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Date : Jan 31, 1997

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CANADA

Visit of Mr. Lloyd Axworthy, Canadian Foreign Minister

The following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on January 8, 1997 regarding visit of Mr. Lloyd Axworthy, Canadian Foreign Minister from January 7 to 14, 1997:

Mr. Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada is presently in India on an official visit at the invitation of Shri I. K. Gujral, External Affairs Minister.

2. Mr. Axworthy is accompanied by his wife and Members of the Canadian Parliament, Mr. Michel Dupuy, Mr. Herb Dhaliwal, Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi and Ms. Colleen Beaumier, Mr. Ujjal Dosanjh, Attorney General of the Provincial Government of British Columbia in Canada is also accompanying Foreign Minister Axworthy.

3. Foreign Minister Axworthy today called on the President and Prime Minister and had extended discussions with the External Affairs Minister on a wide range of bilateral issues and on issues on mutual interest concerning regional and international affairs.

4. The External Affairs Minister, Shri I. K. Jugular and Mr. Axworthy today exchanged notes for the formation of a Joint Ministerial Committee which will consider matters of common interest to the two countries in the political as well as in the economic and commercial fields. India and Canada also signed Memoranda of Understanding for three projects in Revenue Administration, Energy Infrastructure and Private Sector Development. (Details of MOUs is given below).

5. While in Delhi Foreign Minister Axworthy will also meet Shri Y. K. Alagh, Minister of State for Planning & Program, Implementation and Science and Technology; Shri B. P. Verma, Minister of Communication and Shri S. Venugopalachari, Minister of State for Power & Non-conventional Energy.

6. Foreign Minister Axworthy will also visit Calcutta and Chandigarh. At Calcutta he will participate in the Canada Day Programme of the CII Partnership Summit on January 10, 1997. At Chandigarh an Office of the Canadian High Commission will be jointly inaugurated by the External Affairs Minister and the Canadian Foreign Minister on January 13, 1997. The Chandigarh Office will facilitate visa and trade enquiries. The setting up of this office is expected to promote trade and investment relations with the region and facilitate contact between the people of the region and Sikh members of the Indo-Canadian community in Canada.

(DETAILS OF MOU)

India and Canada have signed Memoranda of Understanding for three projects, namely, Capacity Development of Revenue Administration Project, Energy Infrastructure Services Project and Facilitation of Private Sector Development Project. The Memoranda were signed on 8.1.97 by Mr. Gajendra Haldea, Joint

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Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs on behalf of Government of India and Mr. Stanley E. Gooch, Canadian High Commissioner on behalf of Government of Canada. A total grant assistance of C\$ 29.3 millions (approximately Rs. 76 crores) would be extended by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), an agency of Government of Canada, under these three projects.

The objective of Capacity Development of Revenue Administration Project is to strengthen the administration of Direct and Indirect Taxes in India and to assist the States Sales Tax reforms. Only technical assistance and training are envisaged under this project. The assistance for States Sales Tax reforms aims at improving the capabilities of Sales Tax administration. For assistance in the area of States Sales Tax reforms, Rajasthan has been chosen as a pilot initiative. Assistance to another State will be considered under the project after assessment of progress within the State of Rajasthan. A grant assistance of C\$ 8.5 million (Rs. 22 crores, approximately) will be extended by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) under this project.

The objective of Energy Infrastructure Services Project is to assist the State of Kerala in carrying out reforms in Power Sector. Canadian technical assistance and training will be provided under this component of the Project. The Project also envisages Canadian technical assistance to another State for carrying out reforms in Power Sector. Under this project CIDA will also be financing studies on sectoral issues concerning policy reforms of Power sector in India. A grant assistance of C\$ 13.8 million (Rs. 36 crores approximately) will be extended by CIDA under this project.

The objective of Private Sector Development project is to address a number of significant bottlenecks to private sector development in the sectors of power, telecommunications and financial services. For achieving this objective, the project envisages Canadian short term technical assistance and long-term collaborative support. A grant assistance of C\$ 7 million (Rs. 18 crores approximately) will be provided by CIDA under this project

Jan 08, 1997

CANADA INDIA USA FALKLAND ISLANDS CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Jan 08, 1997

Volume No

1995

CANADA

Visit of Mr. Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada accompanied by a high level delegation of Members of Canadian Parliament and Senior provincial Officials, to India

The following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs at New Delhi on January 9, 1997 regarding visit of Mr. Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada accompanied by a high level delegation of members of Canadian Parliament and senior provincial official to India from 7-14, January 1997:

Mr. Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, accompanied by a high level delegation of Members of the Canadian Parliament and senior provincial officials, is visiting India from January 7 to 14, 1997 at the invitation of Shri I. K. Gujral, External Affairs Minister of India.

2. Foreign Minister Axworthy called on the President and the Prime Minister on January 8, 1997 and had discussions with the External Affairs Minister on a wide range of bilateral issues and regional and international matters of mutual interest. Foreign Minister Axworthy also met Shri Y. K. Alagh, Minister of State for Planning & Programme, Implementation and Science and Technology; Shri B. P. Verma, Minister of Communication and Shri S. Venugopalachari, Minister of State for Power and Non-conventional Energy.

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3. Ministers Axworthy and Gujral exchanged Notes establishing a Joint Ministerial Committee headed by the two Ministers, for intensifying cooperation and consultations between the two countries in the political as well as in the economic and commercial fields. It was agreed that the first meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee will take place in Canada in the spring of 1997.

4. Memoranda of Understanding were also signed in the presence of the two Ministers for grant of assistance by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) of Canadian \$ 29.3 million (approximately Rs. 76 crore) for three projects relating to Capacity Development of Revenue Administration, Energy Infrastructure Services and Facilitation of Private Sector Development. The Canadian Minister also offered CIDA financial support for establishing a Fund to be made available to Indian non-governmental organisations engaged in improving the situation of working children, and for a three-year partnership project of joint activities between the National Human Rights Commission of India and the Canadian Human Rights Commission. The Indian side welcomed Canadian interest in working with the Indian Government, institutions and non-governmental organisations in these areas to promote mutually shared objectives.

5. Foreign Minister Axworthy will also visit Calcutta and Chandigarh. At Calcutta, he will participate in the Canada Day Programme of the CII Partnership Summit on January 10, 1997. At Chandigarh, a visa and trade facilitation office the Canadian High Commission will jointly be inaugurated the External Affairs Minister and the Canadian Foreign Minister on January 13, 1997. The setting up of this office is expected to promote Canadian trade and investment relations with the region, and facilitate family contact between the people of the region and the large Punjabi community in Canada, which constitutes a valuable bond of friendship between India and Canada.

6. The two Ministers agreed to intensify cooperation between the two governments to combat terrorism in all its forms, regardless of its motives. The two Ministers agreed to establish a working group on terrorism for this

purpose.

7. The two Ministers agreed that India and Canada should work together for the reform and rejuvenation of the United Nations, essential for which was a more broad based and representative Security Council. They agreed that adhoc and piecemeal additions to the permanent membership of the UN Security Council would not meet the requirements of the situation.

8. Minister Axworthy invited the active participation of India in the cultural and other programmes planned in Canada to observe 1997 as the year of the Asia Pacific when the next APEC Summit was to be hosted in Canada. Shri Gujral readily undertook to send a cultural troupe to Canada for the occasion, which coincided with the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of Indian Independence.

9. The two Ministers reiterated the strong interest of both governments in revitalizing India-Canada relationship, and sustaining the momentum in the expansion and diversification of bilateral cooperation and consultations that had already been established.

Jan 09, 1997

CANADA INDIA USA

Date : Jan 09, 1997

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INDIA

Prohibition of attack against Nuclear Installations and facilities signed in December 1988 between India and Pakistan

The following is the text of a press release issued by Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on January 1, 1997 regarding the agreement on the Prohibition of attack against Nuclear Installation and facilities signed in December 1988 between India and Pakistan:

Under the agreement on the prohibition of attack against nuclear installations and facilities signed in December 1988 between India and Pakistan. The two countries are to inform each other on 1st January of each calendar year of the nuclear installations and facilities to be covered under this agreement.

For the sixth consecutive year, India and Pakistan today exchanged through diplomatic channels, simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad, the lists of nuclear installations and facilities to be covered under this agreement.
Jan 01, 1997

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Jan 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Indo-Russian Electronics Working Group Meets

The following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on January 22, 1997 regarding Meeting of Indo-Russian Electronics Working Group:

The third meeting of the Indo-Russian Working Group on Information Technology was inaugurated here today by Shri Shyamal Ghosh, Secretary, Department of Electronics. In his inaugural address, Shri Ghosh said that the Electronics sector has grown by twenty two per cent during the Eighth Plan' period. The industry is poised to grow five times at the end of the Ninth Plan.

The fundamentals of our economy are on a sound footing and that India has tremendous strength in software, he added. The country has gone away with licensing requirements for many industries. The Government have introduced positive policies for inviting foreign investment and participation. Shri Ghosh said, India treasures the relations with Russia and looked forward to continuing the already strong ties that exist between the two countries and that all possible efforts may be made to build on the respective strength of the two countries.

Mr. Dmitri N. Lavrov, Co-chairman of the Working Group said that they were keen to buy personal computers and education related software. He expressed appreciation about India making inroads in the field of education related software. He said Russia looked forward to exchange of information and related technology with India. He mentioned that India and Russia should concretise projects based on mutual strength and even consider exports to third countries from such projects.

The Working Group on Electronics Information Technology was set up under the overall umbrella of the Indo-Russian Joint Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation. The Department of Electronics is the nodal Ministry from the Indian side. The Secretary, Electronics is the Co-chairman of the Working Group.
Jan 22, 1997

INDIA RUSSIA USA

Date : Jan 22, 1997

Volume No

1995

ISRAEL

Agreement between Israeli and Palestinian sides on the redeployment in Hebron

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on January 31, 1997 regarding agreement between Israeli and Palestinian sides on the redeployment in Hebron:

Government of India welcomes the agreement recently reached between the Israeli and Palestinian sides to conclude a Protocol on redeployment in Hebron, along with accompanying documents incorporating the

understandings on the transfer of Hebron to the Palestinian National Authority, as well as on measures for advancing the peace process, through further Israeli redeployment from the West Bank and working towards the Final Status Negotiations. These understandings reflect the statesmanship of the Israeli and Palestinian leadership, as well as reaffirmation by them, and big the Palestinian and Israeli peoples, of their commitment to work together for forward movement in the peace process, to bring about a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region.

India has consistently supported the Middle East Peace Process. The indications of uncertainty in the peace process in recent months aroused widespread concern, which was shared by India. We had conveyed our views on this to Israel and the Palestinian authorities. The agreement on redeployment in Hebron again underlines the crucial importance of taking the Middle East Peace Process to its logical conclusion, within agreed time schedules, building upon interim agreements and understandings already reached.

Jan 31, 1997

ISRAEL INDIA USA

Date : Jan 31, 1997

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OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Tariff Concessions to Bangladesh

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on January 10, 1997 regarding tariff concessions to Bangladesh:

We have seen a report in the Press attributing to the Prime Minister theremark that tariff concessions to Bangladesh were granted with the sole objective of encouraging that country to grant India a transit route through its territory to the seven North-Eastern States. The report misconstrues the remarks made by the Prime Minister and is factually Incorrect.

Jan 10, 1997

BANGLADESH INDIA

Date : Jan 10, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Action taken by MEA and its Missions regarding drowning of Indians in the waters between Malta and Sicily

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on January 14, 1997 on action taken by MEA and its Missions regarding drowning of Indians in the waters between Malta and Sicily:

Briefing the press today on the action taken by MEA and its Missions on the incident (reported in the press) in which a large number of Indians may have lost their lives in the waters between Malta and Sicily, the Spokesman made the following statements.

- (i) The Embassy in Greece has sent an officer to Naplion, where the Indiansurvivors are in detention (as illegal entrants into Greece), obtained their particulars, as well as the names of those whom they believe have drowned, and have faxed these lists to MEA. The Embassy remains in touch with the authorities concerned in Greece.
- (ii) The list of the Indians in Greek custody has been faxed by the CPV Division to the RPOs in Jalandhar, Chandigarh and Delhi to confirm their passport particulars. Their next of kin are being informed.
- (iii) The list of those reported to have drowned, conveyed by the survivors, has also been faxed to the RPOs to try to obtain passport particulars and addresses of the next of kin. This is necessary as most of the addresses given by the survivors are sketchy, and not enough to establish contact.
- (iv) The CBI has been requested at a senior level by CPV for urgent action against the Indian agents who according to the testimony of the survivors, arranged for their trip.
- (v) Missions in Rome, Malta and Greece have been asked to obtain from the Naval Coast Guard authorities an assessment of what they think may have happened, as well as a report on whether any wreckage or bodies have been recovered. These reports are awaited.

Jan 14, 1997

INDIA MALTA GREECE USA ITALY

Date : Jan 14, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Official visit of the Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago, Hon. Basdeo Panday accompanied by his wife Mrs. Oma Panday to India

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on January 15, 1997 regarding official visit to India of the Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago, Hon. Bastleo Panday accompanied by his wife Mrs. Oma Panday from 23rd January to 4th February, 1997:

The Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago, Hon. Basdeo Panday accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Oma Panday, will be paying an official visit to India from January 23 to February 4, 1997 at the invitation of the Prime Minister, Shri H. D. Deve Gowda. He will be the Chief Guest at the Republic Day Celebrations of India.

During the visit, Prime Minister Panday will hold talks with the Prime Minister. He will call on the President and Vice-President of India. The External Affairs Minister will call on the visiting

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dignitary. Bilateral cooperation arrangements are expected to be agreed on during the course of the visit.

Prime Minister Panday will be accompanied by a delegation of officials and businessmen. He will have interaction with Indian businessmen. Besides New Delhi, he will visit Agra, Varanasi, Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Mumbai. At Varanasi he will receive an honorary doctorate from the Banaras Hindu University.

A cultural troupe from Trinidad & Tobago is simultaneously visiting India. It will be performing the cities that the Hon. Prime Minister will be visiting.

Jan 15, 1997

INDIA USA

Date : Jan 15, 1997

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1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Extradition of Daya Singh Lahoria and Suman Sood (alias Sandhus) by the United States of America

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on January 17, 1997 regarding extradition of Daya Singh Lahoria and Suman Sood (alias Sandhus) by the U.S.A.:

Daya Singh Lahoria and Suman Sood (alias Sandhus) are being extradited by the United States of America at the request of the Government of India, for involvement in terrorist acts in Punjab. Lahoria is to face trial for the attempt to murder a former Youth Congress leader and for the kidnapping of the son of former Minister, Shri Ram Niwas Mirdha.

This is the first such instance and Points to the growing cooperation between India and the US in combating terrorism.

The two countries are also in the Process Of finalising an extradition treaty which will further intensify these efforts and place them on an institutional basis.

Jan 17, 1997

USA INDIA

Date : Jan 17, 1997

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1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Promotion of bilateral cooperation between India and Russia

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on January 24, 1997 on promotion of bilateral cooperation between India and Russia:

The Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IGC) has become the prime vehicle for the promotion of bilateral cooperation between India and Russia in the economic, commercial, scientific, technological and cultural spheres.

Consideration was being given to the convening of the Third IGC Session in Moscow and ' on the basis of a proposal made by the Russian side, it has been agreed that the Third Session of the Indo- Russian IGC would be held in Moscow in the first half of February 1997.

The Third IGC Session will be co- chaired from the Indian side by Shri I. K. Gujral, Minister of External Affairs, and from the Russian side by M- r. Viktor Ilyushin, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Russian Federation. It would play an important role in reviewing progress in areas under its jurisdiction and in identifying perspectives for future bilateral cooperation between India and Russia.

Jan 24, 1997

RUSSIA INDIA USA

Date : Jan 24, 1997

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OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Visit of US Congressmen Howard Coble and Michael McNulty to India

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on January 28, 1997 regarding visit of US Congressmen Howard Coble and Michael McNulty to India:

US Congressmen Howard Coble and Michael. McNulty are presently on a visit to India. Congressman Coble is a 7th term Republican from North Carolina while Congressman McNulty is a 5th term Democrat from New York.

2. The visit of the two Congressmen is sponsored by the National Security Caucus Foundation (NSCF), an external arm of the National Security Caucus. The National Security Caucus is the largest Caucus in the US House of Representatives with a membership of 290 in the House of 435 members.

3. While in New Delhi, the Congressmen called on Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister, Finance and Commerce Ministers. They also attended a meeting at the Ministry of External Affairs and a luncheon-hosted by the Confederation of Indian Industries.

4. The Congressmen saw great scope for exchanging Indo-US cooperation in a variety of areas, particularly trade and investment. They felt there was a need to increase high level contacts between the two countries. They would

on their part promote this in the US Congress and the Administration.
Jan 28, 1997

INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Jan 28, 1997

Volume No

1995

SRI LANKA

Official Visit of External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral to Sri Lanka

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on January 16, 1997 regarding official visit of External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral to Sri Lanka from 19 - 22 January, 1997:

The External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral will pay an official visit to Sri Lanka from January 19-22, 1997. During his visit the External Affairs Minister would call on the Sri Lankan President, Prime Minister and hold talks with his Sri Lankan counterpart Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar, Leader of the Opposition and other senior leaders of the Sri Lankan Government.

During the visit of the External Affairs Minister, the third session of the Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Commission would be convened in Colombo. The Joint Commission has been institutionalised to broaden bilateral relations into all possible areas of cooperation ranging from trade, finance and investment, social cultural and educational matters and matters related to science and technology.

The Joint Commission would review bilateral trade and examine ways of Optimising the potential of trade and economic interaction between India and Sri Lanka in view of the opportunities created by the

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economic liberalisation being pursued by both countries.

A review of the present state of cultural exchanges including exchange of artists, scholars, grant of scholarships to Sri Lankan students and means of further enhancing interaction in these spheres are expected to feature in the forthcoming talks. A Cultural Exchange Programme would be signed during the visit.

In the area of science and technology, talks will focus on a programme of cooperation drawn up for joint efforts and cooperation in the fields of bio-technology, alternate sources of energy, information technology etc.

The earlier two rounds of the Joint Commission were held in New Delhi in January 1992 and April 1994.
Jan 16, 1997

SRI LANKA INDIA USA

Date : Jan 16, 1997

February

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AUSTRALIA USA INDIA CHINA CYPRUS LEBANON PAKISTAN MAURITIUS BANGLADESH
NAMIBIA PHILIPPINES TURKMENISTAN VENEZUELA VIETNAM PORTUGAL

Date : Feb 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

AUSTRALIA

Australia to Train Indian Railway Staff

The following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Feb 11, 1997 regarding Australia agreed to extend training Programme to Indian Railway Personnel:

Australia has agreed to extend training programmes to Indian Railway personnel for handling Heavy Haul Freight movement including maintenance of Rolling Stock. The two countries also decided to have more co-operation in the railway sector. This was decided after a high level Indian delegation, led by the Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, met the Australian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Tim Fisher, the Minister of Transport and Regional Development Mr. John Randal Sharp, the Transport Minister of New South Wales, Australia and Mr. Bob Halverson, Speaker of the House of Representatives. Use of driving simulators for training drivers for improved safety was also discussed. The delegation, which included Chairman, Financial Commissioner and Member (Mechanical) of the Railway Board, visited Australia last week.

The delegation also met the Australian Railway Industries Corp. (ARIC), and explored the possibility of Australian technology being applied to India. One of the members of ARIC, viz. M/S Futuris, is already setting up a Joint Venture company in India for introducing hi-tech composition brake blocks on Indian Railway.

The delegation visited three heavy haul facilities in Australia at Hammersley Iron, Hunter Valley Freight Corp. and Queensland Rail. It felt that there could be a possibility of increased throughput on the existing length of trains by increasing axle loads and payload in the Indian Railways. The delegation also felt that use of Road-cum-Rail vehicles and Driving Simulators

could also be implemented in India as this would lead to the high availability of Rolling Stock and productivity standards as prevalent on Australian Railways.

AUSTRALIA USA INDIA VANUATU

Date : Feb 11, 1997

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1995

CHINA

Condolence Message from the President of India to the President of the People's Republic of China on the passing away of Mr. Deng Xiaoping

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on Feb 20, 1997 regarding condolence message from the President of India to the President of the People's Republic of China on the passing away of Mr. Deng Xiaoping:

"I have learnt with profound grief of the passing away of H.E. Mr. Deng

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Xiaoping, great leader of the Chinese people. Mr. Dang was a far-sighted statesman whose contribution to the development of relations between our two countries will always be remembered. We in India share your sorrow.

On behalf of the Government and people of India, I extend heartfelt condolences of the Government and people of China. Please convey, Excellency, my condolences to the departed leader's Family".

CHINA INDIA

Date : Feb 20, 1997

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CHINA

Condolence Message from the Minister of External Affairs to the Vice Premier and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China on the demise of Mr. Deng Xiaoping

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on February 20, 1997 regarding text of a condolence message from the Minister of External Affairs to the Vice Premier and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China on the demise of Mr. Deng Xiaoping:

"It was with deep regret that I have learnt of the sad demise of H.E. Mr. Deng Xiaoping, the great leader of the Chinese people.

We in India recall the contribution made by the late leader to strengthening and further developing relations between our two countries.

As we mourn his loss, I would like to assure you that India remains committed to seeking friendly, good neighbourly, constructive and cooperative relations with China.

Please convey, Excellency, my heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of China. May I request you, Excellency, to convey my condolences also to the family of the departed leader".

CHINA INDIA

Date : Feb 20, 1997

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CYPRUS

Visit of President Glafcos Clerides of Cyprus to India

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on Feb 02, 1997 regarding state visit of President Glafcos Clerides of Cyprus to India:

The President of Cyprus, Glafcos Clerides will pay a state visit to India, 9-15 February 1997. He will be accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Lila Clerides, Cypriot Foreign Minister Alecos Michaelides and Cypriot Government Spokesman Cassoulides. A large business delegation is also accompanying him.

India and Cyprus have traditionally enjoyed extremely close and friendly bilateral relations. President Clerides' visit will further strengthen our ties and also give a boost to our economic relationship. President Clerides will discuss with Indian leaders, inter-alia, the Cyprus issues and important bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. An agreement on Cooperation in Merchant Shipping will be signed between Cyprus and India during this visit.

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CYPRUS USA INDIA

Date : Feb 02, 1997

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CYPRUS

Visit of President Glafcos Clerides of Cyprus

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on Feb 10, 1997 regarding visit of President Glafcos Clerides of Cyprus to India from 10 - 15 February 1997:

President Clerides held wide-ranging discussions with the Prime Minister today, in which the recent developments on the Cyprus issue were discussed among other subjects of bilateral and international interest. President Clerides will also call upon President Shankar Dayal Sharma. Our Ministers of Civil Aviation and Finance will call upon President Clerides tomorrow. An agreement on Cooperation in Merchant Shipping will be signed on 11th Feb '97 by Cypriot Foreign Minister Mr. A. Michaelides and our Minister for Surface Transport Shri T. G. Venkataraman.

President Clerides is scheduled to visit Udaipur, Aurangabad and Mumbai before departing for Cyprus on 15th of February.

CYPRUS USA INDIA

Date : Feb 10, 1997

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1995

LEBANON

Lebanese Foreign Office Head Visits India

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on Feb 25, 1997 regarding visit of H.E. Mr. Zafer Al-Hassan, Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lebanon to India:

H.E. Mr. Zafer Al-Hassan, Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

Lebanon, arrives on a 4-day visit to India on Feb 27, 1997.

The visit would provide an opportunity for high-level Foreign Office consultations between the two Governments. Earlier, the Foreign Secretary of India had visited Lebanon in 1993, and again in 1994, which had resumed the process of such consultations between the two sides after the prolonged period of civil strife in Lebanon. India and Lebanon have traditionally enjoyed warm, friendly and cordial relations. The present round of talks is expected to contribute significantly to these ties, and enhance the mutual understanding and cooperation in trade, economic, scientific & technological, cultural & educational, and other functional areas.

During the visit, Mr. Al-Hassan would be calling on External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral, besides other meetings at Secretary level in the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Commerce.

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LEBANON INDIA

Date : Feb 27, 1997

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OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

India's Reaction - Dialogue between India and Pakistan

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 04, 1997 on India's reaction on the press reports that Mr. Nawaz Sharif had called for a dialogue between India and Pakistan:

In response to a query, seeking India's reaction on the press reports that Mr. Nawaz Sharif had called for a dialogue between India and Pakistan, the Spokesman stated that India had always been ready for such a dialogue. The spokesman drew attention to the letter addressed by our Prime Minister to Ms. Benazir Bhutto, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan and said that India had not yet received any response to our offer of dialogue contained in the letter of the Prime Minister.

In response to a question whether such offer of dialogue by Mr. Nawaz Sharif could be considered as a positive signal, the Spokesman said that we had seen only the press reports and if these were correct in saying that the Pakistan leadership wishes to have a dialogue with this country, we will welcome it.

Responding to another question about the electoral process the Spokesman

clarified that the elections in Pakistan were entirely an internal affair of Pakistan and that he had no comments to make.

INDIA PAKISTAN

Date : Feb 04, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Visit of the Portugese Foreign Minister, Mr. Jaime Gama to India

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 04, 1997 regarding visit of Portugese Foreign Minister Mr. Jaime Gama to India from 6-10 February 1997:

The Portugese Foreign Minister, Mr. Jaime Gama, will be visiting India from 6-10 February, 1997. A Civil Aviation Agreement would be signed between the two countries on 6th February, 1997 at 1230 hrs at Hyderabad House. After the signing of the Agreement Mr. Jaime Gama would be available to answer any questions by the Press. During his stay, Mr. Gama would be calling on the President, Prime Minister and the Minister for Human Resource Development.

INDIA USA

Date : Feb 04, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

8th Meeting of the India Mauritius Joint Commission

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 04, 1997 regarding 8th Meeting of the Indo-Mauritius Joint Commission:

Briefing the newspersons regarding the 8th Meeting of the Indo-Mauritius Joint Commission, the Spokesman stated that the Joint Commission meeting was inaugurated by Shri I. K. Gujral, Minister for External Affairs on 3rd February,

1997 at Port Louis. In his opening statement, the Minister for External Affairs stated that bilateral trade between the two countries had increased from Rs. 91 crores in 1991 to Rs. 484 crores in 1995-96. Six joint ventures were in operation and 25 more

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were in the pipeline. There was now an increasing focus on high technology projects, like Remote Sensing Centre, radio telescope and Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre in Mauritius. Several new projects are under discussion during the current Joint Commission meeting including cooperation in the area of oceanography, including mapping of the exclusive economic zone of Mauritius and development of an integrated costal development plan as well as in the areas of water resources, development, environment, technical assistance and institutional linkages.

A fresh Government-to-Government Credit Agreement of US \$ 3 million was to be signed at the conclusion of the current session to finance import by Mauritius of capital goods, consumer durables and consultancy services from India on concessional terms.

The agreed minutes of the Joint Commission would be signed in the presence of the Prime Ministers of the two countries on 5th February, 1997.

INDIA MAURITIUS USA

Date : Feb 04, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Pakistan delegation met External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 04, 1997 regarding Five-member delegation of the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Pakistan attend a fair organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII):

This morning External Affairs Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral received a five member delegation of the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Pakistan, which is currently in India to attend a fair organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The Pakistan delegation was led by Mr. Naseem Ahmed, Vice President of the Chamber of Commerce, and included Mr. Zahid Zaheer, Secretary General. The meeting lasted for half an hour.

The Pakistani delegation conveyed to External Affairs Minister its

assessment that there were good prospects for economic and commercial cooperation between India and Pakistan as there were complementarities and synergies which could be profitably utilised. The delegation also said that it was most impressed with technological developments in India.

The External Affairs Minister conveyed to the delegation the interest of his government to the opening up of commercial and economic contacts between India and Pakistan and emphasised that this interchange would be for mutual benefit.

The Pakistani delegation expressed the hope that the opening of India-Pakistan economic ties would also be accompanied by an easing of the visa regime. External Affairs Minister assured the Pakistani delegation that this matter was already being addressed by the authorities concerned and that concrete steps would be announced shortly to facilitate the issue of business visas.

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PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Feb 04, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Meeting between Sheikh Hasina Wajid Prime Minister of Bangladesh and External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 14, 1997 regarding meeting between Sheikh Hasina Wajid Prime Minister of Bangladesh and External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral:

This evening, External Affairs Minister will be calling on Sheikh Hasina Wajid, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, who is presently in India for the Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference.

This meeting is in continuation of the close high-level contacts that have been established between the Indian Government and the Government headed by Sheikh Hasina. Thus, External Affairs Minister had had fruitful meetings with her in September 1996 in Dhaka, in December 1996 in New Delhi, and recently in January 1997 in Dhaka.

The meeting this evening will underline the special relationship that have been established between India and Bangladesh: all major issues of bilateral interest will be reviewed with a view to maintaining the momentum of bilateral

ties.

BANGLADESH INDIA USA

Date : Feb 14, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Visit of H.E. Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of Namibia to India from 13-18 February 1997

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 14, 1997 regarding visit of H.E. Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of Namibia to India:

The President of Namibia, H.E. Mr. Sam Nujoma, would be visiting India as a state guest from 13-18 February, 1997. He would be in Delhi from 13-15 February, 1997 and thereafter visit Jodhpur, Pune and Mumbai.

This was Mr. Sam Nujoma's 9th visit to India. He came seven times earlier to India as President of SWAPO; he last came here as the President of Namibia in 1992, when he also received the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize.

India has been the most consistent supporter of the Namibian freedom struggle and these links have been further consolidated. India has trained a large number of Namibian experts under ITEC. India has also deputed IAF personnel to Namibia and has also gifted helicopters. The Namibian Police has also been using Mahindra jeeps.

In June 1995, our President visited Namibia and on that occasion India extended drought assistance to Namibia in the form of a consignment of 1000 tonnes of wheat. India has also constructed 30 borewells in the Caprivi region of Namibia.

Recently, the President of Namibia had received the African Peace Prize and with the sizeable prize money, the President of Namibia has decided to build a maternity clinic in his country to be named after the former Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, whom he admires greatly.

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INDIA NAMIBIA USA

Date : Feb 14, 1997

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1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Withdrawal of two Indian diplomats stationed in the United States

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 17, 1997 regarding withdrawal of two Indian diplomats stationed in the United States:

The U S authorities have requested withdrawal of two Indian diplomats stationed in the United States. We deeply regret this decision. The individuals concerned were discharging their normal responsibilities as consular officers. We categorically reject any implication to the contrary.

It appears from media reports that the action was taken in retaliation. The concerned officials will be returning to India shortly.

Viewing this unnecessary incident, in the broader perspective of mature Indo-US relations, India will continue to work with the United States in improving and expanding friendly, ties and cooperation.

INDIA USA

Date : Feb 17, 1997

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Message of felicitation to H.E. Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif from Shri H. D. Deve Gowda, Prime Minister

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on Feb 17, 1997 regarding Prime Minister Shri H. D. Deve Gowda sent a message of felicitations to H.E. Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif:

Prime Minister, Shri H. D. Deve Gowda has sent a message of felicitations to H.E. Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif on his assumption of office of Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The text of Prime Minister's letter is as follows:

As you assume the office of the Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of

Pakistan, I have great pleasure in sending you my congratulations and warm greetings. I wish you success in the heavy tasks that lie ahead.

I have noted the positive statements made by Your Excellency to improve relations between our two countries. I reciprocate your sentiments in full measure. We believe there are a number of opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation, We approach these opportunities in a positive and constructive spirit, for it is our firm conviction that cooperation between us will lead to genuine benefit for both our peoples.

To this end, we seek an early resumption of dialogue between our two countries, at appropriate level. We are ready and willing to have wide ranging comprehensive talks on all issues of mutual concern.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

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PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Feb 17, 1997

Volume No

1995

PHILIPPINES

Visit of H.E. Fidel V. Ramos, President of Philippines

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on Feb 25, 1997 regarding visit of H.E. Fidel V. Ramos, President of the Philippines from 2 to 5 March, 1997:

The President of the Philippines H.E. Mr. Fidel V. Ramos will pay a State visit to India from March 2 to 5, 1997 at the invitation of the President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma.

This will be the first-ever visit of any President from the Philippines to India. The then President, Shri R. Venkataraman had visited the Philippines in 1991.

During the visit, President Ramos will hold talks with the Prime Minister. He will call on the President, and the Vice President and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha will call on the visiting dignitary. Apart from the External Affairs Minister, the Finance Minister is also scheduled to call on him. A number of agreements MoUs are expected to be signed during the course of the visit.

President Ramos will be accompanied by a high level delegation of officials

and top notch businessmen of the Philippines. He and his delegation will have interaction with Indian businessmen. Besides New Delhi, he will visit Agra.

This historic visit by the President of the Philippines will be a milestone in our bilateral relations. Bilateral trade which was approximately US \$ 170 million in 1995-96 has shown significant growth in the last 5 years, particularly after both countries have initiated the process of restructuring their economies. While prominent Indian companies have invested in the Philippines in sectors like textile and yarn, automobiles, computer software etc., investors from the Philippines have also shown interest in India. Other areas of bilateral cooperation include renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, small and medium-scale industries, railways, fashion technology etc.

The Philippines is a member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and has participated in the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM). India's full dialogue partnership with the ASEAN provides further avenues to strengthen the excellent bilateral relations between the two countries.

PHILIPPINES INDIA USA

Date : Feb 25, 1997

Volume No

1995

SHANGHAI

Indian Parliamentary Delegation visits Shanghai

The following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Feb 05, 1997 regarding Indian Parliamentary Delegation visits Shanghai:

The Indian Parliamentary delegation, led by the Minister of State for Law and Justice, Shri Ramakant D. Khalap, met Mr. Sun Guizhang, Vice-Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress and had discussions covering a wide range of economic and social development issues. The talks were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere.

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While in Shanghai, the delegation visited the Jinqiao Export Processing Zone in the fast developing Pudong New Area and were informed about the export operations in the Zone. The delegation also visited the low-cost and high-quality apartments in the Sanlinyuan Residential Area. This huge complex of residential apartments will cater to those people currently living in sub-standard houses and those who need to be relocated on account of urban infrastructure construction.

The Indian delegation was received by Mr. Qian Fuxing, Deputy Secretary General of the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress on arrival at Shanghai on 3rd February, 1997. The Members of the delegation are Sarvashri Dr. B. B. Dutta, Maheshwar Singh, Nagendra Nath Ojha, M. A. Baby, R. K. mar, Ram Deo Bhandari, Sriballav Panigrahi, Smt. Ratna Singh, Pramod Mahajan, Dr. M. Jagannath, Shivanand H. Koujalgi and S. S. Palanimanickam.

