



Annual Report 2008-2009

Ministry of External Affairs

Cover Photo:

Model of Jawahar Lal Nehru Bhawan,
the Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs,
under construction on Janpath, New Delhi

Published by:

Policy Planning and Research Division, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi

This Annual Report can also be accessed at website:

www.meaindia.gov.in

Designed and printed by:

Cyberart Informations Pvt. Ltd.
1517 Hemkunt Chambers, 89 Nehru Place, New Delhi 110019

Website: www.cyberart.co.in

Telefax: 0120-4231617

Contents

	Introduction and Synopsis	i-xvi
1	India's Neighbours	1
2	South East Asia and the Pacific	17
3	East Asia	30
4	Eurasia	34
5	The Gulf, West Asia and North Africa	41
6	Africa (South of Sahara)	54
7	Europe	79
8	The Americas	93
9	United Nations and International Organizations	108
10	Multilateral Economic Relations	125
11	Technical & Economic Cooperation and Development Partnership	132
12	Investment and Technology Promotion	135
13	Policy Planning and Research	136
14	Protocol	139
15	Consular, Passport and Visa Services	145
16	Administration and Establishment	149
17	Coordination	153
18	External Publicity	155
19	Public Diplomacy Division	157
20	Foreign Service Institute	161
21	Indian Council for Cultural Relations	163
22	Indian Council of World Affairs	168
23	Research and Information System for Developing Countries	170
24	Library	175

Appendices

Appendix I: Cadre strength at Headquarters and Missions abroad during 2008-09 (including Posts budgeted by Ministry of Commerce and those ex-cadred etc.)	179
Appendix II: Data on recruitment through direct recruitment, departmental promotion and Ltd Departmental Examination made in the Ministry along with the reserved vacancies for April 2008 to November 2008	180
Appendix III: Number of IFS Officers with Proficiency in various languages	181
Appendix IV: Statement showing the number of passport applications received and passports issued including under Tatkaal Scheme, miscellaneous applications received and services rendered as well as Revenue (including revenue under Tatkaal Scheme) and Expenditure figures of the Passport Offices from 1 January - 31 December 2008.	182
Appendix V: Finances of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2008-2009	183
Appendix VI: The Major Sectoral Allocations in the 2008-2009 Budget (Revised Estimate) (Revenue & Capital)	184
Appendix VII: Principal Destinations of India's Aid & Loan Programmes	185
Appendix VIII: Extracts from C&AG's Report on Ministry of External Affairs	186
Appendix IX: Treaties/Conventions/Agreements Concluded or Renewed by India with other countries in the year 2008	187
Appendix X: Instruments of Full Powers Issued during the period 1 January 2008 to December 2008	198
Appendix XI: Instruments of Ratification/Accession issued during the period 1 January 2008 to December 2008	200
Appendix XII: Conference/ Seminars/ Study projects organized/ undertaken by Institutions/ NGOs, which were funded, partially or wholly, by Policy Planning & Research Division till January 2008	202
Appendix XIII: List of ITEC/SCAAP partner countries	204
Appendix XIV: List of ITEC Training Institutes in India (2008-09)	206
Appendix XV: Lectures/Seminars/Conferences/Bilateral Dialogues/Book Releases organised by ICWA	207
Appendix XVI: Seminars Organized by RIS	209
Abbreviations	211

Introduction and Synopsis

India's foreign policy seeks to safeguard the country's enlightened self-interest. The primary objective of India's foreign policy is to promote and maintain a peaceful and stable external environment in which the domestic tasks of inclusive economic development and poverty alleviation can progress rapidly and without obstacles. Given the high priority attached by the Government of India to socio-economic development, India has a vital stake in a supportive external environment both in our region and globally. India, therefore, seeks a peaceful periphery and works for good neighbourly relations in its extended neighbourhood. India's foreign policy also recognizes that the issues that are crucial to India's transformation are global and require global cooperative solutions – issues such as climate change and energy and food security.

The year 2008-09 was marked by several positive developments, some significant successes, and by emerging challenges to India's foreign policy.

India is committed to close and good neighbourly relations with all the countries in the Indian sub-continent, cooperating with them in a wide range of sectors on the basis of sovereign equality and mutual respect. India shares a common destiny with its neighbours. Relations with Bhutan developed further in the year of His Majesty's coronation and the introduction of democracy in Bhutan. India has strongly supported Nepal's transition to a democratic polity, and the restoration of democracy in Bangladesh which is reflected in recent high-level bilateral visits with these two countries. India has contributed to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. Apart from maintaining friendly and close bilateral relations with its neighbours, India has also worked for the evolution of SAARC into a result oriented organization that effectively promotes regional integration.

Bilateral relations with China were further consolidated during 2008 with PM Dr. Manmohan Singh's official visit to China in January and External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherji's visit in June 2008. The situation along the India-China border remained peaceful while the boundary question continued to be addressed by the Special Representatives. The Expert Level Mechanism on trans-boundary rivers continued to expand its work.

Defence cooperation between the two countries has contributed to enhancement of mutual trust. China opened a new Consulate in Kolkata in September and earlier in June India had opened its Consulate in Guangzhou.

India's partnerships with the major powers became deeper and stronger as we expanded the scope and depth of economic and strategic interaction with different countries, groups and regions including the USA, Russia, China, Japan, EU, South-East Asia, Central Asia, IBSA, ASEAN and many others with whom India has developed a fruitful and active dialogue.

A major development was the signing of the India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement in October 2008. Along with the September 6 2008 decision of the Nuclear Supplier Group enabling its members to engage in civil nuclear trade and cooperation with India, the agreement marked the end of thirty years of technology denial in the nuclear field. Following the signing of this bilateral agreement, agreements for civil nuclear cooperation have been signed with France, Russia and Kazakhstan. The India-US strategic partnership was further consolidated by PM Dr. Manmohan Singh's visits to the US in September 2008, when he had a bilateral meeting with the US President George W. Bush in Washington, and in November for the G-20 Summit. The US remained India's largest trading partner and source of technology and relations expanded in every field.

India's traditional friendship and strategic links with Russia were consolidated during the period. The president of the Russian Federation Mr. Dmitry Medvedev paid a state visit to India in December 2008 for the annual bilateral Summit. The year 2008 was observed in India as the 'Year of Russia' in which almost 140 events were organized throughout India. The year 2009 is being observed in Russia as the 'Year of India'. India is committed to further carry forward its strategic relations with Russia. We intend to build on our strong historical and cultural links with the Central Asian countries, and to engage more closely with this region by ensuring that our cooperation with Central Asia receives greater substance and diversification.

India has maintained and intensified its engagement with the EU, a strategic partner, as well as individual countries in Europe in diverse fields such as defence and security, nuclear and space, trade and investment, energy, climate change, science and technology, culture and education. The EU is today India's largest trading partner and one of our major sources of investment.

India continued to attach importance to its traditionally friendly and cooperative relations with African countries. A landmark event was the first ever India-Africa Forum Summit in April 2008 which adopted the Delhi Declaration and India-Africa Framework for Cooperation. Both documents together define the future roadmap for cooperation between India and African countries. Government of India's prestigious pan-African e-Network Project was inaugurated in New Delhi on 26th February, 2009 by EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee.

India's efforts to cultivate stronger bonds with countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region have borne impressive results in recent years, with cross-sectoral dialogue at various levels and a framework of institutionalized mechanisms for mutually beneficial cooperation. India will work towards closer political ties with the region and more intensified contacts. India's trade and economic interaction with the region has been substantially enhanced, but there are still enormous opportunities waiting to be explored and utilized.

Our cooperation with the countries in West Asia and the Gulf region today reveal a contemporary nature and include cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space including the use of Indian launch vehicles. This region is also home to nearly five million Indian expatriates who have contributed significantly to the economic development of both India and the Gulf region.

India views cooperation with ASEAN, and the countries in the Asia-Pacific, as an important dimension of its diplomacy in the 21st century as reflected in India's "Look East Policy".

During the year India significantly expanded its network of economic and technical cooperation. India is ready to play a significant role in recently established forums such as IRC (India-Russia-China), BRIC (Brazil-Russia-India-China) and IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa). India continues to engage with groupings such as ASEM, East Asia Summit, BIMSTEC, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, the G-15, and the G-8.

With its strong commitment to multilateralism India has worked to strengthen the United Nations. India has supported proposals for the reform of the UNSC and revitalization of the UNGA. India would like to see global

institutions better reflect the new realities of the world order, taking into account the legitimate aspirations of developing countries and emerging powers.

Simultaneously with these positive developments, India's foreign policy in 2008-09 faced major fresh challenges including the unsettled security situation in India's immediate periphery and cross-border terrorism. New threats to India's security also emerged.

The composite dialogue process with Pakistan entered its fifth round in 2008-09. The dialogue was premised on Pakistan's stated commitment that it would not permit territory under its control to be used to support terrorism against India in any manner. The dialogue process did achieve some progress during the year in opening cross-LoC trade and liberalizing travel, and in discussing sensitive and divisive bilateral issues. However, Pakistan's inability to implement her commitments as evidenced by the terrorist attacks from Pakistan on the Indian Embassy in Kabul in July 2008 and on Mumbai in November 2008 effectively suspended the dialogue process.

The Mumbai attacks were universally condemned by the international community. Overwhelming evidence was presented to Pakistan and the world about the involvement of Pakistan-based terrorists in these attacks. Pakistan subsequently admitted for the first time that Pakistani nationals had hatched the conspiracy behind the attacks and carried them out. However, subsequent actions by Pakistan were dilatory and obfuscatory, and are yet to bring the perpetrators to justice or to dismantle the infrastructure in Pakistan for terrorism against India.

The year 2008 also witnessed large scale military operations in Sri Lanka eliminating the LTTE's conventional military capability resulting in a major humanitarian crisis. India responded to the immediate humanitarian crisis by sending relief supplies and medical assistance to civilians and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). A 62-member Field Hospital was deployed in Pulmoddai to treat civilians seriously affected by the hostilities. India also continued to stay engaged with Sri Lanka in support of a negotiated political settlement to the ethnic problem. As the situation in Sri Lanka enters a new phase, India will work for a peaceful settlement of the issues within the framework of a united Sri Lanka acceptable to all communities including particularly the Tamils.

The other major challenge during the year was the deteriorating international economic situation. As the international financial crisis became an economic crisis with recession in major Western economies and markets, the supportive international environment for India's growth changed rapidly. Despite this the Indian economy

grew by 6.7% in 2008-09, and continues to be a factor of growth and stability in the world economy. The prospect, however, remains for a difficult international environment for some time to come. India participated actively in international efforts to address the crisis, such as the G-20, to see that the concerns of developing countries were addressed. In these efforts we tried to ensure that credit flows to developing countries were restored, that the benefits of economic stimulus were widely spread, and that measures to tackle the crisis were not protectionist, restricting the free flow of goods, services and persons. India also sought to ensure that international decision-making on global economic issues is democratized to reflect present realities.

