

INDIA SPEAKS

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Bilateral Issues

a. Libya

- 1. Address by the Hon'ble Vice President of India Mr. M. Hamid Ansari at the conferment of Honorary Doctorate for International Relations by Mevlana University at Konya, Turkey, 12 October 2011**

...The upheaval in Libya is characterized by a fast changing situation and the Transitional National Council has now acquired effective control. We believe that the normalization of the situation should be in the hands of the Libyan people themselves - guided by democratic norms, respecting popular aspirations and preserving the sovereignty and integrity of Libya. India has been in touch with the Transitional National Council in Benghazi and Cairo and has reiterated its willingness to extend all possible assistance to the people of Libya in their political transition, rebuilding and reconstruction activities...

Source: Vice-president of India,

<http://vicepresidentofindia.nic.in/printable.asp?id=349>

- 2. India hopes peace will return to Libya soon, reiterates offer of assistance, New Delhi, 20 October 2011**

In response to a question, the Official Spokesperson said,
“We have seen reports that Col. Gaddafi has been killed in Sirte, Libya. The strife in Libya and the suffering of its people has been a matter of concern to us. We hope that peace and stability would soon return to Libya. India's relations with the people of Libya are deep and long standing. At this juncture, India reiterates its readiness to

extend all possible assistance to the people of Libya in their political transition and rebuilding of the country”.

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi,
<http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?id=530318428>

b. Oman

3. Indo Oman Air Exercise – Eastern Bridge – II Concludes at Jamnagar, New Delhi 21 October

A four day joint exercise between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) concluded today at Air Force Station Jamnagar. The exercise, named “Ex Eastern Bridge - 2011” marks the second of the series, the first was held in Oct 2009 wherein six IAF Jaguars had operated at RAFO Thumrait, Oman. It is the first time that the RAFO Jaguars have participated in a Joint exercise held in India. The RAFO contingent comprised of six Jaguar aircraft and 115 personnel. The IAF’s Jaguars and MiG 29s based at Jamnagar have participated in the exercise.

RAFO Jaguars had ferried in directly from Thumrait and landed at Jamnagar. Two years back when the IAF contingent visited Oman, their Omani counterparts had expressed keen interest and desire to fly over Indian terrain which has a vast variation quite unlike the Omani flatbed desert. After having flown from Air Force Station Jamnagar, they would understand the challenges the IAF routinely encounters flying over the varying Indian landscape with deserts to the North and dense vegetation and hills towards South Gujrat.

After the familiarization of RAFO contingent with local flying operational procedures at the base, the exercise commenced on 17 Oct 2011. The 04 day long exercise involved a variety of flying missions from each other’s best practices in terms of operational, maintenance and administrative procedures. The exercise gave vast exposure to the aircrew of RAFO and IAF, towards missions involving long duration sorties with in flight refuelling, large force strike packages, air to ground bombing and maritime strike roles routinely performed by the IAF both independently and in mixed operations.

This exercise did not only enrich the IAF and RAFO professionally but culturally also as the Omani people and Indians share a similar culture. The Ex provided an opportunity of rich interaction between the personnel of both countries. Veterans of

EX- Eastern Bridge-I in 2009 also got a chance to meet old friends from RAFO. This has strengthened the bond between the Air Forces, IAF and RAFO.

At the culmination of the exercise an informal social interaction and a friendly football match between the teams of the participating contingents have been played with an aim to enhance mutual understanding and bonhomie. The Omani's have shown a fondness for Indian cuisine and have especially liked the Khakras, samosas and Dhoklas.

Press Information Bureau of India, New Delhi,

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=76806>

c. Qatar

4. India and Qatar Identify Areas for Cooperation in Oil & Gas Sector, New Delhi, 28 October 2011

Mr. S. Jaipal Reddy, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas has sought additional quantities of crude oil and LNG from Qatar. He also invited investments from Qatar in the upcoming petrochemical projects of the oil sector PSUs. Speaking at meeting here today with Dr. Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Sada, Minister for Industry and Energy of Qatar, Mr. Reddy emphasised that such investments will be a win-win proposition for both the countries. He pointed out that India is looking for strategic investors for some of these projects which include petrochemical complexes at Dahej and Mangalore, and LNG import terminal at Ennore.

The Qatari Minister reiterated Qatar's commitment to India to not only supply LNG under existing contracts but also additional quantities for which discussions are going on. He offered to supply LPG and crude oil condensates which can be processed to produce white fuels like Petrol, Kerosene, ATF and Naphtha.

The two Ministers stressed the need for expediting the process of evaluating the present opportunities for mutual cooperation in the hydrocarbon etc. Mr. Reddy expressed the hope that some of these deals would bear fruition by the time of the World Petroleum Congress at Doha in the month of December 2011.

Source: Press Information Bureau of India, New Delhi,

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=76886>

d. Syria

5. Explanation of Vote delivered by Ambassador Hardeep Puri on draft Resolution on Syria at UNSC on 4 October 2011, New York

Thank you, Madame President,

I want to start by congratulating you on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. We have no doubt that you will have an extremely successful Presidency. I would also like to take this opportunity to complement Lebanon, Ambassador Nawaf and his team, for their very wise and able stewardship of the Council during September, a difficult month at the best of times.

Madame President, Syria has both historically and in contemporary times been an important country in the Middle East. Its role in the Middle East peace process and in the stability of the wider region cannot be overemphasized. Prolonged instability and unrest in Syria, therefore, clearly have ramifications for the region and beyond.

India remains concerned at the unfolding events in Syria that have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians and security force personnel. We deplore all violence irrespective of who its perpetrators are.

Madame President, we recognize the responsibility of all States to respect the fundamental rights of their people, address their legitimate aspirations and respond to their grievances through administrative, political, economic and other measures. At the same time, States also have the obligation to protect their citizens from armed groups and militants. While the right of people to protest peacefully is to be respected, States cannot but take appropriate action when militant groups, heavily armed, resort to violence against state authority and infrastructure.

Given the complexity of ground realities in Syria, we believe that engaging Syria in a collaborative and constructive dialogue and partnership is the only pragmatic and productive way forward. In our bilateral contacts with the Syrian Government as well as through the IBSA initiative, we have urged them to exercise restraint, abjure violence and pay heed to the aspirations of their people.

The international community should give time and space for the Syrian Government to implement the far-reaching reform measures announced by them. For this, it is also necessary that the opposition forces in Syria give up the path of armed insurrection and engage constructively with the authorities. We firmly believe that the actions of the international community should facilitate an engagement of the Syrian government and the opposition in a Syrian-led inclusive political process and not complicate the situation by threats of sanctions, regime change, etc.