CHINA INDIA USA

Date : Feb 05, 1997

Volume No

1995

TURKMENISTAN

State visit of H.E. Mr. Saparmuradov Atayevich Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan to India

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on Feb 21, 1997 regarding state visit of H.E. Mr. Saparmuradov Atayevich Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan to India:

H.E. Mr. Saparmuradov Atayevich Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan, is paying a State visit to India between 25-26 February 1997, at the invitation of the President of India. During the visit, he will also have meetings with the Vice-President and Prime Minister. Agreements relating to economic cooperation, health, culture and cooperation on environmental issues are expected to be signed during the visit.

This is the second State visit of President Niyazov to India. He had earlier visited India in April 1992.

India has traditional ties of friendship and cooperation with Turkmenistan. The visit of H.E. President Niyazov will further enhance the goodwill that exists between the two countries and strengthen bilateral cooperation in diverse areas as well as promote mutual understanding on regional and international issues of common interest.

TURKMENISTAN INDIA

Date : Feb 21, 1997

Volume No

1995

TURKMENISTAN

Vice President Meets President of Turkmenistan

The following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Feb 26, 1997 regarding meeting between Shri K. R. Narayanan, Vice President of India and Mr. Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan:

India and Turkmenistan has expressed deep satisfaction on the expanding bilateral relations and underlined the vast potential for enhanced economic cooperation, particularly in the energy sector These observations were made during half-an-hour meeting between Shri K. R. Narayanan, Vice President of India and President Niyazov of Turkmenistan.

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Shri Narayanan pointed out that trilateral agreement on transit between India, Iran and Turkmenistan will provide an impetus to improved trade with Central Asia by facilitating movement of goods between the countries of Central Asia and India. Shri Narayanan observed that India attaches great importance to bilateral relations with Central Asian countries, as it considers Central Asia as a strategic heart of the world. The Vice President also emphasised the need to further strengthen cultural relations between the two countries, to provide stronger basis for expanding economic and trade relations.

TURKMENISTAN INDIA IRAN USA

Date : Feb 26, 1997

Volume No

1995

VENEZUELA

Relations between India and the ANDEAN Community

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on February 13, 1997 regarding at a meeting of the ANDEAN Foreign Ministers in Caracas (Venezuela), the Foreign Ministers decided to institutionalise relation between India and the ANDEAN Community:

At a meeting of the ANDEAN Foreign Ministers in Caracas (Venezuela) on 1 , xter the Foreign Ministers decided to institutionalise relations between India and the ANDEAN community. This has since been done through an exchange of

letters between the Indian External Affairs Minister and the Bolivian Foreign Minister as Secretary Protempore of the ANDEAN Council of Foreign Ministers.

The institutional mechanism established between India and ANDEAN community would enable the strengthening of relations between the ANDEAN region and India, inter alia, by identification of areas of mutual interest and priority areas for cooperation.

The five member ANDEAN group of countries comprising Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru encompass a territory of 4.7 million square kilometres with a population of 92.5 million, a GDP of US \$ 161 billion, and a volume of foreign trade of around US \$ 54 million.

VENEZUELA INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC BOLIVIA COLOMBIA ECUADOR PERU TOTO
USA

Date : Jan 26, 1997

Volume No

1995

VIETNAM

Visit of Prime Minister of Vietnam to India

The following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi on Feb 25, 1997 regarding official visit of H.E. Mr. Vo Van Kiet, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to India:

His Excellency Mr. Vo Van Kiet, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Pham Ky Cam will be paying an official visit to India from 7th to 9th March, 1997. This will be the first time H.E. Mr. Vo Van Kiet is coming to India and the first top level interaction between India and Vietnam since the latter joined ASEAN in July 1995 and India became Full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN in July 1996.

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During his stay in Delhi, the Vietnamese Prime Minister will hold talks with Prime Minister, Shri H. D. Deve Gowda. He will call on the President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma and Vice President, Shri K. R. Narayanan. The Union Ministers of External Affairs and Agriculture will call on the visiting dignitary.

During the visit of Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet, bilateral agreements relating to trade, investment protection and MOU on cooperation in environment and forestry are expected to be signed between India and Vietnam. On 8th March 1997 the Vietnamese Prime Minister will deliver the Keynote Speech on the

subject 'Moving to the Market - Sustaining Reforms in India and Asia' at the '8th Annual Corporate Conference' organised at Hotel Taj Palace jointly by the Asia Society of America and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The Vietnamese Prime Minister and his delegation will also visit Agra.

VIETNAM INDIA USA

Date : Feb 25, 1997

Volume No

1995

ANNEXURE I

Air Services Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Portugal

The Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Portugal hereinafter referred to as the "Contracting Parties";

Being parties to the Convention of International Civil Aviation opened for signature at Chicago on the seventh day of December, 1944;

Desiring to promote their mutual relations in the field of civil aviation and to conclude an agreement for the purpose of establishing air services between their respective territories;

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Agreement, unless the context otherwise requires,

- a) the term "aeronautical authorities" shall mean, in the case of India, the Director General of Civil Aviation and in the case of the Republic of Portugal, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation or in both the cases, any person or body authorized to perform the functions currently exercised by the said authorities;
- b) the term "Convention" means the Convention on International Civil Aviation opened for signature at Chicago on the Seventh day of December, 1944 and includes any Annex adopted under Article 90 of that Convention and any amendment of the Annexes or of the Convention under Articles 90 and 94 thereof so far as those Annexes and amendments have been adopted by both Contracting Parties;
- c) the term "designated airline" shall mean an airline which has been

designated and authorized in accordance with Article 3 of the present Agreement;

d) the terms "territory", "air service", "International air service", "airline"

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and "stop for non-traffic purposes" have the meanings respectively assigned to them in Articles 2 and 96 of the Convention;

e) the term "tariff" shall mean the prices to be paid for the carriage of passengers, baggage and freight and the conditions under which those prices apply, including prices and conditions for agency and other auxiliary services, but excluding remuneration or conditions for the carriage of mail; and

f) the term "Annex" shall mean the Route Schedules attached to the present Agreement and any Clauses or Notes appearing in such Annex.

ARTICLE 2

OPERATING RIGHTS

1. Each Contracting Party grants to the other Contracting Party the rights specified in this Agreement for the purpose of establishing scheduled international air services on the routes specified in the Annex thereto. Such services and routes are hereinafter called "the agreed services" and "the specified routes" respectively.

2. Subject to the provisions of this Agreement, the airline designated by each Contracting Party shall enjoy the following rights :

a) to fly without landing across the territory of the other Contracting Party;

b) to make stops in the territory of the other Contracting Party for non-traffic purposes; and

c) while operating an agreed service on a specified route, the airline designated by each Contracting Party shall also enjoy the right to embark and disembark, in the territory of the other Contracting Party at the point(s) specified for that route in the Annex to this Agreement, international traffic in passengers, cargo or mail.

3. Nothing in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be deemed to confer on the airline of one Contracting Party the privilege of taking on, in the territory of the other Contracting Party, passengers, cargo or mail destined for another point in the territory of that other Contracting Party.

ARTICLE 3

DESIGNATION OF AIRLINES

1. Each Contracting Party shall have the right to designate one airline for the purpose of operating the agreed services on the specified routes. The

notification of such designation shall be made, in writing by the aeronautical authorities of the Contracting Party designating the airline to the aeronautical authorities of the other Contracting Party.

2. On receipt of such notification, the aeronautical authorities of the other Contracting Party, subject to the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of this Article shall grant without delay the appropriate operating authorization to the airline designated.

3. The aeronautical authorities of one Contracting Party may require the airline designated by the other Contracting Party to satisfy them that it is qualified to fulfil the conditions prescribed under the laws and regulations normally and reasonably applied to the operation of international air services by such authorities in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.

4. Each Contracting Party shall have the right to refuse to grant the operating authorization referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article, or to impose such conditions as it may deem necessary on the exercise by a designated airline of the rights specified in Article 2 of this Agreement in any case where the said Contracting Party is not satisfied that substantial ownership and effective control of that airline are vested in the Contracting Party designating the airline or in its nationals.

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5. When an airline has been so designated and authorized, it may begin at any time to operate the agreed services, provided that the flight-schedules have been approved and tariffs are in force in respect of those services, as required respectively under Article 12 and Article 14 of this Agreement.

6. Each Contracting Party shall have the right to withdraw, the designation of its airline and to substitute it by another airline.

ARTICLE 4

REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF OPERATING AUTHORIZATION

Each Contracting Party reserves to itself the right to revoke an operating authorization or to suspend the exercise of the rights specified in Article 2 of the present Agreement by the airline designated by the other Contracting Party, or to impose such conditions as it may deem necessary on the exercise of these rights:

- a) in any case where it is not satisfied that substantial ownership and effective control of that airline are vested in the Contracting Party designating the airline or in nationals of such Contracting Party; or
- b) in the case of failure by that airline to comply with the laws or regulations of the Contracting Party granting these rights; or
- c) in case the airline fails to operate in accordance with the conditions prescribed under the present Agreement.

2. Unless immediate revocation, suspension or imposition of the conditions mentioned in paragraph (1) of this Article is essential to prevent further infringements of laws, regulations, or provisions of this Agreement such right shall be exercised only after consultation with the other Contracting Party.

ARTICLE 5

ENTRY AND CLEARANCE LAWS AND REGULATIONS

1. The laws, regulations and procedures of a Contracting Party relating to the admission to, stay in, or departure from its territory of aircraft engaged in international air navigation, or to the operation and navigation of such aircraft while within its territory, shall be applied to the aircraft of both Contracting Parties without distinction as to nationality, and shall be complied with by such aircraft upon entering into or departing from or while within the territory of that Party.

2. The laws, regulations and procedures of a Contracting Party relating to the admission to, stay in, or departure from its territory of passengers, crew, cargo and mail transported on board the aircraft, such as regulations relating to entry, clearance, immigration, passports, customs and sanitary control shall be complied with by or on behalf of such passengers, crew, cargo and mail upon entrance into or departure from or while within the territory of that Party.

ARTICLE 6

CUSTOMS CHARGES AND PROCEDURES

1. Aircraft operated on international services by the designated airline of either Contracting Party, as well as its regular equipment, supplies of fuels and lubricants and aircraft stores already on board, introduced into or taken on board such aircraft and intended solely for use by or in such aircraft shall, with respect to all Customs duties, inspection fees and other duties or taxes, be accorded in the territory of the other Contracting Party, treatment not less favourable than that granted by the other Contracting Party to its own airline (s) operating scheduled international air services or to the airlines of the most favoured nation.

2. The same treatment shall be accorded to spare parts entered into the territory of either Contracting Party for the main-

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tenance or repair of aircraft used on international services by the designated airline of the other Contracting Party.

3. Neither Contracting Party shall be obliged to grant to the designated airline of the other Contracting Party exemption or remission of customs duty, inspection fees or similar charges unless such other Contracting Party grants exemption or remission of such charges to the designated airline of the first Contracting Party.

4. The regular airborne equipment as well as the materials and supplies

retained on board the aircraft of either Contracting Party may be unloaded in the territory of the other Contracting Party only with the approval of the Customs authorities of such territory.

5. Materials referred to in paragraphs (1), (2) and (4) of this Article may be required to be kept under Customs supervision or control.

ARTICLE 7

PASSENGERS AND CARGO IN DIRECT TRANSIT

Passengers, baggage and cargo in direct transit across the territory of either Contracting Party and not leaving the area of the airport reserved for such purpose shall except in respect of security measures, be subject to no more than a simplified control. Baggage and cargo in direct transit shall be exempt from customs duties and other similar taxes.

ARTICLE 8

USER CHARGES

Each Contracting Party may impose or permit to be imposed just and reasonable charges for the use of airports and other aviation facilities, provided that these charges shall not be higher than those paid by the other airlines engaged in similar international air services.

2. Each Contracting Party shall encourage consultations between its competent charging organizations and the designated airlines using the services and facilities and, where practicable, through the airlines' representative organizations. Reasonable notice should be given to users of any proposals for changes in user charges to enable them to express their views before changes are made.

3. Neither Contracting Party shall give preference to its own or to any other airline over an airline engaged in similar international air services of the other Contracting Party in the application of its customs, immigration, quarantine and similar regulations or in the use of airports, airways, air traffic services and associated facilities under its control.

ARTICLE 9

REPRESENTATION

The designated airline of one Contracting Party shall be allowed, on the basis of reciprocity, to maintain in the territory of the other Contracting Party its representatives and commercial, operational and technical staff as required in connection with the operational of the agreed services. These staff shall be chosen among nationals of either or both Parties as may be necessary.

2. These staff requirements may, at the option of the designated airline, be satisfied by its own personnel or by using the services of another organization, company or airline operating in the territory of the other Contracting Party, and authorized to perform such services in the territory of that Contracting

Party.

3. The representatives and staff shall be subject to the laws and regulations in force of the other Contracting Party, and consistent with such laws and regulations, such Contracting Party shall, on the basis of reciprocity and with the minimum of delay, grant the necessary work permits, employment visas or other similar documents to the representatives and staff referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article.

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4. Based on the principle of reciprocity, each Contracting Party grants to the designated airline of the other Contracting Party the right to engage in the sale of air transportation in its territory directly and, at its discretion, through its agents. Each designated airline shall have the right to sell such transportation and any person shall be free to purchase such transportation in local currency or in any freely convertible currency.

ARTICLE 10

AVIATION SECURITY

1. Consistent with their rights and obligations under international law, the Contracting Parties reaffirm that their obligation to each other to protect the security of civil aviation against acts of unlawful interference forms an integral part of this Agreement. Without limiting the generality of their rights and obligations under international law, the Contracting Parties shall in particular act in conformity with the provisions of the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, signed at Tokyo on 14 September, 1963, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, signed at the Hague on 16 December, 1970 and the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, signed at Montreal on 23 September, 1971 and any aviation security agreement that becomes binding on both Contracting Parties.

2. The Contracting Parties shall provide upon request all necessary assistance to each other to prevent acts of unlawful seizure of civil aircraft and other unlawful acts against the safety of such aircraft, their passengers and crew, airports and air navigation facilities, and any other threat to the security of civil aviation.

3. The Parties shall, in their mutual relations, act in conformity with the aviation security provisions established by the International Civil Aviation Organization and designated as Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation to the extent that such security provisions are applicable to the Parties; they shall require that operators of aircraft of their registry or operators of aircraft who have their principal place of business or permanent residence in their territory and the operators of airports in their territory act in conformity with such aviation security provisions.

4. Each Contracting Party agrees that such operators of aircraft may be required to observe the aviation security provisions referred to in paragraph (3) above required by the other Contracting Party for entry into, departure

from, or while within, the territory of that other Contracting Party. Each Contracting Party shall ensure that adequate measures are effectively applied within its territory to protect the aircraft and to inspect passengers, crew, carry-on items, baggage, cargo and aircraft stores prior to and during broading or loading. Each Contracting Party shall also give sympathetic consideration to any request from the other Contracting Party for reasonable special security measures to meet a particular threat.

5. When an incident or threat of an incident of unlawful seizure of civil aircraft or other unlawful acts against the safety of such aircraft, their passengers and crew, airports or air navigation facilities occurs, the Contracting Parties shall assist each other by facilitating communications and other appropriate measures intended to terminate rapidly and safely such incident or threat thereof.

6. Each Contracting Party shall take measures, as it may find practicable, to ensure that an aircraft subjected to an act of unlawful seizure or other acts of unlawful interference which has landed in its territory is detained on the ground unless its departure is necessitated by the overriding duty to protect human life. Wherever practicable, such measures shall be taken on the basis of mutual consultations.

7. Any departure from the provisions of this Article may constitute grounds for application of Article 4 of this Agreement.

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ARTICLE 11

CAPACITY PROVISIONS

1. The designated airline of the Contracting Parties shall have fair and equal opportunity to operate the agreed services on any route specified in the Annex to this Agreement.

2. In Operating the agreed services the designated airline of each Contracting Party shall take into account the interests of the designated airline of the other Contracting Party so as not to affect unduly the services which the latter provides on the same route.

3. The agreed services provided by the designated airlines of the Contracting Parties shall retain as their primary objective the provision at a reasonable load factor of capacity adequate to the current and reasonably anticipated requirements for the carriage of passengers and cargo including mail coming from or destined for the territory of the Contracting Party which has designated the airline.

4. Based upon the principles enshrined in the preceding paragraphs, the frequencies of the agreed services to be provided by the designated airline of each Contracting Party shall be agreed between the aeronautical authorities of the two Contracting Parties.

5. In the event that the aeronautical authorities of the Contracting Parties

do not fall in agreement upon the capacity to be offered, the matter shall be dealt with in accordance with Article 16 of this Agreement.

6. If, on review, the aeronautical authorities of the Contracting Parties fail to agree on the capacity to be provided on the agreed services, the capacity that may be provided by the designated airlines of the Contracting Parties shall not exceed the total capacity, including seasonal variations, previously agreed to be provided.

ARTICLE 12

PROVISION OF OPERATING INFORMATION

The aeronautical authorities of each Contracting Party shall cause their designated airline to file with the aeronautical authorities of the other Contracting Party, for their consideration and approval, at least sixty days prior to the inauguration of the agreed services. information relating to the type of service and its frequency, the type of aircraft to be used and the flight schedules. Similar information shall also be supplied at least 30 days in advance as and when any changes are to be introduced regarding operation of the agreed services. In special cases, the above set time limit may be reduced subject to the agreement of the said authorities.

2. The designated airlines shall also furnish any other information as may be required to satisfy the aeronautical authorities of the other party that the requirements of the Agreement are being duly observed.

ARTICLE 13

PROVISION OF STATISTICS

The aeronautical authorities of each Contracting Party shall cause their designated airline to furnish to the aeronautical authorities of the other Contracting Party statistics relating to the traffic carried during each month on the agreed services to and from the territory of that other Contracting Party, showing the countries of origin and destination and the points of embarkation and disembarkation of such traffic. Such statistics shall be furnished as soon as possible.

ARTICLE 14

TARIFFS

1. The tariffs to be charged by the designated airline of one Contracting Party for carriage to or from the territory of the other Contracting Party shall be established at reasonable levels, due regard

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being paid to all relevant factors, including cost of operation, reasonable profit, and the tariffs of other airlines.

2. The tariffs referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article shall, if

possible, be agreed between the designated airlines of the two Contracting Parties and such agreement shall, wherever possible, be reached using the procedures of the International Air Transport Association.

3. The tariffs so agreed shall be submitted for the approval of the aeronautical authorities of both Contracting Parties at least sixty (60) days before the proposed date of their introduction. In special cases, this period may be reduced, subject to the agreement of the said authorities.

4. This approval may be given expressly. If neither of the aeronautical authorities has expressed disapproval within thirty (30) days from the date of submission, in accordance with paragraph (3) of this Article, those tariffs shall be considered as approved. In the event of the period for submission being reduced, as provided for in paragraph (3), the aeronautical authorities may agree that the period within which any disapproval must be notified shall be less than thirty (30) days.

5. If a tariff cannot be agreed in accordance with Paragraph (2) of this Article, or if, during the period applicable in accordance with paragraph (4) the aeronautical authorities of one Contracting Party give the aeronautical authorities of the other Contracting Party notice of disapproval of a tariff agreed in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (2), the aeronautical authorities of the two Contracting Parties shall endeavour to establish the tariff by mutual agreement.

6. If the aeronautical authorities cannot agree on any tariff submitted to them under paragraph (3) of this Article, or on the establishment of any tariff under paragraph (5), the dispute shall be settled in accordance with the provisions of Article 18 of this Agreement.

7. A tariff established in accordance with the provisions of this Article shall remain in force until a new tariff has been established. Nevertheless, a tariff shall not be prolonged by virtue of this paragraph for more than twelve (12) months after the date on which it would otherwise have expired.

ARTICLE 15

TRANSFER OF EARNINGS

1. Each Contracting Party grants to the designated airline of the other Contracting Party the right to remit to its head office, the excess of receipts over expenditure earned in the territory of the first Contracting Party. Such remittances, however, shall be made in any convertible currency, and subject to, and in accordance with the foreign exchange regulations of the Contracting Party in the territory of which the revenue accrued.

2. Such transfers shall be effected on the basis of the official exchange rate for currency payment, or where there are no official exchange rates, at the prevailing foreign exchange market rates for currency payment.

3. In case special arrangements ruling the settlement of payments are in force between the two Contracting Parties, the provisions of such arrangements shall be applied to the transfer of funds under paragraph (1) of this Article.

ARTICLE 16

CONSULTATIONS

1. In order to ensure close cooperation concerning all the issues related to the implementation and application of this Agreement, the aeronautical authorities of each Contracting Party shall consult each other whenever it becomes necessary, on request of either Contracting Party.
2. Such consultations shall begin within a period of sixty (60) days from the date of written request by one Contracting Party, unless otherwise agreed by both Contracting Parties.

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ARTICLE 17

MODIFICATION OF AGREEMENT

1. If either of the Contracting Parties considers it desirable to modify any provision of this Agreement, it may at any time request consultation to the other Contracting Party. Such consultation shall begin within a period of sixty (60) days from the date of the request, unless otherwise agreed.
2. Any amendment or modification of this Agreement shall be settled between the Contracting Parties according to their own constitutional procedures and shall come into effect when it has been confirmed by an Exchange of Notes through diplomatic channels.
3. Modification to the Annex may be effected by direct agreement between the aeronautical authorities of the Contracting Parties and shall come into force by an Exchange of Notes through diplomatic channels.

ARTICLE 18

SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

If any dispute arises relating to the interpretation or application of this Agreement, the aeronautical authorities of the Contracting Parties shall endeavour to settle it by negotiations between themselves, failing which the dispute shall be referred to the Contracting Parties for settlement.

ARTICLE 19

APPLICABILITY OF MULTILATERAL AIR CONVENTIONS

To the extent to which they are applicable to the air services established under this Agreement, the provisions of the Convention shall remain in force in their present form between the Contracting Parties for the duration of the Agreement, unless both Contracting Parties ratify any amendment to the Convention, which shall have duly come into force, in which case the Convention as amended shall remain in force for the duration of this Agreement.

2. If a general multilateral air convention comes into force in respect of both Contracting Parties, the provisions of such convention shall prevail.

ARTICLE 20

ANNEX

The Annex attached to this Agreement shall be deemed to be a part of the Agreement and all references to the Agreement shall include reference to the Annex, except where otherwise expressly provided.

ARTICLE 21

ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Agreement shall come into force when the Contracting Parties, by an exchange of Diplomatic Notes, notify each other of the completion of their constitutional requirements.

ARTICLE 22

TERMINATION

Either Contracting Party may at any time give written notice to the other Contracting Party of its desire to terminate this Agreement. Such notice shall be simultaneously communicated to the International Civil Aviation Organization. If such notice is given, this Agreement shall terminate twelve months after the date of receipt of the notice by the other Contracting Party, unless the notice to terminate is withdrawn by agreement before the expiry of this period. In the absence of acknowledgment of receipt by the other

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Contracting Party, notice shall be deemed to have been received fourteen days after the receipt of the notice by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Done at New Delhi this Sixth day of February, 1997 in six originals two each in Hindi, English and Portuguese languages, all the texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

(I. K. GUJRAL)

Sd/ -

Minister of External Affairs For the Government of the Republic of India

Sd/ -

(JAIME GAMA)

Minister of Foreign Affairs
For the Government of the
Republic of Portugal

ANNEX

SECTION - I

The designated airline of India shall be entitled to operate the agreed services on the following routes.

Points of Origin	Intermediate Points
1	2
Point (s) in India	Any one point excluding points in Greece
Points of Destination	Beyond Points
3	4
Lisbon	Any one point excluding points in Brazil, Angola & Mozambique

SECTION II

The designated airline of Portugal shall be entitled to operate the agreed services on the following route:

Points of Origin	Intermediate Points
1	2
Point (s) in Portugal	Any one point excluding points in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE & Oman
Points of Destination	Beyond Points
3	4
Bombay	Any one point excluding points in Singapore & Japan

Notes:

1. The designated airlines may, on all or any flights, omit calling at any of the points in columns (2) & (4) above, provided that the agreed services on these routes begin at a point in their own country.

2. The designated airlines shall be permitted to exercise fifth freedom traffic rights between the points in column (3) and the points in columns (2) and (4).
3. Intermediate and/or beyond points not specified may be served without exercising fifth freedom traffic rights.
4. The designated airlines shall be permitted to operate open-jaw/roundrobin flights exercising 5th freedom traffic rights between the points in column (3) and the points specified in columns (2) and (4).

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ANNEXURE II

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Merchant Shipping

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, hereinafter referred to as the "Contracting Parties";

Desiring to strengthen the friendly relations existing between the two countries and to intensify their economic relations;

Aiming to develop and promote cooperation between the Republic of India and the Republic of Cyprus in the field of merchant shipping on a mutually advantageous basis in accordance with their respective needs and objectives for economic development:

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE I

The Contracting Parties agree to cooperate on the basis of equal rights, mutual benefit and the principle of freedom of maritime navigation in order to develop the relations between the Republic of Cyprus and the Government of the Republic of India in the field of merchant shipping.

ARTICLE 2

For the purpose of this Agreement:

a) The term "vessel" shall mean any merchant vessel registered in the territory and flying the national flag of either Contracting Party in accordance with its laws and regulations

This definition excludes warships, auxiliary warships, fishing vessels and other vessels destined or used for non-commercial purposes;

b) The term "crew" shall mean all persons, including the master, actually employed under contract for duties on board a vessel during a voyage and included in the crew list;

c) The term "ports of the Contracting Parties" shall mean seaports, including roadsteads, in the territory of either Contracting Party which are approved and open to international shipping.

ARTICLE 3

The territories of the Contracting Parties to which the present agreement applies are:

- a) on the part of Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus, and
- b) on the part of India, the Republic of India.

ARTICLE 4

1) The Contracting Parties agree:

- a) to promote participation of their vessels in the transportation of goods between their countries;
- b) to co-operate in eliminating any hindrances which may hamper the development of sea trade between their countries;
- c) for the purpose of effectively utilising their vessels, to encourage the participation of their vessels, as far as possible, in the transportation of goods between their countries and to and from third countries.

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d) to cooperate for the employment, improvement of conditions of work and for the welfare of their seamen employed on each other's vessels.

2) The provisions of this Article shall not affect the participation of vessels of third countries in the sea trade between the ports of the Contracting Parties.

3) In conformity with this article the shipping enterprises registered and operating in accordance with the laws and regulations of either State may agree to operate jointly or separately line services as well as to conclude agreements on technical and commercial matters related to shipping.

ARTICLE 5

1) Each Contracting Party shall afford to vessels of the other Contracting Party the same treatment as it affords to its own vessels engaged in international voyages in respect of free access to ports, use of ports for leading and unloading of cargoes and for embarking and disembarking of passengers, payment of dues and taxes based on the tonnage or otherwise, in accordance with the national laws and regulations, exercising normal commercial operations and use of services related to navigation.

2) The provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article:

- a) shall not apply to ports not open to the entry of foreign vessels;

- b) shall not apply to the activities reserved by each of the Contracting Parties for their organisations or enterprises including, in particular, national cabotage;
- c) shall not oblige a Contracting Party to extend to vessels of the other Contracting Party exemptions from compulsory pilotage requirements granted to its own vessels;
- d) shall not affect the regulations concerning entry and stay of foreigners.

ARTICLE 6

The Contracting Parties shall adopt, within the limits of their respective national laws and regulations, all appropriate measures to reduce unnecessary delays of vessels in ports and to simplify, as far as possible, the carrying out of administrative, customs and sanitary formalities applicable in ports.

ARTICLE 7

- 1) Each of the Contracting Parties shall recognise the nationality of a vessel of the other Contracting Party on the basis of the documents on board that vessel issued by the competent authorities of the other Contracting Party in accordance with its national laws and regulations.
- (2) Vessel's documents on board, including documents in relation to the tonnage and the crew, issued or recognised by the competent authorities of one Contracting Party shall be accepted by the competent bodies of the other Contracting Party.

ARTICLE 8

- (1) Each of the Contracting Parties shall recognise the identity documents issued by the competent authorities of the other Contracting Party to members of the crew who are nationals of that Contracting Party and shall grant to the holders of such documents the rights provided for in Article 9, 10 and 11 of the present Agreement under the conditions stipulated therein.

The identity documents are:

the "Cyprus Seaman's Book" and the "Passport issued by the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Cyprus" for nationals of the Republic of Cyprus.

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the "Cyprus Seaman's Book" and the issued by the Shipping Master or Competent Officer under the Directorate General of Shipping, Ministry of Surface Transport, Government of India, for nationals of the Republic of India.

- (2) The provisions of Articles 9, 10 and 11 of the present Agreement shall be accordingly applied to any person who is, neither a Cypriot nor an Indian citizen but holds identity documents corresponding to the provisions of either the convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic, 1965 and its

Annex, or the Convention Concerning Seafarers National Identity Documents No. 108 of the International Labour Organisation. Such identity documents must be issued by a country which is a party to the relevant convention and the readmission of the bearer to that country is guaranteed.

(3) The provision of Articles 9, 10 and 11 of the present Agreement shall apply, to the extent possible, to any person who is neither a Cypriot nor an Indian citizen and holds an identity document other than that mentioned in paragraph 2 of this Article.

ARTICLE 9

(1) Holders of the seamen's identity document specified in Article 8 of the present Agreement, being members of the crew, are permitted to stay for temporary shore leave, without visas, during the stay of the vessel in a port of the other Contracting Party, provided the master has submitted the crew list to the competent authorities in accordance with the regulations in force in that port.

(2) While leading and returning to the vessel, the persons mentioned above are subject to frontier and customs control in force in that port.

ARTICLE 10

(1) Holders of the seaman's identity document specified in Article 8 of the present agreement are permitted as passengers of any means of transport to enter the territory of the other Contracting Party or to pass through its territory in transit whenever they are on the way to their vessel or moving to another vessel, on the way to the motherland or going for any other reason, approved by the authorities of this other Contracting Party.

(2) In all cases specified in paragraph 1 of this Article authorities of the relevant contracting Party shall grant the necessary visas at the point of entry with the shortest possible delay.

(3) In case the holder of the seaman's identity document specified in Article 8 of the present Agreement is not a citizen of either Contracting Party, the visas specified in this Article shall be granted; provided that the return to the country which has issued the seaman's identity document, is guaranteed to the holder.

ARTICLE 11

(1) The seamen who possess the identity documents mentioned in Article 8 and are included in the crew list of the vessel, as well as the members of their families embarked on the same vessel, shall enjoy the right of shore admittance for temporary stay in the port town during the period of the vessel's stay in that port.

(2) The shore admittance and their temporary stay in the port town, as well as the trip from the port town to another place or post of the same State for service purposes, or in order to contact the diplomatic office or the consular office of their State, are subject to the local regulations.

(3) Each of the Contracting Parties reserves the right to deny entry to its territory to seamen whom it considers undesirable.

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ARTICLE 12

The Contracting Parties agree to render to each other, within the available possibilities, technical assistance in developing merchant fleets including training of seamen. For this purpose the Contracting Parties shall encourage, support and facilitate cooperation between their appropriate training institutions and maritime organisations.

ARTICLE 13

Shipping organisations and enterprises registered, operating and having their registered office in the territory of one Contracting Party, shall be entitled to establish permanent representation in the territory of the other Contracting Party, in accordance with the latter's laws and regulations.

ARTICLE 14

Each Contracting Party shall, in accordance with its laws and regulations, allow authorised Government representatives or diplomatic and consular missions of the other Contracting Party, as well as representatives of shipping enterprises registered in the other Contracting Party, to enter its ports and board vessels sailing under the flag or chartered by enterprises of the other Contracting Party, in order to perform duties related to the activities of these vessels and their crews.

ARTICLE 15

(1) If a vessel of one Contracting Party suffers shipwreck, runs aground, is cast ashore, or suffers any other accident off the coast of the territory of the other Contracting Party, the vessel and the cargo shall enjoy in the territory of the latter Party the same benefits and privileges and accept the same liabilities as are accorded to a vessel of that Party and its cargo. The master, the crew and passengers as well as the vessel itself and its cargo, shall be granted, at any time, help and assistance to the same extent as in the case of a national vessel.

(2) The cargo, equipment, fittings, stores or other articles rescued from a vessel which has suffered an accident referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article, shall not be liable to customs duties or other taxes of any kind imposed upon or by reason of importation, provided that they are not delivered for use or consumption in the territory of the other Contracting Party.

(3) Nothing in the provisions of paragraph (2) of this Article shall be construed so as to preclude the application of the laws and regulations of the Contracting Parties with regard to the temporary storage of goods.

(4) Nothing in this Article shall prejudice any claim for salvage in respect

of any help or assistance given to a vessel and its cargo.

(5) The competent authorities of one Contracting Party in whose territory vessel of the other Contracting Party has suffered a casualty, as described in paragraph (1) shall immediately notify the nearest consular representative of the other Contracting Party of the event and conduct an investigation into the cause of the casualty or provide every possible assistance for carrying out such investigation.

ARTICLE 16

Notwithstanding the provisions of this Agreement, vessels belonging to, operated or chartered by an enterprise registered and operating under the laws and regulations of one Contracting Party and having registered office in its territory, shall not be chartered for or enter a port of the other Contracting Party which has been closed to international shipping by the latter party.

ARTICLE 17

The taxation of income derived from the use of vessels in international traffic shall be regulated by the provisions of the Agreement between the Republic of Cyprus and the Republic of India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of

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Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital, of 13 June, 1994.

ARTICLE 18

Residents of any one of the Contracting Parties who are employed on board vessels registered in the other Contracting Party as masters, officers or other members of the crew should be taxed on income derived from wages or other benefits in respect of paid services rendered, only in the Contracting Party where the vessel is registered and is flying its flag.

ARTICLE 19

(1) The provisions of this Agreement do not affect the rights and obligations of the Contracting Parties arising out of the international maritime conventions accepted by both Contracting Parties.

(2) Unless otherwise provided in this Agreement, the national legislation of each Contracting Party shall be applied.

ARTICLE 20

(1) For the purpose of ensuring the effective implementation of this Agreement a maritime Joint Commission is set up composed of representatives of the administrations and experts appointed by the Contracting Parties.

(2) The Commission shall consider matters of mutual interest in the field of shipping and deal with any persistent problem which may arise in the course of

the application of this agreement.

(3) The Commission is convened at the request of either Contracting Party.

ARTICLE 21

(1) The matters referring to the implementation of the present Agreement will be dealt with by the competent authorities of the two Contracting Parties.

The competent authorities are:

In the case of the Republic of Cyprus; The Ministry of Communications and Works.

In the case of the Republic of India; The Ministry of Surface Transport.