As the year ended, it was evident that cooperative global solutions are required to the major international issues which will affect India's future, such as the world economic crisis, international terrorism, general and nuclear disarmament, energy security, food security, and sustainable development. As a responsible power, India remains an active and involved participant in the international effort to work out these solutions and will contribute to their success.

Neighbours

Afghanistan: Notwithstanding a significant deterioration in the security situation, impinging directly on us with the attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul in July 2008, we remained at the forefront of international efforts to assist Afghanistan in building a stable democratic and pluralistic society. The Zaranz-Delaram road giving Afghanistan access to the sea was formally inaugurated by EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee and President Karzai on 22nd January, 2009. In the implementation of its pledged commitments progress has been made in a range of areas—education, health, power, infrastructure, humanitarian assistance, and capacity building. The implementation of the scheme of ICCR Scholarships and ITEC training programmes for Afghan nationals and the execution of community based, small development projects in the fields of agriculture, rural development, sanitation, vocational training, etc. is also progressing satisfactorily and plays a significant role in demonstrating, at a popular level, the close and friendly relations between the two countries. India continued to contribute for the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund and pledged a sum of US \$ 1 million to the UNDP election fund. We have also pledged an additional US \$ 450 million (over the US\$ 750 million earlier committed) to effectively meet the requirements of our ongoing and future projects. President Karzai visited India in August 2008 and again in January, 2009

Bangladesh : India continued to constructively engage

with Bangladesh on a broad spectrum of bilateral issues during the year. EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Bangladesh in February 2009, after the Awami League led Grand Alliance won an overwhelming majority in the general elections of December 2008 and formed the government under the premiership of Sheikh Hasina. The other high level visits included visits of Bangladesh Army Chief, Gen. Moeen from 24 February – 1 March 2008, MoS for Commerce and Power Jairam Ramesh to Dhaka in October 2008 and Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Deepak Kapoor.

India took several initiatives, many unilaterally, to bring the two countries closer. They included restarting of the passenger train service "Maitree Express" between Kolkata and Dhaka after 43 years. India gave substantial assistance to Bangladesh to overcome damages caused by natural disasters like cyclone. India started providing duty free access to exports from LDCs in the SAARC including Bangladesh from 1 January 2008 (except some items on India's sensitive list). India has undertaken a project to construct Kalabhaban for the Department of Theatre and Music, University of Dhaka. As a move to check the activities of Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) on Bangladeshi soil, the two sides revived the Joint Working Group.

Bhutan: India and Bhutan continued to share uniquely warm and cordial relations, which were further deepened during the year through regular high level interactions. The year also witnessed the coronation of the 5th King of Bhutan. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Bhutan from 16-17 May, 2008 during which he addressed the first session of the democratically elected Parliament. During the visit, PM announced that India will double the target of hydropower development in Bhutan to 10,000 MW for export to India by 2020; Government of India's assistance for construction of the first rail link between India and Bhutan, and establishment of the prestigious Nehru-Wangchuck scholarships for Bhutanese students.

Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonchhen Jigmi Y. Thinley, paid a State Visit to India from 14-17 July, 2008 and again visited India from 12-14 November, 2008 to participate in the 2nd BIMSTEC Summit in New Delhi. President of India Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil accompanied by EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee paid a State Visit to Bhutan from 5-8 November, 2008 as Chief Guest at the formal coronation of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan.

Bhutan celebrated 2008 as the Golden Jubilee Year of the visit of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to Bhutan in 1958. A Parliamentary delegation from Bhutan visited India during February 2009 and had interaction with their counterparts

in India. We are committed to extending full support to Bhutan for the consolidation of Democratic Constitutional Monarchy in Bhutan.

China: This has been an important year for India-China relations. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China from 13-15 January 2008. The leaders of India and China resolved to develop the Strategic & Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity between the two countries. They also reiterated their firm commitment to resolving all outstanding differences through peaceful negotiations, while ensuring that such differences are not allowed to affect the positive development of bilateral relations. The two Prime Ministers signed "A Shared Vision for the 21st Century" which reflects the aspirations of the two countries to cooperate with each other on areas of mutual interest on regional and multilateral affairs.

The Foreign Ministers of India and China also exchanged visits in June 2008 and September 2008 respectively. The new Consulates General in Guangzhou and in Kolkata were formally inaugurated during these visits. Bilateral trade in the calendar year 2008 reached US\$ 51.8 billion, which is close to the target of US\$ 60 billion by 2010 that has been set by the two Prime Ministers. Cooperation and exchanges in the area of defence relations also continued with the holding of the 2nd Joint Military Exercises and the 2nd Annual Defence Dialogue in India in December 2008. Functional exchanges on economic and trade issues, civil aviation, youth affairs and in other areas have continued to grow. The Special Representatives of the two countries met in September 2008 for the 12th round of discussions on the India-China Boundary Question. India provided humanitarian relief assistance worth US\$ 5 million to China in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake that struck Sichuan province in May 2008. The two countries have also consulted with each other on important global issues including the international financial crisis and climate change.

Iran : The momentum in India-Iran bilateral relations was maintained in 2008-09 through regular exchanges of delegations in different fields as also by high level visits. The impetus provided by high level discussions have contributed to enhanced bilateral cooperation in energy, trade & commerce, investment, culture and transit related issues as well as cooperation in regional and international issues of mutual interest. A shared commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and working for peace and stability in the region has been reiterated at the highest levels by both governments. The President of Iran Dr. Mahomud Ahmadinejad paid a visit to New Delhi on 29 April 2008. EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited

Tehran from 28-30 July 2008 to attend the 15th NAM Ministerial Conference and thereafter for the India-Iran XVth Joint Commission meeting from 31st October – 2 November, 2008. The VIth Annual Foreign Office Consultations at the level of Foreign Secretary were held in New Delhi from 17-18 December 2008.

Maldives : Bilateral relations between India and Maldives continued to be close and friendly. Both the countries remained engaged in further strengthening their friendly relations through high level exchanges and implementing various developmental projects. The newly elected President Mr Mohamed Nasheed paid a State visit to India from 23-25 December 2008, during which an agreement on Standby Credit facility of US\$100 million to Maldives and an Air Services Agreement were signed between the two countries. MoS for Commerce, Shri Jairam Ramesh visited Maldives from 29-31 January 2008. In January and February 2009 Defence Minister and Minister of Health and Family of Maldives visited India to enhance cooperation in security related issues and health respectively.

Myanmar: Relations with Myanmar continued to develop further during the period and become truly multifaceted. India was one of the first countries to rush emergency relief assistance to Myanmar in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis in May 2008. PM of Myanmar Thein Sein visited India for the BIMSTEC Summit in November 2008 and Vice President of India Dr M Hamid Ansari visited Myanmar from 5-8 February 2009.

During Vice President's visit agreements for setting up an Industrial Training Centre by HMIT (I) & a Centre for English Language Training were signed. Engagement in the economic and commercial sphere strengthened considerably. The Bilateral Investment Promotion & Protection Agreement (BIPPA) was signed. The opening of a new trade point at Nagaland border with Myanmar was agreed to. Institutional mechanisms to check the activities of Indian Insurgent Groups in Myanmar were developed. India also remained committed to provide assistance in developing infrastructure within Myanmar, including the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project, and strengthen cooperation in oil and natural gas exploration, power sector, manufacturing, etc.

Nepal: India extended all possible support to the Government and people of Nepal in consolidating the peaceful democratic transition. India stands ready to assist Nepal's transition to a democratic, stable, peaceful and prosperous State. The year witnessed several high level bilateral visits. Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda's first official visit abroad to India from September 14-18, 2008 provided broad political direction

to forge a 21st century relationship with India. During the visit, the Prime Minister held talks with PM Prachanda and conveyed our Commitment to support Nepal's democratic and economic transformation. Drafting a new constitution and conclusion of the peace process are priorities for the Government of Nepal. We expressed our commitment to assist Government of Nepal in these tasks. As agreed by both sides, several high level bilateral consultation mechanisms were also reactivated.

Promotion of investor-friendly business environment in Nepal would help in realization of the potential for major expansion of Indian investment in key areas like hydropower, agriculture, tourism and infrastructure in Nepal for mutual benefit.

EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Nepal in November 2008 to discuss issues of mutual interest. Foreign Secretary visited Nepal from February 17-18, 2009 to follow up on the agreements reached during PM Prachanda's visit to India and EAM's visit to Nepal.

Pakistan: The Composite Dialogue Process with Pakistan entered its 5th round in 2008-09. The Dialogue had been premised since its resumption in 2004, on the commitment made on 6 January 2004, that Pakistan would not permit territory under its control to be used to support terrorism in any form. Notwithstanding some achievements during the year in segments of the Composite Dialogue Process, terrorism and non-implementation of the 6 January 2004 commitments by Pakistan has eroded the fundamental premise of the Dialogue process. Terrorist attacks in India and on the Indian Embassy in Kabul in July 2008, increase in ceasefire violations and continued infiltration across the LoC placed a strain on the dialogue process in particular and India-Pakistan relations in general. The terrorist attack on Mumbai on 26 November 2008 and concrete evidence of the involvement of elements in Pakistan in the attack led to a pause in the dialogue process.

After the Mumbai attack, the Ministry undertook several steps both bilaterally with Pakistan and at international fora to obtain Pakistan's cooperation in bringing the Pakistan-based perpetrators to justice and to ensure that such acts do not recur. As a result, the United Nations Al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee listed individual entities based in Pakistan including leaders of the Lashkar-e-Taiba under Security Council Resolution 1267. The Jamat-ud-Daawa was also listed as an alias of the Lashkar-e-Taiba. On 12 February 2009, Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad was formally informed of Pakistan's response to the dossier that India had made available on 5 January linking the terrorist attacks on Mumbai to perpetrators in Pakistan. In their response, Pakistani authorities admitted that elements in Pakistan

were involved in the terrorist attacks on Mumbai. Pakistan also sought further information and material relating to the investigation. EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee termed this a positive development in a *suo moto* statement on 13 February in Parliament. On 13 March 2009, the Government of India provided detailed responses and material to the Pakistan High Commissioner in New Delhi to all 30 questions raised by Pakistan which was acknowledged by Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Despite the above developments and despite high-level statements from Pakistan promising cooperation regarding the Mumbai attack, in terms of actual action taken the response has been disappointing. As a result, there has been a sharp deterioration in bilateral relations.

Responding to the announcement of the new US strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, MEA spokesperson on 30 March 2009 welcomed the very "clear expression of will to carry through the struggle against extremism in Afghanistan and its roots in Pakistan" and expressed India's "readiness to play a constructive role as a responsible power in defeating extremism of all kinds."

