's bonds of friendship with the Palestinian people have been strengthened and reinvigorated by regular interactions. As a member of this Council during 2011-12, India supported Palestine's bid for full and equal membership of the United Nations. Continuing this support, India co-sponsored the General Assembly resolution in November 2012 that upgraded the status of Palestine to a non-member Observer state. India has consistently supported a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue, resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, side by side and at peace with Israel as endorsed in various United Nations Security Council Resolutions and the Quartet Road Map.

8. India has also partnered Palestine in socio-economic development and extended material assistance to the Palestinian Authority. As in previous years, India pledged an amount of US \$ 10 million in 2012 as budgetary support to Palestine. India also contributes US\$ 1 million annually to UNRWA. India is in the process of implementing projects, bilaterally and through IBSA fund, including in the fields of information and communication technology, vocational training and construction of schools.
9. In conclusion, Mr. President, let me express our deep concern at the deterioration of the situation in Syria. We believe that the Joint Communiqué of the Action Group, adopted in June 2012, provides a good basis for resolution of the Syrian crisis. A Syrian-led political process that meets the legitimate aspirations of all sections of Syrian society can alone resolve the crisis, and must be seriously pursued by all parties concerned.

I thank you



**581. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji,
Permanent Representative of India at the Debate of the
United Nations Security Council on the Agenda Item
“Children and Armed Conflict”.**

New York, June 17, 2013.

At the outset, I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate on the issue of:

Children and Armed Conflict.

I would like to thank Ms. Leila Zerrougui SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict and other briefers today for their statements.

Mr. President,

During the past twelve years, subsequent to the adoption of resolution 1379 in 2001, the issue of Children and Armed Conflict has been a regular

item on the Security Council's agenda. A great deal of progress has been made to implement the provisions of these resolutions. However, a lot more remains to be done, especially as the nature of armed conflict threatening the maintenance of international peace and security has metamorphosed significantly during the past decade. This is evident from the Secretary General's reports on this subject, and the comments made by several delegations during our debate today.

Mr. President,

India has been a strong supporter of peacekeeping operations mandated by the Security Council. Over 160,000 Indian troops have served so far under the Blue Flag in all corners of the globe. The experience that we have acquired during the course of this service makes us acutely conscious that adequate resources are still not being made available to fulfil the mandate of UN Security Council Resolutions on this subject. Specifically, we call for more Child Protection Advisors to be deployed in peacekeeping operations.

During these operations, especially in recent times, UN peacekeepers from India have also come across the outrageous practice of children being used as combatants in armed conflicts, notably by so-called militia groups. There is need for the Security Council to examine the implications of this phenomenon on the Council's mandates for peacekeeping operations.

MrPresident,

In the wider framework of the subject of our debate today, we would encourage the SRSG to continue to work with national authorities in developing capacities to deal with children in armed conflict. Support for efforts by national authorities to ensure accountability should be a key focus area. The monitoring and reporting mechanism of the UN envisages involvement and close cooperation with the country concerned for its effective functioning, and can play a useful role in this regard.

It is also important that UN access to non-State armed groups is carried under the cooperation framework between the UN and the concerned government.

It is imperative in this regard that action-plans signed between the concerned governments and the United Nations are implemented rigorously.

The United Nations' Disarmament, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation (DDR) and the Security Sector Reform (SSR) programmes, inter alia, must focus on guaranteeing the safe return of these children and their reintegration into society.

We believe that the UN Peacekeeping Fund (PBF) can be used to formulate projects to focus on reintegration of children affected by armed conflict.

Mr. President,

There is one issue regarding the report of the Secretary General placed before us today on which my delegation would like to join others before me in expressing concern.

OP16 of resolution 1379 requested the Secretary General to report on situations that are on the Security Council's agenda or that may be brought to the attention of the Security Council by the Secretary General, in accordance with Article 99 of the Charter, which specifically limit such issues to those that, in his opinion, threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

All subsequent resolutions, which draw upon OP16 of 1379, have reiterated this framework for the Secretary General's report. However, we note with concern that despite this clearly spelt out mandate, the report of the Secretary General has included issues which cannot be considered a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security as laid down in Article 99 of the Charter.

In our view, by going beyond the mandate, the Secretary General's report also contains the potential of diverting our already scarce resources in dealing with the issue of children and armed conflict to areas beyond the parameters of UN Security Council resolutions on the subject.

We request the Council to take note of this concern while considering the report.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me reiterate India's strong support for the objectives set out in Security Council resolutions on the issue of children and armed conflict, and our continued commitment to help achieve these objectives.

I thank you



582. Statement by Amb. M.S. Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN at the Security Council Open Debate on "Maintenance of international peace and security: conflict prevention and natural resources".

New York, June 19, 2013.

Thank you, Mr. President.

At the outset, I would like to thank you for convening today's open debate on this important issue of "Conflict Prevention and Natural Resources". I would also like to thank your delegation for preparing a concept paper on the topic under discussion. I also take this opportunity to thank Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for his statement earlier in the day.

Mr. President,

The intrinsic link between effective management of natural resources and development is a time tested reality. Conflict, indeed, holds back development. It is a fact that in several countries on the agenda of the Security Council, including those in Africa, control over natural resources and their exploitation are serious exacerbating factors fanning conflict and also remain major impediment to post- conflict nation building.

If one peeps into history of these conflicts, both control and exploitation of natural resources have been driven largely by factors outside the control of the affected countries. Outside interference for control and exploitation of natural resources when combined with political objectives and ethnic rivalries has been a particularly combustive mix for conflicts.

This has caused several countries in Africa to remain mired in conflicts for decades. It is therefore necessary to tackle the issue holistically.

Mr. President,

It is imperative that we fully respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all UN member-states, including when this Council considers situations on its agenda. The international community, including this Council, must respect the states' right to control and manage their affairs, including natural resources. There must be no attempt to be prescriptive about control, management and use of natural resources by the states concerned.

Even while some countries in Africa are in conflict related to natural resources, we must note that the continent has been the second fastest growing region in the world in the past decade. During the first decade of the current millennium, six of the 10 fastest growing economies were from Africa. The collective African GDP is expected to grow to US \$ 2.6 trillion by 2025. Clearly, with the increased assistance of the international community, conflict affected countries in Africa can achieve faster progress.

In this regard, it is important for the international community, particularly the United Nations, to play a seminal role in capacity building of the concerned member- states. Conflict-affected countries do need assistance to fulfill their international commitments and strengthen their internal institutions, including those dealing with security and border control.

The role of the international community, including the relevant UN agencies, should be to enhance development partnership with the countries in conflict situation. This should include higher allocations of financial, technical and human resources by donors and UN agencies and must be aligned with national priorities of the countries concerned.

Mr. President,

We commend the efforts and commitment of the relevant UN agencies in developing capacities of countries in conflict and post conflict situations. We hope that their commitment to capacity building of States, including in control and management of natural resources, will be matched by

adequate resources and support will be provided based on request of national government and on mutual agreement.

Before I end, Mr. President, let me state that there has been a concerted push to bring several normative issues into the Council's agenda under the pretext of their affecting international peace and security. This needs to be avoided for the effective functioning of the UN system. The Charter provides clear division of responsibilities between the General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC, and other specialized bodies created by the member-states. All UN bodies, including this Council, must respect this division of roles and responsibilities.

Thank you



583. Statement by Amb. Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN at the Security Council Debate on UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

New York, June 20, 2013.

Thank you, Mr. President,

Let me begin with thanking you for scheduling today's debate on the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). I thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for his statement. We also thank the UN Secretary General for his latest report and are appreciative of the briefing by Mr. Jan Kubis, UNSG's Special Representative for Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

The security situation in Afghanistan remains fragile as demonstrated by a number of high profile terrorist attacks over the last two months. We condemn these attacks in the strongest possible terms and convey our condolences to the Government and people of Afghanistan.

The sharp increase in the variety, spread and intensity of attacks by the Taliban and their backers shows that the ANSF continues to require

substantial assistance from the international community in addressing the security and terrorist challenge faced by Afghanistan. Concerted action is needed to isolate and root out the syndicate of terrorism, which includes elements of the Taliban, Al-Qaida, Lashkar-e-Taiba and other terrorist and extremist groups. It is, therefore, important that the transition plan is based on the ground situation rather than a pre-determined timeframe.

The efforts of the international community in Afghanistan should remain focused on security, development, governance, and regional and international cooperation which is aligned with the overall objective of the Afghan government. This alone will enable the Afghan government to eventually assume full responsibility and take charge of Afghanistan's destiny without outside interference.

We welcome that the third Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process held in Almaty in April 2013 renewed the international community's commitment to these objectives. India was represented by the External Affairs Minister H.E Salman Khurshid, who endorsed India's support for the Implementation Plan. India also fully supports the "Heart of Asia" process, which offers an invaluable opportunity to evolve a joint approach on issues of mutual concern through its pillar of political consultations. The process also offers us the opportunity to fulfill the promise of regional cooperation that was identified at Istanbul, Kabul and Delhi and further elaborated in the deliberations in the Implementation plan of the Trade, Commerce and Investment Opportunities CBM that India is leading.

Mr. President,

Afghanistan is a traditional friend and partner of India. The two countries have had a long shared history going back over millennia. The two countries are natural strategic partners by virtue of geography and a common vision of peace and cooperation in the region. Accordingly, India has taken a number of initiatives in pursuance of our Strategic Partnership Agreement with Afghanistan.

India's commitment to partner with Afghanistan as it takes charge of its destiny was reiterated during the visit of President Karzai to India in May 2013. During the visit, both sides reviewed the status of ongoing Indian-assisted development projects in and for Afghanistan, which amount to

more than US\$ 2.5 billion. We have also pledged continued development support for Afghanistan post 2014 under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework.

Turning to the regional aspect, Mr. President, Afghanistan's stability and economic development depend a lot on its neighbours and the region as a whole. We must expand, rather than hinder, trade, transit and transport ties, including overland transit and trade. That is the best way of bringing the regional dimension into play in a positive manner. Growing economic inter-dependence will also help in weaning disaffected youth away from insurgency and militancy and in creating a zone of co-prosperity in the region. We support the wishes of the Government of Afghanistan to take the lead in this direction.

Mr. President,

The holding of presidential and provincial council elections, currently scheduled for 5 April 2014, will be an important step forward in strengthening the democratic framework in Afghanistan. It is also important that the ongoing transition must remain Afghan-led and Afghan-owned, must be multi-faceted and should ensure the protection and promotion of the human rights of all Afghans, and lead to the strengthening of the Afghan state and its institutions.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me state that in the arduous journey for lasting peace, prosperity and stability in Afghanistan, the Afghan government needs a long-term commitment of the international community to confront the challenges that lie ahead. We appreciate the good work done by UNAMA in this regard. India will continue to stand by Afghanistan as a historically close and friendly neighbour through the ongoing transitions.

Thank you



584. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to the UN at the UN Security Council Open Debate on “Sexual Violence in Conflict” under Agenda Item on “Women and Peace and Security”.

New York, June 24, 2013.

Thank you, Mr. President.

At the outset, I would like to thank you for organizing this important open debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict in the broader context of the discourse on Women, Peace and Security.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Ms Zainab Hawa Bangura, SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Angelina Jolie, Special Envoy of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and civil society representative Ms. Jane Adong Agywar from NGO Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, for their remarks.

The resolution of conflict situations requires the adoption of a sustainable, holistic approach to conflict resolution and the overall reconstruction of impacted societies. In our view, gender equality and women's empowerment are integral to the pursuit of this objective. The participation of women in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction efforts are imperative to lay the foundation for durable peace. Economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy cannot be achieved without the active engagement of women.

Thirteen years ago, UNSCR 1325 highlighted the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and children and the need for effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation of women in peace processes. That resolution also contained several detailed recommendations on how to deal with various aspects of this issue.

As reports made to the Security Council since UNSCR 1325 was passed show, we have not made enough progress on implementing its recommendations. Take, for example, the peacekeeping operations mandated by the United Nations Security Council. As one of the major

contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations for over six decades, Indian peacekeepers serving under the Blue Flag have also had to deal with this pernicious problem under challenging circumstances. We are of the view, based on our experience on the ground, that the Security Council must make available the resources that are required to implement the expanded scope of peacekeeping mandates. Specifically, we require greater commitment to the deployment of women's protection advisers in peacekeeping operations.

Mr. President,

The Security Council had called in UNSCR 1325 for greater participation of women in the field-based operations of the United Nations in terms of deployment of police personnel. We are proud of the fact that India was the first member state of the United Nations to successfully deploy an all-women police force as part of the United Nations peacekeeping operations in Liberia, where sexual violence had been one of the hallmarks of the conflict. Apart from the effectiveness of this force, which has been acknowledged by many, we believe that the functioning of such an all-women force has also sent a strong deterrent message to those who indulge in the egregious crime of sexual violence in conflict. By deploying women to deal with conflict situations, we have demonstrated that we can push forward the goal of empowering women to deal with the crime of sexual violence in armed conflicts, and play a major role in post-conflict reconstruction of traumatized societies. We hope that this example will encourage others to follow suit.

Mr. President,

India has drawn the attention of the Security Council in earlier debates to the impact of so-called militia groups on the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations. As the reports made to the Council since the adoption of UNSCR 1325 show, this impact has been felt especially in crimes of sexual violence in conflict situations where peacekeeping mandates are in force.

It is in this context that we take the view that national governments have the primary responsibility for prosecuting and deterring such crimes in conflict situations on their territories, even if these are alleged to have been committed by so-called militia groups. We believe that national

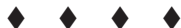
governments should be assisted by the United Nations in augmenting their capacities to deal with this issue. This would play a vital role for ensuring better governance, and the stabilization of post-conflict situations. The UN should focus its efforts in this area.

Mr. President,

We would like to reiterate our principled position that debates such as this in the Security Council should focus on issues related to the mandate specifically given by the Council. We would urge caution in going beyond such mandates in reports submitted to the Council, which can only serve to dilute the focus of the Council and which contain the potential to divert much-needed resources away from the task at hand. It is critical therefore that such reports remain focused on the situations of armed conflict that are on the agenda of the Council, and not stray into so-called "situations of concern" on the basis of sweeping generalizations.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to once again reaffirm India's commitment to positively contribute to our collective efforts to tackle the crime of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, in the overall framework of the work of the United Nations on the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and peace building.

I thank you



585. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative, in the Security Council Open Debate on Protection of Civilians: Protection of Journalists in Conflict Situations.

New York, July 17, 2013.

Madam President,

I would like to thank you for organizing this debate on Protection of Journalists in Conflict Situations under the theme of Protection of Civilians. I would also like to thank you for the concept paper on the subject. We

have benefitted greatly from the briefings today by the distinguished Deputy Secretary General and other briefers.

Madam President,

Before making our observations on this subject, we would reiterate India's consistent view that protection of journalists in all situations is the foremost responsibility of every state.

In India, Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution guarantee the right to life, personal liberty, freedom of speech and expression. Such constitutional rights are of fundamental importance in any democratic society. Journalists play a crucial role in ensuring that citizens exercise these rights in reality. As the world's most populous democracy, India is committed to the protection of these rights for all its citizens, including journalists.

Our ingrained awareness of these rights is an integral part of our participation in the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations, where India has been the largest contributor. Indian UN peacekeepers have helped restore peace and security in conflict situations around the globe and thereby facilitated the creation of a conducive environment for the exercise of the right to freedom of speech and expression.

Madam President,

Since 1950, India has adhered to and fully supported the Geneva Conventions. We also recall this Council's demand in Resolution 1738 that all parties to an armed conflict comply fully with the obligations applicable to them under international law related to the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including journalists, media professionals and associated personnel. Such compliance is necessary not only for access to information, but also for resolution of conflict situations and for post-conflict peacebuilding.

Madam President,

While discussing best practices for protecting journalists in conflict situations, we would recommend certain basic precautions. These recommendations are meant to put in context issues of access and security in conflict situations. First and foremost, journalists should

function within the relevant domestic laws of the countries concerned, so that they have full recourse to the protection afforded by such laws to them. Second, their access to conflict zones should be in a legal manner. Third, they should maintain strict neutrality and impartiality and not become a party to the conflict. By following such precautions, it will become easier for States to protect journalists, facilitate their professional work, and ensure that journalists become a catalyst for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

On their part, national governments must come together and pledge to provide protection to journalists in conflict situations, especially where their whereabouts and coordinates have been provided in advance.

Madam President,

We have witnessed the tremendous dynamism and professionalism of journalists in reporting from conflict situations. Many journalists, including women, have performed their professional duty at grave personal risk. The protection that these journalists have received from responsive mechanisms, established by states under the rule of law, demonstrates the need to support the further development of such mechanisms. The efforts of the Council and of the international community require to be directed at assisting national authorities in augmenting such mechanisms, and in generating greater awareness of these issues. This is the most sustainable method for sovereign governments to discharge their responsibility to protect journalists in conflict situations.

Thank you



586. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative, at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question.

New York, July 23, 2013.

Thank you, Madam President,

Let me begin by expressing our appreciation of the US delegation for convening this quarterly open debate, which will allow the Council to take stock of recent developments in the Middle East, including the State of Palestine. I would like to thank Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry for his comprehensive briefing.

Madam President,

2. We welcome US efforts, including the visits of Secretary of State John Kerry, to re-engage Israel and Palestine in direct talks. We hope that the recent announcement of the two sides to re-start direct talks after perhaps one of the longest period of stalemate since the signing of the Oslo Accords will lead to concrete results.
3. In this context, it is necessary to address the issue of Israeli settlement activities, which have continued unabated and remain a serious obstacle. These activities are not only illegal, but also pose a serious threat to the two-state solution. We join others in urging Israel to stop settlement activities.
4. The blockade of Gaza is also continuing and adversely affecting essential services, economic activities and infrastructure development. While we appreciate measures taken by Israel to allow flow of essential goods into Gaza, these measures cannot be a substitute for lifting the blockade.
5. The Palestinian Authority continues to face one of the worst financial crises that threaten to erode the progress made in building Palestinian state institutions. It is important that international community continue to support financial needs of the Palestine authority.

Madam President,

6. As a member of this Council during 2011-12, India supported Palestine's bid for full and equal membership of the United Nations. Continuing this support, India co-sponsored the General Assembly resolution in November 2012 that upgraded the status of Palestine to a non-member Observer State.
7. India continues to partner with the Palestinian Authority in its socio-economic development, including through the provision of direct budgetary grant, training programmes and IBSA projects.
8. India also continues its consistent support for a negotiated solution to the Israeli- Palestinian issue, resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, side by side and at peace with Israel as endorsed in various United Nations Resolutions, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Road Map. We call on the international community to redouble its efforts for an early resolution of this conflict.
9. Before I conclude, Madam President, let me express our deep concern at the deterioration of the situation in Syria. We look forward to an early holding of the Geneva-2 Conference which should help commence a Syrian-led inclusive political dialogue that resolves the current crisis and meets the legitimate aspirations of all sections of Syrian society. Any further militarization will only exacerbate the conflict and must be avoided by all parties concerned, internal as well as external.

I thank you



587. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative, Open Debate on “Cooperation between the United Nation and regional and sub-regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security” at the United Nations Security Council.

New York, August 6, 2013.

Thank you, Madam President.

Let me begin by congratulating you on presiding over this high-level meeting of the Security Council. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub- regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security is an important and topical issue. We commend the concept note prepared by the delegation of Argentina on the subject.

2. India supports the role of regional and sub-regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as their cooperation with the United Nations under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Article 54 of the Charter enjoins upon these organizations to keep the Security Council fully informed of their activities for maintenance of international peace and security. We, therefore, welcome the participation of, and briefings by, representatives of various regional organizations in this meeting today.
3. Madam President, The Charter provides a broad framework for the UN’s cooperation with the regional organizations, while clearly underscoring the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.
4. It is important to underline here that cooperation of the United Nations, particularly of this Council, with regional organizations should be in full compliance with all other provisions of the UN Charter. The principles of national sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity must be respected. It is important that peculiarities of each situation are kept in mind.

Also, cooperation with one regional organization should not come at the cost of another.

5. We believe that the objective of peaceful resolution of conflicts should imbue the actions of the United Nations, in general, and of the Security Council, in particular. It is important that member-states guide all UN activities, including its cooperation with regional organizations.
6. While acting under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, regional and sub-regional organizations should make every effort to assist their member-states to achieve pacific settlement of disputes, in cooperation with the UN, as appropriate. Such cooperation should encompass all relevant issues related to international peace and security, including the fight against terrorism.
7. Madam President, as many as two-thirds of the active items on the Security Council's agenda concern Africa. About three-fourth of the Council's time is spent on African issues. It would, therefore, be no exaggeration to say that the success of this Council's cooperation with regional organizations will be determined in significant measure by its cooperation with the African Union. In this connection, it is important for the Council to listen to Africa and its organizations so that the Council's activities are not only based on Africa's needs but also complement the efforts of African countries and organizations.
8. We think that such an important partnership should be based on long-term strategic and operational perspectives taking into consideration the complementarity of strengths of the UN and the African Union. Our focus should be on capacity-building of the African Union's peace and security architecture so that the AU becomes a more effective and capable partner of the UN system.
9. In conclusion, Madam President, we reiterate that there is a pressing need for further strengthening the existing capacity of the UN system to help regional and sub-regional organizations

in order to significantly ensure the maintenance of international peace and security.

I thank you



**588. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji
Permanent Representative, in the Security Council Open
Debate on “Protection of Civilians in armed conflict”.**

New York, August 19, 2013.

Madam President,

Let me begin by thanking you and your delegation for organizing today's debate on the important issue of Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict. We thank all the distinguished briefers for this debate today for their valuable inputs.

2. It bears recalling that the Security Council has been considering protection of civilians as a thematic subject since 1999. This has also become a key focus in many resolutions, including those that are country- specific and relate to UN peacekeeping missions. However, the sad fact remains that civilians continue to suffer disproportionately during armed conflicts.
3. We, therefore, hope, Madam President, that today's debate and the comprehensive concept note prepared by your delegation will contribute to the evolving discourse on strengthening protection of civilians in armed conflict.

Madam President,

4. India has consistently supported full compliance with applicable international humanitarian laws by all parties to an armed conflict.

5. We believe that a critical requirement in this context relates to the capacities of national institutions in situations of armed conflict and the need to strengthen these. Obviously, capacity building of key national institutions, including in security and justice sectors, requires to be adequately resourced.
6. It is important that the international community, including the UN, step up to the plate and partner with national authorities to build and strengthen the capacity of State organs.
7. Today, as we mark the World Humanitarian Day, we must emphasize that an adequate resourcing is also an imperative for UN peacekeeping missions that are now also being charged with mandates of protection of civilians. We must hold accountable those who target UN peacekeepers who themselves are responsible for protecting civilians in their theatre of operation.
8. Moreover, efforts at peace building should be initiated right at the beginning and the cause of the armed conflict addressed through national reconciliation and inclusive political processes giving all sections of society a stake in peaceful co-existence.

Madam President,

9. The need to ensure humanitarian access for populations affected by armed conflict cannot be overstated and States must endeavor to facilitate the same.
10. However, humanitarian actors must also ensure that their activities do not provide legitimacy or operational space for terrorist or armed groups.
11. Terrorists and illegal armed groups that often bear the primary responsibility for such attacks against civilians should be held accountable for such attacks.

Madam President,

12. Security Council action must be based on full respect for the UN Charter, including sovereignty and integrity of the Member States.

13. In so far as issues of impunity are concerned, we believe that a lasting solution is not in the creation of more international or regional institutions, but in building national institutions through capacity building efforts so that they can function consistent with the rule of law.
14. In conclusion, Madam President, I would like to reiterate our consistent view that protection of civilians is primarily a national responsibility that becomes even more important in an armed conflict. It is our belief that contribution to national capacity building rather than intervention mechanisms should be the priority of the Security Council.

I thank you



589. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, Debate on UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan at the United Nations Security Council.

New York, September 19, 2013.

Mr. President,

At the outset let me thank you for organizing today's debate on the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). I thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for his statement. We thank the UN Secretary General and SRSG Jan Kubis for their inputs.

Mr. President,

Afghanistan is going through critical security, political and economic transitions. We commend the efforts being made by the Afghan Government in ensuring completion of all technical preparations to hold a successful Presidential election. A peaceful and free election process

that elects an Afghan President acceptable to the people of Afghanistan remains the key.

The Presidential elections in 2014 will be yet another significant step towards the political reconstruction effort in Afghanistan which must always remain Afghan-led and Afghan-owned. This will be the 3rd democratic election in Afghanistan, a significant achievement for Afghanistan, and a sign of maturity of its new political system. The international community must strongly support the Afghan authorities' preparations in this endeavour, and at the same time strongly oppose any outside effort to derail the process.

Mr. President,

The security situation in Afghanistan is fragile not due to the weakness or inabilities of the valiant Afghan Security forces, but due to the continued threat of terrorist and extremist groups to Afghanistan's security. This was demonstrated most recently by the condemnable attack on the Indian Consulate in Jalalabad on 3rd August which led to injuries to several Afghan security personnel guarding the Consulate and the killing of several innocent Afghan citizens, including 10 children. India does not have an "exit policy" in Afghanistan and will not be deterred by such attacks. We do not see this attack as only aimed against India, but also against the efforts of the Afghan people to overcome the tragic consequences of the last several decades of war and conflict. The Secretary General's report speaks about 3500 Afghan servicemen being killed and wounded in action in the second quarter of 2013. We salute the valor of ANSF personnel who have made the supreme sacrifice for the objectives and values enshrined in the Afghan constitution. The recent merciless killing of Sayed Kamala Sushmita Banerjee - a woman medical worker of Indian origin who was married to an Afghan national - reflects the intolerance of those who oppose Afghanistan's socio-economic development as also the challenge that lies ahead in Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

Many of the terrorist attacks in Afghanistan have been coordinated by the Taliban along with the Al Qaida and their affiliates. These definitely are pointers that we must be continuously watchful of the designs of

these terrorist organizations. The Al Qaida and Taliban Sanction Committees must remain proactive and attentive in their listing and delisting process of individuals and entities for targeted measures. The international community should continue to back the efforts of the Afghans in addressing the security and terrorist challenges faced by them. Concerted action is also needed to isolate and root out the syndicate of terrorism, which includes elements of the Taliban, Al-Qaida, Lashkar-e-Taiba and other terrorist and extremist groups. It is, therefore, important that the transition plan takes into account the threats posed by these terrorist organizations and factors in the security situation on the ground.

Mr. President,

The international community must re-assess the role it wishes to play in Afghanistan's internal political process, which brings me to the issue of the renewed mandate we should confer upon the UNAMA.

Over the last decade UNAMA has performed a vital political, humanitarian and development role in Afghanistan along with other agencies of the UN system. With the 3rd democratic elections underway, the political reconstruction effort in Afghanistan has reached a level of maturity. We should, therefore, define UNAMA's political mandate to ensure that it keeps its focus on supporting the institutions of politics rather than the political process itself, which must be left to Afghanistan's own leaders.

At the same time the new mandate for UNAMA must step-up its humanitarian and developmental role through better delivery of assistance in Afghanistan, since the UN is uniquely placed with access to the remotest and most isolated communities in the country. When basic services like health, education, nutrition are provided on a regular basis to all Afghans, we would have created a vital 'space' for the new Afghan political system to mature and take deep roots in Afghan society. This development and humanitarian assistance must also be consistent with the ongoing efforts to develop the capacities of the Afghan public administration to deliver such services on its own. Wherever and to the maximum extent possible, the delivery of the humanitarian and development services must be through Afghan state institutions - because it is not capacity 'substitution' but 'capacity building' that we are seeking to achieve in Afghanistan.

Mr. President

The experience of the last decade also shows that the UN Mission in Afghanistan, like some other missions, has also been plagued by problems of coherence in performing its mandated activities. This has inevitably led to a duplication of resources, and a higher cost of programs. The renewed mandate of the UNAMA should also address this issue.

In conclusion, Mr. President, 2014 would be an important watershed for Afghanistan. The international community's support for Afghanistan would be critical in this transition. We appreciate the good work being done by UNAMA in often trying conditions and assure you that India will continue to stand by Afghanistan during this period of transition and thereafter.

Thank you



590. STATEMENT BY MR. M. KRISHNASSWAMY, MEMBER OF PARLAIMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, DURING THE OPEN DEBATE ON 'WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY' AT THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.

New York, October 18, 2013.

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank you for organizing this Open Debate on the agenda item "Women and Peace and Security".

I would also like to thank the UN Secretary General, Executive Director of UN Women and other briefers for their detailed remarks.

Mr. President,

The resolution of armed conflict situations requires a sustainable holistic approach to conflict resolution and the overall reconstruction of impacted societies. The participation of women in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction efforts is necessary to lay the foundation for durable peace. The UNSCR 1325 and its successor Council

resolutions have provided a framework for effective institutional arrangements. As the Secretary General's report points out – significant progress has been achieved but much more needs to be done.

Mr. President,

India is one of the leading contributors to UN peacekeeping operations with over 160,000 peacekeepers under the blue flag during the past six decades, our peacekeepers have an exemplary record. They have also dealt with this problem under challenging circumstances. Based on our experience, we believe that the Security Council must make available the resources that are required to implement the expanded scope of peacekeeping mandates. India was the first Member State to successfully deploy an all-women police force as part of the United Nations peacekeeping operations. By deploying women to deal with conflict situations, including women peacekeepers as well as women protection advisors, we have demonstrated that we can assist in empowering women to deal with the crime of sexual violence in armed conflict and play a major role in post-conflict reconstruction of traumatized societies. We hope that more Member States will contribute greater number of women military and police personnel for UN peacekeeping operations.

Mr. President,

We have taken note of the indicators proposed in the Secretary General's report. Indicators can serve as a useful reference in assessing situations and in guiding UN action as affected countries move from conflict situation to conflict resolution and peacebuilding to post-conflict reconstruction phase.

At the same time, we must not lose sight of the difficulties in ascertaining credible and verifiable information from armed conflict zones. We believe, therefore, that it will be useful to have wider discussions before adoption of these indicators and to refine them including based on feedback from the ground to ensure their relevance and efficacy.

Mr. President,

It is our firm view that capacity building should be a key focus of UN efforts as affected countries emerge from armed conflict situations. If we wish to see sustainable peace and stability, then state institutions,

including in the area of security, rule of law and justice, need to be augmented and strengthened. The national governments have the primary responsibility for prosecuting and deterring violence against women including sexual violence.

States need to take ownership as they embark on the difficult process of rebuilding their societies and countries including consolidation of democratic ideals and practices, and effective improvements in the socio-economic conditions. It is important to recognize here that some structural changes can take place only in the mid to long term. The UN and the international community must step up and sustain their support to the affected States in this critical endeavor.

Mr. President,

We would like to reiterate our principled position that the Security Council should focus on issues related to the mandate specifically given by the Council. We would urge caution in going beyond mandates in reports submitted to the Council. It will be useful to remind ourselves here that the women and peace and security agenda evolved from the imperative to address the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women including the abhorrent practice of sexual violence against women as an instrument of war.

One recommendation in the current report is to incorporate the Women and Peace and Security agenda in other thematic areas such as countering terrorism, trans-national organized crime, etc. This is clearly a mandate overreach; it has also implications for division of work and responsibilities between the UNSC and the UNGA. But the real danger at its core is the potential to dilute significant UN work being done both in the area of women and peace and security, and other areas such as tackling terrorism.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me reaffirm India's commitment to positively contribute to consolidation of UN efforts in the area of women and peace and security.

I thank you



591. Statement by Mrs. Preet Kaur Minister of State for External Affairs, Debate on the “Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question” in the UN Security Council.

New York, October 22, 2013.

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

At the outset let me express our appreciation to you for convening this quarterly open debate, which allows the Council to take stock of recent developments in the Middle East, including the State of Palestine. I would also like to thank Under Secretary General for Political Affairs Mr. Jeffery Feltman, for his comprehensive briefing.

Mr. President,

2. Resolution of the Palestinian question remains an urgent and key issue for the international community. It is a prerequisite for building a sustainable and lasting peace in the Middle East region. Given the evolving situation in the Middle East region and its inherent fragility and unpredictability, it is necessary that there is no more delay in the resolution of the Palestinian question.
3. We are encouraged by the ongoing direct talks between Israel and Palestine facilitated by the US. We hope that the direct talks which have resumed after one of the longest period of stalemate since the signing of the Oslo Accords will lead to concrete results within the time frame of nine months envisaged by the US Secretary of State, Mr John Kerry.
4. In this context, it is necessary to address the issue of Israeli settlement activities, which are continuing unabated. These activities are not only illegal, but also pose a serious threat to the two-state solution. We join others in urging Israel to stop settlement activities.
5. The blockade of Gaza has had serious consequences for the lives of Palestinians. It has adversely affected essential services,

economic activities and infrastructure development. We continue to hold that it is necessary for Israel to lift the blockade on Gaza and allow normal and unrestricted movement of persons and goods within Palestine.

Mr. President,

6. India remains steadfast in its support for a negotiated solution to the Israeli Palestinian issue resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders with East Jerusalem as its Capital, side by side and at peace with Israel as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap, various UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.
7. Given the financial difficulties that the Palestinian Authority continues to face, India remains committed to support the Palestinian Authority bilaterally as well as through IBSA Fund. Bilaterally, we continue to partner with the Palestinian Authority by providing developmental support and assistance through direct budgetary support, contributions to UNRWA, training, etc. Through IBSA Fund, we will continue to undertake capacity building and infrastructure projects that are prioritized by the Palestinian Authority.
8. As demonstrated over the past six decades, including during its memberships in the UN Security Council, India also stands ready to support all measures that the Palestinian leadership may take towards political resolution of the Final Status issues.

Mr. President,

9. Before I conclude, I would like to express our deep concern at the situation in Syria. While we welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 2118 on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme as well as the Presidential Statement on the humanitarian situation in Syria, we are concerned at the continuing violence and worsening humanitarian situation.
10. We have long held that there is no military solution to this conflict. We continue to think that an inclusive political dialogue to resolve

the crisis should remain the focus of the United Nations, including this Council. We look forward to an early holding of the Geneva-2 Conference, which should help commence a Syrian-led inclusive political dialogue that resolves the current crisis and meets the legitimate aspirations of all sections of Syrian society.

I thank you



592. Statement by Dr. Ahwani Kumar Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian delegation on the Open Debate on Security Council Working Method.

New York, October 29, 2013.

Mr. President,

Let me at the outset, thank you for convening this open debate on Working Methods of the Security Council. I also thank your delegation for authoring the concept note which gives a perspective on the various issues being discussed under the broad rubric of the working methods. I would also like to put on record our deep appreciation of Ambassador María Cristina Perceval's stewardship of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Procedural Questions during the year 2013.

Mr. President,

In the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, Heads of States and Governments supported early reform of the Security Council and recommended that the Council continue to adapt its working methods to the exigencies and imperatives of a vastly altered global order. It is a matter of regret that so far very little has been done to achieve either of these mandates.

Mr. President,

As the primary organ of the UN system for maintenance of international peace and security, working methods of the Council are of interest to the entire international community. As the concept note has rightly

mentioned, issues of transparency, interaction with non-members of the Council, Troop and Police Contributing Countries and relevant United Nation bodies are important for the overall efficiency of the Council and need to be addressed urgently.

Mr. President,

I would like to briefly share India's perspective on how the Security Council could improve upon its performance. Let me start with a quote from the famous writer-poet Victor Marie Hugo, who said, "There is nothing stronger than an idea whose time has come". Reform of the Security Council in tune with the contemporary realities is an idea whose time has come. The permanent members of the Security Council must recognize, not only individually but also collectively, that the Council must be reformed to make it reflect the contemporary realities of the international system.

It is self-evident that the expansion of the Security Council reflecting the contemporary geopolitical realities would improve its representative character and grant greater legitimacy and credibility to its decisions.

Also, the improvement of Security Council's working methods would enhance the Council's effectiveness and efficiency. We strongly believe that real improvements in the working methods need change in both the process and approach, which require reform of the composition of the Council.

Mr. President,

The most important change required in the working methods is to make them transparent and inclusive. The Security Council needs to increase access to documentation and information and curb the tendency to hold closed meetings having no records. What is worse is the practice of taking decisions among the P-5 to the exclusion of other Council members as was seen just last month on an important issue of international peace and security.

Mr. President,

During the last few years, my delegation has strongly supported efforts in the Informal Working Group aimed at improvements in the Council's working methods. Some specific suggestions include the following:

One, the Council should amend its procedures so that items do not remain on its agenda permanently.

Two, the reporting cycle should be practical and result-oriented so that issues do not come for consideration just as a matter of routine, putting pressure on the limited time Council has at its disposal.

Three, Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter must be fully implemented, by consulting with non-Security Council members on a regular basis, especially members with a special interest in the substantive matter under consideration by the Council. There is a need to strengthen the trend of meeting more often in public, including through holding public briefings and debates.

Four, 'penholders' should allow greater and systematic participation of elected members

as 'co-penholders'.

Five, non-members should be given systematic access to subsidiary bodies of the UNSC, including the right to participate.

Six, participation of Troop and Police Contributing Countries in decision making concerning peacekeeping operations must cover the establishment, conduct, review and termination of peacekeeping operations, including the extension and change of mandates, as well as for specific operational issues.

Seven, there is a need to ensure more informative annual SC reporting to the GA.

Eight, the Council should concentrate its time and efforts on dealing with issues concerning its primary responsibility concerning international peace and security as mandated by the UN Charter, rather than encroaching upon the mandate of the General Assembly and other UN organs.

Nine, before mandating measures under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council should first make serious efforts for pacific settlements of disputes through measures under Chapter VI.

Mr. President

In conclusion, let me reiterate India's considered view that genuine reform in the working methods of the Security Council requires a comprehensive reform in the membership of the Council, with expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories, and not only improvement in its working procedures. This is essential both for the credibility and continued confidence of the international community in this institution. It is our sincere expectation that these ideas will be pursued by Council members so that views expressed by the wider UN member-states find resonance in the Council's work and working methods.

Thank you



593. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative on United Nations Security Council debate on "Situation in Afghanistan".

New York, December 17, 2013.

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me thank you for organizing this debate on the 'Situation in Afghanistan'. I avail this opportunity to thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his statement. We also thank UNSRSG Jan Kubis for his inputs.

Mr. President,

Let me begin by expressing our concern with the attacks in Afghanistan's Uruzgan province on 26 November and in the Faryab province on 27 November, which resulted in the death of nine development workers. We are pained that this attack has brought the number of attacks against humanitarian personnel, facilities and assets in Afghanistan to 237 so far this year. All this points to the fact that the main threat to security in Afghanistan is terrorism being perpetrated by those who do not want to see a strong stable prosperous Afghanistan.

We note that progress has been made in the finalization of the candidates for the Presidential and the provincial elections due in 2014. This is a significant step during a period of Afghanistan's transition which encompasses security, political and economic dimensions. I would like to reiterate that the key to successful elections in 2014 is a process whose outcome is acceptable to the people of Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

The events preceding the Presidential elections are extremely important as they would bring to the political discourse issues which are close to the heart of Afghan people. This would impact on the political reconstruction effort in Afghanistan which must always remain Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and 'Afghan-Controlled'. At this juncture, the support of the international community for the Afghan authorities' electoral preparations is critical. We must also be vigilant towards any efforts to derail the process and this would certainly include strengthening the security apparatus.

Mr. President,

The security situation in Afghanistan remains under threat from terrorism. The report of the Secretary General mentions that during the first ten months of 2013, there were 7,394 civilian casualties - a 13 per cent rise compared to the same period in 2012. Three-quarters of these casualties were attributed to attacks by anti-Government elements. It is also noteworthy that the use of improvised explosive devices, including in complex and suicide attacks, accounted for 49 per cent of these casualties and remains the biggest threat to civilians. There are forces active to derail the process of reconstruction. Here, I would like to reiterate that India would be undeterred by these cowardly acts of violence. We do not have an "exit policy" in Afghanistan and I would like to emphasize our commitment to stand by the Afghan people and their servicemen who have shown exemplary courage in protecting the Afghan people.

Mr. President,

The internal security situation has been hostage to the terrorist attacks originating from beyond Afghanistan's border by groups closely allied to the Al Qaida and their affiliates. We would like to reinforce

that we must be continuously watchful of the designs of these terrorist organizations. In this regard, concerted action is also needed to isolate and root out the syndicate of terrorism, which includes elements of the Taliban, Al-Qaida, Lashkar-e-Taiba and other terrorist and extremist groups. In order to have a smooth transition security plan, It is therefore extremely important that the drawdown of troops and its implication on the security arrangements is carefully assessed and appropriate measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the Afghan people. I note that the Secretary General has mentioned the twelfth annual trilateral meeting of Foreign Ministers of Russia, India and China on 10 November 2013 which emphasized the need for continuing international support to and greater regional integration with Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

We also note the recent announcement of record levels of poppy cultivation and opium production. The Secretary General's report rightly mentions that it is a critical hazard to the security, well-being and development of Afghanistan and the wider region. This aspect must not be neglected.

Mr. President,

In view to the efforts of the international community to have an Afghan-led process of transition, the time has come for the international community to re-assess the role it wishes to play. I would suggest that we need to discuss the issue of mandate of UNAMA. Afghanistan has reached a considerable level of political maturity with the ongoing political reconstruction efforts. There is no doubt that UNAMA has played an exceptional role over the last decade in the political, humanitarian and development spheres in Afghanistan along with other agencies of the UN system. However, I would like to mention that in view of the maturity of the process in Afghanistan, the international community may wish to define UNAMA's political mandate in light of the changed circumstances. The new mandate of UNAMA should help to keep its focus on supporting the political institutions rather than attempting to influence the political process itself, which must be left entirely to Afghanistan's own leaders.

Mr. President,

Talking of UNAMA's role, we also believe that UNAMA must step-up its humanitarian and developmental role through better delivery of assistance in Afghanistan, since the UN is uniquely placed with access to the remotest and most isolated communities in the country. We must also not forget that it is not capacity 'substitution' but 'capacity building' that we are seeking to achieve in Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

The future role of UNAMA needs to be discussed so that it plays an effective role keeping in mind the overall objective of the transition process. In doing so we must take into account problems of coherence, the duplication of efforts and the resulting higher cost of programs.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to say that as we enter a new year, we should be hopeful that Afghanistan would be taking definite strides towards a new era of development and progress. India sincerely believes that the huge efforts of the Afghan people and the international community that has gone into the process of transition would provide a solid basis for a stable future. We would like to assure that India will stand by the people of Afghanistan in all its endeavours. We reiterate our support to the efforts of the international community leading towards a peaceful, prosperous and stable Afghanistan.

Thank you



(ii) General Assembly

594. Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative at the First Regular Session of Executive Board of UN Women.

New York, January 23, 2013.

Mr. President,

Permit me at the outset to congratulate you on your election as President of the Bureau. On behalf of more than 500 million Indian women (and equal number of men), I wish you all success and hope that you would successfully navigate the Board, in pursuing its goals on gender equality and empowerment of women.

My felicitations to the Executive Director and Under Secretary-General, Madam Michelle Bachelet for her statement and our complements for an extremely insightful and detailed report on the operational activities of UN Women, which has been placed for consideration by the Board.

Mr. President,

As we begin the third operational year of UN Women, I would like to recall the goals that we set out in the Strategic Plan when we had just embarked on our first steps, after creation of this entity. We had then called for it, to be 'ambitious, achievable and results oriented'. Today, at the beginning of the third operational year of UN Women, my delegation is happy to note the significant milestones that UN Women has achieved under the dynamic leadership of Madam Bachelet, in such a short span of time.

I am particularly pleased to learn from the operational activities report that UN Women has made strengthening and expanding 'partnerships', its key edifice, while pursuing and implementing its mandate, especially by forging active partnerships with civil society stakeholders, NGOs, academia, media and the business community. We are also happy to learn the unique manner in which social media has been used as part of globally driven communications strategy to achieve an audience of 40 million, through social media alone!

Mr. President,

Section IV- D, of the Report on Operational Activities, focusses on the theme of ending violence against women and chronicles UN Women's efforts in achieving the same. I choose to begin my first submission on that theme today, because it is of particular interest to my delegation, and finds resonance, especially in the aftermath of the horrific rape incident that was witnessed in my capital on 16 December 2012.

Representing a country which is home to more than 500 million women, let me first place on record Mr. President, that for me and for my Government, even one incident of violence against any woman or any girl, is an incident too many, and simply unacceptable.

The edifice of the Indian society is premised on the all embracing power of the Indian woman - which in our ancient thought and religious belief, bestows her the power to create, nurture and transform. She is not only worshipped as 'Durga' the goddess of creation, but also as 'Saraswati' - the inspiration for all music, poetry, science and learning.

It is therefore absolutely reprehensible that such an horrific tragedy happened on Indian soil. While it would remain a blot on the strong feminist credentials of the Indian societal fabric, the incident indeed shook the whole conscience of our nation at its very roots.

Let me assure you, Mr. President, that the Government of India will ensure that the culprits are brought to speedy justice, and the sternest possible message sent out by giving them the punishment they deserve. The Government of India shares the collective anguish of all Indians, on this most horrific incident, and today's report of Justice J S Verma's Committee has suggested ways to initiate a series of steps to ensure that such crimes do not happen again.

We believe in the dictum that: "No country can achieve its full potential without adequately developing the capabilities of its women." And that is why women in India have always played a pivotal role in shaping our national discourse and policy making. Economic empowerment of Indian women at the grass roots level, especially through the Self-Help Groups has been a hall mark of India 's success story. Out of the six million self help groups in India, more than 80% (about 4.8 million) are women's groups, which have provided microfinance, employment and livelihood,

and have made a defining change in the lives of millions of Indian women at the village level.

Mr. President, allow me to flag two more issues of particular relevance to our discourse on operational activities for UN Women:

After intense deliberations, member states were able to adopt in the 67th UNGA, the QCPR resolution, which set out the overall policy direction for UN's development operational activities for the next four years. Within the same, we have been able to ensure a very strong focus on keeping gender equality and women's empowerment as the cornerstone of all development activities, and that UNWOMEN should take the lead in ensuring accountability of the UN system when it comes to delivering on these variables, especially, in terms of results and impact.

We would therefore call upon UNWOMEN to make full use of the empowering mandate given by the QCPR Resolution to make operational activities of the UN development system truly transformative for women and girls everywhere .

As we plan for our activities for the next four years, we must also try to work out modalities whereby the 'actionables' on gender equality and women's empowerment as flowing from the QCPR, are implemented through programmes and projects of UN Women, as well as other funds and programmes. We must also work out means to dovetail these into those country programmes, whose periods are synchronous with the time frame of the QCPR resolution.

Secondly, while there is growing recognition that investing in gender equality and empowerment of women is critical to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, given the current financial environment, work on gender equality and empowerment of women does remain chronically underfunded. We hope that the comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy of UN Women, would certainly widen the donor base in order to secure the resources required by UN Women in meeting its global commitments.

Even the QCPR resolution has endorsed the imperativeness of a critical mass of core resources to be made available. Being a recently created entity, this is more than critical for UN Women, as it would enable you to strengthen your programmes on the ground and implement the Strategic

Plan. In this regard, there is a need for donors to increase their contribution to core resources by giving UN Women the foremost priority for enhanced funding, till it secures a firm footing of its resource pool.

Being fully cognizant of this funding requirement, just last week we moved beyond what you called 'love and fresh air' and contributed our third installment of US\$ one million to UN Women's core resources, taking our total contribution to US\$ 3 million so far, since its inception. It is but a small part of Government of India's firm commitment of five million US dollars to provide core predictable funding to UN Women. If we have to ensure that UN Women stands for action, the donor community must make generous contributions to UN Women. We will continue to provide full political and financial support to UN Women and call on others to do likewise.

Given that South South cooperation and development of national capacities is a key component of the UN Women's implementation strategy, we are particularly pleased to learn about the success of the 'South Asian first ever virtual knowledge hub' for elected women's representatives, that Madam Bachelet launched in Jaipur, during her visit in October last year to India, which has been an epitome of success at empowering women at grassroots democracy.

Let me conclude, Mr. President, by reaffirming India's steadfast commitment to all round social, economic and political empowerment of our women, whatever effort and resources, the task might take. We assure you that India will always be willing to walk the extra mile, in having the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan implemented at the earliest.

Thank You



595. Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative at UNDP Segment of the First Regular Session 2013 of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS.

New York, January 28, 2013.

Mr. President, Permit me at the outset to congratulate you on your election as President of the Bureau. I wish you all success in navigating the Board in implementing its agenda, in what promises to be an eventful year.

We would also like to place on record our appreciation to the outgoing Bureau, which was so ably presided over by Ambassador Martin Grunditz, Permanent Representative of Sweden, and his commendable role in guiding the work of the Board last year. My felicitations are also due to the Administrator Madam Helen Clark for her insightful statement and well crafted report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy.

Mr. President, 2012 was marked by major developments across the globe and several key conferences that not only provided an opportunity for stock-taking, but also served as useful reminders to the international community on the pressing challenges that remain to be addressed on the global development agenda. Rio plus 20 outlined the imperative of poverty eradication as the greatest global challenge, and laid down the roadmap for the "future we want ". We must therefore ensure that effective implementation mechanisms and the means that developing countries need to achieve the same, are followed up, and provided for, by the multilateral system.

As a country that has one of the longest relationships with UNDP and is the biggest contributor to its core budget among developing countries, we have an abiding interest in UNDP's success and its efforts in the global development agenda. I would therefore, Mr. President, submit the following for your consideration:

One, we had been saying all along, that for the UN development system to be successful globally, it needs to be firmly rooted in its core focus

area, which has primarily to be development related ONLY, and that the 'D' in UNDP should stand for decimating poverty. With the adoption of the QCPR Resolution by the 67th UNGA, this has been made even more abundantly clear. For the first time ever, in such a resolution, you have a section dedicated exclusively to Poverty Eradication, in which you have been given the mandate by 193 member states to "assign the highest priority to poverty eradication" which has been reaffirmed in the same resolution as the "greatest global challenge".

I would like to quote OP 70 of the QCPR resolution: "eradication of poverty through the development of national capacities in developing countries should continue to be the core focus area for the United Nations development system and that ALL its development programmes and projects should attempt to address this greatest global challenge as their underlying objective "

I hope that given this very specific mandate outlined by the QCPR, which also happened to be a long standing and considered conviction of my delegation, you would now try to place poverty eradication at the heart of UNDP's operational activities for development, as its primary objective.

Mr. President, incidentally, we now also have before us the findings of the evaluation report on UNDP's contribution to poverty reduction, whose findings need to be taken seriously. We hope that in the crafting of the next strategic plan, the specific message from this report would be addressed as well.

Second, as you prepare your next strategic plan for the period 2014 - 2017, it is absolutely imperative that all the "actionables" that the UN Development System and its agencies have been called upon by member states to pursue by the QCPR, are not just incorporated but also implemented as part of the strategic plan being so developed. It would also be prudent to dovetail these actionables into those UNDP country programmes, which are synchronous with the time period of the QCPR.

Third, an agenda item being discussed in this Board Session within the purview of programming arrangements is the establishment of the Contingency Fund, with a proposed allocation of USD 46.8 million dollars. Mr. President, we would like to submit that member states need to be assured of the following before you decide to establish the Fund:

Is there a specific need which has arisen in 2013, which necessitates the creation of this Fund? Should it be given a 7% allocation just because another sister agency made a decision in 1997 to do so? Why should money from an already shrinking resource pool for programming activities of member states, be kept aside, when the same precedent to which its existence is being borrowed from, illustrates that last year more than 80% has gone unutilised? These are some questions that do merit some answers, before we proceed to establishing, what we feel is a misnomer in the name of a Contingency Fund.

Fourth and finally, Mr. President, even though South South Cooperation is being singled out as a new buzzword in the evolving narrative of the developmental discourse, much more remains to be done to give it the 'muscle' it needs from the UN system. We believe, the first thing to do is to let it proceed and grow on the basis of its unique characteristics of national ownership and mutually agreed terms. Looking at South-South cooperation as either permitting a dilution or substituting for North-South aid would only serve to shackle it to the detriment of developing countries.

Along with Brazil and South Africa, we have partnered in the IBSA Trust Fund Initiative, which has been a flagship project under the overall canvas of South South cooperation. We have already concluded several key developmental projects including rural electrification through solar energy systems in Guinea Bissau, improving the health infrastructure services for Children in Cambodia, rehabilitation of health centers and water desalination projects in Cape Verde, capacity building projects in Sierra Leone, besides several others in Palestine, Burundi and Lao PDR. As Chair of the IBSA Trust Fund last year, we explored ways to further strengthen our engagement with the UNDP through innovative partnership mechanisms that facilitate development solutions for other developing countries, particularly the LDCs. We are particularly thankful to the UN Office for South South Cooperation for the excellent support we have received and hope that it would be given the resources it needs to pursue its mandate.

To conclude, Mr. President, this Board Session, given its agenda, is an important and timely opportunity not just for stock taking but also to constructively contribute to UN's development agenda. Our suggestions have been made in this spirit and I hope will find resonance in the larger UNDP community.

For us, UNDP has and will remain the force multiplier arm of the UN, which will continue to foster national and local capacities and promote national ownership by building socio-economic resilience in the most vulnerable developing countries. We reaffirm our steadfast commitment and support to UNDP, and India is willing to walk the extra mile in helping you, achieve your mandate of poverty eradication.

I thank you



596. Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative, at UNDP Segment discussing Evaluation Report on UNDP contribution to Poverty Reduction at UNDP Segment of the First Regular Session 2013 of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS.

New York, January 30, 2013.

Mr. President, I would like to complement the UNDP Evaluation Office for an excellent report on evaluation of UNDP contribution to Poverty Reduction. Our felicitations also to UNDP for having requested this exercise, on a very critical and pertinent theme, which has not just found resonance in the deliberations of this Board, but has also received considerable attention within the QCPR Resolution.

Mr. President, we firmly believe that course correction is always a welcome exercise and any endeavour, which is based on facts and rationale, that have a sound evidence base, in this regard, is never too late ! More so, when we are tackling what has been termed as the "greatest global challenge" of poverty eradication. That is precisely why the findings of the Evaluation Report on UNDP's contributions are welcome and must find reflection in the Strategic Plan for 2014-2017.

I would therefore ONLY submit, the course corrections that the Evaluation Report has pointed that UNDP needs to make, so that we are able to put focus on what we need to do, rather than just delve on what we have

already done. So these are what in my delegation's view are the most pertinent for UNDP in terms of course correction :

One, finding number 8, of the Evaluation Report clearly points out and I quote : "Even when UNDP undertakes activities with an explicit poverty orientation, the approach often lacks a pro-poor bias and tends to rely instead on the trickle-down process. i.e., the idea that the benefits of any general development activities would somehow trickle down to the poor - and must incorporate specific measures so as to impart a pro-poor bias in the policy framework. However, the present evaluation finds that when it comes to specific projects designed to support poverty reduction, the general tendency is to rely on the trickle-down process instead of making conscious attempts to introduce pro-poor elements in the project design. " We do need to factor this and correct it at the earliest

Second, Conclusion 2, of the Evaluation Report points out, quote: "UNDP activities at the country level are often disconnected with overriding commitment to poverty reduction established and are not always consistently designed around an explicit bias towards the poor. While Poverty reduction remains the core focus area of UNDP and the principal objective of its work, by the time it gets to the country level, the focus on poverty reduction often becomes diluted. So even though the overriding UNDP priority is poverty reduction, a large part of the activities it undertakes at the country level and the manner in which it undertakes them does not conform to this priority. Many of its activities have only remote connections with poverty, if at all. Examples include border management, helping to write reports on the country's compliance with multilateral environmental agreements, advising on arcane aspects of trade promotion, and so on."

Mr. President, these are the areas of concern that the report has identified and raised some very pertinent questions, that we do need to consider and factor in, as we plan our course correction for the future.

In fact Para 38 of the report, states and I again quote : "Even the activities undertaken within the poverty portfolio do not always have an adequate propoor bias. This is especially true of the projects related to international trade and private sector development. An agency that has explicitly declared poverty reduction as its overriding priority, UNDP should not

be satisfied with the gains that are possible through the trickle-down process. Its priority demands that it should seek to maximize the gains for the poor by explicitly trying to impart a distinct pro-poor bias to whatever it does and that all programmes and projects give specific consideration to their effects on the poor."

Mr. President, let me submit that we have also noted the response of the Management to the findings of the evaluation report, and find that the response summarises the crux of the matter in a sub- heading titled "targeted versus holistic" debate. The broad argument in the response being that since 'non poverty streams of work also have very powerful impact of poverty reduction', the direct targeting with a pro-poor policy approach may not be the best way around! Our submission to this element of management's response is as follows :

First, allow me to begin with a purely illustrative example which would hopefully help understand the point we are trying to make, if you have a situation, when a person who has been deprived of drinking water for four - five days, is thirsty and on the verge of collapse, not just because he cannot afford it but he doesn't even have access to it, would we be offering him, immediately the first source of water available nearest, or would we be looking at exploring options on whether to give him mineral or sparkle water ?

Today, we have more than 1.3 billion people still living below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day. It would therefore be much better in the immediate run for all of us to first focus, on getting them out of their misery by investing in informed choices that they need the most and have an immediate impact, which can only be done through pro-poor policies like supporting job creation, investing in education, health, vocational training and other social enablers. This is NOT at all to belittle or say that 'holistic approaches' doesn't work, but simply to submit that we do need to get our priorities right.

And our second submission in response to the Management Report, is that this is also the mandate 193 member states have given to UNDP in Para 73 of QCPR and called upon UNDP to focus on capacity building, employment generation, education, vocational training, rural development, and the mobilization of all possible resources among others which aim at achieving poverty eradication"

To conclude, Mr. President, we all know that all human endeavour including that of the development arm of UN System is indeed directed, in some way or the other, in achieving poverty reduction. We all appreciate that and acknowledge the same.

But given the complexity of the mounting challenge, it would be better to focus our collective energies through policies that bear dividend in the immediate run, for the sheer enormity of numbers we are grappling with, who are still stuck in abysmal levels of poverty, is still more than one sixth of humanity. This is what the Evaluation Report submits and we would like this very course correction to be incorporated at the earliest.

I thank you, Mr. President.



597. Extempore Remarks by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at Joint Meeting of Executive Boards of UNDP UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP on operationalising the decisions of the QCPR.

New York, February 4, 2013.

Mr. President,

I want to thank you very much for convening this joint meeting of all of the Executive Boards on the extremely pertinent question of how to operationalise the decisions of the QCPR Resolution.

Mr. President, I must say I am extremely honoured to be speaking in the room today with all the Executive Directors here, present, and to me this is a major sign of their personal involvement and of course, that of their agencies and I am very appreciative of that. Let me also say that I come from a country which has been a strong member of the family of development cooperation of the United Nations across the board.

In every single one of the agencies which we see represented there, the funds and programmes we see represented here, we have been both

beneficiaries and have been participants. We have contributed and we benefited a lot from the work they have done over years in my country. Indeed some of the largest programmes are held there (I see Mr. Lake of UNICEF looking at me, and Sir I acknowledge that fact and I'm very happy about it and I say that for everyone) UNDP, UNFPA and indeed all of them WFP you yourself are partners in that.

We have also been doing our part in the UN's development cooperation efforts. We are among the largest contributors from the developing nations to the core resources of the funds and programmes. And we will continue to be strong in our partnership and in both working with the funds and programmes as well as taking advantage of the expertise, the skills, etc. that they bring. We are very happy to do that.

Mr. President, you have called this meeting basically to seek views on a specific question : the question regarding the prioritization of how the QCPR resolution should be implemented. And I think this is a particularly important meeting, a meeting where all 193 member states have come together so that we can now try to give a policy direction of how do we implement what we have all agreed to, unanimously, and by bringing all of us on board on a common purpose and theme.