(2) In case any of the competent authorities mentioned in this Article is changed, the name of the new authority will be notified to the other Contracting Party through diplomatic channels.

ARTICLE 22

(1) Any differences in the interpretation and/or application of the present Agreement will be settled by means of direct negotiations between the competent authorities of the two Contracting Parties.

(2) In case these authorities do not reach an agreement, the differences will be settled through diplomatic channels.

ARTICLE 23

The agreement shall enter into force thirty days after the receipt of the later notification signifying the ratification of the Agreement in accordance with the constitutional procedures and/or national laws and regulations of each Contracting Party.

The present Agreement is concluded for an unlimited period and it may be terminated by either Contracting Party at six months notice communicated, through diplomatic channels, to the other Contracting Party.

ARTICLE 24

Any alternation of, or amendment to this Agreement shall be agreed upon in writing between the contracting Parties and shall enter into force following the same procedure as described in Article 23.

DONE in New Delhi this 11th day of February, 1997 in two originals in the English.

Sd/-

For the Government of Republic of India

Sd/-

For the Government of Republic of Cyprus

INDIA PORTUGAL CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC USA JAPAN GREECE BRAZIL ANGOLA

MOZAMBIQUE KUWAIT SAUDI ARABIA BAHRAIN QATAR OMAN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
CYPRUS MALI

Date : Feb 25, 1997

March

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Date : Mar 01, 1997

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INDIA

Statement made by Shri I. K. Gujral, Minister of External Affairs in Rajya Sabha on 4th March, 1997

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 04, 1997 containing the statement made by Shri I. K. Gujral, Minister of External Affairs in Rajya Sabha on 4th March, 1997:

Government's attention has been drawn to a letter from the Vice President of the United States to one Gurmit Singh Aulakh self-styled President of the Council of Khalistan. Government is at one with the concerns expressed by Honorable Members in this House, on this matter.

2. The letter is highly objectionable and betrays complete lack of knowledge or understanding of the political realities in Punjab, which should be obvious to any observer.
3. Government have taken this matter up strongly with the Government of the United States both in Delhi and in Washington. The State Department has clarified as follows.

Quote

VICE PRESIDENT'S LETTER ON PUNJAB

The United States does not and has never supported the establishment of an independent state of Khalistan, which has been a goal of Sikh separatists in the Indian State of Punjab.

The United States continues to view Punjab as an integral part of India.

The Vice President firmly supports this policy. Unquote

4. The US Ambassador has conveyed his Government's regrets at the misunderstanding caused. He re-affirmed his Government's position as stated above.
5. The state of normalcy in Punjab, the high level of economic activity, the successful holding of two elections to the State Assembly, and elections to the Parliament, clearly indicate that Khalistan only exists in the figment of some misguided imagination. Government has forcefully conveyed to authorities in the

US to desist from providing any encouragement, even through inadvertence, to such elements.

INDIA USA

Date : Mar 04, 1997

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1995

INDIA

Indian Haj Pilgrims Leave for Makkah

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 11, 1997 on Indian Haj Pilgrims going to Makkah:

The departure of the Indian Haj pilgrims for Makkah and Madinah for the ensuing Haj began yesterday with the departure of the first Air India charter flight from Indira Gandhi International Airport, carrying about 350 pilgrims to Jeddah. The first flight was inaugurated by Shri Saifuddin Soz, Minister for Environment and Forests at 0830 hrs yesterday. Addressing the pilgrims, Shri Saifuddin Soz con-

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veyed good wishes from Prime Minister to the pilgrims in their sacred journey and announced that Government has made best possible efforts for the pilgrims' accommodation, transport and medical attendance in Makkah and Madinah. He also distributed gifts to the pilgrims on behalf of Air India.

Haj charter flights also commenced in the day from other international airports in Chennai and Mumbai. Haj charter flights from Calcutta and Bangalore will begin on March 20 and 26. A special arrangement this year is that pilgrims from Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Calicut, Trivandrum and Srinagar will have the facility to travel by air from these cities to Jeddah with custom and immigration formalities being completed in these places with a change of aircraft at the nearest international airport in India for onward journey to Jeddah.

This year approximately 56,000 Indian pilgrims will perform Haj under the arrangements made by the Central Haj Committee. Ministry of External Affairs is deputing 100 administrative officials and 200 medical and para-medical personnel to the Indian Consulate General in Jeddah to attend to the needs of the Indian pilgrims.

INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC SAUDI ARABIA USA

Date : Mar 11, 1997

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1995

INDIA

India's Position on Restructuring of Security Council

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 23, 1997 on India's Position on restructuring of Security Council:

The Open-Ended Working Group of the UN General Assembly on Security Council Restructuring has concluded its first session of 1997 in New York. During the session, a number of ideas came up for discussion, but no consensus has emerged. This subject will be taken up at the Ministerial Conference of Non-Aligned countries next month in New Delhi and subsequently the Working Group will resume its discussions in New York towards the end of April.

2. Among several suggestions discussed in the Working Group was one by the President of the General Assembly Ambassador Razali, who made a specific proposal regarding expansion of the Security Council based on his personal assessment. It has been suggested in some media reports that India is supportive of this proposal. This does not correctly reflect India's position. As is well known, India has strongly advocated a completely non-discriminatory approach towards candidature of developed and developing countries for permanent membership. India has also called for agreed criteria for expansion and is opposed both to any approach which involves a piecemeal expansion of the Security Council or one which discriminates between different categories for permanent membership. The NAM Summit in Cartagena in 1995 called for UN reform on a non-discriminatory basis. India adheres to this position and its support for the NAM proposal continues.

INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC COLOMBIA

Date : Mar 23, 1997

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1995

INDIA

Statement by Prime Minister

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 24, 1997 containing the statement of the Prime Minister on the killings of innocent civilians in Sangrampura in Jammu & Kashmir:

The recent cowardly killings of innocent civilians in Sangrampura in J & K

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deserves the strongest condemnation. While conveying my sympathies to the bereaved families, I wish to emphasise that the perpetrators of this act of terror shall not escape the consequences of their horrible crime. Their masters abroad, who aid and abet cross-border terrorism, should understand that the entire Indian nation stands together in the defence of the territorial integrity and secular unity of the country. All communities and states are one in defence of these values.

2. The full restoration of democratic government in J & K has opened a new chapter and has decisively defeated the designs of the terrorists and their masters abroad.

INDIA

Date : Mar 24, 1997

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MUSCAT

State Visit of Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said, Sultan of Oman to India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 15, 1997 regarding state visit of Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said, Sultan of Oman to India from 18-21 March, 1997:

At the invitation of the President of India, Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said, Sultan of Oman is paying a State visit to India from 18-21 March 1997. This is the first ever State visit by Sultan to a country east of Oman. The Sultan will be accompanied by a high level delegation consisting of 14 ministers, which include Ministers of National Heritage and Culture, Petroleum and Minerals, Information, Higher Education, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Fisheries National Economy and Finance, Health and Commerce & Industry.

The visit of Sultan Qaboos opens a new chapter in Indo-Oman relations which

have seen a remarkable growth in recent years. During the visit, a number of agreements will be signed between India and Oman, on Investment Protection and Promotion, Avoidance of Double Taxation, Cooperation in Information Sector and Civil Aviation and Agriculture.

Sultan Qaboos will have meetings with Presidents and will receive Vice-President, Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs, Finance Minister, Agriculture Minister, Minister of Civil Aviation & Information and Broadcasting and Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas. A group of industrialists and businessmen will also call on Sultan. In addition, the Ministers accompanying Sultan Qaboos will have separate meetings with their Indian counterparts to discuss and review ongoing cooperation in their respective areas.

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OMAN USA INDIA

Date : Mar 15, 1997

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MUSCAT

Postponment of State visit of Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman

The following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 18, 1997 on the Postponement of a state visit to India by Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman:

At the request of the Government of Oman, the State visit of Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said of Oman which was to begin today is being deferred because of stormy weather conditions in Muscat and a prolonged and severe cyclonic depression in the air corridor between India and Oman which has rendered air travel risky. Mutually convenient dates for a rescheduled visit will be worked out.

OMAN USA INDIA

Date : Mar 18, 1997

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1995

MUSCAT

Rescheduling of State visit of Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 21, 1997 on the rescheduling of the state visit of Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman:

The State visit of Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman which was to take place from 18-21 March 1997 will now take place from 1-4 April 1997.

OMAN USA INDIA

Date : Mar 21, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Israeli approval for settlements in East Jerusalem

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement of the Ministry of External Affairs issued in New Delhi on Mar 05, 1997 regarding Israeli approval for settlements in East Jerusalem:

Government of India is deeply concerned at the recent Israeli Government's approval for construction of settlements at Jabal Abu Ghaneim (Har Homa) to the south of East Jerusalem. India has consistently maintained that unilateral steps which are not in conformity with the agreements and understandings would hinder the peace process, and vitiate the atmosphere to build mutual confidence essential to progress the peace negotiations further.

We remain convinced of the need for purposeful negotiations on all issues in the final-status negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian sides. We once again urge all parties concerned to intensify their efforts for finding a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region, on the basis of the Security Council resolutions, as well as the interim agreements, for allowing the achievement of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and all States of the region to co-exist peacefully within secure and internationally recognised boundaries.

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ISRAEL USA INDIA

Date : Mar 05, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Visit of H.E. Mr. Shamshad Ahmad Foreign Secretary of Pakistan to India

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement of the Ministry of External Affairs issued in New Delhi on Mar 06, 1997 on the visit of H.E. Mr. Shamshad Ahmad Pakistan Foreign Secretary:

H.E. Mr. Shamshad Ahmad, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan will be visiting Delhi from March 28th to 31st, 1997 for talks with the Indian Foreign Secretary.

INDIA PAKISTAN

Date : Mar 06, 1997

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Text of a letter dated 1st March 1997 from Shri I. K. Gujral External Affairs Minister addressed to H.E. Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan Minister of Foreign Affairs Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Following is the text of a press release issued by Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on March 1st, 1997 on the text of a letter dated Mar 01, 1997 from Shri I. K. Gujral External Affairs Minister addressed to His Excellency Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan Minister of Foreign Affairs Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

I have great pleasure in extending warm greetings and felicitations on your appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

I look forward to working with Your Excellency in developing a relationship of trust, friendship and cooperation between our two countries. Prime Minister Shri H. D. Deve Gowda has conveyed in his message to H.E. Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif Sahib our readiness to resume dialogue at an appropriate level and on all issues of mutual concern. We were glad to receive the reply of the 27th

of February in which it is suggested that the two Foreign Secretaries may meet in the month of March. We agree to this suggestion and I am asking my officials to contact their counterparts to establish dates for the meeting.

I believe that we have a real opportunity to bring a new spirit into our relations and to create an environment for cooperation. I hope to meet Your Excellency shortly in New Delhi during the NAM Foreign Ministers' Conference when we will have occasion to consider how we can advance along this path.

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PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Mar 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Text of a Message from the External Affairs Minister to Pakistan Minister for Foreign Affairs on Train Accident in Pakistan

The following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 03, 1997 on a message from the External Affairs Minister to the Pakistan Minister for Foreign Affairs on the recent train accident in Pakistan:

"I am profoundly distressed to learn of the unfortunate loss of life caused by the train accident near Khanewal in Pakistan. Please accept our deep condolences on this accident and also convey to the families of the victims, our heart-felt sympathies.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration".

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Mar 03, 1997

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Suo Moto Statement by External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral on Improved People-to-People contacts with Pakistan in both Houses of Parliament

The following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 20, 1997 on a Suo Moto statement in both houses of Parliament by External Affairs Minister Shri I. K. Gujral on the subject of improved people-to-people contacts with Pakistan:

As honourable Members are aware, Indo-Pakistan official level talks at Foreign Secretary level are due to be held from March 28 to 31 in New Delhi. Talks at a higher level are also expected thereafter. We approach these talks in a positive and constructive spirit.

2. As honourable Members would have noticed, Pakistan has announced its decision to release 38 Indian children who have been under detention in Pakistan since 1994. We appreciate this gesture. These children were travelling on Indian fishing vessels which were apprehended by Pakistani authorities over two years ago. We have made many representations on their behalf and I had raised the issue with Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yakub Khan when I met him on December 18, 1996 in New Delhi. It is a matter of satisfaction that Pakistan has now responded positively, and steps have already been initiated by us to ensure that the children are brought from Pakistan to India at the earliest. May I also convey our deep gratitude to Maulana Abdul Sattar Edhi who has taken good care of them for over a year and a half while they were lodged in the Edhi Centre in Karachi.

3. As honourable Members are aware, travel by Pakistani nationals to India, under a reciprocal arrangement with Pakistan, is permitted only on the basis of visitors visa. These visas are meant essentially for visits to meet close relations. This is obviously very restrictive. In keeping with our policy to promote people-to-people relations, we have decided to permit Pakistani tourists to visit India in groups. This, as honourable Members will agree, is a major new unilateral step in the right direction. In addition, we have also decided to ease travel by Pakistani businessmen to India. They will now be eligible to one year multi-entry visa and, if travelling by air, they can exit and enter either through Mumbai or Delhi. The other measures we will implement are:

(i) Young and elderly Pakistani visitors will be exempt from police reporting. This will give them relief from what can be a troublesome requirement.

(ii) Visa fees for senior Pakistani citizens will be waived.

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(iii) The number of religious shrines in India which can be visited by Pakistani pilgrims will be increased.

(iv) Expansion of cultural contacts between the two countries will be encouraged through exchanges of cultural groups, artistes, poets and writers. Visits by students and journalists will also be encouraged. All these categories will be exempt from visa fees.

(v) Free flow of books and periodicals establishes better appreciation of each other. Therefore, India will unilaterally permit their import in keeping with our general policies.

4. The measures that I announce today are designed to add to the goodwill between the peoples of the two countries. They are an emblem of our earnest desire to establish and maintain relations of friendship and cooperation with our neighbour Pakistan. I am confident that this gesture on our part will have the support of Hon'ble Members.

PAKISTAN USA INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Mar 20, 1997

Volume No

1995

RUSSIA

Prime Minister's Visit to Moscow

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 18, 1997 on the official visit of Prime Minister of India to Moscow:

At the invitation of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. B. N. Yeltsin, the Prime Minister of India, Mr. H. D. Deve Gowda, will arrive in Moscow on an official visit on Mar 24, 1997.

During the visit, meetings will take place with the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. B. N. Yeltsin, and the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation, Mr. V. S. Chernomyrdin, on March 25-26, 1997.

RUSSIA USA INDIA

Date : Mar 24, 1997

Volume No

1995

VIETNAM

The following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Mar 09, 1997 on the state visit of H.E. Vo Van Kiet Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to India from March 7-9, 1997:

Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, H.E. Vo Van Kiet paid a
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State visit to India from March 7-9, 1997. He was accompanied by a high level official delegation which included the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Science, Technology and Environment.

During the visit, the Vietnamese Prime Minister called on the President. Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda had wide ranging talks with his Vietnamese counterpart and the two Prime Ministers were assisted by high level delegations. The talks were held in a very cordial atmosphere in keeping with the traditional bond of friendship and stressed the need for continuing dialogue at all levels and on all issues of mutual interest and concern. Indian interest in a more active dialogue with the Asia-Pacific region was underlined. A number of important agreements on bilateral cooperation were signed in the presence of the two Prime Ministers. These included a trade agreement, an agreement on promotion and protection of bilateral investments and an agreement on cooperation in the fields of environment and forestry. The Government of India extended a US \$10 Million credit line to the Government of Vietnam which would facilitate export of capital goods and services to Vietnam.

Minister of State for Commerce, Shri B. B. Ramaiah and the External Affairs Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral also called on the Vietnamese Prime Minister. The External Affairs Minister had separate bilateral talks with his Vietnamese counterpart in which all bilateral, regional and international matters of mutual interest were covered. The External Affairs Minister briefed the visiting dignitary on the forthcoming NAM Ministerial conference.

The visit played a significant role in strengthening the already close bilateral relations between the two countries and imparted a new vitality and dynamism to the India-Vietnam relationship.

VIETNAM INDIA USA

Date : Mar 09, 1997

Volume No

1995

ANNEXURE I

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on Trade and Economic Co-operation

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam hereinafter referred to as the "Contracting Parties",

Aspiring to continue and consolidate their historic friendship and co-operation,

Wishing to further strengthen trade, commercial co-operation and economic relations between the two countries on the principles of equality and mutual benefit, have agreed as follows:

Article I

The Contracting Parties shall, in accordance with their respective laws and regulations, promote and facilitate trade, commercial and economic co-operation between them on a long-term and stable basis.

Article II

(a) The Contracting Parties shall accord to each other most favoured nation treatment in respect of import and export licences, custom duties and all other charges and taxes applicable to importation, exportation or transit of goods/products.

(b) The Contracting Parties will grant each other in respect of import and export licences or permissions where such licences/permissions are prescribed under their re-

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gulations treatment no less favourable than that granted to any other country.

(c) Any advantages, favour, privilege or immunity granted by either of the Contracting Parties to any products originating in the territory of a third country or destined for its territory shall be granted immediately and unconditionally to the like product originating in the territory of either of the Contracting Parties or destined to be imported into its territory.

Article III

The provisions of Article II above shall not, however, apply to the grant or continuance of any

(a) advantages accorded by either party to contiguous countries for the purpose of facilitating frontier traffic;

(b) preferences or advantages accorded by India to any other country on the date of the conclusion of the present Agreement, and which existed prior to April 10, 1947 or in replacement of such preferences and advantages;

(c) any advantage or preference accorded under any scheme for expansion of trade and economic cooperation among developing countries which is open for participation by developing countries and to which either of the Government is or may become a party;

(d) advantages and preferences resulting from a custom union and/or free trade area of which either country is or may become a party.

Article IV

The Contracting Parties shall encourage and facilitate contacts between their natural and juridical persons, inter alia, through exchange of visits of delegations of business, participation in fairs and exhibitions, and sharing of information.

They shall encourage the opening of representative offices or branch offices of the trade organizations, companies, firms and banks in each other's territory, in accordance with their national laws and regulations.

Article V

The Contracting Parties shall promote cooperation in the fields of science and technology, ecology, transport, tourism and communications, training of personnel and in other spheres of mutual interest.

Article VI

Import and export of goods and services shall take place on the basis of the contracts to be concluded between the natural and juridical persons of the two Contracting Parties at world market prices in accordance with their laws and regulations and international trade practices. Neither of the Contracting parties shall be responsible for liabilities of natural and juridical persons arising from such commercial transactions.

Article VII

All payments for goods and services between the two Contracting Parties shall be made in freely convertible currencies, in accordance with the foreign exchange laws and regulations in force in each country and following the international payment practices, unless otherwise specifically agreed upon between the two Contracting Parties.

Article VIII

Natural and juridical persons of either Contracting Party shall also be free to import or export goods and services from each other on the basis of counter-trade compensation arrangements, leasing and buy-back arrangements, or any other internationally recognized form of business cooperation, in accordance with their national laws and regulations.

Article IX

The Contracting Parties shall encourage investment and technological

coopera-

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tion between their countries in accordance with their national laws and regulations to produce goods for their domestic markets or export to third countries.

Article X

The Contracting Parties will hold regular consultations as may be necessary in order to facilitate smooth implementation of this Agreement.

Article XI

(i) If as a result of unforeseen developments and of the effect of the obligations incurred by a party under this agreement, including tariff obligations, any product is being imported into the territory of that party in such increased quantities and under such conditions as to cause or threaten serious injury to domestic producers in that territory of like, or directly competitive products, the party shall be free, in respect of such product and to the extent and for such time as may be necessary to prevent or remedy such injury, to suspend the obligation in whole or in part or to withdraw or modify the concession.

(ii) Before any party takes such action, it shall give notice in writing to the other party as far in advance as may be practicable and shall afford the other party an opportunity to consult with it in respect of the proposed action. In critical circumstances, where delay would cause damage which it would be difficult to repair, action under paragraph 1 of this Article may be taken provisionally without prior consultation, on the condition that consultation shall be effected immediately after taking such action.

Article XII

(i) This Agreement shall come into force on a mutually agreed date through exchange of notes confirming the completion of the legal procedures required by their countries for its entry into force and shall remain valid for a period of five years.

(ii) The period of validity of this Agreement shall be automatically extended for further successive period of five year unless either of the Contracting Parties informs the other Party in writing of its intention to cancel the Agreement as least six months prior to its expiry. Upon such expiry, the terms and conditions of this Agreement shall continue to apply to all contracts concluded during the period of the validity of the Agreement and not fully executed till the date of expiry of this Agreement.

The present Agreement could be terminated on mutual agreement between the Contracting Parties. Alternatively, it should be terminated one year after written notification by their Contracting Party.

Done in New Delhi on the eighth of March, nineteen hundred ninety seven in

two original copies each in Hindi, English and Vietnamese languages, all three texts being equally authentic. In the event of divergence between any of the texts of this Agreement, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of
the Republic of India
Sd/-

(Dr. B. B. Ramaiah)
Minister of State for
Commerce

For the Government
of the Socialist
Republic of Vietnam
Sd/-
(Le Van Triet)
Minister of Trade

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INDIA VIETNAM USA

Date : Mar 09, 1997

Volume No

1995

ANNEXURE II

Credit Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

The Government of the Republic of India hereinafter referred to as the Government of India and the Government of Socialist Republic of Vietnam hereinafter referred to as the Government of Vietnam mutually desirous of further strengthening economic relations between the two countries, agree to enter into a credit Agreement whereby the Government of India will make available to the Government of Vietnam a line of credit up to an amount of Indian Rupees 350 million.

Article 1

The credit of Indian Rupees 350 million shall be available to the Government of Vietnam for importing from India goods of Indian manufacture and services as mentioned in Annexure II A to this agreement. The contents of Annexure II A may be modified by way of additions, deletions or substitutions from time to time as may be mutually agreed to between the two Governments. The import content of

contracts under the credit should be kept within low or negligible limits.

Article 2

The export of goods from India and their import into Vietnam shall take place through normal commercial channels subject to the laws and regulations in force in both countries. Price and other terms and conditions shall be settled between exporters in India and importers in Vietnam.

Article 3

The credit will cover 100 per cent of the F.O.B. value of the goods mentioned in Annexure II A, which shall be expressed in Indian rupees. Letters of credit shall specify that 100% F.O.B. value shall be financed from the credit.

Article 4

The Credit Agreement shall come into force immediately on the signing of this Agreement. Contracts to be financed under this agreement for items in Annexure II A shall be signed and Letters of Credit established by 30.04.1998 and the full amount in respect of the contracts be drawn by 30.04.1999. If the full amount of the loan for these items is not drawn by this date, the balance will be cancelled and the final instalment of the repayment to be made by the Government of Vietnam shall be reduced accordingly, except as may otherwise be agreed to by the Government of India.

Article 5

- (i) The State Bank of India and the Bank of foreign Trade of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam shall, as soon as possible, enter into a banking arrangement for implementation of this Agreement.
- (ii) The State Bank of India shall maintain an account designated as "Credit to Socialist Republic of Vietnam Account-IX" and make disbursement therefrom in accordance with the procedure indicated in Annexure II-B to this Agreement.

Article 6

- (i) The Government of Vietnam shall pay interest at the rate of 5 per cent per annum on outstanding credit amounts. Interest shall be charged from the dates on which disbursements are effected by the State Bank of India to the dates on which repayments are received by them.
- (ii) Interest charges shall be payable every six months on the first day of May and the first day of November each year.

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Article 7

- (i) The Government of Vietnam shall repay the principal amount drawn and outstanding in 22 semi-annual instalments repayable twice a year on the first

day of May and first day of November of each year commencing from first May 2001 in accordance with the amortisation schedule set forth in Annexure-II-C.

(ii) The Government of Vietnam shall also be entitled to repay in advance of the due date one or more instalments of the principal along with the interest accrued.

Article 8

All repayments of principal and payment of interest shall be made in Indian rupees owned by the Government of Vietnam or acquired through the sale of convertible foreign currencies to banks authorised to deal in foreign exchange in India.

Article 9

(i) In the event of default by the Government of Vietnam in the payment of instalment of principal or any interest, the Government of India may declare that all the principal amount then outstanding along with interest thereon has become due and payable immediately and upon such declaration the same shall become due and payable immediately.

(ii) For all overdue payments the Government of Vietnam shall pay to the Government of India interest on the overdue principal and/or interest at 2 per cent over the rate mentioned in Article 6 of this Agreement. The interest shall be computed from the due date to the date immediately preceding the date of actual payment thereof, both inclusive.

Article 10

Claims or disputes relating to any of the contracts financed under this credit shall not exempt the Government of Vietnam from any obligation by way of interest or repayment of principal arising out of payments made by the State Bank of India by debit to the Account referred to in Article 5.

Article 11

So long as the credit remains outstanding each Government shall, at the request of the other, furnish such reports and information as may be reasonably and specifically asked for regarding the implementation or administration of this Credit Agreement.

Article 12

All payments due to be effected by the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam under this Agreement shall be made without any deductions for taxes, fees, duties and any other charges.

Done at New Delhi on the 7th Day of March, Nineteenth Hundred Ninety Seven in Hindi, English and Vietnamese languages, all three texts being equally authentic, but in case of doubt, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of

the Republic of India

Sd/-

(Montek Singh Ahluwalia)
Secretary
Ministry of Finance

For the Government of
Socialist Republic of
Vietnam

Sd/-

(Mrs. Le Thi Bang Tam)
Vice Minister of Finance

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ANNEXURE II - A

NATURE OF GOODS REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE I AND ARTICLE 3 OF THE INDO-VIETNAM CREDIT AGREEMENT OF 1997

Capital goods (alongwith original spare parts and accessories purchased with the capital goods and included in the original contract).

ANNEXURE II - B

PROCEDURE FOR DISBURSEMENT

- (1) All contracts will be subject to the approval of the Government of India and the Government of Vietnam and shall contain a clause to that effect. All contracts shall be sent to the Ministry of Finance, Department of Economic Affairs, Government of India, for approval. After each contract has been approved intimation thereof will be sent to the Government of vietnam and to the State Bank of India, New Delhi, by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.
- (2) The procedure for disbursements in respect of contracts to be financed under this credit will be as follows:
 - (a) The State Bank of India, New Delhi, will conclude separate Banking Agreement with the Vietcom Bank.
 - (b) The State Bank of India, New Delhi shall maintain an account in the style of "Credit to Socialist Republic of Vietnam Account IX" and make disbursements therefrom to the exporters in India, either directly or through negotiating banks.
 - (c) The disbursements from the aforesaid account shall be made in respect of contracts concluded in Indian rupees on F.O.B. basis. Such contracts should have been entered into after coming into force of the Agreement and should be in respect of items agreed to be financed under this credit.

(d) All disbursements under the credit shall be made under Letters of Credit opened by the Bank for Foreign Trade of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

(e) All Letters of Credit shall be advised by Bank for Foreign Trade of Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the State Bank of India, New Delhi for onward transmission to the exporters either direct or through another bank in India, if any, nominated by the exporters. Normal commercial practices followed in respect of advising payments under Letters of Credit will be adopted.

(f) All Letters of Credit shall be supported by a copy of the contract referred to in paragraph (3) above and shall also contain the following reimbursement clauses.

Reimbursement of 100% of the F.O.B. value of the contract shall be provided by the State Bank of India, New Delhi from the Government of India to the Government of Vietnam. The Letter of Credit is negotiable after the State Bank of India has issued an advice that it is operative.

(g) The State Bank of India shall check the Letters of Credit and contracts as to their eligibility for financing under Rupees 350 million credit and if in order shall forward the credit with an operative advice either direct to the exporters or to their bankers. A copy of the advice will be endorsed by the State Bank of India (Overseas Branch), New Delhi to the Vietcom Bank establishing the Letters of Credit.

(h) A disbursement charge of 1/10th of 1% shall be made by the State Bank of India when reimbursing claims under the Letters of Credit. This charge together with other charges, such as advising commission on credits, negotiating charge, out of pocket expenses incurred by the State Bank of India or bank concerned in India, shall be debited to the aforesaid account.

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(i) While claiming reimbursement, the negotiating banks shall certify that the terms of the Letters of Credit under which payments have been made have been complied with; they shall also submit copies of invoices and non-negotiable copies of bills of lading in support of their claims.

(j) The State Bank of India, New Delhi, shall send a statement of the aforementioned account every month to the Government of Vietnam.

ANNEXURE II - C

AMORTISATION SCHEDULE

Date of Payment	As percentage of amount disbursed under Annexure-I
1.05.2001	4.54
1.11.2001	4.54
1.05.2002	4.54
1.11.2002	4.54

1.05.2003	4.54
1.11.2003	4.54
1.05.2004	4.54
1.11.2004	4.54
1.05.2005	4.54
1.11.2005	4.54
1.05.2006	4.54
1.11.2006	4.54
1.05.2007	4.54
1.11.2007	4.54
1.05.2008	4.54
1.11.2008	4.54
1.05.2009	4.54
1.11.2009	4.54
1.05.2010	4.54
1.11.2010	4.54
1.05.2011	4.54
1.11.2011	4.66

Total : 100.00

INDIA VIETNAM USA RUSSIA

Date : Mar 09, 1997

Volume No

1995

ANNEXURE III

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for the Promotion and Protection of Investments

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (hereinafter referred to as the "Contracting Party");

Desiring to create conditions favourable for fostering greater investment by investors of one State in the territory of the other State;

Recognising that the encouragement and reciprocal protection under international agreement of such investment will be conducive to the stimulation of individual business initiative and will increase prosperity in both States;

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE I

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Agreement:

(a) "Companies" means:

(i) In respect of India: Corporations, firms and associations incorporated or

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constituted or established under the law in force in any part of India;

(ii) In respect of Vietnam: Corporations, firms and associations incorporated or constituted or established under the law in force in any part of Vietnam.

(b) "Investment" means every kind of asset established or acquired, including changes in the form of such investment, in accordance with the national laws of the Contracting Party in whose territory the investment is made and in particular, though not exclusively, includes:

(i) movable and immovable property as well as other rights such as mortgages, liens or pledges;

(ii) shares in and stock and debentures of a company and any other similar forms of participation in a company;

(iii) rights to money or to any performance under contract having a financial value;

(iv) intellectual property rights in accordance with the relevant laws of the respective Contracting Party;

(v) business concessions conferred by law or under contract, including concessions to search for and extract oil and other minerals;

(c) "investors" means any national or company of a Contracting Party;

(d) "nationals" means:

(i) in respect of India: persons deriving their status as Indian nationals from the law in force in India;

(ii) in respect of Vietnam; any natural person having the nationality of Vietnam in accordance with its law;

(e) "returns" means the monetary amounts yielded by an investment such as profit, interest, capital gains, dividends, royalties and fees;

(f) "territory" means;

(i) in respect of India: the territory of the Republic of India including its territorial waters and the airspace above it and other maritime zones including the Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf over which the Republic of India has sovereignty, sovereign rights or exclusive jurisdiction in accordance with its laws in force, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

and International Law.

(ii) in respect of Vietnam: the territory of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam including the territorial sea and the economic exclusive zone over which the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has sovereignty, sovereign rights or exclusive jurisdiction in accordance with its laws in force and international law.

ARTICLE 2

SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall apply to all investments made by investors of either Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party, accepted as such in accordance with its laws and regulations, whether made before or after the coming into force of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 3

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF INVESTMENT

(1) Each Contracting Party shall encourage and create favourable conditions for investors of the other Contracting Party to make investments in its territory, and admit such investments in accordance with its laws and policy.

(2) Investments and returns of investors of each Contracting Party shall at all times be accorded fair and equitable treatment in the territory of the other Contracting Party.

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ARTICLE 4

NATIONAL TREATMENT AND MOST-FAVoured-NATION TREATMENT

(1) Each Contracting Party shall accord in accordance with its laws and regulations to investments of investors of the other Contracting Party, treatment which shall not be less favourable than that accorded either to investments of its own investors or to investments of investor of any third State.

(2) In addition, each Contracting Party shall accord to investors of the other Contracting Party, including in respect of returns on their investments, treatment which shall not be less favourable than that accorded to investors of any third State.

(3) The provisions of paragraphs (1) and (2) above shall not be construed so as to oblige one Contracting Party to extend to the investors of the other the benefit of any treatment, preference or privilege resulting from:

(a) any existing or future customs union or similar international agreement to which it is or may become a party, or

(b) any matter pertaining wholly or mainly to taxation.

ARTICLE 5

EXPROPRIATION

(1) Investments of investors of either Contracting Party shall not be nationalised, expropriated or subjected to measures having effect equivalent to nationalisation or expropriation (hereinafter referred to as "expropriation") in the territory of the other Contracting Party except for a public purpose in accordance with law on a non-discriminatory basis and against fair and equitable compensation. Such compensation shall amount to the genuine value of the investment expropriated immediately before the expropriation or before the impending expropriation became public knowledge, whichever is the earlier, shall include interest at a fair and equitable rate until the date of payment, shall be made without unreasonable delay, be effectively realisable and be freely transferable.

(2) The investor affected shall have right, under the law of the Contracting Party making the expropriation, to review, by a judicial or other independent authority of that Party, of his or its case and of the valuation of his or its investment in accordance with the principles set out in this paragraph. The Contracting Party making the expropriation shall make every endeavour to ensure that such review is carried out promptly.

(3) Where a Contracting Party expropriates the assets of a company which is incorporated or constituted under the law in force in any part of its own territory, and in which investors of the other Contracting Party own shares, it shall ensure that the provisions of paragraph (1) of this Article are applied to the extent necessary to ensure fair and equitable compensation in respect of their investment to such investors of the other Contracting Party who are owners of those shares.

ARTICLE 6

COMPENSATION FOR LOSSES

Investors of one Contracting Party whose investments in the territory of the other Contracting Party suffer losses owing to war or other armed conflict, a state of national emergency or civil disturbances in the territory of the latter Contracting Party shall be accorded by the latter Contracting Party treatment, as regards restitution, indemnification, compensation or other settlement, no less favourable than that which the latter Contracting Party accords to its own investors or to investors of any third State. Resulting payments shall be freely transferable.

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ARTICLE 7

REPATRIATION OF INVESTMENT AND RETURNS

(1) Each Contracting Party shall permit all funds of an investor of the other Contracting Party related to an investment in its territory to be freely transferred, without unreasonable delay and on a non-discriminatory basis. Such

funds may include:

- (a) Capital and additional capital amounts used to maintain and increase investments;
 - (b) Net operating profits including dividends and interest in proportion to their share-holdings;
 - (c) Repayments of any loan, including interest thereon, relating to the investment;
 - (d) Payment of royalties and services fees relating to the investment;
 - (e) Proceeds from sales of their shares;
 - (f) Proceeds received by investors in case of sale or partial sale or liquidation;
 - (g) The earnings of citizens/nationals of one Contracting Party who work in connection with investment in the territory of the other Contracting Party.
- (2) Nothing in paragraph (1) of this Article shall affect the transfer of any compensation under Article 6 of this Agreement.
- (3) Unless otherwise agreed to between the parties, currency transfer under paragraph 1 of this Article shall be permitted in the currency of the original Investment or any other convertible currency. Such transfer shall be made at the prevailing market rate of exchange on the date of transfer.