The resolution under the Council's consideration does not accommodate our concern about threat of sanctions. It does not condemn the violence perpetrated by the Syrian opposition. Nor does it place any responsibility on the opposition to abjure violence and engage with the Syrian authorities for redressal of their grievances through a peaceful political process. We have, therefore, abstained on the resolution.

Thank you.

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi,
<http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?id=530218347>

6. Address by the Hon'ble Vice President of India Mr. M. Hamid Ansari at the conferment of Honorary Doctorate for International Relations by Mevlana University at Konya, Turkey, 12 October 2011

...We are concerned at the unfolding situation in Syria which has resulted in many deaths of civilians and security personnel. We deplore all violence, irrespective of who the perpetrators are. The Syrian government has announced some far-reaching measures and it should be given the time and space to implement them. The actions of the international community should facilitate an inclusive political engagement of the Syrian government and the opposition, rather than complicate the situation through threats of sanctions...

Source: Vice-president of India,
<http://vicepresidentofindia.nic.in/printable.asp?id=349>

e. Turkey

7. Briefing by Secretary (West) on Vice-President's visit to Turkey, New Delhi, 8 October 2011

Official Spokesperson (Mr. Vishnu Prakash): Good afternoon and welcome. Good to see all of you.

Vice-President of India would be paying an official visit to Turkey from the 10th to the 15th of October this month. Secretary (West) Mr. M Ganapathi is here to brief you about the forthcoming visit of the Vice-President. He is also joined by two of my colleagues, to his right Mrs. Banashri Bose Harrison, our Joint Secretary looking after Central Europe and Europe West, and to my left is Mr. P. Harish who is the Joint Secretary in the Vice-President's Secretariat.

Sir, the floor is yours.

Secretary (West) (Mr. M. Ganapathi): Thank you, Vishnu. Good afternoon friends from the media.

I am grateful that Mr. Vishnu Prakash, Joint Secretary (XP), Smt. Banashri Bose Harrison, Joint Secretary (Central and West Europe), and Mr. P. Harish, Joint Secretary and OSD to the Hon. Vice-President of India could join us. I am grateful that all of you could spare a Saturday afternoon to be with us. Of course, among the many reasons is we just returned from our overseas visit overnight.

The Hon. Vice-President of India will be paying an official visit to Turkey from the 10th to the 15th of October that is coming Monday.

The members of the delegation accompanying the Hon. Vice-President will include: Mr. Mukul Wasnik, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, and the Hon. Members of Parliament Mr. Sitaram Yechury, Mr. Ranjitsingh Vijaysinh Patil, Mr. Vijay Pal Singh and Smt. Ingrid McLeod. Senior officials, including Mr. Shumsher Sheriff, Secretary to the Hon. Vice-President, and Mr. Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty, Special Secretary (Public Diplomacy) from the Ministry of External Affairs will form part of the delegation. Members of the media will naturally accompany the Hon. Vice-President. And some members of the Indian business who are based in Turkey along with their representatives from India would join.

There have been a number of high-level visits in recent years between the two countries. In November 2008, we had the Prime Minister of Turkey, His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan in India. The President of Turkey, Mr. Abdullah Gul, visited us in February 2010. Hon. Vice-President's visit is in continuation of these high-level exchanges between India and Turkey.

The Hon. Vice-President's visit commences in Ankara where he will hold delegation-level talks with a delegation of Members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly led by the Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly His Excellency Mr. Camil Cicek. The Hon. Vice-President will be received by the President of Turkey, Mr. Abdullah Gul, and he is also expected to meet the Prime Minister of Turkey, His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan. It is expected that during the discussions between the Hon. Vice-President and his Turkish counterparts the entire gamut of bilateral, regional and international issues will be covered.

The Hon. Vice-President will pay homage to the founder of the Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk at his Mausoleum in Ankara. He will also visit the historical

Provinces of Konya and Nevsehir which is also better known as Cappadocia. He will visit Istanbul where he will participate in a Business Forum at the Turkish Chamber of Businessmen and Industrialists. While in Konya, the Hon. Vice-President will be conferred an Honorary Doctorate for International Relations by the Mevlana University.

India's relations with Turkey have a historical bearing. The links between our two countries are civilisational, encompassing architecture, arts, language and cuisine. In fact I am told that the word pyaaz is a Turkish word, which I came to know only today. India recognises the geographical and geopolitical importance of Turkey as a strong democratic, vibrant and economically growing nation situated on the crossroads of Asia and Europe. Turkish leaders have noted the democratic ideals of India, the secular nature of its polity, its emerging economy and India's position in regional and international politics. Both countries understand each other well drawing their inspiration from their historical connections and the long association between the leaders and the peoples of two countries.

From a people to people point of view, the name Urdu can be traced back to its Turkish origins. The Sufi philosophy of Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi found a natural resonance in the subcontinent's tradition of Sufism. And the Mevlana University I mentioned is also after Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi.

In the economic and commercial area we see Turkey as among our important partners in the region today. Two-way trade between the two countries touched US\$ 4 billion in 2010 of which India's exports were of the order of US\$ 3.4 billion and imports from Turkey into India accounted for US\$ 606 million.

More than 112 Indian companies have registered their business in Turkey with investments in areas ranging from infrastructure and automobiles to IT and consultancy services. Some of the prominent Indian companies with a presence in Turkey include GMR Infrastructure Limited, which recently won the bid for the construction of the airport in Istanbul on a BOT basis, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Reliance, the Aditya Birla Group, Ispat, Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited, WIPRO and Dabur India Limited. Among the leading Turkish companies which have a presence in India in the infrastructure and oil and petrochemical sectors are LIMAK Construction and Fernas Construction Company.

The Indo-Turkish Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation is co-Chaired by the Commerce Ministers of the two countries to give direction towards

further consolidation and development of economic and commercial cooperation between the two countries. Both India and Turkey also have signed an Agreement for Avoidance of Double Taxation as also an Agreement for Reciprocal Protection and Mutual Promotion of Investments. Agreements for development of Science and Technology and for cooperation in the IT sector also exist between the two countries. A Joint Study Group has also been commissioned to examine the feasibility of setting up a Free Trade Agreement between India and Turkey.

Cooperation in the cultural and education sectors has also been fairly active. Since 1995 an Indian Professor has been on deputation to the Indology Department in the Ankara University to teach Hindi. Similarly, two Turkish language Professors have been deputed to the Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Jamia Millia University. MoUs for cooperation have also been concluded between Universities in Turkey and India. Indian culture, including films, dance, yoga and Ayurveda and Indian cuisine obviously, have been drawing attention in Turkey.