Sri Lanka: In Sri Lanka, the military conflict in the North escalated in 2008 leading to a major humanitarian crisis and the eventual military defeat of the LTTE. The situation in the North and the plight of Tamil civilians displaced and affected by the conflict were important issues in the bilateral discourse between India and Sri Lanka. EAM visited Colombo on January 27, 2009 and held discussions with President Mahinda Rajapaksa. This was preceded by Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon's visit to Sri Lanka on 16-17 January, 2009.

In response to the emerging humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka, India sent large-scale emergency relief assistance including family packs for IDPs, medicines and setting up of a 62-member Emergency Field Hospital in Northern Sri Lanka. India also remained engaged with Sri Lanka in support of a peacefully negotiated political settlement within a united Sri Lanka.

Bilateral exchanges continued to strengthen during this period. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Sri Lanka for the 15th SAARC Summit held from 2-3 August, 2008. Trade and investment linkages were further consolidated. India remained Sri Lanka's largest trading partner in 2008, bilateral trade worth US\$ 3.27 billion. India also emerged as the second largest investor in Sri Lanka in 2008.

South East Asia and the Pacific

India continued to pursue closer relations with South East Asia and the Pacific region during the year as envisioned in its 'Look East Policy'. With some countries in the region,

we stepped up relations to the strategic level, while diversifying and strengthening relations with others. Regular exchange of high level visits at bilateral level and interactions at regional and multilateral fora contributed to a higher degree of engagement among leaders in the region to help develop renewed dynamism in India's relations with these countries. In the last five years, Prime Ministers, Presidents and Ministers of several countries in the region visited India. Our leaders also visited various countries in the region. These visits and signing of several framework agreements have significantly contributed to India's growing relations with countries in the region.

The bilateral trade and investment between India and countries in ASEAN have considerably increased, touching about US\$ 40 billion in 2007 – 08. India - ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in Goods has been successfully negotiated and is ready for signature. With the implementation of India-ASEAN FTA, the trade with ASEAN countries will cross the target of US\$ 50 billion by 2010. Meanwhile, bilateral FTA is being negotiated with several countries in the region, the conclusion of which would significantly enhance the two-way trade. The trade with Australia also crossed US\$ 10 billion.

For the socio-economic development of countries in the region, India continued to provide assistance to Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Philippines in the form of grants, soft loans and credit lines and training courses under ITEC Scheme. As a Dialogue Partner of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) countries, India has been engaging with Pacific Island countries by providing regional assistance in capacity building and social and economic programmes and sustainable development. In response, India succeeded in eliciting support from majority of the countries in the region on issues of India's interest, such as India's candidature for UN Security Council membership, Commonwealth, civil nuclear cooperation etc.

India's growing profile has attracted countries in the South East Asia and Pacific region to foster closer engagement at the regional and multilateral fora such as ASEAN, EAS, BIMSTEC, MGC and ARF.

East Asia

Japan: India-Japan relations, which have expanded and broadened in recent years, continue to undergo a significant and qualitative shift. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh paid an official visit to Japan on 22-23 October 2008 for the Annual India-Japan Summit Meeting. The two Prime Ministers signed a Joint Statement on the Advancement of the Strategic & Global Partnership between India and Japan and a Joint

Declaration on Security Cooperation. The 2nd Strategic Dialogue between the Foreign Ministers was held in August 2008 when the Foreign Minister of Japan visited India. Ministerial level dialogues were also held on economic and trade matters and on energy.

India was the largest recipient of Japanese Official Development Assistance (Yen 236.047 billion or Rs 11,802.4 crores approximately) in FY 2008-09. Steady progress was made on the flagship projects jointly initiated by the two countries. On the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor Project, the Japanese side has agreed to provide financial assistance of approximately 450 billion Yen as a loan for the Phase-I, and have expressed their commitment to work with India for early finalization of the assistance for the entire Western Freight Corridor. On the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor initiative, the two sides have held meetings of the Joint Task Force to finalize the contours of the project. We have an annual calendar for defence exchanges. The two sides have also continued to discuss a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, with the objective of concluding a mutually beneficial and high quality agreement. Both sides are also engaged in discussions on Japanese assistance for a new IIT at Hyderabad. Defence and functional exchanges have also emerged as an important area for bilateral cooperation.

ROK: Our relations with the Republic of Korea have steadily grown. Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam attended the Inauguration Ceremony of the new President of the Republic of Korea, Lee Myung-bak. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met the new President in the margins of the G-8 Summit Meeting in Japan in July 2008. The two countries are negotiating a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, that they hope to conclude in FY 2009-10. During the year 2008-09 important cooperation also took place in other areas.

Mongolia: Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met the President of Mongolia in the margins of the 7th ASEM Summit Meeting in Beijing in October 2008. The Defence Minister of Mongolia visited India in February 2009. Bilateral cooperation on economic and trade matters, defence, education, culture and in the training of Mongolians under the ITEC programme have continued to develop during the year. India also provided Mongolia with 5000 MT each of rice and sugar as humanitarian assistance in view of our very friendly relations with that country.

DPRK: Relations between India and DPRK continue to be cordial with a focus on humanitarian assistance and exchanges in the areas of culture, sports and education.

Eurasia

India maintained friendly and cordial relations with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asian and Caucasian countries during the year through visits, conclusion of bilateral agreements, periodic bilateral and multilateral engagements, cooperation programmes, cultural events and other initiatives. Some of the important bilateral engagements during the year included the State visits of the President of the **Russian Federation** Mr. Dmitry A. Medvedev to India in December 2008, the President of **Kazakhstan** Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev as Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations 2009 and visit of the Vice President of India to **Kazakhstan** and **Turkmenistan** in April 2008.

India and **Russia** continue to further consolidate their strategic partnership. Co-operation in defence, space and nuclear energy has intensified. During President Medvedev's visit to India from 4-5 December 2008 for the annual bilateral Summit, 9 important agreements were signed apart from a Joint Declaration. The agreements include an Inter-Governmental Agreement on Cooperation in the construction of additional nuclear power plant units at Kudankulam site as well as in the construction of Russian designed nuclear power plants at new sites, and a MoU between ISRO and Russian Federal Space Agency on joint activities in the field of human space flight programme. From the Russian side, Defence Minister Mr. Anatoly Serdyukov visited India from 28-30 September 2008, Foreign Minister Mr. Sergey Lavrov visited on 20 October, and Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Mr. Alexander Zhukov, visited India to co-chair the 14th Session of the India-Russia IGC on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation. The year 2008 was celebrated as "Year of Russia" in India with almost 140 events organised in different cities of India, and similarly, the year 2009 is being celebrated as the "Year of India" in Russia.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of **Turkmenistan**, Mr. Rashid Meredov led a high level delegation to India from 20 - 22 January 2008. Mr. Meredov co-chaired the 2nd Session of the India-Turkmenistan Intergovernmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation along with for MoS for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed. During the visit Mr. Meredov called on Vice President and PM and also met the EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee. Vice-President Shri M. Hamid Ansari paid an official visit to Turkmenistan from 4-6 April 2008 and that was his first foreign visit abroad as Vice President. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Murli Deora visited Turkmenistan in November 2008. Defence Minister of **Belarus** Colonel General Leonid Maltsev visited India

from 16 - 18 February for DEFEXPO India 2008 in New Delhi. He met the Defence Minister on 16 February to discuss bilateral defence co-operation. Indian army chief General Deepak Kapoor visited Belarus from 12 - 15 March, 2008. Foreign Minister of the **Kyrgyz Republic**, Mr. Ednan Karabaev visited India from 4-6 February, 2008 to review bilateral relations and discuss regional issues of mutual interest. He met the Ministers of External Affairs, Commerce & Industry, Human Resource Development and Culture & Tourism.

During 2008, Vice President (VP) Shri M. Hamid Ansari's visit to **Kazakhstan** from 6 - 10 April, 2008 gave a major boost to India-Kazakhstan relations. During his visit, VP met with the President and Prime Minister of Kazakhstan and addressed the Senate. Kazakhstan President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev paid a State visit to India from 23 - 26 January 2009 and was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations - the first time that a leader from a Central Asian country was accorded this honour. With another important Central Asian Country, **Uzbekistan**, our relations progressed with holding of Foreign Office consultations in New Delhi on 1st August 2008, and meeting of the 8th Session of the India-Uzbekistan Inter-Governmental Commission on trade, economic, scientific and cultural cooperation in September 2008. The Uzbek Minister of Economy Mr. B. Khodjaev had visited New Delhi from 16 - 17 September 2008 for the 8th Session of the IGC.

The Gulf , West Asia and North Africa

India maintained its historical and traditionally cordial relations and cooperation with the countries in the Gulf region. Gulf countries together provide 70% of our total crude oil requirement and about 4.5 million Indians live and work in the region, remitting more than US\$ 10 billion annually. The year witnessed several high level visits which underlined the importance of the region in our relationship. The most important was PM Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to **Qatar** and **Oman** in November 2008 which opened new areas for bilateral cooperation. In Qatar, PM signed two documents relating to defence cooperation and security as well as law enforcement matters. In Oman, an MoU on manpower and another for establishing India-Oman Joint Investment Fund were signed. EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee accompanied by MoS Shri E. Ahamed and Secretary (East) paid an official visit to **Muscat** from 13-14 January 2008. During the visit, EAM called on Deputy PM for Council of Ministers and Mr. Yousef bin Alwai bin Abdullah, Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs of **Oman**.

Dr. Majeed Mohsin Al Alawi Labour, Minister of **Bahrain**, visited India on 25 April 2008 and discussed with Minister

of Overseas Indian Affairs, the MoU on Labour and Manpower Development. Dr. Fatima Bint Al Balooshi, Minister of Social Development, Bahrain, visited India from 17-21 August 2008 and held talks with the Minister of Textiles and Minister of State for Women & Child Development among others.

MoS Shri E. Ahamed visited **Kuwait** from 29-31 January 2008. During the visit, MoS called on the Kuwaiti Prime Minister. A wide range of bilateral and regional issues, including the revised format for Labour Contract to be signed between the Kuwaiti Employer and Indian Worker were discussed in his meetings with the Deputy PM / Foreign Minister and Minister of Social Affairs in Labour.

The year, marked by several high-level visits, witnessed strengthened bilateral relations with **Saudi Arabia**. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal visited India twice in 2008, in February when he called on PM Dr. Manmohan Singh and EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee and on 26 December when he met Vice President, EAM and NSA. EAM paid a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia from 19-20 April 2008 and called on Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and Governor of Riyadh Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud. MoS Shri E. Ahamed visited Saudi Arabia on 17 April 2008 and signed the Haj agreement with Saudi Haj Minister Dr. Fouad Al-Farsy. Finance Minister along with Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister attended the *Oil Summit*, held in Jeddah on 22 June 2008 at the behest of Saudi King Abdullah.

The year 2008 also was the consolidation in the friendly bilateral ties between India and **UAE**. HE Shaikha Lubna Al Qasimi, Minister of Foreign Trade, visited India on 25 April and was awarded "Woman Achiever of the Year" by FICCI. The 1st ever India-UAE Joint Air Forces exercise took place in September 2008 in Abu Dhabi. EAM visited UAE in May 2008 and met both the Foreign Minister and Crown Prince.