ARTICLE 8

SUBROGATION

Where one Contracting Party or its designated agency has guaranteed any indemnity against non-commercial risks in respect of an investment by any of its investors in the territory of the other Contracting Party and has made payment to such investors in respect of their claims under this Agreement, the other Contracting Party agrees that the first Contracting Party or its designated agency is entitled by virtue of subrogation to exercise the rights and assert the claims of those investors. The subrogated rights or claims shall not exceed the original rights or claims of such investors.

ARTICLE 9

SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN AN INVESTOR AND A CONTRACTING PARTY

- (1) Any dispute between an investor of one Contracting Party and the other Contracting Party in relation to an investment of the former under this Agreement shall as far as possible, be settled amicably through negotiations between the parties to the dispute.
- (2) Any such dispute which has not been amicably settled within a period of six months say, if both Parties agree, be submitted:

(a) for resolution, in accordance with the law of the Contracting Party which has admitted the investment to that Contracting Party's competent judicial, arbitral or administrative bodies; or

(b) to international conciliation under the Conciliation Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law.

(3) Should the parties fail to agree on a dispute settlement procedure provided under paragraph (2) of this article or where a dispute is referred to conciliation but conciliation proceedings are terminated other than by signing of a settlement

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agreement, the dispute may be referred to Arbitration. The arbitration procedure shall be as follows:

(a) if the Contracting Party of the Investor and the other Contracting Party are both parties to the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States, 1965 and the investor consents in writing to submit the dispute to the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes such a dispute shall be referred to the Centre; or

(b) if both parties to the dispute so agree, under the Additional Facility for the Administration of Conciliation, Arbitration and Fact-Finding Proceedings; or

(c) to an ad hoc arbitral tribunal by either party to the dispute in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, 1976, subject to the following modifications:

(i) The appointing authority under Article 7 of the Rules shall be the President, the Vice-President or the next senior Judge of the International Court of Justice, who is not a national of either Contracting Party. The third arbitrator shall not be a national of either Contracting Party.

(ii) The parties shall appoint their respective arbitrators within two months.

(iii) The arbitral award shall be made in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement and shall be binding for the parties in dispute.

(iv) The arbitral tribunal shall state the basis of its decision and give reasons upon the request of either party.

ARTICLE 10

DISPUTES BETWEEN THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

(1) Disputes between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement should, as far as possible, be settled through negotiation.

(2) If a dispute between the Contracting Parties cannot thus be settled within six months from the time the dispute arose, it shall upon the request of either Contracting Party be submitted to an arbitral tribunal.

(3) Such an arbitral tribunal shall be constituted for each individual case in the following way. Within two months of the receipt of the request for arbitration, each Contracting Party shall appoint one member of the tribunal. Those two members shall then select a national of a third State who on approval by the two Contracting Parties shall be appointed Chairman of the tribunal. The Chairman shall be appointed within two months from the date of appointment of the other two members.

(4) If within periods specified in paragraph (3) of this Article the necessary appointments have not been made, either Contracting Party may, in the absence of any other agreement, invite the President of the International Court of Justice to make any necessary appointments. If the President is a national of either Contracting Party or if he is otherwise prevented from discharging the said function, the Vice President shall be invited to make the necessary appointments. If the Vice President is a national of either Contracting Party or if he too is prevented from discharging the said function, the Member of the International Court of Justice next in seniority who is not a national of either Contracting Party shall be invited to, make the necessary appointments.

(5) The arbitral tribunal shall reach its decision by a majority of votes. Such decisions shall be binding on both Contracting Parties. Each Contracting Party shall bear the cost of its own members of the tribunal and of its representation in the arbitral proceedings; the cost of the Chairman and the remaining costs shall be borne in equal parts by the Contracting

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Parties. The tribunal may, however, in its decision direct that a higher proportion of costs shall be borne by one of the two Contracting Parties, and this award shall be binding on both Contracting Parties. The tribunal shall determine its own procedures.

ARTICLE 11

ENTRY AND SOJOURN OF PERSONNEL

A Contracting Party shall, subject to its laws applicable from time to time relating to the entry and sojourn of noncitizens, permit natural persons of the other Contracting Party and personnel employed by companies of the other Contracting Party to enter and remain in its territory for the purpose of engaging in activities connected with investments.

ARTICLE 12

APPLICABLE LAWS

(1) Except as otherwise providing in this Agreement, all investment shall be governed by the laws in force in the territory of the Contracting Party in which such investments are made.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this Article nothing in this Agreement precludes the host Contracting Party from taking action for the protection of its essential security interests or in circumstances of extreme emergency in accordance with its laws normally and reasonably applied on a non discriminatory basis.

ARTICLE 13

APPLICATION OF OTHER RULES

If the provisions of law of either Contracting Party or obligations under international law existing at present or established hereafter between the Contracting Parties in addition to the present Agreement contain rules, whether general or specific, entitling investments by investors of the other Contracting Party to a treatment more favourable than is provided for by the present Agreement, such rules shall to the extent that they are more favourable prevail over the present Agreement.

ARTICLE 14

ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Agreement shall be subject to ratification and shall enter into force on the date of exchange of Instruments of Ratification.

ARTICLE 15

DURATION AND TERMINATION

(1) This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of ten years and there after it shall be deemed to have been automatically extended unless either Contracting Party gives to the other Contracting Party a written notice of its intention to terminate the Agreement. The Agreement shall stand terminated one year from the date on receipt of such written notice.

(2) Notwithstanding termination of this Agreement pursuant to paragraph (1) of this Article, the Agreement shall continue to be effective for a further period of fifteen years from the date of its termination in respect of investments made or acquired before the date of termination of this Agreement.

In witness whereof the undersigned, duly authorised thereto by their respective Government, have signed this Agreement.

Done at New Delhi on this 8th day of March, 1997 in two originals each in the Hindi, Vietnamese and English languages, all texts being equally authoritative.

In case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Sd/-

For the Government of
the Republic of India

Sd/-
For the Government of
the Socialist Republic
of Vietnam

INDIA VIETNAM USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Mar 09, 1997

April

Volume No

1995

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EGYPT HONG KONG INDIA INDONESIA NEPAL SAUDI ARABIA SRI LANKA LAOS

Date : Apr 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

CAIRO

Visit of the Foreign Minister of Egypt

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 03, 1997 on the visit of the Foreign Minister of Egypt:

H.E. Mr. Amr Moussa, Foreign Minister of Egypt, will pay a 2-day visit to India, April 9-10, 1997.

Mr. Moussa is arriving in India on April 5, leading the Egyptian delegation to the XII Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, being held in New Delhi from April 7-8, 1997. The official bilateral visit will take place in conjunction with that, on the invitation from External Affairs Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral. During the visit, both Ministers would hold wide-ranging discussions on various aspects of bilateral relations and on regional and international matters of interest to each other.

A highlight of the visit will be the 3rd Meeting of the bilateral Joint Commission to be held under the co-Chairmanship of the two Ministers.

Mr. Moussa would also call on other high Indian dignitaries and will have an interaction with the Indian business community.

During the visit, bilateral agreements are expected to be signed in various fields, including investment promotion & protection, civil aviation, tourism and information & broadcasting. The two countries are also expected to sign a Protocol to institutionalise periodic consultations between their Foreign Ministries.

H.E. Mr. Amr Moussa has been Ambassador of his country to India.

EGYPT INDIA USA

Date : Apr 03, 1997

Volume No

1995

HONG KONG

Chairman, PSC Hong Kong calls on Law Minister

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Apr 29, 1997 regarding the chairman of Public Service Commission, Hong Kong, Mr. Haider Barma called on the Union Minister of State for Law & Justice Shri Ramakant D. Khalap:

The Chairman of the Public Service Commission, Hong Kong, Mr. Haider Barma called on the Union Minister of State for Law & Justice, Shri Ramakant D. Khalap, here today.

Matters relating to legal systems in India and Hong Kong were discussed during the meeting. The two sides also discussed methods of recruiting civil servants, disciplinary proceedings as also technological advances which can be avail-

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ed of by the Law Courts and members of the legal profession in upgrading their skills. The two sides expressed the hope that relations between India and Hong Kong will be further strengthened in the years to come.

HONG KONG INDIA USA

Date : Apr 29, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Statement on Chemical Weapons Convention

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 03, 1997 on the statement on Chemical Weapons Convention:

1. India remains fully committed to the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Given its universal support and non-discriminatory character, India had described it as a "useful model for our future efforts in the field of global disarmament", while signing the Convention on 11th January 1993.
2. In keeping with our commitment to the objectives of a chemical weapon free world, India ratified the Convention on 18th October 1995 and deposited the Instrument of Ratification with the UN Secretary General on 3rd September 1996 to become the 62nd country to do so. The Convention is now due to enter into force on 29th April 1997.
3. It is a matter of regret that even after four years, the Convention remains far from acquiring universal adherence.
4. India is disappointed that the declared chemical weapon possessor states have still not ratified and deposited their instruments of ratification. This delay on the part of the possessor states seriously jeopardises the disarmament character of this Convention which requires their adherence and that of other states with significant potential.
5. On 17th March 1997, in response to a Question in the Lok Sabha regarding the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Minister for External Affairs Shri I. K. Gujral, had noted that while India considered the Chemical Weapons Convention to be a global and non-discriminatory treaty, the fact that major signatories to the Convention had not ratified and deposited their instruments of ratification, India reserved the right to review the situation for an appropriate response.
6. The Preparatory Commission of states signatories to the Convention will be

meeting in The Hague from 9-15 April 1997, the last meeting before the entry into force of this Convention. In the current situation, it is imperative that the Preparatory Commission recognises the seriousness of this development and takes appropriate action to ensure that the character of this unique treaty, which reflects the painstaking labour of over ten years of multilateral negotiations, is not eroded through hasty implementation.

7. India will work closely with other interested countries to ensure that the deliberations of the Preparatory Commission promote the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention as a universal disarmament treaty.

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INDIA USA

Date : Apr 03, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDONESIA

Visit of Foreign Minister of Indonesia to India

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 03, 1997 regarding official visit of His Excellency Mr. Ali Alatas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to India:

His Excellency Mr. Ali Alatas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia accompanied by his wife and Senior Officials is scheduled to pay an official visit to India from 4th to 6th April 1997 prior to participating in the NAM Ministerial Meeting on 7-8 April 1997.

During his stay in Delhi, the Indonesian Foreign Minister will hold discussions with External Affairs Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral on various bilateral and international issues of mutual interest. He will call on the President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma; Vice President, Shri K. R. Narayanan and Prime Minister, Shri H. D. Deve Gowda.

India and Indonesia have had historical ties involving deep-rooted interaction in all spheres including religion, culture, language and architecture. Both the countries are geographically vast having diverse and pluralistic societies and facing fairly common challenges of socio-economic development. Bilateral trade between India and Indonesia has been increasing steadily and is expected to cross US \$ 1 billion this year. Investments from both sides have also been rising. The forthcoming visit of Indonesian FM Ali Alatas will give further boost to the multifaceted cooperation and strengthen

the friendly ties existing between the two countries.

INDONESIA INDIA USA

Date : Apr 03, 1997

Volume No

1995

KATHMANDU

Festival of Indian Films in Kathmandu

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 10, 1997 regarding the weeklong Festival of Indian Films in Kathmandu from April 12 - 20, 1997 by the Embassy of India as part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of India's Independence:

As part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of India's Independence, the Embassy of India is organising a weeklong Festival of Indian Films in Kathmandu from April 12 - 20, 1997. The Festival would highlight fifty years of Indian cinema and would present a feast of some outstanding Indian feature films to Kathmandu audiences. The inauguration of the Festival would be on April 12 at the Birendra International Convention Centre. This would be an occasion to honour Indian film artists for their outstanding contribution to the world of cinema and to building friendship, goodwill and understanding among nations and people through their work. The artists who would be present and felicitated on the occasion include Dev Anand and Waheeda Rehman as

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"Living Legends" and Manisha Koirala and Shahrukh Khan for their outstanding contribution to the world of cinema in the 90's. The inaugural event would trace the evolution of Indian cinema through audiovisual clippings with special reference to the contribution of these artists. Noted artist Javed Jaffrey shall be Master of Ceremonies on the occasion.

The Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr. Lokendra Bahadur Chand has kindly consented to inaugurate the Film Festival on April 12.

During the Film Week, 12 important films would be screened at two separate venues in Kathmandu as per the schedule enclosed. These films are representative of the best of Indian cinema and include a retrospective on Dev Anand and some of the milestones in Indian cinema of the 90s, featuring Shahrukh Khan and Manisha Koirala.

The concluding event of the Film Week would be the Premier of the much acclaimed film "Tamanna" on 20th April. The film produced by Pooja Bhatt and

directed by Mahesh Bhatt, focuses on the situation of the girl child in our society. At the initiative of Pooja Bhatt, the Indian Women's Club, Kathmandu, would be raising funds through the Film Festival for charities dedicated to the welfare of the girl child in Nepal.

NEPAL INDIA UNITED KINGDOM USA

Date : Apr 10, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT

Preservation of Buddhist Relics

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 24, 1997 on Preservation of Buddhist Relics:

In response to a query, the official spokesman expressed deep concern at reports that the Buddhist relics in Bamian in central Afghanistan may deliberately be blown up if they fell into the control of one of the local Taliban commanders. He pointed out that the famous Buddhist site in Bamian, which has already suffered considerably, was an inheritance for all mankind. The creators of Bamian had drawn inspiration from India and their work was greatly revered by us, in token of which the Archaeological Survey of India had put in many seasons of work to preserve and renovate the site. It is hoped that all Afghan parties will pay heed to international opinion and refrain from any action which would further damage this priceless inheritance.

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INDIA AFGHANISTAN USA

Date : Apr 24, 1997

Volume No

1995

PALESTINE

President Yasir Arafat visits India to Attend the NAM Meet

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 05, 1997 regarding the visit of H.E. Mr. Yasir Arafat, President of the State of Palestine to India:

H.E. Mr. Yasir Arafat, President of the State of Palestine, is visiting India from April 6-8, 1997, to lead the Palestinian participation in the XIIth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned countries, being held at New Delhi from April 7-8, 1997.

India and Palestine have enjoyed close friendly relations and India has extended unstinted support for the Palestinian cause, besides providing Indian cooperation in various fields.

India also supports the Middle East Peace Process, aimed at achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region. India has expressed deep concern at recent developments, maintaining that unilateral steps not in conformity with the agreements and understandings hinder the peace process and vitiate the atmosphere of mutual confidence essential to progress the peace process further.

During his visit, President Arafat will call on the President of India, and have meetings with the Vice President, Prime Minister, and External Affairs Minister. The Prime Minister will host a lunch in honour of the visiting dignitary.

INDIA USA

Date : Apr 05, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAUDI ARABIA

Fire at Mina : No Indian Casualties Reported

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 15, 1997 regarding fire at Mina:

A fire broke out at 2.30 p.m. (I.S.T.) in the Haj pilgrim camp in the eastern part of Mina, near King Abdul Aziz bridge. The fire spread to the Asian camps, including those areas where Indian pilgrims are accommodated.

The fire has since been brought under control. An orderly evacuation of pilgrims in the affected areas has been carried out.

There was no stampede among the pilgrime. The affected area is now under the control of the Saudi authorities. It is understood that Indian pilgrims have been brought to Makkah.

There have been no reports of Indian casualties. The Ambassador of India to Saudi Arabia and the Indian Consul General are camping in Makkah to render all assistance to the Indian pilgrims.

In a message to the Indian Ambassador, the External Affairs Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral, has conveyed his deep sense

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of anguish and concern about the welfare of the Indian pilgrims. He has also directed that a senior officer of the rank of Secretary, accompanied by other officials, rush to Saudi Arabia immediately to ensure that the required assistance is rendered to the pilgrims.

Control rooms functioning round-the-clock have been set up by the Indian Embassy at Jeddah, Mina and Riyadh in order to furnish information about the welfare of Indian pilgrims. These control rooms may be contacted at the following telephone numbers:

- i) Control Room, 00-966-2-652-0104 Jeddah
- ii) Control Room, 00-966-2-557-2710 Mina
- iii) Control Room, 00-966-1-488-4189 Riyadh

Besides the above, enquiries about the welfare of pilgrims may be made at the following telephone numbers in India.

- i) Central Haj Committee, Bombay: 2612989/2618862/2678398 (Code No. 022)
- ii) Delhi Haj Committee, New Delhi 3234041/3230507 (Code No. 011)
- iii) Haj Cell, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi: 3013205 (Code No. 011)

SAUDI ARABIA INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC USA

Date : Apr 15, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAUDI ARABIA

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 16, 1997 containing a message from the External Affairs Minister of India:

It is with a sense of deep shock and anguish that I learnt of the outbreak of fire near Makkah yesterday, which destroyed several Haj camps including camps housing Indian pilgrims; and caused a large number of deaths amongst the pilgrims. Immediately on learning of the fire, instructions were issued to our Mission in Riyadh to extend all assistance to Indian pilgrims to arrange safe evacuation and to render medical assistance to the injured. The Indian medical mission, consisting of 100 doctors and hundred para-medical personnel already deployed in Makkah to attend to the Haj pilgrims were fully mobilised along with ambulances to take the injured pilgrims to the hospital. Ambassador of India and the Consul General are camping in Makkah and overseeing the relief operations.

Control Rooms have become operational in Makkah, Jeddah and Riyadh, and in the Central Haj Committee in Bombay and in the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi to answer enquiries from the next of kin of Haj pilgrims. Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs along with the concerned Joint Secretary have been deputed to Jeddah for first-hand assessment of the situation and to coordinate with the Saudi authorities.

The PM and I have sent messages to our Saudi counterparts conveying our pain and sorrow at the tragic incident. I have also spoken to Shri Maqbool Dar, Minister of State for Home Affairs, who is in Makkah and the leader of the Haj Goodwill Delegation, assuring Government's full support and cooperation in the relief operation.

As the pilgrimage was in full swing, it may take another two to three days before the identity of the Indian pilgrims, who perished in the tragedy is firmly established. Transport arrangements for bringing the dead bodies back as soon as they are identified are underway. In the event the next of kin of the deceased wish

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to have the bodies buried in Saudi Arabia, suitable assistance would accordingly be extended.

The death of our pilgrims has caused me immense personal grief and anguish. My heartfelt condolences are with the relatives of the deceased. May the soul of the dead persons rest in peace and may the Almighty give strength to the bereaved families to bear the irreparable loss they have sustained in this momentous tragedy.

Sd/-

(I. K. GUJRAL)

Date : Apr 16, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAUDI ARABIA

The Mina Fire

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 19, 1997 regarding Mina fire:

Five more bodies have been identified taking the total number of the confirmed deaths of Indians in the fire so far to ten. The five deceased persons identified today are Safdar Ali Khan (Rampur), Mohd. Matin Ansari (Gorakhpur), Mohd. Asgar (Saharanpur), Mrs. Mehboob Bee (Bangalore) and Khaliq Ahmad (Bhopal). The process of identification is being hampered by the badly burnt condition of the bodies.

It has now been confirmed that timely and orderly evacuation, under supervision of Indian Embassy and the Consulate General, of the large number of Indian pilgrims from other Indian camps located in the path of the fire greatly helped to keep down the number of Indian casualties.

Visits to the hospitals by Indian medical teams and the Indian Consulate officials is continuing and the total number of the injured identified is now 153. This, excludes 200 who were discharged after treatment. The complete list of the wounded is being made available to the Central Haj Committee. The Indian team which visited the hospitals found the medical attention in the hospitals to be of high order and the morale of the patients high. Members of the high-level Indian Haj Goodwill Delegation have also visited the injured in the hospitals. All the injured are being provided facilities to return to India at the earliest, if they are in a medically fit condition.

Four more telephone lines have been installed at the Control Room in the Central Haj Committee in Bombay to handle the queries from the relatives of the Haj pilgrims. The additional numbers are as follows:

- 1) 2613110
- 2) 2630462
- 3) 2630463
- 4) 2652393

Similarly, the Control Room in Riyadh has added 4 more numbers which are as follows:

- 1) 488-4144
- 2) 488-4691
- 3) 488-4692
- 4) 488-4697

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SAUDI ARABIA INDIA

Date : Apr 19, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAUDI ARABIA

Details of Makkah Pilgrims

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 21, 1997 indicating details of Makkah pilgrims:

The Indian Consulate General in Jeddah continued strenuously to locate the missing persons and to identify the bodies of the pilgrims who died in the fire in Mina. The Consulate's teams have visited 621 buildings housing the pilgrims in Makkah to physically verify and take a head-count of the Indian pilgrims. They have also visited hospitals in Makkah and Jeddah.

As a result, it has now been established that 281 pilgrims are missing. This list is being made available to the Central Haj Committee in Mumbai and through them to the State Haj Committees. A total of 22 bodies of Indian pilgrims have been identified so far. There are 202 injured persons in hospitals. In addition, a total of 252 persons have been treated for injuries.

A special Air India chartered flight has been organised on Thursday, 24th April, 1997 to bring those injured, who are in a condition to fly, to India along with wherever possible, a relative, and an Indian medical mission. The flight will originate in Jeddah and will reach Mumbai with a halt in New Delhi. Stand-by medical facilities are being arranged at Mumbai and Delhi airports to render medical attention to the injured.

Meanwhile, Indians living in Jeddah have risen to the occasion and have extended assistance to the pilgrims affected by the Mina fire. The Indian community has set up a Voluntary Relief Group to render material assistance, including food, drinking water and clothing, to the Indian pilgrims who have

lost their belongings.

SAUDI ARABIA INDIA USA

Date : Apr 21, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAUDI ARABIA

A Team from India visit Saudi Arabia

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 24, 1997 regarding team of Members of Parliament from India visiting Saudi Arabia:

Reports in today's press attribute certain views to the Indian Consul General in Jeddah about the causes for the recent fire tragedy at Mina. This matter has been examined very carefully and it is concluded that these views appear to be derived from information provided by a few of the injured relating to the conduct of an individual gate keeper. No broad generalisations about the tragic accident can be drawn on this basis.

We are aware that the Saudi authorities have already ordered a high level enquiry into the event. A team of Members of Parliament from India will also be visiting Saudi Arabia to meet those affected by the fire and the officials concerned with Haj in the country. They will also look into the arrangements made for the welfare of the Indian pilgrims.

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SAUDI ARABIA INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Apr 24, 1997

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1995

SRI LANKA

Visit of Sri Lankan Foreign Minister to India

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 23, 1997 regarding visit of Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rt. Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar to India:

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rt. Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar is coming to India tomorrow as Special Envoy of President Chandrika Kumaratunga to deliver a personal message of felicitations to Prime Minister Shri Inder Kumar Gujral.

SRI LANKA INDIA

Date : Apr 23, 1997

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1995

VIENTIANE

Visit of Prime Minister of Lao PDR to India

Following is the text of a press release issued in New Delhi by the Ministry of External Affairs on Apr 30, 1997 on visit of Prime Minister of Lao PDR to India:

His Excellency, Mr. Khamtay Siphandone, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, accompanied by a high powered delegation will be paying an official visit to India from 1st to 5th May, 1997. This will be H.E. Mr. Khamtay Siphandone's first visit to India; again, he will be the first foreign Head of Government whom Prime Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral will be meeting after assuming office.

During his stay in Delhi, the Lao Prime Minister will hold talks with Prime Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral. He will also call on the President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, and Vice-President, Shri K. R. Narayanan. Prime Minister Siphandone will address a business conference being organised by CII.

India and Lao PDR share historical ties involving ancient links in religion, culture and language. Bilateral trade between the two countries has been increasing steadily. Agriculture, irrigation, human resource development, health, transport, mining, transport, hydro-electric power and other infrastructure sectors are the potential areas of cooperation between India and Lao PDR.

During the visit of Prime Minister Siphandone, an MOU on Cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Sectors and an Agreement to set up the India-Lao Joint Commission are expected to be signed. The Lao PM and his delegation will be visiting some industrial establishments in Bangalore. On the last leg of the tour in Calcutta on 5th May, 1997, Shri Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal, will be calling on the Lao PM.

LAOS INDIA USA LATVIA

Date : Apr 30, 1997

May

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INDIA USA PAKISTAN MALDIVES AFGHANISTAN IRAN SRI LANKA BANGLADESH YUGOSLAVIA
PERU

Date : May 01, 1997

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INDIA

Decision of U.S. Government to place India on the priority watch list

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 01, 1997 regarding Government of India's regret on the decision of the U.S. Government to continue to place India on priority watch list:

The Government of India notes with regret the decision of the US Government to continue to place India on the priority watch list under their "Special 301" provisions. India and the US are members of the World Trade Organisation and have been in close contact in that Organisation which provides an appropriate forum for discussion and resolution of these and other matters. GOI remains committed to implementing commitments undertaken at the Uruguay Round.

In recent years there have been growing areas of agreement and cooperation between India and the US in trade and economic matters. There is growing interest and investment in India by US companies. They obviously have a keen appreciation of the rights and safeguards provided under the administrative, legal and judicial processes in India. The decision of the US Government will not be in consonance with the positive trend in the development of commercial and business relations between India and United States.

INDIA USA URUGUAY

Date : May 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Prime Minister Gujral speaks to the Pakistani Premier

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 02, 1997 regarding Prime Minister I. K. Gujral conversation with the Pakistani Premier:

Prime Minister I. K. Gujral spoke to his Pakistani counterpart Mian Nawaz Sharief on telephone late this evening. The primary purpose of Mr. Gujral's initiative was to set up a direct line of communication with Mr. Sharief.

The conversation between the two Prime Ministers was very warm and cordial. They exchanged good wishes and recalled with pleasure their past meetings when neither of them had been in office. They said they looked forward to their forthcoming meeting in Male during the SAARC Summit. They agreed to continue to maintain direct contacts to ensure that all distance between them was removed.

The conversation lasted for about 10 minutes

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INDIA PAKISTAN MALDIVES

Date : May 02, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Indo-Maldives Relations

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 05, 1997 on Indo-Maldives relations:

The Union Minister for Environment and Forest, Prof. Saifuddin Soz has said that Indo-Maldives relations have been marked by an exceptional level of understanding and cooperation and the two countries have endeavoured to build on the political goodwill and understanding consistently nourished by regular high level contacts. He was speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Maldives Institute of Technical Education (MITE) at the Maldivian capital Male. The Institute was inaugurated by the President of Maldives, H.E. Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Prof. Soz said that the inauguration of MITE marks high point in Indo-Maldivian relations which are growing from strength to strength with the passage of time.

The Project was first conceived in 1990 during the visit of the then Prime Minister Mr. V. P. Singh to Male when it was decided that the Government of India would assist Maldives in setting up a modern and integrated Vocational Training Centre to meet the needs of Maldives. The Project with an outlay of Rs. 11.5 crs. was funded by the Government of India to the extent of Rs. 10.70 crs. The training Centre will provide the state-of-art training to youth in the trades of Machinist, Welding and Sheet metal work, engine repair and maintenance, electrical refrigeration, airconditioning, electronics and building construction. The total intake will be 112 trainees per year. The Centre has all modern facilities like workshops, laboratories, library and conference hall etc. This is the only institution in Maldives which will impart the much needed technical education to local youth.

The Project has been conceived, designed and executed by HMT (International) Ltd., Bangalore covering project formulation, civil works, supply of machines and equipment, training of Maldivian Instructors in India and deputation of six experts for providing on-the-job training which will continue till September this year. One major highlight of the project is its execution without time and cost overruns.

Apart from the Maldivian President, the ceremony was attended amongst others by the Council of Ministers, Chief Justice of Maldivies, three service chiefs and the diplomatic corps.

INDIA MALDIVES USA

Date : May 05, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Buddhist Monuments in Bamyán in Central Afghanistan

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 09, 1997 regarding India's deep concern at the Taliban Commander declaration to blow up Buddhist Monuments in Bamyán on Central Afghanistan:

On T, loc, our official spokesman had conveyed India's deep concern at the report, originating from a declaration by a local Taliban Commander, that the Buddhist monuments in Bamyán in Central Afghanistan may be deliberately blown up, if the area falls into his hands. We have, since then, seen a report in which the Taliban leadership seeks to explain away this statement, but this report does not contain a categorical assurance that the Taliban will ensure that this site will be protected, should it come under their control.

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The monuments in Bamyán have great religious sanctity and cultural and historical significance for all Buddhists. They also constitute a priceless heritage of all mankind. The threat of destruction or damage of this site has generated strong feelings among the Indian public, which has been reflected in Parliament and in our media. Our concern about the safety of the Bamyán Buddhist monuments, which has already been publicly expressed, has also been shared with countries which have strong Buddhist traditions. Our feelings in this matter have been made known to the Governments of these countries through their envoys in New Delhi.

We reiterate our earnest hope that all parties in Afghanistan will keep the Bamyán site safe and secure.

INDIA AFGHANISTAN USA

Date : Apr 24, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Condolence letter from Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral to H.E. Hojjatoleslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, President of Iran

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 12, 1997 containing condolence letter from Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral to H.E. Hojjatoleslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, President of Iran:

"Excellency,

We are greatly shocked and profoundly saddened to learn of the devastating earthquake which hit Khorassan province on May 10, resulting in severe loss of life and injury and destruction of property.

On behalf of the Government and the people of India, and on my own behalf, I extend our heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the bereaved families, and all others who have suffered in this tragedy. The people of India stand united with them in this hour of grief. May God give the courageous people of Iran the endurance and strength to prevail over this calamity.

We are aware of the prompt and effective measures being taken by your Government for relief and rehabilitation. As a token of our solidarity, my Government would like to offer some assistance. We will be in touch with your authorities in this regard.

With the assurances of my highest consideration and my renewed good wishes and regards.

(I. K. Gujral)"

INDIA IRAN USA

Date : May 12, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Indian Relief Supplies for Iran

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 15, 1997 regarding Indian relief supplies consist of rice, cooking oil, sugar, tea and blankets for Iran:

Following the recent earthquake in Iran, the Indian Prime Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral, had immediately sent a letter to H.E. Hojjatoleslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, conveying his deep concern about the tragic event. In the letter, he had also offered material support for the victims.

In accordance with the Prime Minister's commitment, the Government of India will be sending relief supplies to Iran which will leave Bombay for Tehran by air tomorrow. The relief supplies will consist of rice, cooking oil, sugar, tea and blankets, together weighing about 21 tonnes.

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INDIA IRAN

Date : May 15, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India Elected Chairman of the Executive Council of the organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 16, 1997 regarding India Elected Chairman of the Executive Council of the organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons:

The First Session of the Conference of the States Parties (FSCSP) to the Chemical Weapons Convention appointed Ambassador Prabhakar Menon of India, by acclamation, as the first Chairman of its 41-member Executive Council, which will oversee the day to day functioning of the OPCW. Among the Council's first decisions was to nominate Brazil's Jose Bustani as Director General of the OPCW. The full composition of the Executive Council may be seen in the annexure, which also shows the composition of other bodies of the Conference.

The Committee of the Whole met under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Gustavo E. Figueroa of Argentina, and approved the OPCW Financial Regulations, the transfer of assets and other liabilities from the Commission to the OPCW, and the preliminary tenancy agreement and related understandings of the OPCW, recommended by the Preparatory Commission. The Executive Council, meanwhile,

convened an informal meeting under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Prabhakar Menon of India, in order to agree on its own Rules of Procedure.

INDIA BRAZIL USA ARGENTINA

Date : May 16, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Humanitarian Assistance to Earthquake Victims in Iran

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 16, 1997 regarding Humanitarian Assistance to Earthquake Victims in Iran:

A special Indian Air Force transport aircraft is leaving today for Iran carrying relief materials consisting of blankets, rice, cooking oil, sugar and tea for the people affected by the devastating earthquake in the Khorasan province of Iran. The aircraft will take the material direct to the city of Mashhad from Bombay.

INDIA IRAN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : May 16, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Indian fishing vessel fired up by Sri Lankan Navy

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 19, 1997 regarding the reported firing of an Indian vessel by Sri Lankan Navy:

Last week (May 10-11), it was reported that an Indian fishing vessel had been fired upon by the Sri Lankan Navy, leading to the death of two Indian fisher-men. Three Indian fishermen were reported detained by Sri Lanka.

The matter had been taken up immediately with the Sri Lankan authorities who said that an incident of firing had occurred in Sri Lankan waters, close to the Talaimannar naval base. They added that the Indian fishing boat (RMS 1547) had refused to heed any warning and when fired upon, had exploded, indicating that

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it had been smuggling contraband material, such as fuel. Three fishermen were detained following the firing and two were reported missing. The three detained Indian fishermen are being repatriated to India on May 20.

Further clarifications are being sought from the Sri Lankan authorities. India's serious concern at the tragic loss of life has been conveyed to them. We have reiterated the need to avoid any violent incident involving Indian fishermen.

INDIA SRI LANKA USA

Date : May 19, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Text of letter from the Prime Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral to H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the Cyclone in Bangladesh

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 20, 1997 containing text of the letter from the Prime Minister, Shri I. K. Gujral to H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on cyclone in Bangladesh:

"Excellency,

I learnt with anguish and sorrow of the terrible cyclone which has devastated parts of coastal Bangladesh with large scale loss of life and destruction of property. The people of India share your grief and sorrow on this occasion. Permit me to convey on behalf of Government and the people of India our deep sympathies and condolences to the families of the bereaved.

I am directing officials in my Government to rush emergency supplies to Bangladesh as our contribution for the relief efforts which your Government is putting into place.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(I. K. Gujral)"

H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina,
Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,
Dhaka.

INDIA BANGLADESH USA

Date : May 20, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India's Programme of humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 23, 1997 regarding India's Programme of humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan:

India has an active humanitarian assistance programme for Afghanistan under which food items, medicines and medical supplies, woollens and educational equipment have been despatched to all areas in Afghanistan, both bilaterally and through the UN Relief Agencies. As part of this programme, a camp for the fitting of artificial limbs (Jaipur Foot) was organised in August/September, 1996 in Kabul where over 1100 Afghan persons were fitted with these limbs.

A 11-member team of orthopaedic technicians from the Bhagwan Mahavir Viklang Sahayata Samiti was deputed from India earlier this month to organise a camp in Shibirghan in northern Afghanistan for fitting the Jaipur Foot. The camp was functioning from the 13th to the 21st when it temporarily ceased operations on account of the recent uncertain conditions in the area. During this period, around 200 artificial limbs were fitted.