Turkey's first Nano-satellite – the ITUpSAT1 - manufactured by the Istanbul Technical University's Faculty of Aeronautics was launched by ISRO's PSLV C-14 launch vehicle on September 23, 2009.

There are just under 150 Indian nationals in Turkey with most of them in Istanbul working in commercial organisations. But we have seen a trend now where some Indian professionals have been moving to Turkey to work in their overseas offices there. There are around a dozen lecturers/professors and around two dozen Indian students in different Universities in Turkey including in the Mevlana University.

Both India and Turkey are members of the G20. Today Turkey is the 16th largest economy in the world. It is the only Eurasian country in NATO. Its association with Europe through the Customs Union with the EU could offer opportunities for Indian business.

I should also mention that both India and turkey have been victims of international terrorism. Recently Ankara saw a bomb blast. Both our leaders have been concerned about the spread of international terrorism, and have called for steps to be taken to jointly eliminate this scourge.

Hon. Vice-President's visit will provide an additional impetus and momentum towards further consolidation and strengthening of the broad-based, multifaceted and comprehensive partnership between India and the Republic of Turkey in areas of

mutual interest to mutual benefit. This would also reinforce the close traditional and historical friendship between India and the Republic of Turkey.

Thank you.

Official Spokesperson: Any questions?

Question: You mentioned about Turkey's secular credentials. Turkey of late is seeking refuge in its Islamic identity. It is becoming now more and more prominent. It seems that the fulcrum of the Islamic world is also moving to Turkey which is causing alarm in the West as well as in Israel. What is India's position on this? Also, could you throw more light on the free trade agreement and the joint study group which is set up? When was it set up, when is it filing its report, and what would be the contours of this agreement?

Secretary (West): On the first question I would say it would be incorrect for us to comment on the internal affairs of any country. On the Joint Study Group, it is still examining the details and it will take a little while. We will be able to revert back to you but right now I think it is still at a very preliminary examination stage.

Question: When was the last time an Indian Head of State or Prime Minister visited Turkey?

Secretary (West): We had Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee visit Turkey in 2003. Before that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had visited Turkey in 1988. Of course the first visit was by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1960.

Question by Turkish journalist: You said that the Prime Minister of Turkey visited India in 2008 and you have clearly pointed out that the relations between India and Turkey are booming in the sense of good cooperation as well. My question is on the Pakistan issue. Today you have, as I have observed, lots of problems with Pakistan. But till 2000, Turkey had a very close relation with Pakistan. But Prime Minister Erdogan's party has kept a neutral position and kept a neutral position on the Kashmir issue as well. Today, the economic relations between India and Turkey are much better than those between Pakistan and Turkey. How does India see Turkey as regards Pakistan? Do you think that Turkey can play a role in the peace process between India and Pakistan?

Secretary (West): I will start by saying that during such high-level visits as that of the Vice-President of India, the entire gamut of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest and mutual concern are touched upon. As you are aware, the State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. We have repeatedly made it clear and it has been accepted by the international community that issues as they may be would be discussed bilaterally between the two countries.

Official Spokesperson: As the Secretary has mentioned, as far as the issue of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, if there are any issues that can be, and are being discussed with Pakistan. As far as the relationship of Turkey with Pakistan is concerned, every country has a right to have a relationship with any country as it deems fit. So, you have your relationship. But what we are talking about is the relationship between India and Turkey and the Secretary has already spoken about the manner in which this robust relationship is developing further, is diversifying further and is deepening further.

Question: Is there any specific agreement, especially in business, which is going to be signed during this visit?

Secretary (West): I am told the standard operating procedure on agreements is, we do not announce agreements before the visit commences and takes place. So, we will have to wait till the visit concludes. But insofar as the business part of the visit is concerned, the Hon. Vice-President will be addressing, as I said, the Turkish Chamber of Businessmen and Industrialists in Istanbul where he will talk about Indo-Turkish economic and commercial cooperation and the opportunities available in India, to an audience which will include both Turkish and Indian business persons.

Question: Sir, what can be the possible areas, new areas of cooperation between the two countries during this visit?

Secretary (West): Naturally this has to be the economic and commercial sector.

Question: Which are these sectors?

Secretary (West): I think the traditional areas which have been going on. One of the strengths of the relationship has been in the cotton yarn textiles sector. But we would look at infrastructure development because India has set aside one trillion US dollars over the next five years for development of its infrastructure. And what is very important is, some of the Turkish companies have strengths in this area. Similarly we

have, as I mentioned GMR International is already in Turkey looking at the airport. That is one area. Then we have IT sector which is going to be another important area, and automotive and automobile sector, and engineering. Of course education would be another area where we would look at opportunities as they come in.

Question: Sir, after the attack on flotilla there is a problem between Israel and Turkey. We have good relations with Israel as well. What would be our position in this case if the situation may worsen between Turkey and Israel in future?

Secretary (West): I will again put it this way that since we are talking of the Vice-President's visit, the entire gamut of relations which would have a regional and international bearing will be touched upon in the discussions. And it would be correct for all of you perhaps to wait when the Vice-President meets you and briefs you on the outcome of the visit on his return because that will be the best area to have an insight into what was discussed and what is the outcome.

Question by Turkish journalist: As I know, Hon. Vice-President's uncle signed an agreement in 1951, just sixty years ago, between India and Turkey on cultural relations. I have got the information from the Turkish Embassy here that they are going to celebrate this year as the cultural and the society-based programmes. What kind of programmes India and Turkey will have in India? It is very interesting that the Vice-President's visit to Turkey has different programmes Mevlana University, Honorary Doctorate will be given to him, and in Istanbul he will visit some of the intellectuals of Turkey as well. What kind of cultural fields India and Turkey will share?

Secretary (West): As I said, our cultural relations are historical right across the spectrum. I mentioned from the point of view of India films, dances, culture, theatre, they are all very popular. Similarly from Turkey some of your traditional dances are very well appreciated and known here. So, I think right now we have a programme of cultural cooperation. The next programme for 2012-2013 is already discussion. So, obviously when the officials of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Turkish counterparts finalise the elements which would go into such cultural cooperation, this will also include various segments which you mentioned.

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi,
<http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?id=530318357>

8. Vice President's Remarks in the Golden Book at Ataturk Mausoleum in Ankara, 11 October 2011

The Vice President of India Mr. M Hamid Ansari has remarked that the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was a source of inspiration for India's freedom movement. Mr. Ataturk was a statesman, visionary leader and the founder of the Republic of Turkey. Mr. Ansari is on a five days visit to Turkey. While signing in Golden Book at Ataturk Mausoleum in Ankara, Turkey today, he opined that the ideals symbolized by Mustafa Kemal Pasha continue to inspire secular, liberal and democratic people the world over. Following is the text of Vice President's remarks in Golden Book :

"It is an honour for me to pay my homage and respects to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, a statesman, visionary leader, and the founder of the Republic of Turkey. His leadership in the war of independence of Turkey was a source of inspiration for India's freedom movement.

