



Text of the PM's Press Statement during the joint media briefing with Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi (January 25, 2017)

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**Your Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan,
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi,
Friends from the Media,**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome to India a dear friend, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. We are delighted that His Highness has come back to India on his second State visit. And, with his participation as our honoured Chief Guest in the Republic Day Celebrations tomorrow this visit is particularly special. Your Highness, I warmly recall our earlier meetings in August 2015, and in February last year. Our discussions were wide ranging covering the entire spectrum of our bilateral engagement. Personally, I benefitted immensely from your perspective of our partnership, your appreciation of our region and your world view. Your Highness, under your leadership, we have been successful in creating new synergies in our ties. We have shaped an ambitious roadmap of engagement to make our comprehensive strategic partnership purposeful and action oriented. The agreement that was exchanged just now has institutionalized this understanding.

Friends,

UAE is one of our most valued partners and a close friend in an important region of the world. I have just concluded very fruitful and productive discussions with His Highness. We particularly focused on implementation of various decisions taken during our last two meetings. We agreed to sustain the momentum of our relations in key areas, including energy and investments.

Friends,

We regard UAE as an important partner in India's growth story. I particularly welcome UAE's interest in investing in India's infrastructure sector. We are working to connect the institutional investors in UAE with our National Investment and Infrastructure Fund. I also shared with His Highness the interest of Indian companies to be a partner in infrastructure projects for the World EXPO 2020 in Dubai. UAE can benefit by linking with our growth in manufacturing and services. We can jointly tap abundant opportunities in our initiatives aimed at building digital economy, human capital and smart urbanization in India. We are also encouraging and facilitating business and industry of both countries to increase the quality and quantum bilateral trade. The agreement on trade remedies signed today would strengthen our trade partnership further. Our energy partnership, is an important bridge in our linkages. It contributes to our energy security. His Highness and I discussed ways to transform our energy ties in a strategic direction through specific projects and proposals. In this regard, long-term supply contracts and establishment of joint ventures in the energy sector can be beneficial avenues.

Friends,

Security and defence cooperation have added growing new dimensions to our relationship. We have agreed to expand our useful cooperation in the field of defence to new areas including in the maritime domain. The MoU on Defence Cooperation, signed earlier today, will help steer our defence engagements in the right direction. We also feel that our growing engagement in countering violence and extremism is necessary for securing our societies.

Friends,

His Highness and I believe that our closer ties are of importance, not just to both our countries. They are also of significance to the entire neighbourhood. Our convergence can help stabilize the region. And, our economic partnership can be a source of regional and global prosperity. We exchanged views on developments in West Asia and the Gulf, where both countries have a shared interest in peace and stability. We also discussed developments in our region, including Afghanistan. Our shared concern on growing threat from radicalism and terrorism to the safety and security of our people is shaping our cooperation in this space.

Friends,

UAE is home to around 2.6 million Indians. Their contributions are deeply valued both in India and in UAE. I expressed gratitude to His Highness for looking after the welfare of Indian nationals in UAE. I also thanked His Highness for allotting land for a temple for the Indian diaspora in Abu Dhabi.

Friends,

The success of our partnership owes greatly to the personal interest taken by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of UAE and His Highness Sheikh Mohammed. Moving forward, our cooperation stands poised for a major take off. I am confident, Your Highness, that your visit will build on the strong gains and understanding of our previous interactions. And, shape its future framework marked by depth, drive and diversification of our partnership. In closing, I would like to thank His Highness for accepting my invitation to visit India. I wish him and all the delegation members a very pleasant stay in India.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

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