India's programme of humanitarian assistance to all the people of Afghanistan will continue.

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INDIA AFGHANISTAN USA

Date : May 23, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Humanitarian Assistance to Iran

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 24, 1997 regarding relief material were immediately handed over by senior official of Government of India at the Mashhad Airport to the Iranian Red Crescent of Iran:

Following the massive earthquake which took place on May 10 in the Eastern Province of Khorassan taking a toll of 1,560 deaths, 2,810 injured and thousands displaced with 164 villages destroyed (over 16,000 houses levelled), messages from President and Prime Minister of India as well as President of the Congress Party came in extending sympathies for the people fo Iran, which were conveyed to the Government of Iran. Soon thereafter, a special Indian Airforce aircraft carrying a plane load of relief materials consisting of blankets, rice, cooking oil, sugar and tea reached Mashhad, capital of the devastated Khorassan Province. The despatch of relief materials within days of the earthquake was a reflection of the concern, sympathy and support of the Government and people of India for the people of Iran. The relief materials were immediately handed over by senior officials of the Government of India at the Mashhad Airport, in the presence of senior officials of the Government of Iran, to the Iranian Red Crescent of Iran, which is the main relief coordinating agency working round the clock to collect and coordinate relief assistance from all over the world.

The timely humanitarian assistance extended by India was greatly appreciated by the authorities and people of Iran. The event was covered in the local press. The Indian team, present on the spot, gave statements to Islamic Republic News Agency and Television highlighting the significance of Indian assistance at this hour of tragedy to the people of Iran. Later, at a meeting with Iranian FM Dr. Velayati, I assured the Iranian Government that the people of India were solidly behind the people of Iran and would always extend a helping hand in their hour of need. India and Iran shared much more than culture affinities and civilizational linkages. They were two brotherly nations joined together in the bonds of friendship and cooperation which had reflected in all areas and levels of bilateral relations. Dr. Velayati conveyed his appreciation for the timely Indian assistance and noted his satisfaction at seeing relations between India and Iran develop on a dynamic footing.

INDIA IRAN USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : May 24, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India, Yugoslavia to Identify Areas of Cooperation for stepping up Bilateral Trade

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on May 27, 1997 regarding India, Yugoslavia to identify areas of cooperation for stepping up Bilateral Trade:

India and Yugoslavia have agreed that efforts will be made by both sides to identify areas of cooperation to facilitate increased volume of bilateral trade. This was decided during detailed discussions between the Commerce Minister, Dr. B. B. Ramaiah and his Yugoslav counterpart Mr. Borislav Vokovic, Federal Minister for Foreign Trade, on ways to intensify economic cooperation. Both sides agreed that while the political relationship between India and Yugoslavia was excellent, the volume of bilateral trade was modest at around US \$18 million per year. Dr. Ramaiah was on a two-day visit to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on May 22-23 - the first Ministerial visit from India in over 6 years - and was accom-

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panied by Shri Nripendra Misra, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce; Shri Vijay Topa, Deputy Secretary General of FICCI; and a group of leading Indian businessmen. The Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, Mr. Kontic, during his meeting with Dr. Ramaiah on May 23 in Belgrade referred to his visit as "a landmark in Indo-Yugoslav bilateral relations".

Earlier, Dr. Ramaiah met the President of the Yugoslav Chamber of Commerce and had a useful exchange of views on trade and industrial cooperation. The Indian businessmen established useful contacts with Yugoslav businessmen and were able to identify barriers to bilateral trade as also to suggest ways to surmount them.

Dr. Ramaiah also met Mr. Bulajic, the Yugoslav Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. During his discussions, Dr. Ramaiah briefed the Yugoslav dignitaries on economic reforms undertaken by the Indian government and developments in SAARC and SAFTA. Both sides expressed confidence that the visit would give impetus and momentum to economic and commercial ties between India and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

INDIA YUGOSLAVIA USA

Date : May 27, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Chemical Weapons Convention

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 28, 1997 regarding Chemical Weapons Convention:

India is an original State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention which entered into force on 29th April, 1997. Under the Convention, States Parties are expected to provide certain declarations within stipulated time schedules, the first declarations being due within 30 days i.e., by 28th May, 1997. In order to fulfil its obligations under the CWC, a National Authority has been formally established within the Cabinet Secretariat, on 5th May, 1997. The information on the initial declaration requirements is in the process of being collated and will be furnished to the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) when the compilation of data is completed.

India has also been elected to Chair the Executive Council of the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. At present, 165 countries are signatories to the Chemical Weapons Convention; of these, 90 countries have completed their ratification proceedings and become States Parties to the Convention. We would urge all countries, particularly those in our region, to complete their ratification proceedings at the earliest in order to make the CWC a genuinely universal and comprehensive disarmament agreement.

INDIA

Date : May 28, 1997

Volume No

1995

KYRGHYZSTAN

Official visit of the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Mr. Apas Jumagulov to India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 13, 1997 regarding official visit of the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Mr. Apas Jumagulov to India:

At the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, the Prime Minister of

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the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Mr. Apas Jumagulov will be paying his first official visit to India from May 15-18, 1997. He will be accompanied by his wife, Madame Alymbaeva and a high level official and business delegation.

H.E. Mr. Apas Jumagulov will hold discussions with Prime Minister of India on bilateral relations as well as leading regional and international issues. He will also call on the President and the Vice President. The visiting dignitary will visit several industrial and commercial establishments in India as well as hold a meeting with the Indian businessmen.

The visit of H.E. Mr. Jumagulov will further intensify mutually beneficial co-operation, and understanding and goodwill between India and the Kyrgyz Republic, and contribute to strengthening the framework of bilateral ties.

INDIA USA

Date : May 13, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT

Developments in Afghanistan

Following is the text of a statement issued in New Delhi by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs on May 26, 1997 on recent developments in Afghanistan:

Government of India have closely followed recent developments in Afghanistan which have led to the extension of Taliban authority to the northern areas of the country and the departure from Afghanistan of senior leaders opposed to them. This new situation is entirely within the domestic sphere of Afghanistan. Government would like to re-affirm that it is for the Afghan people to decide on their future, free from outside influence and interference.

In keeping with its historical ties with Afghanistan, India has always supported the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of Afghanistan. India has consistently maintained close links with the Afghan people and has provided economic, technical and humanitarian assistance for their benefit. The Government of India wishes to see reconciliation between all the different Afghan groups and the emergence of a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. This would be in the interest of the Afghan people and would benefit the entire region.

AFGHANISTAN INDIA

Date : May 26, 1997

Volume No

1995

PERU

State visit of the President of Peru H.E. Dr. Alberto Fujimori to India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 02, 1997 regarding state visit of President of Peru H.E. Dr. Alberto Fujimori to India:

President of Peru, H.E. Dr. Alberto Fujimori, will be paying a State Visit to India from May 25-28, 1997 at the invitation of President of India.

This will be the first-ever visit at this level between the two countries.

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PERU INDIA

Date : May 02, 1997

Volume No

1995

ANNEXURE I

Agreement between the Foreign Service Institute of India and the Diplomatic Academy of Peru

The Diplomatic Academy of Peru and the Foreign Service Institute of India Desiring to promote greater cooperation between the two institutions have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE I

The Diplomatic Academy of Peru and the Foreign Service Institute will establish an active information exchange programme related to the curricula of studies, courses, seminars and other academic activity of the two institutions.

ARTICLE II

Both the institutions shall encourage the exchange of students, professors, conference speakers, experts and research scholars for their participation in seminars, and other courses of common interest.

ARTICLE III

Both institutions shall encourage the exchange of publications on specialized subjects, as also of other public and private institutions of their respective countries. In this regard, the libraries, and centers of documentation of the above institutions shall help achieve an effective system of communication.

ARTICLE IV

They shall similarly exchange information of common interest especially related to the participation in regional and international organizational meetings that group together institutions of diplomatic service or university institutions involved in International Relations.

ARTICLE V

This Agreement of Cooperation shall enter into force on signature and shall remain in force for a period of three years, automatically renewable for similar three year periods at a time, unless terminated by any one party by giving a written notice of 90 days to the other party prior to the date of termination.

Signed in the city of New Delhi, this 26th day of May, Nineteen Hundred and Ninety Seven in Hindi, Spanish and English languages, each text being equally authentic.

Sd/-
(DILIP LAHIRI)
Dean
For the Foreign Service Institute of India

Sd/-
(CARLOS HIGUERAS RAMOS)
Ambassador of Peru
For the Diplomatic Academy of Peru

INDIA PERU CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : May 02, 1997

June

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1995

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ALGERIA INDIA IRAQ CHINA USA TURKEY CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC MADAGASCAR
RUSSIA BANGLADESH PAKISTAN SAUDI ARABIA

Date : Jun 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

ALGERIA

Indian Observers for the National Legislative Elections in Algeria

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 11, 1997 regarding National Legislative Elections in Algeria:

On the request from the Government of Algeria, India deputed a team of 5 Election Observers to observe the conduct of the national legislative elections in Algeria, held on 5th June, 1991, part of Algeria's process of national reconciliation and establishment of multiparty democratic pluralism in the country. The Observers Team was part of a Joint International Observer Group under the United Nations coordination. The Indian Observers included former Foreign Secretary Mr. S. K. Singh, former Secretary Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. J. R. Hiremath, and 3 senior officials from the Election Commission of India.

The Indian Observers team has confirmed that the elections were prepared meticulously, conducted in a transparently free and fair manner, and were peaceful. The Indian Observers were also impressed by the procedures adopted, including a through computerisation of the election process. They have further expressed the view that the legislative elections, following the President elections in Algeria in 1995, will no doubt serve to establish multiparty, democratic pluralism in Algeria. It is India's hope that with the constitution of the new Parliament, the process of national reconciliation and return to normalcy and peace in Algeria will be further speeded up.

The Indian Observers Team was unable to associate itself with the tenor of the Report of the Joint International Observer Group which it found inaccurate and unduly negative. Indeed the separate positive statements issued by the Organisation of African Unity and the League of Arab States teams were much closer to what the Indian team observed.

ALGERIA INDIA USA

Date : Jun 11, 1997

Volume No

1995

BAGHDAD

Official Reaction on Foreign Military Incursions into Northern Iraq

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 07, 1997 regarding Official Reaction on Foreign Military Incursions into Northern Iraq:

In response to a question on the subject of incursions into Northern Iraq by the Turkish Armed Forces, the official spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs recalled the reference to the subject contained in the Official

Statement dated Apr 08, 1997 adopted by the XII Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in New Delhi, as well as

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the statement issued by the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement at New York on May 30, 1997. He further reaffirmed India's principled support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Iraq.

IRAQ INDIA USA

Date : May 30, 1997

Volume No

1995

CHINA

Text of Prime Minister of India's letter to H.E. Mr. Li Peng, Prime Minister of People's Republic of China

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 24, 1997 containing text of Prime Minister of India's letter to H.E. Mr. Li Peng Prime Minister of People's Republic of China:

Excellency,

On the historic occasion of China's resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong on 1 July 1997, I extend warm felicitations to the Government and the people of China.

We, in India, having experienced a colonial past, fully understand the joyous sentiments of the Chinese people on this occasion, as the last remnants of colonial rule in Asia are ended.

Hong Kong is a major international trade and financial centre. It has played a unique role in facilitating and furthering economic and commercial cooperation between India and China. The continued prosperity of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region would be of mutual benefit to our two countries.

India historic association with Hong Kong is well-known. The Indian Community in Hong Kong constitutes an integral part of its dynamic society. We expect that it will continue to play a significant role in its future development and contribute to its rich diversity.

We look forward to further strengthening our links with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. This will also contribute to the growing relationship of constructive cooperation between our two countries.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sd/-
(I.K. Gujral)

H.E. Mr. Li Peng
People's Republic of China
Premier of the State Council of the
People's Republic of China
Beijing.

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CHINA INDIA USA HONG KONG

Date : Jun 24, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Kailash Manasarovar Yatra

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 05, 1997 regarding Kailash Manasarovar Yatra:

The Foreign Secretary, Shri Salman Haider flagged off the first batch of 45 pilgrims of the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra. The Kailash Manasarovar Yatra is organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and it is proposed to send 14 batches of 30-35 pilgrims each for the Parikramas of Mount Kailash and Manasarovar Lake in Tibet, China during the period June-September.

Foreign Secretary pointed out that the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra had resumed in 1981, following an agreement with the Chinese Government. Since then, the Government has been making arrangements to send pilgrims to this holy place every year.

3. Shri Haider stated that the Yatra was difficult and arduous but a satisfying experience. Facilities available are limited due to the terrain and remoteness of the area and yatri would have to take in their stride the difficulties encountered. He assured the yatri that their health and well-being was a major consideration in making arrangements and that the Government had taken adequate measures to provide medical assistance to yatri, if required. The Government is taking step to ensure that there is a steady improvement of facilities.

4. Foreign Secretary mentioned that keeping in mind the increasing cost of

the Yatra, the Government had decided to peg the amount payable by each pilgrim to the Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam in 1996. This would be continued in 1997. The Chinese authorities had agreed to maintain the charges payable by pilgrims to the Chinese side at US \$ 500/- per pilgrim until 2000 A.D. Thus, the charges payable to the Chinese side has remained at the same level since 1995.

5. Shri Haider told the yatris that they came from diverse backgrounds and that cooperation and team spirit is very important for the success of this pilgrimage. He wished the yatris a safe journey and hoped that they would find the pilgrimage a rewarding experience with memories to cherish in the years to come.

INDIA CHINA USA

Date : Jun 05, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Official-cum-business Delegation met with leading New York based Financial Institutions

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 11, 1997 regarding Indian official-cum-business delegation met with leading New York based Financial Institution to invite greater US investment in India's infrastructure sectors:

A high-level Government of India Official-cum-business delegation led by the Cabinet Secretary, Mr. T.S.R. Subramanian, met today with leading New York-based financial institutions to invite greater U S investment in India's infrastructure sectors. The Conference, jointly organised by the Consulate General of India and M/s. Robert Fleming Co., attracted over one hundred American participants representing a large number of financial companies.

2. The conference began with opening remarks by Indian Ambassador to the

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USA, Mr. Naresh Chandra. In his address, the Ambassador stated that it is now generally acknowledged that India is capable of sustaining its annual rate of growth of GDP of 7% and more importantly if certain constraints are removed, this rate can in fact, increase to 9%. Among these constraints, he identified the lack of adequate infrastructure as the principle constraint. Noting that the Government of India have, as a result, accorded the highest priority to improving and enhancing the infrastructure facilities in the country, Ambassador Chandra opened the conference by suggesting that the participants should feel free to offer their suggestions to the Indian delegation as also clear any

doubts they had with regard to the policies of the government vis-a-vis any of the infrastructure sectors, telecom, highway or ports.

3. In his keynote address, Cabinet Secretary Subramanian stated that while undertaking the exercise of formulating the 9th Five-year Plan, the Government have identified several key areas for prioritised development. Increasing investment in social sectors, particularly education, was one of them. In the context of today's conference, Mr. Subramanian said that the two priority areas that are of interest were increasing the productivity in agriculture and improving infrastructure facilities in the country. The Cabinet Secretary recalled that infrastructure had more or less been entirely in the governmental sector in the past. This was inevitable considering the fact that at the time of India's independence there was severe constraint of resources and the private sector simply did not have the financial strength to undertake major investment in infrastructure projects.

4. However, today the funding requirements of the infrastructure sectors have become so large, both financial and technical, that involving the public sector and seeking foreign investment have become imperative. In order to open the various sectors to private investment and management, the Government have taken a large number of policy measures and there has been a change in the mind-set of the Administration since economic reforms commenced. The Cabinet Secretary also noted that the State Governments have also come forward with progressive policies to make available the infrastructure projects to private entrepreneurs and stated that several projects in the roads, ports and highway sectors are today being implemented by private sector companies. This is in addition to the enormous investments that are taking place in power, telecommunications and oil & natural gas, etc.

5. Dr. Shankar Acharya, the Economic Adviser to the Finance Minister, spoke after the Cabinet Secretary and gave an overview of the Indian economy and its macro-economic policies since the reforms were initiated. This was followed by sectoral presentations on surface transport, coal, power, petroleum & natural gas. Mr. Yogendra Narain, Secretary Surface Transport, Mr. N. P. Bagchee, Secretary Coal, Dr. Avinash Chandra, Director General (Hydrocarbons) and Mr. Pradeep Baijal, Additional Secretary (Power) made these presentations.

6. Every sectoral presentation also witnessed the participation by business leaders accompanying the delegation, who recounted their actual experiences on ground since the process of economic liberalisation was set in motion. Almost all the industrialists spoke of how there has been a radical change in the mind-set of the Government. They said that there is today a meeting of minds between the industry and the government, and all the problems and challenges that India's economic growth face, will be resolved together. Referring to the 1997-98 budget, one of the industrialists pointed out that it was a very well-balanced budget and positive indeed, and had taken into account a number of suggestions that the industry had made in order to promote economic activities and investment in the country.

7. The participants showed a keen interest in the proceedings of the conference, as was evident from the intense Question and Answer session that followed

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each sectoral presentation. In the afternoon, the delegates had separate one-to-one meetings with the participants, in which specific issues were focused upon in depth and discussed in detail. The general opinion was that in terms of policy changes aimed at reducing hurdles in the way of project approvals and institution building, and in terms of setting up independent regulatory authorities in areas such as telecommunications, insurance etc. a great deal of progress has been achieved in India. The recent budget proposals were also seen as very positive incentives for foreign and domestic private investment in the Indian infrastructure sectors.

8. The delegation leaves for Washington on 11th June where, apart from participating in a conference organised by the US Chamber of Commerce, it has meetings with the World Bank and IFC. The Cabinet Secretary and other GOI officials also have several meetings with the US Administration.

INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Jun 11, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

7th Meeting of India - Turkey Joint Economic Committee

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Jun 12, 1997 regarding 7th Meeting of India - Turkey Joint Economic Committee:

The Commerce Minister, Dr. B. B. Ramaiah, who is in Turkey in connection with the 7th Meeting of India-Turkey Joint Economic Committee called on Mr. Suleyman Demirel, President of the Republic of Turkey and Mr. Necmettin Erbakan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, on Tuesday. President Demirel conveyed his congratulations to the Indian people on the occasion of 50th Anniversary of India's independence and 50th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Turkey. He remarked that India's commitment to secularism and democracy, apart from its achievements in the field of agriculture (self-sufficiency in food grains in spite of such a large population), industry, science and technology were praiseworthy and hoped that Joint Economic Committee meetings and Joint Business Council (JBC) meetings would help achieve the bilateral trade target of \$ 1 billion in the very near future, a target which was decided upon during his visit to India in January, 1995. Indo-Turkish commercial and economic cooperation, would be of tremendous benefit to both countries, given the fact that India offers large market, as does Turkey due to its membership of organisations like Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation and its Customs Union with the European Union.

President Demirel said he was very happy to note that the coalition government under the stewardship of Prime Minister I. K. Gujral accords very high priority to India's relationship with Turkey.

Prime Minister Erbakan during his hour-long meeting with Dr. Ramaiah, praised India's achievements since independence and India's democratic polity. He recalled the historical relationship between the two countries, Indian contribution to the Turkish War of independence and also mentioned the fact that India is the homeland of second largest muslim population in the world. He emphasised on the benefits of commercial and economic cooperation that would accrue to both countries, and also the possibilities for joint ventures and collaborations not only in each other's countries but also in third countries, particularly Central Asia and Middle East. Mr. Erbakan also placed emphasis on direct air, shipping and banking link between the two countries. Small scale and medium scale industries, agricultural research and development, bio-technology, defence industries, computer software and

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textiles machinery, chemicals and dyestuffs, remote sensing application of satellite technology were identified as forward areas of cooperation.

Dr. Ramaiah was accompanied by Shri R. M. Abhyankar, Ambassador of India, during his calls on the Turkish President and the Prime Minister.

INDIA TURKEY USA

Date : Jun 12, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Chemical Weapons - India's Stand

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Jun 26, 1997 regarding India's stand on Chemical weapons:

India has been in the forefront of a campaign for total non-discriminatory approach to elimination of weapons of mass destruction. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is the first non-discriminatory treaty which has taken shape with a view to achieving progress towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. India fully supported the convention and became one of its original signatories in January 1993. Subsequently, India also ratified the convention on 02 September 1996. The Convention has now come into force on 29 April 1997. In the first conference of the State Parties, held in May 1997, India was elected a member of the Executive Council and became its

first Chairman. An international recognition of the positive stand taken by India on the abolition of such weapons of mass destruction.

DECLARATIONS

The convention enjoins upon all State Parties to declare their chemical weapons, their production, storage facilities and to submit a phased plan of destruction of such weapons and facilities over a period of ten years. Based on available information, initial declarations have been filed by India on testing and development of chemical weapons and their related facilities which were developed only to deal with any situation arising out of possible use of chemical warfare against India. Now that the convention has come into force which collectively aims to eliminate such weapons, India has declared without any reservation all such materials in stock, production and storage facilities which will be open to international expert inspection at any given time.

Declarations have also been made in the convention in respect of manufacture of other specific chemicals by the chemical industry in India. However, this will not inhibit their production and growth for purposes not prohibited by the Convention. Besides the United States and China, 37 other countries have already filed their declarations.

SAFEGUARDS

Adequate safeguards are in place for giving primacy to our national security interests and for protection of the interests and rights of our chemical industry. Should a situation threatening our security arise, our response will not be found wanting and our compliance with the CWC will not in anyway compromise the security of our country.

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INDIA USA RUSSIA CHINA

Date : Jun 26, 1997

Volume No

1995

MADAGASCAR

Cultural Agreement signed between India and Madagascar

Following is the text of a press release issued by Embassy of India, Antananarivo on Jun 17, 1997 regarding Cultural Agreement signed between India and Madagascar:

A Cultural Agreement has been signed between India and Madagascar on

Tuesday, the 17th June, 1997 at Antananarivo. This is the first bilateral agreement between the two countries. The agreement was signed by Vice Prime Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Madagascar, H.E. Mr. Herrzo RAZAFI-MAHALEO on behalf of the Government of Madagascar and by Prof. Prabhakara Jha, Ambassador of India, on behalf of the Government of India.

The agreement provides for better interaction between the people of Madagascar and India notably in the fields of art, education, science and technology, sports, mass communications, etc. Speaking on the occasion of the signature ceremony, the Ambassador of India expressed the hope that this first-ever agreement signed between the two countries will promote understanding between the two countries and will go a long way in the development of existing friendly relationship between the two countries.

In reply the Vice-Prime Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr. Herizo RAZAFIMAHALEO also expressed happiness at the signing of this agreement, especially that finally after long years of negotiations the agreement could be signed. He hoped that the agreement will open up new horizons for long-standing friendly relationship between the two peoples. He extended an invitation for the Prime Minister of India to visit this country and expressed a fervent hope that they will be able to receive him.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC MADAGASCAR INDIA

Date : Jun 17, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

India's reaction to the Russia-NATO Founding Act

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 12, 1997 on India's reaction to the Russia-NATO Founding Act:

In response to a question seeking India's reaction to the Russia-NATO Founding Act, the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs said that we had followed the discussions leading to the Act with great interest and view it as a development of obvious importance and wide significance. We hope that the signing of the Act in Paris on May 27, 1997 would resolve the many complex issues that had been raised and would contribute to the consolidation of peace, security and stability in Europe, as also the world as a whole.

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The Spokesman recalled that India, as a country deeply committed to

nonalignment, has traditionally been averse to military blocs and alliances. We are of the firm belief that cooperation and consultation, rather than confrontation, should characterise interaction between States.

RUSSIA INDIA USA FRANCE

Date : May 27, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Deployment of Prithvi Missiles

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 14, 1997 regarding deployment of Prithvi Missiles:

We have seen the recent series of Washington Post regarding alleged deployment of Prithvi missiles near the Pakistan border. Government have already categorically stated that Prithvi missiles have not been deployed. We equally categorically reject other aspects of the Washington-Post reports regarding details of diplomatic exchanges with the United States as false, mischievous and motivated.

The Washington Post stories do not make any secret of the fact that they are based on selective leaks from intelligence and official sources in the US. It has been our experience that such stories are tendentious, planted deliberately to create confusion. It is not Government's practice to dignify such stories by commenting on them in any detail.

It is Government's clear policy that decisions regarding Prithvi or other such matters will be taken in the light of our independent foreign policy and on the basis of our security perceptions. It has been pointed out that there is no imminent threat, and thus no reason for deployment.

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Jun 14, 1997

Volume No

1995

Indian Air Force helicopter entered Bangalore Air Space

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 14, 1997 explaining that the intrusion of helicopter into Bangladesh territory was entirely inadvertent:

There have been reports in Bangladesh that an Indian Air Force helicopter entered Bangladesh air space without permission and landed at Chunarghat in Habiganj district last month. The Government of Bangladesh have asked us for clarification of this matter.

2. A detailed inquiry has been conducted by our Air Force authorities which reveals that on the evening of an Mi-8 helicopter with a total of 3 air crew and 7 ground crew on board inadvertently strayed into Bangladesh. The helicopter which was bound for Aizawl had to divert to Agartala on account of bad weather. The captain of the helicopter had to continuously change his course moving north of his intended route, due to the weather conditions. Subsequently, due to increasingly difficult weather conditions, the pilot landed at a suitable spot to await clearance of weather. When people nearby approached the helicopter, the copilot asked them the name of the village to establish the helicopter's exact ground position. Thereafter the helicopter took off after three minutes. After reconstruction of the actual flight route, it has been ascertained that the Mi-8 helicopter landed in the vicinity of Chunarghat as reported by the Bangladesh authorities.

3. The Indian Air Force helicopter strayed into Bangladesh territory completely inadvertently, and without the

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crew realising that they had actually done so. The helicopter remained on the ground for about 3 minutes from 1748 to 1751 hrs. IST on May 22. 3 members of the ground crew exited the helicopter with the intention of keeping the crowds of people who had gathered away from the helicopter at take off. While the air crew were wearing standard IAF flying overalls, three members of the ground crew were in uniform and the remaining 4 were in working overalls. Government has conveyed to Government of Bangladesh their regrets and explained that the intrusion of helicopter into Bangladesh territory was entirely inadvertent. Necessary steps have been taken by the air force authorities to prevent such occurrence in the future.

INDIA BANGLADESH USA

Date : May 22, 1997

1995

PAKISTAN

Next round of Foreign Secretary-level talks

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 13, 1997 regarding next round of Foreign Secretary-level talks:

Pursuant to the decision taken during the meeting of the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in Male on 12th May, 1997, the next round of Foreign Secretary-level talks will be held in Islamabad from 19th to 23rd June, 1997.

PAKISTAN INDIA MALDIVES

Date : Jun 13, 1997

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Hot line Communication between India and Pakistan

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 19, 1997 regarding inauguration of hot line communication between India and Pakistan:

The hotline communication between India and Pakistan was formally inaugurated today. This was in implementation of an understanding reached between the two sides during the recent SAARC Summit in Male. Prime Minister Gujral spoke to his counterpart, Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, for five minutes this morning.

2. The two Prime Ministers noted that the scheduled round of Foreign Secretary-level talks was to begin today and expressed the hope that these talks would make good progress. Prime Minister Gujral reaffirmed that India wished to move forward on a broad range of issues in relations with Pakistan.

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PAKISTAN INDIA MALDIVES

Date : Jun 19, 1997

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Joint Statement

Following is the text of a Joint Statement issued on Jun 23, 1997 regarding Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan:

1. The Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India, Mr. Shamshad Ahmad and Shri Salman Haidar met in Islamabad on 19 - 23 June, 1997.
2. During his stay in Islamabad, the Indian Foreign Secretary was received by the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Indian Foreign Secretary also called on the Foreign Minister Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan.
3. As decided at their meeting in New Delhi in March 1997 and as directed by their respective Prime Ministers the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan continued their wide-ranging and comprehensive dialogue on all outstanding issues between the two countries with each side elaborating its respective position. The discussions were held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere. It was also agreed that both sides would take all possible steps to prevent hostile propaganda and provocative actions against each other.
4. With the objective of promoting a friendly and harmonious relationship between Pakistan and India, the Foreign Secretaries have agreed as follows:
 - (i) to address all outstanding issues of concern to both sides including inter alia:
 - (a) Peace and security, including CBMs
 - (b) Jammu and Kashmir
 - (c) Siachen
 - (d) Wullar Barrage Project Tulbul Navigation Project
 - (e) Sir Creek
 - (f) Terrorism and drug-trafficking
 - (g) Economic and Commercial Cooperation
 - (h) Promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields
 - (ii) to set up a mechanism, including working groups at appropriate levels to

address all these issues in an integrated manner. The issues at (a) and (b) above will be dealt with at the level of Foreign Secretaries who will also coordinate and monitor the progress of work of all the working groups.

5. The two Foreign Secretaries also had a preliminary exchanges of views on the composition of the working groups and their methodology. It was decided to continue the consideration of this matter through diplomatic channels.

6. The next round of Foreign Secretary-level talks will take place in New Delhi in September 1997.

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PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Jun 23, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAUDI ARABIA

Fifth Session of the Indo-Saudi Joint Commission

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 10, 1997 regarding Fifth Session of the Indo-Saudi Joint Commission:

The Fifth session of the Indo-Saudi Joint Commission will be held in New Delhi on 11-12 June, 1997, co-Chaired by Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram, and the Saudi Minister of Industry and Electricity, Dr. Hashim Abdullah Yamani. The Saudi delegation consists of 40 senior officials and 30 businessmen.

The Indo-Saudi Joint Commission was set up in April 1981 by an agreement between the two Governments. So far, 4 Sessions have been held, the first in New Delhi in August 1983, the second in Riyadh in 1986, the third in New Delhi in 1991, and the fourth in Riyadh in December 1994. The co-Chairman from the Indian side is Finance Minister and from the Saudi side, the Minister of Industry and Electricity.

India and Saudi Arabia have maintained traditionally friendly relations. The traditional relations have been strengthened through the mechanisms of the Joint Commission, which provides a forum for periodic discussions on all matters of mutual interest. Main focus, however, remains on economic and commercial matters.

Bilateral trade between the two countries has been growing steadily. The overall trade grew last year by 40 percent from \$ 2.3 billion to \$ 3.1 billion.

Saudi Arabia is home for 1.3 million Indians constituting the largest expatriate group in the Kingdom. They constitute the single largest source of foreign exchange remittance to India, estimated at \$ 1.5 billion per annum.

There are 15 foreign collaborations in India between Indian and Saudi companies in areas like designing, consultancy, financial services, computer software, electrical equipment, industrial machinery, oil refining, etc. The total investments in these proposals exceed Rs. 6.2 billion.

In the hydrocarbon sector, a beginning has been made by the agreement between the Hindustan Petroleum and Aramco for the joint venture refinery to be set up at Bhatinda in Punjab. Other Saudi companies, particularly the Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC), have shown interest in collaborating with Indian companies.

Likewise, Indian economic presence in the Kingdom range from consultancy, construction, project engineering, management, operations and maintenance, supply of equipment, providing technical personnel to scientific and technical cooperation. TCIL has been involved in O&M in the Kingdom since 1983 for clients like Saudi PTT, Saudi Aramco and AY&T. IRCON has designed and constructed a major Rolling Stock Maintenance Workshop at Dammam for Saudi Railways in 1990 and continues to be associated with the Saudi Arabian Railways Organisation. The Associated Cement Companies have been associated with O&M of Yanbu Cement Company since 1980 and the Oberoi Hotels are operating in the Kingdom since 1981. BHEL has been executing contracts for SCECOS in the field of electricity since a long time. However, the most spectacular item in Indo-Saudi cooperation in the industrial and technological fields is represented by the Saudi Company, Saudi Formaldehyde Chemical Company Limited (SFCCCL) where the entire plant is set up with the advanced Indian machinery and equipment. The acceptance of Indian technology in the highly sophisticated

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petrochemicals sector amidst stiff international competition demonstrates the Indian capabilities in this field.

Some major Indian companies like Tatas, Birlas, Godrej & Boyce, Voltas, HMT, Al Kabeer, Raymonds, etc. have already formed partnership with local Saudi companies. Others like Larsen & Toubro, Thermax, Godrej & Boyce, Metallurgical and Engineering Consultants Limited, etc. have supplied equipment for several plants in the downstream petrochemicals sector.

To prepare the agenda for the current session of the Joint Commission, an official level preparatory meeting was held on 21st May 1997 in New Delhi. The preparatory meeting reviewed the work done so far by the Joint Commission and suggested an agenda for the current session, during which the two sides are expected to sign an agreement to set up a Joint Business Council between the two countries and a Memorandum of Understanding between CSIR and King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology for cooperation in scientific and technological area. The fifth session will also discuss the measures for strengthening the trade, increasing the investment and facilitating increased level of cooperation in manpower areas. Other items include education, agriculture, information, telecommunication, civil aviation and industrial sector. The two countries are

discussing separately a bilateral agreement for investment promotion and protection. The two sides will meet next month to finalise their agreement.

A highlight of the current Joint Commission is the presence of 28 Saudi businessmen in addition to a 40 member official delegation.

SAUDI ARABIA INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Jun 10, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAUDI ARABIA

Fifth Session of the Indo-Saudi Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 12, 1997 regarding Fifth Session of the Indo-Saudi Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation:

At the invitation of Shri P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance, Government of India, His Excellency, Dr. Hashim Abdullah Yamani, Minister of Industry and Electricity, Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, visited New Delhi from 10-13 June 1997, for the meeting of the Fifth Session of the Indo-Saudi Joint Commission. His Excellency Dr. Yamani was accompanied by His Excellency Dr. Saleh Abdul Rehman Al Athel, President of the King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology, by senior officials of various Departments of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and by a high-level business delegation of 30 persons led by His Excellency Mr. Hamad Al Zamil, Chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

2. At the conclusion of the meeting of the Joint Commission, His Excellency, Dr. Hashim Abdullah Yamani and Shri P. Chidambaram signed the Agreed Minutes and the Memoranda of Understanding on the setting up of a Joint Business Council and for Scientific and Technological Cooperation between King Abdul Aziz City for Science & Technology (KASCST) of Saudi Arabia and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of India.

3. His Excellency Dr. Hashim Yamani called on the President of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, the Vice-President of India, Shri K. R. Narayanan, and Shri Murasoli Maran, Minister of Industry. In these meetings, and in the meeting of the Joint Commission, the traditional ties of friendship between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and India were reiterated

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and ways were explored for furthering the existing cooperation in different

fields.