The ideals symbolized by Mustafa Kemal Pasha continue to inspire secular, liberal and democratic people the world over."

Press Information Bureau of India, New Delhi,

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=76561>

9. Vice President Conferred Honorary Doctorate for International Relations by Mevlana University at Konya, Turkey, 12 October 2011

The Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari was conferred the Honorary Doctorate for International Relations by Mevlana University at a function in Konya, Turkey today. He was also conferred the honorary citizenship of Konya on the occasion. Mr. Ansari is on a five day visit to Turkey. Addressing on the occasion, he said that Turkey and India have known each other for centuries. Both were important pillars of a seamless, borderless world of culture, art, spiritualism and philosophy that extended from Maghreb and Andalusia in the west to all corners of Asia in the east, enriched humanity for over a millennium, assimilated and synthesized many distinctive local, cultural and ethnic features and displayed much diversity within unity. Both contributed to it in ample measure; both take pride in this heritage.

Mr. Ansari opined that if convergence characterised the spiritual realm, physical distance, infrequent contacts and complex considerations of statecraft conditioned political relations between our two countries in medieval times. In the last century, Indian public's support for Turkey was evident during the Balkan War and Turkey's struggle after World War I to regain independence, identity and dignity was keenly watched and admired. In 1935 the author Halide Edib spent some time in India, met Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders of our freedom struggle, gave extensive lectures

about modern Turkey, and wrote that India was “nearer to my soul-climate than any other country not my own”.

The Vice President said, “We want to see an inclusive world order, a world united by partnerships based on mutual respect and benefit, not divided into blocs or alliances of competing interests. We believe that the benefits of globalization must be inclusive, across and within nations. We remain convinced that dialogue and cooperation are the best way to address the new global challenges. Institutions of global political and economic governance, including the United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions, should reflect contemporary realities and not perpetuate historical contexts and divides. The primary objective of Indian policy is to improve the lives of our own people through sustained development. For this we need a prolonged period of peace, a peaceful periphery and an enabling international environment that would allow us access to essential resources, technology, and permit free trade.”

He expressed his concern that the complex neighbourhood in which India is located, has seen rapid and often, turbulent, change in the last thirty years. India has followed the same policy of dialogue, engagement and mutually beneficial cooperation that it urges on all international issues. India’s neighbourhood policy seeks to articulate and promote the advantages of building networks of inter-connectivity, trade, and investment so that prosperity can be shared and the entire region can benefit from India’s rapid economic growth.

Press Information Bureau of India, New Delhi,

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=79381>

10. Address by the Hon’ble Vice President of India Mr. M. Hamid Ansari at the conferment of Honorary Doctorate for International Relations by Mevlana University at Konya, Turkey, 12 October 2011

Ladies and Gentlemen

“A man, never having seen water, is thrown blindfolded into it, and feels it. When the bandage is removed, he knows what it is. Until then, he only knows it by its effect”.

When one comes to the city of Mevlana, and to a university bearing his name, it is only appropriate to commence with his wisdom about the difference between feeling and knowing. Needless to say, I am delighted to be here and feel elated by the honoured bestowed on me today. I come as a traveller who has known of the destination but has taken long to reach it. The Persian saying *dair aayed, durust aayed* does help console me.

Turkey and India have known each other for centuries. Both were important pillars of a seamless, borderless world of culture, art, spiritualism and philosophy that extended from Maghreb and Andalusia in the west to all corners of Asia in the east, enriched humanity for over a millennium, assimilated and synthesized many distinctive local, cultural and ethnic features and displayed much diversity within unity. Both contributed to it in ample measure; both take pride in this heritage.

There are similarities and parallelism in this heritage. This is most vividly evident in mysticism, the great spiritual current that runs through all religions. In Islam it is called Sufism and the period from the 9th to 15th century witnessed the emergence of a great many masters in Iraq, Iran, Khurasan, Turkey and India whose teachings are revered to this day and have a mass following. Amongst them were Jalaluddin Rumi in Turkey and Moinuddin Chishti in India. They were virtual contemporaries; Chishti died in 1236 and Rumi in 1273.

Nor were they alone. Yunus Emre in Anatolia who died in 1320, became a folk saint in his lifetime and is regarded as an outstanding example of Turkish humanism. Consider the following:

We regard no one's religion as contrary to ours
True love is born when all faiths are united as a whole
And:
The man who does not see the nations of the world as one
Is a rebel even if the pious claim he is holy
"True faith", he observed succinctly, "is in the head, not in the headgear".

Almost a century and a half later Kabir, brought up in a weaver's family in northern India, was a folk saint in a similar mould who sought to find commonalities in faiths. The theme was pervasive in his utterances. I draw attention of this audience to the following:

Allah the Invisible pervades in us all
You must realise it in your heart
He is the same both in Hindu and the Turk
Says Kabir, after due thought
And
If Allah dwells in a mosque alone,
What about the rest of space?
The Hindus believe that He abides in the image of the deity

The truth is missed in either case
And
Muslim's mosque and Hindu's temple
Make them follow separate paths
The Lord dwells in the heart of man
Both Hindus and Muslims miss that

The tradition, of reverence to mystics, and benefiting from their teachings of ascetic living, egalitarianism, and brotherhood of all faiths, continues to be a living reality in India and has contributed to the spiritual fertility of our society. An excellent example in modern times is one of India's greatest poets, Mohammad Iqbal, who drank deeply from the fountain of Konya; many of his works and individual poems are vividly reflective of the impact of Mavlana's teachings.

It is this backdrop of a plural society and a tradition of accommodation and synthesis that has allowed modern India and its democratic polity to develop and put into practice a secular polity. This is a basic feature our Constitution and cannot be amended. Thus for different reasons, and traversing different paths, modern Turkey and modern India reached the same destination, considered essential for our wellbeing in the modern world.

If convergence characterised the spiritual realm, physical distance, infrequent contacts and complex considerations of statecraft conditioned political relations between our two countries in medieval times. In the last century, Indian public's support for Turkey was evident during the Balkan War and Turkey's struggle after World War I to regain independence, identity and dignity was keenly watched and admired. In 1935 the author Halide Edib spent some time in India, met Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders of our freedom struggle, gave extensive lectures about modern Turkey, and wrote that India was "nearer to my soul-climate than any other country not my own".