I am also very happy that a background paper was put together and that the background paper has outlined a large number of themes, etc. which are extremely important including transition, funding, implementation of Delivering As One, results focus, RBM, strengthening the RC system, and several others. And I want to say that we are very supportive of all of these and the way they are evolving. After all much of the guidance has to be related to the actual working of the funds and programmes. That is particularly important. We have certainly to look at the minutiae of how things are done and we are supportive of that.

Mr. President, I am really wanting to speak here about something that I think is extremely important, and which needs to be the overall guiding principle and guiding direction of what we do. And its not the first time that India is making this point, many other delegations have also said so, and that is to draw your attention to OP 71 of the QCPR resolution and let me quote ""Calls upon the organizations of the United Nations development system including funds and programmes and specialized

agencies as per their mandate to assign the highest priority to poverty eradication and that efforts in this area should be scaled-up to address the root causes of extreme poverty and hunger"

There is also OP 70 of the QCPR resolution which states: "eradication of poverty through the development of national capacities in developing countries should continue to be the core focus area for the United Nations development system and that ALL its development programmes and projects should attempt to address this greatest global challenge as their underlying objective"

Mr. President why am I making this effort?

I am making this effort because I somehow get the feeling by looking at the various papers and participating in discussions, and we are participants in all of them, that while this is what the member states have desired, this is what has been adopted in the General Assembly, and more so in the Rio Declaration, where poverty has been identified as the greatest global challenge, I find that in the detailed documents which get produced much is said about the minutae actions etc, of various sides, but this particular theme is not addressed upfront and as the main highest priority and as the core objective.

Mr. President let us try and understand what exactly we are talking about and why am I trying to stress this.

Even today Mr. President, there are 1.3 billion people living below the poverty line of a \$1.25. We have done well in the course of our pursuing the MDG programmes. We have made tremendous efforts and we have had success but I think we have a long way to go. And I don't think the time is right for us not to have a single minded focus on what is the absolute critical thing for everybody on this earth : to have a minimum standard of life and a minimum quality of a decent life assured to them.

This in my opinion is the single biggest challenge that we face, recognized by the world, and should be the guiding lode-star and indeed the chief point and focus of our policy direction. Naturally, we need to work on this in terms of job creation, building productive capacities, supporting capacity development and investing in education, health, vocational training, social enablers, targeted pro--poor policies, and many many in fact all UN agencies funds and programmes have been working in this

particular area. Poverty eradication continues to remain, and should continue to remain to be the highest priority as noted in the QCPR resolution and in fact the core guiding principle and the policies and programmes, etc. need to be targeted in that direction.

Mr. President, I want to thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

Thank you



598. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the First Regular Session 2013 of the Executive Board of UNICEF.

New York, February 5, 2013.

Mr. President,

Permit me at the outset to congratulate you on your election as President of the Bureau. I wish you all success in navigating the Board in implementing its agenda, in what promises to be an eventful year.

We would also like to place on record our appreciation to the outgoing Bureau, which was so ably presided over by Ambassador John Ashe for his commendable role in guiding the work of the Board last year. My felicitations to the Executive Director Mr. Anthony Lake, his insightful statement and well crafted report on the TCPR of operational activities, for transmission to the ECOSOC.

Mr. President, 2012 was the year, when we successfully completed the second running year in which no fresh case of polio was reported in India and WHO declared that polio was no longer an epidemic in India. This is a major achievement, and a fascinating story to narrate:

The oral polio vaccine was introduced in India in 1978, a year before this neck of the woods (USA) was declared polio free! Till 1988, there were about 350,000 child deaths due to polio globally, and within India by 2009, we were able to bring it down to 741 cases. In 2010, it dropped to 42 and by 2011, only one, and last two years NONE. Today, officially 71% of

children in India are immunized against polio, with 98% of children in the highest-risk areas having been immunized. And all this was possible, by the determined efforts our Health Ministry and the MoWCD, who through the National Polio Surveillance Project, and with support from UNICEF and WHO made it a sustained and unending mission. And today, from being the world's largest victims of polio, we have transformed ourselves to a polio free nation and become one of the world's largest donors to the global polio eradication campaign.

We have therefore in UNICEF, a trusted and reliable partner, who we are sure, would continue to place children at the heart of achieving the 'future we want', as we agreed to in Rio. As a country that has one of the longest relationships with UNICEF and with home to the largest number of children in the world, we have an abiding interest in UNICEF's success and its efforts in ending preventing all preventable child deaths. In June last year, we partnered with UNICEF, and the US and Ethiopian Governments to successfully launch the 'Child Survival: Call to Action' event which had one ambitious yet achievable goal: to end preventable child deaths. We have since then left no effort unspared in reaching the most disadvantaged and hardest to reach children, in pursuit of this exercise.

Mr. President, having flagged our success stories with UNICEF< let me also submit a few points for your consideration in view of the MTSP (Medium Term Strategic Plan) that UNICEF is embarking upon:

One, we welcome the strong focus on promoting greater equity in the development process by investing in the health, education and protection of the most disadvantaged and excluded children. These investments are critical in breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty and help in creating more stable societies and promote sustained economic growth.

Two, within the context of the MTSP, all the "actionables" that the UN Development System and its agencies have been called upon by member states to pursue by the QCPR Resolution, may not just be incorporated but also implemented as part of the MTSP being so developed. It would also be prudent to dovetail these actionables into those UNICEF country programmes, which are synchronous with the time period of the QCPR.

Three, another welcome development that we see, is the emphasis on 'partnerships' across the board, and with all stakeholders. This is a positive tidings and a force multiplier in the development domain. Your partnership with the World Bank, a theme that you elaborated in the first session today, has resulted in concrete success through the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, the School Fee Abolition Initiative, Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) as well as the WASH initiative. In all of these, you deserve, our compliments and more power to your elbows.

Four, an area that we would like you to focus further upon is what we discussed yesterday, on leveraging South South cooperation for the larger benefit of children in the developing world. Even though South South Cooperation is being singled out as a new buzzword in the evolving narrative of the developmental discourse, much more remains to be done to give it the 'muscle' it needs from the UN system. Countries of the South, including India, have several ongoing initiatives including our joint initiative with Brazil and South Africa, under the IBSA Trust Fund, and we have already implemented some extremely critical projects with special focus for children using this TF. These include a construction of a Hospital for Children with special needs in Cambodia, delivery of safe drinking water in Cape Verde and construction of a football stadium in Ramallah. We therefore, hope that you would continue to partner with countries of the South in complementing them achieve their goals, especially in those projects which have an explicit 'children friendly' focus.

Fifth, we have also noted with deep concern the issue of decline in thematic funding of the UNICEF that has been flagged in your report to the ECOSOC. As members of the Executive Board, we pledged US \$900,000 last year, and would be committing another similar amount at the pledging conference on Thursday. We hope that a comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy that addresses this decline in thematic fund, and enables UNICEF to use programme resources more flexibly and responsively would soon be worked out.

To conclude Mr. President, the Executive Board Meeting is very timely and important as it provides an opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of children all over the world.

As home to one fifth of the children in the world, we are steadfastly committed to ensuring protective and nurturing environments for children to reach their full potential. We would like to once again express our sincere appreciation for UNICEF's efforts in fulfilling our common vision of an early realisation of children friendly environments universally.

I thank you, Mr. President.



599. Statement by Mr. Prakash Gupta, First Secretary, on Agenda Item 13 during Pledging Segment at the First Regular Session 2013 of the UNICEF Executive Board.

New York, February 7, 2013.

Mr. President,

India's close and productive association with UNICEF dates back to the agency's inception and is based on our strong and abiding faith in the relevance of UNICEF's message and mandate.

As home to one fifth of the children in the world, India is steadfastly committed to the cause of ensuring the basic needs of children in India and beyond, and helping create protective and nurturing environments for children to reach their full potential.

Mr. President,

As outlined in our Statement at the Plenary Session of the First Regular Session, 2012 was the second year running, when we reported no new cases of polio, and WHO declared that polio was no longer an epidemic in India, which was a significant milestone in our polio eradication effort. We are also pleased to report the universalisation of Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, the launching of the Integrated Child Protection Scheme and further expansion of flagship programmes like National Rural Health Mission and Sarva Siksha Abhiyan.

The Government of India and the UNICEF country programme of cooperation is one of the largest and most diverse UNICEF supported

country programmes globally In this regard, I wish to inform the Board that the Government of India has already pledged US \$900,000 to UNICEF for the year 2013. The announcement to this effect was made by India at the 2012 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities held on 14th November, last year.

To conclude, we would like to once again express our sincere appreciation for UNICEF's efforts in fulfilling our common vision, for an early realisation of children friendly environments universally.

Thank you, Mr. President.



600. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the global launch of the International Year of Quinoa- 2013 at the UNGA.

New York, February 20, 2013.

Mr. President,

Secretary General of the United Nations, Excellencies and distinguished delegates.

India is privileged to be participating in this global launch of the International Year of Quinoa 2013.

We are equally privileged and honoured by the presence amongst us of H.E. Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, President of Bolivia, who has been the guiding spirit behind this initiative.

We also deeply value the presence of H.E Ms. Nadine Heredia de Humala, First Lady of Peru, H.E. Rafael Orbegoso Foreign Minister of Peru, H.E. Ms Silvana Vallejo, Vice Minister of Rural Development of Ecuador and H.E. Mr. Jose Graziano da Silva, Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

The distinguished gathering here today is testimony to the global recognition of Quinoa, its growing popularity across continents, and its potential and possibilities for the future.

Mr. President,

In 2011, this august Assembly adopted a resolution to celebrate 2013 as the International Year of Quinoa. My delegation lent its full support to this initiative. And today, as we gather here to celebrate Quinoa "the golden grain of the Andes", let us remind ourselves of its unique qualities, as a food source, as a cultural value and as a versatile agricultural practice. In today's climate-vulnerable world, where we are constantly challenged by our quest for food security, quinoa offers a sustainable, healthy and nutritive dietary option.

It is the only plant food that contains all essential amino acids, vitamins and trace elements, and at the same time is gluten free. Its exceptionally high amino acid content enriches it with unique therapeutic properties, qualities that make it a superior nutritional option over other grains that form part of our daily food habit.

As a rich source of protein, it holds immense nutritional and health value for populations in developing countries, especially those who depend on legumes for their daily protein intake. And with more than a billion people worldwide suffering from malnutrition, almost all in developing countries, what more affordable way can we have than to promote protein and vitamin rich Quinoa to tackle the challenge.

Mr. President,

Quinoa is a highly adaptive crop which can grow in variable agro-climatic zones. In its home in the Andean region, there are more than 3000 genetically diverse varieties of Quinoa grown in the coast, in the alluvial plains, in the valleys and in the higher reaches of the mountains.

Today, Quinoa's agronomic versatility has allowed it to travel far and wide. Farms in Asia, Europe and Africa are experimenting with Quinoa production, and these efforts have met with appreciable success.

In my own country, Quinoa cultivation is under trial in the Himalayan region and in the plains of North India. AMARANTH, a crop also native to the Americas with similar properties as the Quinoa, which grows widely in India, makes the trials more than promising.

With low input cost, Quinoa production is highly cost effective. As such its potential to tackle hunger, disease and poverty and to meet the

Millennium Development Goals in an affordable manner is truly immense. We look forward to the initiatives of the FAO to promote and popularize quinoa, especially in those parts of the world, where we are still a long way behind in providing the basic needs of people.

Given its environmental adaptability, and our need to identify crops that can best adjust to Climate Change impacts, Quinoa offers several possibilities for adaptation strategies, and can contribute to food and nutrition security in both developed and developing countries.

We must bring greater use of science and technology to promote and propagate Quinoa, and at the same time be willing to share its fruits for greater public good. We fully appreciate the work being done by the FAO on this score and pledge India's committed support to its initiatives.

Mr. President,

Feeding our people and providing them with sustenance is a challenge that we, in developing countries, grapple with daily.

My Government's commitment to providing food security to every citizen of India remains resolute and unflinching. We are in the process of considering a food security bill that would guarantee subsidized grains to more than 600 million people in India, with special provisions for women and children.

To many of us here, the success of Quinoa symbolizes our collective hope that we pin in sustainably harnessing our biodiversity resources for meeting the needs of our present and future generations. It equally reinforces our faith in traditional knowledge and practices, as we look around our daily lives for sustainable solutions.

In October last year, India successfully hosted the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity. At the meeting, we pledged to delve deep into our forests and our wild fields and in our countless but constrained biotic species to find new solutions for food security and sustaining livelihoods. We hope our efforts to promote Quinoa will go a long way in this common endeavour.

Mr. President,

Quinoa is more than a crop. It represents the celebrated spirit of the Andean civilizations and its proud people, people who have preserved

their traditional knowledge and practices and taught us to how to live in harmony with nature.

For centuries and over countless generations, they have preserved their wisdom and bequeathed to us their richness, colour and diversity of life. In today's world, as we strive to balance growth with social equity and environmental sustainability, they are our guiding lights.

President Morales, the Andes, the Andean people and the indigenous civilizations of the New World hold special place in our hearts in India. Over centuries of intermingling, our two lands have exchanged ideas, values, flora and fauna. While you added potato, tomato, maize, papaya and more to our cuisine, we gave you coconut, sugarcane and mango. And now you give us and the world quinoa !

Mr. President,

We deeply appreciate and support the plans drawn by FAO to promote Quinoa as part of the International Year programme, and hope these efforts would continue much beyond. We wish President Morales and Madam Nadine Heredia every success as Special Ambassadors to FAO for the International Year of Quinoa, as they take this initiative forward.

India remains committed to working with the global community to make the International Year of Quinoa a success.

I Thank You



601. Intervention by Smt. Krishna Tirath, Minister for Women and Child Development, India during the High Level Round Table at the 57th Session of the Commission of Status of Women.

New York, March 4, 2013.

Madam Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor. The priority theme of this year's CSW session namely 'elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls' is very relevant given that this scourge remains pervasive despite repeated reaffirmations, globally and at national levels, to combat it.

Madam Chair,

As recent events of horrific violence against women in India and other parts of the world indicate, it is often not the lack of legislative framework that hampers our efforts, but rather its effective implementation. We of course need to strengthen legislative and policy framework as well.

The widespread nature of this problem is a manifestation of unequal power structures among men and women, and of how women's role is perceived. We need to ensure that the stigmatization of victims, the trivialization of the crime and impunity of perpetrators are all ended.

We must also work towards empowerment of women, politically, economically and socially. We must debate relevance of deeply held beliefs and social attitudes and modify them so that they are not a hindrance to social advancement and economic progress.

Madam Chair,

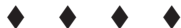
The Government of India has recently taken a number of steps. It has set up fast track courts to try cases pertaining to violence against women. It promulgated an ordinance in February 2013 which broadened the definition of sexual assault and harassment, and violent behavior and provided for greater accountability of public officials. The Parliament also adopted a law in February to combat sexual harassment of women in the workplace. These measures complement existing legislative framework that address the issue of trafficking; sexual offences against

children; and domestic violence. The government is developing protocols for police, medical functionaries, and other service providers to improve coordination of its response to victims of violence.

Madam Chair,

Efforts to combat violence against women and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment are integral to our pursuit of building vibrant inclusive societies. In conclusion, let me reaffirm our full commitment to eliminating the scourge of violence against women and girls. We firmly support the efforts of the United Nations, in particular UN Women in this regard.

I thank you, Madam Chair.



602. STATEMENT BY MRS. KRISHNA TIRATH, MINISTER FOR WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT DURING THE GENERAL DISCUSSION AT THE 57TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION OF STATUS OF WOMEN.

NEW YORK, MARCH 5, 2013.

Madam Chair,

At the outset, let me state that we look forward to working with you and the Bureau for a successful CSW Session. I also thank the Secretary General for his reports.

Madam Chair,

Violence against women and girls must be unequivocally condemned and tackled. We need to ensure that the stigmatization of victims, the trivialization of the crime and impunity of perpetrators are all stopped.

We must also resolutely combat discriminatory practices and prejudices, and firmly oppose any attempts to rationalize such practices on the basis of tradition or custom.

As recent events of horrific violence against women in India and other parts of the world indicate, it is not the lack of normative framework or basis that is impeding our efforts, but rather its effective implementation. These gaps must be identified and plugged.

Madam Chair,

The Government of India has taken a number of steps recently. It has set up fast track courts to try cases pertaining to violence against women. The report of the government established committee headed by the former Chief Justice of India Mr. J.S.Verma is very comprehensive and recommends a range of measures.

Based on these recommendations, the Government promulgated an ordinance in February 2013 amending the criminal law in India. It significantly broadens the definition of sexual assault and harassment, includes new types of violent behavior such as voyeurism, stalking, etc, and aims for greater accountability of public officials.

The Parliament also adopted the 'Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Bill, 2013 in February this year covering women employed in both public and private sectors. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act came into force in November, 2012.

The Government has recently announced budgetary allocation worth US\$ 200 million for a dedicated fund to implement measures to ensure dignity and safety of women.

Madam Chair,

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 addresses the issue of both marital and familial abuse. It recognises that violence can take various forms, including physical, economic, social and psychological. There is also a comprehensive legislative and policy framework to address the problem of trafficking of women and girls.

Women victims of domestic violence are supported through shelter, medical help, legal aid, compensation, maintenance orders, temporary custody of children as also vocational training as required. For better coordinated response, the government is developing protocols for police

and investigating agencies, medical functionaries, lawyers, and other service providers.

The government is introducing "One Stop Crisis Centre for Women" in 100 identified critical districts during the course of this year with the aim to provide integrated services required by women subjected to violence.

Madam Chair,

The pervasiveness of violence against women is a reflection of unequal power structures among men and women, and how women's role is perceived by the society. It is, therefore, equally important to work towards empowerment of women, politically, economically and socially.

An empowered woman is more likely to participate in decision making in the family and beyond. Thus, both combating violence against women and ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment, which are mutually reinforcing processes, lie at the heart of our pursuit to building inclusive societies.

We also need to debate deeply held beliefs and social attitudes, not with a view to dismiss them but to modify them as required to facilitate social advancement and economic progress.

Awareness generation and sensitization programmes are an integral part of government's efforts to combat violence against women. We see civil society as valued partners in this endeavour.

A recent initiative of Ahimsa (peace) messengers has been introduced to mobilize communities at grassroots level as change agents to combat violence against women in both public and private spaces. Another scheme Saksham is being formulated aiming at holistic development of adolescent boys to make them self-reliant, gender-sensitive and aware citizens.

Madam Chair,

In 1992, India provided for 33% reservation to women in rural and local government bodies launching the mass political mobilization of women unprecedented globally given its scale. Today, close to 1.5 million elected women representatives are working in these bodies contributing to tangible progress in bridging the gender-divide in decision making and at the social level.

India's five-year development plans have recognized the importance of women both as contributors and agents of change. Gender is a cross-cutting theme in all development plans, particularly in areas of education, health and skills-training.

A number of schemes are already in place for socio-economic empowerment of women. The government has proposed to set-up India's first all Women's Bank to assist women entrepreneurs and has allocated US\$ 200 million as initial capital. Another US\$ 40 million has been recently earmarked for empowerment of vulnerable women.

Madam Chair,

In conclusion, let me reaffirm our full commitment to advancing the goal of gender equality and empowerment of women globally and to eliminating the scourge of violence against women and girls. We firmly support the efforts of the United Nations, in particular UN Women in this regard.

I thank you, Madam Chair.



603. STATEMENT BY MR. ALOK A. DIMRI, COUNSELLOR, ON AGEBND A ITEM 146 - ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF FINANCING UNPKOs AT THE 5TH COMMITTEE FORMAL MEETING AT ITS FIRST RESUMED SESSION ON THE SENIOR ADVISORY GROUP (SAG) ON TROOP COST.

NEW YORK, MARCH 8, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me at the outset welcome you and all the delegates to the first resumed session of the 5th Committee. My delegation aligns itself with the Statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Fiji on behalf of the G-77. Our thanks to USG Haq & Chairman ACABQ for presenting respective reports to the Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me also recall that our deliberations during the fall session were comprehensive and intense. However, the Committee could not reach consensus on a few agenda items that remain outstanding. We are hopeful, under your able guidance, we will be able to surmount those barriers this time. Our gratitude is also to those who continue to volunteer to steer the 5th Committee process despite stretched hours in a spirit of collegiality and inter-governmental settings. They deserve all our respect.

Mr. Chairman,

The recommendations of Secretary General's Senior Advisory Group's (SAG) on troop cost are before the Committee now for its consideration. SAG was set up on the basis of General Assembly's Resolution 65/289 following a protracted engagement on this matter. SAG's mandate and composition were well spelt out in its founding resolution. My country was a member of this group alongwith other troop contributing countries besides others who represented financial contributors, regional representatives, and persons of eminence selected by the Secretary General. This group was ably supported by the Secretariat staff to whom we owe our thanks.

Mr. Chairman,

UN has dealt with troop-cost reimbursement rates for decades now. This engagement is characterized by phases ranging from informal-methods prior to 1973, proactive engagements thereafter till 1991, deliberative phase that lasted from 1991 to 2001, and a passive phase thereafter. SAG happens to be the singular lone attempt to address this issue in a focused manner.

Mr. Chairman,

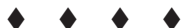
The group's recommendations present an opportunity to resolve this long-pending issue. The option to postpone it further is simply not available to us. Moreover, it is imperative that we make every effort to consolidate this partnership that underpins peacekeeping. All peacekeeping stakeholders today have a duty and responsibility to preserve this vital instrumentality by rising above national concerns alone the way peacekeepers have done for decades beyond their national call for duty.

Mr. Chairman,

SAG's recommendations were agreed by consensus and these are presented to us for adoption today. The challenge this Committee is faced today is financial and more. Its resolution will necessitate political will and an express commitment to UN peacekeeping.

Lastly, Mr Chairman, as a member of the Senior Advisory Group and a longstanding TCC let me assure you of my delegation's commitment in this matter.

Thank You



604. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Acting Permanent Representative, On behalf of the Asia-Pacific troika of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the First Meeting of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, at the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, March 14, 2013

Mr. Co-Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of our Asia-Pacific troika consisting of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by Fiji on behalf of the G-77. The Group played a key role in engraving the concept of SDGs in the Rio+20 negotiations, and has a great responsibility in completing this task.

At the RIO+20 Summit, we pledged ourselves to strive for a better future for our peoples, a future that would give them hope and succour, ownership and pride. In doing so, we agreed to work on a set of sustainable development goals. We are happy that we have started on that road today, and are hopeful that we would accomplish the task at hand in an inclusive and equitable manner. We assure you of our troika's full support as you take this process forward.

Mr. Co-Chair,

We have taken some time in getting this group up and running, but in the process we have ensured that all voices have been heard, patiently and intently. Inclusivity has its own time-line and we must respect it.

As we get down to frame our sustainable development goals, we must bear in mind that sustainable development and its long held principles belong to one symbiotic whole. At Rio+20, the international community unequivocally reaffirmed its commitment to the RIO principles, in particular the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities in pursuing global action on sustainable development. We must respect this reaffirmation in letter and spirit. These goals, universal in nature, can only be meaningful if differentiation is appropriately embedded in them.

It is unreasonable to craft sustainable development goals without paying due regard to the responsibility of those who rushed towards development without much regard for the needs of the global environment.

Of equal significance is the need to address unsustainable consumption and production patterns and lifestyles of people in developed countries, and answers to these persisting challenges remain seminal to crafting a truly universal sustainable development agenda.

Universality of the SDGs mean that developed countries must also have a meaningful and comprehensive set of action points as part of these goals.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Our sustainability agenda must ensure economic prosperity, social cohesion and environmental protection in an integrated manner and in a manner that we place equal emphasis on each of the three pillars of sustainable development.

In line with such an understanding, we would propose that we work first on a set of stand-alone economic, social and environmental goals as part of the SDG menu, before we delve into their inter-linkages.

As stated in para 247 of the RIO+20 outcome document, we must work to fashion a limited number of goals that are aspirational in nature, simple to comprehend, concise and easy to implement and precise to communicate.

At the centre of our efforts and objectives must be the overriding priority of poverty eradication, recognized as the greatest global challenge at RIO+20. These goals must enhance the option of livelihoods and inclusive growth. Meeting our water, food and energy needs, imparting access to health and education to those still lagging behind, strengthening gender equality, youth empowerment, creating opportunities for the burgeoning youth population, and protecting our habitat and ecology are certain issues that appear to us being central.

Our pressing sustainable development challenges remain closely interlinked and intertwined. Food security, for example, cannot be solved only by addressing the fragilities in agricultural practices, it is much more dependent on macro-economic issues of agricultural subsidies, rules of multilateral trade and capacities of countries to absorb external shocks. We have to be mindful how to address these inter-linkages in a coherent manner.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Means of Implementation remains key to our efforts. Each SDG must be accompanied by dedicated means of implementation. They cannot be targets that countries would have to meet through their own resources.

Mobilization of international resources including ODA, transfer of technology and capacity building support is critical to the success of our work.

We agree that ODA alone may not be sufficient to meet our objectives. It is therefore critical that we put in place a global economic environment, including restructuring of the global financial infrastructure that is conducive to development, one that provides adequate policy space for developing countries to combine the benefits of economic growth, social equity and environmental opportunity.

In this regard, ensuring financial stability, meaningful and effective market access for developing countries, early conclusion of the DOHA Round, agreement on a debt settlement mechanism and greater say for developing countries in global governance structures remain fundamental and critical.

All these issues must be made an integral part of the global partnership supporting the SDGs. The global financial institutions must reflect increased flexibility towards developing countries.

South-South cooperation must also contribute, in keeping with its values and principles, but it cannot be a substitute for North-South Cooperation.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Behind all this is the need to coordinate the work of this Open Working Group and other parallel global efforts on the post-2015 development agenda. Our wish is to collectively fast track all these activities through effective institutional reforms in the UN system. Some of the agreed reforms must be absolutely creative if we are serious on our expectations.

Equity and fairness lies at the heart of crafting a set of sustainable development goals for the benefit of our peoples. The future we want must be a future for all. The principles underpinning the SDGs should receive our highest priority and attention as we start our work ahead.

I thank you



605. Statement by Ambassador Sujata Mehta, Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva at the Arms Trade Treaty Conference.

New York, March 18, 2013.

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your well-deserved appointment as the President of this Conference. We assure you of our full cooperation in the discharge of your important responsibility. Conscious of your call for us to eschew general statements, I wish to confine my statement to highlighting India's approach on some key aspects of the proposed Arms Trade Treaty.

Mr. President, we have agreed to work on the basis of the July 26 text even though like many others we believe that it is not a basis for a decision on a treaty. There is still considerable distance to cover before we reach that goal. We hope we will have both the time and the environment to give the negotiating text the serious attention it deserves and reach a positive outcome by consensus. In this regard, we wish to acknowledge

your efforts to consult widely. Given the complexities of the issues involved and the need to bring on board all stakeholders it is important that we proceed in a manner that promotes the prospects of a treaty that is practical and implementable and is able to attract universal adherence.

In our view, it is important that some critical deficiencies in the current draft are addressed during the negotiations. I will spell out two of the more important ones.

The ATT should make a real impact on illicit trafficking in conventional arms and their illicit use especially by terrorists and other unauthorized and unlawful non-State actors. Without such provisions, the ATT would in fact lower the bar on obligations of all states not to support terrorists and/or terrorists acts enshrined in various UNSC resolutions and anti-terrorism Conventions. We cannot allow such a loop hole in the ATT.

While the ATT should ensure a balance of obligations between exporting and importing states, the current draft tends to tilt the balance further away from importing countries. The ATT should not be an instrument in the hands of exporting states to take unilateral force majeure measures against importing states parties without consequences. Such a loop hole in the Treaty would have the affect of strengthening the hands of a few exporting states at the expense of the legitimate defense and national security interests of a large number of importing states parties. To correct the imbalance, rights of importing states should be elaborated and further strengthened. Any other outcome would not only be not acceptable to a large number of countries, but also underline the irony of a multilateral process involving all UN members if in the end it is sought to be used for the benefit of a few.

India remains committed to engaging actively and constructively for a balanced and implementable ATT, which recognizes that arms trade as a legitimate activity for defense, national security and foreign policy interests and in which national implementation and domestic jurisdiction are fully respected. We have a strong stake in such an outcome as one of the largest importers, as a State whose security interests have been affected by illicit transfers of weapons and as a State that has always exercised the highest degree of responsibility in conventional arms transfers. We look forward to working with all delegations to enhance

the prospects for a viable and effective treaty of universal acceptance involving all the main producers, recipients and users of conventional weapons.



605-A. Extempore Remarks made by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Acting Permanent Representative at the Annual Retreat of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC).

New York, March 20, 2013.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for giving me the floor.

Assistant Secretary General, Mr. Olav Kjørven, thank you very much for informing us that the UN system is having truly global conversations (on the post 2015 development agenda). We are in the 68th session of the UNGA and it's high time, we have such conversations on such extremely pertinent issues.

I see this wonderful report (UNDP HDR 2013) - 'The Rise of South'. I feel very good, I come from the South. But it feels like the South has arrived, everything is there and it is time now for the South to take care of South. That's not certainly the case and the facts do not absolve the North from its responsibilities. That is what we need to understand. South-South Cooperation is growing but it must be very clearly understood that this is neither a substitute nor it any way absolves the commitments of the North.

I want to make couple of other big points.

What did Rio say? Rio+20 recognized poverty as the greatest global challenge. It agreed to formulate sustainable development goals but it first recognized poverty as the greatest global challenge. In-fact, just a few months back, the United Nations adopted the QCPR resolution and again acknowledged that fact (poverty eradication as the overriding priority).

Why? You know, what are the MDGs? MDGs were least common agreement among the haves of the world, of what could be done for development at the turn of the Millennium. Today, just a few years before the target date for MDGs, one billion people are still living in abject poverty.

That is why the world is telling you, the MDG's agenda is absolutely important. What do they mean by that? They mean a very simple thing. They mean that the underlying factor continues to remain that each individual must have that minimum fundamental requirement of food, water, health, education. And, whether we like it or not, the best determinant of all these is money and it therefore imperative that salience of per capita income should continue to be the highest (in any measure of development).

In this age of globalization, cell phones are reaching more and more people. In fact, I am told the cell phone companies in Somalia are the best corporate entities there and so is the case in Afghanistan etc. Technology has made many things happen. In several parts of my country, Africa and so many other parts of the world, even the poorest of poor see opportunities. Thank God for that. They can't be cut off from having aspirations and seeing what the others are doing.

Which are the countries with high achievements on MDGs. These are countries that adopted (MDGs) because they fitted with their national priorities. East Asia, China being the leading example, my country and several parts of Africa have done well. Have you seen the latest figures on African growth, which are positive and bode well. There are opportunities for greater and better cooperation at different levels. This is excellent.

I was delighted to see that in the latest HDI ranking, the highest ranking developing country is Brunei at no. 30, and the next is Qatar. If we go down the list, most of the top developing countries are OPEC members. While oil wealth does not mean that their development challenges are overcome, but they now have the necessary means to overcome development challenges and that's critically important.

Equity is often spoken about at such debates. I come from world's largest democracy. Our governments must promote equity. Many of my colleagues sitting here from the developing countries well recognize India's

efforts on inclusive growth. If today, every single country wants to invest in China, India, Brazil or all over Africa, it is because they see market opportunities there because of this effort on equity and the huge market that comes from the vast millions.

However, let us be very clear that equity also has some other dimensions to it.

There is equity among people, among people within the country, that's what really government should do and deliver on. The world can help, provide ideas, paradigms and ways do it and enabling environment certainly. But equity among governments is equally, if not more important.

The Secretary General met the G-77 few days back, on 12th of March. Addressing him, the Ambassador of Argentina pointed out that countries which are classified as Middle Income Countries still continue to need various means of aid assistance etc. And, she pointed to the growth in inequity between countries which has taken place as part of globalization and how important it is to address that.

Mr. Chairman,

If the South has risen, surely, isn't it time, that we should give the South greater say in global governance? Shouldn't the institutions be reformed? Did you know this entire report (The Rise of the South) has hardly to say anything about this? No, I am not criticizing the report, that is different matter altogether. I am very proud of this report because this helps me to stand everywhere and say that the UN has also recognized that we have also arrived. It is not only Goldman Sach who said so, some time back.

Issues today are not about responsible sovereignty. Does any developing country get up at the UN and say that I have come here to see that my domestic law shall be adopted in international arena and that should be the world's way of doing things. None of us from developing countries say that. We accept multilateralism for what exactly it is. It is developed world's way of doing things. But we are there to try and see how we can work with world at large but at least please understand our need for policy space.

So when you mentioned Mr. Assistant Secretary General that you have consulted 'global citizenry', I am glad you also noted the responsibility of

governments. That is the key and the most important element. It is governments that have to deliver. And, multilateralism owes to governments to ensure that there is an enabling environment. This requires real voice and participation of developing countries.

Now let me turn to South-South Cooperation.

South-South Cooperation has grown tremendously over last many years and it has grown because the ability of countries of the South has grown. India earlier focused a lot on capacity building i.e. offered training, scholarships etc. Now we have certain capabilities and we are able to do projects, investments, undertake infrastructure developments and able to help in social areas development etc. We do this with the conscious effort that we are sharing what we have got, recognizing fully that we are no where meeting even our own demands. We do it because of our solidarity. We do it because we also perceive that if our neighbours, friends do well, at the end of day we all benefit as result of it. Therefore, it will continue to grow.

What is important to do internationally, is what our colleagues from Brazil said about an hour ago. There has to be good and clear recognition from where South-South Cooperation comes from, what are its paradigms. These need to be encouraged and sent forward. Straight jacketing it will only weaken it and not even add complementary action to North-South Cooperation.

If South-South Cooperation growing, it is not only because more countries in the South are in a position to provide certain amounts of assistance etc. It is also because the partners are willing to be work in the area of national priorities. Traditional donors first want detailed portfolios to be filed!

This has also affected the World Bank. How many of you are aware, that the Bank has a shrinking loan portfolio? It is shrinking simply because the whole business, what began in 1950s as IBRD's priority of re-building Europe, moved to growth and infrastructure development in developing countries through means of concessional loans, but that does not find favour with the developed countries any more.

Let us remember that the Bank is all about loans. If it does not give loans, it wouldn't make a profit.

A grant giving agency is something else; it can't be the World Bank. The Bank is not a government department; it is not structured like that.

At United Nations excellent work done by us on South-South cooperation is captured in the 'Nairobi Declaration'. Let's give it strength and put it squarely in post 2015 development agenda. Let's leverage it for benefit of all.

I also want to say few words about Triangular Cooperation.

We have an IBSA Trust Fund run by UNDP. It is a modest thing, India, Brazil and South Africa, the partner countries contribute US \$ 1 million annually each. We have put in about US \$ 20 million over last many years. We have projects all over the world. We are extremely happy to see these kinds of things to grow. We will do what we can.

But we need to learn some lessons too.

Everybody talks about Triangular Cooperation. Yes, this is one kind of Triangular Cooperation i.e. cooperation between India, Brazil and South Africa with another country in the South. This is not like what triangular cooperation is made out to be, i.e. India Brazil and South Africa on one side, UNDP or a developed country as another partner.

But be that as it may, in the IBSA TF we have actually seen that a project is taking place at country 'X' (developing country) and it is financed by IBSA but tenders for project procurement are floated only in Western Europe! These are some startling facts and you may be wondering! It is not odd ball incident but is the result of UNDP norms. Why?

It is because the paradigm of thinking is basically along North- South corridor. That is fine, and may remain so but the same paradigm can't be shifted and applied on South- South Cooperation. It is different paradigm and we have to similarly nurture it in parallel with N-S cooperation. This is a must to grow S-S cooperation. I will stop here.

Thank you



606. Remarks by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Acting Permanent Representative, at the Opening Session of Conference on the theme "Right to Work" on the occasion of World Down Syndrome Day at United Nations.

New York, March 21, 2013.

Madam Chair (Ms Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, UN-DESA),

As I walked into the room today, I saw a room full of persons challenged by Down Syndrome and activists. To my mind the efforts of Down Syndrome International to organize events at the UN on the occasion of World Down Syndrome day is very good as it gives an opportunity to raise global awareness about Down Syndrome. So I congratulate Down Syndrome International for their efforts.

I have heard with great interest what Ambassador Quinlan (Permanent Representative of Australia) has just said and I agree with him so much. The issue that I see is for Governments to create enabling environments through legislation etc. so that people who are challenged by disabilities are able to live as normal a life as possible. It is also critical that we tackle societal prejudices and biases. Economic analysis that people working with disabilities would add hugely to GDP are at the end of the day big motivators for pushing society and employers. and society would be a big gainer.

Madam Chair,

I believe that the World Down Syndrome Day marks an important step forward in raising public awareness on the issue of Down syndrome, which is not a disease but a genetic disorder afflicting 1 in 800 to 1000 people globally.

India was happy to co-sponsor the UNGA resolution establishing this day and reaffirms the rights of all persons with Down Syndrome to the same fundamental freedoms and human rights that all persons are entitled to enjoy, including the right to work.

We recognize that persons with disabilities are a valuable human resource. It is our Government's endeavour to create an enabling

environment that provides them with equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation, including education and employment.

India was one of the first signatories to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Steps have been taken to ensure that legislation and programmes reflect our commitment to the Convention.

The Government of India works with civil society organizations to address the challenges faced by people with Down Syndrome.

Madam Chairperson,

I am very happy to note that the 12th World Down Syndrome Congress will be held in India in 2015.

I must particularly recognize the efforts of Dr. Surekha Ramachandran, President of the Down Syndrome Association of India, who is also the Board Member of the Down Syndrome International.

She has relentlessly worked to raise public awareness and to understand, support and improve the quality of life of children with Down syndrome.

I am confident that the discussions today will contribute to a better understanding of the challenges before us.

Thank you



607. Remarks by Amb. Manjeev Singh Puri, Acting Permanent Representative, at the High Level Interactive Dialogue of the UNGA on water cooperation, World Water Day.

New York, March 22, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Let me begin by congratulating everybody on World Water Day. This year also happens to be the International Year of Water, and therefore our deliberations today are even more meaningful.

We are very honored by the presence of the Prime Minister of Tajikistan in the session, and would like to thank his delegation for their leadership on water issues at the UN.

Mr. Chairman,

Water plays a seminal role in development. And this can hardly be overemphasized. Agriculture and our food security depend on water, and so do our livelihoods, our health, our biodiversity and our ecosystems.

Water availability and distribution is challenged by the lack of development, limitations of geography, growing demand, pollution of water bodies, recurrent floods and droughts and environmental stress. Climate Change impacts are also likely to add a great deal more of further variability and water stress.

Water conservation, rain-water harvesting, reducing waste and recycling water have yielded synergistic results globally, both in urban and rural settings and we need build on them.

It is of course very urgent that in dealing with water issues, the sustainable use of water and reducing its wastage is addressed in the entire process of unsustainable consumption and production patterns of people living in the developed countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Given the paucity of time, let me make a few brief remarks on the priority area which is the provision of safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

At the RIO+20 Summit, we agreed on a water agenda underlining its critical importance for sanitation and integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development. We also reaffirmed our commitments to MDG 7 of halving by 2015 the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

But as we gear ourselves for an inclusive Post 2015 agenda, it is time for us to raise our ambition and make safe drinking water and basic sanitation available not just to 50% of the people, but for one and all, and that really should be our priority.

Mr. Chairman,

I heard the panelists and would like to say that while the issues of peace, security and stability are certainly very important, as they are important

enablers, the priority remains and should remain that of providing safe drinking water and basic sanitation to everyone across the world.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me make a few remarks about my country. With 17% of the world population, we have only 4 % of the world's renewable water resources, and we face a huge challenge.

We have been pursuing Integrated Water Resources Management to deal with water availability, distribution and conservation. Large parts of our country are also prone to floods and droughts. Our integrated river basin development and planning has been a key feature of our efforts. We have undertaken dedicated National Missions for cleaning our rivers to enhance their resource value and ecological sustenance.

As part of our National Action Plan on Climate Change, we have launched a National Water Mission which aims at conserving water, minimizing wastage, ensuring more equitable distribution and management of water resources and to optimizing water use efficiency by 20%.

Our water planning efforts has been enriched by multi-stakeholder participation. Grassroots action involving the local community has given us valuable learning experience, especially in using traditional water conservation methods.

Mr. Chairman,

Water management is also a scientific effort. It involves mapping of water resources, collecting hydrological data, monitoring seasonal variability of water and assessing the impact of climate change. The lack of adequate trained personnel for scientific planning, utilizing modern techniques and analytical capabilities incorporating information technology constrain many developing countries. These imperatives must also be addressed.

I thank you



608. Statement by Ambassador Sujata Mehta, Permanent Representative of India to the Conference on Disarmament at the 2013 Substantive Session of United Nations Disarmament Commission.

New York , April 1, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Please accept our felicitations on your election as Chairman of this year's UNDC meetings. I would also like to congratulate other members of the bureau on their elections. Let me assure you of the full support of my delegation in the discharge of your responsibilities. I would also like to place on record our appreciation for the work done by the UNDC Chair of last year as also the Chairs of the two Working Groups.

India associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches high importance to the UNDC which is the deliberative leg of the triad of disarmament machinery put in place by the First Special Session of General Assembly on Disarmament. The Commission plays a unique role as the only body with universal membership for in-depth deliberations on relevant disarmament issues. We cannot over emphasise the role of this body at a time when both the disarmament agenda and the disarmament machinery face numerous challenges.

The UNDC offers an opportunity for Member States to collectively make progress on important disarmament issues by infusing coherence and consensus in disarmament debate which is extremely important if we are to address security challenges of our times. While we share the disappointment at the UNDC not being able to adopt substantive recommendations for more than a decade, we continue to have belief in the inherent value of this forum. It is up to us Member States to realise the value of UNDC by giving importance to its work and showing greater political commitment on disarmament issues.

Mr. Chairman,

The General Assembly in its resolution 52/492 of 1998 had decided that nuclear disarmament will constitute one of the agenda items of UNDC every year. However, it was only after considerable deliberations last year that the Commission was able to adopt its agenda for the 2012-14 cycle of its meetings, with nuclear disarmament as one of the agenda items. Nonetheless, we now have two agenda items for this cycle on which a large measure of ground has already been covered in previous years. We believe that elements on which substantial agreement was reached among Member States in the past should be preserved.

At this stage, we would like to share some thoughts on the two issues on our agenda. We will further elaborate our positions in the meetings of the two Working Groups in the coming three weeks. We attach high importance to the agenda item "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". The complete elimination of nuclear weapons is a long cherished goal of the international community. The UN General Assembly in its very first resolution, adopted unanimously in 1946, sought the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction. The final document of SSOD-I adopted by consensus by the international community, also accorded the highest priority to nuclear disarmament.

India attaches the highest priority to global, non-discriminatory verifiable nuclear disarmament, a principle which has strong and consistent domestic support in our country. India is convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines.

In the current international climate there is greater support for progressive steps for delegitimization of nuclear weapons. Measures to reduce nuclear danger arising from accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons are pertinent in this regard. India's resolutions in the First

Committee give expression to some of these ideas and have found support from a large number of States. Our Working Paper tabled in the UNDC in April 2007, which was developed in the spirit of the 1988 Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan, also suggested specific measures, including a Global No First Use Agreement and a Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons.

We believe that the UNDC must send a strong signal of the international community's resolve for achieving the goal of global, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. Member States should use this forum to intensify dialogue in this regard. We can demonstrate our commitment by adopting consensus recommendations on the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

As regards the second agenda item "Practical CBMs in the field of conventional weapons", let me state that India supports practical CBMs initiatives whether unilateral, bilateral, regional or global. We believe that CBMs can build trust and confidence and enhance transparency to minimize misunderstandings and misperceptions thereby promoting a suitable environment of peace and security among States. India has initiated several CBMs with the countries in our neighbourhood.

We believe that the initiation of a confidence building process must be decided upon by States freely and in the exercise of their sovereignty. Confidence building must be a step-by-step process and should evolve at a pace comfortable to all participating states. CBMs in specific regions should fully take into account the political, military and other conditions prevailing in the region. CBMs in a regional context should be adopted on the initiation and with the agreement of the States of the region concerned. In elaborating practical CBMs in the field of conventional weapons, we should take advantage of the guidelines on CBMs endorsed by the UNGA at its 41st session on the recommendation of the UNDC.

We believe that significant amount of work needs to be accomplished on this agenda item in our meetings this year and the next. The discussions last year were sketchy perhaps in anticipation of the results of the ATT negotiations as well as the Review Conference of the UNPOA on SALW. We also believe that discussions on CBMs in the field of conventional weapons should not become a tool for pursuing political agendas or for promoting instruments that do not enjoy universal support.

Mr. Chairman,

Being the second year of this cycle of UNDC meetings, this year is crucial for us to be able to adopt substantive recommendations at the conclusion of the cycle next year. Since we have only two items on our agenda, unlike three in the past cycle, there is a possibility for in-depth exchange of views on all aspects related to these agenda items this year. We are therefore hopeful of good progress in our work.

Thank you



609. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the Meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee (Measures to eliminate international terrorism) for elaboration of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

New York, April 8, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

We are delighted to see you guiding the proceedings of the meeting of this Ad-Hoc Committee, which has an important mandate for the elaboration of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT). We are highly appreciative of your continuing untiring efforts towards this task.

Mr. Chairman,

Terrorism poses a continuing serious threat to the international community. Every now and then, one or the other country, developed or developing, rich or poor, is brutally targeted by the terrorists.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to draw the attention of the Ad-Hoc Committee toward the operational paragraph 2 of the General Assembly resolution 51/210 by which the Committee was established. It states that "criminal acts

intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be invoked to justify them. In that spirit, India condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterates that no cause or grievance could justify the acts of terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

Tackling terrorism requires a holistic approach and collective action. On the legal front, we need to expand the scope of legal instruments to bring the perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice.

The Ad-Hoc Committee, pursuant to the General Assembly mandate, and after having successfully elaborated the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing and the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism has before it, in an incremental approach, the task for developing a comprehensive legal framework to deal with the acts of terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

In this task, we have already reached an advanced stage. The Ad-Hoc Committee has been able, under your leadership, to produce a draft text of the CCIT as a result of extensive negotiations.

Allow me Mr. Chairman to recognize the sincere efforts and hard work of the Coordinator Ms. Maria Telalian, who after considering several proposals was able to produce a compromise text in 2007 on conflicting issues. In view of my delegation the 2007 package presents a viable and, delicately balanced text. We reiterate our support to the proposal of the Coordinator and that we should not revisit the already agreed articles of the draft CCIT.

Mr. Chairman,

We are convinced that the draft CCIT would fill the legal lacunae and would further strengthen the international legal framework to counter terrorism and would thus contribute to the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

We fully believe in your leadership which makes us to look forward that a text of the convention could be finalized.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations, we reiterate our position that any such conference would be ideal after the adoption of the CCIT. We are convinced that it would provide an opportunity for stocktaking, including identifying needs and available resources for assistance in the implementation of the convention.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.



610. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, Debate on "The Role of International Criminal Justice in Reconciliation" at the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, April 10, 2013.

Mr. President

At the outset, I would like to thank you for convening this interactive thematic debate on the role of international criminal justice in reconciliation.

Mr. President,

Peace and justice are intertwined. There is no peace without justice and there is no justice without peace. A coherent application of the rule of law at all levels of governance is a precondition of avoiding conflicts and ensuring peace and justice. This applies to both international and national affairs.

As such, publicly vindicating human rights norms and punishing those who are guilty helps to prevent future atrocities in conflict and post-conflict situations. Individual accountability for massive crimes should not only be seen as an essential part of preventive strategy but also help arrest the culture of impunity.

Mr. President,

India believes that accountability, as an essential element of international criminal justice system, does not only reflect a desire for justice but also meet the important objective of reconciliation as part of post-conflict peace building.

India also firmly believes that international efforts to address the issues of serious crimes of international concern and impunity should be anchored in the UN Charter and international law.

Mr. President,

It is also necessary that the international justice system be supplemented by substantial post-conflict economic assistance and social rehabilitation. Reconciliation carries with it not only an element of justice for victims by bringing perpetrators of atrocities to book but also promotion of peaceful co-existence; focusing on developmental needs and the democratic principles; and settling the disputes through peaceful means.

A synergy of these measures alone will help avoid emergence of conflict situations and commission of mass crimes, as well as establish sustainable peace, security and stability in post-conflict situations. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that sufficient resources are made available for building institutions and state structures. Resources for the work of the international justice system alone will not suffice.

Mr. President,

Since the rule of law serves as a key element in the conflict prevention and peacekeeping as well as conflict resolution and peacebuilding, India has always supported international cooperation for the development and codification of international criminal law and to strengthen the rule of law as a whole.

India has also been a supporter of international cooperation to suppress and deter heinous crimes of international concern through the relevant judicial instruments.

At the same time, Mr. President, India firmly believes that we need to strengthen the rule of law at the international level by avoiding selectivity, partiality, and double standards as well as by freeing the international criminal justice institutions from the clutches of political considerations.

The system of accountability has not only to operate but also seen to be operating uniformly. Any selective application will ruin the credibility of the international criminal justice system and force people to view it as an instrument to meet the political objectives of the powerful states.

Moreover, Mr. President, we need to ensure that international criminal justice does not become what one author has said "the attractive spectacle of courtroom drama, which pits darkness against forces of light and reduces the world to a manageable narrative".

Mr. President,

It is also necessary to underscore that long-term peace and reconciliation can take place not through international mechanisms but through building national institutions by means of capacity building efforts. Domestic reform constituencies must be fostered in an effort to build the capacity of national justice systems and to reinforce the rule of law.

These measures alone will ensure that the world community is able to meet the challenges that face us today, including accountability, reconciliation, and resolution of conflict situations as well as post-conflict peacebuilding.

I thank you



611. Extempore Remarks by Ambassador Manjeev S. Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UNGA thematic debate on "The UN and Global Economic Governance".

New York, April 15, 2013.

Madam moderator,

Thank you for giving me the floor. Given the paucity of time, I shall be brief.

Your panel has followed the briefing by the G-20 Sherpa. First of all let me say that all the statements that I have heard here have found that the

G-20 did something good; that the G-20 was of help; that the G-20 has a role; and that the UN and the G-20 are learning how to work together. I find this very heartening to hear. And I, as a member of both the G-20 and the G-77, believe collaboration and trying to do things together is certainly the order of the day.

Madam Moderator,

Our topic today for discussion, you know, is the United Nations and Global Economic Governance. Many have spoken about several of the issues which bedevil global economic governance. Let me turn to something which, at least I have not heard anyone else here speak about, which is about the structures of global economic governance and the need to reform them.

Everybody has spoken of the need to adjust global governance to contemporary realities. People have pointed out to shifting GDP balance and new economic realities. We need to adjust to these.

I want to draw the attention of all my distinguished colleagues who are assembled here to some very basic issues. The United Nations and its entire system came about as a result of three United Nations conferences in 1944-45: one in San Francisco as a result of which was born the UNO, the second one in Bretton Woods - the UN Monetary and Financial Conference from which the BWIs came into being, and there was a third one, which people have forgotten about, that is the conference at Havana that ended up with a kind of broken leg, so we could only have the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. We did not go any further. It took many many years, indeed decades, before my dear colleague here Mr. Harsha Singh could become the Deputy Director General of the WTO.

And what else did we do? In 1954, ECOSOC had 27 members. In 1963 when the membership of the United Nations doubled to about a hundred odd, we doubled ECOSOC membership to 54. But where are we today? At 54. Well, even that may have been all right. But who are these 54? The membership is heavily skewed in favour of those who were around in 1963 and continues to be skewed in favour of the developed countries. This continues to be the most bedeviling factor in global governance as such, not just in global economic governance.

At the International Financial Institutions we have started making some kind of movement, courtesy the G-20. Some quota movements have taken place. But here at the United Nations, we really need to have some movement on this. We need to start reflecting contemporary realities.

And to all those who are sitting there, let me point out, following the big financial meltdown of 2008, the Doha Financing for Development conference tried to make a beginning on this. We did have some language which would allow for some kind of action at the UN. But when it came to June 2009 conference (UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its impact on Development), I do not know what happened. Perhaps the green shoots of recovery were becoming visible that all of us decided to let a dampener be put on it, and that process I do not know where it is going at the moment, whether at all there are any facilitators or anything is happening.

Madam Moderator,

I do not want to take up more of your time. But somebody mentioned governance deficit. This is the absolute key issue. This is what we need to address. We need to address structural reform issues and once we start getting them right, I am sure, we shall have the necessary tools and the necessary stakeholders with this particular system to ensure that we will be in a position to address the challenges, which will keep coming up. The United Nations certainly has the most important role in ensuring that there is equitable handling of global issues as such, including global economic governance.

I thank you very much Madam Moderator.



612. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative, at the Ninth Round of Intergovernmental Negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council.

New York, April 16, 2013.

Mr. Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

We are grateful to you for your decision to convene the 9th round of Inter Governmental negotiations on Security Council reform today.

Having presented my credentials to the Secretary-General earlier today, I could not have asked for a better 'debut' statement at the United Nations than this!

Reform of institutions of global governance, including the UN Security Council, and ensuring that they reflect contemporary reality, has been a matter of foremost importance to my country.

At the outset, I would like to align myself with the G4 statement, delivered by the distinguished PR of Germany, Ambassador Peter Wittig, and with the statement made by Ambassador Camillo Gonsalves, my distinguished colleague from St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the Spokesperson of the L69 Group.

Mr. Chair,

Victor Hugo, had once said and I quote "You can resist an invading army, but you cannot resist an idea whose time has come".

It was in 1963, half a century ago, that the last expansion took place to enlarge the membership of the UN Security Council from 11 to 15. That was a modest increase of four in the non permanent category only. Since then membership of the United Nations has increased from 113 to 193. Mr. Chairman, 80 more countries have joined the United Nations, but the composition of its premier body, mandated to maintain international peace

and security, has not undergone even the slightest change. This is an unnatural situation of stagnation in a dynamic and rapidly changing international environment.

We are also faced with a truly bizarre situation, when nearly 80 percent of the work of the Security Council is focussed on the continent of Africa, and yet, the Council has never had, even one permanent member from any of the 53 states of the African continent.

I have cited these examples only to illustrate that the argument for reforms is more compelling than ever before. It appears to be just a matter of time, when the body may either have to willingly embrace change, or be made to accept change as a 'fait accompli'.

Mr. Chair,

Over eight rounds of these negotiations, you have heard clearly the national positions of participating delegations. By now you must also have a fair sense yourself of what the vast majority has been imploring you to achieve, which is to help expand and reform the Council. In your assessment of 25 July 2012 you had acknowledged the strong support for expansion in both categories of membership of the reformed Council.

I would therefore like to submit the following points for your consideration to enable you take this 9th round of our IGN process forward:

The first is to move from words to action, from a mere repetition of old stated positions to achieving tangible progress. In this, we believe that your proposal contained in your letter of 25 July 2012 to produce a 'concise working document' would help kick start real negotiations and is most urgently needed. My delegation would like to support you in this endeavour and we do hope that such a document would be truly reflective of the discussions so far.

We appreciate your efforts in producing the latest compilation of the updated Rev3 text and the 'user friendly guide' along with it. This user friendly guide should help guide us, under your leadership, to at-least remove several redundant positions, as well as those that evidently command minimal support, so that we can move to real negotiations.

Secondly, we would like to hear from you, on how you plan to proceed from here to initiate real negotiations on the substantive proposals on

the table. A sharing of your timeline for producing that 'concise working document' and the next steps would be particularly important.

Thirdly, we must avoid falling into long periods of 'stasis and inertia'. Given that World Leaders mandated us at 2005 World Summit to achieve an 'early' reform of the Security Council, it is imperative that the IGN take place at a 'pace and frequency' that befits the subject matter it deliberates. It would be desirable to demonstrate the result of our work before the 70th anniversary Summit of the United Nations.

A concise working document with set negotiation timelines would help ensure that the IGN moves into an outcome oriented mode

Mr. Chair,

You are also aware that the constituency for reforms is only increasing by the day. The L69 and the African group have converged.

You have also received an extremely constructive and forward looking draft resolution from our colleagues in the CARICOM, which best epitomises the 'comprehensive approach' to seeking early reforms.

We member states, who are positively committed to seeking early reforms of the Security Council look to you as a repository of the collective investment of all our endeavours since we embarked upon this IGN roadmap in the 63rd UNGA in 2009.

We once again compliment you for inviting us today to suggest options for the way forward, and you will always have our unstinted support.

Mr. Chair, the initiative is now in your hands to lead us forward in this collective quest of ours.

Thank You



613. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)- Session on Poverty Eradication.

New York, April 19, 2013.

Mr. Co-chair,

The Open Working Group on SDGs is an important process, and I am delighted to be contributing to its deliberations. India associates itself with the statement delivered by the G-77.

In the decades after RIO '92 when we embarked on the path of sustainable development, we have created more wealth than in the entire human history preceding it put together. And yet, in spite of the progress made through the MDG commitment, the world continues to have more than 1.3 billion people living on less than 1.25 dollar a day. Of these, the region where I come from, South Asia is home to the largest number of global poor.

1 out of every 6 people in this planet, a decade into the 21st century, continue to live a life of extreme poverty, hunger and desperation.

The story of poverty and the imperative for growth cannot be more compelling!

It was to capture this sense of urgency that the RIO +20 Summit identified poverty eradication to be greatest global challenge. Such categorical recognition by our leaders, perhaps for the first time in the sustainable development discourse, and in a manner way stronger than the pronouncements in the First and Second UN Decades for Eradication of Poverty, rightfully deserves our highest attention.

As we sit down to frame the Sustainable Development Goals, let there be no doubt in our minds, and in our efforts, that poverty eradication constitutes the biggest challenge to our sustainability agenda.

We take much satisfaction in the fact that the RIO understanding on poverty has been fully recognized and the UN development system called upon to give the highest priority to achieving poverty eradication in the

recently adopted QCPR (Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review) resolution. And it must now guide us in our work on the SDGs.

Mr. Co-chair,

We recognize that addressing poverty eradication is a multi-dimensional effort. However, the priority must be income generation and employment for the poor.

We also fully appreciate the need for sustainability. Our approach in this endeavour needs to address unsustainable consumption and production patterns in the developed countries and bring to bear responsibility on them to lead responsible lifestyles.

Mr. Co-chair,

We in India have followed a multi-pronged strategy to combat poverty based on faster and inclusive growth. Our average growth rate of 7.9 % in the last five years coupled with targeted poverty alleviation programmes have allowed us to pull millions out of poverty. As per our estimates, from a figure of 48% in 1990, we would be bringing extreme poverty levels down to 26 % by the end of 2015.

Economic growth is fundamental to pursue inclusive policies to eradicate poverty, and we must clearly recognize this imperative. Growth allows greater access to income and employment opportunities by the poor and boosts domestic revenues to undertake targeted interventions. There can be no development without growth and the Post- 2015 development agenda should recognize this fundamental premise if it has to succeed.

On poverty eradication, certainly there is no one-size-fits-all approach. But global development experience, and own experience, reveal that with majority of the poor people in developing countries living in rural areas, we would perhaps do well to stress on agriculture development as an effective poverty reduction tool. Another area of primacy must be to promote small and medium enterprises which generate job-rich growth.