4. Both sides agreed to conduct annual joint market surveys by competent trade bodies in areas having potential for increasing and diversifying bilateral trade. The two sides agreed to carry out investment studies through appropriate organisations in areas of mutual interest. They also agreed to encourage participation in each other's trade exhibitions.
5. The Indian side would send a delegation of concerned officials and leading entrepreneurs in the field of drugs and pharmaceuticals to familiarize themselves with Saudi regulations relating to the registration of products in the pharmaceuticals field, to the formation of joint ventures and to brief the concerned authorities about Indian capabilities in this area.
6. Both sides agreed to hold in New Delhi in the last week of June 1997 the first round of negotiations leading up to a bilateral agreement for protection and promotion of investment.
7. Both sides agreed to exchange information relating to transport in general, and railways in particular as well as for exchange of research results relating to road transport.
8. Prospects of furthering the existing cooperation in the field of agriculture were discussed and both sides agreed to exchange visits of experts and agriculturists, views and expertise in specific areas and publications and to study the possibility of cooperation in the field of farm machinery and equipment. The Indian side agreed to consider the Saudi request for training of Saudi students and scientists in specified fields.
9. Both sides recognised the importance of enhancing cooperation in the field of information and broadcasting and agreed to the exchange of visits, and of delegations, to further this objective.
10. Both sides expressed satisfaction over the existing cooperation in the field of manpower and agreed to enhance that co-operation by all possible means and through abolishing any obstacles and problems. The Saudi side noted the positive contribution made by the Indian workforce in Saudi Arabia. The Indian side appreciated the efforts made by the Saudi side to facilitate the stay of Indian manpower in Saudi Arabia.
11. Both sides agreed that the next meeting of the Joint Commission would be held in Riyadh on mutually agreed dates and that the practice of inter-sessional review to monitor the progress of work in different areas would be continued.

SAUDI ARABIA INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Jun 12, 1997

Volume No

1995

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Joint US - India Communique upon Signing of Extradition Treaty

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jun 25, 1997 regarding United States and India signing a new bilateral treaty for extradition of fugitive offenders:

The Government of the United States and India are pleased to announce that they have today signed a new bilateral treaty for the extradition of fugitive offenders. The signing of this Treaty is a major accomplishment and an important step in US - India law enforcement co-operation.

This modern extradition treaty will replace the 1931 Extradition Treaty between

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the United States and the United Kingdom, which is currently in force between the United States and India. Pursuant to the Treaty, each country will obligate itself to extradite fugitive offenders who have been accused or convicted of offences punishable by more than one year in each jurisdiction. The Treaty also provides procedures for either government to arrest fugitives immediately upon the request of the other government to prevent fugitives from fleeing. It also provides for a legal basis for temporarily surrendering prisoners to stand trial for crimes against the laws of the Requesting State. Fugitives will be extradited under the Treaty regardless of their nationality.

During the discussions between the delegations of India and the United States that led to the conclusion of this Treaty, both sides expressed their determination to redouble their efforts to eradicate the scourge of terrorism and to use the Treaty as an instrument to that end. It is the two governments' common view that the "political offence" exception to extradition should not apply to violent terrorist attacks. It is also each government's common expectation that in any cases of violent terrorist attacks for which extradition has been sought by the other government, the executive authorities of the requested government will most vigorously oppose fugitives' attempts to invoke the "political offence" exception to extradition.

Similarly, the Treaty constitutes an important step in the efforts of both countries to work together to combat the serious problem of international narcotics trafficking and other serious crimes. The United States and India have long co-operated together in the fight against such criminals, and this Treaty will provide a broader legal basis and enhance procedural mechanisms to enable each country to arrest and extradite offenders.

The United States and India look forward to bringing this important Treaty into force in the near future and to continuing to strengthen their relationship in law enforcement cooperation.

USA INDIA

Date : Jun 25, 1997

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1995

ANNEXURE I

Cultural and Scientific Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Madagascar and the Government of the Republic of India

The Government of the Republic of Madagascar and the Government of the Republic of India, hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties;

INSPIRED BY a common desire to establish and develop closer cultural relations and

DESIROUS OF promoting and developing in every possible manner the relations and understanding between India and Madagascar in the realms of Culture and Art, Archaeology, Education, Science and Technology, Social Security, Public health, Mass media and Sports, etc.

HAVE AGREED as follows:

Article 1

The Contracting Parties shall facilitate and encourage cooperation in the fields of culture and art, archaeology, education, science and technology, social sciences, social security, medical research, public health, mass media, information and education, sports and games in order to

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contribute towards a better knowledge of their respective cultures and activities in these fields.

Article 2

Each Contracting Party may establish in the territory of the other, cultural institutes in accordance with the laws, regulations and general policy in this regard, it being understood that prior clearance of the Governments concerned will be obtained before any such institution is established. The details regarding the establishment of such institutions shall be settled between the two countries by means of an additional protocol.

Article 3

The Contracting Parties shall encourage and facilitate:

- a) Participation in conferences, study tours, special courses, symposia, congresses and international film festivals of either of the two Parties;
- b) exchange of representatives of various organisations and associations, experts in the field of cinematography, historians, writers, artists, dance and music troupes, and sports teams whose stay and movements in the benefiting country shall be facilitated without prejudice to the national laws and regulations in force;
- c) exchange of materials, information and experts in the fields of culture and art, mass media, information, science and technology, agricultural research, education, sports and archaeology, film documentaries, adequate programmes (radio and television, books, periodicals, exhibitions and others) as far as possible; and
- d) translations of books of common interest into language of either Party.

Article 4

Each Contracting Party shall endeavour to provide facilities and scholarships to students and scientific personnel of the other country seeking to study in its institutions of higher education and research laboratories as well as to follow practical training courses.

Article 5

The Contracting Parties shall examine the problem of equivalence of diplomas issued at the end of studies carried out in each country.

Article 6

Each Contracting Party shall endeavour to present different facets of the life and culture of the other Party through mass media.

Article 7

The Contracting Parties shall, to the extent possible, ensure that text-books prescribed for their educational institutions, particularly those relating to history and geography of each of the Parties do not contain any error or misrepresentation of facts.

Article 8

Each Contracting Party shall facilitate, in accordance with its respective laws, the importation of non-commercial articles and circulation of all material originating from the other Party, that may be necessary for the fulfilment of the objectives of this Agreement.

Article 9

The Contracting Parties shall take appropriate measures for the implementation of the objectives of the present Agreement through formulation of

cultural, educational, scientific and technology exchange programmes, and periodic review of the same. This purpose may be achieved either through joint meetings of Representatives of the Contracting Parties alternatively in New Delhi and Antanana-

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rivo, or by exchange of correspondence through diplomatic channels.

Article 10

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of exchange of the Instruments of Ratification and shall be valid for a period of five years and shall be tacitly renewed for successive periods of five years at a time unless either Party conveys in writing its decision to terminate this Agreement, six months before the expiry of any such period.

Done at Antananarivo on 17th of June, 1997 in two originals, French, Malagasy, Hindi and English languages, all texts being equally authentic.

Sd/-

Herizo J. Razafimahaleo
For the Government of the
Republic of Madagascar

Sd/-

Dr. Prabhakara Jha
For the Government of the
Republic of India

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC INDIA MADAGASCAR USA

Date : Jun 25, 1997

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Date : Jul 01, 1997

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INDIA

Test Firing of a Medium Range Missile by Pakistan

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jul 02, 1997 regarding Government of India assessing the implications of reports carried in Pakistan dailies on test firing of a medium range missile by Pakistan:

We have noted with concern reports carried in Pakistan dailies today about the test firing of a medium range missile by Pakistan. Government of India is

carefully assessing the implications of these reports, in particular for our security.

INDIA PAKISTAN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Jul 02, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Nuclear Test Conducted by the USA

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jul 05, 1997 regarding nuclear test conducted by the USA:

Government have taken note of the "sub-critical" underground nuclear test conducted by the USA on Jul 02, 1997, and are concerned that this has been justified" as an activity permitted under the CTBT".

2. During the course of the CTBT negotiations, India had repeatedly stated that a credible CTBT must be a first step in the process of nuclear disarmament. India had also conveyed to the international community that the CTBT should end all testing activity that was aimed at developing and refining of nuclear weapons. In fact, we had put forward concrete proposals to ensure that CTBT would be a genuinely comprehensive test ban treaty. It is a matter of regret that, as it has now emerged, the CTBT contains loopholes which are exploited by some countries to continue their testing activity, using more sophisticated and advanced techniques. Such activity, which takes place in established underground nuclear weapon testing sites and is unverifiable, despite the elaborate verification mechanism otherwise envisaged under the CTBT, demonstrates the nuclear weapon states continued reliance on nuclear weapons and their programme to further develop and refine nuclear weapons technology.

3. India has consistently pointed out that the CTBT, without being placed in the context of a phased programme for global nuclear disarmament, serves only a discriminatory non-proliferation intent rather than the urgent goal of global nuclear disarmament. India further reiterates that mere non-proliferation arrangements as are now manifest, do not take into account our legitimate security concerns. This has been stated at the highest levels and is a position maintained consistently by India for more than three decades. Recent developments confirm the validity of India's concerns expressed during the CTBT negotiations, as well as our eventual decision last year that India could not be a party to such a treaty.

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4. India, it may be said, remains committed to achieving genuine global nuclear disarmament in a comprehensive and nondiscriminatory manner. India believes that a nuclear weapon-free world will enhance our national security as well as global security. Such a process, in order to be meaningful, can be based only upon genuine multilateral negotiations aimed at developing a phased programme for elimination of all nuclear weapons within a specified time-frame.

INDIA USA

Date : Jul 02, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Renewal of India-Pakistan Rail Agreement

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jul 08, 1997 regarding Government of India and Pakistan having agreed to renew the India-Pakistan Rail Agreement:

The Governments of India and Pakistan have agreed to renew the India-Pakistan Rail Agreement for a further period of three years from 8th July, 1997 to 7th July, 2000.

The India-Pakistan Agreement relating to Rail Communication was concluded between the Governments of India and Pakistan on 28th June, 1976 for a period of three years. This Agreement has since been extended from time to time with modifications for consecutive periods of three years each. The modified agreement of 1991 was extended for a period of three years in July 1994.

Government of India are committed to improved communication links between the two countries leading to greater people-to-people interaction.

INDIA PAKISTAN

Date : Jul 08, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

U. N. Convention

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jul 22, 1997 regarding Government of India's decision to sign the U.N. Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment:

The Government of India has decided to sign the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The Convention entered into force on 26th June, 1987.

Accession to the Convention Against Torture is part of India's determination to uphold the greatest values of Indian civilisation and our policy to work with other members of the International Community to promote and protect human rights. Signing of the Convention also fulfills our commitment made in the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front Government.

INDIA

Date : Jul 22, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Participation of India in ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jul 23, 1997 regarding participation of India in ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) Meeting in Kuala Lumpur:

India to participate in ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) Meetings in

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Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 27 to 29 July, 1997.

1) India was made a Full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN in 1996 and attended the ASEAN PMC meeting in Jakarta for the first time last year. Other dialogue partners of ASEAN are US, EU, Japan, ROK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada. China and Russia were also made full dialogue partners in 1996.

2) PMC is divided into two major dialogue sessions. One involves dialogue between ASEAN 9 and its 10 Dialogue Partners (PMC 9+10) and the other involves

dialogue between individual dialogue partners like India and the ASEAN 9 (PMC 9+1). Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram will lead the Indian Delegation. MOS, Shri S. I. Sherwani will also attend.

3) Occasion is significant because of ASEAN 30th Anniversary and its expansion to include Myanmar and Laos. India too commemorates its 50th Anniversary of Independence. India and ASEAN have now literally become next door neighbours.

4) ASEAN Indian Cooperation has progressed well in the 7 focus areas of Dialogue Partnership - trade, investment, science & technology, tourism, infrastructure, human resource development and academic/people to people contact. There is a positive balance sheet in regard to policy, programmes and projects, in these areas of cooperation.

5) Our trade with ASEAN continued to grow though as part of global disacceleration there was some show down. With some ASEAN countries our trade grew by over 30%, there was diversification of the trade basket and certain new value added sectors are gaining prominence. At over 6 billion dollars ASEAN India trade constitutes 9% of our global trade. An ASEAN India Working Group is to be constituted with the approval of its terms of reference.

6) ASEAN investments in India have shown a buoyant trend. In cumulative terms total ASEAN investments approved in India amount to \$ 1.8 million and the value of the projects in the pipe line and under consideration are to the tune of \$ 5.4 billion. In addition to Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore which are the leading ASEAN investors in India, Philippines and Indonesia respectively have also become significant investors.

7) In infrastructure there has been considerable evolution in Indian policy particularly in power, ports, telecom, roads sectors. Malaysian investors have in the last one year successfully tendered for the JNPT expansion project and have a number of power projects for implementation. Thai investors are working towards port development power projects and industrial estate and related infrastructure in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh.

8) In Science and Technology an ASEAN India working group has been established and is to meet next month. Two major projects in advanced materials are being implemented now and projects on multi-media education and bio technology are to be finalised for implementation by the working group. India has presented a detailed proposal for ASEAN India informatic training centre to be located in one of the ASEAN countries and is awaiting ASEAN decision thereon.

9) On tourism cooperation discussions have been held on drawing up a programme to identify specific India destinations for joint marketing with ASEAN, specific tourism infrastructure in India to be profiled for interested ASEAN investors and activation of familiarisation programmes for tour operations from both sides. In the related area of civil aviation dialogue with a number of ASEAN countries has been held and with Singapore there was a good agreement considerably expanding airlinks between India and Singapore.

10) In the area of human resource development ASEAN secretariat is preparing comprehensive studies on capabilities and needs on ASEAN and India, on centres

of excellence and India-ASEAN Study Centres. Our ITEC programme continued to be implemented especially vis-a-vis Indo-

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China and we also availed of ASEAN training programmes.

11) ASEAN India Symposia were organised and the ASEAN India Lecture Series were inaugurated by his Excellency Dr. Mahathir Mohmad, P.M. of Malaysia.

Exchange programmes between South East Asian Study Centres in ASEAN countries and universities in India are being worked out. ASEAN India Business Council had its meetings and an Indian business delegation participated in the ASEAN business summit.

INDIA MALAYSIA INDONESIA AUSTRALIA CANADA CHINA JAPAN NEW ZEALAND USA RUSSIA
LAOS REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE THAILAND

Date : Jul 23, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jul 24, 1997 on Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Under-standing:

As a tribute to the memory of the late Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and to his lifelong dedication to the cause of world peace and international understanding, the Government of India instituted the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding to be given annually for outstanding contribution to the promotion of international understanding, goodwill and friendship among the peoples of the world. The Award is administered by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

The Award carries a Citation, Trophy and Rs. 15 lakhs in cash (convertible into foreign currency).

The Award is made by a Jury appointed by the Government of India for this purpose. The Jury consists of seven eminent Indians including the Vice-President of India and the Chief Justice of India who are ex-officio members. The Vice-President of India is the Chairman of the Jury.

The Jury for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for 1995 consists of :

1. Shri K. R. Narayanan Chairman of Vice-President of India the Jury
2. Shri Krishan Kant Member Governor of Andhra Pradesh
3. Justice Shri J. S. Verma Member Chief Justice of India
4. Prof. V. R. Mehta Member Vice-Chancellor University of Delhi
5. Shri Kuldeep Nayar Member Journalist
6. Prof. Romila Thapar Member Historian
7. Smt. Meera Shankar Secretary to Director General, ICCR the Jury

After careful consideration of the numerous nominations received from all over the world, the Jury for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding has decided that the Award for the year 1995 be given to His Excellency, Mr. Mohamed Hosny Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

President Hosny Mubarak was born on May 4, 1928 at Kafr Al Messailha, Menoufia, Egypt. He took over the reins of government in the challenging circumstances created by the assassination of his predecessor. Combining patience, caution and firmness with flexibility, and vision, President Mubarak has brought to Egypt progress with stability.

He has presided over the gradual opening up of the political system and has been a strong advocate of moderation in politics. He has taken the lead in underlining the dangers posed by terrorism, often inspired and funded externally, and has called for an international convention on terrorism that would legally bind

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governments to cooperate in the eradication of this global menace.

The economic reforms begun by President Mubarak in 1991 have yielded positive results. Impressive progress has been made in recent years in developing Egypt's infrastructure. To release growing pressure on the Nile Valley and prepare Egypt for the challenges of the 21st century, President Mubarak has launched the visionary New Valley Project which by irrigating and developing vast tracts of Egypt's western desert, could constitute a monumental achievement for the welfare of future generations.

President Mubarak's moderation and pragmatism, his openness to reasonable and balanced compromises, and his perseverance in the search for solutions have been invaluable assets in efforts to reduce regional tensions. Under President Mubarak's leadership, Egypt has played a major role in advancing the cause of peace and stability in West Asia. Egypt's commitment to regional dialogue and peace has been the bedrock on which efforts to structure peace in this region have been made in recent years. Egypt played an important role in launching the Peace process at Madrid in 1991. President Mubarak has used Egypt's position and its regional leadership to promote and sustain this process.

Relations between India and Egypt, forged in the 50s and 60s under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru and Gamal Abdel Nasser, have remained strong. India and Egypt, continue to work together closely to address the new challenges that the developing countries are facing today. India's longstanding and principled support to the rights, aspirations and legitimate interests of Arab countries constitute a solid bond between India and Egypt and beyond that the Arab world as a whole.

President Mubarak has been chosen for the 1995 Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for the outstanding and important role played by him in providing stability and progress to his country, in upholding the Arab Cause; in promoting peace and understanding in the region, and in contributing to the efforts of the Non-aligned nations for peace, justice and equality in the world.

The previous recipients of this Award are :

U Thant 1965
Martin Luther King Jr 1966
(Presented Posthumously)
Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan 1967
Yehudi Menuhin 1968
Mother Teresa 1969
Kenneth D Kaunda 1970
Josip Broz Tito 1971
Andre Malraux 1972
Julius K Nyerere 1973
Raul Prebisch 1974
Jonas Salk 1975
Giuseppe Tucci 1976
Tulsi Meherji Shrestha 1977
The Most Venerable
Nichidatsu Fujii 1978
Nelson Mandela 1979
Barbara Ward 1980
Alva and Gunnar Myrdal 1981
(jointly)
Leopold Sedar Senghor 1982
Bruno Kreisky 1983
Indira Gandhi 1984
(Presented Posthumously)
Olof Palme 1985
(Presented Posthumously)
Not Awarded 1986
Javier Perez de Cuellar 1987
Yassir Arfaat 1988
Robert Gabriel Mugabe 1989
Helmut Kohl 1990
Aruna Asaf Ali 1991
Maurice F Strong 1992
Aung San Suu Kyi 1993
Mahathir bin Mohamad 1994

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INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC EGYPT LATVIA SPAIN

Date : Jul 24, 1997

Volume No

1995

LAOS

Visit of H.E. Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Foreign Minister of Lao PDR to India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jul 11, 1997 regarding visit of H.E. Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Foreign Minister of the Lao PDR to India to Co-Chair the First Meeting of India-Lao Joint Commission:

Pursuant to the Agreement between the Republic of India and Lao People's Democratic Republic to establish an India Lao Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation signed in New Delhi on May 02, 1997 during the official visit of H.E. Khamtay Siphan-done, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to India, the First Meeting of the India-Lao Joint Commission (JCM) was held in New Delhi on July 11, 1997. The Indian delegation was led by H.E. Shri Saleem Iqbal Shervani, Minister of State for External Affairs of the Republic of India, and the Lao delegation was led by H.E. Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR.

The two delegations reviewed the overall state of bilateral relations and reaffirmed the close and cordial relations existing between India and Lao PDR. Both sides agreed that concerted efforts should be made to further strengthen and upgrade the existing economic and commercial relations which will be commensurate with the excellent political bilateral relations and expressed the hope that the JCM will play a pivotal role in prioritising the areas of bilateral cooperation, especially in the fields of trade, investment, education, training, agricultural and technical cooperation between the two countries. The leaders of the delegation agreed that the two countries should now embark upon concrete measures to accomplish these objectives in the future.

LAOS INDIA

Date : Jul 11, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT

Amendment to US Foreign Assistance Act

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jul 18, 1997 regarding Amendment to US Foreign Assistance Act of 1961:

Government have been informed of an Amendment to US Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which has been passed by the Senate of the US Congress. This amendment was passed with the active support of the US Administration. It lifts some existing restrictions on US military and economic assistance to Pakistan which have been in place under US law, on account of Pakistan's externally assisted nuclear weapons programme.

This amendment comes in the wake of reports of Pakistan having tested a medium-range missile and establishing a missile facility with Chinese assistance. These developments have serious implications for India's security.

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Government have also noted that these same provisions were contained in the 1995 Brown Amendment on which India's concern had been made clear. These provisions were not implemented by the US at that time because of supply of Ring Magnets by China to Pakistan's nuclear enrichment facility. Since then there has been no let up in Pakistan's pursuit of nuclear weapons and means of delivery. This has been confirmed by US officials in their testimony to US Congress.

This Amendment to existing US legislation is part of an incremental process. It cannot but be viewed with concern in India as encouragement to Pakistan's clandestine nuclear and missile programmes. It will also vitiate the atmosphere of the dialogue which India and Pakistan have just resumed by emboldening elements in Pakistan who are not in favour of that process. Government will take appropriate steps to safeguard India's security.

USA INDIA PAKISTAN CHINA

Date : Jul 18, 1997

August

Volume No

1995

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VOL XLIII NO 8 August, 1997

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INDIA CHINA USA NEPAL

Date : Aug 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Tenth Meeting of the Indo-China Joint Working Group (JWG)

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Aug 05, 1997 regarding tenth Meeting of India-China Joint Working Group:

The Tenth Meeting of the India-China Joint Working Group (JWG) on the

Boundary Question as well as Vice Foreign Minister - Foreign Secretary level consultations were held in New Delhi from 4 to 5 August, 1997. The Indian delegation was led by Foreign Secretary Shri K. Raghunath. The Chinese delegation was led by Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan.

Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Shri Inder Kumar Gujral. During the meeting, Vice Foreign Minister Tang conveyed an invitation from President Jiang Zemin to President Narayanan to pay a State visit to China next year. An invitation was extended to the Prime Minister to visit to China at a mutually convenient time.

During the Tenth Meeting of the India-China Joint Working Group, the two sides reviewed developments in bilateral relations since the Ninth Meeting of the JWG held in October, 1996. They also exchanged views on regional, multilateral and international issues of mutual interest.

The two sides reaffirmed at the Tenth JWG the shared assessment of the leadership of the two countries that a constructive and cooperative relationship oriented towards the 21st century, as well as the development of mutually beneficial relations in all areas, would be in the fundamental interests of the peoples of the two countries. The two sides agreed that the high-level political dialogue had played a significant part in promoting understanding between the two countries and that the momentum of high-level visits should be maintained.

The two sides addressed issues relating to the India-China border and clarification of the line of actual control. They also reviewed the implementation of the Agreement between India and China on Confidence Building Measures in the Military field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas, concluded during the visit to India in November, 1996, of President Jiang Zemin of the People's Republic of China.

The two sides exchanged the Instruments of Ratification in respect of the CBMs Agreement and concluded a Protocol on Cooperation between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, with a view to promoting regular consultations and further developing and strengthening the friendly relations between the two countries.

Vice Foreign Minister Tang invited Foreign Secretary to visit China at an early date next year for the next session of the Joint Working Group. This was accepted.

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INDIA CHINA USA

Date : Aug 05, 1997

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1995

International Wheat Meet to discuss "Wheat for All"

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Aug 08, 1997 regarding International Conference to discuss "Wheat for All":

A three day International Conference on Wheat "Wheat Research Needs Beyond 2000 AD" would discuss action plan, strategies & technologies to ensure availability of wheat to the entire population at affordable price and in adequate quantity. The theme of the meet is "Wheat for All". Union Agriculture Minister Shri Chaturanan Mishra, would inaugurate this meet on Aug 12, 1997 at Directorate of Wheat Research, Karnal. About 200 scientists from different parts of the countries and abroad would attend this conference.

The conference will examine various options available for increasing the yield levels through zero tillage, raised bed technology, new candidate weedicides and developing wheat hybrids with significant yield advantage over the best available varieties. Research for using the untapped gene pools of winter wheat, new germplasm as synthetics and application of biotechnology are some of the new and exciting opportunities now available to increase the wheat yields further. Strategy to buffer the crop against the vagaries of rust epidemics and Karnal bunt diseases and examining the issues related to grain handling will also be covered in the meeting.

Problems relating to damage caused by weeds like Phalaris minor, the problem of disposal of crop residue left behind by combines, impending restrictions on germplasm movement due to Intellectual Property Regimes (IPR) would also draw attention in the conference. The pricing policy, its impact on production, the effect of global trade and free market price will be discussed in the seminar.

Delegates from nearly thirty countries including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Mexico, Switzerland, USA, Thailand, Bangladesh and Nepal would be attending the conference. This interaction will promote in identifying new research partners, sensitize the private seed companies and wheat industries of the new opportunities in this field.

Estimates have put India's wheat requirement at 109 million tonnes by 2020 AD to meet the needs of 1.3 billion people. Hence we will have to add another 40 million tonnes to the present wheat production by 2020 AD. The information and knowledge developed through this discussion would serve a vital frame for our future plan in this regard.

In India there is still a large untapped yield potential in eastern UP, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh where current yield levels are only about 2.0 tonnes per hectare. This can be easily doubled. Even in progressive states like Punjab and Haryana there is scope to increase yield further by proper resource management and adoption of superior varieties. Such an increase should be sustainable with minimum impact on our ecology and rural environment.

The plenary lecture by Prof. Reeves, DG, of International Wheat & Maize

Research Institute (CIMMYT) Mexico will indicate the type of international cooperation needed to achieve the set targets, Prof. Reeves is leading a nine member team from CIMMYT. Dr. S. Rajaram, Director of the CIMMYT's wheat program will deliver the second Ch. Ram Dhan Singh memorial lecture on the approaches to break the yield barrier in wheat.

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INDIA USA AUSTRALIA AUSTRIA BANGLADESH GERMANY MEXICO NEPAL SWITZERLAND THAILAND

Date : Aug 12, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Indo-Nepal Foreign Secretary level talks

Following is the text of a joint press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Aug 21, 1997 regarding India-Nepal Foreign Secretary level talks:

The Foreign Secretary of His Majesty's Government of Nepal, His Excellency Mr. Kumar Prasad Gyawali, and the Foreign Secretary of India, Shri Krishnan Raghunath, met in New Delhi from 19th to 21st August, 1997. His Excellency the Foreign Secretary of Nepal was accompanied by Mr. Murari Raj Sharma, Special Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of His Majesty's Government, and Mr. Ram Bhakta Thakur, Charge d' Affaires at the Royal Nepal Embassy in New Delhi. The Foreign Secretary of India was assisted by Shri K. V. Rajan, Ambassador of India, Kathmandu, and officials of the Ministry of External Affairs. The meeting continued the tradition of wide ranging consultations at Foreign Secretary level between the between the two neighbouring countries.

In pursuance of the directives contained in the Joint Press Statement issued during the visit of the Prime Minister of India, Shri I. K. Gujral, to Nepal from 5th to 7th June, 1997, the two Foreign Secretaries discussed issues of bilateral interest covering a diversity of fields, including bilateral economic cooperation, matters relating to trade and transit, water resources, issues relating to the management and demarcation of the Indo-Nepal border and to the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between India and Nepal.

It was agreed that details of the working arrangements for the additional transit route between Nepal and Bangladesh through Phulbari would be communicated by Government of India to HMGN within a week so that the route could be made operational with effect from 1st September.

It was also agreed that the second meeting of the Joint Working Group on Border Management would meet in October in New Delhi, on mutually convenient dates. Both sides reiterated their determination to work closely and fight the scourge of terrorism and their commitment not to allow their territory to be used for activities directed against or prejudicial to the security of the other.

The Joint Working Group of the Indo-Nepal Joint Technical Committee on the Border would continue its discussions on the relevant facts relating to the demarcation of the boundary alignment in the western sector, including the Kalapani area, and hold its 4th meeting at New Delhi in September.

On economic cooperation, it was agreed that Nepal's request for Indian assistance in setting up a Police Academy would be expeditiously followed up and that the details would be discussed during a meeting of the concerned officials of both sides prior to the next round of Home Secretary level talks.

In regard to the Pancheswar project, the two Foreign Secretaries noted the progress on preparation of the DPR through communications between the concerned Ministries and agreed that the concerned expert groups should meet as early as possible so that further substantial progress, along with recommendations where relevant, could be submitted to the High Level Task Force during its fifth meeting scheduled to be held by October 1997.

The Nepalese side raised the question of down-stream benefits from Multipurpose hydroelectric projects which may

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be executed in Nepal. It was agreed that this matter would be discussed between the Ministries of Water Resources of the two countries.

Regarding the question of regularisation of the services of Indian school and college teachers in Nepal which had been agreed to in 1991, the Foreign Secretary of Nepal briefed the Indian Foreign Secretary on progress in consideration of the matter by His Majesty's Government, which would continue to give its attention to the issue.

With regard to the request for establishing a Consulate General of India at Birganj, the Foreign Secretary of Nepal stated that it was under consideration of HMGN.

The two sides recalled the historic role of the 1950 Treaty as a framework for developing and strengthening of Indo-Nepal relations. They explained various aspects of the Treaty in the context of suggestions for a review with the objective of realising the full potential of the bilateral relationship, taking into account the present day needs and concerns of the two countries. It was agreed that specific proposals in this regard would be discussed.

His Excellency the Foreign Secretary of Nepal separately called on Secretary, Commerce and Secretary, Water Resources, of the Government of India.

The talks were held in a friendly, frank and cordial atmosphere. Both sides

agreed that the meeting had been useful and productive, and had enabled a valuable exchange of views. It was agreed that discussions would be continued at the next round of Foreign Secretary level talks this year on mutually convenient dates.

INDIA NEPAL USA BANGLADESH

Date : Aug 21, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Committee Set up to Revise Haj Act

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Aug 29, 1997 on amendments to the Haj Committee Act of 1959:

Government have been actively considering amendments to the Haj Committee Act of 1959. In this connection, Shri Salim I. Shervani, Minister of State for External Affairs, held a meeting today to elicit the views of Muslim Members of Parliament and ex-MPs on the proposed amendments to the Haj Committee Act. The meeting was attended by S\Shri Maqbool Dar, Minister, of State for Home Affairs, M.O. Farook, Obaidullah Khan Azmi, Qamarul Islam, E. Ahamed, M.P., Abdussamad Samadan, Syed Shahabuddin, Mohd. Afzal, Khan G. Zahidi, Sharief-uddin Shariq, M. Zahedi, K. Rahman Khan, G. Rasool Kar, Dr. Shafiqur Rahman Barq and Habibur Rehman Nomani. Also present were Shri Lalit Mansingh, Secretary (West) and Shri R. Dayakar, Joint Secretary (Gulf), Ministry of External Affairs.

2. The members took note of the significant changes since the enactment of the Haj Committee Act of 1959 such as the emergence of seven embarkation points other than Mumbai; discontinuation of sailings for Haj travel; the increasing role played by State Haj Committees in Haj management; the need to regulate the role of private tour operators; and the lack of an all-India character in the present Haj Committee.

3. After considerable discussion, Shri Shervani accepted a suggestion to constitute a committee to study the matter and prepare a consolidated report containing various suggestions. Accordingly, an Advisory Committee on Haj Act was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri M. S. Farooq, MP & former Chief Minister of

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Pondicherry, with the following as members:

S/Shri

1. Dr. Shafiqur Rahman Barq, MP, LS
2. E. Ahamed, MP, LS
3. Qamarul Islam, MP, LS
4. K. Rahman Khan, MP, RS
5. Khan Ghufuran Zahidi, MP, RS
6. Sharief-ud-din Shariq, MP, RS
7. Syed Shahabuddin, ex-MP, LS
8. Mohd. Afzal, ex-MP, RS

4. This Committee will hold three sittings and also invite views from different Muslim organisations and schools of thought on the proposed draft Bill and submit its report to the Minister by the middle of September. The participants felt that considering the urgency for replacing the Haj Act of 1959, an Ordinance may be issued as soon as the final draft Bill is ready. Shri Shervani will take a meeting of all Muslim MPs on 17th September, 1997 to discuss the Committee's report and finalise the text of the proposed Ordinance.

INDIA USA OMAN

Date : Aug 29, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India's Foreign Trade : April-June 1997

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Aug 01, 1997 regarding India's Foreign Trade from April 97 to June 97:

Exports during June, 1997 are valued at US \$ 2660.11 million which is 2.53% higher than the level of US \$2594.41 million in June, 1996.

India's exports during April-June 1997 are estimated at US \$ 8134.95 million which is 0.95% lower than the level of US \$ 8212.87 million in April-June, 1996.

Imports during June 1997 are valued at US \$ 3106.40 million representing 10.66% growth relative to the level of imports valued at US \$ 2807.06 million in June, 1996.

Imports during April-June 1997 are estimated at US \$ 9532.30 million which is 4.22% higher than the import level of US \$ 9146.27 million in the same period last year. Oil imports during April-June 1997 are valued at US \$ 2058.45 million which is 9.89% lower than oil imports valued at US \$ 2284.24 million in the corresponding period last year. Non-oil imports during April-June 1997 are estimated at US \$ 7473.85 million, which is 8.42% higher than the level of such

imports valued at US \$ 6862.03 million in April-June 1996.

The trade deficit for April-June 1997 is estimated at US \$ 1397.45 million which is higher than the deficit at US \$ 933.4 million during April-June 1996.

The positive growth in exports noted in the month of June, 1997 indicates that export optimism is likely to be sustained.

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INDIA USA

Date : Aug 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

On Small Scale Industries

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on Aug 27, 1997 on Small Scale Industries:

According to estimates, during the year 1996-97, 28.57 lakh SSI units provided employment to 160 lakh persons against a target of 150.5 lakh persons.

The production in these units is valued at Rs. 4,18,863 crores at current prices and Rs. 2,51,043 crores at constant prices with 1990-91 as base year.

Exports from SSI Sector increased from Rs. 29,068 crores in 1994-95 to Rs. 34,065 crores during 1995-96.

INDIA USA

Date : Aug 27, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT

On Jammu and Kashmir

Following is the text of a statement issued in New Delhi by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs on Aug 12, 1997 regarding Jammu & Kashmir as an integral part of the Indian Union:

In response to a question regarding the reported remarks of a US State Department official on Jammu & Kashmir, the official spokesman said that Government had received a report on these remarks from the Indian Embassy in Washington. In this context, the official spokesman drew attention to the fact that the State of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union.