II

Countries, like individuals, live by professed values and defined interests. The purpose of public policy is to develop the capacity to protect and promote these values and interests, and to respond to challenges.

The stability and fixed patterns and processes that were a feature of the Cold War period are today a matter of history. Instead, we face changing alliances and interests, new modes and instruments of conflict, and universalisation of normative standards of fundamental and human rights. This churning, and shift in world and regional power balances, will continue.

The unprecedented political and social challenges in every region of the world have been further compounded by the precarious global economic situation, described by Professor Jeffery Sachs as “the great failure of globalization”. It has, to quote an eminent Indian economist, “eroded social stability”.

It is in this context that I wish to speak to you about India’s world view. Our view of the world stems from our civilisational heritage and experience of history. We do believe that every human irrespective of identity, affiliation, faith, nationality, gender or region has an inherent right to a better life, the development and utilization of his/her capabilities to the fullest, and to participate and contribute in productive ways to their communities and nations.

States have a duty to their citizens to enable them to freely choose their paths to development and self-fulfilment. Based on these premises, India has also stood steadfast to the basic principle of full sovereignty and independence of peoples, and their states, in an inclusive, representative, and increasingly pluralist world community.

We abhor any attempt aimed at disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of States, and seek the observance of the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. We want to see an inclusive world order, a world united by partnerships based on mutual respect and benefit, not divided into blocs or alliances of competing interests. We believe that the benefits of globalization must be inclusive, across and within nations. We remain convinced that dialogue and cooperation are the best way to address the new global challenges. Institutions of global political and economic governance, including the United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions, should reflect contemporary realities and not perpetuate historical contexts and divides.

The primary objective of Indian policy is to improve the lives of our own people through sustained development. For this we need a prolonged period of peace, a peaceful periphery and an enabling international environment that would allow us access to essential resources, technology, and permit free trade.

Ladies and Gentlemen

We cannot but notice the pockets of turbulence in our common area. India and West Asia have enjoyed cultural, intellectual and commercial ties since ancient times. The

turmoil that some countries in West Asia and North Africa have experienced in recent months is a matter of great concern to us.

The people of the region seek to shape their own future and their wishes must prevail. However, violent means must be abjured by all sides. As a member of the Security Council since the beginning of this year, India has been underlining the need to resolve conflicts through political negotiations and diplomatic means, rather than through the use of force.

A primary cause of tension, instability and violence in the region is the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. India fully supports the Palestinian people's struggle for a sovereign, independent, viable and united state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognizable borders side by side and at peace with Israel.

The conflict is political and cannot be resolved by force. At the same time, protracted negotiations over decades have not achieved the national goals of the Palestinian people and have fuelled disappointment and anger.

India was the first non-Arab country to recognize the Palestinian State in 1988 and will support its aspirations in the United Nations.

The upheaval in Libya is characterized by a fast changing situation and the Transitional National Council has now acquired effective control. We believe that the normalization of the situation should be in the hands of the Libyan people themselves - guided by democratic norms, respecting popular aspirations and preserving the sovereignty and integrity of Libya.

India has been in touch with the Transitional National Council in Benghazi and Cairo and has reiterated its willingness to extend all possible assistance to the people of Libya in their political transition, rebuilding and reconstruction activities.

We are concerned at the unfolding situation in Syria which has resulted in many deaths of civilians and security personnel. We deplore all violence, irrespective of who the perpetrators are. The Syrian government has announced some far-reaching measures and it should be given the time and space to implement them. The actions of the international community should facilitate an inclusive political engagement of the Syrian government and the opposition, rather than complicate the situation through threats of sanctions.

India firmly believes that observance of the rule of law is as important in international affairs as it is within countries and that the political, societal and economic destiny must be the choice of people. The international community has a role in assisting the process of transition, but that does not extend to imposition of external prescriptions.

Friends

The complex neighbourhood in which India is located has seen rapid and often, turbulent, change in the last thirty years. India has followed the same policy of dialogue, engagement and mutually beneficial cooperation that it urges on all international issues. Our neighbourhood policy seeks to articulate and promote the advantages of building networks of inter-connectivity, trade, and investment so that prosperity can be shared and the entire region can benefit from India's rapid economic growth.

Afghanistan, geographically poised between south and central Asia, is a neighbour with historic people-to-people linkages. The fratricidal conflict there is a threat to regional and international peace and security. It is India's view that the peace process should be Afghan-led, transparent, inclusive, and based on the acceptance of the Afghan Constitution. Our civilizational links with Afghanistan and our close friendship are embodied in the landmark Strategic Partnership Agreement that we signed during President Karzai's visit to India last week.

The international community must take effective measures to guarantee the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Afghanistan. The Afghan people have suffered enough and must be allowed to decide their destiny without external interference, coercion or intimidation. India will participate in the forthcoming conferences in Istanbul and Bonn to contribute to regional and international initiatives to support Afghanistan's efforts at nation building.

We subscribe to the emerging patterns of partnership in Asia based on Asian regionalism, inter-regional dialogue forums with other regions, global and multilateral organizations, and robust bilateral cooperation. We believe that no partnership architecture should be exclusive or exclusionary. It should neither be a reflection of the emerging redistribution of global or regional power nor should it be a platform for projection of narrow economic and political interests of a nation or group of nations.

Furthermore, all disputes must be settled peacefully, without resort to violence, or the threat of violence. These have been the principles that have guided India's "Look East" policy, and increasingly our "Look West" policy, in Asia.

The same cooperative approach is evident in our policy towards African countries. We are convinced that the people of Africa are its most precious resource. India has taken the lead in empowering them through technology, education and skill development. We have offered lines of credit worth US \$ 5 billion and US \$ 700 million in grant assistance for human resource development, transfer of technology and building new institutions.

All this adds up to an ardent policy of international cooperation. India, like Turkey, is a strong proponent of multilateralism and has been actively involved in the work of the United Nations. We believe reform and restructuring of the UN is necessary to make it better equipped to respond effectively in an era of transformational change in global affairs.

The call for democratization cannot be limited to nations and states, but must also extend to global governance. We should test the validity of the proposition, expounded many years back by an eminent political scientist that “a theory of legitimate power is inescapably a theory of democracy in the interlocking processes and structures of the global system”.

Our efforts at the restructuring and reform of the United Nations are ongoing, and support for reform and expansion from member countries is gathering momentum. Unless there is a cooperative framework among states and peoples, today’s challenges cannot be faced. A case in point is international terrorism. It is an immediate threat to all nations and knows no national boundaries. India has called for the adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to help eradicate this scourge.