India's engagement with **West Asia and North Africa** was cemented through a series of high level interactions that included State visits to India by President Bashar Al-Assad of Syria, President Mohammed Hosny Mubarak of Egypt and President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian National Authority. India's dialogue with Egypt was also taken forward during an official visit by EAM to that country in July 2008. India's steadfast support for the Palestinian cause was underlined during the State visit of President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) during which, in the presence of the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, President Abbas laid the foundation stone of the Palestinian Embassy building in New Delhi, a gift of the Government and

people of India, and construction of which is nearing completion. Implementation of PM's offer of \$10 million as budgetary support to the PNA was completed during the year.

India strongly condemned the Israeli incursion into the Gaza Strip that began in December 2008. India's varied relations with the Arab world were institutionalized through a Memorandum of Cooperation with the League of Arab States signed in December 2008 during the visit of the Secretary General of the League, H.E. Mr. Amre Moussa to New Delhi.

India contributed towards development of **Iraq**'s human resources by providing 100 slots to Iraq under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme to train its officials in various training and professional institutions all over India. IOC provided training in India to 228 Iraqi oil officials. On February 26, 2009, President Jalal Talabani of Iraq transited through India and tried to encourage our participation in the reconstruction and development of Iraq, especially in the power sector. During the meeting with Secretary (East), he expressed a keen desire for encouraging Indian companies and personally assured fullest support to them in Iraq.

Africa

The first India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi from 8-9 April 2008 built upon the foundations of the historical relationship that has existed between the two, and created a roadmap for a structured interaction, engagement and cooperation in coming years. The Summit renewed India's commitment to Africa. The two historic documents, the *Delhi Declaration* and the *India Africa Framework of Cooperation* were adopted at the end of the Summit. The *Delhi Declaration* is a political document that covers issues of bilateral, regional and international interests to India and Africa, including our common positions on UN reforms, climate change, WTO and international terrorism, etc. The *India Africa Framework for Cooperation* spells out the agreed areas of cooperation. Prime Minister announced a substantial increase in the existing lines of credit to Africa to US \$ 5.4 billion over the next five years, and a separate grant of US \$ 500 million for projects in the areas of capacity building and human resource development. The Heads of State/Government from Africa who attended the India Africa Forum Summit included Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of Tanzania, Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Joseph Kabila Kabange, President of Congo, Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor, President of Ghana, Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of South Africa, Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President

of Uganda, Mr. Tertius Zongo, Prime Minister of Burkina Faso and Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

There were several other high-level visits from Africa including Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda and Dr Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin. Regular exchanges continued at the ministerial and official levels.

India extended several lines of credit to African countries for specific infrastructure development projects. Both the TEAM-9 and ECOWAS have fully utilized the lines of credit extended to them for projects in different sectors, ranging from agriculture, health, rural electrification, transport and power, which are in the various stages of implementation. Our ongoing political and economic engagement with the Africa Union Commission continued to strengthen, as also our institutional cooperation with regional organisations such as COMESA, SADC, ECCAS and EAC. The *Aid to Africa* budget of the Ministry was used for other cooperation programmes.

India increased ITEC slots for African countries from 279 to 575, while the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, in collaboration with MEA, increased the number of scholarships from 21 to 66.

Two successful India-Africa Project Partnership Conclaves were organised by the CII with the support of the Ministry during the year, the first in Dar-es-Salaam on 28 August 2008 and the second in New Delhi from 22-24 March 2009. FICCI also organised the India-Africa Business Partnership Summit in New Delhi on 19-20 January. All these events witnessed a high-level of participation from Indian and African businesses.

All these initiatives have significantly enhanced India's engagement with countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and have come at a time of increasing private sector engagement in Africa. Two-way trade has increased from US \$ 5.5 billion in 2001-02 to around US \$ 36 billion in 2008-09 representing an almost seven-fold increase in as many years. Bilateral investment is approximately US \$ 17 billion.

India announced the opening of resident Missions in Mali and Niger. The Gambia, Gabon and Madagascar opened their Missions in New Delhi and Mali announced its intentions to open one soon.

Government of India's prestigious Pan-African e-Network Project was formally inaugurated on 26 February 2009 by the External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee in New Delhi for eleven countries, out of the 35 countries that have signed the agreement to join the Project.

Europe

PM Gordon Brown of UK visited India to attend the 4th India UK Summit which took place in New Delhi from 20 - 21 January 2008. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met Mr. Gordon Brown again in London on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit on 1 April 2009. Mr. Nicholas Sarkozy, President of France, accompanied by a high level Ministerial and business delegation, visited India from 25 - 26 January 2008 and was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day parade. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Paris for the India-France Bilateral Summit on 30 September 2008. Both PM and President Nicolas Sarkozy reaffirmed the Strategic Partnership between India and France and their commitment to further strengthen cooperation in core areas such as civil nuclear cooperation, space and defence. Germany continued to be the India's largest trading partner within the EU. Dr. Frank Walter Steinmeier, German Federal Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited India, from 19 - 21 November 2008. Recently, scientific and technological cooperation has emerged as one of the key elements in the Indo-German interaction. Bilateral visits between India and Spain at the ministerial level continued during the period, the most notable being the visits by Indian Ministers of Finance, Health and Family Welfare and Petroleum and Natural Gas, to Spain. India continued to strengthen bilateral relations with Italy at different levels. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met PM Mr. Silvio Berlusconi on 24 October 2008 on the sidelines of the ASEM Summit in Beijing.

India has traditionally enjoyed warm, friendly and close relations with the Nordic countries as well as those of Central and Eastern Europe. Efforts to diversify and deepen India's friendly relations with these countries were pursued assiduously. The potential for high technology manufacturing in India, cooperation in petroleum, non-conventional energy, bio-technology, nano-technology and engineering, together with areas like deep-sea fishing and food processing raised new possibilities for collaboration. Ministerial and official interactions with these countries continued. Mr. Kostas Karamanlis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic visited India from 10 - 13 January 2008. During his visit, he called on the President, Vice President and met the Prime Minister, EAM and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha. Mr. Ferenc Gyurcsany, Prime Minister of Hungary visited India from 16 - 19 January 2008. During his visit, he called on the President, and met the Prime Minister, UPA Chairperson, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Ministers of External Affairs, Petroleum & Gas and Commerce & Industry. From Sweden, Trade Minister, Public Health Minister, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy and Crown Prince visited

India during the period. The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs from the Swedish Parliament paid an official visit to India in January 2009. Bilateral visits between India and the **Czech Republic** included the visit by MoS [AS] Shri Anand Sharma and Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Kamal Nath and from the Czech side, the visit by their Industry and Trade Minister and the Chief of the General Staff of Czech Armed Forces. Former President of India Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam visited **Finland** in April 2008 to attend a seminar there and President of Finland Mrs. Tarja Halonen visited India from 5 - 7 February 2009 to attend the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit. With **Poland**, there were regular visits at various levels. General Deepak Kapoor, Chief of Army Staff, paid a goodwill visit to Poland in March 2008. Following the visit of Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Prime Minister of **Denmark**, to India from 4 - 8 February 2008, bilateral relations between the two countries were further strengthened. There was increased interaction between India and **Turkey** during 2008-09. The Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan paid an official visit to India from 21 - 24 November 2008.

EU: India and the EU (European Union) are indispensable poles in the emerging multi-polar structures. Exchange of high level visits between India and Europe were maintained and summit-level interactions took place. India's engagement with EU intensified and diversified in fields such as defense & security, nuclear and space, trade and investment, energy, food security, climate change, science and technology and culture, education. Special envoys were sent to all the EU countries seeking support for waiver in the NSG for Civil Nuclear Cooperation with USA. Following the Mumbai terrorist attacks, leaders of EU and member States sent messages and made telephone calls condemning the attacks, conveying condolences for the victims and reaffirming solidarity in the fight against terrorism. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Marseille, France, for the 9th India-EU Summit on 29 September 2008. PM had discussions with EU/French President Nicolas Sarkozy and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso. The Summit, inter alia, reviewed India-EU Joint Action Plan of 2005 and issued a revised plan extending the Strategic Partnership to new areas. It also issued a Joint Work Programme (JWP) for Indo-EU Cooperation in Energy, Clean Development and Climate Change. PM also attended the India-EU Business Summit titled, 'New Synergies for Partnership' which was held on 30 September in Paris. The 19th India-EU Troika Foreign Ministerial Meeting was held on 30 May 2008 in New Delhi and the India-EU Strategic Dialogue was held on 05 December in New Delhi. In addition, 4th Round of the India-EU Energy Panel Meeting and the 11th Meeting of the India-EU Joint Working Group on Consular Issues

were held in New Delhi on 08 September and 23 May 2008, respectively.

The EU is India's largest trading partner. Bilateral trade crossed Euro 55 billion in 2007 and is targeted this to reach Euro 100 billion in 2013. India and Europe have been witnessing a very dynamic investment relationship.

The Americas

The year 2008 was marked by an intensification of the bilateral engagement between India and the USA. The signing of the Indo-US civil nuclear Agreement in Washington on 10 October 2008 was a culmination of the civil nuclear energy initiative announced during the visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to the USA in July 2005. India successfully concluded an India-specific Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on 1 August 2008 which paved the way for the USA to approach the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) for an adjustment of the NSG guidelines to enable its members to enter into civil nuclear cooperation and trade with India. The formal signing of the Agreement by External Affairs Minister, and his US counterpart Secretary of State, Dr Condoleezza Rice took place on 10 October 2008 in Washington. The agreement is a symbol of the transformed nature of the bilateral dialogue and has added strategic content to the relationship. It has also opened up vast opportunities for bilateral, economic and high technology engagement.

While economic and commercial ties, defense cooperation and people to people contacts were other priority areas of focus in the bilateral agenda, Indo-US consultations on global issues of common concern and the dialogues, work plans and implementation groups for bilateral initiatives in energy, education, science and technology, health, space, agriculture among others, continued to add depth and strengthen the Indo-US linkages.

Several high-level visits took place during the period. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Washington in September 2008. In his meeting with President Bush the two leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction on the achievements and progress made on the bilateral agenda that was set out in the Joint Statements of July 2005, issued during PM's visit to Washington and of March 2006, issued during the visit of President Bush to India.

US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice visited New Delhi in October 2008 and held discussions with EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee. The latter visited Washington DC from 24-25 March 2008. He met his counterpart and also called on President George Bush. He interacted with a select group of scholars at the Carnegie Foundation, a

Washington based think tank. PM also visited Washington in November 2008 to attend the G-20 Summit.

The Obama Administration sent its first delegation to India from February 15-24, 2009, to mark the 50th anniversary of American Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's visit to India to study Mahatma Gandhi's teachings. The delegation included Dr. King's eldest son, Dr. Martin Luther King III. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, visited India from 15-16 February. He called on EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee, NSA and FS on 16 February, and discussed the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan with them.