Mr. Co-chair,

Our key proposals on how to deal with poverty in the context of SDGs, both as goals and in the narrative, are as follows:

1. Our overarching objective must be to end poverty. We have to be more ambitious than the MDGs which talked of just extreme poverty. Our initial target may be on extreme poverty, with the question of larger poverty being addressed through strong cross-cutting action on meeting basic needs.
2. We should have a stand-alone goal on poverty as in the MDGs, and at the same time address multi-dimensional nature of poverty through cross-cutting themes.
3. Action on Poverty must not be contextualized or linked with other challenges. It must receive undiluted attention and focus. Its synergies with other issues should be captured in the cross-cutting themes.
4. While talking of strategies on poverty eradication, primacy must be given to faster and inclusive growth, access to income and employment opportunities, skill development, capacity building, targeted interventions and investment in physical and social infrastructure. There must be specific focus on investment and growth in agriculture and rural development sectors.
5. There is a strong co-relation between energy access and poverty, and we must clearly bring out the primacy to address lack of energy access through all sources of energy.
6. There is symbiotic relationship between the twin challenges of inequality and poverty. Without raising the standards of poor people and meeting their basic needs, we can hardly deal with inequality in an effective manner.
7. We must provide enough flexibility in our framework for countries to tailor their needs and priorities according to their circumstances.
8. Finally Mr. Co-Chair, we are firmly of the view that the SDGs should be universally applicable. It is therefore appropriate, even necessary, that when we talk of poverty issues as an SDG which applies primarily to developing countries, we need to balance it out through another SDG which would apply to the developed

countries and contribute directly to addressing the overall objective of poverty eradication, i.e. changing the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production.

I thank you



614. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the 35th Session of the Committee on Information.

New York, April 23, 2013.

Madam Chair,

At the outset, on behalf of India, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Lyutha Sultan Al-Mughairy on her election as Chair of the Committee, as also the other members of the Bureau on their election. I wish you all the best of success and assure you of my country's full co-operation during the ongoing session of the Committee.

India also welcomes the appointment of Mr. Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal of Austria as the new Under Secretary General for Communication and Public Information. We are happy that he has served in India, and are confident that his creativity and experience would add to the DPI's ability to effectively communicate the ideas and activities of the United Nations. We wish him success in his new assignment, and also assure him of India's full co-operation.

We also welcome the reports of the Secretary-General on activities of the UNDPPI in the areas of strategic communications, news service and outreach services, which enable us to have a better perspective of DPI's efforts to fulfill its mandate, despite challenges emanating from limited availability of resources.

Madam Chair,

India associates itself with the statement made by the Chair of the G-77 and China. We would also like to make the following observations on the activities of the DPI, in our national capacity.

We commend the DPI's Outreach Services Division for its consistent effort to expand partnership with the global academic community, through its Academic Impact initiative. This excellent initiative, aimed at strengthening collaboration between the United Nations and institutions of higher education, has grown 850-member strong in a short period of less than three years. We are pleased to mention that a number of Indian Universities are members of this initiative.

Under this initiative, member institutions have organized a range of activities on diverse global issues, ranging from the changing nature of conflict in the 21st century, to human rights, faith, dialogue and integration. We are happy to mention that on November 26 last year, our Mission associated itself with the Initiative in organizing an event under the "Unlearning Intolerance" seminar series. This event, coinciding with India's Presidency of the UN Security Council, and the 800th anniversary of the great Indian Sufi Saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti, included a panel discussion on "Faith, Dialogue and Integration", and a musical concert on the theme of "Love Towards All, Malice Towards None". The musical event brought together three genres of music, including the soulful Sufi music presented by the Shahi Qawwals from the Holy Shrine of Ajmer Sharif.

Madam Chair,

We welcome the appointment by the Secretary General of the Youth Envoy, under the Outreach Division of DPI. We hope that this will help enhance DPI's engagement with one of the key constituencies of the United Nations.

While highlighting the role of the Committee in examining its activities and giving policy directions to the DPI, we would like to emphasize the close partnership between member states and the DPI, with each supplementing the role of the other. There is a need for both to work closely together, to continually improve upon the content of the

information being disseminated, and to ensure its effective delivery to potential users across the world.

Madam Chair,

We also reiterate the need for DPI to keep both the inter-state and intra-state digital divide in mind, and use the widest possible spectrum of media channels, ranging from digital social media channels to the traditional means of communication, like radio and print. We would also like to emphasize that dissemination of the information should be done in a democratic manner, giving equal importance to all the available channels of communication, including radio and print.

Madam Chair,

The network of UN Information Centers are the real interface between the United Nations and the people at the grassroots, given their ability to interact with local communities and communicate with them in their own language. We commend the work of UNIC New Delhi for producing its newsletter in the Indian languages, and collaborating with local NGOs, educational institutions and cultural centers in organizing its "Peace to Non-violence" campaign. We also emphasize the need for DPI to work closely with host countries to further strengthen these information outposts. We would also support adequate budgetary resources being made available to Information Centers, particularly in developing countries.

Madam Chair,

We support the DPI in its efforts to highlight the question of Palestine. We appreciate the annual training program for Palestinian journalists hosted by the Department, and its undertaking of a variety of activities in commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, through UNICs around the world, including in New Delhi. We hope that such efforts would help create world opinion in favor of a peaceful settlement of this issue, and restore peace in the Middle- East.

The DPI should continue to work closely with the DPKO, DFS and DPA in its efforts to highlight the work performed by UN peacekeepers, often under extremely demanding circumstances. However rather than responding to particular situations or incidents, these efforts should continue throughout the year.

Disseminating accurate, impartial and timely information on the UN work is one of the important tasks of the DPI. The summaries of various important meetings at the UN released by DPI are critical sources of information for the world at large and even for member-states. It is therefore necessary that the information be factual, not judgmental. Let us remember that DPI officers are not journalists, but information officers. For example, the fact of the Security Council not adopting a decision cannot be called a failure as is often mentioned by the DPI in its summary of Council meetings.

Madam Chair,

We would like to conclude by assuring India's full support to the DPI as it endeavors to project the work of the UN, and to you as you guide the work of this Committee.

Thank you, Madam Chair.



**615. STATEMENT BY MR. DEVESH UTTAM, FIRST SECRETARY,
ON 'ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY' AT THE MEETING OF THE AD HOC WORKING
GROUP OF THE REVITALIZATION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY.**

New York, APRIL 29, 2013.

Mr. Chair,

Thank you for convening this meeting to discuss the "Role and Authority of the General Assembly", as well as its relationship with other principal organs of the United Nations and other Groups outside the United Nations.

I would also like to align with the statement made by the distinguished representative from Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Group.

Mr. Chair,

We sincerely appreciate your hard work and that of the Secretariat for issuing an updated inventory/chart of resolutions on revitalization

pursuant to resolution 66/294. However, a close look into this chart reveals that much remains to be done to enhance the role and effectiveness of this august body.

We need to change it from a mere talk shop to a place where transnational issues that impact each and every one of us are addressed swiftly and truly global effective solutions prescribed.

India has consistently held the view that the General Assembly can be revitalized only when its position as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations is respected in letter and in spirit.

The Assembly should take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving transnational issues. In particular, revitalization must restore the primacy of the UN in development matters.

As the United Nations chief deliberative, legislative, policy-making and representative body, it also needs to reinvent itself to contemporary realities.

Mr. Chair,

Over the years, it has been amply demonstrated that the prerogatives and authority of the General Assembly have been undermined by the Security Council.

It is critical that a relationship of respect for the respective mandates between the General Assembly and the Security Council are maintained in the spirit of the Charter.

The Council, in particular, should stop its frequent attempts to redefine its scope of competence through wider and permissive interpretations of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security and including issues that clearly fall within the purview of the General Assembly or the ECOSOC.

Moreover, it is imperative that the General Assembly exercises its judgment in the matter of the appointment of the Secretary General, rather than merely rubber stamping proposals by the Security Council while ensuring that the appointment process does not become a divisive issue between the Assembly and the Council.

In so far as the General Assembly itself is concerned, member states should engage in substantive deliberations in the six main committees instead of rushing to the plenary and or calling for votes without real negotiations in the Committees.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, please be assured of my delegation's constructive support and steadfast commitment in your efforts to achieve the common goal of ours to revitalize the General Assembly.

Thank You



616. Extempore Remarks by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative at the General Assembly Consultative Workshops on "Development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies in developing countries".

New York, May 1, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

I want to thank UNDESA for convening this workshop. In my understanding, the answer to the larger challenges of sustainability that we face today lies in technology and we need to work and collaborate to harness it.

I am a bit disappointed to see that the attendance in all the sessions since yesterday has been rather low. To be relevant to the discourse and developments on technology, we at the United Nations must do our best to lead the conversation and I would urge you to try and do your best to enhance the participation of Member States and other stakeholders in the upcoming workshops at the end of this month.

The Secretary General has made a very good recommendation on operationalising a Technology Facilitation Mechanism by 2013 and we

fully support it. We should constitute an inter-governmental preparatory working group to work out its institutional details.

I want to inject energy here among all of us in the United Nations to lead the conversation on technology for sustainable development. Without harnessing technology, we cannot make progress on improving the lives of our people and take urgent action on climate change and sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

The second thing I want highlight is that small fixes have generally small benefits. Let me be very clear about this. You know, every one of us here is carrying a smart phone or a similar device and this technology today has spread all over the world. There is no country in the world today which is not connected through mobile telephony or internet. The internet today is making its presence felt in every nook and corner of the world. Globalization has become the order of the day. These changes have happened not because of small ideas but through big transformational changes achieved through technology. I am not saying that local action and small scale changes are any less important. But we really need to look at big fixes because the challenges before us are gigantic. This demands strong collaborative action.

And globalization is demanding collaboration. Globalization has given us a lot of benefits but in terms of tackling the negatives of it, we need to do a great deal in science and technology. And I have little doubt in my mind that much of this effort, the push, shove and heave, has to be made in the leading developed countries where innovation is not just incubated but taken forward. All the major changes in our lives have occurred out here, in the developed world. And we need to find ways and means of getting them everywhere.

Yesterday we talked about agriculture and how we achieved food sufficiency. You know if this idea of green revolution had not been spread through investment and scientific collaboration by the world's most industrialized and developed countries, so many of our countries would have been basket cases. This, fortunately, is not the case because appropriate technologies were developed here and shared with everyone.

The last presentation talked about HIV Aids. When the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were being evolved, there must have been something special about HIV that it is among the few specific things that finds mention in the MDGs. Today we have been able to contain it. I am not saying we have been able to get rid of it. But how did we contain it? Yes, the lead was taken by the developed countries. And I am not going into IPR and related issues. But let's look at what the Clinton Foundation did for example. They did wonders in getting the solutions to the people through innovative approaches including financing.

I therefore again stress the argument of collaboration. We have to have big ticket things done which can only take place in most advanced economies where funds are available to undertake scientific research and innovation. Once innovations and technologies are evolved or developed, they will reach everyone in the world.

Our first step, therefore, should be to develop solutions and then to find ways and means to make them available to everyone. Of course, we say that innovation must be rewarded; innovation must be encouraged but at the same time we must balance it with global public good. And we are ready to collaborate in scientific research and development, as are other developing countries. These are the kind of thoughts I want to leave with you.

I want to once again thank you for having convened this workshop and I want to assure you of my delegation's strong support on the issue of technology collaboration. The recommendation made in the SG's report has our full support and we will do what we can for our big call for collaboration. I think people want to shy away from collaboration and that is not something that I would like to see.

Thank you very much.



617. Statement by Mr. Devesh Uttam, First Secretary at the Meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly.

New York, 10 May 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for convening this meeting to discuss the "role and responsibility of the General Assembly in the selection and appointment of the Secretary General and other Executive Heads of the United Nations System".

At the outset, we would like to align with the statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chair,

We have been discussing the revitalization of the General Assembly for last two decades without any substantive outcome. There have been some improvements but major progress still eludes us. It's high time that the General Assembly claim its rightful position as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations both in letter and in spirit.

The Assembly should take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving transnational issues.

Mr. Chair,

The selection process of the Secretary General is far too important to be left entirely to the Security Council. The General Assembly must have a greater say in it. The Secretary- General's election should not be limited to merely "consulting closely with other Security Council members to reach agreement on a candidate" followed by approval by acclamation by the General Assembly. At the same time, it should not be allowed to become a divisive issue between the two principal organs.

General Assembly Resolution 11 (1) of 1st February 1946 which lays out the "terms of appointment of the Secretary General" belongs to the past.

In any case, the practice established by GA Resolution 11 (1) can be modified to allow for the Council to send a panel of names that the Assembly could choose from as against a single nomination. Additionally, if the member-states attach high importance to the role and responsibilities of the Assembly, we see no reason why the matter should not be "decided by a two-third majority" in terms of Article 18(3) as against the one with a simple majority requirement in Resolution 11 (1).

We could also identify objective criteria for the candidatures, including commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, extensive leadership, administrative and diplomatic experience with due regard being given to regional rotation and gender equality. Equally useful and practical would be to encourage formal presentation of candidatures in a manner that allows sufficient time for interaction with member-states, and also requires candidates to present their views to all member-states of the General Assembly.

Moreover, the General Assembly resolutions 51/241 of 22nd August 1997 and 60/286 of 9th October 2006 which outline in detail proposals on improving the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary General must be fully and faithfully implemented.

Mr. Chair,

Let me briefly touch on the matter of selection of other Executive Heads in the UN system organizations. Our position flows from the clear guidelines in the Charter.

The Charter provisions clearly reflect the desire of the UN membership to have an international civil service which displays the highest standards of professionalism, neutrality and integrity and which is accountable to the General Assembly. In addition, we would welcome closer consideration of procedures for selecting, appointing and confirming the heads of the major Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes with a view to ensuring transparency, legitimacy and balanced representation.

In conclusion, we would like to re-emphasize the need for greater transparency, inclusiveness in the selection of the Secretary General and stress on implementation of relevant GA resolutions without further delay.

Thank You



**618. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji,
Permanent Representative at High Level Meeting of the UN
General Assembly on the Appraisal of the Global Plan of
Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.**

Ney York, May 14, 2013.

Mr. President,

I thank you for organizing this important meeting. I also thank the UN Secretary General, the President of the General Assembly, the Executive Director of UNODC and other speakers for their important contributions on the subject of combating trafficking in persons.

Mr. President,

The United Nations has articulated a clear vision on this subject by launching the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons in August 2010.

The Plan mandated the international community to address the problem of human trafficking in a holistic and comprehensive manner. This has to be implemented through integrated, balanced, coherent, result-oriented and people-centric policies.

The 4 Ps, of Preventing, Protecting, Prosecuting and Partnership, is a new clarion call in this fight, which needs to be adhered to and implemented.

The new element of Partnership is crucial. It recognizes effective partnerships with civil society, NGOs and private sector as an integral part of this fight.

The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012 brought out by the UNODC is the first such attempt to present a global overview of trends and challenges in trafficking of persons.

Notwithstanding the information gaps that still persist, the findings of the report are a grim reminder of the growing global scale of trafficking of persons, and of the complexities involved in dealing with this issue.

According to the report, women and children remain particularly vulnerable to trafficking, especially with respect to trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour.

While over 130 countries have criminalized trafficking, progress in conviction remains limited.

These findings underline the basic fact that while national efforts to eliminate trafficking are essential, it is also critical to have greater cohesion in the international community's efforts to prevent, prosecute and punish those involved in trafficking in persons, especially through organized crime. Capacity building, as the report notes, is a significant challenge to be addressed.

Mr. President,

India is firmly committed towards a world free of human trafficking. We live in one of the most densely populated regions of the world. India has ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in May 2011. Our commitment is reflected in various national laws and policies.

At the level of policy implementation, we have developed strategies which are holistic, participative and inclusive and are not restricted to direct intervention against trafficking alone. We are adopting a victim-centric approach to these issues.

Anti-Trafficking Nodal Cells have been set up both at the Central and the provincial levels. We are working with the UNODC for strengthening law enforcement responses in India against trafficking in persons.

A comprehensive scheme for prevention of trafficking, rescue, rehabilitation, reintegration and repatriation of the victims of commercial sexual exploitation is already in place.

India also seeks to eradicate trafficking through empowering the vulnerable sections of our society, who are its potential victims. This is also one of the core objectives of this Global Plan.

Mr. President,

The international community, including the UN, must contribute and help States that seek financial and technical assistance in their efforts at capacity building and in putting in place appropriate administrative and legal frameworks. These are institutional reforms which are imperative to combat this challenge.

The UNODC has an important role to play in enhancing training and capacity building to strengthen law enforcement responses.

We are concerned that despite deeper international cooperation, the growing global trend of trafficking in persons has not been arrested. We need to redouble our efforts to fighting this scourge. India stands ready to work with the international community in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. President.



619. India's explanation of vote delivered by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative at the United Nations General Assembly - Resolution on Syria.

New York, May 15, 2013.

Mr. President,

India remains deeply concerned at the unabated violence in Syria and the suffering it continues to cause to the Syrian people. The military approach pursued by various sides to the conflict has undermined the efforts for a political solution to the crisis. Violence has assumed a serious sectarian nature, and terrorist groups, including al Qaida, have entrenched themselves. All these developments will have long-term repercussions for national, regional and international peace and security. Reports on the alleged use of chemical weapons are also deeply worrying.

2. We strongly condemn all violence in Syria as well as all violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, irrespective of who their perpetrators are. We condemn all attacks directed at women and children, civilians, UN peacekeepers and public institutions and infrastructure. We also condemn in the strongest terms possible all terrorist acts that have been and continue to be committed in Syria.
3. We are particularly concerned that UN peacekeepers have been repeatedly targeted by rebel groups and taken hostage, including on two occasions in the recent past. This is completely unacceptable. It is imperative that the sanctity of United Nations peacekeepers be respected by all sides. A clear signal must be sent by the United Nations that such acts will not be tolerated and will attract the full weight of the international community against the perpetrators.
4. Since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, India has consistently called on all parties to abjure violence, dissociate themselves from terrorist groups, and pursue a peaceful and inclusive political process to address the grievances of all sections of Syrian society. We have also contributed to mitigate the humanitarian impact of the crisis by providing assistance worth US\$ 2.5 million.
5. We believe that the Joint Communiqué of the Geneva Group adopted in June 2012 provides a good basis for resolution of the Syrian crisis through a Syrian-led political process that respects Syria's independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty, involves all sections of Syrian society and meets their legitimate aspirations. The task of the international community, anchored in the United Nations, is to assist the Syrian parties in this process, without pre-judging its outcome. Also, it is important that further militarization of the conflict, including support for terrorist and armed groups, ceases forthwith.
6. These are the principles that have guided our consideration of the draft that the Assembly has just voted upon. Whether a group, any group, is the legitimate representative of the Syrian people

or not can only be determined by the Syrian people, not this Assembly. Therefore certain provisions of this resolution can be interpreted as effecting regime change by sleight of hand. This is a dangerous precedent which we cannot acquiesce in. We would once again reiterate our position that the leadership of Syria is a matter for Syrians to decide themselves.

7. As we have said earlier, unilateral action of any kind will not resolve the crisis. It will only exacerbate the problem and cause greater instability and violence even beyond Syria's borders. We think that following the settlement of the conflict, Syrians themselves should establish accountability for crimes committed by Syria. This cannot be done by outsiders. We also believe that promotion of political dialogue requires engagement with all parties concerned, and calls for boycott of the government and support of the opposition will not help. Due to these shortcomings, Mr. President, we have abstained on the resolution.
8. India remains committed to support the efforts of the United Nations, including Joint Special Representative Lakdhar Brahimi, to resolve the Syrian crisis expeditiously through inclusive political dialogue among Syrian parties. We also welcome the recent decision by the Russian Federation and the United States to convene a meeting of the Action Group with the Syrian parties, and hope that all sides will engage seriously, realistically and unconditionally to resolve the crisis in the interests of the Syrian people, the region and the larger international community.

I thank you



**620. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji,
Permanent Representative, at the International Day of Vesak
celebrations in the United Nations.**

New York, May 24, 2013.

Venerable Monks,

Excellencies, Friends from near and far,

I am honoured and delighted to be with you today on this very auspicious day of Vesak. As co sponsors to this noble initiative, we salute the efforts of all Member States in getting us together this evening, in particular, my sincerest appreciation to the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka for coordinating this year's event and making it happen.

Venerable Monks, Excellencies and Friends,

Representing a country which has been the cradle of Buddhism since its advent, for us in India, the International day of Vesak, continues to be an occasion to reaffirm and strengthen the cultural and civilizational ties that bind the nations of our region. Buddhism has played a major role in our composite culture and pluralism.

In a strife torn world, as the one we live in today, the preachings of Buddha : " Buddham Sharanam Gacchami " - I take refuge in the Buddha, and by doing that, I take refuge in myself and in the innate goodness of all human beings, is indeed, the only comforting solace available to us all, at least in the spiritual realm. For if it were not, the essential kernel of Lord Buddha's message would not have continued to reverberate two and a half millennia after the attainment of enlightenment, as we so witness at this altar of multilateralism today.

What can be more inspirational for practitioners of multilateral diplomacy like us, than to seek recourse to the Middle Path, a concept preached 2500 years ago, and perhaps most relevant in the trying times we are faced with today. To avoid extremes of any kind, to neither champion violence nor to sit in passive isolation, but to seek harmony, strike the right balance and continue the eternal pursuit of truth and knowledge.

In today's world, Buddha's teachings therefore, stand out as an ideal amalgam and intellectual guide for conducting a dialogue among

civilizations, which is a much needed pre-requisite for peace in our times. It is, in this context, that we look to the continued revitalization of the principles and purposes of the United Nations, from a source that is tried, tested and true.

It is in the simplicity of Buddha's message wherein lies the reason for its spread and success. It is based, in the first instance, on a clinical appreciation of the world we live in. which is indeed far from perfect.

Einstein had said and I quote: "If there is any religion that could cope with modern scientific needs, it has to be Buddhism". No wonder, Buddha underscored that the best way to pay homage to him was not by offering flowers, incense and light, but by truly and sincerely striving to follow his teachings. That is how we are expected to celebrate Vesak, let us join hands to use this opportunity to reiterate our determination to lead noble lives, to practise loving kindness and to bring peace and harmony to humanity by eliminating the "I" or "self" for the larger collective good.

I thank you all.



621. Remarks by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to UN at Commemoration Event of Centenary Year of Nobel Prize Award for Literature to Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore.

New York, May 30, 2013.

We are privileged to gather here in the United Nations today to commemorate the centenary of the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature to Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore.

I would like to especially thank my old friend and colleague Ramu Damodaran of the Department for Public Information of the United Nations for making this event happen.

In the United Nations, we have always benefited from the personal interaction that takes place in various parts of this multilateral institution.

Such interaction between representatives of different cultures is central to our common pursuit of peace and security, of socio-economic development, and of the common threads that bind us and our cultures together.

Today, it would be appropriate to recall one such dynamic interaction between cultures, which catalyzed the publication of the *Gitanjali* in 1912, and led to the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 to Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore.

Sir William Rothenstein, (1872-1945), was a prominent British artist and professor and Principal of the Royal College of Art in London. He founded the India Society on 13 January, 1910 in order to encourage an appreciation of Indian fine art. Rothenstein travelled to India that year, visiting various cities before reaching Calcutta. At Calcutta, he was met by an artist of the Bengal School, Abanindranath Tagore, along with his brother Goganendranath. The two brothers took Rothenstein to their family home, Jorasanko.

It was at Jorasanko, in February 1911, that Rothenstein first met Abanindranath's uncle, Rabindranath Tagore. Rothenstein was deeply impressed by Rabindranath, whom he described as "one of the most remarkable men of this time".

The meeting between the Indian poet and the British artist was to prove significant in propagating the appeal and creativity of Indian nationalist thought in the West. Rabindranath visited England between 1912 and 1913. On board the ship, he took up the poems of his *Gitanjali*, filling up a notebook with translations of the collection from the original Bengali into English. Soon after his arrival on June 16, 1912 Tagore sought out Rothenstein, who took the notebook of English-language translations of poems from Tagore and had copies typed.

On July 7, 1912 Rothenstein arranged for the poems to be read at his rented house in Hampstead by the poet W.B. Yeats. On November 1, 1912 the India Society published a limited edition of *Gitanjali: Song Offerings*. Of the 750 copies, 500 were for its members and 250 for general sale. The volume contained English translations of 103 poems, with an introduction by Yeats and a pencil-sketch of Tagore by Rothenstein.

Tagore dedicated the publication to Rothenstein. Gitanjali won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. Looking at Rabindranath Tagore's many achievements, we marvel at his flair for expressing a strong sense of national pride, tinged with deep spiritualism. His poems Jana Gana Mana and Amar Sonar Bangla are fittingly the National Anthems of India and Bangladesh. Rabindranath, however, did not confine himself within "narrow domestic walls". He prayed that his "heaven of freedom" would be found in a "world that has not been broken up into fragments", in one of his most well-known poems.

Tagore was a quintessential "Renaissance Man". He was a painter, dramatist, musician, novelist, essayist as well as India's national poet. He had a profound awareness of mankind's common destiny, which he experienced during his travels to more than 30 countries on five continents between 1912 and 1933.

By hosting this function today, the United Nations underscores the continuing relevance of Tagore's humanistic and holistic vision for all of us even a hundred years after he was awarded the Nobel Prize.

Thank you



622. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India at the Intersessional Meeting of the 17th High Level Committee on South South Cooperation.

New York, June 4, 2013.

Thank You Mr. President for giving me the floor and for convening this meeting to discuss the Report of the Joint Inspection Unit which conducted a system wide review of the existing UN institutional arrangements in support of South South Cooperation. I am also happy to note that in the Report of the Secretary General on the same subject, of the three funds outlined as supporting South South Cooperation, the IBSA Fund figures prominently. It is an initiative which we along with our

partners from Brazil and South Africa to further strengthen the narrative of South South cooperation in the developing world. We are most grateful and express our thanks to the excellent team in the UN Office for South South Cooperation, who are our partners in managing the IBSA Fund.

Before I begin my remarks, I would align myself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Fiji, on behalf of the G77.

Mr. President, it does not reflect well on us collectively to have not been able to initiate substantive forward movement on some of the key recommendations of the JIU report since it came out in March 2011. More than two years have passed, and we are still discussing the text of the JIU report. Perhaps its time, that we now actually begin on a forward path and initiate actions based on the key recommendations outlined in the JIU report.

Second, since the last session of the High Level Committee in May last year, for all practical purposes the only thing that has changed in this 'high focus' area of South South Cooperation, has been only in the name of the sole entity mandated within the UNDS to manage South South Cooperation. But as we all know, that by merely calling a pumpkin as apple wont make it any sweeter, we need to now look at giving more resources to this entity, which could be both financial and human, to make this now renamed UN office for South South Cooperation, act in a manner that does justice to the principles of South South Cooperation.

It is in this context, that I would like to draw specific reference to recommendation 9 of the JIU report, which calls upon governing bodies of UN organisations to apportion NOT less than 0.5 per cent - of core budget resources for the promotion of South South Cooperation, in consultation with programme countries.

Incidentally, UNDP's own Evaluation of its contribution to SSC has also come up with a similar recommendation in Para 95 of DP/2013/31, which calls upon UNDP to consider increasing funding and resource allocation to support SSC.

So I guess we have enough of what is called 'evidence base' from the UN system to move beyond the lip service, which we witnessed in HDR reports 'as rise of the Global South' to actually put their monies where it

matters the most, in helping the UNDS assist SSC more tangibly and in a meaningful manner.

Mr. President, I would also like to flag that as countries from the South, we do not need to loose our way by getting lost in this 'definitional debate' on South South OR in the operational guidelines for South South.

We know for sure where we are coming from, and will continue to pursue the cause of South South cooperation irrespective of the support from the multilateral system. We know that for us, our definitive framework lies in the Nairobi Outcome Document and the Buenos Aires Declaration. No non UN process can or will replace this reality. It is therefore important to focus on the future than to waste our collective energies over infructuous debates on seeking to reinvent the wheel by defining SSC once again.

Before I conclude, Mr. President, let me also bring to your attention, that along with UN DESA & RIS, our Ministry of External Affairs organised a two day conference on 15-16 April 2013, on South South Cooperation in New Delhi, in which several of our fellow developing countries from the South were represented, and together we reaffirmed our principles of SSC as a partnership in solidarity, based on national ownership and in line with national priorities of our partners. It also underscored the clear understanding that South-South cooperation can supplement North-South Cooperation but cannot substitute or dilute the obligation and quantum of North-South aid flows. The Conference also recommended the need to strengthen systematic collection and analysis of evidence, strengthening evaluation of South South programmes, strengthening multilateral and regional support and establishing platforms to discuss issues of common concern and interest. These would be further discussed and carried forward at a DG's level meeting on 7 June in Addis Ababa.

As partners in this discourse that we have practiced since our independence, India stands committed to championing the agenda for SSC.

I thank you Mr. President.



623. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to UN, during UNDP Segment discussing Evaluation Reports on UNDP contribution to South South Cooperation and UNDP's Evaluation of Strategic Plan 2008- 2013 at the Annual Session 2013 of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/ UNOPS.

New York, June 7, 2013.

Mr. President, I would like to complement the UNDP Evaluation Office for excellent reports on evaluation of UNDP contribution to South South Cooperation and on its Previous Strategic Plan, as contained in (DP/2013/17 and DP/2013/31). These two evaluations are in particular, most welcome for they could not be more timely and pertinent, as they are coming right when we are working towards crafting the new Strategic Plan for UNDP. But before I begin, allow me to align myself with the statement delivered by Fiji, on behalf of the G-77.

Mr. President, our intervention today in the Evaluation Section, perhaps flows from what Hugh White had said and I quote: "When you make a mistake, don't look back at it long. Take the reason of the thing into your mind and then look forward. Mistakes are lessons of wisdom. The past cannot be changed. The future is yet in your hands, and your success lies in not repeating that same mistake again"

To us therefore, Evaluations, are an excellent means of 'course corrections' and a means to factor the lessons learnt, which need to be included in our plans for the future. The Evaluation Report on UNDP's contribution to South South Cooperation has made some interesting observations:

Course Correction One, Conclusion 4 states that 'there is no clear evidence of the long term sustainability of South South initiatives supported by UNDP, and the wider replication of their benefits is uneven.' It goes on to say "this is a clear area for improvement, where much attention needs to be paid to the follow up effects of SS knowledge exchange initiatives, either in direct implementation or in the policy arena'.

We hope that this would be addressed in the Section on SS cooperation in the new draft Strategic Plan.

Course Correction Two: Para 26- of the Report states "there is a gap between how SSC is promoted and advocated for at higher levels of organization, and its practical and functional integration into programming." It goes on to say in Para 29: "UNDP's operational guidance and mechanisms to support SSC at regional and country levels were NOT in place" We hope that this would be addressed. "

Course Correction Three: Recommendation 5 - UNDP should clarify its FINANCIAL commitment with regard to its support to SSC. It explicitly calls upon the EB of UNDP to consider increasing its financial commitment to SSC.

While the course corrections on SS enumerated in the Evaluation Report are many, I have chosen to focus on three most easily doable ones and hope that these would merit attention of the UNDP SP team.

I would now like to move to the Second but equally important Evaluation of the Strategic Plan of 2008-2013.

Recommendation 3 of the Report states "the new SP should emphasise the priority of support at the country level, and explicitly recognize that no matter how good the work is at the centre, it is at the country level where the difference is being made" Mr. President, to us this a very key recommendation that must find place in the new strategic plan under consideration, for it is in improving the lives of people at the country level, where the development system must continue to focus on.

Finding 6 of the Report states: "Programmes are seldom designed with sustainability in mind. The UNDP funding model also adds to the sustainability challenge." It goes on to state" the likelihood of the sustainability of the outcomes to which UNDP is contributing is poor"

Mr. President, we have also seen examples from recent field visits of the Executive Boards in Myanmar, where community level projects were abandoned midway because of lack of inbuilt sustainability in the projects, several needy lost jobs. We hope that as we go forward this critical aspect of 'sustainability', especially in community level projects would be factored.

Mr. President, we firmly believe that course correction is always a welcome exercise and any endeavour, which is based on facts and rationale, that have a sound evidence base, in this regard, is never too late ! We had also made a similar intervention requesting UNDP to take into the findings of its own Evaluation Report on Poverty Reduction at the last Board in February. It had also made some extremely pertinent recommendations on tackling what has been termed as the "greatest global challenge" of poverty eradication in the development debate.

We hope that all these would be taken onboard and would find reflection in the Strategic Plan for 2014 - 2017.

I thank you Mr. President.



624. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent representative of India to UN at UNDP Segment of the Annual Session 2013 of the Executive Board of UNDP/ UNFPA/UNOPS.

New York, June 10, 2013.

Mr. President, thank you for giving me the floor. My felicitations to Administrator Helen Clark for her an extremely insightful statement and well crafted Annual Report on the prev'ous Strategic Plan. We would also like to place on record our appreciation to the outgoing ASG of the Asia Pacific Bureau, my dear friend and colleague, Mr. Ajay Chhibber, for having so ably spearheaded the excellent work that UNDP has being doing in India and the South Asian region.

Mr. President, before I begin, allow me to align myself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Fiji, on behalf of the G-77. It is perhaps for the first time that the entire group of developing countries have transcended the regional groupings format in an Executive Board context, and come together to advise UNDP to stay focussed on its overriding objective: the greatest global challenge of poverty

eradication. It is indeed a welcome development and merits due consideration.

Representing a country that has one of the longest relationships with UNDP and is the biggest contributor to its core budget among developing countries, we have an abiding interest in UNDP's success and its efforts in how it decides its future in the next Strategic Plan. I would therefore, Mr. President, submit the following for your consideration:

One, in the recently adopted QCPR Resolution, 193 member states affirmed their resolve to "assign the highest priority to poverty eradication" and that "it should continue to be the core focus area for the United Nations development system and that all its development programmes and projects should attempt to address this greatest global challenge as their underlying objective"

We therefore welcome the amended vision statement of the new Strategic Plan, which aims to achieve both poverty eradication and inclusive growth. We do hope that when it comes to implementing this vision, the primary focus of the UNDP would be on eliminating extreme poverty, which is an essential prerequisite for inclusive growth.

Two, we also welcome the delinking of the recently coined concept of "Sustainable Human Development" from the Vision Statement, which has been labeled as a one stop panacea for achieving both these stated goals. Mr. President, we believe that Para - 73 of the QCPR Resolution provided good guidance on the way forward to tackling the challenge of poverty eradication, and hope that it would be factored in the new Strategic Plan.

Three, it is also important that the 'outcomes' and 'areas of work' identified in the Strategic Plan are commensurate with the NEW goals that UNDP has set for itself. UNDP's Board Decision of 1996, 96/29, which is now being cited by UNDP as a frame of reference, made Sustainable Human Development - a goal to be achieved. In this proposed Strategic Plan, it has however, become a 'means' to achieve an entirely different set of goals! We would therefore seek greater definitional clarity from UNDP on this concept, and how this would lead to a change in terms of how its programmes are implemented on the ground in programming countries. We do hope that if SHD is indeed to be made the 'lens' of achieving ALL

its goals, then it would certainly include what member states have unanimously agreed to in Para 73 of the QCPR.

Four, for our delegation, Evaluation Reports are an important instrument for course correction, and their findings, conclusions and recommendations must therefore find reflection in the future plans for UNDP. We made an intervention in the Evaluation Segment on Friday outlining our concerns and do believe, that from the perspective of the next Strategic Plan, the Evaluation Reports on UNDP's contribution to Poverty Reduction (DP/2013/31) and South South Cooperation (DP/2013/3) are extremely important frames of reference. It appears that the present draft has not taken note of its key recommendations.

Five, the draft SP (DP/2013/12) has placed the very critical theme of South South Cooperation, at the extreme end under the last subheading. We hope that it would be eventually given a placement commensurate to the importance UNDP places on the subject. More importantly, the outcomes and areas of work proposed in the new SP would make some mention of how it intends to mainstream SSC initiatives in its programming activities.

Six, while we note the efforts made by UNDP to align the new Strategic Plan with the QCPR, we believe that there is a lot that still needs to be done, especially with regards to approaches to tackle the stated goal of poverty eradication. We would therefore request UNDP to continue to further align the draft Strategic Plan with all the "actionables" that the UN Development System and its agencies have been called upon by member states to pursue in the QCPR.

To conclude, Mr. President, let me submit that this Board Session, given its agenda, is an important and timely opportunity not just for stock taking but also to constructively contribute to the future of UN's development agenda. Our suggestions today have been made in this spirit and I hope will find resonance, not just within the larger UNDP community but also feed into the post 2015 development agenda.

The father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi had once said and I quote: "The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problem" For us, UNDP's capabilities are immense and enormous. If tapped to the fullest, you will

be the force multiplier arm of the UN development system, which can indeed decimate poverty from the face of this planet.

Please rest assured of our steadfast commitment to UNDP, in walking the extra mile together in this common pursuit.

I thank you Mr. President.



**625. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji
Permanent Representative of India to the UN on Agenda
Item 11: "Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment
on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS" at
the UNGA.**

New York, June 10, 2013.

Mr. President,

We take note of the Report of the Secretary General on Accelerating the AIDS response: achieving the targets of 2011 Political Declaration as contained in document A/67/822 of 3 April 2013. At the outset, we would like to express our support for the draft decision submitted by the Hon'ble President of the General Assembly, dated 29 May 2013.

Mr. President,

It is heartening to note that the international cooperative effort to respond to the challenge posed by the spread of AIDS has achieved significant success. As the Report of the Secretary General points out, this has been due in equal measure to extraordinary scientific breakthroughs, concerted global action, and bold progress by individual countries. The special role of antiretroviral treatment in achieving the objectives of prevention of AIDS cannot be understated.

Mr. President,

In India, in terms of prevalence, adult HIV rate is close to 0.3 per cent. However, in absolute terms, our HIV positive population is around 3

million. The primary objective of our national programme to combat HIV/AIDS is to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2015.

The main features of our National AIDS Programme are to scale up efforts of targeted interventions for high risk groups, strategizing comprehensive information, education and communication packages for specific segments and scaling up of the service delivery component.

We recognize that the fight against HIV and AIDS have socio-economic and development dimensions, in addition to the public health aspect. Our endeavor is to fully mainstream HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment in all our schemes and activities. We have involved the corporate sector, NGOs and other stakeholders as partners towards this end.

The need for an integrated approach that includes effective prevention strategies and access to low cost affordable treatment for all cannot be over-emphasized for the effective containment of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Mr. President,

There is need for continuing cooperation and coordination at international level to fight this challenge. One of the major obstacles in the achievement of universal treatment is the high cost of anti-retroviral drugs.

The Indian pharmaceutical industry has been plugging this critical gap by reducing the costs of these life saving drugs by producing high quality affordable drugs for use in India and also in other developing countries.

The availability of second generation anti-retroviral drugs will not have any meaningful impact if low cost generic products are not available in the market. It is pertinent to note here that only 4 per cent of persons receiving treatment have access to these second generation medicines.

India is currently meeting around 80 per cent of global anti-retroviral drug demand. India is committed to use all flexibilities under the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement of the World Trade Organization to ensure availability of affordable and quality medicine to all people living with HIV.

We strongly believe that the work which has been done by all of us in this field has significantly contributed towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in this sector. In order to ensure that our effort is

sustainable, we would need to focus on resource mobilization and the transfer of technologies and knowledge. The role to be played by industrially advanced countries and civil society in the context of the work being done by the United Nations and its partners is of immense importance in this context. We believe that the targets and commitments contained in the 2011 Political Declaration can only be fully met if resource mobilization is identified as a priority by us. The narrow considerations of commerce and profitability should not be allowed to affect issues of life and death, which is what our fight against the spread of AIDS is all about. India stands ready to play a role in this context.

As the Secretary General's Report states, "the concept of shared responsibility and global solidarity must be advanced" and the funding gap must be closed so that we ensure a more strategic focus in our activity to eliminate HIV and AIDS.

Thank you, Mr. President.



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success. As the Report of the Secretary General points out, this has been due in equal measure to extraordinary scientific breakthroughs, concerted global action, and bold progress by individual countries. The special role of antiretroviral treatment in achieving the objectives of prevention of AIDS cannot be understated.

Mr. President,

In India, in terms of prevalence, adult HIV rate is close to 0.3 per cent. However, in absolute terms, our HIV positive population is around 3 million. The primary objective of our national programme to combat HIV/AIDS is to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2015.

The main features of our National AIDS Programme are to scale up efforts of targeted interventions for high risk groups, strategizing comprehensive information, education and communication packages for specific segments and scaling up of the service delivery component.

We recognize that the fight against HIV and AIDS have socio-economic and development dimensions, in addition to the public health aspect. Our endeavor is to fully mainstream HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment in all our schemes and activities. We have involved the corporate sector, NGOs and other stakeholders as partners towards this end.

The need for an integrated approach that includes effective prevention strategies and access to low cost affordable treatment for all cannot be over-emphasized for the effective containment of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Mr. President,

There is need for continuing cooperation and coordination at international level to fight this challenge. One of the major obstacles in the achievement of universal treatment is the high cost of anti-retroviral drugs.

The Indian pharmaceutical industry has been plugging this critical gap by reducing the costs of these life saving drugs by producing high quality affordable drugs for use in India and also in other developing countries.

The availability of second generation anti-retroviral drugs will not have any meaningful impact if low cost generic products are not available in the market. It is pertinent to note here that only 4 per cent of persons receiving treatment have access to these second generation medicines.

India is currently meeting around 80 per cent of global anti-retroviral drug demand. India is committed to use all flexibilities under the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement of the World Trade Organization to ensure availability of affordable and quality medicine to all people living with HIV.

We strongly believe that the work which has been done by all of us in this field has significantly contributed towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in this sector. In order to ensure that our effort is sustainable, we would need to focus on resource mobilization and the transfer of technologies and knowledge. The role to be played by industrially advanced countries and civil society in the context of the work being done by the United Nations and its partners is of immense importance in this context. We believe that the targets and commitments contained in the 2011 Political Declaration can only be fully met if resource mobilization is identified as a priority by us. The narrow considerations of commerce and profitability should not be allowed to affect issues of life and death, which is what our fight against the spread of AIDS is all about. India stands ready to play a role in this context.

As the Secretary General's Report states, "the concept of shared responsibility and global solidarity must be advanced" and the funding gap must be closed so that we ensure a more strategic focus in our activity to eliminate HIV and AIDS.

Thank you, Mr. President.



627. Statement by India on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Troika of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the Fourth Meeting of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals [Discussion on: Health and population dynamics, Employment and decent work for all, social protection, youth and education].

New York, June 17, 2013.

Mr. Co-Chair, distinguished delegates,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of our troika consisting of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

We endorse the statement made by Fiji on behalf of the G-77 & China. I am thankful for the spirited statement made just now by the young delegate of Netherland. She made some very important points particularly with reference to youth issues. Representing a young country, I cannot but wholeheartedly agree with the importance of adequately focusing on youth. I also agree with her remarks on promoting inter-generational equity, but would like to add that we must equally focus on intra-generational equity. I also thank the Government of Sri Lanka for taking the initiative in hosting the World Youth Conference in Colombo next year.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The issues being addressed in today's meeting are of core interest to developing countries. Several of these are also part of what constitutes the unfinished agenda of the MDGs. As such, it is important to take them on board the post-2015 development agenda, so that the remarkable progress made under the MDGs can be continued apace. There should not be any slackening of efforts to address these core human development challenges, both before and after 2015.

As we are addressing various important issues in this 4th meeting of this Working Group, we propose to share some of our key priorities in this opening statement and look forward to participating in an interactive debate which is to follow in the next 2 days.

First and foremost, ensuring full and productive employment for all should be a fundamental focus of the SDGs. And for this to happen, we have to

undertake growth promoting policies. With the demographic dividend of the developing countries, creation of decent employment for all is the only way to promote rapid economic growth and social inclusion. This challenge was duly recognized in Rio+20 which noted the 'importance of job creation by investing in and developing sound, effective and efficient economic and social infrastructure and productive capacities for sustainable development and sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth'. Investments in skill-based training, vocational education and promotion of business opportunities are key ingredients for employment generation. Career guidance during the final stages of school education is instrumental in creating a responsive workforce. Providing more opportunities and financing for self-employment enable meeting the growing demand for formal employment.

Second, despite the impressive progress made in the past decades, education outcomes continue to be a key priority for developing countries. Universal access to education is the key, both at the primary and secondary levels. Along with access, quality of education and learning outcomes also need attention. Skill development through technical and vocational training is necessary for diversifying economies and creating productive employment for all. Use of ICT for education can be a force-multiplier for enhancing the effectiveness of interventions in education. On the other hand, we must have appropriate indicators to assess the impact of school education, higher education and vocational training, for successful development of an SDG around this theme. An SDG approach should benchmark these qualitative factors and in addition target closing the gap between formal and informal education systems enabled through nationally determined social safety nets.

Third, the youth constitute the most valuable human resource in any country, the building blocks of development. This is particularly true of the developing countries where are experiencing a 'youth bulge'. We owe it to the youth to create meaningful opportunities for education, skills development and employment so that they have the wherewithal to fashion their own destiny. Accordingly, investment on children aiming at productive and disciplined youth is a more proactive approach. Our focus on youth in the post-2015 development agenda must be anchored in such policy interventions. Next year's World Conference on Youth in Sri

Lanka will provide opportunities for all stakeholders to actively engage in mainstreaming youth in global development agenda. We also welcome the UN Secretary-General's appointment of a Special Envoy on Youth as well as the establishment of an Inter Agency Network of all key UN agencies working on youth matters.

Fourth, health indicators account for 3 of the 8 MDGs. The fact that many of them will not be achieved till 2015 should not deter us from making this a key pillar of the new development framework. At Rio+20, we recognized the importance of universal health coverage. This remains the key challenge for developing countries. We must pay particular attention to women's health as a priority. Prevention of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, influenza, polio and other communicable diseases remain serious global concerns and redoubling of efforts is required to tackle these threats. At the same time, we are witnessing a gradual increase in burden of non-communicable diseases. As such, we should also focus on non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, heart diseases and also the neglected tropical diseases. We commend the efforts of UNICEF and WHO, especially awareness campaigns for preventive healthcare. One thing we must not forget is the need to accommodate indigenous healthcare practices, which are readily available in many developing countries.

Fifth, on population dynamics, as confirmed by Rio+20, we need to have a positive agenda that focuses on forward-looking planning so that we can seize the opportunities and address the challenges associated with demographic change, including migration. The role of education and ensuring full and productive employment for all cannot also be overemphasized in this context. Equally relevant is the need for flexible migration policies to address population dynamics and movement of people.

And, finally Mr. Co-Chair, while the challenges we are discussing today relate to fundamental human development for which national policy action is no doubt the key, we must not forget the crucial importance of international factors and cooperation in assisting developing countries to address these issues. Enhanced trade opportunities, market access, enhanced investments, access to medicines including through flexibilities in the TRIPS, and flexible migration policies are extremely important and

relevant in addressing these challenges. Such linkages must be meaningfully woven into the SDGs framework. We must also remember that entrenched trade barriers, however explained will be an impediment to the realization of MDGs and future SDGs

I thank you Mr. Co-Chair.



628. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to UN, at the Annual Session 2013 of the Executive Board of UNICEF.

New York on June 18, 2013.

Mr. President, my felicitations to the Executive Director Mr. Anthony Lake for an extremely informative statement and I would also complement UNICEF for an insightful report on the progress and achievements against the Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP). The Executive Board Meeting is very timely and important as it provides an opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of children all over the world.

The UNICEF Strategic Plan draft has set out an extremely laudable goal: "Advancing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged". It is indeed a very noble goal to set and we are encouraged by Mr. Anthony Lake's emphasis on reaching every last child, no matter where she or he lives. It is perhaps this kind of passion and zeal that is the real hallmark of UNICEF in pursuing the cause for ensuring a much better world for our children.

Mr. President, we are also confident that as UNICEF embarks upon the finalization of its Strategic Plan, it would take into account the recommendations made by the QCPR for the UN Development System. Members states had invested considerable time and energy in ensuring that the QCPR provided the framework for the post 2015 goals as a means to develop a legacy for the UNDS, which will benefit future generations and in particular our children.

Investments in children's health and education are key imperatives for all developing countries. It is in this context that we hope that as the next UNICEF Strategic Plan takes shape, there would be no dilution of resources committed to these two key stand alone goals. A strong focus on promoting greater equity in the development process by investing in the health, education and protection of the most disadvantaged and excluded children is of utmost importance. These investments are critical in breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty and help in creating more stable societies and promote sustained economic growth.

Another area that we would like you to focus further upon is on leveraging South South cooperation for the larger benefit of children in the developing world. Even though South South Cooperation has often been singled out as a new buzzword in the evolving narrative of the developmental discourse, much more remains to be done to give it the 'muscle' it needs from the UN system. The so called 'rise of the global south' is not matched by the development indicators mapped against the South in the Human Development Report.

Countries of the South, including India, have several ongoing initiatives including our joint initiative with Brazil and South Africa, under the IBSA Trust Fund, and we have already implemented some extremely critical projects with special focus for children using this Fund. We very recently inaugurated a Hospital for Children with special needs in Cambodia and hope that UNICEF would continue to partner with countries of the South in complementing them achieve their goals, especially in those projects which have an explicit 'children friendly' focus.

Earlier this year in February in Chennai, the Government of India along with UNICEF, hosted the three day Call for Action on Child Survival and Development which reaffirmed the promise towards further reducing Under Five Mortality Rate in India. We also arrived at a set of agreed actions that will sustain the momentum and fast track our journey towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals related to maternal and child mortality. We are also looking forward to the hosting the 2nd High Level Meeting on South South Cooperation for Child rights in Asia and the Pacific in New Delhi later in October this year.

It is pertinent to point out Mr. President, that the rate of decline of Under5 mortality rate was faster in India than the global average and the narrowing

of the rural - urban gap in child mortality is reflective of Government of India's continued commitment to serve children by establishing 'a culture of care' -from addressing the health of mothers to infants to children to adolescents.

We have therefore in UNICEF, a trusted and reliable partner, who we are sure, would continue to place children at the heart of achieving the 'future we want', as we agreed to in Rio. As a country that has one of the longest relationships with UNICEF and with home to the largest number of children in the world, we have an abiding interest in UNICEF's success and its efforts in ending preventing all preventable child deaths.

As home to one fifth of the children in the world, we are steadfastly committed to ensuring protective and nurturing environments for children to reach their full potential. We would like to once again express our sincere appreciation for UNICEF's efforts in fulfilling our common vision of an early realisation of children friendly environments universally. I thank you, Mr. President.



629. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN at the annual session of Executive Board of UN Women.

New York, June 25, 2013.

Mr. President, my felicitations to the Acting Head of UN Women Madam Lakshmi Puri for an extremely informative statement and I would also complement UN Women for an insightful report on the progress made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan 2011 - 2013, which has been placed for consideration before the Board.

Mr. President, before I delve into the substance of my remarks, let me place on record my delegation's sincerest appreciation for the dynamic leadership provided by the former ED of UN Women, Madam Michel Bachelet in the nearly three years, she spent guiding this entity from

nascence to its fruition, as we see today. Her innings will be long remembered for giving not just direction and support but for having achieved significant milestones in a very short tenure.

When we embarked upon the Strategic Plan of UN Women in June 2010, we had called for it, to be 'ambitious, achievable and results oriented'. Today, in the third operational year of UN Women, my delegation is happy to note that UN Women has been able to significantly influence policy narratives across the globe in areas ranging from political participation and leadership, economic empowerment, ending violence against women and gender equality.

However, we still have a long way to go in our common pursuit for ensuring women's economic empowerment. Mr. President, even today women bear a disproportionate burden of the world's poverty and constitute nearly 70% of the world's poor and despite estimates that they perform approximately 66% of the world's work and produce approximately 50% of the food, they only earn 10% of the income and own only 1% of the property. Promoting the empowerment of women must therefore be a key economic development imperative.

Mr. President, representing a country which is home to more than 500 million women, let me submit, that women's economic and political empowerment has been the cornerstone of our policy making, all along. More so, when 69% of our total women population (nearly 405 million women) reside in the rural areas alone. It is in this context, that contribution of rural women to our GDP growth and their central role in poverty reduction has been a key guiding factor in the framing of our national policies.

Economic empowerment of Indian women at the grass roots level, especially through 4.8 million women led Self-Help Groups (SHG's) has been a hall mark of India's success story. Covering over 97 million beneficiaries, these have provided microfinance, employment and livelihood, and have made a defining change in the lives of millions of Indian women at the village level.

I am also pleased to inform you that India has the highest numbers globally, of political empowerment of women at the local level. We have nearly 1.5 million elected women representatives at the local grassroots

level, an all time record anywhere, which epitomises the scale at which the landscape of political empowerment of women in India is rapidly changing.

Mr. President, allow me to flag a couple of key issues on the main agenda of the Annual session of the Executive Board and on the next Strategic Plan for UN Women 2014 - 2017.

First, we welcome the consultative and interactive nature of the process that has been followed so far by taking into account views of member states in crafting the Strategic Plan. It has an extremely laudable and ambitious vision statement, which my delegation fully endorses: "Making this Century for Women and Gender Equality" and I wish you all success in making it a reality. We hope that as you move further forward on the Strategic Plan, the recommendations of the QCPR on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment would be factored in the Strategic Plan and it would be QCPR consistent, and,

Second, work on gender equality and empowerment of women continues to remain chronically underfunded. If we have to ensure that UN Women stands for action, the donor community must move beyond the political rhetoric of just stated commitments, and transform them into the much needed monetary support for the organization. A fact pointed out in Para-24 of ED's report states that OECD-DAC aid commitments for gender equality fell by 19 percent from US\$25.3 billion in 2009-2010 to \$20.5 billion per year in 2010-2011. We hope that this would be addressed sooner than later, and tomorrow's pledging event would witness a correction in this trend.

We also appreciate the financials outlined in the draft of the integrated budget 2014 - 2015, and fully endorse the way forward as proposed by the President earlier today.

Let me conclude Mr. President, by quoting Margaret Thatcher, when she said: " In politics if you want anything SAID ask a man. If you want anything DONE, ask a woman".

We believe that in UN Women, you have the where withal to have 'anything done' for the cause of women globally.

We reaffirm India's steadfast commitment to the all round social, economic and political empowerment of our women, whatever effort and resources,

the task might take. We assure you that India will always be willing to walk the extra mile, as UN Women embarks upon this journey.

Let me also re-iterate that as part of our stated commitment of five million US dollars to UN Women's core predictable funding, India has already contributed three million US dollars to UN Women, so far and we will continue to provide full political and financial support to UN Women and call on others to do likewise.

Thank You



630. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations at the Ninth Round of Intergovernmental Negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the United Nations Security Council and other matters related to the Council in New York.

New York, June 27, 2013.

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the floor. At the outset, I would like to align myself with the G4 statement, delivered by Ambassador Luiz Alberto Machado, the Permanent Representative of Brazil, as well as with the statement made by Ambassador Camillo Gonsalves, the Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, on behalf of the L69 Group.

The position of India on the issue of reform of institutions of global governance, including the UN Security Council, in order to ensure that they reflect contemporary reality has been a matter of foremost importance to my country. It was in this spirit that India joined the unanimous consensus of the landmark Outcome Document adopted by our Heads of State and Government at the 60th anniversary of the United Nations in 2005. We have participated constructively in the nine rounds

of intergovernmental negotiations held so far on the issue of "an early reform of the Security Council", as instructed by our leaders in paragraph 153 of that Document.

It is therefore a matter of deep concern to us that despite the urgency expressed more than eight years ago, we have not been able to make concrete progress towards the objective set out for us in the Outcome Document. In our view, we need to address two major issues which are contributing to the current delay on this issue.

The first is a procedural issue. Despite the enthusiastic participation of member states of the United Nations during the nine rounds of inter-governmental negotiations on Security Council reform held so far, the momentum of our discussion has been stymied by the inexplicable slowdown of the process of our meetings. Indeed, this must be one of the rare Sessions of the General Assembly in which we have been allowed to participate in only one meeting during the previous nine months on such an important issue. We therefore call on you, Mr President, to find a way to get these negotiations back on track, by empowering Ambassador Tanin, the distinguished Chairman of the Inter-Governmental Negotiations, in whom we have the fullest confidence, to convene more meetings before the end of the 67th Session of the General Assembly.

The second issue is substantive. Here again, we are surprised that despite the fact that all of us in this forum have been given the opportunity to express our positions on such an important issue, we are still awaiting a concise working document containing these views. Member states have supported expansion in both categories of membership of the Security Council. We therefore call on you, Mr President, to authorize the Chairman of the Inter-Governmental Negotiations to circulate such a concise working document without delay so that we can engage in text-based negotiations on such an expansion of the Security Council.

Having made these two points, Mr President, allow me to convey three observations which will help you to catalyze our work. Firstly, it should be recalled that we were requested by our leaders to conduct a review of the reforms of the Security Council mandated by them by the end of 2005 itself. Of course, we have missed this deadline by a considerable

length of time. However, now that our organization is beginning to prepare to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the United Nations two years from now, the 2015 Summit should be taken as an outer deadline for the results of our work in this group to be reported to our leaders. Indeed, this would be only logical in terms of their expectations set out in the 2005 Outcome Document!

The second observation, Mr. President, is that the world around us is changing very rapidly. In the most important area of the maintenance of international peace and security, which is the "primary responsibility" of the Security Council, the international community is facing challenges which could not have been foreseen when the United Nations was founded in 1945. These changes, caused by diverse factors, require us to address the issue of reform of the Security Council in a responsible, constructive manner. While acting under the provisions of the UN Charter in the 21st century, the reformed Security Council has to become, in the words of our Heads of State and Government, "more broadly representative, efficient and transparent" in order to "enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions".

Thirdly, Mr. President, we recognize that as members of the United Nations, which is the bedrock of the international legal system, we are constantly interacting on the basis of a delicate balance of rights and obligations. In a narrow sense, what we are advocating today is the give and take of text-based negotiations with regard to achieving such a balance in the reformed Security Council. In a broader sense, we have to be conscious of the fact that such a reformed Security Council is the arch-stone of a strengthened United Nations system, which is essential to implement the ambitious agenda of our organization in all areas of human endeavor, the so-called "global governance" agenda. In keeping with this sense of balance, we cannot applaud the progress made by us since 2005 in areas such as human rights, peace building, the democracy fund and women's empowerment, while making no progress at all on the mandated "early" reform of the Security Council. Potentially, we fear that this lack of balance in implementing the vision of the 2005 Summit will jeopardize our aspirations for the 2015 Summit, and dilute the effectiveness of the United Nations itself.

It is our hope that, by recognizing the political implications of this issue, you will use our meeting today to propel us into a result-oriented process. This would be a befitting "legacy" to the United Nations!

Mr President, as has been very succinctly said by a well-known member of the National Speakers Association of the United States: "The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot."



631. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN, New York at the High Level Segment of the ECOSOC.

Geneva, July 1-4, 2013.

Mr. President,

It gives me great pleasure to address this High Level Segment of the ECOSOC on a topic that goes at the heart of our efforts to build a better future for all. Science, technology, innovation and culture are critical enablers of development whose full potential must be harnessed if we are to realize our collective ambition under the Millennium Development Goals.

In this context, we thank the Secretary General for his report on this issue presented to the Council. The Secretary General has rightly pointed out that overcoming twenty-first century challenges such as poverty, inequality and environmental degradation will require drawing on a range of innovations from science, technology and culture.

Mr. President,

Science, technology and innovation hold the veritable key to the sustainability conundrum facing the world today. They are also key to the eradication of poverty and achievement of other human development goals under the MDGs. We must seek rapid advances in science & technology but more importantly, we must also seek to share the fruits of such advances widely if we are to make progress towards eradicating

poverty and ensuring the sustainability of our future development. It is imperative that the IPR regime balance rewards for innovation with the common good of humankind and be development oriented.

Access to technology is central to the efforts of the developing countries to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs, address climate change and achieve sustainable development. It is also central to address the critical challenge of energy poverty which many developing countries face today. The link between energy poverty, income poverty, malnutrition and low health indicators is well documented and this empirical overlap is evident in the global achievement map on MDGs.