The same holds for the safety of sea lanes. Maritime commerce along the sea lanes of communication has been subjected to piracy being carried out with impunity from areas that are outside State control and not subject to international accountability. Pandemics, global warming and climate change, sustainable development, and issues of equity, both within and across nations, pose substantial challenges to the international order. Each requires a cooperative and global approach.

III

Friends

As we survey this backdrop to our engagement and partnership, we must remember what binds us. Both our countries are secular democracies wherein the will of our peoples is embodied in the supremacy of our Parliaments. Turkey and India believe in

the need to support and sustain our plural traditions and multi-cultural societies. Our economies are growing at an impressive rate leading to generation of incomes and employment opportunities to millions of our citizens and improving their standards of living. Both the countries have faced terrorism and have collaborated at international fora on combating terrorism. We also have a common stake in the emergence of a cooperative multi-polar world order which recognizes the legitimate aspirations of all countries, big and small. We do not share physical borders, but we do have a vast common extended neighbourhood – in Central Asia, West Asia and the Persian Gulf. I am convinced that enhanced engagement between India and Turkey is in the interests of our peoples and regions, global peace and cooperation, and tolerance and peaceful co-existence among nations. Our joint efforts can result in a more balanced, inclusive and sustainable development for the benefit of vast sections of humanity.

IV

Allow me to conclude. It is evident that the world of tomorrow would be too small for discord, too interdependent for isolation, too evolved for prejudice. Perhaps Yunus Emre had anticipated it. I am fascinated by the following couplets:

Come let us all be friends for once
Let us make life easy on us
Let us be lovers and loved ones
The earth shall be left to no one..

I once again thank the University for honouring me today and convey the best wishes of the government and people of India for the continued progress and prosperity of Turkey.

Source: Vice-president of India,

<http://vicepresidentofindia.nic.in/printable.asp?id=349>

11. Address by the Hon'ble Vice President of India Mr. M. Hamid Ansari at the dinner hosted by the confederation of businessmen and industrialists of Turkey at Hilton Hotel, Istanbul 14 October 2011

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am happy to be in the historic and beautiful city of Istanbul. I thank the leadership and people of Turkey for the warmth and hospitality shown to me and my delegation during the visit. My meetings in Ankara with President Gul, Prime Minister Erdogan and my gracious host Speaker Cicek have made evident the fund of goodwill that

exists and reflects the mutual determination for a multifaceted and dynamic partnership between our two countries.

I thank the Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey for hosting me today. We can together explore ways of furthering our mutual economic and commercial relations and take them into a higher orbit. As one of the largest institution representing the business community in Turkey, TUSKON has taken the initiative in facilitating outreach between our business and industry. TUSKON was active in the successful trade and investment delegation that visited India in March 2008 led by the State Minister for Foreign Trade Mr. Kür'ad Tüzmen. I understand that its members had more than 2000 one-on-one meetings. Its success is thus evident.

The next step should be the opening of a representative office in India to help consolidate the surging growth rate in bilateral trade and facilitate the realization of our ambitious trade and investment targets.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Turkey and India share many basic values and beliefs. We share a commitment to democracy, a profound belief in a secular polity, respect for the rule of law and upholding of human rights fundamental freedoms, and an economic system that could unshackle the energies and capabilities of our dynamic people and lead them to higher levels of prosperity and well being.

As members of the G 20, Turkey and India are witness to the momentous economic developments sweeping the global stage. We are witnessing a new and dangerous phase in the global economy that could threaten the global economic recovery that began in 2009. The IMF warned last month that the downside risks are “severe” and include “a downward spiral of increased uncertainty and risk aversion, dysfunctional financial markets, unsustainable debt dynamics, falling demand and rising unemployment”. Even with policy interventions, the prognosis is for anaemic recovery in major advanced economies and a cyclical slowdown in emerging economies.

Developing countries would be hit with weakening external demand and need to enhance domestic demand in an inclusive manner, bear the rising burden of inflationary pressures, and strengthen macroeconomic and financial frameworks.

More than at any time in the past, nations and leaders are called upon to undertake collective economic actions and implement coordinated policies to enable a return to sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth. The backdrop to our bilateral economic

cooperation is thus one of global uncertainty. Yet, it has a silver lining. Turkey has in 2010 experienced a real GDP growth of 8.9 per cent and is expected to grow by 6.6 per cent this year. India too had real GDP growth of 10.1 per cent last year and is projected to grow at 7.8 per cent this year.

During the past five years, India had aimed at achieving faster and more inclusive growth, and has achieved an average GDP growth of 8.2 percent. This growth led to generation of incomes and employment opportunities to millions of our citizens and improved the living standards for the bulk of our population. It has also enhanced revenue generation of the government enabling it to launch social sector programmes, aimed at reducing poverty and enabling inclusiveness. We attach high priority to them.

India has set a growth target of 9 per cent per annum for the five year period 2012-17 in the Twelfth Five Year Plan. This cannot be achieved without doubling the investment in infrastructure during the next five years, from US \$ 500 billion over the past five years to about one trillion dollars. We need more investments in roads and highways, new electricity generation and distribution networks, expanded and modernized railways networks, new and upgraded airport and port facilities. Such essential elements of infrastructure would provide our industry and agriculture with the connectivity needed for growth in production and trade, and for improving the quality of life of all of our people.

We have also reiterated our commitment to continue the process of economic reforms. In a multi-pronged manner, we are proceeding with tax reforms, especially the introduction of a Goods and Services Tax, financial sector reforms, legal reforms, and major reforms in education and skill development. We are also committed to the pursuit of prudent fiscal and monetary policies and controlling inflation.

This is the context in which I view the Turkey-India engagement.

In recent years, our mutual economic and commercial relations have become a major driving force of our bilateral relationship. Bilateral Trade has more than doubled in the last five years from US\$ 1.5 billion in 2005 to US\$ 4 billion in 2010, with an increasingly diverse export basket on both sides. For the current calendar year, the bilateral trade is expected to register an 80 plus percent increase over last year and touch US\$ 6.5-7 billion, surpassing the target of US\$ 5 billion that the two governments had set for 2012 during Prime Minister Erdogan's landmark visit to India in 2008. This has been possible only due to the active exchanges and collaboration between our business communities, including that of members of TUSKON.

The trend in the flow of services and investments between our two countries is encouraging. Today, over hundred Indian companies have registered businesses, investments and operations here, spanning the IT sector, airport infrastructure, automobiles, steel, irrigation and personal care products. Considering the expertise and experience of the Turkish companies in construction of infrastructure, it has emerged as a leading sector for investments from Turkey into India. I am confident that our business and industry would further strengthen the bilateral economic partnership. The prospects have never been brighter for us to intensify our engagement and tap our markets, and those of our regions and third countries to which we are important gateways.

