



Media Statement by Prime Minister during the State visit of Prime Minister of Portugal to India (January 07, 2017)

Posted On: 07 JAN 2017 8:32PM by PIB Delhi

Your Excellency, Prime Minister Antonio Costa,
Distinguished delegates,
Members of the media,
Friends,
Good Evening, to you all.
Excellency,

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you and your delegation to India. This may be your first State Visit to India, but you are neither a stranger to India, nor is India unfamiliar to you. So, in addition to extending a warm welcome on this chilly evening, I must also say, Welcome Back! We are deeply honoured that you have accepted our invitation to be the Chief Guest at our Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, the Indian Diaspora Day celebrations, in Bengaluru. Tomorrow, we will have the privilege to celebrate your outstanding accomplishments as a distinguished leader who has family roots in India. I also wish to congratulate you for the several successes that Portugal has had under your Prime Ministership. Under your leadership, the Portuguese economy is on a steady course and right direction.

Friends,

India and Portugal have built a modern bilateral partnership on the foundation of a shared historical connect. Our partnership is also strengthened by a strong convergence on global issues, including at the United Nations. In my extensive discussions with Prime Minister Costa today, we reviewed the full range of India-Portugal ties across various sectors. We agreed that the two countries must focus on action oriented approach to realize the full potential of economic opportunities in our partnership. The agreements signed today are just one indication of our shared resolve to do exactly that.

Friends,

Expansion and deepening of trade, investment, and business partnerships between our two countries is our shared priority. Areas of infrastructure, waste and water management, solar and wind energy, and innovation are full of opportunities to build strong commercial ties between our two economies. Our experiences of creating an ecosystem for start-ups could be an exciting area of bilateral engagement. It offers unique possibilities for building a rewarding partnership between our young business entrepreneurs that creates both value and wealth for both our societies. I am confident that the partnership being forged between Start-up Portugal and Start-up India will help us in our mutual quest to innovate and progress. Prime Minister Costa and I also agreed to deepen our partnership in the field of security and defence. The MoU on Defence cooperation signed today will help us harness our respective strengths in this field for mutual benefit. Sports is another area that holds promise for our bilateral ties. We are aware, Excellency, that you are an avid soccer fan. Portugal's strength in football and the rapid development of this sport in India could well form the nucleus of an emerging partnership in sporting disciplines.

Friends,

India and Portugal share common views on many international issues. I thanked Prime Minister Costa for Portugal's consistent support for India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council. We are also grateful for the support extended by Portugal to India's membership of the Missile Technology Control Regime, and for its continued support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. We also discussed the need for the global community to take strong and urgent action against the rapidly growing and widely spreading threats of violence and terror.

Excellency,

India and Portugal share a common cultural canvas. We deeply appreciate the contribution of your father, Orlando Costa, to enriching this space and to Goan and Indo-Portuguese literature. Today, we have released a commemorative stamp celebrating two dance forms. These two art forms, one Portuguese and the other Indian, are wonderful examples of our cultural affinities.

Excellency,

You have an exciting agenda of engagements and travels in India over the next couple of days.I wish you and your delegation the very best for stay and experience in Bengaluru, Gujarat and Goa.I especially wish that you have a memorable visit to Goa and are able to reconnect with your ancestral roots.

Thank You.

Thank You very much.

AKT/NT

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