Mr. President,

As we seek to accelerate our efforts towards achieving the MDGs before 2015 and set our sights on a transformative global development framework for the post-2015 period, we need a transformative shift in the way we have been looking at technology issues so far.

The international system must enhance global collaboration on science and technology. We have seen how collaboration in technology has produced revolutionary impact within a short span of time. Today, we boast of 5 billion mobile phone users worldwide and over 2 billion internet users and this number is growing exponentially. This success of ICT and mobile technologies has been possible because of collaboration. Mobile technology was developed and applied in the North but soon thereafter spread all over the South due to advances in mass production techniques and uniquely innovative business practices in many developing countries spurring growth and bringing about transformative change in our societies.

Mr. President,

As we deliberate on the post-2015 development agenda, we must also carefully reflect on the global mechanisms to facilitate rapid development, transfer and diffusion of technologies. The Secretary General in his report on options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies has proposed the creation of a global Technology Facilitation Mechanism under the aegis of the UN. We fully endorse this idea which

would catalyze our efforts, enhance synergies and bring about much needed coherence in several ongoing international initiatives on technology issues.

Mr. President,

We concur with the Secretary General's report that a culture-sensitive approach is needed for the success of development initiatives. Coming from India which has been a cradle of human civilization and a melting pot of multiple cultures living in harmony with each other, a culture-sensitive approach is one that embraces differences, celebrates diversity and promotes mutual respect. Only such an inclusive approach to culture can enable us to pursue collective objectives such as MDGs in a spirit of solidarity.

A culture centric approach is also necessary for building a sustainable future for all. If we are to collectively achieve the overarching objective of sustainable development, the world will also have to embrace a culture of frugality. This idea has been a part and parcel of Indian ethos and culture. Unfortunately, the current consumption patterns in the industrialized world are not only unsustainable but also inequitable and we must find new pathways for transition to a culture of frugal living, less wastage and equitable sharing of resources.

In conclusion Mr. President, as we redouble our efforts for eradication of poverty and achievement of MDGs by 2015, we must commit ourselves not only to fully utilizing the potential of science, technology, innovation and culture but also to crafting facilitative processes to foster better collaboration for finding collective solutions to the problems we face. India with its human resource and scientific capacity is more than willing to be a partner in this collaboration.

Thank you



632. Statement by Mr. Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Joint Secretary, Department of Disability Affairs, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, During the Sixth Session of the Conference of the State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

New York, July 17, 2013.

Mr. President,

Thank you for chairing these discussions at the Sixth Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. I am confident that these discussions will contribute to a better understanding of the challenges before us.

The theme of "Ensuring adequate standard of living: empowerment and participation of persons with disabilities within the framework of the CRPD" is particularly relevant.

An estimated 15% of the world's population is disabled and an estimated 80% of those 1 billion people live in the developing world. This group can make a significant contribution to development and the progress of society. Their potential has, however, seldom been met due to existing barriers. It is our obligation to remove those barriers and empower them.

A High Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on Disability and Development is scheduled for 23 September 2013. India is looking forward to this high level meeting which provides an important opportunity to reaffirm our global commitment and to shape the agenda on disability issues in the coming years.

Mr. President,

India became a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities in March 2007 and the Convention was subsequently ratified in October 2007.

The Government of India had recognized very early the need for specific policy intervention to support persons with disabilities. In fact, the Indian Constitution stipulates the State to ensure equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all individuals, which implies an inclusive society for all, including

the Persons with Disabilities who constitute 2.13% of the total population of our country, which comes to 21.9 million persons. Article 41 of the Constitution, which is particularly relevant with regard to persons with disabilities, mandates the State to , within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement.

Mr. President,

Our legislative framework is anchored in the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act passed in the year 1995. The Act recognized that persons with disabilities are a valuable human resource and seeks to create an enabling environment that provides them with equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society, including in areas of education and employment. The Department of Disability Affairs under the nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment works with several Ministries to coordinate and implement programmes and schemes in the areas of health, education and employment.

Mr. President,

Another Law - the National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability Act was passed in 1999. This Act laid out provisions for legal guardianship of the four categories of the persons. In addition, the Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 has been enacted to deal with the development of manpower for providing rehabilitation services to the persons with disabilities.

Mr. President,

The Government of India has already enacted several general laws incorporating, inter-alia, a disability perspective. Some of these are:

- * The National Disaster Management Act (NDMA), 2005,
- * The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RCFCE), 2009, and
- * Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2010.

The National Building Code India 2005 incorporates detailed provisions for construction of buildings and makes accessible design an inherent part of all plans.

Mr. President,

In order to execute the policy and to ensure persons with disabilities of equal opportunities, protection of rights and assured participation of the disabled in the social processes, India has in place a mechanism for coordinated action among all stakeholders through Central Coordination Committee of the Department of Disability Affairs, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Combined efforts have succeeded in developing an extensive infrastructure in the form of various National, Regional and District level Institutes and Rehabilitation Centres to develop manpower by providing courses/ trainings in different areas to cater to the needs of persons with Disabilities. The Government has established seven National Institutes (NIs) dealing with different types of disabilities and eight Composite Regional Centers (CRCs) to promote research and conduct training for delivery of services to persons with disability.

Mr. President,

The Government of India, in 2009, issued guidelines to make all government websites in accessible format as per Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) of W3C. The websites of several Ministries including that of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, are now in accessible format.

With a view to further improve implementation of government policies and fulfillment of its responsibilities towards the persons with disabilities, the Government created a separate Department of Disability in May, 2012. The Government of India has 9 existing schemes and 19 new schemes which are being implemented in the XII Five Year Plan of the country for empowerment of persons with disabilities and the financial allocation for the schemes has been doubled as compared to the XI Five Year Plan period.

Mr. President,

Empowerment of persons with disabilities is an inter-disciplinary process, covering various aspects namely, prevention, early detection,

intervention, education, vocational training, rehabilitation and social integration, etc. Apart from resources, it requires dedicated efforts of persons and institutions involved in the process of empowerment. In order to recognize their effort and encourage others to strive to achieve excellence in this field, national awards are being presented to encourage outstanding achievement in the disability sector.

Mr. President,

Besides this, India is a signatory to the Declaration on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asia Pacific Region and to the Biwako Millennium Framework for action towards an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society.

Further, in order to harmonize the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 with the provisions of UNCRPD, the Act has been reviewed and a new Bill namely the Draft Rights of Persons with Disability Bill is being finalized for enactment. The new Act would replace the old Act and would serve the Person with Disabilities in larger perspective. The Bill envisages a right based approach to cater to the emerging challenges for empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and also to meet the obligations under UNCRPD.

Mr. President,

Govt. of India remains committed to building an enabling environment so that all persons with disabilities are able to enjoy their rights and realize their full potential. I would like to add that India's initial Country report with reference to the obligations under UNCRPD is being finalized and will be submitted to the UN Committee shortly.

Thank you



**633. STATEMENT BY MR. DEVESH UTTAM, FIRST SECRETARY,
AT THE FOURTH WORKING SESSION OF THE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL OPEN-ENDED WORKING
GROUP ON AGE.**

NEW YORK, AUGUST 12, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for chairing the fourth session of the open-ended Working Group on Ageing. We are confident that under your guidance, we will make progress in our deliberations.

Mr. Chairman,

We recognize that population ageing is one of the most significant demographic changes in the 21st century. Increased longevity is a direct consequence of unprecedented advances in technology and medicine as well as steadily improving socio-economic conditions particularly in terms of food availability, better nutrition, improved access to better health-care and safer working conditions.

At the same time, shift in economic structures has led to significant work-related migration and changes in family structure towards more nuclear families. In this backdrop, an ageing population poses fresh challenges to policy makers. India is home to over 100 million old persons and this population segment is expected to increase faster than the average population rate. It is estimated that at its current rate, India's elderly population will double in 20 years.

Mr. Chairman,

It is evident that old persons are vulnerable in several respects on account of their age, even when they may be financially independent. Physical infirmity leads to dependence in various forms on others - be it family members or care givers. The challenge for policy makers is to ensure that older persons live a life of dignity and fulfillment through provision of appropriate policy and legal framework.

Equally, however, there is a need to acknowledge the social dimension of the issue and the need for immediate and extended families and the community to step in. It is an issue of inter-generational social compact.

Just as parents provide for their children, the children need to take care of and support their parents when they grow old. It is simply inconceivable that the government can alone address this issue if the families and communities do not play their part.

Mr. Chairman,

In India, the government has adopted a multi-stakeholder approach in addressing issues related to the ageing population. The government, through its various schemes, has collaborated with other partners such as NGOs, local bodies and the community in ensuring that the elderly not only live longer but also lead a secure, dignified and productive life. The National Policy on Older Persons addresses the requirements of financial security, health care and nutrition, shelter and appropriate financial incentives and discounts to senior citizens. This policy is presently being reviewed in consultation with all stakeholders to plug gaps and improve policy implementation.

The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act 2007 provides for the protection of life and property of senior citizens, better medical facilities and setting up of old age homes in every district. Pension schemes, free legal aid services and insurance coverage schemes are also available to assist senior citizens.

The National Programme for Health Care of Elderly provides for improved health services by setting up geriatric units around the country as well as special clinics for the elderly in government run hospitals.

Grant-in-aid schemes are in place to provide financial assistance to establish and maintain old age homes, recreation centers, mobile medicare units, help lines, physiotherapy centers and mental healthcare facilities.

Several facilities are also available to the elderly including subsidized travel on public transportation, prioritization of their legal cases, higher rates of interest on savings, reduced banking charges, tax rebates, etc.

Mr. Chairman,

India is a signatory to the Madrid International Plan on Ageing. We will actively participate in the discussions of the working group and at the UN on this important issue.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm India's full commitment to safeguard the dignity and well-being of the elderly.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



634. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at UNDP Segment of the Second Regular Session 2013 of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS.

New York, September 9, 2013.

Mr. President, thank you for giving me the floor. My felicitations to Administrator Helen Clark for her an extremely insightful statement and to the UNDP Strategic Plan Team for having followed an extremely consultative and participatory process in the production of this Strategic Plan, which will guide your work for the next four years.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new ASG of the Asia Pacific Bureau, Mr. Xu Haoliang, and hope he would ably spearhead the excellent work that UNDP has been doing in India and the South Asian region.

Mr. President, before I begin, allow me to align myself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Fiji, on behalf of the G-77.

The meeting of this Executive Board comes at a very critical point, In eighteen months, the post-2015 development agenda, one of the United Nations' most ambitious projects, would be launched. And as the PGA elect, Ambassador John Ashe said the other day : "If we are to rise to the task, the General Assembly must be equally as bold, ambitious and collaborative."

Representing a country that has one of the longest relationships with UNDP and is the biggest contributor to its core budget among developing countries, we have an abiding interest in UNDP's success and its efforts

in how it implements its next Strategic Plan. I would therefore, Mr. President, submit the following for your consideration :

One, we welcome the vision statement of the Strategic Plan, which sets the goal reasonably well placed : achieving poverty eradication and inclusive growth. To our delegation these two have to be the fundamental bedrock of the post 2015 development agenda. This vision also flows well from the mandate given by QCPR Resolution, to "assign THE highest priority to poverty eradication" and that "it should continue to be the core focus area for the United Nations development system and that ALL its development programmes and projects should attempt to address this greatest global challenge as their underlying objective"

Two, we do believe that there is a certain degree of disconnect between the areas of work envisaged in the Strategic Plan and how they contribute to achieving its stated vision. We therefore would request UNDP to further focus its areas of work, towards explicitly achieving this Vision more meaningfully and follow the guidance provided the QCPR Resolution on tackling the challenge of poverty eradication

Three, while we welcome the significant amount of rewording and repositioning done to the narrative of South South cooperation in the text of the Strategic Plan, we would continue to urge UNDP to move beyond the lip service that has been traditionally meted out to such an important subject. Words must translate into action, and developing countries which are pursuing projects of South South cooperation, wherever they so need help from the multilateral system, if UNDP's resources so permit, you should be willing to step in and assist them. We also hope that in future when UNDP is implementing projects of South South cooperation, sustainability would be factored in, as was pointed out in your Evaluation Report.

Four, we continue to request UNDP to build greater definitional clarity in the recently coined concept of "Sustainable Human Development" and its usage in the Strategic Plan as being the one stop panacea for achieving its the goals. If SHD is indeed to be made the 'lens' of achieving 'ALL' its goals, by UNDP, then we do hope it would mean what 193 member states agreed to in QCPR on capacity building, employment generation, vocational training, rural development and the mobilisation of all possible resources at achieving poverty eradication.

Five, we also hope that whenever next UNDP does the midterm review of this Strategic Plan, it would also report on the implementation of the course corrections pointed out in the Evaluation Reports on Poverty Reduction and South South cooperation. These Reports serves as important frames of reference and must not be lost sight of in our future course of action.

To conclude, Mr. President, let me submit that this Board Session, given its agenda, is an important and timely opportunity not just for stock taking but also to constructively contribute to the future of UN's development agenda. Our suggestions today have been made in this spirit and I hope will find resonance, not just within the larger UNDP community but also feed into the post 2015 development agenda. The next four years over which the Strategic Plan of UNDP will be implemented will be an litmus test, given the trying times amidst evolving economic crises that confronts most developing countries today.

As the largest development arm of the UN system, if UNDP indeed taps its abilities to the fullest, in pursuit of achieving the vision of this Strategic Plan, we are confident that you would indeed reduce poverty significantly if not fully, from the face of this planet.

It has been said and I quote: "It would be nice if the poor were to get even half of the money that is spent on studying them", and perhaps now is the time to move from words to action and tangibly tackling this challenge.

Please rest assured of our steadfast commitment to UNDP, in walking the extra mile together in this common pursuit.

I thank you Mr. President.



635. Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the informal Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect: State Responsibility and Prevention.

New York, September 11, 2013.

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this interactive dialogue on the "Responsibility to Protect: State responsibility and prevention". I am confident that today's deliberations would significantly contribute towards exchanging views on measures that can be taken by Member States on this issue.

Mr. President,

It is important to recall that the 2005 World Summit outcome document had clearly recognized that it was the responsibility of each State to protect its populations from the four crimes, namely genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and to prevent the occurrence thereof. The key to R2P must be prevention.

Mr. President,

We would emphasize three issues regarding R2P:

First, the R2P must remain confined to the four crimes identified by our leaders. We have the Geneva Conventions which provide the bulwark of international humanitarian law. The creation of the Human Rights Council provides the international community with a specialized mechanism to monitor and take appropriate action on human rights violations. Also, a more interactive peer review process in the Human Rights Council has the potential to flag problem areas which may need concerted action by the states concerned with support of the international community, if required and as appropriate.

Second, the default response of the international community cannot be coercive measures, including under Chapter VII of the Charter. R2P cannot be code for military intervention.

Third, R2P must not become a tool in the hands of the powerful to pressurize weaker states, and bring about regime change. Resort to Chapter VII, particularly Articles 41 and 42, may be taken only after serious and genuine efforts at the pacific settlement as set out in the UN Charter have failed. Even while applying Chapter VII, the use of force should be considered as a measure of last resort. Any action involving R2P must be taken under the auspices of the UN and not outside the UN framework.

Mr. President,

We believe that actions under R2P should be based on impartiality, neutrality and proportionality. In conflict situations, there must be push for early political engagement with the parties concerned. Response of the international community must be necessarily calibrated and must stress, at all times, dialogue and peaceful resolution. Moreover, there have to be inbuilt mechanisms for monitoring and reporting measures taken by the Member-States as well as course correction depending on how the situation concerned evolves on the ground. In this context, responsibility while protecting (RwP), as proposed by Brazil, is equally important. If R2P is to regain the respect of the international community, it has to be anchored in the concept of RwP.

Mr. President,

The United Nations and its Member States, and regional or sub-regional organizations must be there to offer assistance, as required by the State, including capacity building, to strengthen such policies and programmes, which must be nationally owned.

The spread of education, economic growth, equal opportunities, social coherence, gender equality, religious tolerance, and adherence to the rule of law nationally and internationally are factors that can contribute to help prevent crimes.

Mr. President,

Finally, I would like to emphasize that the effectiveness of the implementation of R2P is linked to the balanced and impartial discharge of their responsibilities and obligations by Member States under the UN Charter. The reform of the United Nations governance system in tune

with the contemporary realities will go a long way in ensuring this changed dynamics which is critical for the successful implementation of R2P.

I thank you



**636. STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MANJEEV SINGH PURI,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD OF
UN WOMEN.**

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 16, 2013.

Mr. President, on behalf of the Government of India, let me begin conveying our sincerest felicitations and congratulations to H.E. Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuk on her appointment as Head of UN Women. Madam, you bring renewed momentum and vitality to this high office and as a developing country with historical ties to South Africa, even predating our independence, we take great pride and delight in your appointment.

You made a very pertinent observation in the morning session in your address: 'sustainable development will not be really possible if half of humanity is left behind' and we join you in echoing this noble sentiment. As founding members of its Executive Board, and that having had a bit to do with your organization's creation, India will always be willing to walk the extra mile in supporting you in your endeavours to promote gender equality and women's empowerment across the globe.

Allow me to delve into the substance of our remarks on the main agenda item for consideration before this Board, i.e. the Strategic Plan for UN Women for 2014-2017.

When we embarked upon the Strategic Plan of UN Women in June 2010, we had called for it, to be 'ambitious, achievable and results oriented'. Today, in the third operational year of UN Women, my delegation is happy to note that UN Women has been able to significantly influence policy narratives across the globe in areas ranging from political participation

and leadership, economic empowerment, ending violence against women and gender equality.

UN Women's journey in a short span of three years has been exemplary and has achieved significant milestones to its credit. So, when we embark on the Strategic Plan for the next four years, we are extremely heartened by your resolve right upfront in the Strategic Plan to make "this THE century for women and gender equality".

We would also complement you for the extremely consultative and participatory process that has been followed by your team in the drafting and finalisation of this Strategic Plan, especially in incorporating the feedback received from Member States and bringing about amendments to focus on poverty eradication and having included gender perspectives in the post 2015 development agenda.

Two, we also welcome the significant emphasis placed in the Strategic Plan on attempting to incorporate the mandates of the QCPR Resolution on gender equality and women's empowerment. Advancing women's rights and their political empowerment was a key facet of the QCPR and we are happy to note its continued reaffirmation in the new Strategic Plan of UN Women.

Mr. President, representing a country which is home to more than 500 million women, I am also pleased to inform you that India has the highest numbers globally, of political empowerment of women at the local level. We have nearly 1.5 million elected women representatives at the local grassroots level, an all time record anywhere, which epitomises the scale at which the landscape of political empowerment of women in India is rapidly changing.

Another theme, that I would like to flag today and which resonates with a pivotal thrust of the Strategic Plan has been on 'ending violence against women'. In this regard, following last week's court verdict against perpetrators of such horrific crimes, we also noticed the recent call by UN Women to Government of India "to do everything in its power to ensure speedy justice for survivors of violence".

Mr. President, let me first place on record, that for me and for my Government, even one incident of violence against any woman or any girl, is an incident too many, and simply unacceptable.

The edifice of the Indian society is premised on the all embracing power of the Indian woman - which in our ancient thought and religious belief, bestows her the power to create, nurture and transform. She is not only worshipped as 'Durga' the goddess of creation, but also as 'Saraswati' - the inspiration for all music, poetry, science and learning.

While the December incident indeed shook the whole conscience of our nation at its very roots, the Government of India has since ensured that the culprits have been brought to speedy justice and the sternest punishment delivered. We have also since enacted a series of laws to ensure that such crimes do not happen again, and the people of India stand together firmly in this resolve.

We still have a long way to go in our common pursuit for ensuring women's economic empowerment as women bear a disproportionate burden of the world's poverty and constitute nearly 70% of the world's poor. Despite estimates that they perform approximately 66% of the world's work and produce approximately 50% of the food, they only earn 10% of the income and own only 1% of the property. Promoting the empowerment of women must also be therefore a key economic development imperative of the post 2015 development agenda.

Also, work on gender equality and empowerment of women continues to remain chronically underfunded. If we have to ensure that UN Women stands for action, the donor community must move beyond the political rhetoric of just stated commitments, and transform them into the much needed monetary support for the organization.

Let me also re-iterate that as the largest contributor to UN Women's core predictable funding from the developing world, India has already contributed three million US dollars out of its committed five million to UN Women so far, and we will continue to provide full political and financial support to UN Women and call on others to do likewise.

We reaffirm India's steadfast commitment to the all round social, economic and political empowerment of our women, whatever effort and resources, the task might take. We assure you that India will always be willing to walk the extra mile, as UN Women embarks upon this journey.

I thank you Mr. President.



637. STATEMENT BY MS. KUMARI SELJA, MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT AT THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING OF THE UNGA ON THE REALIZATION OF THE MDGs AND OTHER INTERNATIONALLY AGREED DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WITH THE OVERARCHING THEME 'THE WAY FORWARD: A DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA TOWARDS 2015 AND BEYOND.'

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 23, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me express my deep sense of shock at the brutal terror attack in Nairobi on 21st September. India strongly condemns this heinous attack which has claimed many innocent lives including that of Indians. India also condemns in strongest terms the attack on the church in Peshawar. These senseless acts of violence are a stark reminder that the persisting menace of terrorism remains a threat that requires a concerted and sustained response from the global community.

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for chairing these discussions. This meeting provides an important opportunity to reaffirm our global commitment and to shape the discourse on disability issues in the emerging post-2015 development agenda.

India signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007.

India is also a signatory to regional frameworks such as the Declaration on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asia Pacific Region and to the Biwako Millennium Framework.

Mr. Chairman,

An estimated 15% of the world's population is disabled and 80% of these over 1 billion people live in the developing world. This group can make a

significant contribution to development. It is imperative that we dismantle existing barriers and empower the persons with disabilities.

We must identify measures to strengthen the normative framework to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities including through incorporation of their perspectives in formulation of development policies and enhancing their accessibility to education, healthcare and employment.

We must also find ways to strengthen international cooperation through exchange of good practices, capacity building and provision of technical assistance.

Mr. Chairman,

India's legislative framework is anchored in the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act 1995 that recognizes persons with disabilities as a valuable human resource and aims to create an enabling environment to empower them.

There are separate laws dealing with the issue of training of manpower for providing rehabilitation services to the persons with disabilities and providing for legal guardianship for four categories of disabled persons.

India is currently in the process of reviewing and harmonising our legal framework with the provisions of UNCRPD.

Mr. Chairman,

In addition, several laws incorporate a disability perspective. These include the National Disaster Management Act 2005; the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009; and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2010.

The National Building Code 2005 stipulates norms for accessibility in construction of buildings. There are government guidelines to ensure that public places and transportation are gradually made barrier free. The websites of several federal Ministries are now in accessible format as per Web Content Accessibility Guidelines of W3C.

Mr. Chairman,

The Government established a Department of Disability Affairs under the nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in May 2012 to further improve the implementation of government policies and schemes for persons with disabilities.

The budget for these schemes has been doubled in the current Five Year Plan period compared to the previous plan period. Three percent of government employment is reserved for persons with disabilities.

An extensive network of national, regional and district level institutes and rehabilitation centres has been set up to promote research on disability issues and to train manpower to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

We see private sector and civil society as valued partners in our endeavor to empower persons with disabilities. The government has instituted national awards to recognize exemplary contribution in this area.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, let me reaffirm India's firm commitment nationally and at the global level to building an enabling and inclusive environment so that all persons with disabilities are able to enjoy their rights and realize their full potential in society.

Thank you



638. STATEMENT BY MR. SALMAN KURSHID, MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, AT THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM (HLPF).

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 24, 2013.

Madam President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply honored to be present at this inaugural meeting of the High Level Political Forum today.

Madam President,

The creation of the High Level Political Forum was one of the key decisions of the Rio+20 Conference. We are happy that we have created a universal and inclusive process to deliberate on issues in which we all have a stake.

Madam President,

Let me assure you of India's strong commitment to sustainable development. We need sustainable development to lift millions of our people out of poverty and for them to have a better quality of life. In fact, sustainability has been mainstreamed as one of the primary goals of our 12th five year plan.

Sustainable Development must be pursued with a balanced and holistic emphasis on all its three dimensions, economic, social and environmental.

Madam President,

The High Level Political Forum must be a forum for action-oriented collaboration. It must give special attention to the needs and priorities of the developing countries, while ensuring that their developmental policy space is fully preserved.

It must emphasize sharing of best practices and experiences, mobilization of international resources, transfer of technology and capacity building support in order to mainstream sustainable development at all levels.

Madam President,

At Rio+20, world leaders agreed that poverty is not only the greatest global challenge but also an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. The central focus of the Post-2015 Development Agenda must therefore be on ending poverty and hunger once and for all.

In crafting the Post-2015 Development Agenda, we must ensure that it is based on the Rio principles including that of common but differentiated responsibilities, which were reaffirmed at Rio+20.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda must carry forward and complete the unfinished business of the MDGs.

It should also prioritize other core issues such as ensuring food security and universal access to modern energy services, full and productive employment for our youth, managing urbanization, creation of infrastructure, rationalizing consumption patterns and reducing the wastage of food in developed countries.

More importantly, the Post-2015 Development Agenda must succeed in crafting a transformative and meaningful global partnership to provide enhanced means of implementation to developing countries.

The early fulfillment by developed countries of their commitment of 0.7% of GNI as ODA should be the starting point of this important endeavour. We must also craft a truly supportive international system including for trade and finance to assist national efforts.

We must also aim at a genuine reform of the institutions of global economic governance to give real voice and effective participation to developing countries.

Madam President,

Let me take this opportunity to highlight an area that I consider extremely important for sustainable development - correcting the gross disparity and imbalance in the global consumption of natural resources.

The report of the Secretary General's High Level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda has drawn our attention to a startling fact. That the over 1 billion poorest people on this planet account for a mere 1% of

total global consumption while the billion richest consume over two-thirds of it.

This stark imbalance must change if we are serious in our quest for the sustainability of our planet.

The international effort to achieve sustainable development must be premised on an equitable sharing of the planet's resources. This is not just an economic or environmental necessity; it is also a moral and ethical imperative.

We must promote not just inter-generational but also intra-generational equity to achieve sustainable development.

In conclusion Madam President, we are confident that this newly created body would prove to be a worthy platform for action-oriented, inclusive dialogue to assist us in mainstreaming sustainable development and realizing our collective vision of Rio+20.

I thank you



639. Statement by H.E. Mrs. Suiatha Singh, Foreign Secretary Ministry of External Affairs, at the Special Event to follow-up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

New York, September 25, 2013.

Co-Chairs,

Excellencies.

Distinguished Delegates,

It is my distinct honor to participate in this Special Event to follow-up efforts for the achievement of MDGs.

As we near the date for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, our foremost priority must to accelerate our efforts so that the gaps in our achievement can be filled.

Discussions on a global development agenda for the Post-2015 period have also begun. We are happy that today we have decided to launch a process of intergovernmental negotiations to arrive at the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Co-Chairs,

Our global record in the achievement of the MDGs is a mixed one. Over the past two decades, we have made substantial gains in eradicating poverty to which efforts of India have contributed in a significant manner. However, while we may have met the target, we are still far from overcoming the greatest global challenge of poverty.

A decade into the 21st century, 1 out every 6 people in this planet continues to live a life of extreme poverty, hunger and desperation. Progress on other goals and targets in the MDGs has been equally uneven across regions and sectors and, in some cases, far from being achieved by 2015.

It is evident that we need to sustain the momentum for realizing the MDGs beyond 2015 and make them an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda.

As far as social indicators go, the more we run the more we seem to be stay in the same place, due to the sheer pressure on the meager resources of the developing countries. The fact that, after several decades, only three countries have graduated out of the list of Least Developed Countries is a testimony to how much more needs to be done.

We need to make a serious dent in the MDGs before we can make any meaningful progress on the post-2015 development agenda.

The core human development objectives encapsulated in the MDGs - eradication of poverty and hunger, education, health, sanitation, infant and maternal health, gender equality, environmental sustainability - must continue to receive our highest priority. We owe ourselves and our future generations no less!

However, as we deliberate on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, we also need to be cognizant of the pitfalls of the MDGs.

For one, however noble the intentions, the MDGs did not emerge out of an intergovernmental negotiation process. They were focused only on developing countries, while the developed countries had, at best, undefined obligations to facilitate their achievement. While the goals to be reached were identified, the Global Partnership to provide the support to achieve the MDGs, remained weak. Domestic resources became the vehicle rather than genuine international collaboration.

The gap in commitments and disbursement of Official Development Assistance reached US\$ 167 billion in 2011 and further widened in 2012. Aid to the Least Developed Countries, who most need assistance, has also dipped in real terms. Developed countries must urgently fulfill their long made commitment of 0.7% of GNP as ODA.

South-South Cooperation has significantly complemented global resources in recent years, but it is not a substitute for the North-South aid. To focus excessively on South-South cooperation would be to transfer the burden on large developing countries what the developed countries should legitimately do.

We must ensure that the new global partnership for the Post-2015 Development Agenda is a strengthened and meaningful one, to provide adequate and enhanced means of implementation to the developing countries.

Structural reforms of the institutions of global economic governance in order to give real voice and participation to developing countries must be a part of the new global partnership of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The new global partnership cannot be about shifting burdens to large developing countries.

Co-Chairs,

In the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the emphasis has to be on the word 'development'. Therefore, it must first and foremost, promote rapid and sustained economic growth in developing countries. Growth is fundamental to pursue inclusive policies to eradicate poverty, and we must clearly recognize this imperative.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda must be based on the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference, which contains the high level political consensus of the international community on all issues related to sustainable development. It must also fully respect the Rio principles in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

A universal Post-2015 Development Agenda demands meaningful and comprehensive set of action points for developed countries as well. The agenda must put greater focus on changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns and curbing food waste with developed countries taking the lead.

The new agenda must enable us to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner at all levels.

Co-Chairs,

We have only one world and the agenda that we are forging is an unprecedented opportunity. Let us redouble our commitment to the achievement of the MDGs, learn from the experience of the past and ensure that we forge a development agenda which is transformational rather than transactional in nature and one that enables genuine international collaboration to create a better future for our world and our people.

I thank you



640. Statement by Mr. Pavan Kapoor, Joint Secretary, at the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Friends of the UN Secretary-General on Myanmar.

New York, September 26, 2013.

I would like to thank the UN Secretary-General for convening this high-level meeting of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General on Myanmar. I would also like to thank Ambassador Vijay Nambiar, Special Advisor on Myanmar for his briefing. We are also very pleased to see

the Myanmar Minister for Immigration and Population here and welcome him warmly.

2. Myanmar is an important neighbour of India. We have always believed that peace and stability both on our border with Myanmar and within Myanmar are crucial for us. There are historical linkages between India and Myanmar with special ties of culture, language, trade and tradition. India's close and multifaceted relationship with Myanmar has been further strengthened through exchange of visits at the highest level. The landmark State visit of the Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh to Myanmar in May 2012, the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister after a gap of 25 years, was a major milestone in bilateral relations.
3. Our PM reiterated India's readiness to extend all necessary assistance in accelerating Myanmar's democratic transition and developing the capacity of democratic institutions such as the Parliament, National Human Rights Commission and the media. As a part of ongoing capacity building programme, the Prime Minister announced that the training slots for Myanmar nationals would be doubled from existing 250 to 500 per annum.
4. As a close and friendly neighbour, India remains committed to extending all possible assistance and are appreciative of the measures taken by the Government of Myanmar towards greater democratisation and national reconciliation. The ongoing efforts of the government at political, economic and social reforms, including negotiation of preliminary peace agreements with several ethnic groups as well as dialogue with various democratic political parties, including the National League for Democracy led by DawAung San SuuKyi (ASSK), are significant steps in this direction. The smooth and peaceful conduct of bye-elections of last year represents a major milestone in Myanmar's transition towards multiparty democracy.
5. We have noted the developments in the Rakhine State and hard from the Minister what efforts the Government is making to deal with the situation. We understand that the situation is currently under control and that relief and rehabilitation measures, including under UN auspices, are underway to provide for those affected.

We have extended humanitarian assistance worth US\$ 1.2 million to Government of Myanmar as part of our support for the relief, rehabilitation and community building measures being undertaken in the affected areas.

6. India has consistently emphasized the need for the international community to step up engagement with the Government of Myanmar in order to encourage the advancement of national reconciliation as well as socio-economic development. The Government of Myanmar has made significant progress towards greater democratization. The Myanmar leadership, particularly President U TheinSein, has shown considerable vision and courage in ushering in the positive changes in the country. We have noted the message of tolerance, mutual respect and religious freedom made by President TheinSein in the wake of communal clashes in Myanmar. In the message, Myanmar President reiterated his Government's commitment to respect and protect the right of all citizens to worship any religion freely, which conveys a willingness on the part of the present Government to seek a resolution to the issue in line with the international humanitarian regulations. The review or phasing out of sanctions by countries imposing such sanctions against Myanmar is a positive step.
7. We urge that the UN agencies and international financial institutions must be fully enabled at the earliest to carry out the entire gamut of their developmental work in the country. We would also urge the member countries to agree to the discontinuation of resolution on human rights situation in Myanmar. This would convey the world community's strong support and encouragement for the reform measures that are already underway in Myanmar.
8. India supports the SG's proposal for change in nomenclature of this Group stands ready to continue to play a constructive role in the process of consultations with other like-minded countries on the issue.



641. Statement by the Minister for External Affairs H.E MR. Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs, at the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament.

New York, September 26, 2013.

His Excellency, President of the General Assembly,
His Excellency the Secretary General of the United Nations,
Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen

It is an honour to address this high level gathering on Nuclear Disarmament. We associate ourselves with the statement made by the NAM.

Mr. President, from the days of our freedom struggle, we have been consistent in our support for the global elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our nation, was moved by the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki but remained unshaken in his belief in non-violence. He wrote that he regarded the employment of the atom bomb for the wholesale destruction of men, women and children as the most diabolical use of science. More than six decades later, it remains our collective challenge to craft a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order.

India remains convinced that its security would be strengthened in a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order. This conviction is based both on principle as well as pragmatism. We believe that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. Progressive steps are needed for the de-legitimization of nuclear weapons paving the way for their complete elimination.

In 1988, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi presented to the UN General a comprehensive Action Plan for a nuclear weapon free and non-violent

world order, which if implemented would have rid the world of nuclear weapons by 2008. India's subsequent proposals in the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament are testimony to our consistent support for nuclear disarmament based on the key principles of the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan for achieving nuclear disarmament in a time bound manner.

As a responsible nuclear power, we have a credible minimum deterrence policy and a posture of no-first use. We refuse to participate in an arms race, including a nuclear arms race. We are prepared to negotiate a global No-First-Use treaty and our proposal for a Convention banning the use of nuclear weapons remains on the table. As we see no contradiction between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, we are also committed to working with the international community to advance our common objectives of non-proliferation, including through strong export controls and membership of the multilateral export regimes.

Mr. President, the Non-Aligned Movement, of which India is a proud founding member, has proposed today the early commencement of negotiations in the CD on nuclear disarmament. We support this call. Without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, we also support the negotiation in the CD of a nondiscriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty banning the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that meets India's national security interests. It should be our collective endeavor to return the CD, which remains the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, to substantive work as early as possible.

Mr. President, this meeting is proof that the international community remains concerned about the catastrophic consequences of nuclear war and the lack of progress in moving toward global nuclear disarmament. In recent years, many initiatives both official and non-governmental have been launched in order to make the vision of a nuclear weapon free world a reality. Simultaneously, there has been a welcome and well-deserved focus on preventing access by non-state actors, in particular terrorists, to weapons of mass destruction and related materials. The recent use of chemical weapons in Syria point to an urgent need for the international community to strengthen restraints on use of weapons of mass destruction and in particular preventing their access to non state

actors and terrorists. We hope that our discussions today would galvanize political will and help channel our collective efforts towards the noble goal of ridding the world of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. To that end, Mr. President, we pledge to you our full support and cooperation.

I thank you



642. STATEMENT BY H.E. MR SALMAN KURSHID, MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, AT THE 37TH ANNUAL MEETING OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS GROUP OF 77 AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 26,2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to begin by thanking you for your esteemed leadership of the Group of 77 this year. I must underline the sterling role played by your Permanent Representative Ambassador Peter Thompson and his staff here in New York in assisting member states and guiding the discussions of the Group.

Let me also take this opportunity to extend a very warm welcome to Republic of Kirbati as the newest member of the G-77 family.

Mr. Chairman,

The founding principles of the Group of 77 of equity, solidarity and unity are rooted in our collective aspiration to help our people achieve a life of dignity and respect.

Today, with the global economy in turmoil and growth prospects in developing countries under unprecedented stress, our quest for poverty eradication and inclusive development is facing challenges. These are further compounded by sustained food and energy crises.

Under these trying times, we must undertake growth promoting policies to boost demand and create jobs for our youth. The Group must also work to bring growth back at the centre stage of the international discourse.

We must bring to bear our considerable collective strength to ensure a fair and sustainable multilateral trading system under the WTO and a development oriented outcome of the Doha round.

The Group must also continue its leadership in ensuring meaningful progress in the reform of the institutions of global economic governance in order to give real voice and participation to developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The target date for MDGs is drawing near. We are simultaneously engaged in the follow-up to the important decisions taken in Rio+20 last year. We are also commencing the global discussion on the Post- 2015 Development Agenda.

Taken together, these three processes are of crucial importance for the Group. The Group must lead in all these processes to ensure they have a strong imprint of our core principles.

While we have made enormous progress in our achievement of the MDGs, the objectives of the Millennium agenda have not been met.

The Group must ensure that no effort is spared for the achievement of the MDGs in the remaining period till 2015. There must be no slackening at this stage and international support to developing countries at this crucial stage must be enhanced.

In the follow-up to the Rio+20 conference, the foremost priority of the Group must be to ensure that the high level mandate of the Rio+20 Conference is fully respected, in both letter and spirit.

Mr. Chairman,

It is of utmost importance that the Post-2015 Development Agenda is negotiated intergovernmentally.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda must be rooted in the central priority of poverty eradication, identified as the greatest global challenge by our

leaders in Rio+20. It should also carry forward the unfinished agenda of the MDGs.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda must be based on the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference and fully respect the Rio principles in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

We must emphasize that the Post-2015 Development Agenda is an agenda for development. It must therefore promote rapid, sustained and inclusive growth in developing countries and must prioritize core issues central to developing countries such as food security, access to energy, skill development, full and productive employment and creation of infrastructure.

If we are to succeed in our collective efforts as part of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, we must ensure that the global partnership does not remain mere rhetoric. A weak global partnership remained the major weakness of the MDGs and we must ensure that a strengthened and meaningful global partnership underpins the Post- 2015 Development Agenda.

The commitments of developed countries, for ODA, market access and technology transfer, must be met. Developed countries need to take urgent actions to promote the flow of capital to developing countries, eliminate protectionist barriers to trade and foster a supportive IPR regime. The urgent need for a technology facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, deployment, dissemination and transfer of technologies to developing countries cannot be overemphasized. In this context, we welcome the recommendation of the UN Secretary General for the establishment of a 'Technology Facilitation Mechanism'.

A transformed global partnership cannot be about recognizing new actors and dilution of agreed principles and commitments. South- South Cooperation has contributed significantly in recent years and it must be given space to grow as per its own principles, not as a substitute but a complement to North-South Cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

Climate Change continues to present a severe threat to our developmental prospects and in some cases even our survival. G77

has been a pillar of the climate change negotiations under the UNFCCC. We must remain united in our pursuit of a comprehensive, balanced and equitable outcome in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention, in particular the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities.

In order to support the urgent adaptation efforts of the developing countries, it is important for us to ensure that the mechanisms already created under the UNFCCC, in particular the Green Climate Fund and the Technology Mechanism deliver timely and tangible results.

Mr. Chairman,

India is deeply sensitive to the interests of the LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and the African countries as part of the G77 family. It is important that their special needs continue to receive the highest priority of the Group.

We look forward to an ambitious outcome to the Third International Conference on SIDS in Samoa in 2014 which should galvanize political will and redouble international efforts to enhance the support of the international community to the SIDS.

As a mark of our abiding commitment to the sustainable development of the SIDS and in the spirit of South-South solidarity, India has contributed a sum of US\$ 250,000/- for the organization of the Third SIDS Conference.

We also look forward to working closely with all our LLDCs partners for an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced outcome to the 10- year review conference of the Almaty Programme of Action (APoA) for LLDCs in 2014. India has decided to contribute a sum of US\$ 100,000 for the organization of the LLDC review Conference next year.

Before concluding Mr. Chairman, allow me to reiterate India's strong and abiding commitment to the G77 and solidarity with all its members. You can count on India's steadfast support to your endeavors in the coming year to strengthen the unity of the Group and give a voice to its priorities.

I thank you



643. Intervention made by Shri Navtej Sarna.AS (IO) at the Ministerial Meeting of the NAM Committee on Palestine.

New York, September 26. 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished members of the Committee,

Allow me at the outset. Mr. Chairman. to thank you for organizing this meeting.

2. NAM has a long history of solidarity with the Palestinian people. India as the founding member of the Movement has always supported the cause of the Palestinian people. Our support for their just cause is time tested and a cornerstone of India's foreign policy. India continues to remain steadfast and unwavering in its commitment to the cause for a sovereign. independent. viable and united State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders with East Jerusalem as its Capital. side by side and at peace with Israel as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap. various UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.
3. As a member of the Security Council during 2011-12. India not only supported Palestine's bid for full membership of the United Nations, it co-sponsored the General Assembly resolution in November 2012 that upgraded the status of Palestine to a non-member Observer State. India will continue its full support for Palestine to be come a Member-State of the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The biggest obstacle to the realization of an independent. sovereign Palestinian state is Israeli settlement activity. This activity is mortally undermining the premise of a two-state solution. India. therefore. opposes Israeli settlement policy. voted in favour of the draft resolution in the Security Council in February 2011 and continues to call for total cessation of all settlement activities.

5. The blockade of Gaza has had serious consequences for the lives of Palestinians. It has adversely affected essential services, economic activities and infrastructure development. We continue to hold that it is necessary for Israel to lift the blockade on Gaza and allow normal and unrestricted movement of persons and goods within Palestine.
6. We are also alarmed at the continuing violence and disproportionate and excessive use of force by the Israeli authorities. We deplore these measures and the loss of lives and property that they cause in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Given the evolving situation in the region and its inherent fragility and unpredictability, it is necessary that there is no more delay in the resolution of the Palestinian question. We are encouraged by the resumption of direct talks between Israel and Palestine (facilitated by US efforts). We hope that the direct talks after perhaps one of the longest period of stalemate since the signing of the Oslo Accords will lead to concrete results.
8. India stands ready to support all measures that the Palestinian leadership will take towards political resolution of the Final Status issues so that an independent, sovereign Palestinian State comes into being.
9. Meanwhile, we will continue to provide developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian Authority through direct budgetary support, contributions to UNRWA and bilateral capacity building and infrastructure projects as well as through IBSA fund.
10. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we think NAM has an important role to play in supporting the Palestinian leadership in their efforts towards realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian People. As our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh said during the last NAM Summit in Tehran, "we should renew our pledge to

support an early resolution of the Palestinian question, so that the long suffering people of Palestine can live in peace and dignity in a state of their own."

11. We are hopeful that today's meeting will send a strong signal to all concerned of our collective support for the Palestinian people and their leadership in their endeavours to resolve this long-standing question.

I thank you



644. Statement of the Prime Minister of India in the General Debate of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly.

New York, September 28, 2013.

Your Excellency, President of the General Assembly, Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. We wish you every success and assure you of our fullest co-operation.

Mr. President,

At a time when the world is facing multiple challenges, there is renewed attention on the role of the United Nations in advancing international peace, security and prosperity. However, never has scepticism about the UN' s capacity to do so been higher, or the external environment less propitious for multilateralism.

Nearly seven decades of the work of the United Nations hold one simple lesson and that is this: we are most successful when we adhere to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, basing our decisions on

the widest possible consent and balancing equitably the needs and responsibilities of nations at different stages of development.

In these seven decades, the world has changed in fundamental ways. Asia and Africa are independent and resurgent. Countries are now not only more interdependent, but also face new and increasingly complex challenges. For multilateralism to remain relevant and effective in the future, multilateral institutions need to be reformed.

The UN Security Council must be reformed and restructured to reflect current political realities. More developing countries should be included as both permanent and non-permanent members.

Multilateral Financial Institutions should also enable an enhanced voice for developing countries in their decision making structures.

Multilateral efforts must guide our quest for peace and security, wherever they are threatened. And the centrality and contribution of the UN system to development must be restored.

These objectives require the building of a new international consensus, suited to our time and rooted in today's realities. It is only such a plan of action that will enable the UN to meet the twin tests of legitimacy and efficacy.

Mr. President,

We commend your choice for the theme of this session. Setting the stage for the post-2015 Development Agenda is especially important as we deal with a lingering global economic slowdown and continuing volatility in financial markets. These have imposed disproportionately heavy costs on developing countries and vulnerable groups within them.

Growth and inclusive development are naturally important for all our countries. They require a supportive international economic environment, enhanced investment flows, including from multilateral development banks, transfer of technology, and an open multilateral trading regime.

But the problems of over a billion people living in abject poverty around the world need to be attacked more directly. Poverty remains a major political and economic challenge and its eradication requires special attention and a new thrust. This priority should anchor the post-2015

Development Agenda, which should be shaped by the member states so that it enjoys the broadest possible support and acceptance.

Mr. President,

Issues of peace, security, human rights and governance are important and need to be addressed. But we will fall short of realizing an ambitious post-2015 development agenda if we focus merely on governance issues at the cost of robust economic growth.

This agenda should not be merely about reprioritizing domestic spending, but also about fostering genuine international partnership between the developing and developed countries to bring about change. All of us need the policy space necessary to set our own domestic priorities. No one knows the condition of developing countries better than the developing countries themselves.

It is, therefore, important that the UN set clear and concise goals and provide practical and well-defined means of implementation, including adequate flow of resources and transfer of technology, taking the views of developing countries fully into account.

A meaningful post-2015 agenda must place equally high priority on food and nutrition, health, education, infrastructure, water, sanitation, energy and discrimination against women. Especially critical is women's equal access to economic opportunities, and that they do not become victims of violence or targets of prejudice.

In India, we promote inclusive development in multiple ways. Legislation has broadened access to education and secured rural livelihoods. We are now building the world's largest programme for food security. Digital technology is being harnessed to improve the delivery of public services and benefits to the people.

Mr. President,

India is proud of its partnerships with developing countries. Using modest resources, we have built strong ties with Africa and the Least Developed Countries. We are committed to building 100 institutions in Africa, have offered capacity building support including thousands of scholarships, and made available concessional assistance of over 9.5 billion US dollars. India and Africa are engaging through the India-Africa Forum Summit

process. We also look forward to participating actively in the 3rd Conference on the Small Island Developing States in Samoa in 2014 and contributing to its outcome.

Mr. President,

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our times. We must summon the necessary political will for crafting a robust global response to climate change on the basis of equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Mr. President,

We are deeply concerned about the future of West Asia, a region with which India shares deep bonds of history, and one that is critical for our energy security as well as the livelihoods of nearly seven million Indians who work and live in the region.

The increasingly lethal conflict in Syria is not only a tragedy for the people of Syria, but also threatens stability and security in the region and beyond. It has been made worse by the use of chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons, whosoever may have deployed them, must be condemned in the strongest terms. India supports strongly the elimination of chemical weapons material and equipment in Syria.

There is no military solution to this conflict. We must intensify efforts to end the conflict and seek a political settlement. It is essential that the Geneva-2 conference be convened at the earliest.

Mr. President,

We are encouraged that direct talks have resumed between Israel and Palestine. India supports an early realisation of a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognised borders side-by-side and at peace with Israel. We also remain committed to the Palestinian quest for full membership of the UN. In our own region, Afghanistan prepares for a historic political, security and economic transition. The international community must support the people of Afghanistan through this transition and beyond in combating terrorism, preserving the progress of the past decade and creating a stable, united and prosperous Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

Terrorism remains a grave threat to security and stability everywhere and extracts a heavy toll of innocent lives around the world. From Africa to Asia, we have seen several manifestations of this menace in the last few days alone. State-sponsored cross-border terrorism is of particular concern to India, also on account of the fact that the epicentre of terrorism in our region is located in our neighbourhood in Pakistan.

Speaking from this podium yesterday, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan spoke of making a new beginning. I reciprocate his sentiments and am looking forward to meeting him tomorrow. India is committed sincerely to resolving all issues with Pakistan, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, through bilateral dialogue on the basis of the Simla Agreement. However, for progress to be made, it is imperative that the territory of Pakistan and the areas under its control are not utilized for aiding and abetting terrorism directed against India. It is equally important that the terrorist machinery that draws its sustenance from Pakistan be shut down. There must be a clear understanding of the fact Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and that there can never, ever, be a compromise with the unity and territorial integrity of India.

Mr. President,

We need to renew our commitment, especially here at the UN, for concerted, cohesive and continuing global action against terrorism. There can be no tolerance for states sheltering, arming, training or financing terrorists. Nor can they absolve themselves of the responsibility to prevent their territories from being used to launch acts of terrorism.

Mr. President,

The increasingly complex challenges to international peace and security require a new international consensus to be built, whether it is in cyber security, non proliferation or terrorism. This year, 25 years after Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi put forward a comprehensive Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapon-free and Non-violent World Order, we must strengthen efforts against nuclear proliferation and pursue time-bound, universal, non-discriminatory, phased and verifiable nuclear disarmament. We must also guard against terrorists and non-state actors gaining access to sensitive materials and technologies.

Mr. President,

Two years from now, the United Nations will be seventy years old. Every new state that was born during this period took its place in this Assembly not just with pride but also with hope. 2015 will be a moment to celebrate our successes and to ensure that the UN is -ready for this century by completing the much needed reforms of the United Nations and its Security Council, by developing an ambitious and balanced post-2015 Development Agenda and by demonstrating our capacity to cooperate effectively for durable peace and security in this world.

Thank you



645. Statement by Ambassador Navtej Sarna, Additional Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, on the 12th Annual Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries [LLDCs] at 68th Session of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, September 30, 2013.

Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honor for me to participate in the 12th Annual Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries today.

India is deeply sensitive to the significant geographical difficulties faced by landlocked developing countries that place them at a distinct disadvantage as far as international trade and economic linkages are concerned and pose severe challenges to their efforts for achieving sustainable development.

The Almaty Programme of Action has led to encouraging results. It has led to an increased global awareness to the special circumstances and

needs of the LLDCs and the need for sustained international support to address these needs.

It is important that the international community continues and strengthens its support to the LLDCs in the coming decade. The objective of our efforts in the coming decade should be to promote greater structural transformation in the LLDCs, create infrastructure and build strong productive capacities in order to improve trade performance and enhance their integration with the world economy.

An effective solution to the problems faced by the LLDCs must also address the constraints and challenges faced by the transit developing countries that neighbour landlocked developing countries.

We are happy that South-South Cooperation has meaningfully supplemented international efforts for supporting the LLDCs. The report of the Secretary General has pointed out that corporations from the South, in particular from India and China accounted for 41% of FDI inflows into LLDCs in 2011 and that Southern providers accounted for 47% of official infrastructure financing in sub-Saharan Africa from 2001 to 2008. At the same time, it is a matter of concern that ODA flows to LLDCs fell by 3.3% in 2011.

India has special bilateral cooperation agreements with its landlocked neighbours for easy transit of their goods through India. We accord the highest priority to further strengthening our ties with these countries to support their economic development.

India will continue to contribute enhanced economic and technical support to the development efforts of the LLDCs as part of South-South cooperation.

We look forward to working closely with all our LLDCs partners for an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced outcome to the 10-year review conference on LLDCs next year.

Before concluding Mr. Chair, I am happy to announce that Government of India has decided to contribute a sum of US\$ 100,000/- for the organization of the 10-year review conference on LLDCs next year.

I thank you



646. Remarks by Ambassador Asoke K Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to UN at Special Event to Commemorate "International Day of Non Violence".

New York, October 2, 2013.

Excellencies & Distinguished Guests,

On behalf of the Permanent Mission of India, I would like to welcome all of you for joining us today at this annual event to commemorate the International Day of Non Violence, here at the United Nations.

Before we begin, allow me to welcome the dignitaries on the dias today. We are privileged to have amidst us, the Secretary General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, our Chief Guest who would be delivering the key note address

We are honoured to have, His Excellency Ambassador John Ashe, President of the United Nations General Assembly; thank you Mr President, for joining us and for agreeing to deliver the Presidential Address

And we have my dear colleague the Permanent Representative of South Africa, Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, who is in many ways a co-sponsor of this event, given the fact that Mahatma Gandhi spent his formative years as a political activist using the tools of non-violence in South Africa before returning to India to lead the Indian freedom struggle.

We are also honoured to have amongst us today one of India's greatest artists, and perhaps, the world's greatest exponents of the Sarod, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan and his sons Aman and Ayaan. We will be privileged to listen to a special recital by them to mark this day, during the latter half of our function.

I would like to share with you that we have received a special message on this occasion from Mrs Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, the granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, who has asked that we spend a moment to introspect on the message of non-violence spread by the Mahatma on the occasion of the United Nations Day of Non-Violence. May I request you to observe a minute's silence for introspection?

Thank you.

To set our gathering in context, we would like to invite you watch a short film chronicling the defining time lines in the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Can we have the AV please ?

Honourable President of the General Assembly, distinguished Secretary General, and friends,

You will recall that it was on 27 June 2007, at its 103rd plenary meeting during the 61st session of the UNGA, under Agenda Item 44, that the General Assembly acted on India's proposal to adopt Resolution 61/271. This declared October 2, the birth date of Mahatma Gandhi, as the "International Day of Non Violence" to be commemorated annually at the United Nations.

Since then, eminent persons have participated in this event, including the Chairperson of the ruling United Progressive Alliance from India, Mrs Sonia Gandhi who was here for our inaugural event, and the Foreign Minister of India last year. In 2009, the UN Postal Administration issued a commemorative stamp on Mahatma Gandhi.

Since the genesis of our event is Resolution 61/271, we would like to recall that the International Day of Non-Violence is celebrated, and I quote :

"bearing in mind that non violence, tolerance, full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, democracy, development, mutual understanding and respect for diversity are interlinked and mutually reinforcing,

Reaffirming the universal relevance of the principle of non violence, and desiring to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non violence".

On this occasion, we would like to recall the singular contribution made to the cause of world peace and development by the philosophy of non-violence. Indeed, since it promotes dialogue and understanding, non-violence has established itself as a major instrument of policy, whether it be to address and resolve armed conflict, or to provide the framework for growth and development, or indeed to form the glue which binds humanity together, regardless of our many diversities. I would dare

suggest, in the presence of this distinguished audience, that the path of non-violence and dialogue is the surest path to sustainable peace, sustainable development and indeed, sustainable reforms. It is through such an approach that we would be best equipped to deal with the challenges of change, whether political, social, economic or environmental, and find solutions on the basis of the strength of dialogue. The dynamism and vibrancy of the societies in which Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela have lived and worked is proof, if indeed such proof were required, of this.

Allow me to invite our Chief Guest, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, to deliver the key note address. Excellency, you have the floor, please.



647. Statement by His Excellency Mr. Asoke Mukerji, Permanent Representative, on Second High level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

New York, October 4, 2013.

Your Excellency Madam President,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the very outset, let me convey on behalf of India our deep condolences at the tragic loss of life of migrants off the shore of Lampedusa in Italy.

I am honored to participate in this discussion on the important issue of international migration and its linkages with development under the auspices of the UN General Assembly.

This issue was last discussed at the UN General Assembly seven years ago. Since then, we have not made much progress in advancing the global discourse on international migration in the context of the global economy and development. We hope that this Dialogue will help us move forward towards that objective.

We live in a world that has been reshaped by the forces of globalization. This globalized world is critically dependent on the unimpeded and accelerated flow and exchange of not only trade, capital and technology, but also information and ideas. Most importantly, the spirit of globalization rests on the mobility and flow of human resources, of people. It is important that international migration be a part of the global economic discourse and development paradigm.

Madam President,

India is one of the leading countries of origin, destination and transit for international migration. Over centuries, our people have travelled to distant corners of the globe in a spirit of cooperation and friendship and in the process have made enormous contributions to the receiving societies.

Today, over 25 million people of Indian origin live overseas and have made us proud of their contributions in countries where they live and work. This includes several million workers who often toil in trying circumstances and contribute the bulk of the remittances received by India.

Many of our professional and business people have sterling achievements of a global order to their credit. They have also been a major source of strength for us, building bridges with India and contributing to our economic development. We celebrate their achievements every year with a "Pravasi Bharatiya Divas" - the Day of the Overseas Indian.

On the other hand, our composite culture, which prides itself on its diversity, has attracted millions to its fold as well.

India favours a holistic approach to international migration. An approach premised on the developmental paradigm of migration that is sensitive to the national circumstances of countries of origin, transit and destination, and one that seeks to maximize the mutually beneficial nature of international migration while reducing its negative effects.

It is this spirit that has underpinned India's engagement with the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) which has emerged as a useful platform to discuss the opportunities and challenges of international migration.

Madam President,

Developed countries need to acknowledge that they have gained from the process of international migration, and acknowledge the significant contribution of international migration to their economic development.

Migration has contributed and continues to contribute to the augmentation of their capacities and intellectual and institutional resource base. It has helped countries of destination meet their shortfalls in labour market and skilled manpower supply. Many developed economies have greatly benefitted from the talent of migrants, including in academia, business, research and innovation.

Migrations flows not only occur from South to North or from South to South, but also from North to North. Our approaches to deal with these migration patterns must be uniform and consistent, while acknowledging that policies and solutions to dealing with international migration will differ according to the different national circumstances of countries. This is especially true of developing countries that are both countries of origin and countries of destination for migrants.

Greater openness and political willingness is, therefore, needed in developed countries for allowing freer movement of people across their national boundaries. We must also ensure that migrants are provided opportunities to harness their full potential. This would not only bring benefits to the migrants but also to the destination countries.

Madam President,

Coming from India, which received nearly US\$ 70 billion worth of remittances in 2012, I am well aware that remittance from international migrants contributes to development in the countries of origin. These are often critical for livelihood of families of migrant workers. Studies point to a tenfold increase in migrant remittances to developing countries between 1990 and 2008.

Remittances, however, are not a substitute to ODA or other forms of development financing, as is often suggested. They represent the sheer dint of hard work and efforts of migrants in the countries of their destination. International commitments on ODA and development financing cannot be diluted on this account.

We need to provide greater policy support at the international level to the issue of short term migration, in particular on issues related to portability of pensions and social security contributions.

We must also focus our attention on the temporary movement of natural persons to supply services i.e. Mode 4 movement under GATS, which is in response to specific skill shortages and thus provides direct benefits to the destination economies. It is a matter of grave concern that instead of facilitating such movements, governments in some major economies have recently imposed greater restrictions by way of steep hike in visa fees, and quotas.

There is an urgent need for liberalization and simplification of procedures which govern Mode 4 movement.

Madam President,

It is important that the global discourse on migration does not blur the distinction between regular and irregular migration of people. The latter is a cause for concern as it often has serious socio-political and security implications.

Strengthened international cooperation is required to combat irregular migration as well as to combat people smuggling and trafficking in persons.

Greater international cooperation is required to support and supplement national efforts in addressing the challenges associated with international migration including the issues of brain-drain and capacity building in the South.

Madam President,

Our endeavour should be to realize a humane, orderly and mutually beneficial process of migration for both developed as well as developing countries.

A clear recognition that international migration is a win-win opportunity in an increasingly interconnected world must underpin our approaches to deal with it. We look forward to participating in our ongoing discussion on this issue in the future.