I call upon you to harness the huge untapped potential to increase the volume and enhance the quality of our economic engagement. Both governments are your partners in this enterprise.

Thank you.

Vice-President of India, New Delhi,

<http://vicepresidentofindia.nic.in/printable.asp?id=350>

Specific Issues

f. Hajj

12. Hajj 2011 Operations, New Delhi, 7 October 2011

The Union Cabinet today approved the following for the Hajj 2011 Operations:

- i) Number of Hajj Pilgrims to be covered under the Government subsidy scheme for Hajj 2011 to be facilitated by the Hajj Committee of India is 125,000.
- ii) Fare to be charged from each of the pilgrims for Hajj 2011 is Rs.16,000.
- iii) Hajj flights would be operated from 21 embarkation points during Hajj 2011.
- iv) Ex-post facto approval has been given for increasing the number of pilgrims to 126,191 for Hajj 2010.

Ministry of Civil Aviation is entrusted with the responsibility of making air travel arrangements for Hajj pilgrims proceeding for Hajj through the Hajj Committee of India. For Hajj 2011, Ministry of Civil Aviation has selected the airlines for undertaking Hajj Charter flights through sealed tender process. Since only designated

airlines of India and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) are permitted to carry Hajj pilgrims from India to Saudi Arabia, the designated airlines of both the countries were issued the tender notice, Saudi Arabian Airlines and National Air Services (NAS), the two designated airlines of Saudi Arabia emerged L1 for 13 and 8 embarkation points respectively. MoUs have been signed with these airlines for carrying the Hajj Pilgrims. The pilgrims would be carried from India to Jeddah/Medina during 29.9.2011 and 31.10.2011 and from Jeddah/Medina to India during 10.11.2011 and 10.12.2011.

The number of Hajj pilgrims going through the Hajj Committee of India is decided by the Ministry of External Affairs which is the nodal Ministry for Hajj matters. The cost of air travel of pilgrims undertaking Hajj through Hajj Committee of India is borne partly by the pilgrims and partly subsidized by the Government of India. The cost/fare to be charged from pilgrims is decided by the Cabinet and collected by the Hajj Committee of India and paid to the Government/airlines and the balance cost is borne by the Government, for which a budgetary provision is made in the annual budget of Ministry of Civil Aviation. The number of pilgrims to be covered under this scheme and the number of embarkation points in India from which these pilgrims would board the flights are also decided by the Cabinet every year.

Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi,

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=76503>

g. Palestinian issue

13. Address by the Hon'ble Vice President of India Mr. M. Hamid Ansari at the conferment of Honorary Doctorate for International Relations by Mevlana University at Konya, Turkey, 12 October 2011

...A primary cause of tension, instability and violence in the region is the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. India fully supports the Palestinian people's struggle for a sovereign, independent, viable and united state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognizable borders side by side and at peace with Israel. The conflict is political and cannot be resolved by force. At the same time, protracted negotiations over decades have not achieved the national goals of the Palestinian people and have fuelled disappointment and anger. India was the first non-Arab country to recognize the Palestinian State in 1988 and will support its aspirations in the United Nations...

Source: Vice-president of India,

<http://vicepresidentofindia.nic.in/printable.asp?id=349>

14. Statement by MOS Mr. E. Ahamed at UNSC's Open Debate on the Situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question, New York 24 October 2011

Thank you, Madam President.

I would like to express our deep condolences to the Government and people of Saudi Arabia on the passing away of His Royal Highness of Saudi Arabia Sultan bin Abdel Aziz Al Saud.

I would also like to express our solidarity with the Government and people of Turkey in dealing with the aftermath of the devastating earthquake. First of all, I would like to thank you for organizing this Open Debate on the Middle East, a region witnessing momentous transformation. I would also like to thank Under Secretary General Lynn Pascoe for his comprehensive briefing on developments in the region.

Madam President,

Clearly, the issue of Palestine has taken a decisive turn in the history of the Middle East conflict after President Mahmoud Abbas filed an application with the Secretary General on 23 September 2011 for Palestine's full membership to the United Nations. Speaking a day after President Abbas filed the application, my Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh said in the General Assembly on 24 September 2011 that India has been steadfast in its support for the Palestinian people's struggle for a sovereign, independent, viable and united state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognized borders side by side and at peace with Israel, as per the relevant resolutions of this Organization, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap. The Prime Minister added that we look forward to welcoming Palestine as an equal member of the United Nations.

Madam President,

India recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in 1975 and its Office in New Delhi was accorded full diplomatic recognition in 1980. India was the first non-Arab country to recognize the State of Palestine in 1988. We have maintained diplomatic relations with Palestine for over two decades now.

It is also pertinent to note that Palestine has been recognized by more than two-thirds of the membership of this Organization. Obviously, the State of Palestine fulfils all criteria mentioned in Article 4 of the Charter for membership to this Organization. We, therefore, support Palestine's application and hope that the process will be concluded expeditiously.

Madam President,

During my long political career, I have had the honour to work closely with the Palestinian leaders. I had met the undisputed leader of the Palestinian people late President Yasser Arafat on 17 September 2004 at Ramallah, just a few months before he left his earthly abode. At that meeting, I had the opportunity to reiterate India's solidarity with the Palestinian people and support for their cause.

He had warmly recalled his close relations with Indian leaders, particularly Mrs Indira Gandhi and Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and appreciated India's unwavering support for the cause of the Palestinian people. We have continued our interactions with the Palestinian leadership under President Abbas. He has paid state visits to India in 2008 and 2010.

Madam President,

As the world's largest democracy and arguably its most diverse country, India recognizes the democratic aspirations of all peoples, including in the Middle East. The call of the international community for democracy and respect of fundamental rights will sound hollow if the present impasse continues and Palestinians are denied their aspirations.

It is also our firm conviction that lasting peace and security in the region can be achieved only through peaceful dialogue and not through use of force. In this context, we have noted the Quartet Statement of 23 September and hope that the timelines indicated in the Statement would be realized. The biggest stumbling block to direct negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians remains continuing settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories. We call upon Israel to stop settlement activities. This will facilitate resumption of negotiations in which all Final Status issues should be addressed. We cannot, however, make Palestine's membership to the United Nations conditional upon a peace agreement for that will be legally untenable, even while we support resumption of direct talks to resolve the outstanding issues.

Madame President,

We welcome the recent agreement between Israel and Hamas on exchange of prisoners. We hope this will ease tension and build confidence.

