



Press Statement by Prime Minister during the State visit of Prime Minister of Australia to India

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**His Excellency Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull,
Members of Media,**

Excellency,

I am delighted to welcome you on your first ever visit to India. Just last month, we witnessed a thrilling conclusion to the Border-Gavaskar trophy. In my speech at the Australian Parliament in 2014 I had spoken of legendary Bradman and Tendulkar. Today, Virat Kohli in India and Steven Smith in Australia are shaping the young brigades of cricket. I hope your visit to India is as productive as it has been for Steven Smith's batting, the other Australian Captain.

Excellency,

I vividly recall our meetings on the sidelines of G-20. They have always reflected a strong sense of convergence and purpose. I particularly appreciate your active interest in advancing the substance of our engagement. The journey of our cooperation is firmly on course. Under your leadership, our relationship has touched new milestones. And, your visit gives us an opportunity to shape new priorities in our strategic partnership.

Excellency,

The waters of the Indian Ocean remind us of our linked histories. They are also a pointer to our connected destinies. The values and principles of democracy and rule of law are common to both our nations. Today, the vast scope of opportunities in our ties is defined by a strong desire for economic prosperity by 1.25 billion people of India, and Australia's capacities and strengths.

Friends,

In our discussions today, Prime Minister and I reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations. We took a number of forward-looking decisions to further strengthen our partnership, including the decision to soon hold the next round of negotiations on our Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. In a lighter vein I am, of course, glad that our decisions are not subject to the D.R.S. review system.

Friends,

Both India and Australia recognize the central value of education and innovation in the prosperity of our societies. It is no surprise, therefore, that cooperation in the field of education and research is one of the most important aspects of our engagement. Prime Minister and I have just inaugurated the TERI-DEAKIN Research Centre on Nano and Bio Technology, which is a classic example of the kind of cutting-edge science and technology cooperation that is happening between our two countries. The Australia-India Research Fund of nearly 100 million dollars has focused on collaborative research projects in the areas such as nano-technology, smart cities, infrastructure, agriculture and disease control. Our joint development of bananas fortified with Vitamin A has entered the phase of field trials. Our scientists are also collaborating on developing more nutritious and hardy varieties of pulses. These are just two examples of our outstanding scientific cooperation firmly rooted in tangible outcomes that will improve the lives of millions including our farmers. I also extend a warm welcome to the large delegation of Vice Chancellors and Heads of Vocational Training Institutions that is accompanying Prime Minister. A number of institution-to-institution tie-ups have been concluded during this visit. Student exchanges are an important element of bilateral education cooperation. Australia is home to more than 60,000 Indian students. Increasing number of Australian students are coming to study in India. Responding to the aspirations of India's youth, building world class institutions in India is one of the objectives of my government. Prime Minister Turnbull and I discussed ways by which Australian Universities could connect and contribute to this goal.

Friends,

Prime Minister and I share a conviction that our economic growth and prosperity must be gentle on the environment. We are happy that our dialogue and cooperation in other forms of energy including renewable energy is on the up-swing. I would also like to thank Prime Minister for Australia's decision to join the International Solar Alliance. And, With the passing of legislation in the Australian Parliament with bi-partisan support, Australia is now ready to export Uranium to India.

Friends,

Prime Minister and I recognize that our future is deeply tied to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. We, therefore, agree on the need for a secure and rule based Indo-Pacific. We are also aware that in this globalized world, challenges like terrorism and cyber security, extend beyond the boundaries of our region. And, therefore, require global strategy and solutions. Indeed, Prime Minister's understanding and insight into regional and global issues brings a new dimension to our cooperation on matters that

concern us both. Our cooperation in the area of defence and security has reached new heights. Our maritime exercises and exchanges have been productive. Our bilateral mechanisms on counter-terrorism and trans-national crimes are functioning well. I am particularly pleased that we have been able to conclude an MOU on Security Cooperation during this visit. We also agree that strong regional institutions are necessary for peace, prosperity and a sense of balance in our region. We would, therefore, actively work to cooperate more closely with members of the East Asia Summit and the Indian Ocean Rim countries to pursue our common interests.

Friends,

A major pillar of strength in our partnership is the connect between our societies. Australia is also home to nearly half-a-million people of Indian origin. Their prosperity and vibrant culture enrich our partnership. A very successful Festival of India called "Confluence" was held in many cities of Australia last year. I thank Prime Minister for all the help and support accorded to the Festival by the Australian Government.

Excellency,

India and Australia have made major strides in our bilateral relations in recent years. In months and years ahead, we only see promise and opportunities for our two nations. Our strong and vibrant strategic partnership is of course important for the security and well-being of our societies. But, it is also a major factor for peace, stability and security in our region. With these words, Excellency, let me welcome you once again to India, and wish you a fruitful and productive stay.

Thank you.

Thank you very much.

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