I thank you



648. STATEMENT BY MR. M. KRISHNASSWAMY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 27 'SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT' AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 7, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election and for chairing this important Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the deliberations and work of this Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

The 1995 World Summit for Social Development was a significant milestone that recognized the need for fostering international cooperation in promoting social development. It identified three priority areas: poverty eradication; creation of employment opportunities and decent jobs; and fostering just, social and stable societies.

While progress has been recorded in all three major pillars of Social Development, many challenges remain to be overcome.

As the Secretary General's report points out, in the aftermath of recent global financial and economic crisis, widening inequality, high and volatile food and fuel prices and environmental risks, have all been frustrating efforts to promote social development aimed at enhancing the well-being and quality of life of people.

Mr. Chairman,

With over a billion people living in extreme poverty and hunger, we cannot afford but to make inclusive growth our priority. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that we collectively undertake growth stimulating policies to boost demand and create jobs.

At the Rio+20 Summit, the international community renewed its commitment to sustainable development, recognizing poverty to be the

greatest global challenge. The post-2015 development agenda must continue to prioritize the eradication of poverty as its central objective.

Mr. Chairman,

In India, the key focus of the Government is to not only have sustainable economic growth but also an inclusive and equitable growth to benefit all sections of the society.

The Government has adopted a multi-pronged approach involving introduction of specific and targeted policies as well as institutional changes to improve delivery of services. We are scaling up domestic investment in several areas such as education, health, affordable housing etc.

Investments in skill-based training, vocational education and promotion of business opportunities are key ingredients for employment generation. We have also initiated steps to build linkages between the education system and our economic needs.

Inclusiveness and empowerment of people is also dependent on accessibility of information about their rights and entitlements made available by law and policy. The government has taken steps to address this aspect.

To illustrate the multi-dimensional nature of our interventions, let me briefly describe one programme - the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. It is the world's largest cash for work programme, covering 53 million lower income rural households and providing them 100 days of employment annually. Fifty percent work is reserved for women; there is also reservation for disabled persons. This programme has helped break down social inequalities, empower rural people, build up rural infrastructure and revive economic growth.

Mr. Chairman,

The youth are the building blocks of future development. Our effort is to provide them meaningful opportunities for education, health and skills development so that they are fully equipped to chart out their destiny.

The Constitution guarantees universal compulsory education as a fundamental right for every child in the age group 6-14. The enactment of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act in 2009 provided a

momentum to our efforts to address issues of equity and elimination of barriers in accessing education.

Initiatives in the field of education has led to India attaining nearly full enrolment in primary grades of schooling for both boys and girls and narrowing of gender gaps in middle and higher education.

Similarly, the Government's flagship National Rural Health Mission and other innovative health interventions have led to increased life expectancy, increased rates of immunization of children, and substantial decline in infant and maternal mortality rates.

The Government has also recently enacted a comprehensive Food Security Act that covers around 2/3rd of our population and provides for an entitled quantity of food grains per month per individual.

Mr. Chairman,

The government has taken several measures to ensure that persons with disabilities and older persons lead a secure, dignified and productive life.

Our focus is to advance the inclusion of the persons with disabilities by enhancing their accessibility to education, healthcare and employment. Our efforts are underpinned by a comprehensive legal framework.

India is home to over 100 million old persons. The government has put in place appropriate policy and legal framework to address the requirements of financial security, health care and nutrition, shelter and appropriate financial incentives and discounts to senior citizens.

Mr. Chairman,

Inclusive social development is critically dependent on national policy action. States need to scale up mobilization of domestic resources through government reforms, prudent management of resources including natural resources, more effective taxation policies and growth in the job market.

There is, however, need to recognize that the domestic financing gap cannot be plugged through national efforts alone. This needs to be complemented by official development assistance which continues to fall significantly below commitments made by developed countries.

We must also not forget the crucial importance of international cooperation in realizing our goals on social development. Enhanced trade opportunities and market access, more investments, and flexible migration policies are all extremely important and relevant in addressing these challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

The goals that we set for ourselves in 1995 remain far from being realized. Let us redouble our collective efforts to ensure that economic and social development does not remain an aspiration for many, and that we translate this aspiration into a global reality.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.



649. Statement by Mr. Arun Jaitley, Member of Parliament, & Member of the Indian Delegation, at Sixth High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development, at the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

NEW YORK, October 7, 2013.

Madam President,

It is my distinct honor to participate in this sixth High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development.

We welcome the opportunity offered by this High Level Dialogue to review the status of implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development.

Coming as it does at a time when the international community is giving the final push to efforts for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and simultaneously commencing deliberations for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, this dialogue is indeed very timely.

At the outset, let me associate with the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77.

Madam President,

Poverty eradication and sustained and inclusive economic growth are the central and overarching priorities of developing countries. Poverty eradication is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development and inclusive economic growth is a sine qua non for eradicating poverty and providing a better quality of life to our people. It is imperative that these priorities of the developing countries are supported by the international community through enhanced financial and technological assistance and through a supportive and fair international economic system.

Madam President,

While we have made significant advances in reducing poverty and achieving human development over the past decade, the progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been uneven and many of the goals will not be met by 2015.

A key reason for our collective failure to achieve the MDGs has been the shortfall in development financing. The global partnership to provide the support to achieve the MDGs has failed to deliver.

Madam President,

The report of the Secretary General on the follow-up and implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration presents a sobering picture.

The multiple global crises of the past several years have had a deleterious impact on the ability of developing countries to mobilize finance for their development aspirations. Their capacities have been further eroded by the widening gap in aid delivery and reversal of capital flows.

The gap in commitments and disbursement of Official Development Assistance reached US\$ 167 billion in 2011 and further widened in 2012. Aid to the Least Developed Countries, who most need assistance, has also dipped in real terms.

It is a matter of serious concern that just as the world commits to accelerating progress towards the MDGs by 2015 and elaborating an ambitious Post-2015 Development Agenda, the prospects for ODA point to a stagnation in the medium term.

At the same time, there appears no light at the end of the tunnel as far as the Doha Development Round of WTO is concerned. The stunted market access for developing countries is exacerbated by rising protectionist tendencies in the developed countries and falling levels of FDI.

Madam President,

It is evident that if we are to succeed in crafting a transformative development agenda for the post-2015 period, we must craft a strengthened global partnership for provision of adequate and enhanced means of implementation to the developing countries as part of it.

The urgent fulfilment by developed countries of their commitment of 0.7% of GNI as ODA should be a starting point of a renewed and strengthened global partnership for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The reform of the institutions of global economic governance to give real voice and participation to developing countries must also figure high as part of the new global partnership.

Madam President,

South-South cooperation has increasingly complemented global development cooperation in recent years, even as large developing countries themselves face increased developmental challenges of their own. However, unlike North-South aid, South-South cooperation is a voluntary partnership guided by its own principles. It must therefore remain free from externally imposed norms drawn from North-South assistance. It can neither be a substitute for North-South aid nor can it be used as a pretext to dilute existing aid commitments.

Madam President,

The need for a supportive international economic environment, enhanced investment flows, a supportive multilateral trade regime and a strengthened framework for transfer of technology has never been greater to foster and sustain economic growth and job creation in developing countries.

The Financing for Development Process is a key pillar of the global development agenda. Its fundamental creed of ensuring enhanced and predictable financial resource flows to assist developing countries in

pursuing their development priorities, is in fact all the more relevant today and will remain so in the post-2015 period.

It is imperative that we must ensure the full and urgent implementation of the commitments enshrined in the Financing for Development process.

I thank you



650. STATEMENT BY SHRI ARUN JAITLEY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT && MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 110 "MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 8, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I congratulate you for your election as the Chairperson of the Sixth Committee. I also congratulate other members of the Bureau on their election. I assure you of full cooperation and support of the Indian delegation during the proceedings of the Committee.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report A/68/180 dated 23 July 2013 entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism".

Mr. Chairman,

The international community is continuously facing a grave challenge from terrorism. It is a scourge that undermines peace, democracy and freedom. It endangers the foundation of democratic societies. Terrorists are waging an asymmetric warfare against the international community, and are a major most threat to the international peace and security.

India holds the firm view that no cause whatsoever or grievance could justify terrorism. India condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including those in which States are directly or indirectly

involved, including the State-sponsored cross-border terrorism, and reiterates the call for the adoption of a holistic approach that ensures zero-tolerance towards terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

India strongly supports all efforts, especially within the purview of the United Nations that strengthen international and regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The success in the fight against terrorism goes hand-in-hand with progress in strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation and exchange of information at the international, regional and sub-regional level. India has been in the forefront of global counter-terrorism efforts and is part of all major global initiatives against international terrorism, including the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Mr. Chairman,

The Global Counter Terrorism Strategy is a unique and universally agreed strategic framework to counter terrorism. The setting up of the Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) in 2010 has provided an institutional framework to support the implementation of the Strategy as well as the harmonization of an integrated counter-terrorism approach within the UN system.

An effective and balanced implementation of the Strategy requires greater international and regional cooperation. In this context, we also count on the UN Counter Terrorism Center established within the CTITF Office, to supplement these efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

We strongly favour the strengthening of the normative framework at the United Nations to effectively deal with the scourge of terrorism. We continue to stress the need for expanding the scope of the legal instruments and the enforcement efforts to destroy safe havens for terrorists, their financial flows and support networks and to bring the terrorists to justice.

In this context, we attach significance to the work undertaken by the Ad-hoc Committee towards negotiations of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT). In our view, the 2007 package submitted by the Coordinator of the Ad-hoc Committee presents a viable

and, delicately balanced text of the Convention. At its 16th session in April this year, the Ad-hoc Committee has recommended for the establishment of a working group of the Sixth Committee during the 69th UNGA session, with a view to finalizing the process on the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. We reiterate our support to the Coordinator's text and are hopeful that all States, considering the seriousness of the threat of the menace of terrorism and the importance of the measures to deal therewith, will consider according their acceptance to the text of the draft Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that in addition to the law enforcement measures, the preventive aspect is equally important. Focus on development, education, social integration, tolerance, rule of law and respect for human rights are the integral components of such an approach.

Mr. Chairman,

My own country, India, has faced the scourge of terrorism for over two-and-a-half decades. Indeed, our entire region, has been wracked by the activities of the biggest terrorist actors in the world, be they Al-Qaida, elements of Taliban or Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jamat-ud Daawa and others. Terrorism, extremism and radicalization continue to pose a serious challenge to peace, progress and prosperity in the region.

Within the framework of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), we have the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism of 1987, and its Additional Protocol of 2004 on the financing of terrorism, and the SAARC Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters of 2008. India is working with fellow SAARC nations to strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

The Government of India has taken important steps towards strengthening its strategic, legal and operational framework in the fight against terrorism. India is a party to 13 international counter-terrorism conventions and protocols.

Among the national legislations, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act incorporates provisions dealing with all aspects of terrorism including

conspiracy and incitement to terrorism. The Act criminalizes the raising of funds for terrorist activities, holding of proceeds of terrorism, harboring of terrorists, unauthorized possession or use of any bomb, dynamite or hazardous explosive substance or other lethal weapons.

The Weapons of Mass Destruction (Prevention) Act, 2005 provides detailed measures preventing the falling of weapons of mass destruction or dual use materials in the hands of terrorists and non-state actors.

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 seeks to further streamline monitoring of all foreign contributions received by non-governmental organizations and religious, educational and charitable organizations.

India has concluded more than forty bilateral treaties on extradition and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

Mr. Chairman,

As part of operational counter-terrorism framework, the National Investigation Agency is mandated to investigate and prosecute offences affecting the sovereignty, security and integrity of India, friendly relations with foreign States and offences under Acts enacted to implement international treaties, and resolutions of the United Nations and other international organizations. A National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID), linking data bases for constructing actionable intelligence to combat terrorism and internal security threats, has also been set up. The Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND) has launched the Project FINnet (Financial Intelligence Network) with the objective to adopt best practices and appropriate technology to collect, analyze and disseminate valuable financial information for combating money laundering and related crimes.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the fight against terrorism has to be unrelenting and fought across all fronts. The international community cannot afford selective approaches in dealing with terrorist groups or in dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism. We must step up our collective efforts with real cooperation among member states to confront the scourge of terrorism squarely and decisively. Terrorism is a Frankenstein monster. Resort to the use of terrorism as an instrument of State Policy is short-sighted. Indeed, those who have taken recourse to it have

invariably themselves suffered immensely from it proving the age old dictum that those who play with the sword, shall also perish by it.

Thank you



651. STATEMENT BY MR. M. KRISHNASSWAMY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 108 - 'CRIME PREVENTION & CRIMINAL JUSTICE & ITEM 109: 'INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL' AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 9, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me thank the Secretary General for all his reports under these agenda items and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for his statement.

Mr. Chairman,

The World Drug Report 2013 points that the manufacture and use of substances that are under control remain largely stable compared with 2009. While the international mechanisms have not been able to reduce the drugs problem, it has ensured that it does not escalate.

The forthcoming high-level review of the progress made in the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action in March 2014 will provide an important opportunity to examine the challenges that exist in the implementation of the international drug control system¹, as also the challenges posed by the fast evolving nature of new psychoactive substances (NPS) and synthetic drugs.

The scale of problem involving greater use of NPS and synthetic drugs is demonstrated by the fact that such NPS now number over 350, much more than the 234 substances under control.

It is satisfying to note that UNODC and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs have begun international consultations to address this new challenge. India has already notified one such NPS - 'Ketamine' subjecting it to stringent control measures.

Mr. Chairman,

Another major challenge is use of synthetic drugs, which are chemically synthesized using certain precursor chemicals. Since precursor chemicals have valid industrial, scientific and medicinal uses, it is important that we control them in a manner, which limits their diversion and abuse but not affect their legitimate uses.

India supports the United Nations mechanisms for control of precursor chemicals such as the 'PEN-online' system developed by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) for notifying countries in advance before precursor chemicals are exported.

The current International Drug Control system is rooted in the three United Nations Conventions namely the UN Single Convention on Narcotics Drugs 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 and the UN Convention against illicit trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988.

In March this year, India has notified a new regulation for control of large number of precursor chemicals including ephedrine and pseudoephedrine used for manufacture of synthetic drugs like Amphetamine Type Stimulants (ATS) - a controlled substance.

India strongly supports the Paris Pact initiative of UNODC and is contributing US \$ 200,000 to the Phase 4 of this Initiative.

Drug trafficking is one of the most severe challenges that confront us today. That money from drug trafficking finances other forms of criminal activity, including terrorism and transnational organized crime, is well documented.

Mr. Chairman,

Terrorism remains a grave threat to security and stability everywhere and extracts a heavy toll of innocent lives around the world. It endangers the very foundations of all free democratic societies.

From Africa to Asia, we have seen several manifestations of this menace in the last few days alone. State-sponsored cross-border terrorism is of particular concern to India.

We need to renew our commitment, especially here at the UN, for concerted, cohesive and continuing global action that ensures zero-tolerance towards terrorism. We need to remove the moral and legal ambiguities that allow terrorists to gain succor and even legitimacy.

There can be no tolerance for States sheltering, arming, training or financing terrorists. Nor can they absolve themselves of the responsibility to prevent their territories from being used to launch acts of terrorism.

Globalization and significant advances in information and communication technology provide a platform for terrorists to operate across continents on a real time basis. This has to be met with a global response.

It is high time that the international community demonstrates the necessary political will to conclude the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to strengthen the normative framework against the increasingly sophisticated and globalized terrorist challenge.

Mr. Chairman,

Transnational organized crimes continue to adversely impact many parts of the world threatening the rule of law and hindering economic development.

India is a State Party to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, and to the UN Convention against Corruption.

India has enacted strong domestic legislation and entered into bilateral agreements to prevent money laundering, and counter terrorism and organized crime. India is also a member of the Financial Action Task Force.

India is deeply concerned at the growing scale worldwide of trafficking of persons. The 2010 UN Global Plan of Action (GPA) against Trafficking in Persons provides a holistic and comprehensive framework to intensify our efforts to tackle this menace.

We are also concerned about the new emerging areas such as cyber-crime, economic fraud, education related fraud and identity thefts, and their links with other criminal and terrorist activities.

Mr. Chairman,

India is of the view that ever-evolving cybercrime poses a new global challenge which calls for more effective global responses. National capacity-building and international cooperation need to be further strengthened.

The comprehensive study on cybercrime prepared by the UNODC under auspices of the expert group examining the options to strengthen existing and to propose new national and international legal or other responses to cybercrime is a useful input in our deliberations.

While India welcomes the progress made in promoting greater international cooperation and coordination among law enforcement and criminal justice institutions in combating transnational crimes in recent years, more needs to be done.

We also need to place greater emphasis on capacity building and technical assistance, especially in dealing with new and emerging forms of crime. We strongly advocate the centrality of crime prevention and the criminal justice system to the rule of law and support the UN efforts in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I would reiterate our strong support and commitment to working with the international community through various regional, international and UN mechanisms towards a world free of illicit drugs, money laundering, trafficking in persons, illegal arms transaction, transnational organized crime and terrorism.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.



652. STATEMENT BY MR. S.C. MISRA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 85: "THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 9, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate you on your assuming the chairmanship of the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

Mr. Chairman

The agenda item "Rule of Law at the National and International Levels" has been on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly since its sixty-first session. The principal objective for inclusion of this agenda item remained to strengthen the United Nations attention to the rule of law at all levels.

The last General Assembly session has been remarkable, in which the United Nations hosted a High-Level-Meeting on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels. The Heads of States and Governments adopted a Declaration on the Rule of Law as an outcome document.

Mr. Chairman

The outcome document takes stock of the contemporary political, social and economic conditions and stresses upon the implementation of the rule of law principles, in order to achieve the objective of the maintenance of international peace and security, peaceful co-existence, gender justice and development.

The Outcome Document stresses the importance of continuing efforts to reform the Security Council. We consider it essential to reform the Security Council at the earliest possible to make the body broadly representative, efficient and transparent.

The Outcome document reaffirms the duty of all States to settle their international disputes by peaceful means.

Mr. Chairman

We thank the UN Secretary-General for his report A/68/213 entitled "Strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities". The report throws light on the key achievements and challenges in the rule of law at the national and international levels over the past year, and also reflects on the activities carried out further to the Declaration of last year's high-level meeting.

We agree with the notion in paragraph 36 of the report that the laws must be publically promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated and should be consistent with the international human rights standards.

It is important to note that the law making activity at the national level is exclusively the domain of the national legislature. The rule of law is a fundamental concept to be fully observed in the law making and in the implementation thereof; however, there is no established definition of the term "Rule of law".

Mr. Chairman

According to the General Assembly Resolution 67/ 97, the focus of our debate in this session is on the sub-topic of "The rule of law and the peaceful settlement of international disputes".

It is our considered view that settling international disputes by peaceful means should have the highest priority to achieve the goal of the maintenance of international peace and security. Article 33 of the UN Charter deserves special mention in this regard, which obliges the States to settle their disputes by peaceful means including by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.

The independent judiciary; efficient and transparent judicial system; and equal access to justice by all are a must to promote the rule of law.

Mr. Chairman

The judicial settlement is an important mechanism available to the Member States for the peaceful settlement of their disputes. The International Court of Justice has a prominent role in the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The ICJ has proved remarkably efficient in fulfilling the task of peaceful resolution of disputes and has acquired a well deserved reputation as an impartial institution with the highest legal standards, in accordance with its mandate under the UN Charter. The Court has contributed significantly towards settling legal disputes between Sovereign States, thus promoting the rule of law in international relations.

Also, Mr. Chairman, we recognize the significant role of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in the peaceful settlement of disputes, which provides services for the resolution of disputes involving various combinations of States, state entities, intergovernmental organizations, and private parties.

Mr. Chairman

India is a strong supporter of respect for sovereignty, integrity and political independence of States. We believe in avoiding any unauthorized intervention in a State's internal affairs or use of force in any conflict or post-conflict situation. Adherence to the rule of law principles and enhanced cooperation among Member States in this direction at all levels could ensure the non-use of force in international relations and the peaceful resolution of international disputes.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.



653. Statement by Ambassador D.B. Venkatesh Varma, Permanent Representative of India to the Conference of Disarmament, Geneva at the General Debate of the First Committee of 68th United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 9, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset allow me to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of the First Committee of the 68th UN General Assembly and assure you of our full cooperation. We associate ourselves with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

This year we meet against the back drop of a complex international situation and the difficulties being faced in fashioning multilaterally agreed and effective responses to the multifarious challenges to international peace and security. The First Committee can play a substantive role in bringing purpose and direction to our efforts as we seek to build international consensus to meet these challenges.

Mr Chairman,

India has been unwavering in its support for universal and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and other WMDs. Our policy is consistent with the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament enshrined in the Final Document of the First Special Session of UN General Assembly on Disarmament and the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan of 1988 for a Nuclear Weapon Free and Non-violent World Order. Speaking at the 68th session of the UNGA, on 28th September 2013, Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh voiced India's support for time bound, universal, non-discriminatory, phased and verifiable nuclear disarmament. India remains convinced that its security would be strengthened in a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order. This conviction is based both on principle and pragmatism.

Mr. Chairman,

India firmly believes that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved by a step-by-step process underwritten by universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is need for a meaningful dialogue among States possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. India's resolutions in the First Committee give expression to some of these ideas and have found support from a large number of States as steps for the progressive de-legitimization of nuclear weapons. Our Working Paper submitted to the UN General Assembly in 2006 also outlined a number of specific steps in this regard. India welcomes the high level political commitment shown by UN Members to nuclear disarmament at the High Level Meeting held on September 26, which was addressed by Shri Salman Khurshid, India's Minister for External Affairs. India supports the proposed NAM resolution on follow up to the High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament.

As a responsible nuclear power India has adopted the policy of credible minimum deterrence and a posture of no-first-use and non-use against non-nuclear weapon States and is prepared to convert these undertakings into multilateral legal arrangements. Our proposal for a Convention banning the use of nuclear weapons remains on the table. India remains committed to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. Without prejudice to the priority attached to nuclear disarmament, India is ready to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of the Shannon mandate. As the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body of the international community the CD is the appropriate forum for undertaking FMCT negotiations. India is a nuclear weapon State and will approach these negotiations as such. India would be willing to join an FMCT that meets our national security interests.

India is committed to working with the international community to advance our common objectives of non-proliferation, including through strong export controls and membership of multilateral export control regimes and strengthening the implementation of UNSCR 1540. India does not see a

contradiction between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as these are mutually reinforcing. India has contributed actively to the Nuclear Security Summit process. India also contributed to the success of the July 2013 IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security. We fully share global concerns on nuclear terrorism and clandestine proliferation, which continue to pose serious threats to international security. It is important to maintain public confidence in the viability of nuclear power as a safe and secure energy source through enhanced international standards on nuclear safety and security.

India attaches high importance to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. These two treaties are examples of non-discriminatory treaties in the field of disarmament which could effectively lead to a total elimination of specific type of weapons of mass destruction. India completed the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles in 2009 as per its obligations and within the stipulated time frame under the CWC. The recent events in Syria show the importance of the complete destruction and elimination of all chemical weapons stockpiles in the world as soon as possible and that terrorists and non state actors must be prevented from gaining access to these weapons. The use of chemical weapons anywhere and by anyone must be condemned and the international norm against the use of chemical weapons must not be breached. India supports the ongoing efforts of the OPCW for the expedited destruction and elimination of chemical weapon stockpiles in Syria.

India continues to contribute effectively to the BWC discussions in the new inter-sessional period 2012-16. The vitality of this Convention is important for enabling State Parties to face the security challenges, including the threat of bio-terrorism, posed by the rapid pace of developments in biological sciences and technology in the 21st century.

We support continuing international efforts to strengthen the international legal framework to ensure the safety and security of space assets and to prevent the weaponization of outer space. While universal and non-discriminatory transparency and confidence building measures can play a useful complementary role, they cannot substitute legally binding instruments in this field. It is also important that all the major space-faring nations are involved in any multilateral endeavour related to

prevention of arms race in outer space in order to enhance the possibility of universal acceptance of its outcome.

India participated actively in the negotiations for the Arms Trade Treaty in the expectation that such a treaty would make a real impact on illicit trafficking in conventional arms and their illicit use especially by terrorists and other unauthorized and unlawful non-state actors. During the ATT negotiations India consistently stressed that the treaty should ensure a balance of obligations between exporting and importing States. However, the finalized treaty text did not meet our requirements on these counts. We are undertaking a full and thorough assessment of the ATT from the perspective of our defence, security and foreign policy interests.

We made positive contribution to the work of the GGE which reviewed the operation of the UN Register of Conventional Arms this year. We look forward to the Biennial Meeting of States of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons to be held next year. We remain strongly committed to the CCW process in strengthening the rules and principles of international humanitarian law.

India will make detailed statements on some of these issues during the thematic debate, including on the UN disarmament machinery.

Mr. Chairman,

Lastly, I would like to mention that as in the past years India would present three resolutions at this First Committee namely, Convention on the Prohibition of Use of Nuclear Weapons, Reducing Nuclear Danger and Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction. India seeks the support of all members for these resolutions.

Thank you



654. Statement by Mr, Satish Chandra Misra, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation on Agenda Item 111 Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization at the 68th Session of the United Nations General ,Assembly.

New York, October 9, 2013.

Mr. President,

I am privileged to address the UN General Assembly today. Let me congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the Presidency of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly.

I thank the Secretary General for a compressive annual report on the Work of the Organization. It covers a wide spectrum of issues that inform the activities of the United Nations. It also underscores the global and interconnected nature of the challenges we face, as well as highlights the unfinished agenda of development and reform. It is important that the socio-political challenges in the West Asian region are addressed in an inclusive and peaceful manner.

Mr. President,

With less than 850 days remaining for their fulfillment, we need to accord the highest priority to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Substantial progress has been made in reducing poverty, yet our gains and progress has been uneven and short on expectations. Secretary General's report points out that almost one billion people will still live in extreme poverty in 2015.

Eradication of poverty therefore must remain the core overarching objective of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including under the SDGs.

The quest for sustainability will ring hollow as long as there exists deep-imbances in the consumption of natural resources and carbon-intensive lifestyles in the developed world. The fact still remains that the richest billion people consume two-thirds of earth's resources whereas the

bottom billion a meager 1%. On climate change, India remains fully committed to crafting an ambitious, balanced, and comprehensive outcome to negotiations in accordance with the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC.

As we embark on a process of framing Sustainable Development Goals, crucial issues such as that of resource mobilization, be it ODA, technology transfer, trade or FDI, must find appropriate priority and be enshrined in the principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) and equity. In so far as our development partnership initiatives go, we are resolved to carry forward and expand our multi-faceted and vibrant cooperation with Africa, including through the framework of the India-Africa Forum Summit.

Similarly, we will continue to build on our commitments for enhanced cooperation with the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries, and the Small Island Developing States within the overall rubric of South-South Cooperation.

Mr. President,

Terrorism remains a grave threat to security and stability everywhere and extracts a heavy toll of innocent lives around the world. From Africa to Asia we have seen several manifestations of this menace. The international community has long acknowledged the ever present and pervasive threat posed by terrorism. No country, city or region is immune from this global scourge.

And yet, regretfully, we have failed ourselves by continuing to procrastinate on concluding the Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism. It is time that member-states summoned the necessary political will to agree on the CCIT as a sound legal-framework for the fight against terrorism. We need concerted global action. Such action should be predicated on 'zero tolerance' towards terrorism and aimed at systematically dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism.

Mr. President,

India has a proud association with UN peacekeeping since its very inception. Over 150,000 of our uniformed-personnel have participated in this flagship endeavour of the United Nations.

As peacekeeping moves forward, we must remain mindful of the challenges of operating in increasingly complex environments. Not only should the mandates be realistic but their framing should be inclusive of all stakeholders in a meaningful manner. Ambitious mandates require matching resources. We also need to be mindful of peacekeepers' safety while crafting these mandates.

It is also imperative that those who threaten and attack UN peacekeepers are held accountable. Cases where UN peacekeepers have laid down their lives due to attacks by militias and non state actors must be thoroughly investigated and perpetrators of such acts brought to justice expeditiously.

Mr. President,

We note with appreciation the initiatives to modernize and reform the Secretariat, including through large-scale business transformation projects such as the new enterprise resource planning system (Umoja), International Public

Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), Managed Mobility of Secretariat Staff, and the Capital Master Plan. While each involves considerable investment, we see them as important drivers in modernising the UN.

However, it is our deep-rooted conviction that the relevance of the United Nations ultimately hinges on more fundamental reform of its governance architecture that is frozen in another era that perpetuates the rights of the haves of the mid-1940s. It is only through such governance reform that the UN can truly invigorate action on issues of pressing global concern, be it issues of peace and security, climate change, development, or human rights.

Let me therefore conclude, Mr. President, by raising something that inexplicably does not find even mention in the Secretary-General's report.

That is, the important issue of Security Council reform where inter-governmental negotiations have not seen much progress inspite of a clear affirmation by an overwhelming majority of the member-states for expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

We need to build on this by immediately commencing real negotiations based on a negotiation text, as is the case in all UN processes. It is

imperative that this process is imparted a sense of urgency and momentum by pressing for a 'result based timeline' to achieve early reforms of the Security Council.

The year 2015, which would be the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, as well as 10 years following the Millennium Summit Declaration, in which our Heads of State and Government mandated us to achieve early reforms of the Security Council, will be an important occasion therefore to deliver some concrete results and an expanded Security Council reflecting contemporary realities. I thank you, Mr. President.



655. Statement by Mr. E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs at the General Debate of the Second Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 10, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on assuming the leadership of the Second Committee.

India associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. Chairman,

The Second Committee's mandate includes a host of important development issues which are of core concern to the developing countries.

In the coming year, owing to the convergence of three historic processes - the final push for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), follow-up to the Rio+20 Conference and the Post-2015 Development Agenda - the work of the Second Committee assumes added significance.

This is a time of abiding challenges that we must confront, but also a time of key opportunities to strengthen development cooperation that we must seize.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the Declaration of the Special Event to follow-up efforts to achieve MDGs. This should now guide our efforts as we give the final push to our efforts to achieve the MDGs and take the first steps towards the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

At Rio+20, world leaders had categorically reaffirmed the Rio principles in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

The similar reaffirmation of these principles in the Declaration of the MDG Special Event must now leave no doubt as to their continued relevance and central role in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

In its deliberations, the Second Committee must place paramount importance to advancing international collaboration for eradication of poverty and achieving sustained inclusive economic growth. These two imperatives must remain at the centre of global development cooperation discourse for the post-2015 period as well.

Building on the progress made in reducing poverty under the MDGs, we must now make an ambitious push to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030.

It is absolutely critical that the core human development objectives enshrined in the MDGs are carried over into the post-2015 period as well.

We must place high priority on promoting women's access to economic opportunities which is a key driver of inclusive development.

Rapid, sustained and inclusive economic growth is the only way for developing countries to lift their populations out of poverty, drive gains in human development and maintain peace and stability.

We must pursue growth promoting policies and a development-oriented outcome of the Doha round of negotiations at the WTO.

Through our deliberations, we must promote greater mobilization of resources and generate investments for building productive capacities in the developing countries.

At the same time, we must take meaningful steps to reform the institutions of global economic governance to give real voice and participation to developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

As we evaluate the progress made in achieving the MDGs, it is clear that one of the key reasons for our mixed record has been the failure of the global partnership to support the efforts of the most vulnerable developing countries.

It is a matter of serious concern that even as we are giving the final push to our efforts for the achievement of MDGs and prepare an ambitious template for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, global aid levels have fallen for two consecutive years.

The imperative of a supportive international economic environment, enhanced aid and investment flows, a supportive multilateral trade regime and a strengthened framework for transfer of technology must anchor the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

A transformative agenda for the Post-2015 period requires a transformative shift in which we have been looking for solutions so far. Business as usual will not be sufficient.

An ambitious Post-2015 Development Agenda must be matched by an equally ambitious and meaningful global partnership.

Mr. Chairman,

Sustainability is a key element in current global discussions.

India is fully committed to sustainable development. In fact, sustainability has been mainstreamed as one of the primary objectives of India's 12th five year plan.

However, our efforts to mainstream sustainability will remain hollow unless we are able to confront the issues of inequity in consumption of global resources and reducing the unsustainable ecological footprints of the developed countries.

The burden of sustainability cannot be placed on the poor. Livelihood concerns of the developing world cannot be compromised for lifestyle interests of others.

Mr. Chairman,

The Second Committee must continue to give a strong focus to the special needs and interests to the most vulnerable groups of countries, in particular the Least Developed Countries, the Land-locked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States.

We look forward to ambitious and comprehensive outcomes to the 10-year review conferences for SIDS and LLDCs respectively, which are to be held in 2014.

In the spirit of South-South solidarity and in line with our long standing partnerships with them, India has made financial contributions for the success of these important conferences.

Before concluding Mr. Chairman, let me once again assure you of India's full support to your endeavours for fashioning an action-oriented and development focussed agenda of the Second Committee in the coming year.

I thank you



656. Statement by Mr. Aran Jaitley, Member of Parliament & the Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 131 - Financial Reports & Reports of the Board of Auditors at the 5th Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 11, 2013.

Mr. Chairman, Thank you for giving me the floor.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election to the Chairmanship of the 5th Committee and to the members of the bureau.

Mr. Chairman,

The Board of Auditors constitutes the core of UN's oversight mechanism. Its observations and recommendations play an important role in UN's financial and administrative management.

My delegation wishes to commend Board for its high-quality reports that continue to guide the work of this Committee and that of the General Assembly in administrative and financial matters.

I would, therefore, like to thank the Chairman and the other members of the Board of Auditors for their reports. I am also appreciative of Mr. Carlos Ruiz, Chairman of the ACABQ.

Mr. Chairman, Major management reform initiatives are currently under implementation in the United Nations in the fields of information technology, accounting, human resource, field support, and capital master plan. These are resource intensive projects.

We are happy that preliminary phases of UMOJA have been launched and that the IPSAS implementation is on course. We have also noted improvements in UMOJA's project governance.

We now look forward to elucidation of the end-state visions and the road map for the implementation. In this regard, we would like to underscore the need for better and expeditious follow-up action on Board's recommendations. There is much scope to improve the synergy between various oversight bodies in the UN system in an effective manner.

The success of these initiatives will depend not only on their timely implementation, but also on their sound financial management and delivery of all intended benefits. Needless to say, the case for sound oversight has never been as pertinent as today.

Mr. Chairman,

As the Leader of the Opposition in my Parliament, I can affirm the critical importance of strong audit institutions for ensuring public accountability.

Indeed, the competence of our Audit Office is playing a stellar role in consolidating the democratic fabric of our constitutional order by ensuring accountability and oversight in public finances.

Mr. Chairman,

The agenda for the upcoming session is substantial. We are going to deliberate the programme budget for the biennium 2014-15, second performance report, special political missions, and the mobility framework besides the ongoing management-reform projects. Most importantly, revised appropriations for the 2012-13 biennium will be before the Committee for its decision.

Mr. Chairman,

Most of the recent budgets have been characterized by low-level initial appropriations that are supplemented at the revised appropriation stage.

There is a fundamental disconnect between the creation of mandates and our aspiration to freeze budget-levels well ahead in time.

Mali, Syria, and Great Lakes all testify to the reality that the prediction in budgetary matters is as difficult as the prediction of crisis itself if not more.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.



657. Statement by Mr. E. Ahamed, Minister of State of External Affairs General Debate - Agenda Item 28 "Advancement of Women" in the Third Committee, 68th United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 11, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, please allow me to thank the Secretary General for all his reports under this agenda item.

Empowering women politically, economically, educationally and socially has been a major objective of the Government of India to contribute to our national pursuit of inclusive development.

Our Government's efforts are directed not only at adopting appropriate legislative and policy framework for advancement of women but also at raising social awareness of the issue of gender equality and women empowerment to fight deep-rooted social prejudices and stereotypes.

Mr. Chairman,

We are proud of the fact that India gave women equal voting rights more than 60 years ago at the time of our independence.

In 1992, India provided for 33% reservation to women in rural and local government bodies launching the mass political mobilization of women unprecedented globally given its scale.

The Parliament raised the percentage of women to 50% in local bodies in 2009. Today, close to 1.5 million elected women representatives are working in these bodies contributing to tangible progress in bridging the gender-divide in decision making and at the social level.

Mr. Chairman,

India's five-year development plans have recognized the importance of women both as contributors and agents of change. Gender is a cross cutting theme in all our development plans.

Since 2005, the Gender Budget Statement has been introduced in the annual Union Budget to reflect budgetary allocations for programmes that benefit women.

There is also a Joint Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women to ensure that legislations passed by Parliament are gender sensitive.

Mr. Chairman,

Education is perhaps the single most important instrument for social and economic transformation. The 2011 census indicates a positive increase of 11.8 % in literacy rate amongst women.

This is a consequence of constant efforts of the Government in ensuring access to education by adopting innovative schemes such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (or Education for all), Mid-Day Meals and the National Literacy Mission.

The enactment of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act in 2009 provided a momentum to our efforts to address issues of equity and elimination of barriers in accessing education.

With nearly universal enrollment for primary education, our current focus is on the expansion of secondary education and its accessibility to girls, and skill development for improved employability.

Health is another vital component in empowering women. The National Rural Health Mission launched in 2005 provides healthcare to all villages, with particular focus on maternal and children's health programmes.

Under this programme, Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), who are trained health volunteers, provide a link between health centres and villages to ensure easy access to universal immunization, care of the new born, improved nutrition levels and healthcare for women.

These health interventions have led to increased life expectancy, increased rates of immunization of children, and substantial decline in infant and maternal mortality rates.

Mr. Chairman,

There are several schemes in place for socio-economic empowerment of women. The Government has proposed to set up India's first all-Women's Bank to assist women entrepreneurs and has allocated US\$ 200 million as initial capital.

To help rural women leverage their strength, increase bargaining power and enhance capacities and skills through joint action, the Government has encouraged the Self-Help Groups (SHG) - a movement that started as people's initiative. There are around 6 million SHGs of which 80% (4.8 million) are women's groups, covering almost 100 million beneficiaries.

The Government measures for SHGs, rural women and women entrepreneurs include easy access to credit, provision of loans at lower interest rates and support to enhancing women's rights to land ownership and providing infrastructure support for women farmers.

At least 50% of the work is reserved for women in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, which responds to the

needs of 53 million poor rural households by ensuring them 100 days employment per year. The scheme mandates equal pay for men and women.

Mr. Chairman,

To ensure real empowerment of women, it is equally important to firmly address the problem of exploitation and violence against women.

Violence against women and girls must be unequivocally condemned and tackled. We need to ensure that the stigmatization of victims, the trivialization of the crime and impunity of perpetrators are all stopped.

The Government has taken a number of steps to strengthen and expand the legislative framework in this area. It has set up fast track courts to try cases pertaining to violence against women.

The amendments to the criminal law, which were carried out earlier this year, significantly broaden the definition of sexual assault and harassment, and aims for greater accountability of public officials.

The 'Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act was adopted in February 2013 covering women employed in both public and private sectors. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act came into force in November, 2012.

Mr. Chairman,

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 addresses the issue of both marital and familial abuse. It recognises that violence can take various forms, including physical, economic, social and psychological.

There is also a comprehensive legislative and policy framework to address the problem of trafficking of women and girls. The 2010 UN Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons provides a holistic and comprehensive framework to intensify international efforts to tackle this menace.

The Government is introducing "One Stop Crisis Centre for Women" in 100 identified critical districts during the course of this year with the aim to provide integrated services required by women subjected to violence.

Mr Chairman,

Gender equality and the empowerment of women remains the key focus area of social development and distributive justice globally. India is fully committed to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and its Platform of Action.

Let me reaffirm our full commitment to advancing the goal of gender equality and empowerment of women globally and to eliminating the scourge of violence against women and girls. We firmly support the efforts of the United Nations, in particular UN Women in this regard.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.



658. STATEMENT BY MR. E. AHAMED, MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, AT THE JOINT DEBATE ON THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR RWANDA [AGENDA ITEM 73] THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA [AGENDA ITEM 74]; AND INTERNATIONAL RESIDUAL MECHANISM FOR CRIMINAL TRIBUNALS [AGENDA ITEM 132]. AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 14, 2013.

Mr. President,

Please allow me to begin by congratulating you on your assuming the Presidency of the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly and reiterate the assurance of the full cooperation and support of the Indian delegation in the proceedings of the General Assembly session.

Mr. President,

I thank the Presidents of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and the International Residual Mechanism for these Tribunals for their reports, and record our appreciation for their work.

We commend the efforts of the two Prosecutors for having undertaken outreach initiatives, including training, aimed at strengthening the capacity of the national systems to handle the referred cases effectively.

Mr. President,

We are glad to note that both the branches of the Mechanism have, by now, become operational, the one for the ICTR in Arusha, Tanzania, by commencing its functioning on 1 July 2012; and the other for the ICTY in the Hague, Netherlands that was launched recently on 1 July 2013. This would ensure the smooth transition of their pending work to the respective Residual Mechanism.

Mr. President,

The establishment of the Mechanism, by the Security Council, vide resolution 1966 of 22 December 2010, is a key step of the Completion Strategy of the two Criminal Tribunals. The Mechanism is mandated to perform a number of essential functions previously carried out by the two Tribunals, including securing the arrest, transfer and prosecution of the fugitives still at large.

It is worth mentioning that the Arusha Branch of the Mechanism has, in the past one year, conducted a number of judicial activities and performed functions ranging from the protection of witnesses to responding to requests for assistance from national jurisdictions. We are confident that the Mechanism will successfully build upon the work of its predecessors with perfection in accordance with its mandate and will thus complete the pending judicial work efficiently in a timely manner without compromising fair trial rights. The efforts towards the relocation of persons acquitted by the Tribunals and those convicted persons who have completed their sentences and have been released are significant from the humanitarian and reconciliation angles and should be accorded priority.

Mr. President,

The international community had set up international criminal courts and tribunals to achieve the objective of punishing the guilty and ending impunity.

However, trials through the international courts do not always have the desired impact on the affected communities by helping in healing and reconciliation. When such trials are conducted by foreign judicial systems or Tribunals, with little or no connection to the perpetrators, victims, or offenses, they are invariably decoupled from the political, social and economic context of the affected country and its people.

Despite the important role which has been played by international criminal tribunals towards accountability and ending impunity, strengthening of national judicial systems to prosecute serious crimes remains crucial as States have the primary responsibility to prosecute serious crimes committed in their territory or by their nationals. Therefore creating effective national legal and judicial institutions that uphold the rule of law is essential and it is imperative for the international community to continue to promote strengthening of national criminal justice systems by building capacities of national investigating, prosecuting and judicial agencies.

In this regard, the referral of six cases by the ICTR to the Rwandan authorities for trial holds significance.

Mr. President,

The international criminal justice is also criticized for its selectivity. In order to ensure the credibility of the system, selective and discriminatory approaches should be shunned and the role of political organizations be minimized for consistent application of the law.

Thank you



659. STATEMENT BY MR. M. KRISHNASSWAMY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, AT THE GENERAL DEBATE UNDER AGENDA ITEM 24 (A) & (B) ON OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT COVERING QCPR AND SOUTH SOUTH COOPERATION IN THE 2ND COMMITTEE DURING THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 14, 2013.

Mr. President, thank you for giving me the floor.

India aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Fiji, on behalf of the G-77.

While we welcome the significant strides made by UN Development system in recent years, the real focus for all of us now, is on, how well the UN Development System delivers on the mandate given to it by the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Resolution (QCPR).

As we follow up on implementation of the QCPR and its recommendations, my delegation would like to submit the following:

First, for UN development system to be successful globally it needs to be firmly rooted in its core focus area, which primarily has to be development related only. Poverty eradication still remains the over-riding priority for developing countries and the greatest global challenge.

With the adoption of the QCPR Resolution, this was made even more abundantly clear. For the first time ever in such a resolution, we had a section dedicated exclusively to Poverty Eradication, in which the UN Development System has been called upon by 193 member states to "assign the highest priority to poverty eradication".

Let me quote OP 70 of the QCPR resolution: "eradication of poverty through the development of national capacities in developing countries should continue to be the core focus area for the United Nations development system and that ALL its development programmes and projects should attempt to address this greatest global challenge as their underlying objective"

To my delegation, this is the defining mandate from the QCPR, and the true test of operational activities segment lies in ensuring that effective implementation mechanisms that developing countries need to achieve the same, are followed up, and provided for by the UN Development system.

Second, developing countries have their own set of 'needs' and different 'context' based requirements, which the UN development system must find ways to respond to. The operational activities of the UN system must therefore have the ability to respond and adapt to the evolving environment and expectations of individual countries.

Third, financing for development is increasingly coming under acute pressure. The present global economic slowdown has adversely impacted plans of national governments in developing countries to even consider scaling up developmental financing.

The requirement of enhanced ODA is all the more critical now, when developing countries are faced with curtailed capital flows, economic slowdown and increased programming requirements. These needs must be met by efforts to increase ODA, promote investment and trade by facilitating transfer of and access to advanced technologies for developing countries.

Fourth, there is a 'negative impact of policy conditionality' that is tied into donor driven aid arrangements when planning for development activities. The UN operational activities for development should feed into national development plans and steer clear of conditionality. The fundamental principles of national ownership and adherence to national development priorities must be the pivots around which UN development activities are implemented.

Fifth, though 'South South Cooperation' continues to be the buzzword in the narrative of the developmental discourse, much more remains to be done to scale it beyond the 'lip service' it has received so far from the UN development system.

Titling Human Development Reports as 'the Rise of the Global South' with falling human development indicators would continue to be misnomers, if they are falsely premised on economic indicators alone! The real rise of the South for any Human Development Report needs to

matched by a commensurate rise in human development indicators, in which considerable investment is still expected from the multilateral system.

The paradigm construct of South-South cooperation requires that developing countries have the policy space for their own development. Given the vast difference in development levels between countries of the North and those from the South, it is important that development projects under South-South Cooperation are not strait-jacketed in terms of rigid rules and regulations or policy prescriptions. Flexibility and adaptability is the key to the success of South-South Cooperation. These must not be compromised.

India's approach to South-South Cooperation has been to share our experience and knowledge in a spirit of solidarity with countries from the South. A key facet of our joint initiative has been along with Brazil and South Africa: the IBSA Fund. We are extremely pleased that our partners in this, are the UN Office for South South Cooperation. We do hope that it would be given the resources it needs to assist developing countries in implementing projects of South South Cooperation.

Sixth, strengthening institutional capacity building in developing countries has to be a key focus area of any operational activity for the development agenda. It is a strategic choice that should be made and sustained by all stakeholders. Many countries could do more if additional finance and technology were available. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of support from the industrialised countries in these areas.

Mr. President, as we move further forward in crafting the post 2015 development agenda, the real task before us, is to give practical shape and meaning to the guidance provided by the QCPR and ensuring its effective implementation.

I thank you Mr. President.



660. Statement by Mr. Arun Jaitley, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 55 - Question Relating to Information at the Special Political Decolonization [Fourth] Committee of the 68 th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 16, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, on behalf of India, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Carlos Garcia Gonzalez of El Salvador on his election as Chairman of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee to the 68th General Assembly, as also the other members of the Bureau on their election. I wish you all the best of success and assure you of my country's continued co-operation and support. I would also like to congratulate the former Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Gabon, Ambassador Noel Nelson Messone, for doing an admirable job in conducting this committee during the 67th session of the General Assembly.

We also welcome the report of the Secretary-General on Questions Relating to Information (A/68/315), which provides an update on the activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI) in the areas of strategic communication services, news services and outreach services, and enables us to have a better understanding of DPI's efforts to fulfill its mandate, despite challenges emanating from limited availability of resources. We also welcome the report of the Committee on Information contained in document A/68/21.

India aligns itself with the statement made by Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

We underline the central role played by the DPI in promoting and advancing the work of the United Nations, and taking the issues of global importance, such as the internationally agreed upon development goals, to the larger world audience. We also take note of the DPI's efforts to highlight the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and promote

consultations on the post-2015 development agenda, and the various events held by it in this regard.

The role played by the UN Information Centers (UNICs) is also noteworthy. The UNICs act as an important interface between the UN and local communities, and by improving awareness about the work of the United Nations, help enhance its public image. We are happy to note that these information outposts have played an important role in giving due publicity to the MDG Report 2013, and have also promoted local, national and sub-regional consultations on the post-2015 development agenda. We are of the view that the UNICs, particularly in the developing countries, should be strengthened through provision of adequate budgetary support, and urge the DPI to work in close cooperation with the host countries in these efforts.

It is important to raise local content and local involvement in the production of DPI's publicity material. The UNICs, which have the capacity to work in local languages, can significantly contribute in this regard. This will also enable local talent to be involved in the work of the United Nations. We also urge DPI to encourage the UNICs to deepen their collaboration with local communities, in order to take the UN agenda to the grass root level.

We particularly commend the work of the UN Information Centre in New Delhi, which organized a well-received commemorative event in cooperation with UN-Women in April this year, and subsequently in July, also organized the national launch of the MDG Report 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

The academic community can play a crucial role in promoting the UN agenda. It is, therefore important for the DPI to continue expanding its partnership with institutions of higher learning under its Academic Impact initiative. We note with satisfaction that more than one thousand colleges and universities from over 120 countries have enrolled themselves as members of this initiative. We are happy that a large number of universities in India have also joined this initiative, and have committed to carry out activities aimed at promoting the UN mandate.

India has always been supportive of the Academic Impact initiative, and has been collaborating with the DPI in organizing events to promote

intercultural dialogue and understanding, under the "unlearning intolerance" series. We are pleased to mention that on May 30, 2013, the Indian Mission joined the DPI and the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to organize an event to mark the 100th anniversary of the award of the Noble Prize for Literature to poet Rabindranath Tagore.

Mr. Chairman,

As highlighted by the Secretary General in his report on 'Questions Relating to Information', the DPI has, in conjunction with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS), been organizing activities on the United Nations Peacekeeping Missions in Africa. We appreciate these efforts, and hope that the DPI will continue to work more closely with the DPKO and DFS to highlight the work of the UN Peacekeepers, their success stories as well as the exceptional work being done by them, that often goes unnoticed.

Mr. Chairman,

We support the efforts towards multilingualism by the DPI, which enables the UN to disseminate information not only in its official languages, but also in other languages. We are happy to note that the DPI is now producing media content in several other languages, including some Indian ones. These efforts need to be further intensified and widened, so as to reach a larger audience.

Mr. Chairman,

As indicated by the Secretary General in his report, there are an ever growing number of people becoming aware of the working of the United Nations, through modern communication networks and social media platforms. We welcome the use of the widest possible range of technologies, including the new information and communication technologies based on the internet, in the work of the DPI. However, we would like to underline that many countries in the developing world are still far behind in technological terms, and therefore it is essential that media products of the DPI are disseminated through the widest possible spectrum of media tools, including the traditional media. Use of widely used media tools like radio and print continues to be of importance to reach out to people in the developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by conveying India's good wishes to the DPI, and our continued support to its efforts to project the great work being done by the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



**661. STATEMENT BY DR. VISHNU DUTT SHARMA,
COUNSELLOR ON AGENDA ITEM 78 - "CRIMINAL
ACCOUNTABILITY OF UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS AND
EXPERTS ON MISSION" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF
THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY.**

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 16, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

The instances of crimes being committed by the United Nations officials and experts on mission are a matter of grave concern to the international community. We condemn all kind of crimes committed by them. This has adverse impact over the image, credibility and integrity of the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the Report of the Secretary General A/68/173 on "Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission, submitted pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 67/88.

The Report outlines the information received from member States on their national laws establishing jurisdiction over crimes, committed by their nationals while serving as United Nations officials or experts on mission. It also provides information on cooperation among States and with the United Nations in the investigation and prosecution of such crimes; and on the activities within the UN Secretariat towards disciplining the officials and assisting the States to help prevent and stop such crimes.

Mr. Chairman,

According to paragraph 18 of the Secretary-General's report, during the past one year, cases of nine UN officials were referred to the States of their nationalities for investigation and prosecution. We are fully confident that the concerned States will conduct thorough investigations and prosecution and if found guilty, will punish the officials involved.

We note with appreciation the information in paragraph 27 of the report that the awareness-raising activities continue to emphasize the obligations of all United Nations personnel to observe the laws of the host country, and the consequences of failing to do so.

Mr. Chairman,

The General Assembly resolution 67/88 strongly urges all States to consider establishing jurisdiction over crimes committed by their nationals while serving as United Nations officials or experts on mission, at least where the conduct of the person amounts to a crime both in the host country and the country of his nationality as well. Implementation of this element would help fill the jurisdictional gap in respect of member States that do not assert extra-territorial jurisdiction over crimes committed abroad by their nationals.

Mr. Chairman,

As informed earlier, the Indian Penal Code extends to extra-territorial offences committed by Indian nationals. Accordingly, the offences committed by Indian officials or experts on mission while serving abroad, are subject to the jurisdiction of the Indian courts and are punishable under the Indian law.

The Indian law has provisions for assistance in criminal matters, which enables to seek from and extend to a foreign State, assistance in criminal cases. These provisions are part of the Code of Criminal Procedure of India.

Mr. Chairman,

The Indian Extradition Act, 1962 deals with extradition of fugitive criminals and the related issues. The Act allows for extradition in respect of extraditable offences in terms of an extradition treaty with another State.

The Act also allows consideration of an international convention as the legal basis for considering an extradition request in the absence of a bilateral treaty.

India has concluded more than forty bilateral treaties on extradition and mutual assistance in criminal matters. Where there is no bilateral treaty, the Government of India can provide assistance on a reciprocal and case by case basis, in accordance with the provisions of the applicable national laws.

Mr. Chairman,

We reiterate our view that dealing with the wrongdoings of UN officials or experts on mission, does not require the development of an international convention. What, in our view, is required is that the member States ensure that their laws provide for jurisdiction and have adequate provisions for prosecuting any such conduct of their nationals serving as UN officials or experts on mission abroad, and that their laws have provisions for international assistance for the investigation and prosecution of the crimes committed.

Mr. Chairman,

India ascribes to the zero tolerance policy and considers it extremely important that violation of any national or international law by the UN officials and experts on mission is properly investigated and prosecuted. The UN officials and experts should act and perform their duties in a manner consistent with the UN Charter that promotes the image, credibility and integrity of the Organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



662. Statement by Mr. M. Krishnasswamy, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, On Agenda Item 18: "Follow-Up to and Implementation of the Outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference" & Agenda Item 17 (b): "International Financial System and Development" at the Second Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 16, 2013.

Madam Chairperson,

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77.

Madam Chairperson,

We have just concluded the sixth high level dialogue under the auspices of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the Financing for Development process.

In the high level dialogue, the developing countries spoke with one voice on the importance of the timely and effective follow-up to the implementation of the commitments enshrined in the Financing for Development process. They also expressed their continued concern with the lack of progress in advancing discussions on a followup FFD Conference. This conference must be held before the end of 2015 to meaningfully contribute to the discussions on a Post-2015 Development Agenda.

In the context of this debate, I would like to highlight seven points:

First, the ambition of the post-2015 development agenda would need to be matched by the ambition of the global partnership to support it.

At present, our collective ambition to craft a transformative agenda for the Post-2015 period does not seem to be matched by our commitment for mobilizing enhanced resources and for an enabling global environment conducive for this agenda.

Second, the agenda that we are crafting for the 'Future we Want' is a broader integrated agenda which will require an integrated financing strategy with additional, predictable and stable flows of resources.

The work of the Intergovernmental Expert Committee on Sustainable Development Financing must be seen as a contribution to the wider FFD process for a coherent financing strategy for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Third, ODA will continue to play a central role in the post-2015 period. It is particularly important for the poorest and the most vulnerable countries. Estimates suggest that ODA accounts for over half of all external financing available to the LDCs to close their savings gap. In our view therefore, past ODA commitments must not only be met, but also scaled up in the post-2015 period.

Fourth, in the current economic scenario, issues of technology transfer, market access, capacity building and debt sustainability remain as relevant as ever. We must build on the template of MDG-8, even as we take steps to scale up commitments, enhance effectiveness and address systemic issues.

Early completion of the Doha development round of WTO and elimination of trade distorting measures including agricultural subsidies in developed countries remain equally critical.

Fifth, a renewed global partnership must address systemic issues including reform of the institutions of global economic governance and the international financial architecture.

Better regulation of speculative financial flows, improving exchange-rate management, preventing global imbalances and promoting policy coordination must be prioritized.

We need reform of the global financial institutions to give real voice and participation to developing countries.

Sixth, given the enhanced needs, it is clear that we would have to mobilize all sources of finance including innovative ones. We would also need to leverage private capital through innovative public-private partnerships. However, the key principle for this should be additionality not substitution.

Seventh, the enhanced role of South-South cooperation is based on the pre-requisite that developing countries have the policy space for their own development. We need to recognize that South-South Cooperation is in the nature of a voluntary partnership. It is free from conditionalities, recipient driven and characterized by sharing of developmental experience.

It is important that South-South Cooperation is not strait-jacketed in terms of rigid rules or policy prescriptions derived from North-South Aid. The inherent flexibility and adaptability of South-South Cooperation must not be compromised.

At the same time, even as remittance to developing countries has increased substantially in recent years, it cannot be seen anything more than household income. It cannot be passed off as another source of financing for development or as a substitute to ODA.

Finally Madam Chairperson,

In the post-2015 period, development cooperation would have to involve more than merely providing development finance. We must make a genuine effort to create a global system conducive to development itself.

We must ensure an ambitious, scaled-up and comprehensive financing framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda based on the principles and commitments enshrined in the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration.

I thank you



**663. STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MANJEEV SINGH PURI,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, ON AGENDA
ITEM 86 "THE SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THE
PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION" AT THE
SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 17, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

I thank the Secretary-General for his reports A/68/113 on 'The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction', which provides information about the laws and practice of certain States concerning the universal jurisdiction.

My delegation aligns with the statement made by the distinguished representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and offers the following comments in the national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

India holds the firm view that those who commit crimes must be brought to justice and punished. A criminal should not go scot free because of procedural technicalities including the lack of jurisdiction.

Mr. Chairman,

Exercise of jurisdiction is a unique legal subject in itself. The term "jurisdiction" connotes the power or the right of a State, which in legal parlance refers to two aspects: first, the rule-making; and second, the rule-enforcing. The widely recognized bases for the exercise of jurisdiction include: Territoriality, which is based on the place of the commission of offence; Nationality, which is based on the nationality of the accused. Some States recognise the nationality of victim also, as basis for exercising jurisdiction; and Protective principle, which is based on the national interests affected. The common feature of these jurisdictional theories is some connection between the State asserting jurisdiction and the offence.

Mr. Chairman,

Under the present agenda item, we are however deliberating upon a different type of jurisdictional basis, namely the universality theory.

A State invoking the universal jurisdiction claims to exercise jurisdiction over an offender, irrespective of his or her nationality or the place of commission of the offence, and without any link between that State and the offender.

It assumes that each State has an interest in exercising jurisdiction to prosecute offences which all nations have condemned. The rationale for such jurisdiction is the nature of certain offences, which affect the interests of all States, even when they are unrelated to the State assuming jurisdiction.

Mr. Chairman,

Under general international law, piracy on the high seas is the only one such crime, over which claims of universal jurisdiction is undisputed. We consider that the principle of universal jurisdiction in relation to piracy has been codified in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982.

In respect of certain serious crimes like genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and torture, etc., international treaties have provided basis for the exercise of universal jurisdiction. This is applicable between the States parties to those treaties. They include, among others, the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Apartheid Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

The question that arises is whether the jurisdiction provided for specific serious international crimes under certain treaties could be converted into a commonly exercisable jurisdiction, irrespective of the fact whether or not the other State or States are a party to those treaties.

Several issues remained unanswered, including those related to the basis of extending and exercising such jurisdiction, the relationship with the laws relating to immunity, pardoning and amnesty, and harmonization with domestic laws.