INDIA USA

Date : Aug 12, 1997

September

Volume No

1995

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Date : Sep 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

BELARUS

State Visit of H.E. Alyaksandr Lukashenka, President of the Republic of Belarus to India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 25, 1997 regarding state visit of H.E. Mr. Alyaksandr Lukashenka, President of the Republic of Belarus to India:

The President of the Republic of Belarus, H.E. Mr. Alyaksandr Lukashenka will be paying a State visit to India from 25-28 September 1997. President Lukashenka will be accompanied by several Ministers of the Belarusian Government.

On 27 September 1997, President Lukashenka will have separate meetings in New Delhi with the President, the Vice-President and the Prime Minister of India. Several important bilateral documents will also be signed the same day.

Prior to arrival in New Delhi, President Lukashenka and delegation will visit Calcutta and Mumbai. In Calcutta, besides meetings with the Governor and the Chief Minister of West Bengal, President Lukashenka would lay a wreath at the grave of Mother Teresa. In Mumbai, he would meet the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, as well as have separate meetings with the representative of Indian industry and business.

USA UNITED KINGDOM INDIA

Date : Sep 25, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Phulbari Transit Route Inaugurated

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 01, 1997 regarding inauguration of alternative transit route from Kakarbhitta (Nepal) to Banglabandh (Bangladesh) through Phulbari (India):

In pursuance of the decision taken by the Prime Ministers of India and Nepal during Prime Minister I. K. Gujral's visit to Kathmandu in June 1997, an alternative transit route from Kakarbhitta (Nepal) to Banglabandh (Bangladesh) through Phulbari (India) was inaugurated today. The Ambassador of India, H.E. Shri K. V. Rajan and the Commerce Secretary of Nepal, H.E. Shri Mohan Dev Pant, exchanged letters at Kakarbhitta in the presence of the Foreign Minister of Nepal, H.E. Mr. Kamal Thapa on the modalities for the new route connecting Nepal and Bangladesh. The total road distance of this route in India (from Panitanki to Phulbari) is 45 kms. According to the modalities agreed upon, the trucks carrying cargo in transit would move in escorted convoys on Saturdays and Sundays. The cargo would move in

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Nepalese registered pilfer-proof containers or trucks capable of being sealed. There will be a short Negative List of categories of goods not allowed for

transit, such as fire arms and ammunition, hazardous cargo, gold and silver bullion, narcotics, etc.

Speaking on the occasion, the Indian Ambassador said that the opening of the Phulbari route to Bangladesh was yet another milestone in India-Nepal relations. He expressed the hope that this would lead to an expansion and diversification of trade and economic relations within the region.

INDIA BANGLADESH NEPAL CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC USA

Date : Sep 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Prime Minister's Visit to South Africa

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 03, 1997 on Prime Minister's visit to South Africa:

The Prime Minister of India, Shri I. K. Gujral, will be visiting South Africa between October 5 - 8, 1997. He will visit Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria.

The principal elements of his programme include a substantive interaction with the South African leadership, address to the South African Parliament in Cape Town, meeting with the Indian-origin community in Durban, visits to the Gandhi heritage sites, and unveiling of a bust of Pandit Nehru in Pretoria. The details of the programme are being worked out in consultation with the South African authorities.

INDIA SOUTH AFRICA USA

Date : Sep 03, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

52nd Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 05, 1997 regarding Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral to attend the 52nd Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York:

Shri I. K. Gujral, Prime Minister of India, will attend the 52nd Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York from September 21 to 24, 1997.

The visit of Shri Gujral assumes added significance in view of the fact that it is taking place during the Golden Jubilee Year of India's Independence. Shri Gujral's address to the UN General Assembly is expected to provide an overview of India's contributions to the UN and her achievements in foreign policy and international affairs over the past five decades.

During the visit Shri Gujral will have meetings with leaders from several important non-aligned and developing countries and industrialised nations attending the UN General Assembly. The Prime Minister will interact with the past and current Chairmen of NAM to review developments since the New Delhi NAM Ministerial Conference held in April, 1997. He is scheduled to meet with President Clinton of the United States. Meeting with the Secretary General of the United Nations will also take place.

Shri Gujral is expected to address groups of leading intellectuals and academics in New York, apart from meeting the Indian community.

On his way to New York Prime Minister Gujral will pay a bilateral visit to Tanzania in response to invitation extended by the President. Before returning to India the Prime Minister will stop over in Rome, Italy for a bilateral visit.

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INDIA USA TANZANIA ITALY

Date : Sep 05, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral's Meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister Shri Nawaz Sharif in New York

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 15, 1997 in which Official Spokesman denied that the meeting between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in New York was arranged through the good offices of a third country:

In the context of some press reports, the official spokesman denied that the forthcoming meeting between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in New York was arranged through the good offices of a third country. The official spokesman said that the Prime Minister will be visiting New York for the UNGA Session and it is customary during such visits for the visiting leaders to meet each other on a bilateral basis.

Prime Minister's meeting with the Pakistan Prime Minister is scheduled to take place on 23rd September, 1997. The Spokesman recalled that the two Prime Ministers had a useful meeting in Male in May 1997 when they were both there for the SAARC Summit. The forthcoming meeting, which was arranged bilaterally, will be part of the ongoing dialogue between the two countries.

The question of any third party mediation or intervention in India's relations with any other country simply does not arise.

INDIA PAKISTAN USA MALDIVES

Date : Sep 15, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Joint Statement

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 18, 1997 regarding meeting of Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan in New Delhi:

The Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan, Shri K. Raghunath and Mr. Shamshad Ahmad, met in New Delhi from 15-18 September, 1997.

2. During his stay in New Delhi, the Pakistan Foreign Secretary was received by Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral and called on the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Saleem I. Shervani.

3. The discussions were held in a cordial atmosphere. Each side presented their views with regard to the operationalisation of the mechanism envisaged in para 4(ii) of the Joint Statement between India and Pakistan of Jun 23, 1997. It was felt that further consideration was required. The Foreign Secretaries, therefore, decided to adjourn now and reconvene their meeting at a mutually convenient date.

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Jun 23, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Joint Press Release

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 18, 1997 regarding release of civilian detainees in India and Pakistan:

The Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan at their meeting in Male during the SAARC Summit in May 1997 had agreed that the Governments of India and Pakistan would take measures for the release of civilian detainees in both countries.

The matter was discussed during the Third Round of the resumed Foreign Secretary level talks in New Delhi and it was decided that concerned authorities of both countries would expedite the release of civilian detainees belonging to either side.

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INDIA PAKISTAN MALDIVES USA

Date : Sep 18, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Condolence message from the Prime Minister of India to H.E. Prime Minister of Nepal on the demise of Mr. Ganesh Man Singh

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 19, 1997 containing the text of a condolence message from Prime Minister of India to H.E. the Prime Minister of Nepal on the demise of Mr. Ganesh Man Singh:

Excellency,

I am deeply saddened to learn of the passing away of Mr. Ganesh Man Singh early this morning. India shares with Nepal a sense of deep loss on the passing away of a champion of democracy and a figure of enormous respect in the political firmament of our region.

Mr. Ganesh Man Singh was a well-known figure in India and was held in the highest respect for his unswerving commitment to the cause of democracy. His life's work and the personal sacrifices that he made in the service of the people of Nepal are an inspiration to future generations who will shape the future of their country.

On behalf of the people and the Government of India, and on my own behalf, I convey my deepest condolences on this loss. I shall be grateful if you could kindly convey our sentiments to the bereaved family.

(I. K. Gujral)
Camp : Dar-es-Salaam

His Excellency,
Mr. Lokendra Bahadur Chand,
Prime Minister of Nepal,
Kathmandu.

INDIA NEPAL USA

Date : Sep 19, 1997

Volume No

1995

NEPAL

Official Visit of the Foreign Minister of Nepal to India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 15, 1997 regarding official visit of the Foreign Minister of Nepal to India:

The Foreign Minister of Nepal, Mr. Kamal Thapa, paid an official visit to India from 10-14 September 1997. Apart from official talks held in New Delhi during the visit, Mr. Thapa called on the President, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and held meetings with the Ministers of Commerce and Water Resources, and other dignitaries and political personalities in New Delhi.

2. During the official talks, Mr. Thapa was assisted by Mr. Kumar Prasad Gyawali, Foreign Secretary of His Majesty's Government, Mr. Murari Raj Sharma,

Special Secretary, and Mr. Leela Prasad Sharma, Joint Secretary, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, and Dr. Ram Bhakta Thakur, Charge d'Affairs of the Royal Nepalese Embassy in New Delhi. The Indian side was led by Mr. Saleem Shervani, Minister of State for External Affairs, assisted by Mr. K. Raghunath,

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Foreign Secretary, Mr. K. V. Rajan, Ambassador of India to Nepal and officials of the Ministry of External Affairs.

3. The visit was an occasion for a high level review of progress in bilateral relations. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the all-round development in cooperation in the fields of water resources, trade and transit arrangements, health, infrastructure and education and training, which has contributed to the welfare of the people in both countries. Discussions were held in a frank and cordial atmosphere reflecting the closeness and goodwill that defines the relations between India and Nepal.
4. They recognised Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral's visit to Nepal in June 1997 as a landmark in Indo-Nepal relations. Recalling the understanding reached during the visit, the Ministers directed the concerned officials on both sides to expedite their implementation.
5. The Ministers welcomed the inauguration of the additional transit route between Nepal and Bangladesh through Phulbari in India, and expressed the hope that this step would contribute to the growth of trade and economic development, while contributing to the flowering of sub-regional cooperation in the area.
6. They noted that the Joint Group of Experts on the Pancheswar Hydroelectric project was currently meeting at Kathmandu in preparation of the Detailed Project Report of the project. They expressed their determination to take necessary steps to resolve the remaining issues pertinent to the Project, including the setting up of the Mahakali River Commission at an early date, so as to enable accelerated progress and the completion of the Detailed Project Report on schedule. They also noted that developments in this matter would be reviewed at the next meeting of the High Level Task Force to be held next month.
7. Regarding the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship, both sides agreed to continue further discussions.
8. The two sides also noted with appreciation that the Joint Working Group on Border Management at its first meeting in Kathmandu in July had identified certain concrete steps to prevent misuse of the facility of the open border between the two countries for purposes detrimental to the interests of both. They noted that the next meeting of the Group is to be held in October in New Delhi on mutually convenient dates. They agreed that necessary follow up action on decisions taken at the first meeting would be taken expeditiously.
9. Both sides reiterated their determination to work closely and fight the scourge of terrorism and their commitment not to allow their territory to be used for activities directed against or prejudicial to the security of the other.

10. It was agreed that the decision of His Majesty's Government of Nepal on the two issues relating to the regularisation of the services of Indian school and college teachers in Nepal, and the request for establishing an Indian Consulate General in Birganj, raised during the Prime Minister of India's visit to Nepal in June last, would be expedited.

11. On the 13th and 14th of September, the Foreign Minister of Nepal and Mrs. Thapa visited Vaishno Devi on pilgrimage.

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NEPAL INDIA USA BANGLADESH

Date : Sep 15, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

India and Pakistan Foreign Secretary Level Talks

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 01, 1997 stating that allegation from Islamabad that India is "backtracking" on understandings reached at the second round of Foreign Secretary-level talks held in Islamabad in June 97, is entirely incorrect:

We have seen reports emanating from Islamabad alleging that India is "backtracking" on understandings reached at the second round of Foreign Secretary-level talks held in Islamabad in June 1997. This allegation is entirely incorrect.

The Joint Statement, which was issued at the conclusion of the Foreign Secretary-level talks in Islamabad in June 1997, identifies a number of subjects for discussion and sets out a mechanism for the process of talks between the two sides. The mechanism has to be given concrete shape and the two countries are currently engaged in discussions for this purpose. We have suggested dates to the Pakistani side for the next meeting of the Foreign Secretaries and a response is awaited.

On its part, India will adhere to the provisions of the Joint Statement.

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Sep 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral's Meeting with Mr. Mushahid Hussain Syed

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 12, 1997 regarding meeting of Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral with Mr. Mushahid Hussain Syed, Minister of Information and Media Development of Pakistan:

Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral received Mr. Mushahid Hussain Syed, Minister of Information and Media Development of Pakistan this morning. The meeting was held in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Mr. Mushahid Hussain conveyed warm greetings of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif which were fully reciprocated by Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Gujral and Mr. Mushahid Hussain Syed expressed their desire for friendly and cooperative relations between India and Pakistan and for the continuation of the Foreign Secretary-level dialogue between the two countries. The two countries will adhere in letter and spirit to the Joint Statement which was issued on Jun 23, 1997 in Islamabad.

A meeting of Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will take place in New York when both leaders are there later this month for the UN General Assembly session.

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USA INDIA PAKISTAN

Date : Jun 23, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

India rejects Pak allegation

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 19, 1997 rejecting the

allegation contained in statement issued in Lahore that India has resiled from Joint Statement of June 23, 1997 issued after the second round of talks held in Islamabad:

We have seen a statement issued in Lahore yesterday following the return of the Pakistan delegation which was in New Delhi for the resumed Foreign Secretary level talks. We categorically reject the allegation contained in that statement that India has resiled from the Joint Statement of Jun 23, 1997, issued after the second round of talks held in Islamabad.

The Joint Statement of 23 June, 1997 identified subjects for future discussion. It also stated that the two sides had agreed to set up a mechanism for this purpose. The two Governments have since then been in touch to work out and to give concrete shape to such a mechanism. Discussions on this subject continued during the third round of talks held in New Delhi between September 15-18. At these talks, the two sides agreed that there were some issues which required further consideration, and that they would meet again at a mutually convenient date for this purpose.

India adheres to the letter and spirit of the Joint Statement issued at the end of the Islamabad talks. Our commitment to dialogue is firm and unequivocal. We seek to build relationship of trust, friendship and cooperation and in this context we look forward to a sustained, comprehensive and substantive dialogue.

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Jun 23, 1997

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1995

UNITED KINGDOM

Visit of Queen Elizabeth - II and the Duke of Edinburgh to India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Sep 30, 1997 on Queen Elizabeth - II and the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to India from 12-18 October, 1997:

Queen Elizabeth-II and the Duke of Edinburgh are scheduled to visit India from 12-18 October, 1997. This will be their third visit to India. During the visit, the Queen will meet President Shri K. R. Narayanan, who will also host a State Banquet in her honour. The Queen will also meet the Vice President Shri Krishna Kant and Prime Minister I. K. Gujral.

The itinerary for their visit includes Delhi, Amritsar, Chennai and Kochi. The Duke of Edinburgh is scheduled to visit Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

The other elements in the programme include the opening of the largest ever

British trade exhibition in India - "Indo-British Partnership: Towards 2000".
The Queen is also scheduled to open an exhibition with the President at the
National Museum of India of treasures from the British Museum.

INDIA UNITED KINGDOM USA

Date : Sep 30, 1997

October

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BULGARIA INDIA PAKISTAN SAUDI ARABIA USA FRANCE GERMANY

Date : Oct 01, 1997

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1995

BULGARIA

Bulgarian Secretary on Foreign Affairs Call on Union Home Minister Shri Indrajit Gupta

Following is the text of a Press Note issued in New Delhi on Oct 14, 1997
regarding H.E. Mr. Valentin Dobrav, the Secretary on Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria,
called on Union Home Minister Shri Indrajit Gupta:

H.E. Mr. Valentin Dobrav, the Secretary on Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria called
on Union Home Minister Shri Indrajit Gupta here today.

Both the leaders discussed matters of mutual interest and exchanged views
for cooperation in the field of agriculture, commerce. The impending extradition
treaty was also discussed during the talks.

BULGARIA INDIA USA

Date : Oct 14, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 1997

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 01, 1997 regarding nomination of Mr. Gerhard Fischer of Germany for the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 1997:

Mr. Gerhard Fischer of Germany has been nominated for the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 1997. Seventy-six years old German "Ambassador of Humanity" was unanimously chosen for the prestigious international Prize for Social, Economic and Political transformation through Non-violence by a high powered Jury chaired by Shri Inder Kumar Gujral, Prime Minister of India.

The Gandhi Peace Prize was established in the year 1995 with the objective of encouraging the promotion of Gandhian values around the world. So far the Prize has been awarded to Dr. Julius K. Nyerere, former President of Tanzania (1995) and Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, a Sri Lankan social scientist (1996).

Nominations for the Prize were invited from both individuals and organizations from all over the world including MPs, Nobel Laureates, Secretary General of the United Nations, Vice Chancellors, Heads of Institutions relating to studies and research in non-violence and Gandhian principles, Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Commonwealth Parliamentary Union International Parliamentary Union, Governors, Chief Ministers, etc.

This year as many as 55 nominations were received out of which Gerhard Fischer was chosen for his outstanding

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work for treatment and rehabilitation of leprosy patients and children affected by polio. He retired prematurely from a successful diplomatic career which saw him serve as German Consul General in Madras and Germany's Ambassador in Malaysia, Ireland, the Netherlands and finally, Switzerland. He had come to believe that he had to do something more meaningful and chose to work among leprosy patients in India.

He began his work by setting up centres where patients suffering from leprosy were treated. In course of time, he expanded his activities beyond physical treatment. He rehabilitated leprosy victims by training and supporting them in their efforts to become independent and self-reliant. He decided to also work on the prevention and treatment of polio among children. He set up polio centres and, as in the case of the leprosy programme, went beyond immunising the children. He provides artificial aids to the afflicted children and also sends them to school.

Gerhard Fischer's network in India today includes two centres where patients suffering from leprosy are treated. These leprosy centres provide a comprehensive range of services which include hospitals and rehabilitation and vocational training facilities. An important aspect of his work is to tackle the stigma which is still unfortunately associated with leprosy. He also runs three polio treatment centres which are set up on similar lines. His polio immunisation service goes out into the countryside to reach out to those who

cannot go to his hospitals.

Gerhard Fischer stands out because of his commitment to serve those people who are deprived and underprivileged. He has followed the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi by helping those who suffer to help themselves. It is to honour his commitment and his contribution towards the amelioration of human suffering and dedication to the upliftment of the people under his care that he has been selected for the Gandhi Peace Prize for 1997.

INDIA GERMANY USA TANZANIA SRI LANKA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC IRELAND THE NETHERLANDS SWITZERLAND

Date : Oct 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Firing by the Pakistan Rangers in the Samba Sector in Jammu

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 09, 1997 regarding summoning of the Pakistan High Commissioner by Foreign Secretary about unprovoked firing by the Pakistan Rangers in the Samba Sector in Jammu:

The Pakistan High Commissioner was summoned by Foreign Secretary today. A strong protest was lodged about the unprovoked firing on 8th October, 1997, by the Pakistan Rangers across the International Boundary in the Samba Sector in Jammu, in which two women and a young boy were killed and three other civilians injured.

INDIA PAKISTAN

Date : Oct 09, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Comments attributed to Prime Minister

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 12, 1997 regarding Comments by the Prime Minister to Egyptian intellectuals in Cairo:

With reference to a news agency report attributing certain comments to the Prime Minister in his conversation with Egyptian intellectuals in Cairo yesterday evening, the Official Spokesman said that this had been an informal, private close-door meeting, with no official briefing having been provided to the media. The remarks attributed to the Prime Minister are completely without foundation and

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bear no relation to the content of the wide-ranging discussions that took place between him and the intellectuals in Cairo which focused on revitalisation of NAM and the role of India and Egypt in this regard.

INDIA EGYPT USA

Date : Oct 12, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Speech by the President of India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 13, 1997 containing speech by the President of India Shri K. R. Narayanan at the Banquet in Honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth-II and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh:

Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have great pleasure, on behalf of the Government and the people of India, to extend to Your Majesty and Your Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, a warm and cordial welcome to India. You have come at an important and joyous juncture of our history when we are celebrating the 50th Anniversary of our Independence. Your gracious presence amongst us at this time brings back to us memories of the sense of liberation and reconciliation that pervaded the first days of our independence. By a happy co-incidence this is also the golden jubilee year of Your Majesty's marriage. May I be permitted to extend to Your Majesty and Royal Highness our warm congratulations.

This is your third visit to India. You must have observed that the esteem, affection, and the depth of feeling for Your Majesty personally, and for your family, on the part of the people of India, have only increased with each visit.

Your Majesty must have also observed the profound changes that have taken place in India during the years after Independence. India today is a dynamic and modernizing economy having released its pent-up energies for the rapid development of the country and having opened up to the world, while keeping to the path of basic self-reliance and holding on to its cultural moorings. I am glad to say that Indo-British relations have kept pace with this changing situation. To-day these relations are stronger and more broad-based than ever before. Britain is a major partner for us whether it is in the field of trade, investment, finance, science and technology, defence or cultural co-operation. The Exhibition Indo-British Partnership - Towards 2000 and the Exhibition of Treasures from the British Museum being inaugurated during Your Majesty's visit bear witness to this multi-faceted co-operation between our two countries. As one of the world's largest markets and as an emerging economic power India is a suitable and reliable partner for Britain which is one of the great developed countries of the world. I believe that the present visit of Your Majesty is an assurance of the enduring nature of this Indo-British partnership.

What gives Indo-British relations inherent vitality and larger significance are the values of freedom, democracy, secularism and social justice that we share. It is my sincere belief that these deeper affinities deserve due weightage in the policies we follow towards each other and in the world.

Your Majesty, we belong to the Commonwealth of Nations, a unique institution in the transformation of which in its modern form, India has had much to do. We appreciate the role played by the British monarchy in helping to hold the Commonwealth together as a contemporary force in world politics. India is looking forward to the forthcoming meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government in Edinburgh towards the end of this month.

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Your Majesty, India to-day is a country throbbing with change and great expectations. Our greatest achievements during the last 50 years are to have kept this vast sub-continental nation together as one, to have built up a democratic system that has been tested in the fire of many a crises, and to have substantially improved the living conditions of millions of our people. We have also reached out to the world through our policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence and striven sincerely for good neighbourly and co-operative relations in our region. It has been our conviction that peace and harmony in the world is essential for the full development of a nation as big and populous as ours. In this enterprise of peace and development, friendship and co-operation with Great Britain has been an asset to us. As we move towards the next millenium we look forward to the deepening and broadening of this co-operation for the benefit of our two countries and peoples.

May I now request you all to join me in a toast to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth-II and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh for their personal well-being and happiness, for the peace and prosperity of the people of the United Kingdom, and for the enduring friendship and co-operation between our two countries.

INDIA UNITED KINGDOM USA

Date : Oct 13, 1997

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1995

INDIA

Joint Press Statement

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 13, 1997 containing Joint Press Statement by the Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs, the Rt. Honourable Robin Cook and Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral:

The Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs, the Rt. Honourable Robin Cook called on Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral earlier today for over an hour. They reviewed the current state of bilateral relations between India and the United Kingdom. During this meeting and at the Luncheon hosted by the Prime Minister earlier in the day in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth-II, they discussed economic cooperation and the scope for increased trade, the issues that are likely to be covered at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Edinburgh, the reform and proposed expansion of the United Nations Security Council and the ASEM meeting scheduled for early next year, as well as a range of other issues. The discussions were friendly and valuable.

2. Both the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary Cook expressed satisfaction at the strength and closeness of bilateral relations. Her Majesty's visit, during the 50th Anniversary of India's Independence which Prime Minister Gujral warmly welcomed, demonstrated this.

3. It was agreed that a firm basis existed for the further development and strengthening of this relationship, including through increased personal contact.

INDIA USA

Date : Oct 13, 1997

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1995

INDIA

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 15, 1997 regarding disturbance created by overstayers at the Consulate in Jeddah:

On October 13, a group of about 500 people seeking exit documents and wanting immediate repatriation to India at Government cost, became agitated and turned violent within the premises of the Consulate General of India at Jeddah. A section of the crowd resorted to stone throwing and, in the process, broke windows. The ground floor of the Consulate building was

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occupied. Five members of the staff were slightly injured due to flying glass. There was also some damage to Government property and to official and private cars. The quarters of an Indian Security Guard were vandalised and his possessions taken.

2. At this stage, police had to be called for restoring law and order. They, together with the Consul General, were able to persuade the demonstrators to leave the Consulate premises. Force was not used.
3. It is still not clear what prompted the people to resort to violence. Officials of the Consulate General had repeatedly explained to them that local Saudi exit regulations which are applicable to all departing foreigners, had to be followed and could not be bypassed. Indeed, earlier on 13th morning, it had appeared that the crowd had understood the situation and would disperse peacefully. When violence began, Consulate officials were actually discussing ways of speeding up exit formalities with Saudi authorities.
4. All these people are now lodged at the temporary Deportation Centre in Jeddah where they are being provided food by the Consulate General. Efforts are also being made to expedite departure formalities.
5. It should be mentioned that a Saudi amnesty for overstayers amongst pilgrims and workers without valid documents is in progress and is expiring on October 16. Pursuant to it, over 35,000 persons have been issued travel documents by our Missions in Riyadh and Jeddah in the past six weeks.

INDIA SAUDI ARABIA USA MALI

Date : Oct 15, 1997

Volume No

INDIA

Ten Years Visitor and Business Visas between India and the United States

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 17, 1997 regarding ten years visas between India and the United States:

It has been agreed between the Ministry of External Affairs and the United States Department of State, that from the first day of November, 1997, the maximum length of visas for tourists and temporary visitors for business will be ten years. The fees for the maximum length visas will remain unchanged. This measure is in recognition of growing number of visitors and in preparation for the anticipated future growth in tourist and commercial travel between the two countries.

It is expected that this Agreement will greatly facilitate travel by concerned categories of visitors between the two countries.

INDIA USA

Date : Oct 17, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India Signs UN Convention Against Torture

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 17, 1997 regarding India signing UN Convention Against Torture:

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Kamlesh Sharma, signed the UN Convention Against Torture on Oct 14, 1997. This follows a decision by the Union Cabinet giving approval for the signing of the Convention.

The United Nations Convention Against Torture (CAT) was adopted by the General Assembly in 1984 and entered into force in 1987. There are 102 State Parties to the Convention as of Jun 30, 1997.

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Accession to CAT was a part of the Government's commitments under the Common Minimum Programme and is a reflection of the importance India attaches to the International Instruments on Human Rights and to cooperation with the treaty

body system established by these instruments. This is also in consonance with India's commitment to promote and protect the human rights of its citizens. India is already a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Thus, when the Convention on Torture is ratified, India will become a party to all the six core Conventions on Human Rights.

INDIA USA

Date : Jun 30, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India and Trinidad & Tobago to Cooperate in the Oil Sector

Following is the text of a Press Note issued in New Delhi on Oct 24, 1997 regarding cooperation between India and Trinidad & Tobago in the oil sector:

India and Trinidad & Tobago are exploring areas of cooperation in the Hydrocarbon Sector which include improvement in refinery operations, energy efficiency and other upstream and downstream activities. This emerged from the talks when the visiting Minister for Energy and Energy Industries, Government of Trinidad & Tobago, Mr. Finbar Gangar called on Shri Janeshwar Mishra, Minister for Petroleum & National Gas, here today.

Recalling strong cultural ties that bind the two nations, Shri Mishra emphasised the need for greater economic cooperation for the mutual benefit of India and Trinidad & Tobago. He said that IOC can associate with Trinidad & Tobago once the foreign investments are fully liberalised in that country. The Indian Oil Companies could also cooperate in refining, pipelines, marketing, training and consultancy activities.

The visiting Minister who is heading a high-level delegation, will have the overview of the Indian Refining Sector, when he visits R&D Centre of IOC in Faridabad and refinery at Mathura. The delegation will have detailed discussions with the IOC officials and identify specific areas of cooperation.

Memoranda of Collaboration were signed on 21st July, 1997 between Petroleum Company of Trinidad & Tobago Ltd. (Petrotrin), National Petroleum Marketing Company of Trinidad & Tobago (NPMC) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited for joint cooperation in hydrocarbon sector. Pursuant to the above, a joint approach paper was prepared by the three organisations on areas of collaboration. These include

improvement in refinery operations - energy efficiency, onstream factor, product optimisation, optimisation, operation and maintenance practices; technical services back-up and support including process studies, debottlenecking, optimisation, upgradation; energy, safety and environmental audits; technology development including R&D related activities like simulations, catalyst development etc.; exploration & production activities; distribution study/re-development of distribution system including upgradation: joint strategies for market protection/expansion; blending/packaging and marketing of lubricants in Trinidad & Tobago and other Caribbean countries; pipeline grid system for supply of petroleum products to retail outlets/new international airport to minimize road movement.

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INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC USA

Date : Oct 24, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Cancellation of Banquet Speech by Her Majesty the Queen in Chennai

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 15, 1997 regarding cancellation of banquet speech by Her Majesty the Queen in Chennai:

In response to queries, the Official Spokesman said he was surprised at news reports suggesting that Indian officials had sought to cancel a banquet speech by Her Majesty the Queen in Chennai. As per Indian protocol, only one banquet speech is scheduled for a visiting Head of State, which is normally given at the banquet hosted by our President. No other banquet speech by the distinguished visitor is scheduled either in Delhi or at any other State capital.

In the weeks leading upto the Queen's arrival, there was no suggestion from British officials that a banquet speech be included in her programme other than the one that she was scheduled to give at the President's banquet in New Delhi. Hence the question of cancelling a banquet speech that had never been included in the official programme at any stage just does not arise.

INDIA USA

Date : Oct 15, 1997

Volume No

1995

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENTS

Postponment of Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral's visit to Bonn & Paris

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Oct 22, 1997 regarding postponment of Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral's visit to Bonn & Paris:

The Prime Minister of India, Shri I. K. Gujral, who had postponed his visit to Bonn and Paris, spoke on telephone to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany and President Jacques Chirac of France this afternoon. Both dignitaries expressed the hope that the Prime Minister would be able to visit their countries very soon. Prime Minister Gujral, on his part, invited both of them to visit India, the invitations were accepted with pleasure.

President Chirac's visit to India is likely to materialise very early in the new year.

FRANCE GERMANY INDIA

Date : Oct 22, 1997

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Date : Nov 30, 1997

Volume No

1995

BURKINA FASO

Visit of the President of Burkina Faso to India .

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 11, 1997 regarding visit of H.E. Mr. Blaise Compaore, the President of Burkina Faso to India:

H.E. Mr. Blaise Compaore, the President of Burkina Faso met Prime Minister today at Hyderabad House. There was a tete-a-tete followed by delegation talks. This is the third visit to India in the last four years. The former Prime Minister ' Shri Narasimha Rao, also visited Burkina Faso in 1995. Both. sides agreed to faithfully implement all the understandings reached earlier in their joint endeavour to forward South-South Cooperation. Specific areas of cooperation discussed were agriculture, railway transport, development of human resources and animal husbandry. India is already undertaking a Rs. 16 crore agricultural development project in Burkina Faso. The attempt is to enhance this cooperation in this field through demonstration projects to be undertaken by Indian farmers to be deployed in Burkina Faso. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two countries in 1995 on the construction of a 240 Kms railway line to help transport manganese ore from the northern area of Burkina Faso towards the port of Abidjan. Technical discussions have taken place and both sides resolved to initiate the project at the earliest possible. President Compaore will also be meeting the President, Vice-President, Railway Minister and Agriculture Minister.

President Compaore assured the PM that Burkina Faso would stand by India in the efforts of the NAM to bring about a restructuring of the UN and on the common endeavour of establishing a new world order. Burkina Faso was convinced that a country of India's important should not be excluded in the management of world affairs.

Nov 11, 1997

BURKINA FASO INDIA USA

Date : Nov 11, 1997

Volume No

1995

BURKINA FASO

Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit of the President of Burkina Faso

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 13, 1997 regarding Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit of the President of Burkina Faso:

At the invitation of His Excellency Shri K. R. Narayanan, President of India, His Excellency Mr. Blaise

Compaore, President of Burkina Faso and Head of State paid a state visit to India from 10 to 13 November, 1997.

2. The visit, the third by the President of Burkina Faso to India, testifies to the common desire of both countries to further consolidate and develop their friendly and cooperative relations as a model of South-South cooperation.

3. The President of Burkina Faso was accompanied by Madame Chantal Campaore and a high level delegation comprising Mr. Adama Fofana, President of the Superior Council of Information, Mr. Idrissa Zampaligre, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, Mr. Michel Koutaba, Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Mohamed Topan Sanne, Director of Cabinet in the President's Secretariat and senior officials.

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4. The President of Burkina Faso held discussions with the President of India, Shri K. R. Narayanan, the Vice President Shri Krishan Kant and the Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha Shri P. A. Sangma, the Minister for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Shri Chaturanan Mishra, the Minister for Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Salim Shervani also called on President Compaore. The discussions took place in a cordial and friendly atmosphere reflecting the ties of close friendship and mutual understanding between the two countries and their peoples, and included a comprehensive review of bilateral, regional and international issues.

5. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the progress of various bilateral cooperation programme, particularly of the integrated Agricultural and Rural Development Project being undertaken with Indian assistance in Burkina Faso. They welcomed the opening of each other's resident diplomatic missions in New Delhi and Ouagadougou. as well as the positive outcome of the second meeting of the India-Burkina Faso Joint Commission which took place in New Delhi on 22-23 February 1996. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Joint Commission would be held in Ouagadougou in the first half of 1996.

6. Noting that cooperation in the agricultural field served as the anchor to the expanding bilateral cooperation between India and Burkina Faso with the eventual objective of helping the Burkinabe people achieve food self-sufficiency, both sides agreed on the principles of a programme for deployment of Indian farmers in Burkina Faso, and transfer of equipment and related material for a demonstration project to be undertaken on developed and irrigated land to be made available by the Government of Burkina Faso.

7. Prime Minister Gujral reiterated his Government's commitment to the Memorandum of Understanding concluded in 1995 on the implementation of the Sahel railway project. Both sides undertook to have the remaining technical and financial issues resolved through mutual consultations with a view to initiating the work on this project by September 1998.

8. The Indian side responded positively to the request from Burkina Faso for assistance in the following sectors:

- i) supply of equipment for polytechnic institutes and health centres.
- ii) export of buffaloes intended to augment milk production and assist in rural activities.
- iii) training of Burkinabe agronomy specialists including floriculturists in India.
- iv) setting up of small and medium Industries.

9. The Indian side also offered to provide training facilities for Burkinabe nominees in India and to depute experts to Burkina Faso in mutually identified fields in the framework of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme.

10. President Campaore addressed a meeting of senior business representatives from India organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Both sides agreed that programmes of economic liberalisation and structural

adjustment in their respective countries had considerably enhanced the potential for increased trade and business exchanges between them including through participation in joint ventures.

11. Both sides emphasised the importance of regional peace and security. In this regard, they expressed their support for efforts of the Organisation of African Unity towards the resolution of conflicts

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and the promotion of political stability on the African continent.