India's relations with **Canada** were substantively reinvigorated during the period with the Canadian Government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper continuing to consider relations with India a foreign policy priority. Canada's Foreign Minister, Mr. Maxime Bernier visited India from 10-12 January 2008. Canada's Deputy Minister for Citizenship and Immigration, Mr. Richard B Fadden visited India from 12-18 January 2008. India and Canada opened a new chapter in their relations when Canada supported India's Safeguard Agreement with the IAEA and it also joined the NSG's consensus decision to allow nuclear trade with India.

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

In the light of existing commonalities with regard to bilateral and multilateral issues and mutual economic interests, India's engagement with LAC countries intensified during the period under reference. Cross-sectoral linkages were facilitated through regular dialogue at the political and official level and also through exchange of business delegations, experts and professionals from both sides. Contacts at the institutionalized level were maintained through Joint Commission Ministerial meetings and Foreign Office Consultations. As many as 21 agreements and MoUs were signed during this time. Indian companies stepped up their presence in sectors such as oil and hydrocarbons, ICT, mining, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, auto industries, new & renewable energy and in the services sector. As part of our Development Partnership and South-South cooperation initiatives, Line of Credit assistance to the tune of US \$ 160 million was announced for LAC countries and disaster relief to the tune of US \$ 2.125 million was disbursed. IT Centres were also set up in three LAC countries and a total of 382 ITEC scholarships were announced and utilized by LAC candidates. The signing of a JV agreement between the national oil

company (PDVSA) of **Venezuela** and ONGC Videsh for oil production and development activities in the San Cristobal oilfield in eastern Venezuela, acquisition of the rights of Encana Corporation of Canada in 10 offshore blocks in **Brazil** by the BPRL-Videocon JV, waiver of commercial debt and interest to the tune of Rs.128 crores owed by **Cuba** to India and sale of 7 advanced Light (Dhruv) helicopters by HAL to **Ecuador** was among the important milestones in our economic/commercial relations with LAC countries.

United Nations and International Organisations

India continued to play an active role in the United Nations (UN) focussing on the ongoing process of reforming the UN Organization with a view to enhancing its representative nature and its credibility, and therefore, its effectiveness. In collaboration with other member states India continued to work for reform of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and to revitalize the General Assembly.

The period under review was marked by several high-level visits. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the 63rd Session of General Assembly in September 2008. In his address to the UNGA on September 27, 2008, PM underlined the need for progress on core elements of the agenda for reform of the UN. He also stressed for the need for coordinated action by the international community in dealing with the crisis in the world financial system and global food and energy crisis. In the context of the fact that 2008 marked the mid-point of international efforts to achieve the developmental targets set by the Millennium Development Goals, PM emphasized the indivisible nature of global prosperity and welfare. PM also referred to terrorism, exhorting the world to strengthen international cooperation in this regard and reaffirmed the need for the early conclusion of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT).

External Affairs Minister visited New York from 28 September to 2 October 2008 and participated in the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly. Finance Minister visited the UN as PM's special representative for participating in the High Level Event on Midterm Review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) held on 25 September 2008.

UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, visited India from 30 - 31 October 2008 and delivered the Rajiv Gandhi Commemorative Speech on 31 October 2008. He visited India again on 4-6 February 2009 to participate in the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit.

India worked actively to ensure that development remains at the core of the United Nations agenda, particularly against the backdrop of the global financial meltdown, together with upheavals in the food and energy markets. In this regard, the need for developed countries to fulfil their commitments to provide enhanced aid, greater market access, debt relief and technology transfer to developing countries was re-emphasized. India also pushed for proportionate voice and participation of the developing countries towards ensuring a greater developmental focus in the international regimes on trade, finance and economic bodies.

India also continued its active engagement with the Non-Alignment Movement and the Commonwealth. EAM led the Indian delegation to the 15th NAM Ministerial Meeting in Tehran during 27-30 July 2008. Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, former High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom, who was elected as the Secretary General of the Commonwealth in November 2007, assumed office on 1 April 2008 and visited India on 16-22 October, 2008 and 4-11 February, 2009.

Multilateral Economic Relations

Agendas of the multilateral fora, during the period, were generally under the shadow of international financial turmoil, high food prices and volatile energy prices. India continued its active engagement with ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China-May 2008), G-8-05, G-20, IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa), IOR-ARC (Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation), ACD (Asia Cooperation Dialogue) etc where it presented its perspective on financial crisis and other critical issues such as food, security, energy security, climate change and sustainable development. The first IOR-ARC Film Festival was held in New Delhi in February-March 2008 as part of Indian initiatives announced at the 7th IOR-ARC Council of Ministers (COM) meeting held in Tehran in March 2007.

Secretary (ER) led the Indian delegation to the preparatory meeting of BRIC Deputy Foreign Ministers held in Rio de Janeiro from 10-11 March 2008 to prepare the roadmap for the first formal meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers meeting in Russia in May 2008.

India hosted the Second BIMSTEC Summit (13/11/2008), and the Third IBSA Summit in New Delhi during the period. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegations to the ASEM Summit in Beijing (24/10/2008), the G-20 Summit in Washington (15/11/2008), and informal interaction of Heads of State/

Govt. of BRIC countries. Conclusion of the negotiations on the agreement on "Trade in Goods" under the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and ASEAN was considered yet another milestone in India's "Look East" policy.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and Development Partnership (DP)

The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme is the flagship programme of India's technical and economic cooperation efforts. In keeping with India's growing economic strength and international role, efforts were made to enhance and expand India's technical cooperation and development assistance to partner countries with emphasis on capacity building, transfer of technology and sharing of experiences. This involved 158 developing countries including 139 countries under ITEC in Asia, Africa, Central Asia, East Europe, Latin America and 19 countries under SCAAP (Special Commonwealth African Assistance Programme) in Africa. Around 5000 professionals, in Government and other sectors from 158 developing countries attended more than 200 courses conducted by institutions in India, both Government and in the private sector, under the civilian and defence training programmes. Special courses were organized for Africa, IOR-ARC, CIS, Afghanistan, Lao PDR, Yemen in various fields like management, WTO issues, labour, audit, etc. Indian experts were deputed to advise and assist in diverse areas such as information technology, auditing, legal expertise, pharmacology, statistics and demography, public administration, textile and agriculture. Many projects were undertaken during the year in the field of information technology, small and medium enterprises, civil construction and vocational training in different parts of the world. Humanitarian assistance was also extended to countries affected by earthquake, cyclones, floods, etc.

Investment and Technology Promotion (ITP)

Economic Diplomacy continued to occupy an important place in India's foreign policy, acquiring a sharper focus in an increasingly interdependent and interconnected world. The Ministry, through the ITP Division, was actively engaged in the promotion and facilitation of foreign investment and trade. It participated in policy meetings of Foreign Investment Promotion Board and Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, as well as other policy meetings concerning reforms and liberalization of the economy and simplification of investment procedures. ITP Division supplemented the overall efforts of the Government to boost FDI inflow into India, by reaching out to the investor community

and organizing and funding promotional events in partnership with the private sector, apex business chambers and our Missions abroad. The cause of foreign investments was further supported by projecting the country's image as an investment friendly destination through special publications such as the "India - Dynamic Business Partner: Investor Friendly Destination" etc and ITP Division's website: www.indiainbusiness.nic.in.

Development aid, including grants and Lines of Credit (LoC), to developing countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia formed an important component of our Economic Diplomacy. While helping Indian companies get project contracts and orders for supply of goods in these developing countries, the LoCs have helped in infrastructure development in these regions thereby creating considerable goodwill for the country. During 2008-09, 17 LoCs worth US\$ 744 million to 16 developing countries were approved.

Given the importance of energy security for India's development, a separate Energy Security Division was established in March 2009 to coordinate with Energy Ministries and Indian Missions abroad. The Division worked closely with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in organizing the *India-CIS Roundtable on Hydrocarbons* in November 2008 and *Petrotech 2009*, hosted/co-hosted seminars on India's energy options, commissioned studies on energy surplus countries and regions, was actively involved in energy security related seminars/conferences organized by other Ministries and Chamber of Commerce and Industry and extended assistance to Indian companies dealing with overseas energy collaborations and opportunities. It also took the initiative to set up a Working Group on Energy with senior representatives of oil and infrastructure PSUs.

Policy Planning and Research

The PP&R Division maintained close interaction with institutions and individuals specializing in policy research and analysis and extended financial assistance to various academic institutions/think-tanks located in different parts of the country for holding conferences, seminars, preparation of research papers, exchange of scholars on issues related to India's external relations and security with a view to derive invaluable inputs for the planning, formulation and implementation of our foreign policy.

Policy Planning and Research Division continued issuing Monthly Summary for the Cabinet. The division also continued to edit and publish the Annual Report of the Ministry. The Report serves as a compendium of India's interaction with the rest of the world in the political,

economic, and cultural fields, including the views of the government on various facets of international relations.

The situation room which functions under this division was used as a 24 hours operational control room during the Mumbai crisis from 27 November – 1 December 2008.

A boundary cell has been established to provide cartographic advice and technical support on border related matters to Territorial Divisions. It handled work related to examination of maps depicting India's external boundaries in co-ordination with the Survey of India. It has started building data base for boundary strip maps covering the external boundary of India.

Protocol

Reflecting India's active engagement with the world, there were 62 incoming visits during 2008 at the level of Head of State, Vice President, Head of Government, and Foreign Minister; and 27 outgoing visits at these levels during the year. Three Summits were held in Delhi- the India-Africa Forum Summit in April 2008; the 3rd India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum Summit in October 2008; and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technological and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Summit in November 2008.

Consular, Passport and Visa Services

During the year 3 new Passport Offices were opened at Amritsar, Dehradun, and Coimbatore. All 37 Passport Offices have been computerized and issue machine-printed and machine readable passports.

A total of 53.15 lakh passports were issued in 2008-09, an increase of approximately 6.5% over the corresponding figure in 2007-08. The total revenue generated from all Passport Offices also increased to Rs. 606 crores, an increase of approximately 5.5% over 2007-08.

The Ministry has been taking a number of measures to make the processing and issue of passports simpler and quicker for the comfort and convenience of the public. District Passport Cells (DPCs) have been opened at the district level to increase the efficiency of the receiving and verification process. Online submission of passport applications has been introduced in all Passport Offices. During 2008, Also facilitation Counters and Help Desks have also been set up to assist applicants and also to attend to grievances/complaints expeditiously.

The Passport Seva Project launched by the Government of India is expected to result in the issue of new passports within three days after police verification and of all other

passport services in one day. The Pilot Project is expected to begin at Chandigarh and Bangalore by July-August, 2009. It will be implemented fully to cover the entire country in 2010.