Mr. Chairman,

Several treaties oblige the States parties either to try a criminal or handover for trial to a party willing to do so. This is the obligation of aut dedere, aut judicare ("either extradite or prosecute"). This widely recognised principle, including by the International Court of Justice in its decision of 20 July 2012 in the Belgium Vs Senegal case, should not be confused with or short circuited by the universal jurisdiction.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.



664. Statement by Mr. M. Krishnasswamy, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 23: "Eradication of Poverty - Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017)" at the Second Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 17, 2013.

Madam Chairperson,

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77.

Madam Chairperson,

With less than 850 days to go before the target date for the Millennium Development Goals, we can draw much satisfaction from the substantial progress we have made in reducing global rates of poverty. Efforts of India have contributed to this global effort in a significant manner. The world, however, continues to have more than 1.3 billion people living in conditions of abject deprivation. At current rates, over than 970 million people will still be in poverty in 2015.

A decade into the 21st century, one out of every six people in this planet continues to live a life of extreme poverty, hunger and desperation. The story of poverty and the imperative for growth cannot be more compelling.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to highlight six key themes for this debate:

First, as India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh emphasized in his address to the 68th UN General Assembly, poverty eradication requires special attention and a new thrust. Ending poverty once and for all is within reach. Our collective political will to do so must not slacken.

It is therefore important that the imperative of poverty eradication anchors the Post- 2015 Development Agenda as the foremost global priority and its central and overarching objective.

Second, what the experience of the last decade has taught us is that the prerequisite for poverty eradication is rapid, sustained and inclusive economic growth. This is needed to enable developing countries generate additional revenues and resources. This helps them in enhancing investments in infrastructure and job creation and pursuing social inclusion programmes.

We must therefore bear in mind that in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the emphasis has to be on the word 'development'. It must first and foremost, promote rapid and sustained economic growth in developing countries.

Third, along with policies to promote inclusive growth, also needed are targeted interventions and programmes to promote education, fight hunger and malnutrition, promote maternal and infant health and gender empowerment.

Creation of infrastructure, productive and full employment, universal energy access, agricultural growth and rural development are equally critical.

Fourth, taking the lead given by our leaders in Rio+20, the General Assembly last year called upon the UN development system to give the highest priority to achieving poverty eradication through the development of national capacities in developing countries. UN System must now follow this clear direction in both letter and spirit and assign the highest priority to this core objective in its policies and programmes.

Fifth, a supportive and enabling international environment is crucial in our collective fight against poverty. We must pursue growth and demand

promoting policies at the global level and seek to create a supportive and fair international economic structure. This structure should be conducive to development. It should respect the policy space that each country requires to formulate and implement its own pro-poor and inclusive development strategies.

Madam Chairperson,

A key reason for our failure to meet many of the MDGs is the weakness and the lack of full implementation of the global partnership under MDG-8.

We hope the support of our development partners in implementing the second UN decade to eradicate poverty is backed up by greater enthusiasm to fulfill their long made commitments on issues like ODA, debt relief, technology transfer, market access, multilateral trade etc.

Sixth, we would do well to recognize that it is technology that lies at the intersection of the two imperatives of poverty eradication and sustainable development. We must promote greater collaboration in environmentally friendly technologies and more importantly we must ensure that the fruits of such collaboration are shared more widely.

This would enable developing countries to eradicate poverty and leapfrog into higher stages of development without incurring the environmental costs that traditional development models have entailed.

Madam Chairperson,

Mid-way into the second UN decade to eradicate poverty, let us redouble our commitment and efforts to forge a genuine global partnership to end poverty and hunger forever.

I thank you



665. Statement by Mr. M. Krishnasswamy, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian delegation on Agenda Item 65 - 'Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children' at the Third Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 17, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and his Special Representatives for their reports under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

The Indian Constitution has several provisions providing for protection, development and welfare of children.

A National Charter for children was adopted in 2004. A detailed Plan of Action was drawn up in 2005 focusing on four broad areas: child survival, child development, child protection and child participation.

Mr. Chairman,

Early childhood is the most crucial phase. This is when the foundations for physical, psychological, social and intellectual development are laid. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the flagship programme of the Government benefits 78 million children below the age of 6 in the area of nutrition, health and education.

ICDS also covers these children with immunization, regular health check-ups and referral services as required as well as provides pre-school non-formal education to 37 million children in the age group of 3-6 years. The Scheme is being universalised.

ICDS and other programmes such as Universal Immunisation Programme, Integrated Management of Neonatal Childhood Illnesses, Total Sanitation Campaign, and the Reproductive and Child Health Programme have led to significant decline in infant mortality rates.

I am also happy to state here that India manufactures 40% of vaccines used in universal immunization programs across the world, protecting small babies and little children from disease and death.

Mr. Chairman,

The Indian Constitution provides for free and compulsory education for children up to the age of 14 years. The enactment of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act in 2009 provided a momentum to our efforts to address issues of equity and elimination of barriers in accessing education.

With nearly universal enrollment for primary education, our current focus is on the expansion of secondary education and its accessibility to girls, and skill development for improved employability.

As part of a public-private partnership, private schools reserve 25% of seats for children from economically weaker sections of society with budgetary support from the government.

Mr. Chairman,

The girl child is one of the most vulnerable members of any society. Targeted interventions for the girl child have led to almost full enrolment in primary grades of schooling and narrowing of gender gaps in middle and higher education. The government has also undertaken legislative and policy measures to ban sex selective abortion and child marriage.

India observes January 24 as "National Girl Child Day". The occasion is used to generate awareness about their tremendous potential as well as to highlight the challenges faced by them.

Mr. Chairman,

Ending exploitation and violence against children is fundamental to ensuring a healthy future for every child. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights was set up in 2007.

The eradication of child labour is a priority for the Government of India. We are strictly enforcing the ban on the employment of children under 14 years of age.

To strengthen implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000, the government launched the Integrated Child Protection Scheme in 2009 to cover offences against children which are not presently addressed in the law, and to increase the safety net for the protection of children.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act came into force in November, 2012. There is also a comprehensive legislative and policy framework to address the problem of trafficking of women and children.

Mr. Chairman,

The child is an instrumental stakeholder in the social contract. We have an obligation to provide a safe and enabling environment for their development. I would also like to point out that civil society in India is an integral and active partner in this endeavor.

Let me reaffirm our commitment to national and international efforts on the promotion and protection of the rights of our children.

I thank you



666. Statement by Ambassador DB Venkatesh Varma. Permanent Representative of India to Conference on Disarmament on Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons at the First Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 18, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

India associates itself with the statement made by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Nonaligned Movement on 17 Oct 2013. India's External Affairs Minister participated in the HLM on Nuclear Disarmament on 26th September and we support the follow up resolution proposed by NAM contained in document L6.

Mr. Chairman,

India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was among the first world leaders to champion the cause of nuclear disarmament. In 1988, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi proposed an Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapons-Free and Nonviolent World Order to attain the goal of nuclear disarmament in a

time-bound, universal, non-discriminatory, phased and verifiable manner. We remain committed to the objective of that Plan and the realization of its vision of ushering in a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order.

While addressing the UN Special Session on Nuclear Disarmament, the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons to humanity was foremost in Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's mind. He said "We cannot accept the logic that a few nations have the right to pursue their security by threatening the survival of mankind. It is not only those who live by the nuclear sword who, by design or default, shall one day perish by it. All humanity will perish."

Even though nuclear weapons are now an integral part of India's security policy as part of our credible minimum deterrence, our support for global, non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament has not diminished. As Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh stated in the Indian parliament in 2007 "the possession of nuclear weapons only increases our sense of global responsibility and does not diminish it."

We believe that nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework. We have called for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. Steps for the progressive delegitimization of nuclear weapons are essential to the goal of their complete elimination.

In a working paper submitted to the UNGA in 2006, India suggested a number of measures, including reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment by all nuclear weapon states to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons, measures to reduce nuclear dangers arising from accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, increasing restraints on the use of nuclear weapons, de-alerting of nuclear weapons and specific legal measures such as a Global No First Use Agreement, Convention on the Prohibition on the Use of Nuclear Weapons leading finally to a Nuclear Weapons Convention for the global non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear with a specific timeframe.

India supports efforts aimed at building awareness and political will to move in a step-by-step manner towards the goal of nuclear disarmament: from reducing nuclear risks and the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, restraints on use leading thereafter to a universal, non-discriminatory Convention on prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. In taking this process forward we stress the need for dialogue. India participated in the Oslo Meeting and believes that further discussion on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should be conducted in an inclusive manner with the participation of all states. In terms of substance, it should do no harm to the non-proliferation regime or the goal of a nuclear weapon free world. In terms of process, it should do no harm to the established disarmament machinery.

Mr. Chairman,

Without prejudice to the priority we give to nuclear disarmament, we support the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a multilateral, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that meets India's national security interests. We remain committed to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. India supports the CD as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Even though we abstained on the resolution establishing an Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament, we participated actively in its meetings and India's proposals are reflected among the various proposals in the report of the Group.

Mr. Chairman,

India is committed to working with the international community to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, including through strong national export controls and membership of the multilateral export control regimes. All states should fully and effectively implement the obligations arising from the agreements or treaties to which they are parties. India's position on the NPT is well-known and needs no reiteration. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state. At the same time, India would make its contribution to the strengthening of the global non-proliferation regime.

Mr. Chairman,

India's resolutions in the First Committee give expression to our desire to work with other member states of the United Nations to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament.

We are introducing on behalf of the sponsors a draft resolution on "Reducing Nuclear Danger" contained in document L20. The resolution highlights the need for a review of nuclear doctrines and immediate steps to reduce the risk of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, including through de-alerting and de-targeting of nuclear weapons. It is a matter of satisfaction that the issues raised by this long-standing resolution are finding greater resonance and recognition in the international community.

Further, we have the honour to present on behalf of the sponsors a draft resolution on a Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons contained in L21. This traditional text reflects our belief that a multilateral, universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons will contribute to the process of the step-by-step delegitimization of nuclear weapons and create a favourable climate for negotiations on an agreement on the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

We would like to highlight that first introduced in 1982 this is one of the long standing resolutions in the First Committee and has consistently received majority support. We would like to convey our appreciation for this support and to those countries which have co-sponsored this resolution which is only gaining in significance with the passage of time. However, a sizeable minority of member states - some of them nuclear weapon states, some with nuclear weapons stationed on their soil and others with alliance partnerships underwritten by policies of first use of nuclear weapons have voted against this resolution. We regret further that a few states that do not belong to such partnerships and in fact today are in the forefront of current efforts to highlight the humanitarian impact of use of nuclear weapons, for reasons that are difficult to understand, have also voted against this resolution. We appeal to these states to review their position and bring their voting on this resolution at par with their public support for addressing the humanitarian impact of

use of nuclear weapons. We also would like to invite NGOs and civil society to take another look at this resolution in the context of the current discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

As in previous years, India will be tabling draft resolution entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction" contained in document L23. We would like to convey our appreciation to the membership of this Committee for the consensus support extended to this resolution and to the large number of co-sponsors who have joined us in highlighting the importance of this resolution which gives expression to the deep concerns of the international community with respect to the risks posed by terrorists gaining access to WMDs and sensitive materials and technologies. We hope that the First Committee will adopt this resolution by consensus.

Thank you



667. Statement by Mr. Vipul, Counsellor, PMI to CD, Geneva during the First Committee Thematic Debate on UN Disarmament Machinery.

New York, October 21, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches high importance to the UN disarmament machinery established in its present form by the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament, SSOD-I. The triad of disarmament machinery comprising of the First Committee, UN Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament is the mechanism by which the international community gives expression and coherence to its efforts in the area of disarmament and international security. In recent years the disarmament machinery has faced several challenges to its integrity. We believe that there is a need to recommit ourselves to the machinery even while considering ways to improve its work efficiency.

India associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

The UN, in accordance with its Charter, has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament. The First Committee is the embodiment of the faith of the international community in the benefit of collective action and multilateral approaches on disarmament and international security issues. It provides countries with diverse perspectives an opportunity to voice their views on disarmament and international security issues and submit resolutions on issues of priority to them. We are open to suggestions to strengthen the work of the First Committee. We appreciate the observations of the High Representative regarding some such aspects in her statements to this Committee in the past two weeks.

The UN Disarmament Commission is the only universal forum that provides for in-depth consideration of specific disarmament issues and can help in building greater understanding and consensus on issues on the international disarmament agenda. The Commission has produced several important sets of guidelines and recommendations for the General Assembly in the past. However, in its current cycle the Commission struggled to achieve consensus even on its agenda items in 2012. Despite the fact that the General Assembly has decided that nuclear disarmament should remain one of the agenda items for the Commission's meetings, in the current cycle the relevant agenda item could only be agreed to after long deliberations. We believe that if Member States show commitment to the Disarmament Commission, all aspects of nuclear disarmament can be discussed in the Commission, in an inclusive manner. We hope that the UNDC will be able to achieve a substantive result in 2014, the last year of the current cycle.

Mr. Chairman,

India had the privilege of holding the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament during the first part of 2013 session. As the President of the Conference we exerted all possible efforts to enable the CD to commence substantive work. As the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum the CD continues to bear a heavy responsibility to

make progress in the international disarmament agenda. We believe that the CD continues to have the mandate, the membership, the credibility and the rules of procedure to discharge its responsibility. Since the decisions of the CD impact national security, it is logical that it conducts its work and adopts its decisions by consensus. We believe that proposals which question the viability or relevance of the CD or even suggest unrealistic alternatives need to be viewed with utmost caution.

India remains committed to efforts, consistent with CD's rules of procedure, aimed at the CD reaching consensus on its Programme of Work to commence early substantive work. India did not stand in the way of the adoption of the CD's decision CD/1956/Rev.1 to establish an Informal Working Group on Programme of Work. However, it would be perverse if the CD were to become a platform for reopening longstanding consensus agreements and for endless procedural debates, which would take it further away from the prospect of early negotiations. In our understanding the Informal

Working Group does not take away anything from the responsibility of the CD President under the rules of procedure to draw up the CD's Programme of Work and present it to the CD for consideration and adoption.

Mr. Chairman,

The UN Secretariat, in particular the ODA, has an important responsibility in assisting States in pursuing the multilateral disarmament agenda. We believe that the ODA should be strengthened to facilitate the implementation of permanent treaty bodies under the UN such as the BWC and CCW. There is also a need to ensure greater coherence between disarmament work in New York and Geneva, such as on small arms and light weapons. It is equally important that the integrity of the CD Secretariat in Geneva is maintained.

The issue of membership of various Group of Governmental Experts constituted by Secretary General has been raised by several delegations this year. India, a major space faring nation, was excluded from the GGE on TCBMs in Outer Space despite having key capabilities and interest in this area. India could have enriched the work of the GGE. We hope that this matter will receive due attention of the Secretariat.

Two related bodies of the UN disarmament machinery which have received much attention this year are UNIDIR and Secretary General's Advisory Board. Both these bodies find their origins in SSOD-I and in their own right play a role in shaping the multilateral disarmament agenda and discharging the important and impartial research function mentioned in SSOD-I. We believe that UNIDIR's autonomy and impartiality should be upheld so that it can fulfill its role of providing in-depth and long term research on disarmament issues, in particular nuclear disarmament. The Secretary General's Advisory Board should be made more representative so that it can reflect the broadest range of perspectives. It should take an inclusive and forward looking approach to global disarmament issues.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to underline that the UN disarmament machinery cannot be looked at in isolation from the urgent need for revitalization and reform of the UN and its principal organs, the General Assembly and the Security Council, to bring them in line with contemporary realities. India would continue to work towards strengthening multilateralism and UN's role in accordance with its Charter.

Thank you



668. Statement by Ambassador D.B Venkatesh Varma, Permanent Representative of India to Conference on Disarmament on Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons at the First Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 21, 2013.

Mr. Chairman.

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on 26th September and we support the follow up resolution proposed by NAM contained in document L6.

Mr. Chairman.

India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was among the first world leaders to champion the cause of nuclear disarmament. In 1988, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi proposed an Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapons-Free and Nonviolent World Order to attain the goal of nuclear disarmament in a time-bound, universal, non-discriminatory, phased and verifiable manner. We remain committed to the objective of that Plan and the realization of its vision of ushering in a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order.

While addressing the UN Special Session on Nuclear Disarmament, the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons to humanity was foremost in Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's mind. He said "We cannot accept the logic that a few nations have the right to pursue their security by threatening the survival of mankind. It is not only those who live by the nuclear sword who, by design or default, shall one day perish by it. All humanity will perish."

Even though nuclear weapons are now an integral part of India's security policy as part of our credible minimum deterrence, our support for global, non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament has not diminished. As Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh stated in the Indian parliament in 2007 "the possession of nuclear weapons only increases our sense of global responsibility and does not diminish it."

We believe that nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework. We have called for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. Steps for the progressive de-legitimization of nuclear weapons are essential to the goal of their complete elimination.

In a working paper submitted to the UNGA in 2006, India suggested a number of measures, including reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment by all nuclear weapon states to the goal of complete

elimination of nuclear weapons, measures to reduce nuclear dangers arising from accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, increasing restraints on the use of nuclear weapons, de-alerting of nuclear weapons and specific legal measures such as a Global No First Use Agreement, Convention on the Prohibition on the Use of Nuclear Weapons leading finally to a Nuclear Weapons Convention for the global non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with a specific timeframe.

India supports efforts aimed at building awareness and political will to move in a step-by-step manner towards the goal of nuclear disarmament: from reducing nuclear risks and the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, restraints on use leading thereafter to a universal, non-discriminatory Convention on prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. In taking this process forward we stress the need for dialogue. India participated in the Oslo Meeting and believes that further discussion on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should be conducted in an inclusive manner with the participation of all states. In terms of substance, it should do no harm to the non-proliferation regime or the goal of a nuclear weapon free world. In terms of process, it should do no harm to the established disarmament machinery.

Mr. Chairman,

Without prejudice to the priority we give to nuclear disarmament, we support the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a multilateral, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that meets India's national security interests. We remain committed to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. India supports the CD as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Even though we abstained on the resolution establishing an Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament, we participated actively in its meetings and India's proposals are reflected among the various proposals in the report of the Group.

Mr. Chairman,

India is committed to working with the international community to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, including

through strong national export controls and membership of the multilateral export control regimes. All states should fully and effectively implement the obligations arising from the agreements or treaties to which they are parties. India's position on the NPT is well-known and needs no reiteration. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state. At the same time, India would make its contribution to the strengthening of the global non-proliferation regime.

Mr. Chairman,

India's resolutions in the First Committee give expression to our desire to work with other member states of the United Nations to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament.

We are introducing on behalf of the sponsors a draft resolution on "Reducing Nuclear Danger" contained in document L20. The resolution highlights the need for a review of nuclear doctrines and immediate steps to reduce the risk of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, including through de-alerting and de-targeting of nuclear weapons. It is a matter of satisfaction that the issues raised by this long-standing resolution are finding greater resonance and recognition in the international community.

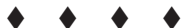
Further, we have the honour to present on behalf of the sponsors a draft resolution on a Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons contained in L21. This traditional text reflects our belief that a multilateral, universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons will contribute to the process of the step-by-step de-legitimization of nuclear weapons and create a favourable climate for negotiations on an agreement on the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

We would like to highlight that first introduced in 1982 this is one of the long standing resolutions in the First Committee and has consistently received majority support. We would like to convey our appreciation for this support and to those countries which have co-sponsored this resolution which is only gaining in significance with the passage of time. However, a sizeable minority of member states - some of them nuclear weapon states, some with nuclear weapons stationed on their soil and others with alliance partnerships underwritten by policies of first use of

nuclear weapons have voted against this resolution. We regret further that a few states that do not belong to such partnerships and in fact today are in the forefront of current efforts to highlight the humanitarian impact of use of nuclear weapons, for reasons that are difficult to understand, have also voted against this resolution. We appeal to these states to review their position and bring their voting on this resolution at par with their public support for addressing the humanitarian impact of use of nuclear weapons. We also would like to invite NGOs and civil society to take another look at this resolution in the context of the current discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

As in previous years, India will be tabling draft resolution entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction" contained in document L23. We would like to convey our appreciation to the membership of this Committee for the consensus support extended to this resolution and to the large number of co-sponsors who have joined us in highlighting the importance of this resolution which gives expression to the deep concerns of the international community with respect to the risks posed by terrorists gaining access to WMDs and sensitive materials and technologies. We hope that the First Committee will adopt this resolution by consensus.

Thank you



668-A. STATEMENT BY DR. ASHWANI KUMAR, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 120 - 'FOLLOW-UP TO THE COMMEMORATION OF THE TWO-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ABOLITION OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE - AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 21, 2013.

Mr. President,

I would like to welcome the Secretary General's report on the 'Program of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery' and for his Status Report on the UN Trust Fund for Partnerships for the Permanent Memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

Mr. President,

Transatlantic slave trade is one of the most abhorrent chapters in the history of mankind. It ravaged the African and the Caribbean nations to satisfy the rapacious economic greed and exploitation of the colonizers. The lingering consequences of its brutality and human suffering are visible even today.

We must all take initiatives to ensure that future generations do not forget the grief and tragedy borne by the countless nameless victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. It is equally imperative that the international community takes upon itself the commitment that such crimes against humanity never recur.

Education has a critical role in creating awareness amongst present and future generations, about the history, causes and impact of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. A better understanding of history provides a valuable perspective in confronting current challenges.

Mr. President,

India welcomes the various outreach activities and programmes organized by the Department of Public Information to commemorate the

"International Day of Remembrance" at the UN as well as in other countries through its network of UN information centres and partner organizations in March 2013.

We stress the need for regular and adequate financial allocation to the Department of Public Information in organising these events.

We also welcome the initiatives undertaken by States in reaffirming their commitment to implement paragraphs 101 and 102 of the Durban Declaration aimed at countering the legacy of slavery and honoring the memory of the victims of slavery and the slave trade.

Mr. President,

The construction of a Permanent Memorial will be a fitting tribute by the United Nations to the millions of victims of the transatlantic slave trade. We are pleased to note that the international design competition to finalize the memorial design has been concluded and that the UN Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly unveiled the winning design in September this year.

With a contribution of US \$ 260,000/-, India is the lead contributor to the "United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships - Permanent Memorial" for receiving contributions to erect the Permanent Memorial. The Trust Fund has, however, so far received only close to US \$ 1.4 million against the anticipated expenditure of US \$ 4.5 million for the construction of the Memorial. We, therefore, strongly urge all countries, and in particular those who derived material gains from the transatlantic trade, to contribute generously to the Fund to show their earnest acceptance that wrongs were committed and that there is a sense of repentance.

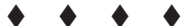
Mr. President,

As we recall the struggle, the degradation and the deaths of the victims of the transatlantic slave trade, we hope that the Permanent Memorial can be constructed at an early date. It will be a small commemoration for the struggle of the victims who suffered silently with no hope for freedom before they disappeared into the night.

We have a chance to pay our humble tribute to the victims, who suffered this disgrace by generously contributing to the Trust Fund.

This, Mr. President, is the least we can do.

Thank you



669. STATEMENT BY MR. AVINASH PANDE, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION ON AGENDA ITEM - 77, "RESPONSIBILITY OF STATES FOR INTERNATIONALLY WRONGFUL ACTS" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 21, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to begin by extending to you my hearty felicitations on your election as Chairman of the Sixth Committee. My felicitations are also due to other members of the Bureau.

Mr. Chairman,

The Draft Articles on "Responsibility of States for internationally wrongful acts" were adopted by the International Law Commission at its fifty-third session in 2001. The ILC submitted the Draft Article to the General Assembly, with the recommendation for taking note thereof; and further recommended for the possibility of convening an international conference to examine the Draft Articles, with a view to conclude a convention on this topic.

Pursuant to the consideration of draft articles in the Sixth Committee and its recommendations, the General Assembly took note of Draft Articles in its resolution 56/83 of 12 December 2001.

Mr. Chair. These would come into play only in case an internationally wrongful act as defined by a primary rule is committed. In this connection we may note that international law is still striving to achieve the type of universality that is essential in different fields.

The international structure is still in the making and we cannot rush ahead of institutional developments and the development of the international legal system, without risking counterproductive effects.

Mr. Chairman,

Given this background, we are of the view that, at this stage, it will be prudent to maintain the careful balance in the text of Draft Articles that the ILC struggled for more than forty years to achieve.

We are happy to note the reception of the ILC's Draft Articles on State responsibility into international law, through State practice, scholarly writings, decisions of courts, tribunals and other bodies.

Thank you



670. Statement by Mrs. Rajani Patil, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, On Agenda Item 22: "Groups of countries in special situations: Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries; Comprehensive 10-year Review Conference on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action" at the Second Committee 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

NEW YORK, October 21, 2013.

Mr. Chairperson,

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) face unique developmental challenges and need the sustained support of the international community.

In the interconnected world of today, it is important that we approach the issues of LDCs and LLDCs through the lens of solidarity and as a vision

of our common destiny. Their development is the common development of all.

Unless we are able to ensure rapid, sustained and inclusive development in the LDCs and LLDCs, we can hardly expect to make any headway in achieving the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs.

It is equally important that the concerns and priorities of the LDCs and LLDCs are given priority in our deliberations for a Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Mr. Chairperson,

Unfortunately, the first year of implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action has witnessed a deceleration of growth rates in the LDCs. Structural transformation has not taken hold in most LDCs. Share of manufacturing in their GDP remains low and lack of energy access remains a critical weakness.

Mr. Chairperson,

ODA accounts for over half of all external financing available to the LDCs to close their savings gap.

Unfortunately, ODA levels have now fallen for two consecutive years. ODA flows to LDCs have declined even more drastically. This is a matter of serious concern.

Mobilization of resources for development in LDCs must receive our highest attention. Past ODA commitments for LDCs must be met urgently.

ODA commitments to LDCs need to be further scaled up in the post-2015 period so that the ambitious target of half of LDCs graduating by 2020 can be realized.

We must work for the early conclusion of the Doha Round to create more space for the LDCs in global trade. We must also prioritize technology transfer, enhanced market access, debt relief, creation of infrastructure and building of productive capacity in the LDCs to promote structural transformation of their economies.

Mr. Chairperson,

India remains fully committed to timely and effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA). India has offered One Billion Dollars worth of Lines of Credit to the LDCs. We have also contributed Five Million US Dollars for the follow-up of the Istanbul Programme.

We are confident that these measures will assist the LDCs in meeting the objectives of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

Mr. Chairperson,

India is deeply sensitive to the significant geographical difficulties faced by Landlocked Developing Countries that place them at a distinct disadvantage as far as international trade and economic linkages are concerned.

The Almaty Programme of Action has led to encouraging results.

It is important that the international community continues and strengthens its support to the LLDCs in the coming decade.

The objective of our efforts in the coming decade should be to promote greater structural transformation in the LLDCs, create infrastructure and build strong productive capacities in order to improve trade performance and enhance their integration with the world economy.

An effective solution to the problems faced by the LLDCs must also address the constraints and challenges faced by the transit developing countries that neighbour them.

India has special bilateral cooperation agreements with its landlocked neighbours for easy transit of their goods through India. We accord the highest priority to further strengthening our ties with these countries to support their economic development.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are happy that South-South Cooperation has meaningfully supplemented international efforts for supporting the LDCs and LLDCs.

The report of the Secretary General has pointed out that corporations from the South, in particular from India and China accounted for 41% of FDI inflows into LLDCs in 2011 and that Southern providers accounted

for 47% of official infrastructure financing in sub-Saharan Africa from 2001 to 2008.

Large developing countries have emerged as important trade partners for LDCs and LLDCs. In fact, over 50% of the exports of LDCs now go to developing economies.

India has already extended duty free tariff preference scheme to all the LDCs.

India will continue to contribute enhanced economic and technical support to the development efforts of the LDCs and LLDCs as part of South-South cooperation.

Yet, efforts of countries like India through South-South Cooperation can only complement the provision of resources from our developed partners, which needs to be scaled up urgently.

Mr. Chairperson,

We look forward to working closely with all our LLDCs partners for an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced outcome to the 10-year review conference on LLDCs in year 2014.

In the spirit of our long standing solidarity and partnership with them, India has made a financial contribution of One Hundred Thousand US Dollars for the organization of the Conference on LLDC.

In conclusion Mr. Chairperson,

Let me reiterate the high level political commitment of India to work closely in partnership with our LDCs and LLDCs partners to assist them in their efforts to pursue rapid, sustained and inclusive economic growth, eradicate poverty and mainstream sustainable development.

I thank you



**671. STATEMENT BY DR. VISHNU DUTT SHARMA,
COUNSELLOR, ON AGENDA ITEM 87: "THE LAW OF
TRANSBOUNDARY AQUIFERS" AT THE SIXTH
COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 22, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Aquifers are life-supporting groundwater resources for the mankind. Proper management and proper utilization of aquifers assumes significance in view of the increasing demand for freshwater around the world.

Mr. Chairman,

The draft articles on the trans-boundary aquifers contain a number of useful provisions such as on the utilization, cooperation, and on the protection, preservation and management of aquifer system.

It is worth mentioning that draft article 3 recognizes the sovereignty of an aquifer State over the portion of trans-boundary aquifers or aquifer system located within its territory.

Mr. Chairman,

At the 66th session, this delegation pointed out the lack of adequate scientific knowledge in the field of management and protection of aquifers, highlighting the need for further study. We also stressed for further scientific and technical assistance to States in understanding the complex issues associated with the management and protection of aquifer system.

Our position has been that time is not ripe to develop a legally binding instrument, such as a convention on the basis of draft articles and that they could serve as a useful guide for States in concluding their bilateral or regional arrangements on this subject.

Mr. Chairman,

We appreciate the efforts of the delegation of Japan in introducing the draft resolution, this time, with a view to consider the draft articles as

guiding principles for bilateral or regional agreements and arrangements for the proper management of trans-boundary aquifers.

The draft resolution encourages the International Hydrological Programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to continue offering further scientific and technical assistance to States. We look forward for discussion on the draft resolution.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we note the fact that conferring the status of guiding principles to the draft articles would be non-binding in nature and the draft articles would be available, in their present form with other instruments and State practices, to States for taking into account and their suitable use in concluding bilateral and regional arrangements on this subject.

Thank you



672. Statement by Mrs. Rajani Patil, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 69: "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (A) Implementation of Human Rights Instruments, (D) Comprehensive Implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action" at the Third Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 22, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to thank the UN Secretary-General for his reports as well as the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteurs for their reports under this agenda item relating to 'protection and promotion of human rights'.

Mr. Chairman,

Human rights are at the core of any free democratic society. They form an important institutional pillar of the United Nations. The promotion and protection of human rights within the United Nations was put on a firm footing with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. Since then, we have come a long way in our collective endeavour to promote and protect human rights.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. We attach great importance to the work undertaken by the OHCHR and encourage it to continue to carry out its mandate in an objective and non-selective manner.

The OHCHR has the responsibility to demonstrate that it is independent and impartial by being open, fair, transparent and accountable to all stakeholders. It is important to maintain the representative character and financial independence of this office. It remains a matter of concern that only one-third of OHCHR funding comes from the regular budget, whereas two-third of the funding comes from voluntary contributions.

Mr. Chairman,

The Human Rights Council is an important body that the international community has carefully constructed to strengthen the protection of human rights globally. We must consciously ensure that Council continues to function in a nonselective, non-politicized and transparent manner. We believe that we can advance our common cause only through dialogue and cooperation.

The mechanism of the Universal Periodic Review has emerged as an extremely useful mechanism for the Human Rights Council and the international community to engage in an open discussion on human rights in member countries. This unique Member-State driven process of peer review, enriched by contributions from the civil society, has been a successful collaborative and constructive endeavour.

The human rights treaty bodies play an important role in assessing the implementation of the treaty obligations by the State parties. We support the ongoing intergovernmental process that aims to make the human rights treaty body system more coherent, coordinated and effective. We

are thankful to the co-facilitators of the process as well as OHCHR and civil society for their contributions. We remain committed to actively supporting a consensus outcome of this process.

Mr. Chairman,

As we commemorate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action this year, we would like to recall that the Vienna Declaration had reaffirmed the Right to Development as a universal and inalienable right, as well as an integral part of fundamental rights.

At RIO+20, the international community renewed its commitment to sustainable development, recognizing poverty eradication to be the greatest global challenge.

While States have the primary responsibility to promote the Right to Development, one cannot disregard the imperative of international cooperation, which is essential for the purpose of creating a supporting environment for the genuine realization of the Right to Development.

Mr. Chairman,

We are yet to realize the objective of a global culture of human rights, which can serve as a unifying force rather than a divisive force. A major challenge is to determine the most effective approach for promotion and protection of human rights, especially in instances of gross and systematic violations of human rights. Such violations anywhere in the world must certainly be addressed by the international community promptly, impartially, collectively and effectively with the objective to encourage concerned member States to undertake necessary measures to address the human rights situation.

Mr. Chairman,

As a State Party to the principal covenants on human rights, and of practically all other major human rights instruments, India is committed to the promotion and protection of human rights of its citizens.

The State policy is underpinned by our democratic, pluralistic and secular polity, an independent and impartial judiciary, a vibrant civil society, a free media and independent national human rights institution.

Let me highlight some important measures undertaken by us in this area. The Right to Information Act 2005 has empowered the ordinary citizens through access to information on government action leading to a more transparent and accountable governance.

The government has enacted several landmark legislations guaranteeing basic rights in the areas of work and employment, education and food security. These include the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of 2005, the Right to Education Act of 2009 and most recently, the National Food Security Act of 2013.

The innovative mechanism of public interest litigations crafted by the judiciary ensured that even the most vulnerable sections of society, who may not be able to approach courts otherwise, can seek justice via a public-spirited person or organization. This mechanism has been extremely effective in providing remedies to vulnerable groups.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, we are confident that India's focus on fundamental human rights nationally as well as our active participation and contribution to human rights related issues, both in UN and other fora, would make the world a better place to live in.



673. Statement by Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 16: "Information and Communications Technologies for Development" at the Second Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 22, 2013.

Mr. Chairperson,

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77.

Mr. Chairperson,

Information and Communication Technologies are critical enablers of development. They themselves present enormous growth potential and can contribute to economic growth and employment generation.

These technologies act as force-multipliers, thereby stimulating the development of diverse sectors of the economy.

Information and Communication Technologies are particularly important in reducing transaction costs, improving and expanding service delivery, promoting access to information and knowledge in remote and rural areas, reducing intermediaries in delivery chains and enhancing government accountability and democratic participation.

We see the rapid deployment and up-scaling of Information and Communications Technologies as a real and profound opportunity to fast-track development.

Mr. Chairperson,

The growth of Information and Communications Technologies over the past decade has exceeded all expectations.

A decade ago, the idea that a person living in a remote village in India, for example could actually follow this debate in real time would have seemed a distant dream.

This dream is indeed true today and in fact anyone can actually watch me making this statement live on his mobile device!

This is nothing short of revolutionary.

Today more than six billion people worldwide have access to mobile phones and over a third of the world's population uses the internet.

What's more, the the share of smart phones with the ability of deliver more data and information is rapidly increasing and more and more people have access to broadband services.

Information and Communications Technologies can enable developing countries to enhance capacities and maximize limited resources in order to leapfrog traditional development patterns. By doing so, they can make meaningful and rapid headway for achieving inclusive and sustainable development.

ICT also is a critical enabler of better and more responsive governance, improved service delivery, enhanced transparency and promotion of social and economic empowerment of all our people.

Unleashing and tapping the enormous developmental potential of internet and mobile telephony is a real opportunity. We must make full use of it.

Mr. Chairperson,

India today boasts of over 700 million mobile phones. We also have the largest number of internet users after the United States and China.

Many of our major socio-economic programmes are delivered on IP based networks, and government and private sector networks are intimately interconnected.

India has actively utilized Information and Communication Technologies for inclusive development.

Our ambitious National e-Governance Plan has brought the government closer to the people. It has promoted greater openness and transparency and in the process has empowered the common people.

Information Technology has been combined with satellite based communication technology to reach rural areas through initiatives like tele-education and tele-medicine.

The initiative of Government of India to provide Unique Identification to all Indian citizens has borne fruit. More than 520 million Indians are now enrolled - making this possibly the world's largest ID scheme. The first major target of 600 million is likely to be exceeded by mid-2014.

Mr. Chairperson,

As a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and democratic society, India is fully committed to the free growth of the internet.

We believe in the true spirit of the vision outlined in the Tunis Agenda, which reiterated the need for multilateral, transparent and democratic international management of the Internet with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations.

As the experience of our Government has demonstrated, we can significantly accelerate the process of development by applying ICTs in a well-coordinated manner.

India attaches great importance to the use of cyber space and ICTs as a major vehicle for achieving the goals of sustainable development.

We believe that the governance of cyber space which is based on the values of democracy, pluralism, inclusion, openness and transparency should also be similarly inclusive, democratic, participatory, multilateral and transparent in nature.

Operationalizing the Tunis mandate in this regard should not be viewed as an attempt by governments to 'take over' or to 'regulate' the internet.

If cyber space is a global commons, it cannot be managed only as private property. Its governance and architecture should reflect this fact as also respect for basic human rights including the inalienable human right of privacy.

Global internet governance can only be functional, effective and credible if all its stake-holders including those in developing countries, contribute to, and are consulted in, the process.

Enhanced cooperation on optimizing public policies on the use of cyberspace for development, therefore, should be a common goal for us in the United Nations.

The 10th anniversary of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS), due in 2015, will be an opportunity for all of us to assess how cyber space and its related technologies can be optimally used for development.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is important that these issues are discussed openly.

India, I can assure you, remains committed to cooperate with all our partners in developing policies through the United Nations to support the use of cyber space and ICTs for sustainable and inclusive development.

I thank you



674. STATEMENT BY MR. MOHAMMED ADEEB, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM - 83 "CONSIDERATION OF PREVENTION OF TRANSBOUNDARY HARM FROM HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES AND ALLOCATION OF LOSS IN THE CASE OF SUCH HARM" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 22, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assuming the Chairmanship of the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. My congratulations are also due to the other Bureau members.

Mr. Chairman,

The present agenda item, under consideration of the Sixth Committee, is comprised of two important documents of vital interest for the international community, namely: the Draft Articles on prevention of transboundary harm from hazardous activities; and the Draft Principles on the allocation of loss in the case of trans-boundary harm arising out of hazardous activities.

The Draft Articles and the Draft Principles were adopted by the International Law Commission (ILC) at its fifty-third session in 2001 and at its fifty-eighth session in 2006 respectively, and submitted to the General Assembly.

Regarding the Draft Articles, the ILC recommended to the General Assembly for the elaboration of a convention on the basis thereof. With regard to the Draft Principles, the ILC recommended to the Assembly to endorse the Draft Principles by a resolution and urge States to take national and international action to implement them.

Mr. Chairman,

Once again, we take this opportunity to acknowledge the excellent work done by the ILC on the Draft Articles, and the Draft Principles; and once

again we express our deep appreciation for Dr. P.S. Rao of India, the Special Rapporteur for both these topics, while also recognizing the contribution of the other two Special Rapporteurs for these topics.

Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary-General for his reports on this agenda item, containing compilation of decisions of international courts, tribunals and other bodies referring to these Draft Articles and Draft Principles; and containing comments and information received from Governments concerning these documents.

Mr. Chairman,

The Draft Articles are a valuable contribution of the ILC toward the progressive development of international law. We believe that they are supplementary to the customary law reflected in the judicial decisions dealing with the principle of trans-boundary harm and ensuing damage from hazardous activities.

We reiterate our view that the Draft Articles are dealt in a general manner, providing enough flexibility to States to fashion specific liability regimes for particular sectors of activities under their jurisdiction.

It is our belief that the thrust of the prevention aspect, in the Draft Articles, could be seen in the broader context of the right to development and the obligation to promote, preserve and protect the environment.

Mr. Chairman,

Concerning the Draft Principles, we agree with the basic purpose thereof and support the fundamental premise that in situations involving harm arising out of hazardous activities, the liability rests with the operator and where appropriate extends to the other persons or entities also.

Regarding the "response measures", we recognize that obligations to notify as well as consultation to mitigate the effects of transboundary harm are recognized in a number of international instruments governing hazardous activities. At the same time, we also believe that competent authorities of a State shall have the power, under domestic laws, to require response measures from the operator towards mitigation/elimination of the damage. Any residual response measure from the State should be

supplementary to the operator's liability, based on the capacity of the State to undertake such measures.

Mr. Chairman,

We, as stated earlier, have a concern on an expanded definition of "damage" which, under the Draft Principle 2(a), includes: loss of life or personal injury, loss of or damage to property; loss or damage by impairment of the environment; costs of reasonable measures of reinstatement of the property; and costs of reasonable response measures.

A traditional civil liability regime as the one in my country provides for a definition of damage that includes loss of life, property and loss caused on account of "actual damage" to the environment. We believe that cost of response measures or reinstatement of the environment on account of "impairment of the environment" will have adverse impact on the developmental efforts of States. Therefore, in our view the draft principles should be complementary in nature without prejudice to the regime on state responsibility under international law.

Mr. Chairman,

The Draft Articles and the Draft Principles are a major step forward toward regulating the transboundary impact of hazardous activities. These documents, in our view, are set to serve as a useful guide to States in their efforts to adopt legislative, regulatory and administrative measures, incorporating relevant principles in their domestic laws and policies.

I Thank you Mr. Chairman.



- 675. Statement by Mrs. Shruti Choudhry, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, On Agenda Item 21: "Globalization and interdependence: (a) Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence (d) Culture and development" at the Second Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.**

New York, October 23, 2013.

Mr. Chairperson,

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77.

Mr. Chairperson,

Globalization and its effective management for the greater good is an issue that lies at the heart of multilateral cooperation under the United Nations and also the evolving discourse on a Post-2015 Development Agenda.

In this context, I would like to focus on six key themes.

First, globalization is the defining reality of our times and its essential creed is that today all of us share a common destiny.

Globalization has brought unprecedented mobility of goods, services, capital, labour, technology and ideas. In doing so, it has created growth and wealth. It has fostered greater trade and interdependence. It has brought people together.

No individual or nation can remain unaffected by changes occurring in other parts of the world. We live in a world where we act together, succeed together and even fail together.

Second, we must also recognize and confront the risks and challenges that globalization has brought.

Till a few years ago the world had taken for granted the benefits of globalization and global interdependence. Today we are faced with the negative dimensions of those very phenomena.

The benefits of globalization have not been equitably shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed.

While it has created wealth and opportunities, it has also brought in a high degree of instability and insecurity in its wake.

A clear manifestation of the negative effects of globalization was the global financial and economic crisis, worsened by the crises of food and energy prices. It is the developing countries that became the worst victims of these crises even though they were the least responsible for them.

The increasing interdependence in the world as a result of the processes of globalization has also meant that national policies can no longer be formulated or implemented in isolation from international environment.

Third, the key to manage globalization and make it a force for inclusive development and common good is to strengthen multilateralism through open, democratic and participatory global governance structures. Unfortunately, global governance has not kept pace with the rapid changes of the past many decades.

A key reason for this is the abiding 'democratic deficit' in institutions of multilateral decision making. For multilateralism to remain relevant and effective in managing the forces of globalization, multilateral institutions need to be reformed urgently. This needs to be done both in the United Nations as well as in multilateral financial institutions. We must enable an enhanced voice for developing countries in decision making structures of the global economic governance.

Fourth, a key aspect of globalization is the management of the global commons.

We strongly believe that our collective effort for the management of the global commons must equitably balance the needs and responsibilities of nations at different stages of development.

The present stark imbalance in the consumption of natural and atmospheric resources does not lend credibility to our efforts to mainstream sustainability and address global challenges such as climate change.

Above all therefore, our commitment to the management of global commons must be premised on an equitable sharing of resources.

Fifth, an abiding feature of globalization is the phenomenon of international migration. The spirit of globalization rests on the mobility and flow of human resources.

We need to craft a humane, orderly and mutually beneficial process of migration which maximizes its win-win opportunity for both developing as well as developed countries and reduces its negative dimensions.

Sixth, managing globalization so that it benefits everyone would be a central challenge of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

It is therefore important that this agenda remains focused on the promotion of sustained and inclusive economic growth with eradication of poverty as the central and overarching objective.

It should carry forward the human development imperatives enshrined in the MDGs, fully respect the Rio principles and prioritize enhanced mobilization of resources as part of a renewed global partnership for development.

In order to harness the positive forces of globalization, the Post-2015 Development Agenda must be anchored in the imperative of creating a supportive international economic environment, enhanced aid and investment flows, a supportive multilateral trade regime and a strengthened framework for transfer of technology.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to also address the important issue of 'Culture and Development'.

We fully support the notion that a culture-sensitive approach is needed for the success of development initiatives.

Coming from India I believe that a culture-sensitive approach is one that embraces differences, celebrates diversity and promotes mutual respect. Only such an inclusive approach can enable us to pursue collective global objectives in a spirit of solidarity.

Let me also add that certain cultural precepts can add value to our global efforts at promoting sustainable development.

If we are to collectively achieve sustainable development, the world will have to embrace a 'culture of frugality'. The culture of harmony with nature, of taking from the Earth and the atmosphere only so much as one puts back into them. This idea has been a part and parcel of Indian ethos and culture.

We must find new pathways for transition to a culture of frugal living, less wastage and equitable sharing of resources.

I thank you



676. Statement by Mrs. Shruti Choudhry, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 17 (a): "Macroeconomic Policy Questions: International Trade and Development" at the Second Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 24, 2013.

Mr. Chairperson,

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77.

We thank the Secretary General and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for the comprehensive report on the subject of International Trade and Development.

Mr. Chairperson,

International trade has long been recognized as an engine for development and a vital tool to provide long-term sustainable growth.

The international community has also reaffirmed its commitment to a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, as well as meaningful trade liberalization as a means for stimulating economic growth and development worldwide.

India firmly believes that trade and investment, and an open, rules-based, transparent and non-discriminatory WTO-based trading system can play an important role in restoring global growth.

These imperatives will also have to anchor our approach under the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

We need to accelerate and strengthen our efforts for ensuring that international trade plays an enabling role for restoring global growth and assisting developing countries in eradicating poverty and promoting all-round development.

Mr. Chairperson,

The report of the Secretary General notes that after expanding strongly by 6.9% in 2011, global trade volume decelerated sharply to only 2.7% in 2012. This sharp deceleration of global trade is a matter of concern.

The continued fragility of global economic recovery and the weak demand in developed countries continues to hobble robust growth in international trade.

Growth in large developing countries has also slowed down. Unemployment remains high and food and energy price volatility has not been contained.

In this scenario, it is important that we undertake growth promoting policies to boost demand and create jobs.

Mr. Chairperson,

India firmly believes in the centrality of the multilateral trading system and is convinced that strengthening the WTO is critical for anchoring expectations about the continued commitment to an open world economy.

We need to urgently summon the necessary political will and international action for reinvigorating the Doha Development round in the WTO. This was the first round of trade negotiations that was explicitly called a development round and presents a valuable opportunity to make international trade a genuine vehicle for growth and development.

With the upcoming 9th Ministerial Meeting of the WTO in Bali, it is imperative that we get back to the negotiating table with the will to reach

an outcome that is fair, balanced and equitable, with development at its core.

Mr. Chairperson,

To act as an engine of development, the international trade framework should work towards removing barriers that prevent developing countries from fully participating in global trade. Eschewing protectionism and enhancing market access for developing countries are critical in this regard.

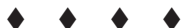
Removal of trade distorting subsidies in developed countries particularly in the agricultural sector is equally crucial.

In this context, we note the decision of the G-20 to extend their standstill commitment on protectionist measures until the end of 2016. This however, must be part of a commitment to take credible steps to show progress on the Doha Round.

Mr. Chairperson,

We look forward to a positive outcome of the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Bali in the hope that it will encourage all countries to move ahead quickly on a fair, equitable and development-oriented outcome of the Doha round.

I thank you



677. STATEMENT BY MR AVINASH PANDE, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 50 - INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE, AT THE SPECIAL POLITICAL & DECOLONIZATION [FOURTH] COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 24, 2013.

Mr. Chairman

At the outset, on behalf of India, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Carlos Garcia Gonzalez of El Salvador on his election as Chairman of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee to the 68th General Assembly, as also the other members of the Bureau on their election. I wish you all the best of success and assure you of my country's continued co-operation and support. I would also like to congratulate the former Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Gabon, Ambassador Noel Nelson Messone, for doing an admirable job in conducting this committee during the 67th session of the General Assembly.

The Indian delegation believes that UNCOPUOS continues to be the unique platform for international space cooperation and utilization of outer space for peaceful purposes, under the mandate of the General Assembly. The Indian delegation also expresses its satisfaction over deliberations at the 56th session of UNCOPUOS, under the chairmanship of Mr. Yasushi Horikawa of Japan, and the work carried out by the two sub-committees of UNCOPUOS.

Mr. Chairman

While acknowledging the significant achievements of various member states in space endeavours during the last one year, the Indian delegation desires to brief the Committee on the significant achievements made by India in the field of space, since the last session.

On February 25, 2013, the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C20), on its twenty second successive successful flight, placed the satellite

with Argos and Altika (SARAL), an Indo-French joint mission, in polar orbit, and also placed six other satellites belonging to Austria, Canada, Denmark and United Kingdom in their intended orbits. SARAL carries a radar altimeter (Ka band Altimeter - ALTIKA) to study sea surface altitude and a data collection platform (ARGOS) for collecting data from ocean buoys and weather data centers. Data is currently being received by both France and India and after the validation phase, the products will be made available globally.

On July 01, 2013, PSLV-C22 precisely placed the first satellite of India's Regional navigational satellite system constellation, IRNSS-1A into its intended orbit. IRNSS-1A is the first of the seven-satellite constellation designed for providing position, navigation and timing services over the Indian region.

India's weather satellite, INSAT 3D carrying advanced weather monitoring payloads, was successfully launched by Arianespace from Kourou, French Guiana on July 25, 2013. Arianespace has also launched India's advanced communication satellite GSAT-7 on August 30, 2013.

The Indian Space Research Organization, ISRO is undertaking a "Mars Orbiter Mission", as the first step by India towards exploring the planet Mars. The primary technological objective of this mission is to design and realize a spacecraft with a capability to reach Mars, and to orbit around Mars. The Mars Orbiter Mission is scheduled for launch during October-November 2013 from Sriharikota using PSLV, and would be captured around Planet Mars in September 2014.

India's geosynchronous satellite launch vehicle GSLV-Mk II, with Indian cryogenic stage, carrying GSAT-14 satellite, is also scheduled for launch this year. India is also getting ready to launch the first Indian space based observatory for multi-wavelength observations of the celestial bodies and cosmic sources, named ASTROSAT.

Mr. Chairman

The Indian space programme continues to integrate the advances in space technology and applications with its national developmental goals. India places considerable importance on International Cooperation for peaceful use of outer space. Currently, formal instruments of cooperation

are in place with 33 countries and three international organisations. India provides near real-time global wind vector data derived from OCEANSAT-2 satellite to the scientific community globally, under an arrangement with EUMETSAT.

Under India-ASEAN cooperation, it is proposed to establish a station in one of the ASEAN member countries to receive, process and use data from Indian satellites for a variety of applications, including disaster management support. A network of weather stations is also being established in SAARC countries to support severe thunderstorm predictions.

India continues to provide expertise and services for supporting the developing countries in the application of space technology through capacity building. The Center for Space Science and Technology Education for Asia and the Pacific Region, affiliated to the UN and operating from India, has so far benefited more than 1200 scholars from 53 countries.

India is an active member of the Committee for Earth Observation Systems (CEOS) and hosted the 26th plenary meeting of CEOS in Bangalore, in October 2012, with the participation of more than 30 space agencies and affiliated organizations.

Mr. Chairman

In conclusion, the Indian delegation greatly acknowledges the potential of space technology and the efforts of UNCOPUOS to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes.

Thank you Mr. Chairman



678. Statement by Hon'ble Ms. Preet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs at the Joint debate in UNGA under Agenda item 63(a) and (b) and 13 on New Partnership for Africa's Development and International Support; Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa; Reports of the Secretary General ((A/68/222 AND A/68/220-S/2013/475); AND 2001 - 2010 DECADE TO ROLL BACK MALARIA IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA.

New York, October 25, 2013.

Your Excellency, President of the General Assembly,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all congratulate H.E. Mr. John Ashe, on his election to the presidency of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. We wish him every success and assure him of our fullest co-operation.

I am honoured to address today's Joint Debate on the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the promotion of peace and development in Africa, including in its efforts to fight malaria.

Allow me to also convey our sincerest appreciation to the Secretary General for his timely and extremely informative report on the agenda items under discussion today.

Epitomising the spirit of Pan Africanism, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), with its strong emphasis on infrastructure, agriculture and governance, is indeed firmly on course in realising the vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful African continent.

Madam President,

India applauds the progress achieved by Africa in the implementation of NEPAD priorities over the last ten years through multi sectoral initiatives in agriculture, infrastructure, health, education, science, information technology and environment. However, despite these positive strides, serious challenges remain to be addressed before the African continent

can achieve all round development and prosperity. Extreme poverty, hunger, lack of adequate nutrition, conflicts and other malaises continue to shackle the tremendous potential of the African people.

It is therefore important to acknowledge that addressing Africa's development needs and challenges requires an unwavering commitment backed by resolute action, not only from within Africa, but equally important, from outside the continent.

As has been pointed in Secretary General's report, total ODA to Africa has further declined from \$ 133.7 billion in 2011 to \$ 125.9 billion in 2012.

The report also points out that despite a strong average growth of 6.6% in 2012, it has not been inclusive or sustainable. Persistently high unemployment threatens to undermine the recent gains made towards social development and derail the progress towards achievement of the MDGs.

It is therefore imperative that the international community remains resolute in its support for Africa through sustained cooperation including transfer of technology, resources and an enabling international environment and immediately address this gaping gap between promise and delivery on pledged commitments.

In these times of political uncertainty and economic meltdown, it is more incumbent than ever for the continent's development partners to stay the course and help African countries achieve their developmental goals.

Madam President,

The India-Africa partnership is based on firm historical foundations, which over the decades, has grown into one of the most productive and durable partnerships. For the people of India, Africa is the land of awakening of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi and our ties continue to be rooted in our history of solidarity against colonialism and apartheid.

Our engagement with Africa has come a long way since then and today we have built a new template for partnership in the form of the India-Africa Forum Summit. This partnership is based on mutual respect, guided by the vision and priorities of our African brothers and sisters. India and Africa are committed to pursue the ideals of democratic governance in multicultural linguistic societies and inclusive development

for the benefit of their peoples. India and African Union launched a Plan of Action of Enhanced Framework of Cooperation on 6th September 2013 in New Delhi.

India is committed to assist Africa including in human resources and institutional capacity building, education, science & technology, agricultural productivity and food security, industrial growth, including small & medium enterprises, health sector, infrastructure and ICT.

These activities are being implemented directly with Member States in close consultation with Regional Economic Communities, African Union Commission and NEPAD Agency. India is also extending concession finance to develop social and economic infrastructure. Over the last decade, 170 Lines of Credit for an amount of US\$ 9.7 billion have been allocated, of which US\$ 5.8 billion was allocated for African countries.

There has been a spectacular increase in India-Africa trade over the last two decades. India-Africa trade has grown from a small US \$ 967 million in 1991 to over US \$ 70 billion in 2012. The target of US \$ 90 billion has been set for 2015. There is significant scope in enhancing and diversifying it with coordinated and sustained efforts.

India also actively supports African initiatives for peace and security in the continent. In the pursuit of this commitment, more than 6,500 Indian soldiers support UN Peacekeeping Operations in various parts of Africa.

There is a lot that we can learn from each other's development experiences. We have redirected our age-old bonds of friendship to respond to the contemporary aspirations of our peoples and build a partnership which is increasingly being cited as the 'beacon of South South cooperation'.

The IBSA Fund, which recently celebrated a Special Event on the occasion of International Day of South South Cooperation here at the UN in New York on 12 September, has already completed several successful projects in Burundi, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone for strengthening of infrastructure and capacity building.

Madam President,

Our partnership with Africa has the potential to strengthen global governance systems and democratise multilateral institutions. It is indeed

an irony and a continuing question on the credibility of the Security Council's representativeness to not have the whole continent of Africa represented in the permanent category of membership, inspite of nearly 75 percent of its work being focussed on Africa alone!

We along with our African friends, continue to impress upon the need for urgent reforms of the Security Council and addressing historical injustices by making it reflective of contemporary realities.

The year 2015, which marks the 70th anniversary for the United Nations and 10 years following the 2005 World Summit mandate by our Heads of States and Governments to achieve early reforms, would be a befitting occasion to deliver concrete outcomes on our pledged commitment to reforming institutions of global governance.

I thank you Madam President.



679. Statement by Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation. during the Thematic Debate on Other Weapons Mass Destruction at the First Committee of 68th United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 25,2013.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches high importance to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. These are examples of non-discriminatory treaties in the field of disarmament which could effectively lead to the total elimination of biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction. These treaties are indeed historic in the sweep of their vision and the unity of purpose that has inspired them.

India associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non- Aligned Movement.

Recent events in Syria have demonstrated the importance of complete destruction and elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles in the world

as soon as possible and the need to ensure that terrorists and non-state actors are prevented from acquiring access to these weapons. The use of chemical weapons anywhere and by anyone must be condemned and the international norm against the use of chemical weapons must be rigorously enforced. India supports the ongoing efforts of the OPCW for the expedited destruction and elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles in Syria.

India served as the Chair of the Executive Council leading up to the Third Review Conference and welcomes the adoption of the Final Report of the Conference by consensus. We welcome the clear expression of the international community's conviction in the Review Conference document that the CWC has reinforced its role as the international norm against chemical weapons and has made a major contribution to international peace and security by seeking a total exclusion of the possibility of use of chemical weapons. The Review Conference also expressed the determination that the destruction of all categories of chemical weapons shall be completed in the shortest possible time in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

India reaffirms that disarmament is a primary goal of the Chemical Weapons Convention and should remain our priority till the complete destruction of all chemical weapons is achieved. India completed the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles in 2009 as per its obligations and within the stipulated time frame under the CWC. We believe that the possessor States should fulfil their obligations within the shortest possible time. Universality is also fundamental to the success of the Convention. Full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI is essential for the realisation of the object and purpose of the Convention.

With its large and growing chemical industry, India has the second largest number of declared facilities. Our filing of chemical industry declarations has been exemplary indeed. India receives one of the largest number of inspections from OPCW and we have ensured a flawless track record of verification inspections. At the same time, we believe that the OPCW needs to evolve transparent and objective criteria and modalities for inspections. The provisions of the Convention should be implemented in

a manner that does not hinder legitimate activities, especially in countries like India with a large and growing chemical industry.

We join other delegations in conveying our felicitations to the OPCW on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Mr. Chairman,

India is committed to improving the effectiveness of the BWC and strengthening its implementation and universalization. We believe this is necessary in view of the new challenges to international peace and security emanating from proliferation trends, including the threat posed by terrorists and other non-State actors seeking access to biological agents for terrorist activities. We welcome the accession of Cameroon, Nauru, Guyana and Malawi to the BWC this year.

One critical area in which the BWC is focused inadequate is an effective mechanism for verification of compliance. In a multilateral treaty such as the BWC, verification of compliance is critically important for States Parties to be collectively assured that the provisions of the Convention are being implemented by all States Parties. Only a multilaterally agreed mechanism for verification of compliance can provide the assurance of observance of compliance obligations by States Parties and act as a deterrence against non-compliance.

The Seventh Review Conference mandated the current inter-sessional programme to consider three standing agenda items and two items on a biennial basis. We appreciate the chairmanship of Algeria in 2012 and Hungary in 2013 for providing a purposive initiative to the inter-sessional meetings.