12. Commending Prime Minister Gujral's policy of friendship and cooperation with India's neighbours, President Compaore reiterated his Government's position that outstanding issues relating to the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir should be resolved through bilateral negotiations between India and Pakistan on the basis of the Simla Agreement of 1972.

13. Both sides underlined the importance of reinforcing South-South cooperation to ensure that the developing countries reaped commensurate benefits from the globalisation of the world economy. They agreed that the problems of poverty, deprivation, terrorism and drug trafficking were of international concern, and committed themselves to collaborate closely to address these problems.

14. Acknowledging that the end of the Cold War held out the promise of a new era of peace, both sides emphasised the imperative need to eliminate all nuclear weapons within a time bound framework.

15. They reiterated the need for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations structures, and in particular of the Security Council, to reflect present day global realities and to provide an effective voice to the aspirations of the developing countries. In this context they reaffirmed their commitment to the Declaration issued at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement in Delhi in April 1997. President Compaore affirmed that the permanent presence of countries like India in a restructured Security Council was indispensable to the efforts of the Non-Aligned Movement towards building a more just and equitable world order.

16. At the conclusion of his visit to India, the President of Burkina Faso expressed his deep gratitude to the President, the Prime Minister and the Government and people of India for the warm reception and cordial hospitality accorded to him and his delegation.

17. His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaore invited His Excellency Shri K. R. Narayanan and His Excellency Shri I. K. Gujral to pay official visits to Burkina Faso in the near future with the aim of continuing their exchanges and consolidating the relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. The invitations were accepted with pleasure. Dates of these visits would be fixed through diplomatic channels.

Nov 13, 1997

BURKINA FASO INDIA USA VANUATU LATVIA PAKISTAN

Date : Nov 13, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Sixth Meeting of Indo-German Consultative Group

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 2, 1997 regarding Sixth Meeting of Indo-German Consultative Group:

The high powered Indo-German Consultative Group held its sixth meeting at New Delhi from November 1 - 2, 1997. The Group was set up by the German Chancellor and the Indian Prime Minister in 1991, to recommend ways to enhance the bilateral cooperation in various spheres. Several of its recommendations from its previous meetings have led to concrete measures that have helped in fostering closer cooperation.

The Group includes eminent leaders of business and industry, scientists, scholars

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and other distinguished persons drawn from areas of culture and the media from both sides. The two co-chairmen are Prof. Muchkund Dubey (of JNU) and Dr. Theo Sommer (Publisher of Die Zeit in Germany).

The members of the Group met the Prime Minister on November 1, 1997, who also very kindly hosted them for lunch. Representatives of German industry in the Group also called on the Finance Minister on November 1, 1997.

The discussions identified problem areas and suggested ways to overcome these. The Group also identified new initiatives to intensify Indo-German relations. The issues discussed included promotion of trade & investment, cooperation in the fields of science & technology with active industry involvement, education, culture and the media. The Group will submit its recommendations to the German Chancellor and the Prime Minister of India. They will include an Indo-German Agenda 2000 as a blue-print for raising relations between the two countries to a higher plane and to develop a larger vision of what could and should be accomplished by the year 2000 and beyond.

Nov 02, 1997

INDIA USA GERMANY

Date : Nov 02, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India Elected to World Tourism Body

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on November 3, 1997 regarding Election of India to World Tourism Body..

India has been elected to the Executive Council of the World Tourism Organization (W.T.O.) for the third consecutive term.

In the 12th General Assembly meeting of the World Tourism Organization held in Istanbul, Turkey, India was elected unopposed for a term of four years. India has been the member of the Council for the last eight years. With the third term upto 2001, India will have a continuous term of 12 years in the Executive Council of W.T.O.

India is a founder member of World Tourism Organisation. India's delegation to the Istanbul meeting was led by Shri M. P. Bezbaruah, Secretary (Tourism).

Among the major issues which figured at the Assembly meeting of W.T.O. was the future of W.T.O. on which a white paper was circulated. The white paper emphasised on public-private collaboration in tourism development.
Nov 03, 1997

INDIA TURKEY USA

Date : Nov 03, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India Elected to UNESCO Executive Board

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 5, 1997 regarding election of Shri Muchkund Dubey, former Foreign Secretary to UNESCO Executive Board:

Shri Muchkund Dubey, former Foreign Secretary was elected to the UNLSCO Executive Board with an overwhelming majority of votes of member states. He secured a record number of 158 out of 169 votes cast at the elections held during the UNESCO General Conference on 4th November. This is the highest vote obtained by a candidate in the hotly contested Executive Board elections.

Election of the Indian candidate by a wide margin to the important UNESCO

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Board is reflective of India's standing at UNESCO and a recognition of the important contribution made by India to the UN and its specialised agencies.

India's participation in UNESCO activities has been extensive and India has advocated and placed great emphasis on the UNESCO ideals of world peace, human solidarity and intellectual cooperation. In recent years, India has vigorously participated in the Joint UNESCO-UNICEF initiative for Promoting Education for All.

Eminent Indians who have represented India in the UNESCO Executive Board in the past include Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Snit. Indira Gandhi, Shri Swaran Singh.
Nov 05, 1997

INDIA USA

Date : Nov 05, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Fifth Indo-Sudan Joint Commission Meeting in New Delhi

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 8, 1997 regarding Fifth Indo-Sudan Joint Commission Meeting held in New Delhi:

The First Session of the Indo-Sudan Joint Commission was held in New Delhi from 6-8 November, 1997. The Joint Commission Meeting was co-chaired by Shri Saleem I. Shervani, Minister of State for External Affairs and Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, State Minister for External Relations of Government of Sudan.

Both Co-Chairmen endorsed the Minutes of the Official Level Meeting held at Khartoum on 16 - 18 June, 1997 *. They reviewed the progress in implementation of the decisions taken at the Official Level Meeting, expressed satisfaction with the steps taken so far in this regard and underlined the need for prompt and continuous follow-up. Both Co-Chairmen also utilised the opportunity to discuss ways and means to further expand bilateral co-operation in diverse fields like trade, commerce, science & technology, agriculture, oil exploration, etc. It was agreed that the Private Sector in both the countries would be assigned a greater role in promoting bilateral cooperation.

During the Meeting, Drafts of Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (WTAA) were exchanged.

While in New Delhi, the Sudanese Minister called on Shri Krishan Kant, Vice president of India, Shri Saif-ud-din Soz, Minister of Environment and Forests, Dr. B. B. Ramaiah, Minister of State for Commerce and Prof. Y. K. Alagh, Minister of State for Power.
Nov 08, 1997

INDIA SUDAN USA

Date : Nov 08, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India and Venezuela to Promote Cooperation in Hydrocarbon sector

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on November 11, 1997 regarding India and Venezuela to promote co-operation in Hydrocarbon sector:

India and Venezuela will further promote mutual cooperation in all aspects of Hydrocarbon Sector. The two countries have agreed to set up a Joint Working Group to work out modalities of cooperation in areas like setting up of joint ventures for operation in either country and third countries. The co-operation will extend to data collection, seismic survey, exploration, drilling and all other activities relating to exploitation of hydrocarbon resources, their production, processing, refining, marketing, transportation, research and development, training and technology transfer. " H.E. Dr. Evanan Romero Gutierrez, Vice Minister of Energy and Mines of Venezuela who called on Shri T R

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Baalu, Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas here today also showed interest in marketing orimulsion - an emulsion of heavy oils in India as an alternative feedstock to naphtha for power plants.

Shri Baalu congratulated Venezuela for its remarkable success in attracting private investment in enhanced oil recovery from their small and marginal fields. He said that as India is also going in a big way for private investment, it could learn from the highly transparent system of bidding adopted by Venezuela. He also said that an Indian team of experts will visit Venezuela to have discussions on enlarging areas of cooperation and discuss joint venture arrangements.

The Venezuelan Minister showed interest in developing commercial ties which could benefit both the countries.
Nov 11, 1997

INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC VENEZUELA ITALY USA

Date : Nov 11, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Visit of Shri Salim Iqbal Shervani, Minister of State to Saudi Arabia

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 13, 1997 regarding visit of Shri Salim Iqbal Shervani, Minister of State to Saudi Arabia:

At the invitation of His Royal Highness Saudi AI Faisal, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Shri Salim Iqbal Shervani, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs will be visiting Saudi Arabia from 14-17 November, 1997. He will be accompanied by Shri Nareshwar Dayal, Secretary (East) and Shri B. Dayakar, Joint Secretary (Gulf & Haj) in the Ministry of External Affairs.

During the visit, Shri Shervani will hold bilateral discussions on matters of mutual interest with Saudi leadership. This will be the first visit from an Indian Foreign Minister in 15 years.

In the recent past several high-level exchange of visits has taken place between India and Saudi Arabia. Prince Khaild Bin Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz Joint Forces Commander of Operation Desert visited India in October, 1996. The Saudi Haj Minister Dr. Mahmoud Safar visited in December, 1996. Saudi Petroleum Minister Ali AI Naimi and Deputy Petroleum Minister Prince Abdul-aziz Bin Salman Bin Abdul Aziz visited India in November 1996 and during their visit a plan for setting up a joint venture refinery in Bhatinda in Punjab was finalised. at a total investment of US \$ 1222 million.

A delegation from Majlis A Shoura (the Saudi Consultative Consul) visited India in March, 1997.

From India an Indian Parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of Lok Sabha visited Saudi Arabia in October, 1996.

India and Saudi Arabia has a Joint Commission which meets once in two years. The last meeting of the India and Saudi Arabia Joint Commission met in New Delhi in June, 1997. I.I.E. Dr. Hashim Abdullah Yamani, Minister for Industry and Electricity led the Saudi delegation. A 30-member business delegation led by Mr. Hamad' AI Zamil,

Chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry accompanied Dr. Yamani. A Memorandum of Understanding for Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research of India and King Abdul Aziz City for Science and technology was signed during the Joint Commission Meeting. Another Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of Joint Business Council between India and Saudi Arabia to facilitate continuous interaction between the business committees and to increase trade and economic cooperation was also

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signed by FICCIASSOCHAM and the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Saudi Arabia is among the major supplier of petroleum to India valued at about US \$ 1.5 billion annually. Bilateral trade has witnessed considerable expansion and diversification during the past 3-4 years. It increased from US \$ 1.80 billion in 1991-92 to US \$ 2.39 billion in 1995-96. During the last financial year 1996-97 bilateral trade showed an increase of 42.29% and crossed US \$ 3.40 billion.

An estimated 1.3 million Indians live in Saudi Arabia. They are employed in various sectors of the Saudi economy. Also, a total of 80,000 Indian Haj Pilgrims visit Saudi Arabia every year.
Nov 13, 1997

INDIA SAUDI ARABIA USA

Date : Nov 13, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Investment Incentive Agreement

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November, 19, 1997 regarding signing of an Investment Incentive Agreement between Government of India and Government of United States of America:

Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram and Ms. Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State currently on visit to India signed an Investment Incentive Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the United States of America.

2. The intent of the Agreement is to promote and protect US investments into India by facilitating investment support to US investors from Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), a designated agency of the Government of USA. The Agreement is important in the context of the additional comfort it offers to potential US investors by way of investment support from OPIC.

3. The Agreement shall continue in force in perpetuity unless either Government gives a notice of its intent to terminate the Agreement whereupon the Agreement shall terminate after six months from the date of receipt of such notice.

4. The Agreement incorporates the principle of reciprocity. For any investment support extended by Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India, or any other designated agency of Government Of India for Indian investments In

USA, provisions equivalent to those contained in the Agreement shall apply to Indian investments upon completion of constitutional or other legal processes of either Government and upon exchange of notes made at the initiative of either Government.

5. The Agreement enlarges the scope and nature of investment support or risk coverage extended to potential US investors by way of OPIC investment support. OPIC investment support includes any debt or equity investment, any investment guarantee and any investment insurance or reinsurance provided in connection with a project in India. Investment insurance includes insurance against risks relating to inability to convert either currencies into US dollars, loss of investment due to expropriation or confiscation, losses due to war, revolution, insurrection or civil strife etc.

6. The Agreement provides for dispute resolution mechanism for disputes between the two Governments in matters relating to the interpretation of the Agreement and in relation to claims arising out of acts attributable to the Government of India involving questions of liability under public international law and includes recourse to international arbitration.

7. The Agreement shall apply to investment support by OPIC if approvals from Reserve Bank of India, Foreign Investment Promotion Board, Ministry of Finance,

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Ministry of Industry or concerned agencies of the Government of India as may be specified, have been obtained for making of the loan, equity investment or any other form of investment underlying the investment support.

8. Taxation matters would continue to be governed by the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement between India and USA.

9. This Agreement Would replace and supersede the previous exchange of notes between the two governments of 1957, 1959 and 1966 which sought to protect US investments in India against currency non-convertibility and expropriation by providing risk coverage 1 insurance. It is perceived that the signing of this Agreement would give a boost to US investments into India.

Nov 19, 1997

INDIA USA

Date : Nov 19, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

India, UK Stress Scope for Further Enlarging Commercial Ties

Following is the text of a press note issued in New Delhi on November 19, 1997 titled India, UK stress scope for further enlarging Commercial ties:

The scope for further expansion of commercial and economic ties between India and the United Kingdom (UK) was underlined during discussions between the Commerce Minister, Dr. B. B. Ramaiah and the visiting Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, UK, Ms. Margaret Beckett, who is also the President of the UK Board of Trade, when

she called on the Commerce Minister here yesterday evening. Both agreed that the two countries had natural affinity which provided a stable basis for bilateral cooperation. Dr. Ramaiah referred to the issue of the EU's new tariffication regime which was disadvantageous to Indian Basmati rice exports and sought UK's support with the EU on this matter. Later, during an interaction with the business delegation accompanying Ms. Beckett, the UK delegates highlighted procedural and other problems faced by them particularly for investments in petroleum and gas sector. They referred in particular to hurdles faced by them at the state level in the implementation of various collaboration projects and sought the Minister's cooperation in eliminating these bottlenecks so that the flow of British investment in India could be augmented. The discussions also covered general points relating to the process of economic liberalisation with the UK delegation conveying their interest in liberalisation of financial services, particularly, opening up of the insurance sector.

Shri Yogesh Chandra, Chairman & Managing Director, India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) Participated from the Indian side while Sir David Gore-Booth, High Commissioner of UK to India, Sir Terence Harrison, Co-Chief, Indo-British Partnership Initiative and Chairman Alfred McAlpine, Mr. Roger Taylor, Chairman, Association of British Insurers and other members of the business delegations and officials accompanying Ms. Beckett represented the UK business and industry. Shri Chandra conveyed India's interest in having a special display, in the context of the 50th anniversary of Indian independence and suggested that UK revive its earlier proposal for constructing an exhibition hall in Pragati Maidan as part of the commemoration.

Britain is India's fifth largest trading partner with a share of about 6 % of India's global trade. Within the European Union, the UK is India's second largest trading partner after Germany, although the UK is the largest importer of Indian goods among European nations. In 1996-97, Indo-UK trade amounted to US \$ 4115.55 million (or \$ 4 billion) consisting of roughly around \$ 2 billion each of exports to the UK and imports from the UK.
Nov 19, 1997

INDIA UNITED KINGDOM USA GERMANY

Date : Nov 19, 1997

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Indo-UAE Agreements initialed

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 25, 1997 ' regarding signing of Indo-UAE agreements:

India and United Arab Emirates today initialed three important consular agreements. This was a culmination of a visit by a high level UAE delegation led by H.E. Ahmed Abdul Rehman AI-German, Director, Department of Legal Affairs and Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. The Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters reflects a shared desire to combat crime and facilitate taking of steps to investigate and prosecute fugitive offenders.

3. The Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial matters underscores the growing commercial links between the two countries and the need to have a judicial framework for facilitating the widest measure of cooperation in civil and commercial matters.

4. The Agreement on Extradition reflects the desire of the two countries to create a legal framework for cooperation in bringing criminals to justice.

5. The talks were held in an extremely cooperative and cordial atmosphere. The Agreements are expected to be signed at the ministerial level during the forth-coming meeting of the Indo-UAE Joint Commission.

Nov 25, 1997

INDIA UNITED ARAB EMIRATES USA

Date : Nov 25, 1997

Volume No

1995

NEPAL

His Majesty the King of Nepal honouring the Indian Army Chief

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 18, 1997 regarding His Majesty the King of Nepal honouring General V. P. Malik, Chief of Army Staff:

General V. P. Malik, Chief of the Army Staff, Indian Army, who is on an official visit to Nepal from November 17 to 22, was conferred with the Khadga (Sword) of Honorary General of the Royal Nepalese Army and the 'Lal Mohr' by His Majesty the King of Nepal Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, at a function held in the Royal Palace today at 1730 hours. This is a unique tradition followed by the armies of India and Nepal. In 1966 the Nepalese Army Chief General Dharmapal Bar Singh Thapa was conferred with the rank of Honorary General of the Indian Army by the President of India.

Earlier, the Chief of the Army Staff of Nepal Gen. Thapa hosted a dinner in honour of the visiting Indian dignitary on the 17th November. Welcoming the Indian Army Chief, Gen. Thapa highlighted the strong bonds of comradeship and friendship existing between the armies of both countries and said that the relations were based on mutual cooperation and benefit. He also stressed with the traditional perceptions of security changing fast, the region in general and Nepal in particular was faced with a situation where organized societies would be vulnerable to violence and coercion. The overriding national

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security concern would be the requirement to combat effectively against non-state groups, terrorists, guerrillas, bandits and robbers. He emphasized that failure to address this problem would not only pose serious problem to democracy but also for the very concept of a national state.

Visit of the Indian Army Chief is to be followed by a visit by the Royal Nepalese Army Chief to India in the first week of December. The Nepalese Army Chief has been invited to India as the Chief Guest for the passing out parade of the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, scheduled on December 6, 1997. The invitation to India as the Chief Guest for the passing out parade is a unique honour bestowed upon the Nepalese Army Chief as it is very rare that a foreign army chief is invited for such passing out parades at the Indian Military Academy.

Nov 18, 1997

NEPAL INDIA MALI USA

Date : Nov 18, 1997

Volume No

1995

PALESTINE

Visit of President Arafat

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 15, 1997 regarding visit of President Arafat to India:

President Arafat will be coming to India on a State visit from 19-22 November at the invitation of the Prime Minister. During his stay, he will exchange views with Indian leaders on the situation in the region, crisis in the Gulf and the Middle East Peace Process.

2. India recognised the PLO as "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people" and PLO was allowed to open its office in January, 1975. PLO was accorded full diplomatic recognition in March, 1980. India accorded recognition to the State of Palestine in November, 1988 and the PLO Office in New Delhi started functioning as the Embassy of the State of Palestine. In the wake of establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), India opened its Representative Office in Gaza on June 25, 1996, for ensuring effective coordination with the PNA.

3. India has extended its consistent and unwavering support to the Arab cause and the Palestinian issue. We share the perception that the question of Palestine is at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. We Support the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, and the imperative need for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region, based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338 and 425 and the principle of 'Land for Peace'.

4. India has extended unstinting support for the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) from the time of its launching with the Madrid Conference in October, 1991. India stands ready to make all possible contribution for expeditious success of the MEPP.

5. India has been closely watching developments in the MEPP in the wake of the elections in Israel in May 1996. India has taken note of the concerns reflected in the final communique of the Cairo Arab Summit in June, 1996, and particularly their determination to uphold and continue the Middle East Peace Process, as a strategic decision of the Arab world.

6. India has consistently maintained that unilateral steps which are not in conformity with the agreements and understanding would hinder the peace process

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and vitiate the atmosphere to build mutual confidence essential to take the peace negotiations further. We feel that the current situation underlines the need for immediate and effective measures to end the violence and create a climate which would enable purposeful negotiations, based on a recognition of the underlying causes of the conflict.

7. At the Washington Donors Conference in October, 1995, India made a pledge of US \$ 1 million for assistance to the Palestinian people. At the subsequent pledging conference held at Paris in January, 1996, India pledged another US \$ 1 million assistance to the Palestinians. It would be utilised for undertaking projects proposed in the PNA territory.

8. India has offered 51 specialised training slots to Palestinians in various disciplines during the year 1996-97, which is estimated to cost Rs. 55 lakhs. Indian Government will bear all the expenditure on training cost, 'including boarding, lodging, study tours, books, uniforms, etc.

9. During the visit of the President of Palestine, Mr. Yasser Arafat, an MOU in Bilateral Economic Cooperation will be signed. This would facilitate structured cooperation between India and PNA in diverse fields like trade, economic, science & technology, industrial collaboration, information and technology, etc.

10. India has also invited a delegation of Palestinian businessmen to meet Indian businessmen, apex bodies and Chambers of Commerce.

11. President Arafat's last State visit to India was in 1992. President Arafat had come to India in April 1997 to address the 12th NAM Ministerial Conference.
Nov 15, 1997

INDIA USA ISRAEL SPAIN EGYPT PERU FRANCE

Date : Nov 15, 1997

Volume No

1995

ROMANIA

Visit of President of Romania to India

Following is the text of a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on November 12, 1997 regarding visit of H.E. Mr. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania to India:

H.E. Mr. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania, will pay a State Visit to India, from 16-19 November 1997, at the invitation of the President of India.

The programme of the visit will include official talks between the two Heads of State, as well as with the Vice-President of India and the Prime Minister of India. There would also be meetings with other high Indian dignitaries, discussions with businessmen and representatives of Indian industrial and commercial circles, visit to economic and cultural sites in New Delhi, Agra and Mumbai.

A number of important bilateral documents will be signed during the visit.

H.E. Mr. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania, will be accompanied by H.E. Mr. Adrian Severin, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, by other Ministers and senior officials, as well as by a group of Romanian businessmen and journalists.

The State Visit to India of H.E. Mr. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania, will represent an important milestone in the further development of the intensive cooperation in bilateral relations between Romania and India in the political, economic and other fields, on the basis of mutual respect and benefit.

Nov 12, 1997

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ANNEXURE I

Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on Behalf of the Palestinian National Authority

The Government of the Republic of India and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on behalf of the Palestinian National Authority, hereinafter referred to as "the Parties".

Mindful of their warm and traditional friendly relations,

Reaffirming the strong bonds of solidarity existing between them,

Aiming to broaden and deepen various areas of cooperation, have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

The Parties shall promote and foster scientific, technical and industrial cooperation through:

- (a) Provision of training facilities including academic, technical and specialised.
- (b) Exchange of experts, consultants and technicians.
- (c) Preparation of pre-feasibility and feasibility reports for projects.
- (d) Undertaking mutually agreed projects.
- (e) Identification of new areas for cooperation.

ARTICLE 2

The Parties shall, in accordance with their laws and regulations, promote commercial and economic co-operation and towards this end:

- (a) Promote and facilitate bilateral trade.
- (b) Encourage and facilitate exchange of business delegations and commercial information.
- (c) Encourage and promote institutional linkages between Chambers of Commerce & Industry.
- (d) Encourage and promote investment by private sector.
- (e) Encourage participation in trade fairs & specialised exhibitions.

ARTICLE 3

The Parties shall endeavour to strengthen co-operation in the fields of education through:

- (a). Grant of scholarships for higher studies.
- (b). Exchange of scholars 1 academics to deliver lectures and to visit institutions 1 universities.
- (c). Organisation of joint seminars symposia.
- (d). Establishment of direct linkages between the universities 1 institutions.
- (e). Exchange of books J course materials and participation in book fairs.
- (f). Provision of training slots in vocational and professional institutes.
- (g). Establishment of equivalence and mutual recognition of Degrees.

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ARTICLE 4

The Parties shall encourage and pro. mote cultural cooperation through:

- (a). Exchange of cultural troupes, per. forming artists and craftsmen.
- (b). Organisation of Cultural Weeks.
- (c). Organisation of exhibition of Visual Arts & Handicrafts.
- (d). Participation in Film Festivals and organisation of Film Weeks.
- (e). Exchange of visits of archaeologists and experts preservation of monuments.

ARTICLE 5

The Parties shall encourage and pro. mote co-operation in the field of in for. mation through:

- (a). Exchange of visits of journalists, media officials and technical experts.
- (b). Promote and facilitate linkages in the field of mass communications.
- (c). Promote and facilitate co-operation between the media establishments.

ARTICLE 6

The Financial terms and conditions for the implementation of the provisions of this Memorandum of Understanding shall be agreed through diplomatic channels.

ARTICLE 7

The present Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force on the date of its signing and shall remain in force for a period of two years, and shall be further extended for subsequent periods of two years at a time, unless either of the Parties gives to the other a written notice three months in advance of its intention to terminate it before

the date of its expiry.

Done at New Delhi on this 20th day of November, 1997 in two originals in the English language.

Sd/-For and on behalf of the Government of the Republic of India

Sd/-For and on behalf of the Palestinian National Authority
Nov 30, 1997

INDIA USA

Date : Nov 30, 1997

December

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Dec 31, 1997

INDIA IRAQ ITALY OMAN MALDIVES USA SRI LANKA

Date : Dec 31, 1997

Volume No

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INDIA

India's Policy on Iraq

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on December 8, 1997 on India's Policy on Iraq:

To a query from the Press, the official spokesman stated as follows regarding impact of UN economic sanctions on Iraq and the sufferings of the Iraqi people.

India's policy on Iraq is well known. As a member of the UN, India has adhered to the UN sanctions. India has, however, repeatedly stated that there should be no use of force against Iraq in the implementation of the sanctions and the matter should be resolved peacefully.

We have however noted with increasing concern the human suffering caused by the sanctions. India shares fully the concern of the global community in this regard, especially as far as the Iraqi people particularly children and women are concerned. Sensitive to the humanitarian needs of Iraq, India has donated food and medicine within its means to alleviate the hardships. Rice, wheat, baby-food and medicines were shipped to Iraq. India has also striven to assist Iraq in other forms such as providing scholarships to Iraqi students in Indian colleges and universities under the programmes of Indian Council for Cultural Relations and facilities for training of Iraqi technical people in Indian Scientific and Technical establishments under the ITEC programme etc. Government also arranged for a visit of delegation from the Iraqi Health Ministry to Indian institutions concerned with nutrition and child-related diseases and exchanged delegations in agriculture, railways and oil exploration. India is participating in the Food-for-Oil programme approved by the United Nations and has also expressed keen interest in effecting supplies to Iraq under the Food for Oil programme.

Dec 08, 1997

INDIA IRAQ USA

Date : Dec 08, 1997

Volume No

1995

ITALY

Visit of Prime Minister of Italy Prof. Romano Prodi to India

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on December 31, 1997 regarding visit of Prime Minister of Italy Prof. Romano Prodi to India:

The Prime Minister of Italy, Prof. Romano Prodi will be paying a visit to India from January 5-8, 1998 at the invitation of the Prime Minister Shri I. K. Gujral. Prof. Prodi will be leading a 100-member business delegation. He will also be visiting Chennai, where he will be the Chief - Guest at the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) partnership summit. This visit follows a visit by our Prime

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Minister Shri I. K. Gujral to Italy in September, 1997.

The Italian Prime Minister will be accompanied by the Foreign Trade Minister, Mr. Augusto Fantozzi and the Secretary General in the Italian Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Umberto Vattani.

An Honorary Doctorate Degree by the University of Madras will be conferred on Prof. Prodi during his visit.
Dec 31, 1997

ITALY INDIA OMAN USA

Date : Dec 31, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAARC

Meeting of SAARC Foreign Ministers

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on December 1, 1997 regarding SAARC Foreign Ministers Meeting sends strong signal against terrorism:

SAARC Foreign Ministers Meeting Sends Strong Signal Against Terrorism.

2. The Nineteenth Meeting of the SAARC Foreign Ministers in Male has sent out a strong signal against terrorism. The Foreign Ministers reviewed the implementation of the SAARC Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism which was concluded in 1994. The Ministers felt that this was a vital and essential tool for regional efforts to combat terrorism in South Asia. They urged Member States, which have not yet done so, to urgently adopt domestic legislation to give effect to the Convention.

3. A SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk has been set up in Colombo. The Ministers emphasised the need for a regular and timely flow of information to enable the STOMD to function effectively.

4. The Ministers also recalled the adoption of the 1996 UN Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism and urged all member States to work towards its implementation. They called for international action to prevent the abuse of Refugee Conventions and to halt activities which help terrorist groups to collect funds for activities in South Asia. The delegation of Sri Lanka requested Member States to consider signing the "UN

Convention on Terrorist Bombings" adopted by the 53rd Session of LJNGA.

5. Minister of State, Salim Shervani, in his speech at the Council of Ministers, Male, strongly reiterated India's concern against Terrorism. He said that terrorism posed a grave threat to the security and well-being of the region. Brute violence against fellow human beings was unacceptable in any civilised society and it was necessary to send a clear signal of the resolve not to tolerate it.

6. He proposed that SAARC seriously consider a supplementary agreement to prohibit the illegal manufacture, sale and distribution of small arms, explosives and ammunition within the region. Mr. Shervani said that such an agreement would help to choke off the illegal traffic in small weapons which continue to fuel terrorist activity and strengthen efforts to rout out terrorism from the region.

Dec 01, 1997

INDIA MALDIVES SRI LANKA USA RUSSIA

Date : Dec 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

SAARC

Foreign Secretary Level Discussions in Male

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on December 1, 1997 regarding SAARC Standing Committee concluded its 2 day Foreign Secretary level discussions in Male and finalise the report for presentation to the SAARC Council of Ministers:

- * SAARC Council of Ministers stresses economic agenda.
- * Takes major initiative for a Regional Convention to Combat Illegal Trafficking in Women and Children.
- * Decides to introduce SAARC Driving Licence Scheme.
- * Agrees that Daily Weather Bulletins on National Radio and TV should cover the whole SAARC Region.

The SAARC Standing Committee Successfully concluded its 2-day Foreign Secretary level discussions in Male and finalised the report for presentation to the SAARC Council of Ministers.

2. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Salim Shervani, arrived in Male to a warm reception to participate in the 1-9th Session of the Council of Ministers of SAARC which began its deliberations this morning. Inaugurating the meeting, President Gayoom highlighted the importance of regional economic cooperation in this era of globalisation. He stressed that SAARC must meet its target date for setting up a South Asian Free Trade Area by 2001. He noted that SAARC, with over 1.2 billion people, covered the world's largest regional market. It had the potential to become a formidable economic power house, and breaking up barriers to trade would be vital in this endeavour.

3. The Foreign Minister of SAARC agreed that the focus must be on the economic agenda. The last SAARC Summit at Male had taken a landmark decision to achieve the goal of a Free Trade Area in South Asia by the year

2001. The Foreign Ministers agreed that trade liberalization should be speeded up in order to achieve this goal. The Third Round of Trade Preference Talks under SAPTA will recovene in Kathmandu from 16-18 December, 1997. The Ministers agreed that this Round should cover substantive ground, deepening tariff concessions along with removal of nontariff barriers and structural impediments in order to move speedily towards the goal of SAFTA - 2001.

4. The Ministers decided that measures for trade facilitation should be taken in parallel to derive the full benefits of trade liberalization. The SAARC Customs Coordination Group had recently drawn up a Customs Action Plan for harmonisation of ; customs procedures. This should be implemented quickly and further measures taken to modernise and improve customs infrastructure at border check posts. They felt that a similar initiative should be taken to harmonise standards and quality to facilitate the expansion of economic activity within the region.

5. The Ministers agreed that joint venture collaboration would be an important means of developing regional economic complimentarities and expanding trade and business. They appreciated that the first meeting on investment, Promotion and Protection had been held in Delhi in September, 1997 and felt that proposals for a Regional Investment Agreement and a SAARC Arbitration Council should be pursued and finalised quickly.

6. Minister of State, Salim Shervani stressed the need for identifying short term and medium term measures that could be taken to strengthen transportation networks by road, rail, ship and air within the region. The short-term measures could include harmonisation of traffic regulations and procedures as well as steps to increase capacity on existing transport routes. At the same time, additional routes should be identified and the neces-

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sary institutional framework and infrastructure developed for operationalising these routes. He said that proposals for a SAARC Highway and a SAARC Railway were worth considering and should be studied by the SAARC Committee on Transportation.

7. The Foreign Ministers decided that a SAARC Driving Licence Scheme should be formulated and directed that it should be ready for launch at the next Summit which will be held in August 1998 in Colombo.

8. The SAARC Ministers underlined that the ultimate objectives of SAARC must be to reduce and eliminate poverty from the region by the early years of the next century through a purposeful and focussed Agenda of Action.

9. A major initiative was taken to address the serious problem of illegal trafficking in women and children within and between the countries in the region. The Ministers directed that a Regional Convention on Combating the Crime of Illegal Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution should be finalised in time for the next SAARC Summit. A Working Group has been set up to negotiate the Convention and India will be hosting the first meeting of the Group early next year. The Ministers felt-that this was a truly worthwhile initiative and would address the problems of some of the most vulnerable sections of society.

10. The Minister appreciated the major initiative taken by the SAARC Environment Ministers Meeting in Male in October, 1997 to develop an Environmental Action Plan for the region. They commended the common SAARC position on Climate Change adopted by the Environment Ministers seeking binding commitments by the industrialised countries to reduce Greenhouse Gases. They agreed to coordinate closely with each other at the forthcoming meeting in Kyoto on the framework Convention on Climate Change.

11. An important initiative taken by SAARC leaders at Male in May this year was the decision to appoint a Group of Eminent Persons to develop a long range vision and prepare a SAARC Perspective Plan for the year 2000 and beyond with specific targets to be achieved by the year 2020. The Ministers noted that the first meeting of the Group would be held in Male in December. Minister of State, Salim Shervani conveyed India's offer to host the second meeting of the Group in Delhi. This offer was welcomed by the SAARC Foreign Ministers.

Dec 01, 1997

MALDIVES USA INDIA NEPAL SRI LANKA PERU

Date : Dec 01, 1997

Volume No

1995

SRI LANKA

Investments from Sri Lanka

Following is the text of a Press Note issued in New Delhi on December 26, 1997 on Investments from Sri Lanka:

Starting from Rs. 15.1 million in 1993, investments from Sri Lanka in India touched Rs. 54.5 million in 1996. As on 31.10.97 total investment approvals stood at Rs. 147.7 million. Against this figure the inflow was Rs. 15.2 million which is 10.29 % of the FDI approved for Sri Lanka.

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The highest investment proposals have been in the Food Processing Industry which accounts for over 30% of investment approvals from Sri Lanka. Textile Industry accounts for the second place and Chemicals (other than fertilisers), the third.

Some of the major Sri Lankan Companies which have invested in India are Ritzbury Lanka (P) Ltd., Ceylon Supply and Development Company Ltd., Prince Plastic Industries (P) Ltd., and Jewelknit Ltd.
Dec 26, 1997

SRI LANKA INDIA USA

Date : Dec 26, 1997