The Ministry has successfully implemented the project for centralized printing of Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) at CPV Division, New Delhi in respect of 140 Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

All diplomatic and official passports are now being issued as e-passports as part of the pilot project. Based on the experience gained from the pilot project, it is proposed to start issuance of e-passports in the ordinary category by end 2009. During 2008, visa-waiver agreements were signed with Egypt, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, South Africa and Turkey.

Extradition treaties were signed with Brazil, Australia, Iran and Egypt. The attestation and apostille of the documents was also started at branch secretariat offices of the Ministry at Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Guwahati with effect from 15 June 2008. During the year, 1,70,000 personal and educational documents and 1,71,000 commercial documents were attested by the Ministry. In addition to this, 80,000 documents were apostilled for use abroad in the member countries.

Administration

There are currently 171 resident Indian Missions and Posts abroad. During the year, a resident Indian Mission was opened in Iceland, while three new Missions are to be opened in the near future in Niger, Mali, and Guatemala. In order to address the Ministry's acute constraints of personnel in the face of India's growing diplomatic responsibilities, a ten-year plan has been developed to induct 514 additional positions in the Ministry in a phased manner.

Several steps were taken to streamline rules, regulations, and procedures and to improve housekeeping in the Ministry. Construction work for the future Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs, i.e. Jawahar Lal Nehru Bhawan, and transit accommodation at Canning Lane, New Delhi continued apace. A residential complex for officers of the Ministry, building of the Headquarters of the Afro-Asian Legal Consultative Committee, and residence of its Secretary General, in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, and the Regional Office of ICCR in Kolkata were completed. Purchase and construction of properties for Indian Missions abroad was further accelerated to reduce expenditure on rents. Projects under construction abroad include chancery/residences projects at Kabul, Beijing, Tokyo, Kathmandu, London and Singapore.

Coordination

Coordination Division issued a total of 2539 political clearances for foreign visits of Governors, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Union Ministers, Ministers in the State Governments, Members of Parliament, Members of State Legislative Assemblies, Members of the Judiciary, government officials, thereby registering an increase of about 21%. The division also handled 971 clearances for foreign non-scheduled flights; an year-on-year increase of 13% during April – November 2008.

Coordination Division assisted the Ministry of Defense in interaction with the Ministry and the Indian Missions/ Posts abroad during DEFEXPO India – 2008, organized by the Ministry of Defense in February 2008 and for the Aero India- 2009 exhibition in February 2009 at Bangalore.

External Publicity

The main activities of the Division were focused on dissemination of information on India's relations with its immediate neighbours as also with major countries of the world. The Division launched the first phase of the Media Monitoring Project for all users at Headquarters. This is aimed at streamlining the monitoring of media sources for the Ministry. The Project monitors Print, Web and Internet based media in a systematic manner and provides 5 daily products to users on a real time basis.

The Division used the opportunities provided by visits of the President of Iran, Mr. Ahamadnejad; President of Syria, Dr. Bashar Al-Assad; President of Egypt, Mr. Hosny Mubarak; Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda"; Prime Minister of Bhutan, Mr. Lyonchen Jigmi Y. Thinley and the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Anatoly Medvedev to articulate India's position on important bilateral, regional and international issues. The Division also arranged joint press interaction with the visiting dignitaries during these visits. Special briefings by the official spokesperson and other senior officials of the Ministry were also held regularly on important international issues of concern to India.

Media delegations on President's visit to Brazil, Medico, Chile, Vietnam and Indonesia; Prime Minister's visits to Bhutan, Japan (G-8 summit), Sri Lanka (15th SAARC summit), USA and France (UNGA and Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement), China, Oman and Qatar (bilateral); Vice President's visits to Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and; the External Affairs Minister's visits to Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Russia, Australia, Egypt and USA were facilitated by XP Division. EAM, Foreign Secretary and other senior officials of the Ministry addressed special media briefings on important issues of

concern. Interviews with the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister, Ministers of State for External Affairs and other dignitaries were arranged with Indian and international newspapers and TV organizations.

Public Diplomacy

PD Division, in order to fulfil its mandate of outreach activities inside and outside India, and audio-visual and print publicity to effectively project India's Foreign Policy to the wider public, works in collaboration with researchers, think tanks, civil society, media and industry, within India and abroad.

The Division organized a number of seminars and conferences to effectively project India's foreign policy, and to support Track Two interaction with other countries. A large number of Indian and foreign academics, researchers, senior officials, representatives of industry and the media were involved in the events organized by the Division. Among the major activities of the Division were conferences on our relations with Nepal, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Ethiopia. The Division also organized conferences on varied themes such as the fallout of the cold war, development of North-East, terrorism and climate change. With a view to familiarize policy and opinion makers from other countries with modern India and our concerns and interests, the Division hosted visits of delegations from the UK, Mauritius, South Africa, Tajikistan and Taiwan, as well as a delegation of PIO journalists from 16 countries.

The Division commissioned documentaries projecting our interests as also Indian culture and heritage. Some of the documentaries commissioned by the Division were screened at international festivals and awarded special prizes/special mention. The Division's flagship magazine 'India Perspectives' covering a variety of subjects completed twenty years; an anniversary issue and two Special Issues on Indian Publishing and Indian Cinema were brought out.

Foreign Service Institute (FSI)

The Foreign Service Institute conducted training programmes for the IFS Probationers, Diplomatic Correspondents, Police officers, Cabinet Secretariat officers, and other officers of the Ministry of External Affairs and other Ministries/ Departments. Special courses for officials from Southern Sudan, for ASEAN Diplomats and for Diplomats from Norway as well as Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) were held. The Foreign Defence officers attending the 48th Course at National Defence College visited FSI and a lecture was arranged for them.

A MoU providing institutional framework of cooperation between FSI and its counterpart institute in Ukraine was signed. Delegations from Bangladesh, Romania and China visited FSI. The Second Meeting of Deans of Diplomatic Institutes of IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa) countries was held at FSI in September, 2008. A Seminar on the subject of "India-Brazil-South Africa Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities" was also held on this occasion.

Cultural Relations

The primary objective of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) is to establish, revive and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. The Council's flagship project, the Rabindranath Tagore Centre (RTC) was inaugurated on 1 June, 2008 by Shri Pranab Mukherjee, former Minister for External Affairs. ICCR also commenced implementation of its '6-Point Expansion Plan', for which it has been allocated Rs. 75 crores.

The Council organized large-scale cultural events with foreign and Indian troupes, on the sidelines of major Summits, such as the India-Africa Summit, IBSA Summit, Arab League Meeting etc. It also coordinated the South Asia Cultural Festival and held cultural programmes for VVIP visitors. A number of Festivals were held, such as Sufi Music Festival in Srinagar, Malhaar Festival and Festival of Indian Classical Dance by foreign artists residing in India. An important highlight was the 'Year of Russia in India' which included a series of high-profile cultural performances. In addition, 50 cultural troupes from different countries were hosted by the Council, with performances held in Delhi and other cities. The Council also provided financial support to NGOs and cultural institutions to jointly organize cultural activities. The Council hosted 19 eminent visitors from different countries under the Distinguished Visitors Programme,

The 21 Indian Cultural Centres abroad continued to vigorously promote India's 'Soft Power'. The expanded Cultural Wing of the Indian Embassy in Beijing became functional in the year and preparations were made to open new Cultural Centres in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo and Dhaka.

The Council organized a series of cultural Festivals abroad in Syria, Egypt, Netherlands, Argentina and Hungary, which included diverse and varied cultural programmes. The 'Year of India in Russia' was inaugurated by President, ICCR on 31 March, 2009 in Moscow. The Council sponsored 93 cultural delegations which visited 73 countries and also sponsored a number of outstanding artistes abroad and provided travel grants. The Council

continued to manage 21 long-term and 12 short-term Chairs in Indian Studies in various foreign Universities.

An important focus area of ICCR has been facilitating admission of foreign students in Indian Universities. In 2008-09, ICCR administered scholarships for approx. 3200 foreign students under various schemes. This included 1778 new scholarships, including 500 scholarships for Afghan students.

The Council opened two new Regional Offices at Cuttack and Shillong during the year to enhance its reach to North-east and eastern India. The Council also organized major exhibitions showcasing Indian and foreign art and sculpture; disseminated six journals in five different languages and also assisted various organizations/Institutes in organizing 24 International Conferences in India.

President of India presented the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for 1995 to President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Hosny Mubarak on 18th November 2008. The Maulana Abul Kalam Memorial Lecture 2009 was delivered by Mr. Martin Luther King III on the subject "A New Nonviolent Revolution".

Indian Council of World Affairs

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) continued to develop as a think-tank and an important platform for discussions on foreign affairs in India. ICWA signed 6 MoUs for bilateral cooperation, viz, with Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, New Zealand Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) Wellington, Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) Melbourne, The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR) Abu Dhabi , Asia Centre; Bangalore, Centre for Research in

Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID) Chandigarh. Council sponsored a Joint Study between India-Central Asia Foundation (ICAF), ICWA and Department of International Relations, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan on "Contemporary Process of Political Modernizing: Experience of Central Asian States and India". The Council organized 7 lectures, 9 Seminars/Conferences, 6 bilateral dialogues & 14 background briefings, book release/panel discussions. ICWA Library continues to be used by a large no of scholars and students.

E- G & Information Technology

During the year, computerization of passport & visa services at Moscow, Doha, Washington, San Francisco, Chicago and Houston was completed. Outsourcing of passport services at Jeddah was completed. Outsourcing of passport/visa services at London, Moscow, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah, Riyadh, Kuwait, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore has been completed during the year.

Research & Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

RIS, as an autonomous policy think-tank, conducted policy research on international economic issues and provided analytical support in preparations for major Summit meetings and other important negotiations such as East Asia Summit, IBSA Summit, SAARC and BIMSTEC Summits, WTO negotiations, Track-II Study Group of CEPEA, among others. It continued to hold policy dialogue on the relevance and the way forward for an Asian Economic Community in collaboration with leading policy think-tanks in Asia, and has networked with policy think-tanks in other countries to bring policy coherence and capacity building on international economic issues and development cooperation.



Afghanistan

Bilateral Relations

Close and friendly relations were maintained with the Government of Afghanistan. Our developmental and reconstruction assistance programme in Afghanistan is widely appreciated by all sections of the Afghan people. Notwithstanding serious deterioration in the security situation, India has remained at the forefront of the international effort to assist the Government and people of Afghanistan in building a stable, democratic, and pluralist society. The deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan impinged directly on India after the attack on the Embassy of India on 7 July, 2008.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan His Excellency Hamid Karzai paid a State visit to India from August 3-5, 2008. President Karzai's visit took place shortly after the terrorist attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul on the seventh of July 2008. India and Afghanistan expressed their determination to fight terrorism unitedly and with all the forces at their command. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh conveyed that all of India's commitments to Afghanistan would be fully met. To this end, the Government of India pledged an additional US\$ 450 million (over US\$ 750 million announced so far) to effectively meet the requirement of our ongoing and forthcoming projects.