India believes that it is critical for the success of the BWC that commitments and obligations under the Convention are fully and effectively implemented. India has a broad based regulatory framework to prevent the misuse of biological science and technology. We believe that CBMs are an important transparency measure to enhance trust in implementation of the Convention, but cannot substitute a multilaterally agreed mechanism for verification of compliance. In this regard, the decisions taken by the 7th Review Conference should be respected so as not to upset the balance in priorities of States Parties.

Mr. Chairman,

One of the issues that concerns both the BWC and the CWC and to which India attaches due importance is that of export controls. India has strong and law-based national export controls which fulfil all our obligations under these Conventions as well as commitments under UNSCR 1540. India filed its report on UNSCR 1540 in November 2004 and has submitted periodic updates the last being in 2013. India has actively engaged with the Australia Group and other export control regimes with a view to seeking full membership of these organizations. India is committed to maintain the highest international standards with reference to control of chemical, biological and toxin items.

Thank you



680. Statement by Mr. Avinash Pande, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation on Agenda Item 49-Effects of Atomic Radiation at the Special Political and Decolonization [Fourth] Committee of the 68th Session of the UNGA.

New York, October 25, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of India, I would like to once again congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee to the 68th General Assembly. I wish you all the best of success, and assure you of my country's continued co-operation and support.

Mr. Chairman,

I would also like to compliment the Scientific Committee on its detailed assessment of the levels and effects of radiation exposure after the accident at the Fukushima Daichi Nuclear Power Plants in 2011. The Committee was ably assisted by experts from several Member States,

and was provided voluminous critical data by the Government of Japan, TEPCO, other authenticated Japanese sources and international organizations. It is reassuring to note that in the assessment of the Committee, there was no significant adverse health effect observable in the exposed population so far.

The biological and health effects of this accident will be monitored for several decades to come. A Fukushima Health Management Survey has been initiated to monitor long-term health effects. India would urge the Committee to undertake periodic analyses of the emerging data.

While present estimates indicate that exposure of marine and terrestrial nonhuman biota was, in general, too low for acute effects to be observed, caution needs to be exercised. In the aftermath of a calamity of this proportion, it is only to be expected that certain shades of opinion would paint a gloomy picture of the consequences. However the world will have to depend on the non-partisan and scientifically sound assessments of UNSCEAR for a non-judgmental view. We would also like to stress that the Committee's projections of the risk of any health effect like cancer, based on use of certain models and data on collective dose, should not be wrongly interpreted to derive the number of likely deaths. There is need for utmost restraint in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

India commends the large-scale evacuation and other preventive as well as recovery and remedial measures taken by the Government of Japan, which ensured considerable reduction in the radiation dose received by the people.

Mr. Chairman,

India also congratulates the Scientific Committee for completing its evaluation of radiation exposure of children. It is an unfortunate fact that only in a few countries, is reliable data maintained on exposure of children and the population in general during various medical, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Notwithstanding this limitation, the analysis carried out by the Committee is revealing. While the Committee has concluded that for a given dose, children are generally at greater risk of tumor induction than adults, when examined by tumor types, it is seen that 25% of children are clearly more radio-sensitive, 15% have the same

radio-sensitivity and 10% appear to be less sensitive than adults. However, in the case of the remaining nearly 50%, there is weak or no relationship between radiation exposure and age at exposure. For deterministic effects after high acute or fractionated exposure, the differences between a child and adult are complex. There are some instances of more, same and lower sensitivity of children vis-a-vis adults, for different deterministic effects. There is no evidence of increase in hereditary effects such as chromosomal instability, DNA mutation and congenital malformations in offspring of parents exposed to radiation, including high level natural radiation. India is happy to state that this inference is also strongly supported by the data published by Indian researchers based on the study of several thousand newborn children in the high level natural radiation area off the Kerala coast.

Mr. Chairman,

India would like to urge early publication of two very important scientific annexes that were finalized by the Committee in the 59th session, namely the "Ability to attribute risk and effects to ionizing radiation" and "Uncertainties in the risk estimates for cancer due to exposure to ionizing radiation". These are of considerable interest from the social, economic and legal points of view, as they may impact the liability of an agency that provides services involving use of ionizing radiation or generation of nuclear energy.

India notes with satisfaction the progress made in the development of several other scientific documents undertaken by the Committee. Of special interest to India is the one on "Epidemiology of low-dose-rate exposures of the public to natural and artificial environmental sources of radiation". In this context, India suggests evaluation of all available data on different biological end points, including cancer.

Mr. Chairman,

India would like to emphasize that international regulatory agencies use the risk assessments by UNSCEAR for arriving at the dose limits of radiation exposure, for the protection of occupational radiation workers and the general public. These limits are several fold lower than the doses that have actually been shown to cause significant harm. Of late there have been concerns about the public perception of these limits. In

particular, these concerns get reflected in reservations with respect to recovery management in the case of radioactive contamination. People are concerned about the continuing exposure situation that would be created. Results of studies on biological and health effects in populations exposed to chronic high level natural radiation as carried out in India and China, would reflect such a situation of continued exposure. Yet, they do not indicate any significant health detriment.

As regards Medical Radiation Exposure, India offers its full cooperation to facilitate the collection of relevant information. The Global Survey to be undertaken by the Committee is an essential but very challenging and difficult task, considering the ground realities in several countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The Committee's new strategy of bringing out its reports with scientific annexes in a shorter time than the earlier cycle of 5-6 years, is yielding commendable results. Its efforts to address emergent issues on priority, should be appreciated and supported by UNEP, with adequate resources as and when necessary.

I would like to conclude by reiterating that as a founder member of UNSCEAR, India is proud to be associated with its deliberations.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.



681. Statement by Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item No. 134 "Proposed Programme Budget: Biennium 2014-15" at the Fifth Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 28, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

It is an honour to have the President of the General Assembly, and the Secretary-General among us today for the presentation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-15

I wish to thank the Secretary-General for the presentation of the budget for the next biennium. I thank the ACABQ Chair for introducing their relevant reports.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished permanent representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The biennium budget reflects the priorities of United Nations and the willingness of the international community to make necessary resources available to achieve them. The budget document is a link between our ambitions and the actions we are ready to undertake.

It is our firm belief that under your able guidance the committee will successfully deliberate Secretary-General's proposed programme budget amounting to 5.4 billion USD. We also hope it will lead to a balanced allocation of resources across the key priorities of the organization in the fields of peace, security, and development.

Important subjects pertaining to staff-mobility, special political missions, and numerous ongoing reform initiatives are also before the committee at this session.

Mr. Chairman,

More importantly, the committee will also have to carry the burden of the past- indecisions that can no longer be deferred anymore. Recosting decision to the tune of USD 170 million remains outstanding before the Committee. Unresolved staff- compensation issue is likewise a carryover from the past sessions.

Mr. Chairman,

Although the budgetary allocations to the Special Political Missions have increased steadily through the last decade, the regular budget has maintained a zero-growth in real terms for the last few bienniums. Investments on ICT, renovation and reconstruction have also been substantial.

The widening-gap between the initial appropriations and the revised estimates is a pointer to the infirmities of the budgetary process we have adopted.

Our ability to address unforeseen expenditures also continues to be ad-hoc and, therefore, is unsustainable from a budgetary perspective.

Expectations that additional expenditures will always be absorbed within the existing resources are ill-founded and must not define the process of budgetary formulation.

Mr. Chairman,

Last few bienniums were heavily focused on reforms & renovations. Much of the expenditures therefore went to headquarter-based structures and processes. The member states' meager resources should go to the poor and the deprived and not for the creation of hardware and assets at the headquarters.

It is our sincere hope that we can now re-focus our attention to the core priorities in the field of development, peace and security, all the more when budgetary resources have streamed thin.

Mr. Chairman,

In this regard, we are deeply anguished to note secretary-general's proposed reduction of posts under the developmental pillar. This will further aggravate the neglect of the developmental needs of the poor citizenry of the world.

Mr. Chairman,

Ballooning extra-budgetary contributions defy the belief that the prevailing fiscal- climate has adversely impacted member-states ability to contribute to the regular budget. Moreover, an excessive shift towards voluntary contributions pre-empts a judicious and consultative allocation of resources.

We believe that the regular budget is not to cater to the administrative expenses of the organization alone, with extra-budgetary contributions taking over the programmatic component.

Mr. Chairman,

The paramount need today is to anchor the budgetary process once again in the democratic ethos and to dedicate it visibly to vindicating the role of this organization as custodian of global peace and well-being of the disadvantaged.

Mr. Chairman,

Secretariat staff are the drivers and carriers of our mandates. Their ability is our capacity. Our workforce must be true to the global character of the organization. A restricted catchment of workforce will continue to throw up challenges that the proposed mobility-framework seeks to address. It is our sincere hope that the Secretary General's proposals will contribute to correcting the geographic imbalance in the composition of the present secretariat.

Mr. Chairman,

The special political missions are now a prominent tool in the domain of peace and security. From a mere 200 million USD, the SPM today require an estimated 1.2 billion USD. The arrangements for their backstopping and funding have generated much debate in the past sessions. Streamlining of their budgetary and associated processes will render them nimble and cost-effective.

Mr. Chairman,

Programme delivery is the sole yardstick for the success of the budgetary process. Our sights must therefore be firmly focused accordingly. Efficiency gains & cuts suggested at the headquarters are essentially

management practices that can in no way substitute the field-based assessment of mandate implementation.

Faced with mounting challenges to global peace & security, our ability to make a difference in people's lives is directly proportionate to our willingness to spare resources and to use them judiciously. An aspiration, therefore, to freeze budget-levels artificially ahead in time will end up exposing its limitations as the biennium unfolds.

Mr. Chairman,

Expensive reform initiatives have been undertaken in recent bienniums. ICT project UMOJA alone cost us USD 360 million. The cost of secretariat renovation amounted to USD 2 billion. The logistical and support arm of peacekeeping stands relocated today in far-off lands away from the member states, thus enhancing the cost of arbitrage many times. Cost overruns, project-governance, hidden-costs, and implementation-delays have been some of the routine features the member-states had to grapple with during the past sessions

The case for strict monitoring and greater transparency has, therefore, never been this strong. Our experiences must be built into the lessons we learn. The ambition for transformation must not risk derailment on account of lack of administrative and management oversights.

Mr. Chairman,

Concern for the well-being of the poor and the under-privileged must be the first charge on the resources of the organization while we adopt corporate efficiencies and standards at the headquarters. Our housekeeping expenses must necessarily be moderated so that we are not found wanting in the discharge of our primary responsibility.

Mr. Chairman,

India believes that an overly cost-conscious approach, dominated by few big donors hurts the deliberative space so far as the programmatic elements of the mandates are concerned. It also weakens the collaborative character that defines the United Nations.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman,

This process is not about the aspirations, resources, and mandates alone. It is also about the manner in which we deliberate together to make it

work. Imbalances, therefore, impart strength neither to the process nor to its outcome. This session must make manifest and eloquently visible our collective response to faithfully vindicate the trust reposed in this organization for ensuring distributive and inter-generational equities in the cause of global peace and inclusive development.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.



682. statement by Mr. Mohammed Adeeb, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 40: "Necessity Of Ending The Economic, Commercial And Financial Blockade Against Cuba" at the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, October 29, 2013.

Mr. President,

I am honored to make a statement on this important agenda item.

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77 and also the statement made by the distinguished representative of Iran on behalf of NAM.

Mr. President,

This is the twenty-second year in succession that this Assembly is deliberating the decades old economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba.

In all these years, this Assembly has repeatedly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extra-territorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures that hurt the progress and prosperity of the people the world over.

This august Assembly has also called upon all States to respect their obligations under the United Nations Charter and international law, as well as repeal and invalidate laws and measures that have "extra-

territorial effects" on the sovereignty of other States and affect the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Despite the repeated calls of the General Assembly, its resolutions remain unimplemented in contravention of world opinion.

Such disregard of the collective will of the international community expressed through the United Nations undermines the credibility of this institution and weakens multilateralism.

Mr. President,

India strongly supports the categorical rejection by the international community of domestic laws with extra-territorial impact.

Mr. President,

The embargo on Cuba has resulted in immense suffering for the Cuban people. This embargo is a violation of the right of a sovereign state to development and to enjoy the freedom of trade, economy and navigation.

The embargo has denied a life of dignity to the people of Cuba and has severely undermined the progress of the country.

The adverse impact of the embargo has been made worse by the global economic and financial crisis, as well as by the rise in global food and energy prices. The embargo has denied Cuban economy access to market, investment, technology, which is needed for rapid and inclusive development.

Since it is denied access to major markets with which it shares its geography, Cuba has had to pay enormous extra cost for sourcing products, technology and services from third countries located thousands of kilometers away as well as finding markets for its products.

The extra-territorial application of the embargo has discouraged investment, technology transfer and sale and other forms of business collaborations between Cuba and third countries.

Mr. President,

The United Nations Economic Commission for the Latin America and the Caribbean has noted that the embargo limits key policy options for

the Cuban government and its efforts for updating the economic model of the country are hampered by the embargo.

The Food and Agriculture Organization has pointed out that the embargo has very negative implications for Cuba's balance of trade and foreign exchange earnings, as well as for the country's supply of food and agriculture products as well as a direct effect on the food security of the vulnerable segments of the population.

The office of the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Cuba has further brought to our attention the fact that the embargo has a pervasive impact on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of human development in Cuba, affecting the most vulnerable socioeconomic groups of the Cuban population in particular.

These instances are clear evidence of the immense suffering caused to the Cuban people due to the embargo.

Mr. President,

We believe that differences among countries should be solved through dialogue and negotiation, in a spirit of mutual respect, respect for each other's independence and sovereignty, and non-interference in the other's internal affairs. It is of utmost importance that the spirit of multilateralism embodied by the UN is respected.

Mr. President,

Before concluding, permit me to reiterate India's opposition to unilateral measures by countries, which impinge on the sovereignty of another country, including attempts to extend the application of a country's laws extraterritorially to other sovereign nations.

India joins other nations in calling for an immediate end to the embargo against Cuba. India supports the resolution moved by Cuba.

I thank you



683. Statement by Mrs. Shruti Choudhry, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 25: "Agriculture development, Food Security and Nutrition" at the Second Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York , October 29, 2013.

Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. Chairperson,

The subject at hand today - that of food security - is at the heart of human development and the most pressing issue on the global sustainable development agenda.

We must spare no effort to achieve the MDG target of halving the proportion of people suffering from hunger by 2015. We must also ensure that food security and nutrition remain at the centre of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Mr. Chairperson,

India feeds seventeen percent of the world's population on less than five percent of the world's water and three percent of its arable land.

Over a period of time, India has taken several measures to increase agricultural output and promote food security.

The National Food Security Mission launched in the year 2007 has yielded positive results.

India's total food grain production in 2011-12 reached a record 259 million tons.

The Food Security Law that we have passed recently is the largest such effort of its kind in the world aimed at ensuring food security for our people. This law will benefit 75 percent of our rural population and half of our urban population.

Mr. Chairperson,

In the context of this debate, I would like to highlight some key issues.

First, food security - especially access to food - is directly linked with income poverty. While addressing food security, we must be cognizant of and maintain this link with poverty eradication.

At the same time, ensuring global progress towards food security and nutrition requires action along multiple dimensions. These include food availability, access, price stability, consumption and utilization and health and sanitation.

Second, while focusing on food security, we must also focus on the problem of under-nourishment and malnutrition, which is akin to a silent epidemic in many developing countries.

An estimated 26 % of the world's children are stunted and 2 billion suffer from one or more micro-nutrient deficiencies. This is a challenge that requires a focused policy response.

Third, food security cannot be ensured by national action alone. In today's interconnected world, there is an important role of international systemic and structural factors which need to be looked into. Meaningfully addressing food price volatility and its structural and root causes, including speculative practices in the commodity markets needs to be prioritized.

Fourth, we cannot achieve food security and agricultural livelihood security in developing countries if we do not urgently address the issue of revamping the distorted global rules of agricultural subsidies.

These rules have allowed OECD countries on the one hand to increase their subsidies to US\$ 415 billion in 2012 while at the same time constraining the developing countries to benchmark the current administered prices offered to their poor farmers against an antiquated reference price based on the 1986-88 period, as a measure of subsidy.

It is important that global policy in this regard must be able to differentiate the bona fide efforts of developing countries aimed at providing basic food and nutrition to their people.

The argument that somehow subsidies are good for the rich but bad for the poor is untenable and unacceptable. We cannot have multilateral

trade rules that favour the rich countries but punish the developing countries on the same issue.

It is time that we address this historical bias by ensuring that the vast millions of low income and resource poor farmers in developing countries continue to receive the necessary support and price guarantees for tilling their land and providing adequate food for the poor consumers. It is time that the right to food is recognized as a basic human right and developing countries are encouraged to devise programmes that meet this basic need.

Fifth, the central role of technology must be noted. The Green Revolution which enabled many developing countries to augment food production and become self-sufficient was a result of international collaboration on agriculture research. We need to be able to replicate this model of multi-stakeholder research to invest in agriculture technology and spread the fruits of such collaboration widely. Flexibility in global IPR regimes will have to play a catalytic role in this process.

Sixth, crafting a purposeful global response to tackling the unacceptably high levels of food waste is critical if not central to addressing food security. 1.3 billion tons of food produced is wasted every year, amounting to over one-third of all food produced. Most of this wastage happens in the developed countries due to unsustainable and wasteful consumption patterns. FAO estimates that per capita food waste by consumers in the developed countries works out to over 100 kilograms per year.

The scale of this problem can be gauged from the fact that wastage of food at consumer level alone in industrialized countries is nearly as much as the total food production in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is important to focus on greater efforts at awareness creation and attitudinal change in the developed world which will enable us save huge amounts of food.

There is unacceptably high level of post-harvest losses in the developing countries as well. However, this is more a function of poor infrastructure and lack of advanced technologies for production, post-harvest processing, packaging and transportation. This problem needs to be addressed by means of enhanced investments in rural infrastructure

and transportation and storage facilities as well as better access to technologies - for production and post-harvest processing.

Finally Mr. Chairperson,

Gender equality and women's empowerment, their social inclusion and equal access of women to economic opportunities and resources is a key determinant for food security. We must ensure that our approaches for food security fully take into account this gender perspective.

I thank you



684. Statement by Mr. Vipul, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of India to CD Thematic debate on "Other Disarmament Measures and International Security" at 68th Session of the First Committee.

New York, October 30, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

India associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of NAM during this thematic debate.

India has the honour to introduce the draft decision L.22 which proposes the inclusion of the item entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" in the provisional agenda for the sixty-ninth General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

It is clear that scientific and technological progress is critical for any society for economic and social development and needs to be maintained and encouraged. The developing countries are especially dependent on access to scientific developments and new technologies for developmental purposes and for active participation in global trade. We therefore believe that international cooperation in peaceful uses of science and technology should be promoted through all means, including

technology transfer, sharing of information and exchange of equipment and materials.

At the same time, we recognize that scientific and technological developments can have both civilian and military applications. The military applications of scientific and technological developments can contribute significantly to the improvement and upgrading of weapons systems, including WMDs, as well to inventing entirely new weapon systems. For instance, the international community has expressed concerns about the misuse of information and communications technologies for criminal or hostile purposes as well as the development of Lethal Autonomous Robots. We believe that there is a need to closely follow scientific and technological developments that may have a negative impact on the security environment and disarmament, particularly when they give rise to proliferation concerns.

While progress in science and technology for civilian applications needs to be encouraged, it is also important that international transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technology with military applications are effectively regulated, keeping in mind legitimate defense requirements of all States. National regulations and export controls of appropriate standards in this field should be strengthened and effectively implemented. Relevant international agreements in this field should be implemented in a manner designed to avoid hampering the economic or technological development of state parties to those agreements.

For all the above reasons, the Role of Science & Technology in the context of international security and disarmament is an important and dynamic subject that affects the interests of all states. There is thus need for dialogue among Member States to find a viable forward looking approach taking into account current trends and possible future directions. We therefore hope that as in the past years the First Committee will endorse the draft decision L.22 tabled by India.



685. Statement by Mrs. Pratibha Parkar, Counsellor, PMI to UN, during the thematic debate on Conventional Weapons, at 68th Session of UNGA. First Committee.

New York, October 30, 2013,

Mr. Chairman,

India shares concerns about the challenges posed by conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, to international peace and security. We attach importance to measures aimed at conventional arms control to address these challenges and to make progress on the goal of general and complete disarmament. Such measures need to be taken in a fair and balanced manner so as not to hamper the legitimate defence requirements of Member States. They should specifically aim at countering the illicit trade in conventional weapons and banning their transfers to terrorists and non-State actors.

Mr. Chairman,

The United Nations has had a measure of success in dealing with the threat posed by illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The UN Programme of Action outlines a realistic and comprehensive approach to address the problem at national, regional and global levels. The full and effective implementation of the UNPOA and the International Tracing Instrument is a priority for India, especially as a means for combating terrorism and transnational crime which has adversely affected our national security.

We welcome the successful conclusion of the Second Review Conference of the UNPOA with the adoption of the outcome document by consensus. We note with satisfaction that the Review Conference reaffirmed the key commitments of States under the UNPOA. It is important to maintain consensus in the UNPOA process in the coming years while making further progress on both the political and technical aspects of its implementation. In this context, we look forward to the Fifth BMS to be held next year. We support and congratulate Amb. Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan for being designated as the Chair of the meeting. It is important that the Agenda for the meeting be decided early to enable Member States to undertake thorough preparations for the meeting.

India is privileged to be a party to the entire CCW package and attaches importance to the spirit of the CCW which aims to strike a balance between addressing humanitarian concerns arising from the use of certain conventional weapons and the military necessity of such weapons. It remains the only forum of a universal character that brings together all the main users and producers of certain conventional weapons, thus ensuring that the instruments which emerge have greater prospect of making a meaningful impact on the ground. India remains committed to the CCW process in progressively strengthening the role and principles of international humanitarian law.

India supports the vision of a world free of the threat of landmines and is committed to the eventual elimination of anti-personnel landmines. We support the approach enshrined in Amended Protocol II of the CCW which addresses the legitimate defence requirements of States with long borders. India has discontinued the production of non-detectable antipersonnel landmines and observes a moratorium on their transfer. We are also contributing to international demining and rehabilitation efforts. Amended Protocol II also serves as perhaps the only UN framework which addresses the issue of Improvised Explosive Devices or IEDs which is today the weapon of choice for terrorists and NSAs. India participates in the Ottawa Convention meetings as an Observer.

India has shouldered various responsibilities in relation to CCW's Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, including on the development of Generic Electronic Template and national reporting. In recent months the issue of Lethal Autonomous Robots (LARs) has engaged the attention of the international community. There is a need to enhance the understanding of the international community about the possible humanitarian impact of the development and use of such weapons.

India supports the two major instruments promoting transparency in armaments, viz. the UN Register on Conventional Arms and the UN Report on Military Expenditures. India has regularly submitted national reports to the UN Register on the export and import of conventional arms, including the latest covering the period 2011 and 2012. India has also contributed to the three-yearly review of the Register including in 2013. India supports efforts for further improving the Register along with efforts towards universalizing participation in it. We also contributed to

the work of the GGE on the UN Report on Military Expenditures in 2011 and have submitted our national reports for this instrument.

India participated actively in the Diplomatic Conferences to negotiate an Arms Trade Treaty in the expectation that such a treaty would make a real impact on illicit trafficking in conventional arms and their illicit use especially by terrorists and other unauthorized and unlawful non-state actors. During the ATT negotiations India consistently stressed that the treaty should ensure a balance of obligations between exporting and importing States. However, the finalized treaty text did not meet our requirements on these counts. India is undertaking a full and thorough assessment of the ATT from the perspective of our defence, security and foreign policy interests.

Thank you



686. STATEMENT BY DR. NEERU CHADHA, JOINT SECRETARY, ON AGENDA ITEM 81 "REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION ON THE WORK OF ITS SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION- Part-1" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 30, 2013.

Mr. C.actice in relation to the interpretation of treaties"; and "Immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction".

We express our appreciation to the Special Rapporteur Prof. George Nolte for presentation of his first report on the topic "Subsequent agreements and subsequent practice in relation to the interpretation of treaties". The Rapporteur has extensively analyzed articles 31 and 32 of the Vienna convention on the Law of Treaties.

Mr. Chairman,

We agree with the observation that the rules contained in articles 31 and 32 of the Vienna Convention reflect the customary international law. The

subsequent practice is an authentic means of interpretation that can be taken into account while interpreting the terms used in and the provisions of the treaty, but cannot be taken as conclusive or legally binding unless the parties agree.

There is a clear distinction between a subsequent agreement and a subsequent practice. We agree with the Commission that "subsequent agreement between the parties regarding the interpretation of the treaty or the application of its provisions" ipso facto has the effect of constituting an authentic interpretation of the treaty, whereas a "subsequent practice" only has this effect if it "shows the common understanding of the parties as to the meaning of the terms". The subsequent practice can only be taken into account as a means of interpretation, if it establishes an agreement between the parties. The basic determining factor whether or not a subsequent agreement or practice has acquired the status as a means of interpretation of a treaty is the acceptance thereof by all parties to the treaty.

Similarly, the evolutive interpretation of a treaty cannot be merely a matter of the presumption of the intent of parties, particularly in regard to treaties that lay down specific rights for each Party and where such an interpretation can alter the core rights of a party. Therefore we are of the view that nature of the Treaty may be relevant for determining whether more or less weight should be given to certain means of interpretation.

Mr. Chairman,

Turning to the topic of "Immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction", we appreciate the efforts of the Special Rapporteur Ms. Concepcion Escobar Hernandez and congratulate her for the second report on this topic, wherein six draft articles were elaborated, which were redrafted in three draft articles by the Drafting Committee and consequently provisionally adopted by the Commission with commentary.

We agree with the understanding of the Commission reflected in paragraph 10 of the commentary to paragraph 2 of draft article 1 that the rules regulating the immunity from foreign criminal jurisdiction of persons connected with activities in specific fields of international relations are the treaty-based and custom-based "special rules". The Commission

has decided not to include an explicit reference to international conventions and instruments. However, we are of the view that making reference to the regimes under which the special rules fall, would provide greater clarity in understanding the nature and scope of the immunity.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding the immunity *ratione personae*, It is universally accepted that the Heads of State, Heads of Government and the Foreign Ministers, the so called Troika, are entitled to the immunity from criminal jurisdiction of foreign States by virtue of their representational capacity for the State abroad and functional necessity.

We consider that, were the same criteria applied, a few other high ranking Officials especially, Ministers of Defence and Ministers of International Trade could also be considered as the State Officials deserving immunity from the criminal jurisdiction of foreign States. We request the Special Rapporteur to consider and analyze the views of States in this regard and come up with appropriate propositions.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the decision of the Commission to include in its programme of work the topics "Protection of the environment in relation to armed conflict" and "Protection of atmosphere" and appointment of Ms. Marie G. Jacobsson and Mr. Shinya Murase, respectively, as the Special Rapporteurs for the topics. We consider these topics timely and look forward to the reports of the Special Rapporteurs.

We acknowledge the cautious approach of the Commission, with regard to the topic of "Protection of atmosphere", especially as to what issues should not be dealt with under this topic and agree that the outcome of the work on this topic should be the draft guidelines rather than developing a convention.

We also note the Commission's decision to include the topic "Crimes against humanity" in its long-term programme of work. We note with interest the written proposal made on the topic by Mr. Sean D. Murphy. As a preliminary comment, we would like to stress on a thorough examination on the need to undertake work on this topic, in view of the existing international instruments including the Statute of the International Criminal Court that already includes crimes against humanity.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, in conclusion, we would like to congratulate the Commission and others for successfully holding the 49th Session of the International Law Seminar pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 67/92. India was one of the voluntary contributors to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Law Seminar. We agree with the Commission that these annual Seminars indeed make valuable contribution in allowing successive generations of young international lawyers to familiarise themselves with the work of the Commission and many international organizations based in Geneva. We also look forward to the holding of 50th anniversary of the International Law Seminar.

Thank You



687. Statement by Mr. Mohammed Adeb, Hon'ble Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item No. 53 "Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in all their Aspects" at the Fourth Committee General Debate of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York , October 30, 2013.

Madam Chairperson,

At the outset let me thank you and the USG DPKO Mr. Herve Ladsous and USG DFS Madam Ameerah Haq for their useful briefings the other day. It is my honour to speak today at the peacekeeping general debate of the 68th UNGA. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Egypt on behalf of NAM.

India is proud to have been associated with UN Peacekeeping from its very inception. Having contributed over 150,000 peacekeepers to virtually every peacekeeping mission, India has an abiding interest in UN peacekeeping. India is one of its largest contributors today and we remain committed to this global enterprise.

Peacekeeping has been a critical tool of the United Nation in maintaining international peace and security. Its collaborative character infuses it with a unique legitimacy that defines its strength.

The core values of UN peacekeeping explain its enduring relevance. Principles of consent, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defence and in defence of the mandate have outlived many transitions that peacekeeping has witnessed from truce-supervision missions of yesteryears to multi-dimensional mandates of today.

Madam Chairperson, Peacekeeping is often evaluated as a stand alone exercise rather than a part of an overarching peace process. While this reflects its usefulness, lasting peace always accompanies the success of the overall political process.

Peacekeeping's agenda today is generated mostly outside the General Assembly. Major peacekeeping policy initiatives get on-boarded outside the C34. This encourages a reliance on factors outside the confines of the General Assembly. Moreover, this allows ourselves to be judged by those who do not even take part in peacekeeping. Over a period of time this has distorted peacekeeping's policy universe.

Peacekeeping mandates continue to be the preserve of a privileged few. These are generated in isolation from the personnel responsible for their field implementation. Moreover, they accord primacy to material over men.

In-depth consultations with troop and police contributing countries should be an integral part of the mandate generation process. A fair assessment of mandates with corresponding resources will inject a sense of realism into expectations with respect to mission objectives and achievements.

The working methods that were meant to smoothen C34's functioning ended rusting it up. The substantive core of C34's functioning stands damaged today on account of a mere technical detail. Revival of C34 is necessary to restore its democratic underpinnings. Under no circumstances can peacekeeping be allowed to be run as an executive affair.

C34's dormancy will hurt triangular partnership between the member states, Security Council, and the secretariat. A healthy C34 is necessary for the consolidation of this relationship.

Sadly, countries that have dispatched hundreds of thousands of men in service of UN peacekeeping, continue to be at the periphery including in the headquarter departments.

We welcome the assurance by USG DFS at the adoption of peacekeeping budgets this year to undertake corrective measures to improve representation of troop and police contributing countries in headquarter departments.

It is our firm belief that the welfare and safety of soldiers must be dealt with in a responsible manner. Indifference to personnel matters such as troop-cost results in a disconnect between the field and the headquarter.

Secretary General's Special Advisory Group was set up to resolve this longstanding grievance of the field personnel. Its outcome, therefore, must remain true to this objective.

Unfortunately, resource allocation too has failed to keep pace with expansion in the mandates. Peacekeeping missions are called upon to do more and more with less and less. This has added to operational challenges faced by peacekeepers and missions are overstretched due to shortage of personnel and equipment.

Madam Chairperson,

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding are two sides of same coin. Critical peacebuilding tasks are all premised on peacekeepers proactive involvement. Our strategies and approaches, therefore, should be geared to capitalize on these strengths.

Two-thirds of UN's field presence comprises of uniformed personnel. They respond to a complex set of challenges in a holistic manner. We should, therefore, synergize the keeping-of-peace and the building-of-peace. Their mutual complementariness should be harmonized rather than being zoned as civilian versus military.

In this regard, we keenly look forward to the long-awaited materialization of the civilian capacity review process. This process should be firmly placed in the member state domain in its intergovernmental context.

UN peacekeepers are keeping peace today in most dangerous and challenging terrains and circumstances. Attacks on peacekeepers by

armed militia groups have increased exponentially. United Nations must undertake manifest action against the perpetrators of such violence and bring them to justice.

Madam Chairperson,

The representative character of peacekeeping and its reform is the key to its across the board acceptability. It is imperative that the work on this reform process is not the prerogative of a few but is representative across the board.

I thank you Madam Chairperson



688. STATEMENT BY MRS. RAJANI PATIL, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM: 72 "REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE" AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 31, 2013.

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank Judge Peter Tomka, President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), for his comprehensive report, covering the judicial activities of the Court over the last year. I also thank him and the Vice-President Bernardo Sepulveda-Amor for guiding the work of the Court.

Mr. President,

The Court, as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, is entrusted with the task of peaceful resolution of disputes between the States, which is fundamental for fulfillment of one of the purposes of the United Nations, namely the maintenance of international peace and security.

We acknowledge the fact that the Court has fulfilled that task admirably since its establishment, and has acquired a well deserved reputation as an impartial institution maintaining the highest legal standards in accordance with its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations, of which the Statute of the Court is an integral part.

Mr. President,

One of the primary goals of the United Nations, as stated in the Preamble to the UN Charter, is to establish conditions under which justice and respect for international

obligations can be maintained. The ICJ, as the only Court with general international law jurisdiction, is uniquely placed to fulfill that role.

Mr. President,

The report of the Court, contained in document A/68/4, illustrates the importance that States attach and the confidence that the States repose in the Court, as is clearly evidenced through the number, nature and the variety of cases the Court deals with, and through the ability of the Court in so dealing with the complex aspects of public international law.

Mr. President,

The judgments delivered by the ICJ have played an important role in the interpretation and clarification of the rules of international law, as well as, in the progressive development and codification of international law. In the performance of its judicial functions, the Court has remained highly sensitive to political realities and sentiments of States, while acting in accordance with the provisions of the UN Charter, its own Statute and other applicable rules of international law.

During the 2012/2013 judicial year, the Court delivered two judgments; held public hearings in four cases; and also handed down six orders. The number of contentious cases presently on the Court's docket stands at 10. Among the cases before the Court, five are from Latin American States, two from Europe, one each from the African and Asian States, while one is of inter-continental character, which shows the universality of the Court.

Mr. President,

The cases before the Court involve a wide variety of subject matters, such as territorial and maritime disputes, environmental damage and conservation of living resources, violation of territorial integrity, violation of international humanitarian law and human rights, genocide, interpretation and application of international conventions and treaties, and interpretation of the Court's judgments.

Mr. President,

The Court's second function, of providing advisory opinion on legal questions referred to it by organs of the United Nations and specialized agencies, further adds to its important role of clarifying key international legal issues. The report of the Court rightly points out that "everything the Court does is aimed at promoting the rule of law", in particular through its judgments and the advisory opinions.

Mr. President,

It is worth mentioning that the Court ensures the greatest possible global awareness of its decisions through its publications, multimedia offerings and the website, which now features the Court's entire jurisprudence, as well as, that of its predecessor - the Permanent Court of International Justice. These sources provide useful information for States wishing to submit a potential dispute to the Court.

Mr. President,

We are glad to note that the three posts sought by the Court in different service categories, have been filled pursuant to the approval of the General Assembly, which would help strengthen the Court's security related aspects and will expedite the publication of Court's work. It is also a matter of satisfaction that the Great Hall of Justice has been refurbished with modern equipments, in which the public hearings are held.

Finally, Mr. President, India wishes to reaffirm its strong support to the Court and acknowledges the importance that the international community attaches to the work of the Court.

Thank you



689. STATEMENT BY DR. NEERU CHADHA, JOINT SECRETARY, ON AGENDA ITEM 81 "REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION ON THE WORK OF ITS SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION- Part-2" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 1, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

"Reservations to Treaties" is a topic which the Commission has been discussing since 1995. We congratulate the Special Rapporteur, Prof. Alain Pellet and the Commission, for the adoption by the Commission of the "Guide to Practice on Reservations to Treaties", along with commentaries. Prof. Pellet submitted a total of 17 reports, beginning with his first report on the topic in 1995. The "Guide to Practice" is very detailed and nuanced work, which tries to cover all possible situations relating to reservation to treaties, and is based on an in-depth and exhaustive analysis of State practice and case law.

It contains very useful material and doctrinal discussion and valuable examples by way of elucidation of the guidelines and is sure to be an invaluable tool for government legal advisers as well as practitioners in resolving problems posed by reservations to treaties and interpretative declarations.

Mr. Chairman,

In addition to the Guide to Practice, the Commission has also adopted an annex on the "reservations dialogue" as well as a recommendation on "mechanisms of assistance in relation to reservations".

The Commission has set out nine 'conclusions' in the annex on the 'reservations dialogue', and recommended that - The General Assembly call upon States and international organizations, as well as monitoring bodies, to initiate and pursue such a reservations dialogue in a pragmatic and transparent manner. We support this proposal.

As regards the proposal for a Reservation Assistance Mechanism, We are willing to take this recommendation forward and are of the view that

the suggestion to create a small group of experts within the Sixth Committee is worth further examination. This group could make recommendations to States in order to settle differences of view concerning reservations' and provide States with 'technical assistance in formulating reservations or objections to reservations as suggested by the Special Rapporteur. However, we do not see that any compulsory procedure in this regard would be acceptable to States.

As regards the Observatories, different regional mechanisms like CAHDI have been suggested as templates, this need to be more fully examined and further discussed within the Sixth Committee to see whether it can be replicated within the UN which is a much bigger body.

Mr. Chairman,

In spite of the legal acumen of the Special Rapporteur and rich material he brought into play, the process of drafting the guidelines has not been an easy one. Nevertheless, the end product is not only the result of a careful examination of the various views and nuances involved but also the product of general consensus within the Commission. Accordingly, we accept these guidelines as a useful contribution to the process of international law-making. These guidelines are likely to give rise to fewer problems from a policy and political angle as they are not intended to revise the regime of reservations contained in the Vienna Convention on Law of Treaties.

Mr. Chairman,

We congratulate and thank the Special Rapporteur once again for an excellent job done and are sure that the legal offices of foreign ministries, in their practice, would heavily draw on these guidelines to find answers to many difficult substantive and procedural issues concerning reservations to treaties and interpretative declarations.

Thank you



690. STATEMENT BY MR. P. RAJEEVE, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION ON, AGENDA ITEM 81 "REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION ON THE WORK OF ITS SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION- Part 3" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 4, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

I thank the Chairman of the International Law Commission for the presentation of his report concerning the third cluster of topics.

Mr. Chairman,

We congratulate the Special Rapporteur Mr. Eduardo Valencia-Ospina for submitting sixth report on the topic "Protection of persons in the event of disasters". It deals with the prevention aspects, in particular, those relating to: prevention as a principle of international law, and international cooperation. The report has also provided an over-view of national policies and legislations on the preventive aspect. The Special Rapporteur has elaborated draft article 5 ter (Cooperation for disaster risk reduction); and draft article 16 (Duty to reduce the risk of disasters). We note with appreciation that the Commission has adopted the commentaries to all draft articles adopted so far.

Mr. Chairman,

We have made comments on other draft articles in previous sessions, and so would restrict our comments on the new draft articles 5 ter and 16, relating mainly to the duty and cooperation towards the risk reduction. In this regard, we welcome the Special Rapporteur's shift from response-centric model to focus also on prevention and preparedness.

We also note with interest that the Commission had relied upon variety of sources of law in order to identify the duty to reduce the risk of disasters, including international agreements and instruments (such as the 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action), regional and national laws on

prevention, preparation and mitigation, which also includes India's Disaster Management Act, 2005.

Mr. Chairman,

Draft Article 16 obliges each State to take measures, including laws and regulations to prevent, mitigate and prepare for disasters. The scope of the topic will thus comprise not only the disaster phase but also the pre and post disaster phases. However, it is unclear whether the same would also be applicable to industrial disaster situations.

As a State's undertaking of rights and obligations during pre-disaster phase is largely linked with that State's economical development, technical know-how and human resources, we would stress for a balance to ensure that the interests of developing States are not affected by the rights and obligations under this draft article. Similarly, 'the principle of common but differentiated responsibility' envisaged under environmental law for developing States need to be considered and respected while determining the characteristics with regard to 'due diligence'.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the elaboration of draft article 5 ter, which envisages extending the cooperation for taking measures intended to reduce the risk of disasters. We agree with the approach of the Commission reflected in paragraph 3 of the commentary to draft article 5 ter regarding the flexibility as to the location of this draft article or combining together the draft articles dealing with the aspects of cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

Turning to the topic, "Formation and evidence of customary international law", we thank the Secretariat for a very useful Memorandum identifying the previous work of the Commission relevant to the topic. We complement the Special Rapporteur Sir Michael Wood for his excellent first report and appreciate the rich debate within the Commission.

We agree that the purpose of the work on the topic should be to provide practical assistance to the practitioners of international law as well as to the judges and lawyers in the domestic jurisdictions, who might not be well-versed with public international law, but called upon to examine and decide on matters involving international law aspects. This purpose would

be better served if, as agreed in the Commission, the outcome of the work would be in the form of non-prescriptive "conclusions" and commentary that would provide guidance to States.

Mr. Chairman,

We share the view that the substance of the rules of customary international law would not fall within the scope of the topic. We agree that "jus cogens" would not also fall within the scope of the topic, as the peculiarity of non-derogation distinguishes it from the customary international law rules.

Mr. Chairman,

We think as appropriate the change of the title of the topic to "Identification of customary international law", and that this study would also include the dynamic process of formation, with special focus on the objective evidence of the rules of customary international law. The existence and formation of regional customary international law should also be studied. While the dynamic relationship between customary international law and treaties would form part of the study of the topic, we look forward to the study of the relationship between customary international law and other sources of international law, especially, the general international law.

Mr. Chairman,

India would like to see that both elements the State practice and opinio juris are given equal importance in the study. The practice of States from all regions should be taken into account. In this regard, the developing States, which do not publish digests of their practice should be encouraged and assisted to submit their State practice including their statements at international and regional fora, and the case-law, etc. At the same time, we urge the Commission to exercise utmost caution in taking into account the arguments and positions advanced by the States before international adjudicative bodies and, should not be detached from or devoid of the context in which they were made.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome and appreciate the first report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Juan Manuel Gomez-Robledo on the topic "Provisional application

of treaties" and also welcome the comprehensive Memorandum of the Secretariat on the topic.

Since the provisional application is a sort of formal application, it would be relevant if the study addresses various legal implications of provisional application and relations between the State parties to it, including the extent of international responsibility incurred by a State vis-a-vis other State parties for violation of an obligation under a provisionally applied treaty.

We agree with the idea that the present study should be in the form of guidelines with commentaries for the guidance of States.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.



691. STATEMENT BY MR. MD. NADIMUL HAQUE, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 19 - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 4, 2013.

Mr. Chairperson,

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77.

Mr. Chairperson,

I come from a region that is home to the largest mangrove forests of the world. The SUNDARBANS in my home state of West Bengal in the east of India is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is a reservoir of biodiversity and the home of the Royal Bengal Tiger.

Conserving the Sundarbans is a key priority of the Indian government. We are promoting sustainable tourism in the region which could help raise revenues and promote employment while fully protecting this unique ecosystem.

Mr. Chairperson,

Global cooperation on sustainable development is today at an important cross-road.

In the coming two years, negotiating a set of Sustainable Development Goals, elaborating a strategy for financing sustainable development and arriving at a post- 2015 development agenda will be the key preoccupation of this body. India looks forward to participate constructively in this endeavor.

Mr. Chairperson,

Adherence to the mandate of Rio+20 and respect for Rio principles, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, must underpin our efforts across all these tasks. Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner is equally important.

Often the discourse on sustainable development remains confined to minimizing environmental impacts of development. While this is no doubt extremely important, the wider need, especially for developing countries, is to ensure that their development itself can be sustained in all its dimensions.

We must therefore ensure that the post-2015 development agenda remains an agenda for development.

An ambitious agenda for the post-2015 period cannot be merely about policy prescriptions for developing countries, nor should it be about reprioritizing domestic spending.

We must craft a truly supportive international system and a genuine international compact between developed and developing countries to bring about change.

Addressing issues of inequity in consumption of global resources and correcting the unsustainable consumption patterns in developed countries must remain our central priorities.

Mr. Chairperson,

Sustainable development is as much about how to develop as much about how not to develop. Achieving sustainable development involves

avoiding choices that were made by many countries in their race for unsustainable development.

This however is easier said than done. In spite of the immense progress in technology and despite their command of considerable financial resources, even the most advanced economies have not been able to truly decouple economic growth with carbon emissions. This shows the enormity of the challenge we face.

For developing countries, poverty eradication and rapid economic growth are the primary and overriding objectives. These are also indispensable for them to achieve sustainable development.

Mr. Chairperson,

Technology is the golden key that unlocks the nexus between poverty eradication and sustainable development.

We must therefore promote greater collaboration in environmentally friendly technologies and more importantly we must ensure that the fruits of such collaboration are shared more widely.

This would enable developing countries eradicate poverty and leapfrog into higher stages of development without incurring the environmental costs that traditional development models have entailed.

Often the call for technology collaboration is portrayed to imply a demand to do away the Intellectual Property Rights.

What is required however is to create a technology regime which balances the need to reward the innovators while ensuring affordable and wide dissemination of the technologies for public good.

Mr. Chairperson,

The proposal for a Technology Facilitation Mechanism proposed by the Secretary General and supported overwhelmingly by member states must be made operational as early as possible.

Mr. Chairperson,

On climate change, India remains fully committed to crafting an ambitious, balanced and comprehensive outcome to negotiations in accordance with the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC. India is engaged

constructively in the negotiations under the Adhoc Working Group on Durban Platform.

However, we are concerned with an egregious tendency to incorrectly characterize the nature of the agreement that we are supposed to reach under the Durban Platform in 2015.

Certain expressions such as achieving a 'truly universal' and 'legally binding' agreement by 2015 used in many reports including some UN reports create the incorrect impression that the existing international regime on climate change is not universal or legally binding.

We must recognize that the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol are both universal and legally binding instruments on climate change. The remit of the Durban Platform is to further enhance the implementation of the Convention in order to reach its ultimate objective, and not to reinterpret or renegotiate it.

Our attempts to craft an ambitious and comprehensive outcome of the Durban Platform can only succeed if it respects the balance of responsibilities and capabilities enshrined in the Convention principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities.

India firmly believes that the early and meaningful operationalization of the finance and technology mechanisms under the Climate Change Convention must be a central priority in the run-up to 2015.

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me conclude by recalling what the great Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore said. He said "Let your life dance lightly on the edges of Time, like dew on the tip of a leaf".

We need to take inspiration from these words. The need of the hour is to craft sustainable pathways to living that can enrich our lives without leaving a heavy footprint on nature.

I thank you



692. STATEMENT BY MR. SHATRUGHAN SINHA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION ON THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE IAEA FOR THE YEAR 2012 AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 5, 2013.

Mr. President,

My delegation thanks the Director General, IAEA for preparing the Annual Report for the year 2012, as contained in document [88]: note by the SG A/68/324.

Mr. President,

The increasing global demand for energy, as well as concerns about climate change, volatile fossil fuel prices and the security of energy supplies remain essential factors in deciding an energy mix for any country. Nuclear power remains an important option not only for countries with existing nuclear programmes, but also for developing countries with growing energy requirements. Since last year two important meetings were held related to nuclear energy, namely, the Fukushima Ministerial Conference in Japan during December 15-17, 2012, and the IAEA International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century in the Russian Federation during June 27-29, 2013. Both these meetings have underscored the role that nuclear energy continues to play in the energy mix of various countries for achieving energy security and sustainable development goals in the 21st century for their respective populations. We note that the Agency projections indicate significant growth in the use of nuclear energy worldwide between 17 and 94% by 2030 .

Mr. President,

The Fukushima accident elicited a global response towards enhancing nuclear safety with Member States reassessing the safety of existing nuclear power plants. While the results of these reassessments would be further refined as necessary, in the light of new information that might emerge in the future, we note with satisfaction that tthe world nuclear

community made noteworthy progress in strengthening nuclear safety in 2012. An overwhelming majority of Member States with operating nuclear power plants have undertaken and essentially completed comprehensive safety reassessments and many have introduced additional safety measures including mitigation of station blackouts and construction of higher protective walls. It is a matter of satisfaction that safety performance indicator data on the 437 operating nuclear power plants showed that the operational safety level remained high.

India is committed to implement the highest standards for the safety of Indian nuclear power plants and the associated fuel cycle facilities. India will continue to participate and assist the IAEA Secretariat in its endeavor to enhance nuclear safety through the cluster of measures it has formulated in the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

We feel that the IAEA should take all necessary measures to allay misapprehensions in the public and Member States about the safety of nuclear power plants taking into account the current advances in relevant design and technology areas. In this connection we wish to acknowledge the visit of DG, IAEA to India in March 2013 where he appreciated the safety upgrades implemented in the Tarapur 1 & 2 reactors. We would also like to encourage the IAEA to make concerted efforts for free flow of latest information, technology and equipment pertaining to nuclear safety among the Member States.

Mr. President,

The nuclear power programme in India is oriented towards maximising the energy potential of available Uranium resources and the utilisation of its large Thorium reserve. We believe that available global uranium resources cannot sustain the projected expansion of nuclear power in the coming decades, without adopting the closed fuel cycle approach and subsequent adoption of thorium fuel cycle.

With its excellent physical and nuclear properties Thorium is widely and rightly viewed as the 'fuel of the future'. India continues to carry forward intense development of Thorium fuel cycle based technologies for demonstration in its AHWR programme. It is heartening to note that one of the Panel Sessions at the IAEA International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century held at St. Petersburg was devoted

to the topic 'Drivers for deployment of sustainable and innovative technology', in which we shared our rich experience in the development and implementation of Thorium utilisation programme. Thorium-based fuel cycles and technologies present opportunities for enhanced passive safety features, utilisation of the larger natural resources of Thorium, and inherent proliferation resistance. International collaboration under the IAEA would help provide a much wider resource base for future nuclear technology development in this direction.

Mr. President,

India is committed to harness the benefits of nuclear energy for electricity production while according the highest priority to nuclear safety and security. India will need to rapidly raise the energy production to meet its growing energy requirements to achieve its developmental goals.

The energy resources at our disposal make it imperative for us to consider all energy options. Presently, there are 21 NPP units in operation in India. Construction of four units of 700 MWe PHWRs is under progress, at the Kakrapar and Rawatbhata sites.

India has setup two VVER based NPPs (2X1000 MWe), at Kudankulam (KKNPP- 1&2) in Tamilnadu, with the co-operation of Russian Federation. The first unit achieved criticality on 13th July, this year and subsequently synchronized to the grid on October 22, 2013. The power will be further raised to 1000 MWe in stages. With the addition of KKNPP Unit#1 of 1000 MWe capacity, Nuclear Power contribution in the Country will increase to about 5800 MWe.

India is also setting-up 500 MWe; Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam. Major equipment such as main vessel and safety vessel, primary-secondary sodium heat exchangers, steam generators, other reactor auxiliaries have been erected. Construction is expected to be completed this year.

The Agency performed its first OSART mission to India for Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS)-3&4 in November 2012. The mission was performed using the revised scope and modules updated from the lessons learnt from Fukushima nuclear accident. The mission recognized the strong safety culture present at the nuclear power plant and many good

practices. The follow up mission has also been invited which will take place in early 2014. The preparation and planning for inviting IAEA's Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) for peer review of our regulatory system is also in progress and India will approach the Agency with a request to undertake this mission.

Mr. President,

India has been associated with International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) since its inception and has contributed to its progress. INPRO supports Member States in developing and deploying sustainable nuclear energy systems. We believe that this programme has a great potential towards making nuclear energy accessible in a safe and sustainable manner, particularly to new entrants embarking on this path. In 2012, three States joined INPRO: Malaysia, Romania and Vietnam. We welcome the new members into the fold of INPRO. The IAEA, through INPRO, should continue to play a central role in the area of development of innovative technology for safe utilisation of nuclear power.

We fully support other activities of the IAEA undertaken to stimulate innovation in nuclear power through Technical Working Groups for different reactor technologies, small and medium sized reactors and for non-electric applications. The coordinated research projects organized by the IAEA provide an excellent forum for understanding and development of technology.

Mr. President,

Nuclear Energy has a crucial role to play in achieving the objectives of India's sustainable economic growth. At the same time India is extensively engaged in development of nuclear technologies in diverse fields extending beyond nuclear power. This includes isotope applications for improved crop varieties, crop protection and post-harvest technologies, radio-isotope applications for diagnostic and therapeutic uses in health care and, technologies for safe drinking water, industry, etc.

India attaches great importance to the IAEA's work in the fields of nuclear science. We contribute to these activities through participation in the Technical Meetings and coordinated Research Projects and also support the IAEA's programme in nuclear fusion.

The Agency's programme and achievements in relation to nuclear applications in food and agriculture, human health and nutrition, water resources management, protection of the environment and industry make a valuable contribution to meeting the needs of the developing countries. India is highly appreciative of the IAEA's efforts in cancer management, and in particular the Programme on Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT). India would continue to support agency activities in these areas, including by offering service of experts and training fellows in reputable institutions in the country.

Mr. President,

There is widespread recognition that the threat of nuclear terrorism is one of the pressing challenges facing the international community. Responsible national action and effective international cooperation are therefore required for strengthening nuclear security to prevent vulnerable nuclear material falling into hands of non-state actors.

India has consistently supported IAEA's important role in facilitating national efforts to strengthen nuclear security and in fostering effective international cooperation. At the Nuclear Security Summit held in Seoul in April 2012, India reaffirmed its commitment to supporting IAEA activities in the area of nuclear security and announced a contribution of US \$ 1 million to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund. We have fulfilled our commitment. A collaboration arrangement has been signed with the Secretariat and is being implemented. India is a member of DG's Advisory Group on Nuclear Security and the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee and contributes in the development of these documents

India commends IAEA Director General for organizing the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Enhancing Global Efforts. Our delegation to the conference was led by our Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office.

Mr. President,

Universal adherence to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials (CPPNM) and early entry into force of its 2005 Amendment would go a long way in strengthening global efforts in the area of nuclear security. India is party to the CPPNM and is amongst the countries which have ratified the 2005 amendment to the Convention.

We appreciate the Agency's efforts to bring the amendment into force and note the increase in the number of states adhering to the amendment. We encourage the Agency to continue its efforts to promote early entry into force of the amendment. We appreciate Agency's efforts in improving the understanding of member states about Illicit Trafficking Database (ITDB) and to encourage them to join the programme.

Mr. President,

With these comments, we take note of the IAEA's Annual Report for 2012. India supports the work of IAEA and has cosponsored the draft resolution on the Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.



**693. STATEMENT BY MRS. RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH,
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN
DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM-11 - SPORTS FOR
PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING A PEACEFUL
AND BETTER WORLD THROUGH SPORT AND THE
OLYMPIC IDEAL AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 6, 2013.

Mr. President,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel honored and privileged to participate in this debate today, under agenda item-11 entitled "Building a Peaceful and Better World through Sport and the Olympic ideal".

Mr. President,

India welcomes the resolution adopted by the 67th General Assembly proclaiming April 06 as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace. We hope that observance of the day will help spread awareness about the importance of sport as a tool for development and

peace. We are also happy to be a co-sponsor of the resolution entitled "Building a Peaceful and Better World through Sport and the Olympic ideal", to be moved in the ongoing session of the General Assembly.

We also welcome the deliberations at the third International Forum on Sport for Peace and Development, organized at the UN Headquarters in New York in June this year, jointly by the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC). We are confident that collaboration between the United Nations and the IOC will lead to integration of sport in all areas of development and peace, and help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs).

Mr. President,

Ever since the dawn of human civilization, the intrinsic linkage between sports and games, and the human pursuit of excellence, has been recognized. This pursuit of excellence through sport reached its epitome in the ancient Greek civilization, which was the progenitor of the modern Olympic movement.

In India too, sports and physical activities have been an integral part of our civilization, through the practice of yoga and its highly evolved system of physical, mental and spiritual regimen. Yoga, as a form of physical and mental exercise, is now popular across the world. In addition, India also has a range of highly developed indigenous games and martial arts.

After India attained independence in 1947, the integration of physical education and sports with formal education was emphasized in the First Five Year Plan. Subsequently, a separate department for sports was set up in 1982, and a National Sports Policy was announced in 1984. The Sports Authority of India (SAI) was also established in 1984, for the effective and optimum utilization of various sports facilities, and all matters pertaining to sports promotion and sports management.

India has encouraged the autonomous functioning of national sports federations, and we are proud to mention that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is one of the most resourceful autonomous sports bodies in the world. All sections of our society, including the media and corporate sector, are actively involved in the promotion of sports.

Mr. President,

Sport is the most effective tool to help achieve the development objectives in the areas of health, education, and child development. It helps generate public awareness and inspires broad and inclusive action in support of the developmental agenda. It is heartening to note that sport has been recognized as one of the tools to address developmental challenges.

We appreciate the work of the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSPD), and the Special Advisor of the UN Secretary General on Sport for Development and Peace, for bringing the worlds of sport and development closer together. Efforts should continue to focus on sport for development, and to make it firmly rooted in the UN system.

Associating sporting personalities with the UN, with the objective of creating public awareness about education, health and development issues, and promoting tolerance, understanding and peace within and between communities and cultures, is praiseworthy. I would like to mention here that Indian sportsmen have also been associated with different UN entities, and while Indian tennis star Vijay Amritraj was a UN Messenger of Peace, cricketer Sachin Tendulkar is a Goodwill Ambassador of the UN Environment Program.

Mr. President,

India welcomes the work of the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympics Committee in promoting and strengthening a culture of peace, based on the spirit of the Olympic Truce. I assure them of India's full cooperation and support in their efforts to use sport as a tool to promote peace, dialogue and reconciliation.

India also cherishes and celebrates the noble ideals and values of the Olympic movement, and stands committed to furthering international fraternity, friendship, goodwill and unity. We believe that there is no better medium than sport to inculcate and foster the values of respect, diversity, and tolerance across communities, civilizations and cultures.

Thank you, Mr. President.



694. STATEMENT BY MR ARVIND KUIMAR SINGH, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 62 - "REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS" AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 6, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to thank the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for his report, as well as his presentation before this Committee.

His report highlights the central challenges being faced by the UNHCR and the organization's efforts to address them. We acknowledge the commitment of the High Commissioner and his staff in their tireless efforts to implement the core agenda of UNHCR - that of protection of refugees in the most trying and difficult circumstances. We also pay tribute to UNHCR staff, who lost their lives in the line of duty.

Mr. Chairman,

Over the past one year, we have witnessed significant deterioration of crisis situations in many countries. As the High Commissioner's report mentions, more than 1.1 million people fled their countries of origin. A large number of these people are hosted by developing countries who continue to meet their humanitarian obligations, often risking their delicate economies.

In our common pursuit to find more durable solutions, it is important to develop a better understanding of the underlying reasons that would help formulate more comprehensive policies for early return and reintegration of refugees into their home country.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation shares the High Commissioner's concern regarding the situation of protracted refugees. While we address emerging crises situations, it is important not to lose sight of the protracted refugee situations. There is an imperative to create conditions for voluntary repatriation, which is the most durable solution to such problem.

While we recognize the political complexities that limit the implementation of voluntary return in many cases, bilateral and regional dialogues amongst countries involved is necessary to reassure the refugees of safe and stable return to their countries of origin. To this end, developing countries of origin should also be assisted to create economic opportunities for returning refugees.

Mr. Chairman,

It is a well recognized fact that the challenges posed by internal displacement is well beyond the capacity of any single organization to handle. It was reassuring to note in the report on Strategic Review of UNHCR that primary responsibility for internally displaced lies with States. The UNHCR's involvement, therefore, can only complement the efforts of national authorities and cannot substitute them.

We would, once again, underline that UNHCR's involvement in IDPs should only be with the concurrence of national authorities. Further, such involvement should be based on due consideration of its mandate, modality of intervention, availability of resources and careful examination of all implications before mainstreaming such activities.