We also hope this would pave the way for an early and significant easing of restrictions on movement of goods and people into the Gaza Strip, thereby addressing the dire humanitarian situation there. India on its part has continued its development support to the Palestinian Authority. From the year 2009-10, we enhanced our annual

contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency [UNRWA] to US\$ 1 million, in addition to a special contribution of US \$ 1 million to UNRWA in response to a flash appeal in 2010. During the last two years, India has also contributed US\$ 10 million annually as untied budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority. We are offering 100 slots to the Palestinian Authority for capacity building and human resource development under our technical and economic cooperation programme. We have also undertaken joint projects with our IBSA partners in Palestine with a sports complex having just been completed.

Madam President,

While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the most serious one in the region, we need to be mindful that resolution of this conflict by itself may not result in achievement of a comprehensive and durable peace in the region.

Other issues relating to Arab lands that remain under occupation are equally important. Progress in the Lebanese and Syrian tracks of the Middle East Peace Process is, therefore, necessary for comprehensive and lasting peace in the region. Developments in the Middle East since February this year underline the need for reinvigorating the search for this comprehensive peace, while the countries in the region undertake inclusive political processes and implement reforms to meet the legitimate aspirations of their people.

It is important that the grievances of the people are addressed through dialogue and negotiations rather than resorting to arms. It is the responsibility of all countries to create conditions that enable their people to freely determine their pathways to development. This is the essence of democracy and fundamental human freedoms. No action should be taken from outside that exacerbates problems and gives space for the rise of extremism. The international community should stand ready to assist the countries in these efforts while respecting sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all countries.

As my Prime Minister said in the General Assembly on 24 September, societies cannot be reordered from outside through military force. Observance of the rule of law is as important in international affairs as it is within countries. Guided by these principles, Madam President, India stands ready to play its role in our collective endeavours to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Thank you.

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi,

<http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?id=530118445>

Multilateral Issues/ Regional Issues

g. India and the Middle East/ West Asia

15. Address by NSA at the Cariappa Memorial Lecture on “The Role of Militaries in International Relations”, New Delhi, 5 October 2011

...In fact we seem to be entering a phase of increasing militarization of international relations. Look at recent developments in the Middle East, where conventional air power, covert and Special Forces, and internet social media have been used in new tactical combinations with old fashioned propaganda and international institutions to change regimes and create political outcomes...

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi,

<http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?id=530118351>

16. Address by the Hon'ble Vice President of India Mr. M. Hamid Ansari at the conferment of Honorary Doctorate for International Relations by Mevlana University at Konya, Turkey, 12 October 2011

...We cannot but notice the pockets of turbulence in our common area. India and West Asia have enjoyed cultural, intellectual and commercial ties since ancient times. The turmoil that some countries in West Asia and North Africa have experienced in recent months is a matter of great concern to us. The people of the region seek to shape their own future and their wishes must prevail. However, violent means must be abjured by all sides. As a member of the Security Council since the beginning of this year, India has been underlining the need to resolve conflicts through political negotiations and diplomatic means, rather than through the use of force...

Source: Vice-president of India,

<http://vicepresidentofindia.nic.in/printable.asp?id=349>

17. PM's Opening Statement at the Plenary Session of the IBSA Summit, Pretoria, 18 October 2011

...The visit of an IBSA delegation to Damascus in August this year and their interaction with the Syrian leadership demonstrated the political role which IBSA can usefully play. We should build upon this experience...

Press Information Bureau of India, New Delhi,

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=76726>

18. IBSA Summit of Heads of State and Government- Tshwane Declaration, Pretoria, 18 October 2011

...This Summit took place at a critical time globally, when the world economy is faced with serious challenges and where democracy is being sought after in areas such as the Middle East and North Africa. The Leaders highlighted that the basic pillar of IBSA is the shared vision of the three countries that democracy and development are mutually reinforcing and key to sustainable peace and stability. The Leaders posited that the entrenched democratic values shared by the three countries to the good of their peoples and are willing to share, if requested, the democratic and inclusive development model of their societies with countries in transition to democracy.

Libya

The Leaders reiterated their governments' attachment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Libya. They underlined the urgency of ceasing hostilities, consolidating public security and fully restoring basic services throughout the country. The Leaders called on those concerned to reach an agreement on an inclusive transitional government as soon as possible with a view to promoting national unity, reconciliation, democracy and reconstruction. The Leaders underlined the central role of the United Nations in post-conflict Libya and the contribution of the African Union can offer in this process. The Leaders expressed IBSA's willingness to help the Libyan people rebuild their institutions and infrastructure.

Arab-Israel Peace Process

The Leaders welcomed the Palestinian request for full membership at the United Nations, which they support as a key step towards the full realization of the two-state solution and expect a positive response by UNSC to the Palestinian request. The Leaders called for the urgent resumption of effective and result-oriented negotiations aimed at giving birth to a sovereign, democratic, independent, united and viable Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, coexisting peacefully alongside Israel, within secure borders. They called for the monitoring of the Quartet's activities by the UNSC. The Leaders called for an immediate freeze in all settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian Territories and East Jerusalem and lifting the siege against Gaza. The Leaders reflected on the work of the Quartet as regards to finding a solution to the Palestinian question. They urged the Quartet to report to the UNSC on a regular basis on progress made, or lack thereof.

Syria

The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria. They expressed their grave concern at the current situation in Syria and

condemned the persistent violence. They expressed their belief that the only solution to the current crisis is through a Syrian-led all inclusive, transparent, peaceful political process aimed at effectively addressing the legitimate aspirations and concerns of the population and at protecting unarmed civilians. The leaders welcomed IBSA's joint initiatives on Syria. They further called for an immediate end to violence and, respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. The Leaders decided to consider the possibility of undertaking a visit to Syria by an IBSA delegation in an effort to expedite the implementation of reforms promised by the Syrian Government.

Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan

The Leaders welcomed the new state of the Republic of South Sudan and congratulated the efforts and commitment made by Sudan and South Sudan which led to the conclusion of the processes of the creation of the new state. The Leaders stressed the continued need for all parties to fully respect the 2005 CPA and the resolution of the outstanding issues in a constructive manner.

The Leaders expressed continued support for both Sudan and South Sudan and indicated that they will continue to support AU efforts regarding peace between the two countries as well as the post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts. They also emphasized the importance of close cooperation between both countries and the African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan (AUHIP), led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki and pledged continued support for its work...

Press Information Bureau of India, New Delhi,

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=76738>

Compiled By Anjani Kumar Singh

Anjani Kumar Singh is a Doctoral candidate in the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Email: aks1511@gmail.com

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