President Karzai again paid a working visit to India from 11-12 January, 2009 to express Afghanistan's solidarity with the Government and people of India in the aftermath of the Mumbai terrorist attack. In a Joint Press Statement issued after the visit, President Karzai and PM called for the full compliance with bilateral, multilateral and international obligations of States to prevent terrorism in any manner originating from territories under their control. PM also conveyed that in order to help the fraternal people of Afghanistan in tiding over their current food crisis, India would gift Afghanistan 250,000 metric tonnes of wheat. A request from the Government of Afghanistan to increase the number of education and technical scholarships for Afghan nationals to study undergo courses in India was agreed to. President Karzai

also invited Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh for a State visit to Afghanistan.

India's Minister of Panchayati Raj, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyer visited Afghanistan in May 2008. During the visit, an MoU on local governance was signed between the two countries. The Chief Election Commissioner Shri N Gopalaswami, visited Afghanistan in April 2008. During the visit an MoU on cooperation between two Election Commissions was signed.

Terrorist attack on the Embassy: A suicide bomber attacked our Embassy in Kabul on the morning of 7 July, 2008 in which five Embassy personnel were killed. About 60 Afghan nationals were also killed. The attack on Indian Embassy was amongst the worst of the terrorist strikes in Afghanistan. Investigations of the Government of Afghanistan as also our own evidence that the attack was planned and executed by elements based in a Pakistan make it a dangerous and unacceptable situation.

India's assistance to Afghanistan

India remained at the forefront of the international effort in Afghanistan to aid and assist its government and people in the process of national reconstruction, and establishing a stable, democratic, and pluralistic polity. The Minister of State for External Affairs led the Indian delegation to the International Conference in support of Afghanistan held in Paris in June 2008. India continued to actively participate in various multilateral meetings to co-ordinate developmental assistance to Afghanistan including, interalia, meetings of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board. India also participated in December 2008 in the Paris Ministerial Meeting on Regional Cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours.

Despite the terrorist attack on Indian Embassy on 7 July, 2008 and continued security threat to the Embassy, Consulates, projects and personnel, India's commitment to Afghanistan's reconstruction and development has remained unwavering. PM announced a further pledge of US \$450 million during President Karzai's visit to India in September 2008, taking the total Indian pledge for Afghanistan to US \$1.2 billion for the India's extensive developmental assistance programme. The Union Cabinet

in November 2008 also approved the construction of Afghanistan's new Parliament building, a symbol of the common commitment of both countries to pluralism and democracy. The project has since commenced.

Projects completed

A major infrastructure project for construction of 218 km road from Zaranj to Delaram was successfully completed despite daunting logistical and security challenges. The road was jointly inaugurated by the President of Afghanistan and the External Affairs Minister on 22nd January 2009.

Significant progress was made in execution of another major infrastructural project - the construction of a 220 KV Transmission Line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul together with sub-station in Chimgala which will wheel power from Uzbekistan to Kabul (completion expected by April 2009).

New Schemes

During President Karzai's visit to India in January 2009 India had announced a grant of 250,000 metric tonnes of wheat in order to help the fraternal people of Afghanistan in tiding over their current food crisis.

An MoU on Local Governance was signed between the two countries in May 2008.

An MoU on cooperation between Election Commissions of the two countries was signed on 22nd April 2008. India also contributed a sum of US \$ 1 million to the UN Trust Fund for the Afghanistan Elections.

Major Projects under implementation

Work on the construction of Salma Dam Power Project (42 MW) in Herat province, continued.

Humanitarian assistance: The on-going school feeding programme of distribution of protein fortified biscuits through World Food Programme as part of Government of India's commitment to provide one million tonne of wheat to Afghanistan as humanitarian assistance continued. Indian biscuits are now supplied to about 2 million school children on school days and cover 32 out of 34 provinces in Afghanistan. India donated ten ambulances to the Ministry of Public Health in April 2008. Supply of 30,000 Desk-cum-Benches to schools in Jalalabad Province commenced in November 2008.

Medical services and medicines through five Indian Medical Missions (IMMs) in Kabul, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Mazar-e-Sharif and Herat and the reconstruction of Indira Gandhi Institute for Child Health in Kabul in various phases continued.

Education and Capacity Building

Both the ICCR administered Indian Scholarships scheme and technical training programmes under ITEC were effectively implemented. Out of the 500 ICCR Scholarships offered to Afghanistan in the current year, 493 scholarships have been utilized by Afghan candidates for pursuing higher education in various universities in India. Through 500 annual short-term technical training programmes to Afghanistan under the ITEC, India continued to contribute significantly in human resource development of Afghan professionals in the fields that included IT; communication; English language proficiency; human resource planning; geo-informatics and human resource planning and development; textile mills management; development journalism; empowerment of women; promotion of micro enterprises, etc.

The Skills Development Project of Confederation of the Indian Industries (CII) proposing to train 1,000 Afghans in construction related skills and setting up of a Women's Vocational Training Centre at Bagh-e-Zanana in Kabul by Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) to train 1,000 Afghan women in garment making, fruit processing and horticulture were inaugurated in June 2008. Since 2002, around 3150 Afghans have got trained/studied in India under the various Government sponsored training programmes.

Small Developments Projects

Implementation of the community-based, small development projects scheme in the fields of agriculture, rural development, education, health, vocational training, etc. continued satisfactorily. Under phase-I (2006-08), 50 such proposals had been approved and are being executed.

Under phase-II (2008-2010), 50 other projects have been Identified for implementation.

India continued to contribute US\$ 200,000 annually for the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

India Culture Centre

Despite the terrorist attack on Indian Embassy, the activities of India Culture Centre (ICC) in Kabul including classical music and yoga classes by Indian teachers and other cultural activities continued.

Bangladesh

India continued to constructively engage the caretaker Government in Bangladesh on a broad spectrum of bilateral issues while reiterating its expectation of a free,



President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai meeting with the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in New Delhi on 4 August, 2008.



Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonchen Jigmi Y. Thinley meeting with the Union Minister of External Affairs, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, in New Delhi on 16 July, 2008.

fair, credible elections leading to full restoration of democracy in Bangladesh. In a momentous occasion ,the two countries restarted the passenger train service "Maitree" between Kolkata and Dhaka after 43 years on 14 April, 2008.

The Bangladesh Foreign Secretary visited India for the annual Foreign Office Consultations on 17 July, 2008 during which substantive discussions were held on all aspects of bilateral relations, including security, trade, transit and connectivity issues

India continued to emphasize its security concerns to Bangladesh, especially the use of Bangladeshi territory by Indian Insurgency Groups (IIGs) and by terrorists of other nationalities. The two sides revived the Joint Working Group to discuss operational matters related to security issues and held a meeting in New Delhi from 29-30 May, 2008. This was followed by the bilateral Home Secretary-level talks in Dhaka from 29-31 August, 2008.

The two countries continued to discuss operational matters related to border management through the bi-annual DG-level border coordination conferences of the respective border security forces, which were held from 11-12 April, 2008 in New Delhi and from 20-25 August, 2008 in Dhaka. The bilateral sub-group on border/trade infrastructure held its first meeting from 6-7 August, 2008 in Dhaka.

During the year, the two sides also held technical level talks on maritime boundary in Dhaka from 15-27 September, 2008, after a gap of over 25 years.

Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Deepak Kapoor visited Bangladesh from 28 July to 1 August 2008 during which various steps to strengthen defence cooperation between the two countries were discussed.

Pursuant to announcement made by Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh at the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi, India started providing duty free access to exports from LDCs in the SAARC region, including Bangladesh, on 1 January, 2008, except some items on India's sensitive list. The 2007 bilateral MoU with Bangladesh on duty-free imports into India from Bangladesh of up to 8 million pieces of apparel articles in a calendar year also came into effect in April 2008.

The Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Shri Jairam Ramesh visited Dhaka from 31 October to 2 November, 2008 to participate in the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry. During the visit, he discussed various bilateral economic and trade issues with his counterparts.

The two sides reviewed the bilateral air services agreement in New Delhi from 11-13 February, 2008 and increased the flights to select destinations operated by designated carriers of both countries to 61 per week.

In line with India's policy of boosting connectivity in the SAARC region to facilitate bilateral trade and movement of people, India continued to pursue proposals for strengthening transport and trade infrastructure between the two countries. The Tenth Meeting of the Standing Committee under the bilateral protocol on Inland water Transit and Trade was held in Dhaka from 26-27 May, 2008.

In keeping with India's close and friendly ties with Bangladesh, India provided Bangladesh bilateral aid and assistance to help overcome damage caused by natural disasters. India's assistance included supply of 1000 MT of skimmed milk powder and 40,000 MT of rice. India has also undertaken a project to construct 2,800 core shelters, toilets and 22 tubewells for rehabilitation of 11 cyclone-affected villages in Bangladesh and another project to construct Kala Bhawan for the Department of Theatre and Music, University of Dhaka.

Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for External Affairs paid a visit to Dhaka on 9 February, 2009. This was the first high-level visit from India after new Government under Her Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina took over office following General Elections in Bangladesh on 29 December, 2008. During the visit, EAM met several leaders of the newly elected Government, including Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Home Minister, Commerce Minister and the Industries Minister and discussed a range of bilateral issues, including those related to security, connectivity, trade and investment and people-to-people contacts. Two Agreements, namely (i) Trade Agreement and (ii) Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) were signed. EAM unveiled a model of 2800 core shelters that Government of India would be constructing in 11 Bangladeshi villages affected by cyclone 'Sidr' and also unveiled a Plaque for the construction of Kalabhaban at the Dhaka University.

Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker, Lok Sabha visited Dhaka from 21-23 February, 2009. Speaker addressed the Members of Bangladesh Parliament at the opening ceremony of 'Parliamentary Orientation Program for Ninth Jatiya Sangsad' and met several leaders in Bangladesh.

Bhutan

India and Bhutan continue to share uniquely warm and cordial relations characterized by close consultations, maturity, complete trust and mutual understanding. These relations were further deepened during the course of the year that coincided with the Golden Jubilee of the visit of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to Bhutan in 1958, Coronation of the Fifth King of Bhutan and the 100th Anniversary of the Wangchuck dynasty. In keeping with the tradition of regular visits and exchange of views at the highest levels between the two countries, there were high level visits that led to consolidation of our economic and political relations.

President, Smt. Pratibhadevi Singh Patil accompanied by the External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee and Chairperson of UPA, Smt. Sonia Gandhi paid a State visit to Bhutan from 5-8 November, 2008 on the invitation of the Royal Government of Bhutan to attend the formal coronation of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan. Government of India sponsored various live musical shows, football matches etc. as part of the celebrations for the Coronation ceremony of the King of Bhutan.