Mr. Chairman,

In our discourse, we need to guard against the intersection of the two constituencies of migrants and refugees. The concerns about one should not be transposed on the other.

International migration needs to be promoted in a regular non-discriminatory and orderly manner as migrants add value in economic terms both to the destination as well as sending States.

UNHCR must, therefore, develop capacities to maintain a clear distinction between refugees and economic migrants so as to better address the protection needs of the former.

Mr. Chairman,

We have also taken note of the first written report of the Independent Audit and Oversight Committee (IAOC) 2012-2013. The report has recommended the creation of two operational units - (i) an internal audit unit, and (ii) an investigating unit. We see merit in establishing a unified internal oversight service with distinct audit and investigation components.

We thank the External Auditors for their incisive observations on various financial and other related aspects of UNHCR activities. We are confident that UNHCR will closely implement various recommendations, and where there are constraints in implementing any recommendation, it should be brought to the attention of members.

Mr. Chairman,

India's record in dealing with refugees has been no less than exemplary. India stands steadfast in its commitment to provide humanitarianism assistance to them. We continue to host a large number of refugees and our programmes for them are managed entirely from within our own resources. Our protection regime is based on the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Indian Constitution and other relevant legal provisions. We have clearly demonstrated our abiding commitment to the principles of protection and non-refoulement.

The decision to grant all UNHCR mandate refugees in urban areas the opportunity to apply for long stay visas of a one year renewable duration augments the protection space considerably. These long stay visas allow refugees to work in the private sector and enrol in any academic institutions. India continues to refine its administrative mechanisms for providing greater hospitality to refugees during their stay in the country.

Mr. Chairman,

India remains firmly committed to working in concert with the UNHCR and the international community to address the international protection agenda for refugees in a spirit of solidarity and find comprehensive practical solutions.

Thank you



695. STATEMENT BY MR. VIJAY INDER SINGLA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF INDIAN DELEGATION ON AGENDA ITEM 51-"UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (UNRWA)" AT THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 7, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express the Indian delegation's appreciation for the work of the Commissioner General, Mr. Filippo Grandi and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). We would like to thank the Commissioner General for his informative and detailed briefing to the Committee on the activities of UNRWA. We also thank the UNRWA Advisory Commission and the members of the working group on Financing of UNRWA, for their efforts in support of the Agency.

Mr. Chairman,

The situation in the Middle East region continues to remain fragile and unpredictable with the unprecedented transformation in several countries in the recent years and the ongoing conflict in Syria. Regrettably the long standing Palestinian question and the related Arab-Israeli issues have also largely remained unaddressed and unresolved. Further, the armed conflict in Syria has also seriously impacted the situation of Palestinian refugees.

In this context, the role of UNRWA in providing critical assistance to the Palestinian refugees assumes greater significance. The Agency today is a symbol of the international community's commitment to the well-being of the Palestinian refugees until a just and durable settlement of the issue is achieved. India commends UNRWA for its exemplary work, carried out under extremely difficult circumstances for the nearly 5 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. We also take this opportunity to commend the cooperation of host countries to UNRWA's work.

We are happy to note that despite the many challenges it faces, UNRWA remains committed to building the human development of the refugees and improving their lives, while further improving service delivery and cost-effectiveness. Notable in particular is the significant progress achieved in 2012 and 2013 in operationalizing far-reaching reforms in the Agency's education and health programmes and in extending urgent assistance to 278,000 Palestine refugees affected by the conflict in Syria. We once again commend and encourage UNRWA to continue its valuable activities and work.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to place on record India's consistent support for the Palestinian cause.

We remain firm in our support for a negotiated solution to the Israeli Palestinian issue 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 and at peace with Israel. We will also continue to support Palestine's bid for full and equal membership of the United Nations.

Bilaterally, India is committed to support the development and nation-building efforts of Palestine and has been providing development support to the Palestinian Authority. During the last three years alone, India has contributed US\$ 10 million annually as untied budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority. During the visit of President Mahmoud Abbas to India in September 2012, Government of India announced a contribution of US Dollar 10 million to Palestine's budget to help address its financial requirements. The first tranche of US \$ 1 million was released during the visit of India's Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. E. Ahamed to Ramallah in July 2013. We are also offering 100 slots to the Palestinian Authority for capacity building and human resource development under our technical and economic cooperation programme.

From the financial year 2009-10, we enhanced our annual contribution to UNRWA to US\$ 1 million, in addition to a special contribution of US \$ 1 million to UNRWA in response to a flash appeal in 2010. India's contribution of US \$ 1 million for the current year was presented to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA during his visit to India in September

2013. This will be primarily used for provision of food and medicines to the displaced people in the refugee camps under UNRWA's various programmes. Also through the IBSA [India-Brazil-South Africa] Fund we will continue to undertake capacity building and infrastructure projects that are prioritized by the Palestinian Authority as we had done in the past.

Mr. Chairperson,

The report under this agenda item, clearly illustrates the severe challenges UNRWA continues to face.

The immediate challenge before UNRWA that needs to be addressed is the crisis of chronic underfunding. Shortage of funds adversely impacts the quality and maintenance of the existing level of services.

We support the efforts of UNRWA to enlarge the donor base. In spite of the current difficult global economic condition, it is important that the international community continues to show commitment to the cause of Palestine.

Mr. Chairman,

The continuing blockade of Gaza is causing severe hardship to the population. While there has been improvement in restrictions on West Bank and movement of humanitarian supplies and construction material into Gaza, approval of UNRWA projects, restrictions due to the separation barrier, closures, and curfews in the Palestinian territories is causing severe hardships to the affected population. The restrictions on freedom of movement of UNRWA staff members continue to hinder the work of UNRWA.

We join others in calling upon Israel to lift the blockade and allow the resumption of normal socio-economic activities in Gaza and facilitate free movement of UNRWA staff.

Mr. Chairman,

As I have stated earlier India has been steadfast in its support for the Palestinian cause from the beginning. As demonstrated over the past six decades, including during its memberships in the UN Security Council, India supports all efforts towards political resolution of the Palestinian Question.

We are encouraged in this regard by the resumed and ongoing direct talks between Israel and Palestine facilitated by the US. We hope that the direct talks will lead to concrete results within the envisaged time frame and a just and durable solution to the conflict will be arrived eventually.

Until then, Mr. Chairman, it is imperative upon all of us member states to fully support UNRWA, as the primary source of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian refugees.

Thank You Mr. Chairman.



696. STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MANJEEV SINGH PURI, Cd'A AND ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM: 123: 'QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO THE COUNCIL' AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 7, 2013.

Congratulations to you on your Presidency and you have the fullest support of my delegation in assisting you in all your endeavours in this session of the GA.

We also welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin as Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations, which is a most positive development and brings the much needed institutional continuity to this debate.

But before I delve into the substance of my remarks, allow me to first align myself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative Japan on behalf of the G4, as well as with the distinguished Permanent Representative of St. Kitts and Nevis, on behalf of the Group of L.69.

I would also like to lend my fullest support to the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Guyana, on behalf of the CARICOM.

Mr. President, having closely followed this debate over reforms of the Security Council over the last four years in New York, as well from nearly a decade before that, I would like to submit a few 'myth busters' to set the record straight on some of the key issues that have been raised recently.

First, we have been engaged in nine rounds of Intergovernmental Negotiations since 2009, with having to conduct negotiations in the air, literally! It would be the only instance of its kind perhaps, when negotiations in a multilateral setting have been conducted so far without any text, which goes against the very logic of multilateral diplomacy, and should have started off in the first instance, on the basis of a text.

So, anyone who says that we cannot move to text based negotiations, to me is a nay sayer to any forward movement. For if we dont negotiate on the basis of a text, then on what basis do we conduct negotiations?

The Chair of the IGN having presided over eight rounds spread over five years, having heard loud and clear, views of all interest groups and each member state, came to this very conclusion in his letter of 25 July 2012 and recommended that he, like in all other UN processes, be authorised to produce, what he called a Concise Working Document to enable the process to move towards real give and take negotiations. This was also a plea that had the largest support from the floor of the last meeting of the IGN conducted on 27 June earlier this year.

However, we subsequently learnt that a select handful group of nay sayers, protested to the PGA against the role of the Chair and his recommendations, inspite of these recommendations being recognised in the rollover decision on this subject by the GA

Subsequently, to tide over this concern, when the President of the General Assembly formed an Advisory Group to himself, to assist him in providing an input to become the basis for the IGN, the same group of naysayers are now questioning the authority of the PGA to do so! It is indeed an outright absurdity, you simply can't have your cake and eat it too!

Mr. President, it is our delegation's firm belief that having been unanimously elected by this very august assembly, you have the full authority to choose who you want as advisors, what and how to be advised and what to make of that advice.

We welcome your initiative and hope that input of the Advisory Group, would help us move forward on the basis of the PGA's text.

I also would like to solicit the understanding of all member states to not necessarily see 'text based negotiations' as inimical to diluting any position of any Group, or as being the final word, for as and when that input is presented by the PGA to the IGN, each and every member state will have the full authority to propose additions, deletions or amendments, and build upon the PGA's initiative. But to not let even an input emerge and cast aspersions on the role of the PGA does not reflect well on all of us.

A second myth that I would like to touch upon today is the often called need for 'complete consensus' by the same set of naysayers as being the ONLY way forward.

Mr. President, on a matter as complex and pressing as UNSC reforms, as and when it happens, we all know that it will have to be eventually tested from the floor of the General Assembly through a vote. That is what the UN Charter prescribes.

We also agree and acknowledge that we are not there yet, but to insist that no forward movement can take place till we have 'complete consensus' is only tantamount to delaying any kind of progress.

Time and again, repeated articulations from all the major stakeholders have proved from the floor of the IGN, as well as the General Assembly, that an overwhelming majority supports expansion in both categories of membership.

This is also an observation made by the Chair of the IGN, having heard statements from member states over the last five years. We therefore hope that the Advisory Group would factor this in their input under consideration.

The third misplaced myth, that I would like to touch upon, is the perceived apprehension that through this process of the IGN, some countries would make it to the expanded setting, while others would not.

Mr. President, we are presently in a process that does not decide or indicate, which countries would be members of the expanded setting. We are only attempting to negotiate through the IGN, the broad parameters of what the expanded UNSC would like, and provide workable options on each of the five key issues identified in GA Decision 62/557.

We have a mandate from our Heads of State in 2005 through the Millenium Summit, which we need to fulfill. If we let the small yet vocal minority of 'counter aspirants to the aspirants' even scuttle this process forward, then we are failing in our obligation to deliver on that commitment. Which brings me to my final submission Mr. President.

The exercise of UNSC reforms cannot be seen to be going on till the cows come home. Recent developments around the world have increasingly put to question not just the representativeness but also the credibility of the UN Security Council is at stake. And the clarion call for change is only growing louder by the day.

All these are important tidings which cannot be ignored in our collective quest to achieve UNSC reforms. We need to have a results based time line and the year 2015, which will be the 70 th Anniversary of the United Nations, as well as 10 years following the 2005 World Summit when all our Heads of States/Governments mandated us to achieve early reforms of the Security Council, will be an important occassion to deliver 'concrete outcomes' on this most pressing subject.

We hope that we can collectively work together in a constructive and forward looking manner, not just on the process but as well as on the substance, in the interim, so as to deliver on this long due mandate.

Your initiative and personal commitment is most appreciated and in your success lies our collective endeavor.

I thank you Mr. President.



697. STATEMENT BY MR. ANTO ANTONY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, JOINT DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEM 9: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL; ITEM 14: INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOMES OF THE MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 11, 2013.

Mr. President,

It is my distinct honor to make a statement in this important Joint Debate.

The United Nations embodies humankind's faith in multilateralism to solve global problems. Over the decades, it has rendered great service to humanity.

India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G-77.

Mr. President,

India attaches great importance to the work of the Economic and Social Council.

The Council has an acknowledged role as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development.

Mr. President,

Global cooperation on sustainable development is today at an important cross-road. The work on accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), negotiating a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), formulating a strategy for financing sustainable development and arriving at a post-2015 development agenda will be the key priorities of the international community over the next two years.

ECOSOC has an important role to play in this endeavor.

Mr. President,

The vision for a strengthened ECOSOC has been realized through the General Assembly resolution 68/1 adopted in September this year.

We deeply appreciate the efforts of the Permanent Representatives of Guyana and Belgium for leading an inclusive process of consultations towards this resolution.

We believe that the strengthened structure of the ECOSOC will assist it in better discharging its role as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development.

Mr. President,

The High Level Political Forum that we have just created must be seen as a forum for action-oriented collaboration.

The Forum should address sustainable development challenges from the prism of poverty eradication as its overarching objective.

Mr. President,

The Council and the Forum together will play a key role in the articulation of global priorities for the post-2015 period.

India believes that poverty eradication must be pursued with renewed vigour and determination. Other human development imperatives enshrined in the MDGs remain equally important and must be carried forward.

Only economic growth can ensure eradication of poverty. To achieve this, we must strengthen the partnership between developed and developing countries and make it more meaningful and genuine.

The post-2015 development agenda must remain an agenda for development. Its focal point must be the distribution of resources and wealth more equitably among the nations and within them.

It must also promote an international system conducive to development.

Mr. President,

India has followed a path of inclusive growth with the aim of making all sections of the society stakeholders in the development of the country.

Robust economic growth over the past decade supported by proactive and targeted interventions by the Government have enabled us to move millions of our people out of poverty.

We have taken several path-breaking and unique initiatives.

The Food Security Law enacted recently will ensure food security for the Indian people. We have enacted a law that ensures at least a hundred days of work for the rural poor of India.

We have also enacted a law for Right to Education for ensuring universal access to quality education to our people.

The Right to Information has empowered the people by enhancing openness and transparency in governance.

Empowerment of women has been promoted through reservation of seats in local bodies. We have strengthened the law dealing with offences against women for ensuring better safety and security for women.

We have also made use of Information and Communications technology for inclusive development. The initiative of Government of India to provide Unique Identification to all Indian citizens is perhaps the world's largest ID scheme. More than 520 million Indians are already enrolled.

Sustainable development is one of the primary goals of our 12th five year plan. We have been fortunate to have leaders who have deeply recognized the need for harmony with nature. In fact, our Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi was the only head of government to attend the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment way back in 1972.

Mr. President,

India's development experience has shown that human development indicators can be improved even with low per capita incomes. Kerala, the state where I come from, has managed to reduce infant mortality rates to levels not achieved by many rich countries. We have created a program call 'Zero Landless Project' by which all families in the state are provided with land to build a house of their own. We have taken pioneering

initiatives in public health, making available generic medicines and cutting-edge treatments and surgeries at affordable rates. The mass contact programme of the state government has been recognized by the United Nations.

Mr. President,

India is fully committed to playing a constructive role to fashion an ambitious, equitable and comprehensive post-2015 development agenda.

We believe that with our collaborative efforts and collective will, we can create a better world for ourselves and our future generations.

In this quest, we must take inspiration from the words of the Father of the Indian nation Mahatma Gandhi.

He said: "Whenever you are in doubt...recall the face of the poorest and weakest person you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to her...will she gain anything by it? Will it restore to her a control over her own life and destiny? Then you will find your doubts melt away".

I thank you Mr. President.



**698. STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MANJEEV SINGH PURI,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE 2013
UNITED NATIONS PLEDGING CONFERENCE FOR
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AT THE 68TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 11, 2013.

Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to extend our sincere felicitations to you on your election as Chair of the 2013 United Nations Pledging Conference. We wish you all success and hope that under your stewardship the Pledging Conference would achieve even greater results.

Mr. President

Both at the Rio+20 Summit , as well as in the recently adopted QCPR resolution on operational activities for development, we had collectively recognised eradication of poverty as the greatest global challenge and urged the UN Development System that all its programmes and projects must focus on addressing this very challenge as their underlying objective.

In pursuit of this objective, any stasis in resource mobilisation or a decline in funding to the development activities of the UN poses a threat to the viability of operational activities and severely circumscribes its ability to work at the country level.

As a developing country, while India has its own plate full of developmental challenges to be addressed, even then, we have always attempted to contribute to increasing the availability of core resources for development activities of the United Nations system.

In keeping with this long-standing tradition, I now have the honour to announce India's pledges of contributions for operational activities of development for the year 2014.

This list is not exhaustive and we shall be undertaking further commitments to other entities in due course of time.

1. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
USD 4,500,000
2. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) USD 900,000
3. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) USD 500,000
4. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
USD 100,000
5. World Food Programme (WFP) (Biennium 2013-2014)
USD 1,920,000
6. UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) USD 1,000,000

7. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
USD 100,000
8. United Nations Commission on Human Settlements (UNCHS)
Programme USD 100,000
9. Voluntary Fund for Technical Co-operation USD 100,000
10. Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery
USD 25,000
11. Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Torture USD 25,000
12. UN Volunteers USD 15,000
13. UNCPCJF USD 3,000

In addition, we also have a standing 5 year commitment of USD 5 million towards UN Women, of which, USD 3 million has already been contributed so far.

I thank you, Mr. President.



699. Statement by Mr. Md. Nadimul Haque, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation on Agenda Item 141: "UN Common System" at the Fifth Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, November 13, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

I am honoured to speak at the 5th Committee today on the important agenda item of UN Common System.

The UN staff is instrumental in realizing the high-ideals envisioned in its founding documents. Common-system matters therefore, are critical to the implementation of the mandates we generate in the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman,

United Nations embodies mankind's unrelenting faith in the power of multilateralism. This hallowed institution was founded on the ashes of war and has played a pivotal role in keeping world peace since.

Speaking in the UN, I am reminded of the words of the great Indian poet Sahir Ludhianvi, who said: *"Jang mashriq mein ho ya maghrib mein, Nasl-e-Adam ka khoon hai aakhir; Is liye aye shareef insaanon, jang talti rahi to behtar hai; Aur hum sabhi ke aangan mein, Shama jalti rahe to behtar hai"*

"War, whether it's in the East or the west, it spills the same blood - that of humankind. Therefore, the more we can avoid war the better, the longer we can ensure the light of peace in our homes the better"

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to thank Mr. Kingston Rhodes, Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and his team for the report contained in document A/68/30. I also wish to thank the ACABQ Chair and the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division for the relevant reports.

My delegation would also like to record our appreciation of the ICSC for its commendable work in fulfilling its responsibility as mandated by the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

Commission's work has led to significant HR reforms in the past in harmonizing service- conditions of the staff across the organization. It has also played a significant role in institutionalizing the complex processes of determining base-floor salary, margin-management, and post-adjustment indexation.

ICSC has played an important role in ensuring that the organization continues to attract the best and competitive talent for its workforce and in guaranteeing them remunerative service conditions.

Commission's ongoing comprehensive review of the compensation package for professional and higher staff will, therefore, shape the quality of the organization's workforce in times ahead. We sincerely hope it also adds much needed diversity to the staff-composition both in terms of geography and gender.

Mr. Chairman,

Holding our decisions in abeyance on common-system matters through repeated deferrals in the past has distorted General Assembly's consideration of this important agenda item. Post-related re-costing continues to bedevil the entire budgetary process. The margin-levels are likewise fast approaching the limits of acceptable thresholds.

Given the pay-freeze in the comparator federal civil-service and the uncertainty in this regard beyond December 2013, it is imperative that the measures are put in place to maintain the margins at the desirable level of 115.

My delegation also believes that the post-adjustment system should be allowed to function normally in accordance with the methodology that was agreed by the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

It is imperative that adequate resources are made available to ensure implementation of the ICSC recommendations on UN Common System.

A number of high-level posts have been created in the organization, faster than anytime in the past. It is impossible today to get a consistent-list of USGs and ASGs in the organization. Mandate-creeps across departments and entities have blunted the ability to monitor posts, functions, levels, and finances judiciously. It would therefore, be misplaced to attribute budgetary demands to staff-remunerations alone.

Mr. Chairman,

Before closing, let me assure you of my delegation's constructive engagement in deliberations on this agenda item.

I would like to conclude by quoting one of the most renowned Urdu poets from the Indian sub-continent GHALIB whose words are so very apt in today's context.

Ghalib said:

"Such are the thousand ambitions that each of them would consume my life. And yet my desires are not enough for this one lifetime"

I Thank you



700. STATEMENT BY MR. P. RAJEEVE, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 64 "REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL" AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 13, 2013.

Mr. President,

We thank the President of the Human Rights Council for his briefing on the activities of the Council.

Human rights questions are amongst the most important and cross-cutting of all subjects in the realm of international discussions today. The strength of the Human Rights Council lies in its emphasis on dialogue, cooperation, transparency and non-selectivity in the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

We believe that the HRC should emerge as a forum for voluntary participation and sharing of national experiences and best practices in the protection and promotion of human rights. There should be an emphasis on capacity-building of States through technical and financial assistance.

Mr. President,

It goes without saying that actions of the UN and its organs should be anchored in the principles of the UN Charter. We believe that collaboration of all States in the spirit of equal and mutually respectful dialogue is the most effective tool to promote and protect human rights. This would not only strengthen the confidence of all interested parties in the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms but also contribute to the reinforcement of its political and moral authority and credibility.

We would like to express our appreciation for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navenetham Pillay and her Office in supporting the work of the Human Rights Council. Serious thought needs to be given to increasing the accountability of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Human Rights Council. We

believe that our common endeavour to promote and protect all human rights for all globally can be advanced further through a formalized interaction that will strengthen institutional linkages between the Council and OHCHR.

Regular interaction between the OHCHR and the HRC in Geneva and the GA in New York is important for deliberations on issues such as OHCHR's strategic thematic priorities, budgetary considerations, staffing, etc. It remains a matter of concern that the OHCHR depends for two-third of its budget through voluntary funding. This financial dependence distorts strategic planning and allocation of available resources in OHCHR's work. The geographical imbalance in the staffing pattern of the OHCHR also continues to be a matter of concern. These matters require greater attention and deliberation.

Mr. President,

Special Procedures is an important mechanism of the Human Rights Council for a "genuine dialogue for strengthening the capacity of member states". It is, therefore, important that Special Rapporteurs maintain confidence by adhering to the code of conduct and their mandates established by the HRC. We also reiterate the importance of ensuring equitable distribution of financial resources among all Special Procedures mandate holders through a transparent process.

In this regard, we would like to request the President of the Human Rights Council to reflect on these important issues and exchange views on what steps can be taken by the Council.

Mr. President,

I would like to also briefly refer to the issue of reprisals. We share the view that any act of reprisal or intimidation is unacceptable and must be dealt with effectively. However, we regret that the Human Rights Council could not address this issue in a unified manner. We are in fact concerned at attempts in the Council to trespass into areas that are not strictly within its mandate.

The appointment of a UN-wide mechanism on reprisals that will deal with other UN entities not primarily dealing with human rights issues is the prerogative of the body that has universal representation. We would

have preferred that such matters be transmitted to the competent body i.e. the General Assembly, of which the Human Rights Council is a subsidiary body. Here, we would like to underline the importance of the Council's adherence to the Institutional Building Package in carrying out its mandate.

Mr. President,

Allow me to also place on record our appreciation to the President of the Human Rights Council, Mr. Remigiusz Henczel for the smooth and effective manner in which he has conducted the deliberations of the Council. We also appreciate his efforts in streamlining the work of the Council through the annual voluntary calendar of HRC thematic resolutions.

We believe that the Human Rights Council should continue to rationalize and prioritize its work to make the most efficient use of limited resources. We reiterate our firm commitment to continue to engage constructively with all member states to make the Council more effective, efficient and responsive. We believe that we can advance our common cause only through dialogue and cooperation



701. STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ASOKE KUMAR MUKERJI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ON UNGA DEBATEON 'SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 20, 2013.

Madam President,

At the outset, let me thank you for organizing this discussion on 'The Situation in Afghanistan'. I also avail of this opportunity to commend the German delegation for coordinating inter-governmental negotiations in an excellent manner that has led us to this annual General Assembly resolution.

As for the last several years, India is happy to co-sponsor this resolution, which is traditionally adopted by consensus.

Madam President,

Afghanistan is undergoing a significant period of transition which encompasses security, political and economic dimensions. The progress in the technical preparation of the Presidential elections is a testimony of the resolve of the people of Afghanistan to have a smooth political transition. The key to successful elections in 2014 is an election whose outcome is acceptable to the people of Afghanistan.

Madam President,

The Presidential elections in 2014 will be yet another significant step towards the political reconstruction effort in Afghanistan which must always remain Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and let me add 'Afghan-Controlled'. The rationale behind our addition of 'Afghan-controlled' is that we want to stress that the destiny of Afghanistan is in the hands of Afghan people and it will also symbolize the distance which the people of Afghanistan have covered in the process of transition and transformation. This will be the 3rd democratic election in Afghanistan, a significant achievement for Afghanistan, and a sign of maturity of its new political system.

The international community must strongly support the Afghan authorities' preparations in this endeavour, and at the same time resist any outside effort to derail the process.

Madam President,

The security situation in Afghanistan remains fragile. Civilian casualties have risen. So have targeted killings. The condemnable attack on the Indian Consulate in Jalalabad on 3rd August 2013 which led to injuries to several Afghan security personnel guarding the Consulate and the killing of several innocent Afghan citizens, including 10 children is another example of the tenuous security environment in Afghanistan. As we have stated earlier, India does not have an "exit policy" in Afghanistan. India will not be deterred by such attacks. We do not see this attack as only aimed against India, but also against the efforts of the Afghan people to overcome the tragic consequences of the last several decades of war and conflict. I would like to reiterate our commitment to stand by the Afghan people and their personnel who have shown exemplary courage in protecting the Afghan people.

Madam President,

It has been seen that most of the terrorist attacks in Afghanistan originate from beyond Afghanistan's border by groups closely allied to the Al Qaida and their affiliates. We would like to reiterate that we must be continuously watchful of the designs of these terrorist organizations. The listing and delisting process of the individuals and entities for targeted measures by the "Al Qaida and Taliban Sanction Committees" must remain proactive and attentive. Here the role of the international community is critical in not only giving inputs to the Sanctions Committee and other related Counter Terrorism entities but also in continuing to support the efforts of the Afghans in addressing the security and terrorist challenges faced by them. In this regard, concerted action is also needed to isolate and destroy the syndicate of terrorism, which includes elements of the Taliban, Al-Qaida, Lashkar-e- Taiba and other terrorist and extremist groups. It is therefore extremely important that the transition security plan takes into account the threats posed by these terrorist organizations, and supplements the security architecture in Afghanistan. The drawdown of troops and its implication on the security arrangements needs to be carefully assessed and appropriate measures need to be taken to ensure the safety and security of the Afghan people.

Madam President,

The time has come for the international community to re-assess the role it wishes to play in Afghanistan's internal political process. In this regard the issue of the renewed mandate of UNAMA needs to be discussed.

Afghanistan has reached a considerable level of political maturity with the huge political reconstruction effort in Afghanistan. We applaud the role UNAMA has performed over the last decade in the political, humanitarian and development spheres in Afghanistan along with other agencies of the UN system. However, we are of the view that we should take note of the maturity of the political process in Afghanistan and therefore, define UNAMA's political mandate to ensure that it keeps its focus on supporting the institutions of politics rather than the political process itself, which must be left to Afghanistan's own leaders. We also believe that UNAMA must step-up its humanitarian and developmental role through better delivery of assistance in Afghanistan, since the UN

is uniquely placed with access to the remotest and most isolated communities in the country. The improvement in infrastructure along with access to basic services like health, education, nutrition on a regular basis to all Afghans would create a vital 'space' for the new Afghan political system to mature and take deep roots in Afghan society. This must complement and supplement the Afghan State institutions and their initiatives in these spheres, since it is not capacity 'substitution' but 'capacity building' that we are seeking to achieve in Afghanistan. It would also be useful if we undertake a serious assessment of the future role of UNAMA, by learning from its experiences and from the views of other member states. The objective should be to see how best the international community can realistically assist the Afghan people in a fast changing political scenario.

Madam President,

The assessment of issues facing UNAMA must take into account the problems of coherence in performing its mandated activities and the related duplication of resources, and a higher cost of programs.

In conclusion, Mr. President, as Afghanistan moves toward 2014, it would be entering a new era of development and progress. Needless to say, the international community's support and constant encouragement for Afghanistan would be critical in this transition. We would like to assure that India will remain steadfast in its support to Afghanistan during this period of transition and thereafter. India once again reiterates its support for an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled process of transition and development.

Thank you



702. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative, on the Annual Report of the UNSC at the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, November 21, 2013.

Madam President,

Thank you for organizing this meeting on the annual report of the United Nations Security Council for the period 1 August 2012 - 31 July 2013.

At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Samantha Power and the US delegation for their efforts in preparing the introduction to the report. Our thanks are also due to Ambassador Liu Jieyi and the Chinese delegation for presenting the annual report of the Security Council.

In November 2012, as President of the Security Council, India had the honour of presenting the report.

Madam President,

The report of the Security Council is an important means for facilitating interaction between the most representative organ of the United Nations and its most empowered one. The UN Charter itself bestows on the report a profound gravitas as is evident from the fact that there exists a separate provision mandating such a report, rather than clubbing it with the provision for reports from other UN bodies.

The membership of the General Assembly has repeatedly requested that this report be more analytical and incisive than being a mere narration of events. The report, however, continues to be a statistical compilation of events and listing of meetings and outcome documents.

This leaves us with no other option but to recognize that the real solution not only for a more credible, legitimate and representative Council, but even for a more thorough report, lies in the comprehensive reform of the Council, including expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories, and improvement in its working methods.

Madam President,

Much of the Council's efforts and activities during the year centered around Africa, including the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Somalia.

The period of report saw the Council endorsing the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region, signed in Addis Ababa on 24 February 2013. The Council also authorized the deployment of an intervention brigade for MONUSCO to carry out robust activities to take on armed groups, as stated on page 17 of the Report.

As a major troop contributing country and one with a substantial presence in MONUSCO, I would like to underscore the need for an objective assessment of the implications of such robust mandates on the impartial nature of UN peacekeeping.

It is important to remember that impartiality and neutrality are key principles for ensuring acceptability of UN peacekeepers and also for their safety and security and in the long term, robust mandates could, indeed, add more threats to maintenance of international peace and security.

Moreover, the implication of having intervention and traditional peacekeeping units under one command, with no differentiation in physical appearance, is that it would invite attacks on peacekeepers.

Another related issue is how to deter threats to peacekeepers from nongovernment forces or militias. The Council has asked for apprehending those responsible for killing UN peacekeepers, but not much has happened to ensure this so far, either in the DRC or in South Sudan. We would ask the Council to refer to pages 17 and 34 of the Report in this context, and call for visible steps to be taken by the Council to prosecute and bring to justice those who attack peacekeepers within a determined time frame. The Council has to use its authority to effectively deter non-government forces or militias, which threaten both the UN peacekeepers, and, as importantly, the civilians who these peacekeepers are protecting.

Robust mandates may also pose issues relating to the legal immunity from prosecution of UN peacekeepers. It is imperative to ensure immunity of UN peacekeepers from prosecutions in order to ensure that they discharge their duty smoothly. Especially at a time when peacekeepers are deployed after being oriented on the various dimensions of international humanitarian law relevant for UN peacekeeping.

In operations where peacekeepers are operating without robust mandate, such as UNDOF, the threats to the UN, mentioned on page 49 of the Report, have to be taken seriously. All Member States must be cognizant of their responsibility under the Charter to protect and uphold the integrity of UN operations. They must investigate and prosecute those who blatantly threaten the UN, especially if the sanctity of the Council is to be maintained.

Madam President,

I am happy that yesterday, member states adopted a resolution on Afghanistan in the General Assembly, which we co-sponsored. India expressed full support to an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled process of peace and reconciliation.

Madam President,

On the issue of Counter-Terrorism, we recall that the Council has endorsed a policy of 'Zero Tolerance' for terrorism. This implies that no cause or grievance, including so called "root causes", can be used to justify terrorism. India strongly supports all efforts, especially within the purview of the United Nations that strengthen international and regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism. In this context, the challenges facing the international community continue to grow, as set out on pages 65 and 66 of the Report.

Madam President,

I cannot but conclude by bringing up an issue which has an umbilical relationship to the agenda item of today's debate, i.e. reforms of the UN Security Council. I would like to flag, in particular, two key issues in this regard for your consideration:

One, the process of bringing about UNSC reforms cannot be seen to be an exercise ad infinitum. A results based timeline is imperative, and those

who ask for not imposing artificial timelines may be advised to desist from inflicting artificial delays on this process.

The debate convened by the President of the General Assembly on 7-8 November, 2013 had three important statistics, which you must bear in mind as you plan the way forward. Firstly, of the nearly 90 countries which took the floor, 58 individual countries asked for expansion in both categories. Secondly, 26 individual member states explicitly asked for concrete outcomes by 2015. Thirdly, 23 individual delegations supported commencing the IGN on text based negotiations as leading from your initiative. If one were to consider the numbers as represented by their Groups, the number of these countries would be even twice higher than the ones just stated.

I therefore urge you, Mr. President, to act on this collective call made by such a large number of states from this very podium. You have the full support of the overwhelming majority of this august assembly to steer your own initiative towards its logical culmination and commence the IGN immediately on the basis of a text.

And secondly, Mr. President, even as we embark on marking the 70th anniversary of the United Nations and crafting a post-2015 development agenda, it is important that we deliver on the most important unfinished mandates from 2005 World Summit i.e., early reform of the Security Council. Indeed, while all other mandates from the World Summit have been fulfilled or remain work in progress, its only this which remains 'work without any progress', i.e. still stuck where it was in 2005! This is an unacceptable interpretation of the words "early reform" unanimously argued to by all Members of the United Nations eight years ago.

Thank you



703. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative, on Agenda Item 36 - 'Question of Palestine' at the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, November 25, 2013.

Thank you, Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation to you for convening this important discussion on the Question of Palestine at the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

We are marking the International day of solidarity with the Palestinian People. Let me begin by quoting from my Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh's message to the friendly people of Palestine on this occasion:

"On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I reaffirm India's strong and steadfast support for the Palestinian cause. We welcome the recent efforts of Palestine and Israel mediated by the US, for resumption of direct peace talks and remain hopeful that the negotiations would lead to a comprehensive peace process for final resolution of the conflict within an agreed time line. India supports a negotiated resolution, 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 and at peace with Israel, as endorsed in the Arab Peace Initiative, the Quartet road map and relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

I also take this opportunity to extend heartiest congratulations to the people of Palestine and their leadership on obtaining 'Non-Member Observer State' status in the UN General Assembly last year. India has always played a proactive role in supporting Palestinian cause in the multilateral fora. We cosponsored the resolution enhancing Palestine's status in the UN General Assembly and will continue to support Palestine's bid for full and equal membership of the United Nations.

India has also supported the nation-building efforts of Palestine through technical and economic assistance, including budgetary support. We

are supporting construction of schools and setting up an IT centre and Vocational Training Centre in Palestine. Additionally India contributes \$1 million annually to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian refugees. We are also implementing developmental projects in Palestine jointly with Brazil and South Africa as partners in IBSA. India will continue to support these efforts.

On this important occasion, on behalf of the people of India, I convey our best wishes and greetings to the friendly people of Palestine."

Mr. President,

It has been almost a year since this assembly voted on the up gradation of Palestine's status in the United Nations to a non-member observer state along with other resolutions which are voted every year. While the upgradation was an important milestone, the aspirations of the Palestinian people and leadership for the full membership to the United Nations still remains to be achieved.

Mr. President,

The Resolution of the Palestinian question is a prerequisite for building a sustainable and lasting peace in the Middle East region. Given the fragile and unpredictable situation in the Middle East with the ongoing conflict in Syria, there should be no more delay in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

The situation in the occupied Palestinian territories has been deteriorating due to settlement activities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. These activities are creating new realities on the ground threatening the very premise of a two- state solution. The blockade of Gaza has also had serious consequences for the lives of Palestinians. It has adversely affected essential services, economic activities and infrastructure development. The Palestinian Authority is also facing a severe financial crisis that could erode the significant progress made by the Palestinian Authority in building state institutions. All these issues have to be issued in a timely manner for just and durable peace in the region.

While there has been improvement in restrictions on the West Bank, and movement of humanitarian supplies and construction material into Gaza, we continue to hold that it is necessary for Israel to lift the blockade on Gaza and allow normal and unrestricted movement of persons and

goods within Palestine. We also join others in urging Israel to stop settlement activities.

Mr. President,

India has a long history of solidarity with the Palestinian people. As demonstrated over the past six decades, including during its memberships in the UN Security Council, India also stands ready to support all measures that the Palestinian leadership may take towards political resolution of the Final Status issues.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to reiterate India's continued support for the Palestinian cause.

I thank you



704. STATEMENT BY H E AMBASSADOR BHAGWANT SINGH BISHNOI, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE JOINT DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEMS 121: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS & AGENDA ITEM 122: REVITALIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 4, 2013.

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this important discussion.

I am happy to place on record our appreciation for the good work done by the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group for last year, Ambassador Mootaz Ahmadein Khalil, Permanent Representative of Egypt.

I also welcome the appointments of the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and Thailand as co-Chairs of the ad-hoc Working Group for this Session.

I would also like to align myself with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of Non-Aligned Group.

Mr. President,

The impact of the political transformations sweeping parts of the world and the continuing weakness in the global economy has exposed the weakness of globalization. The increasingly complex and pressing transnational challenges of our time, namely the issues of peace and security, development, human rights, the environment and health, among others, also require more effective structures of global governance and a revitalized General Assembly.

Mr. President,

In your acceptance speech in July 2013, you had rightly identified reinvigoration of the reform agenda of the General Assembly as critical. In your inaugural address to the 68th General Assembly you had reiterated your determination to dedicate significant time and resources to the issues of reforming and revitalizing the major bodies of UN: the Assembly and the Council. You can count on India's support in these endeavors of yours.

The need for revitalization of the General Assembly has long been recognized by this Assembly. However, after more than two decades of discussions, there are few changes even in its working methods and negligible outcome in terms of substantively changing the norms and structures of the Assembly.

Mr. President,

Without prejudging the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Working Group that should start soon, I would like to place on record the Indian delegation's considered views on some of the more important aspects of the issue which concern General Assembly Revitalization.

We have consistently held the view that the General Assembly can be revitalized only when its position as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations is respected both in letter and spirit. The Assembly should take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving transnational issues. In particular, revitalization must restore the primacy of the UN in development matters.

We need to change it from being a talk shop to a place where transnational issues that impact each and every one of us are addressed swiftly and truly global solutions prescribed.

Mr. President,

First of all, it is critical that we establish a relationship of respect for respective mandates between the General Assembly and the Security Council in the spirit of the Charter. The Council should not encroach upon the mandate of the Assembly through extremely wide and permissive interpretations of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

Second, the Assembly we believe must have a greater say in the process of selection of the Secretary General. The continued circumscribing of the Assembly's role and responsibilities in the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary General needs to change in the interests of the United Nations system in general and the Assembly's prerogatives in particular.

And, thirdly, the Assembly and the other entities that form part of the UN system must reflect best practices in its day to day functioning. And it has a lot to learn from member-states in this regard.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me re-emphasize the need to discuss substantive measures that would strengthen the role of General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative body of the international community.

You can count on India's constructive support and participation in these efforts.

Thank you



705. Statement by Mr. Amit Narang, First Secretary after adoption of the 2nd Committee Resolution on 2nd UN Decade on Eradication of Poverty at the Second Committee of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, December 6, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Like the rest of the world, India is mourning the loss of President Nelson Mandela. The passing away of this giant among men is as much a loss to India and the world as it is to the South African nation. He belonged to the world and his courage will inspire generations.

Mr. Chairman,

We are happy we have adopted this important resolution on the 2nd UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty. We would like to commend the constructive engagement of all delegations on the resolution.

Mr. Chairman,

After having significantly contributed to the global reduction of poverty in the last two decades, India remains fully committed to eradicating poverty and raising the living standards of our people through inclusive growth.

We strongly believe that the international community must redouble its efforts to end poverty once and for all under the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The global commitment to the central imperative of poverty eradication must not slacken.

We are happy therefore that the resolution that we have adopted reaffirms the commitment of the international community that poverty eradication shall be central to the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

We were however somewhat surprised that this commitment, which should have been a given, should have required so much discussion, let alone negotiation.

We need to remind ourselves that our leaders gave us a clear mandate at the Rio+20 Conference - that eradication of poverty is the greatest

global challenge today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. This mandate must underpin the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Not only is poverty eradication a critical economic necessity but also the highest political and moral imperative.

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to emphasize that the centrality of poverty eradication as the central and overarching objective of the post-2015 development agenda cannot subject to negotiation.

We of course look forward to engaging constructively with all delegations in the run-up to the Post-2015 Development Agenda to agree on ways to strengthen national and international efforts to make poverty history.



706. STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR BHAGWANT SINGH BISHNOI DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, ON AGENDA ITEM 76(a) AND (b) "OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA" AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 9, 2013.

Mr. President

Allow me to begin by thanking you for convening today's meeting for the consideration of the agenda item "Oceans and the Law of the Sea", a subject of significant interest for the whole world.

The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 entitled "The Future we want" recognizes the oceans and seas as an integral and essential component of the Earth's ecosystem and of crucial value to sustaining it. The role of oceans in supporting life on Earth is thus of vital importance.

We note however, that our oceans face terrific challenges including the deterioration of the marine environment, biodiversity loss, climate change, those relating to the maritime safety and security including the acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, and illegal fishing practices.

Mr. President

Safe navigation and smooth transportation of goods by seas are crucial to international trade and development. The acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea are a grave threat to maritime trade and the security of maritime shipping. Piracy endangers lives of seafarers, affects national security, territorial integrity and hampers economic development of nations.

We highly appreciate the work of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) in containing piracy through international cooperation and coordination. India actively participates in international efforts to combat piracy and armed robbery at sea. We are gratified that these efforts have yielded significant results as in the past year and a half, there has not been a successful hijacking off the coast of Somalia.

We would however, like to express our deep concern over the incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea. Although, the States in the region have the primary role to play to counter the threat of piracy, we urge the entire international community to continue cooperation and efforts toward ensuring the end of this menace.

Mr. President

Turning to the international legal mechanism, the Law of the Sea Convention, 1982 is the key international instrument governing ocean affairs. It sets out the legal framework for all activities in oceans and seas. The Convention enjoys wide acceptance with 166 Parties, Niger being the latest State joining the Convention on 07 August 2013.

We thank the Secretary-General for his Report A/68/71 and Addendum 1 on issues concerning oceans and the law of the sea.

We welcome the report A/68/159 of the Co-Chairs of the fourteenth Meeting of the United Nations open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP), on the deliberations on "The impacts of ocean acidification on the marine environment". The broad

scientific thinking and studies reveal that ocean acidification has serious impacts on marine ecosystem. The changes in temperature due to ocean acidification may alter the rate and pattern of ocean productivity. This necessitates the need for a more comprehensive study on ocean acidification and for capacity building including through filling the knowledge gaps and promoting the transfer of technology.

We welcome the report A/68/82 of the Co-Chairs of the meeting of the Ad-hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for the global reporting and assessment of the state of marine environment, including socio-economic aspects. We commend the efforts toward materializing the first global integrated assessment of the state of the marine environment and look forward for its completion by 2014.

We also welcome the report A/68/399 of Co-Chairs of the meeting of the Ad-hoc open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. The working group took note of the deliberations of experts in the intersessional workshops held in May 2013. The Workshops provided valuable scientific and technical information on conservation and management tools, environmental impact assessments, as well as on marine genetic resources; and also considered the issues relating to intellectual property rights, capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology. We support the efforts of the Working Group towards addressing, on urgent basis, the issue of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, including through developing a legal framework.

Mr. President

The smooth functioning of the institutions established under the Convention namely the International Sea-bed Authority, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf hold the key to the proper implementation of the provisions of the Convention and to the realization of the desired benefits from the uses of the seas. We therefore support all efforts towards ensuring their smooth functioning, and note with satisfaction the progress made by these institutions in their respective areas.

Mr. President

Being a country with a vast coastline and numerous islands, India has a traditional and abiding interest in the maritime and ocean affairs, and assures full cooperation in efforts toward ensuring the proper management and sustainable use of the oceans and seas as a responsible partner of the international community.

Finally, Mr. President we thank both the Coordinators for having successfully conducted the consultations on draft resolutions "Oceans and the Law of the Sea" and "Sustainable Fisheries" and support their adoption.

Thank you Mr. President.



707. Joint G4 Statement delivered by Ambassador Asoke K Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations at the First meeting of the 10th Round of Intergovernmental Negotiations of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly on the Question of Equitable Representation and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters.

New York, 12 December 2013

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the G4 countries; namely Brazil, Germany, India and Japan.

We wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your reappointment as Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations, and under your dynamic leadership, we look forward to achieving tangible progress in this round of the IGN.

Mr. President,

We are meeting today, following a very fruitful exchange of views in the General Assembly on 7-8 November.

It is therefore important that this round of the IGN does not ignore three very important pointers from the General Assembly debate.

First and foremost, was the strong call by the collective membership to finally start genuine text based negotiations in this round of the IGN. Several delegations categorically stated that this was not just the 'next logical step' but the 'only' next step forward. This was also a recommendation that you had yourself as the Chair of the IGN made earlier in your letter of 25 July 2012.

The initiative taken by the President, Ambassador John Ashe, therefore comes as a welcome step in the right direction. The non paper that he has submitted in his letter of 10 December, is a well balanced, honest and sincere attempt to contribute to the process, by providing a set of very useful ideas, on each of the reform clusters, as was outlined in UNGA Decision 62/557.

We believe that it provides a very good way forward to conduct this round of the IGN, by building further upon it, through a truly membership driven process from the floor of the IGN. We would also like to compliment the distinguished members of the Advisory Group, as well as Ambassador Sinclair, who have together contributed to this outcome, in a professional and neutral manner.

The President of the General Assembly has given you a clear mandate. The ball, Mr. Chair is now in your court. We encourage you to heed his call and use the non paper as a guide for this year's programme of work. A thorough discussion on the ideas presented, organised around the five reform clusters, would provide us, the member states, the opportunity to clearly voice our preferences, and to indicate where room for convergence exists. Such a discussion would also help you Mr. Chairman, to arrive at, a sound assessment of where the mood of the house stands on the options presented under each cluster. This is not just the logical way forward but perhaps the only way forward in our common pursuit of early reforms.

Mr. President, our second point flows from the November GA meeting, which was the categorical affirmation by nearly 2/3rds of the 90 odd speakers that took the floor, calling for support in expansion in both categories of membership. The overwhelming support in favour of expansion in both categories has already been established on each of occasions that we have debated the subject both within the GA, as well as the IGN.

The third key outcome from the GA discussion, was the clear call of a time line to deliver concrete outcomes on this long standing debate. As the United Nations approaches its 70th Anniversary Session of the General Assembly in the year 2015, it is important to finally deliver the only unfulfilled mandate from Para- 153 of the 2005 Outcome Document, i.e. achieve early reforms of the Security Council.

Mr. President, this is not an artificial timeline, if we only recall that the mandate under which we are discussing this subject was agreed to by us unanimously on the 60th anniversary of the UN. It was not an open ended mandate and it was not a contentious mandate. It was a clear call for 'early reforms'. The world has changed rapidly since 2005, and the Security Council has been called upon to address complicated issues of international peace and security without in any way benefiting from early reforms to make it more representative and effective. It is in this context, Mr Chairman, that we need to work towards the next significant milestone in our organization, which is the 70 th anniversary summit of 2015.

It is in this spirit that the G4 countries have reached out to all regional groups. We aim to find a path that will reflect the dominant call by Member States for a reform of the Security Council leading to an expansion in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent. In so doing, we have, together with our partners, pursued a constructive approach, calling for action - not only words, and for progress - not the status quo. We are encouraged by the broad and cross regional support that our efforts continue to enjoy.

Mr. President,

Against this background, it is even more important that this round of the IGN takes us a step forward by providing for a regular set of meetings,

focussed on specific ideas contained in the PGA's non paper and aimed at achieving clear deliverables, which would help us in arriving at a consolidated 'membership driven' text. We also hope that you would be able to arrive at an assessment by the end of this round, on where the overwhelming body of opinion among member states lies on each of the options in each cluster and reflect the same in your concluding assessment.

From our side, as exhorted by the PGA in his letter of 2 December, the G4 countries are ready 'in a spirit of flexibility and accommodation' to arrive at a common ground on the issue of Security Council reform. We also encourage others to show the same spirit of 'flexibility and accommodation' that is required to engage in a text based negotiation process that deserves to be called so in content and not in name only.

The G4 stands ready and committed to playing its part in this process.

I thank you Mr. President.



708. Statement by Ambassador Asoke K. Mukerji, Permanent Representative at the Informal General Assembly Plenary Meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council" at United Nations General Assembly.

New York, December 16, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

I have already addressed this meeting on behalf of the G4. In my national statement, I would like to align my delegation with the statement of the L.69 delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Nicaragua, and express our full support for the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Guyana, on behalf of the CARICOM. These alignments demonstrate, Mr Chairman, India's

mainstream position in these negotiations with a large number of like-minded developing countries from Asia-Pacific, Africa and Latin America, all of whom seek expansion in both categories of a reformed United Nations Security Council.

Like other speakers, Mr Chairman, my delegation is happy with your reappointment as the Chair of the Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN). India has never hesitated in expressing publicly our support for your valued professional stewardship of our proceedings.

My country, Mr Chairman, attaches high priority to our work. Speaking in the General Assembly in September this year, Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh said, and I quote:

"For multilateralism to remain relevant and effective in the future, multilateral institutions need to be reformed. The place to begin is right here. The UN Security Council must be reformed and restructured to reflect current political realities. More developing countries should be included as both permanent and non-permanent members."

Mr Chairman,

Let me with your permission proceed to outline some practical suggestions for your consideration on how to structure our future work in the months ahead. What we are about to suggest to you, Mr Chairman, given your "institutional memory" of chairing this long-drawn out process, may appear to be *deja vu*. You would recall that in March 2009, when we were engaged in the first round of these negotiations, you had proposed to give, and I quote "guidance to Member States on the path to decisive progress"¹. This is the same commitment that we are seeking of you, Mr Chairman, as we stand on the threshold of the tenth round of these negotiations today.

¹ A/63/960 dated 10 September 2009

First, we believe that all of us would benefit by your circulating a schedule of our meetings, preferably to be held at least once a month, from now till the end of the 68th General Assembly in September 2014, so that we can regain the momentum in our negotiations. In 2009, Mr Chairman, you had conducted our meetings by following a similarly circulated schedule.

Second, we would like you, Mr Chairman, to provide a framework for our activity, so that we can get down to our job of text-based negotiations in earnest. We agree with other member-states participating in these negotiations that such a framework document must be based on the views articulated by members during the previous nine rounds of our discussions on each of the five clusters of issues agreed to by all of us in Subsection (e)(ii) of General Assembly Decision 62/557.

Third, Mr Chairman, we find that the views of member-states has been summarized very objectively in the non-paper circulated by the distinguished President of our General Assembly (PGA), Ambassador John Ashe. The non-paper in fact follows the structure of the five broad clusters that was identified and accepted by all of us in GA Decision 62/557.

Mr Chairman,

We would like to convey, through you, our deep gratitude to the PGA for investing his time and energy to take the initiative of restoring the momentum of these intergovernmental negotiations by seeking, and I quote from his letter, "an instrument to assist in the organization of the IGN." That instrument, Mr Chairman, is the non-paper circulated to all of us by the PGA. In the process, the PGA has given you the authority and guidance to move forward this process, or "organize", the IGN.

In your letter to us, Mr Chairman, you have specifically asked us to speak at this meeting on, and I quote, "ways in which [members] can benefit from the Non Paper as a tool to lead us towards genuine give and take, which is essential to taking the process forward".

Whether we call it an "instrument" or a "tool", Mr Chairman, the non-paper deserves to be appreciated because of its status, its content, and its potential as a reference framework for our text-based negotiations.

First, Mr Chairman, its status. The non-paper has been circulated by the PGA, who has elected unanimously by all of us, and continues to enjoy our full trust and confidence. His initiative to constitute an Advisory Group was taken transparently, and within his powers as the President of the General Assembly. The terms of reference of his Advisory Group were reportedly drawn up in close interactive consultation with each of the six distinguished Permanent Representatives chosen by him, and contained

amendments and suggestions made by them, including by our distinguished colleague who has attached a dissenting note to the non-paper.

As you will no doubt recall, Mr Chairman, there has been a precedent for such an initiative by the PGA in tackling the subject of early reform of the United Nations Security Council. Five "facilitators" had been appointed by the PGA during the 61st General Assembly. These five distinguished Permanent Representatives produced a report which guided Member-States in April 2007 towards a "framework for result-oriented negotiations". GA Decision 62/557 is a direct outcome of such an input.

Mr Chairman, the non-paper is a similar initiative by the PGA to motivate us to conclude this protracted inter-governmental negotiation.

The non-paper has been accepted and circulated by the PGA. It has his moral authority, and should not be ignored or dismissed as an irrelevant document. Especially so because both the PGA and you, Mr Chairman, have clarified that the non-paper does not have the status of a negotiation text. My delegation honours your clarifications, keeping in mind the authority and dignity of your offices.

That brings us, Mr Chairman, to the content of the non-paper. It is a summary of views expressed during the nine rounds of our negotiations so far. On the basis of a preliminary reading, we find that it is a sincere attempt by the Advisory Group, in their individual capacity, to reflect all the views that have been expressed in this process by participating Member-States so far.

The objectivity of the non-paper can be gauged by the fact that even those who have argued vigorously against the very existence of this non-paper would find their viewpoints reflected in it. Those among us who feel that the summary points of the nonpaper have not brought out the finer nuances of their actual views can, in fact, correct such perceived imperfections by participating in the text-based discussions which, we hope, Mr Chairman, you will initiate from our next meeting.

This leads us to give you our view on the potential of this non-paper. Mr Chairman, my delegation has always expressed full faith in your ability and impartiality in producing a negotiation text, based on the views of member-states you have heard over the past six years in these

negotiations. Your own desire to do so, in your letter of 25 July 2012, has unfortunately been subjected to an apparent "veto" by some in this room.

In this context, Mr Chairman, the non-paper has the potential to bridge this crucial gap in our negotiating process. The framework provided by the non-paper can be placed, cluster by cluster, section by section, on the screens in this hall. As our Chairman, you could invite comments on each section from the floor, making it a member-driven process. The comments can be used to refine the language on the screen in an interactive manner, providing us with the outlines of a text-based negotiating process.

A first reading of the contents of the non-paper demonstrates that the substance of our respective positions is indeed reflected in the framework of the document. To illustrate, Section 1.a reflects the view supported by my delegation, including as a member of the G4 and L.69, and the position of many delegations from Asia-Pacific, Africa and Latin America, who have spoken on the need for expansion in both categories. Perhaps Section 1.d and 1.e would resonate among my distinguished colleagues from the Uniting for Consensus group! Section 2.1, we note is framed "in relation to enlargement", and therefore does not mention what is already contained in Article 27 of the Charter, which should allay the concern expressed by distinguished colleagues from some of the permanent members of the existing Council. This illustration, Mr Chairman, is meant to show how we see the potential of the non-paper. It is indeed, as the PGA and you have said, an "instrument" or a "tool" to move us to engaging in the give-and-take of negotiations.

After nine rounds and six years of chairing this process, it is clear to you Mr Chairman that there are differences of views among member-states on each of the five clusters. Therefore, there can never be any unanimous consensus on these clusters. However, we have a unanimous mandate for "early reform" of the UN Security Council. We must accordingly move to bridge the differences through the give-and-take of negotiations on the basis of the framework provided by the non-paper.

Such a transparent process would also enable you, Mr Chairman, to determine, as the Chair of our negotiations, where you can seek consensus, based on the views of the majority of participating Member-States in these negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

There are some in the room who feel that by launching this process of negotiations, we are in fact trying to harvest the final outcome at the very beginning of this process in a non-negotiated manner. This is not the case.

We, for one, are fully cognizant that the final outcome of our negotiations will come only from what we have always termed the "give-and-take" of our interaction. We are aware that all member-states willing to take on the additional responsibilities and obligations from participation as permanent and non-permanent members of an expanded Security Council will have to campaign, and be elected, on their individual merits under the procedures of the UN Charter.

Mr. Chairman,

Before I conclude, I would like to draw your attention to the dramatic attention the issue of UN Security Council reform has received internationally during recent weeks. This attention has come because, it has been asserted, that all the efforts made by us in recent years

"did not result in reaching the reforms required to be made to enable the Security Council to regain its desired role in the service of the issues of peace and security in the world."²

This assertion must act as a wake-up call for all of us engaged in these negotiations. Otherwise, the malfunctioning heart of the multilateral system designed for the maintenance of international peace and security, which is the UN Security Council, will be damaged beyond repair.

We therefore call on you, Mr Chairman, to use your position and your mandate to act now, and set us on the path of actual negotiations from our next meeting itself.



**709. Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji,
Permanent Representative in the special meeting of the
General Assembly dedicated to the life and memory of His
Excellency Nelson Mandela.**

New York, December 19, 2013.

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this special meeting of the General Assembly dedicated to the life and memory of former President, Dr. Nelson Mandela.

At the outset, let me join others in paying homage to a visionary, a venerated elder and a great soul. As described by my Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, Dr. Mandela was a "giant among men". He was the epitome of forgiveness, compassion and humaneness that inspired all of mankind. He dedicated his life to values of peace, pluralism, justice, equality and dignity which are also embodied in the United Nations Charter.

Mr. President,

The passing away of Dr. Mandela is as much a loss to India and the world as it is to South Africa. The world has lost an apostle of peace and non-violence. We pray for eternal peace for the departed soul.

Mr. President,

We, in India, have long admired him - and all that he stood for - and we will always cherish his friendship and love for our people. The outpouring of intense grief and sadness across India reflects the high degree of love and respect which Dr. Mandela commanded in my country. We observed state mourning for five days in India as a mark of respect to him. The President of India, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee who participated in the Memorial Service in his honour was accompanied by a delegation representing the cross-section of our political spectrum.

Nelson Mandela was a household name and someone, we saw as one of our own. His life was a living example of human strength and courage in the face of brute force and gross injustice. He was the last of the

giants who led the world's struggles against colonialism. Indeed, his life and struggles - which represented 'hope' for people in South Africa and all over the world, reminds us of the principles that the father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, stood for. His stoic determination, patience and magnanimity reminded us, in India, of the revolutionary methods of Mahatma Gandhi. It also mirrored our own hope for a better world. It was, therefore, an honour for India to confer upon Madiba our highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna when he visited India in 1990.

Mr. President,

It is matter of great honour and pride for us that upon his release from prison, Nelson Mandela chose India as the first country to visit. Speaking at a banquet hosted by then-President of India, Madiba said of India,

"The indentured labourers also served to establish an umbilical cord that ties together the peoples of our respective countries. As much as India is a part of our country, so are we too a part of India. History has condemned us to seek each other out, to deal with each other as members of the same family.

It is that history which makes it possible for each one of us to claim the immortal Mahatma Gandhi as our national hero.

In 1995, when he again visited India as the first President of post apartheid Africa, Mandela visited Gandhiji's Sabarmati Ashram and said that it was for him a homecoming, a pilgrimage.

Mandela often acknowledged the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and the first Prime Minister of India, Jawarharlal Nehru on his own thought process. During his visit to India, remembering Nehru, he said:

"Panditji taught that narrow forms of nationalism, intense and powerful as they may be in awakening people to struggle, are inadequate as a basis for achieving victory or for lasting peace. Our experience has shown us the truth of this lesson that exclusiveness must give way to co-operation and inter-dependence. It is a lesson forged in struggle and inscribed in the rapidly changing world order..."

Mr. President,

We have no doubt that the world will honour the historic legacy of Madiba, one of the most influential personalities of our century, who taught the world the true meaning of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Thank you