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Bhutan from 16-17 May, 2008 as the first foreign dignitary to visit Bhutan after it became a Democratic Constitutional Monarchy in April 2008, he called on the King of Bhutan and the former King besides having productive discussions with regard to intensifying bilateral cooperation especially in the hydropower sector. Besides formally inaugurating the Tala Hydroelectric Project and laying the foundation stone of the Punatsangchhu-I Hydroelectric Project, PM announced the revision of the target of exporting hydropower from Bhutan to India from 5,000 MW (as per the Agreement of 2006) to 10,000 MW by 2020. He also announced the GoI's economic assistance package of Rs. 10,000 crores for the next five years to be used both as GoI's assistance to Bhutan's Tenth Five Year Plan as also for development of mega projects for hydropower and infrastructure. PM also committed the GoI's assistance towards construction of the first rail link between India and Bhutan – the Golden Jubilee Rail Line connecting Hashimara in India to Phuentsholing in Bhutan, the establishment of the prestigious Nehru-Wangchuck scholarship for meritorious Bhutanese students to study in reputed educational institutions in India and the establishment of a Medical College in Thimphu.

Minister of Power, Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde, led a delegation of officials from the Indian PSUs involved in

the hydropower projects in Bhutan to Thimphu from 4-7 December, 2008 on the invitation of the Minister of Economic Affairs of Bhutan. Foreign Secretary subsequently visited Bhutan from 14-15 February, 2009 and discussed a wide gamut of bilateral issues especially those relating to development assistance and hydropower cooperation between the two countries.

The Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonchen Jigmi Y. Thinley, paid a State visit to India from 14-17 July, 2008 after his election as the first democratically elected Prime Minister of Bhutan. Prime Minister Thinley again visited India from 12-14 November, 2008 to participate in the Second BIMSTEC Summit in New Delhi. A delegation led by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Bhutan, Lyonpo Jigme Tshultim, also visited India from 25 August to 5 September, 2008 while the Bhutanese Minister of Health, Lyonpo Zangley Dukpa, visited India from 11-18 September, 2008 to strengthen bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the health sector. The Attorney General of Bhutan subsequently visited India from 15-21 December, 2008 for a study tour.

India continued to be the largest trade and development partner of Bhutan. The implementation of the India assisted projects agreed under Bhutan's Ninth Plan progressed satisfactorily. Some of the important ones that were completed include Semtokha Dzong, Thimphu and Mongar Regional Referral Hospitals, Youth Centre, RENEW Centre and Exhibition Hall for the National Museum. The two Governments also agreed various projects under the GoI assistance for the Tenth Plan of Bhutan. GoI agreed to double its assistance to Bhutan under the Tenth Plan over the Ninth Plan to Rs 3400 crores. Government of India also signed an MoU with Royal Government of Bhutan in March 2009 for grant of Rs. 300 crores Standby Credit Facility to Royal Government of Bhutan to assist the latter meet its Rupee liquidity shortages. Cooperation in Security and Border Management continued between the State Governments of Assam and West Bengal and the Royal Government of Bhutan. India remained committed to providing assistance to Bhutan during its transition to a Democratic Constitutional Monarchy.

The First Meeting of the Empowered Joint Group on Hydropower Development in Bhutan was held in New Delhi on 17 March, 2009 to discuss issues relating to development of 10,000 MW of hydropower in Bhutan for export to India by 2020 as per the commitment given by our Prime Minister to Bhutan during his last visit to the country in May 2008. The Protocol to the 2006 Agreement

on Hydropower Cooperation between India and Bhutan to formalize the aforesaid commitment of GoI was signed between the two sides in New Delhi on 16 March, 2009.

China

This has been an important year for our bilateral ties. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited China from 13-15 January, 2008. PM held official talks with Premier Wen Jiabao and had meetings with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, Wu Bangguo. Both sides issued 'A Shared Vision for the 21st Century' between India and China and also signed ten other documents covering cooperation in various fields. The Prime Minister again met with Chinese President Hu Jintao on 8 July, 2008 in Sapporo on the sidelines of the G-8 summit and on 25 October, 2008 in Beijing on the margins of the ASEM Summit. PM also met with Chinese premier Wen Jiabao on 24 September, 2008 at New York on the sidelines of the UNGA session.

Following Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit, the momentum of high-level exchanges was maintained. External Affairs Minister visited China from 4-7 June, 2008. He called on the Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping and had talks with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi. An MoU for Provision of Hydrological Information of the Brahmaputra River in Flood Season by China to India was signed. EAM also inaugurated the new Consulate General of India in Guangzhou. Chinese Foreign Minister Mr. Yang Jiechi visited India from 7-9 September, 2008. He inaugurated the new Chinese Consulate General in Kolkata, had talks with External Affairs Minister and also called on the Prime Minister.

According to the Economic Survey released in February 2008 China is now India's largest trading partner. Bilateral trade in 2007 was US\$ 38.96 billion. According to Chinese Customs statistics, in the year 2008, bilateral trade reached US\$ 51.8 billion, with India's trade deficit standing at US\$ 11.2 billion. The growth in the trade deficit with China is a matter of concern to Government, and this issue was flagged by both PM and EAM during their visits to China. Chinese Premier told PM that they have noted this concern and are working to address it. A Corporate Purchasing Mission led by Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce visited India from 9-12 October, 2008 and concluded 22 MoUs on trade that seeks to enhance Indian exports by US\$ 390 million a year. The two PMs also mandated their Ministers of Commerce to examine the Feasibility Study on the benefits of a Regional Trading Arrangement (RTA) at the Eighth Meeting of the Joint Economic Group and to make

recommendations on this and on other matters of mutual concern. The Third India-China Financial Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 16 January, 2009.

Defence cooperation has contributed to enhancement of mutual trust and cooperation. Both sides held the second joint military exercise in India (Belgaum) from 4-14 December, 2008 and also held the Second Annual Defence Dialogue at upgraded level (Secretary/DCGS) in India on 15 December, 2008. Chief of PLA Navy visited India from 1-5 November 2008. Indian Chief of Air Staff visited Zhuhai for the Air Show and bilateral meetings from 2-6 November, 2008.

Following the terror attacks on Mumbai from 26-28 November, 2008, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi conveyed messages of condolences. In a telephone conversation with EAM on 25 December, 2008, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said that China strongly condemned the attacks, and reiterated his country's firm opposition to terrorism of all forms.'

The 12th round of Special Representatives talks on the Boundary Question were held in Beijing from 18-19 September, 2008. The next round will be held in Delhi.

Government announced US\$ 5 million in relief assistance for the earthquake which struck Sichuan Province in May 2008. Nine Indian Air Force aircrafts delivered tents, sleeping bags, blankets and medicines and other relief material between 18 May and 8 June, 2008.

The First round of Consular Talks between India and China took place on 3 March, 2008 in New Delhi. An Memorandum of Understanding on Air Service Matters between India and China was signed in New Delhi on 20 March, 2008 whereby it was agreed that the designated airlines of India could operate beyond China to San Francisco with full Fifth Freedom Rights. The third meeting of the India-China Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism was held in New Delhi from 9-10 July, 2008. The Second India-China Joint Working Group on Agriculture Cooperation and Workshop on Rural Development were held in New Delhi from 14-18 October, 2008.

The second meeting of the India-China Expert Level Mechanism on Trans-Border Rivers was held in New Delhi from 10-12 April, 2008. Both sides signed the Work Regulations of the Expert Level Mechanism; initialed the draft MoU between the two Ministries of Water Resources upon the provision of hydrological information of Brahmaputra River in flood season by China to India; and signed the Implementation Plan between the Bureau of



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and the other Heads of State at the opening ceremony of the Seventh ASEM Summit at the Great Hall of the People, in Beijing, China on 24 October, 2008.



President of Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed meeting the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh , in New Delhi on 24 December, 2008.

Hydrology and Water Resources of the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Central Water Commission upon provision of hydrological information of Sutlej River by China to India. The MoU between the two Ministries of Water Resources upon the provision of hydrological information of Brahmaputra River in flood season by China to India was signed during EAM's visit to China from 4-7 June, 2008.

Border trade across Nathu La, Lipulekh Pass and Shipki La was affected during the year because of temporary restrictions imposed by the Chinese authorities in connection with the Beijing Olympics and Paraolympics. Six batches of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra in 2008 also had to be cancelled due to the imposition of restrictions by China.

Both countries have also interacted constructively on regional and international issues. Both sides have seen and agreed to work on their convergence of interests on issues such as world trade, food and energy security, climate change concerns, global financial crisis etc. High-level meetings on the sidelines of regional and multilateral conferences have become a highlight of the relationship. Both sides also interact at various regional forums like the East Asia Summit, ASEM, SCO, SAARC as observers and as members.

Other notable functional exchanges during the year included the following:

- Union Minister for Tourism and Culture, Ms. Ambika Soni visited China from 6- 8 April, 2008; Minister of State for Finance, Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal visited China in May to participate in the '2nd High Level India-China Financial Conference' organized by China Society for Finance and Banking, Indian Banks Association and ICEC Council; Chief Minister of Delhi, Smt. Sheila Dixit visited China in May; Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office, Shri Prithviraj Chavan visited Beijing on 29 July, 2008; Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr. M.S. Gill attended the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics in August, 2008; Minister for Urban Development, Shri S Jaipal Reddy undertook a bilateral visit in September; and Minister of State in charge of Housing and Poverty Alleviation, Ms. Kumari Selja visited China from 2-10 November, 2008 during which she attended the World Urban Forum meeting and also held bilateral discussions with Chinese counterparts.
- Under the exchange programme institutionalized in

2004 between the Ministry of External Affairs and the International Liaison Department of the Communist Party of China (MEA-ILD programme), Assam Chief Minister, Shri Tarun Gogoi visited China in the third week of May 2008 while Mr. Yu Zhengsheng, Party Secretary of Shanghai and Member of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party visited India from 16-22 October, 2008. Assam Chief Minister, Shri Tarun Gogoi also attended the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic in August, 2008.

- The Third Indian Youth Delegation led by Shri S K Arora, Secretary (Youth Affairs) visited China from 29 June to 8 July 2008. The Third Chinese Youth Delegation led by Mr. Wang Hongyan, Vice President of the All China Youth Federation visited India from 10-19 November, 2008.
- Mr. Qin Guangrong, Governor of Yunnan Province visited India from 7-15 November, 2008. Mr. Li Zhanshu, Governor of Heilongjiang Province visited India from 20-24 November, 2008. A Six-member delegation led by H.E. Feng Shuping, Vice Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China visited India from 18-22 October, 2008.
- Mr. He Yafei, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China visited India on 5 January, 2009.

According to the Economic Survey 2008, China is now India's largest trading partner. Bilateral trade in 2007 was US\$ 38.96 billion. According to the Chinese sources, India's trade deficit stands at US\$ 8.32 billion. This issue has been a matter of concern and has been flagged by both PM and EAM during their visits.

Defense cooperation has contributed to enhancement of mutual trust and cooperation with chief of PLA Navy visiting India from 1-5 November, 2008 and Indian Chief of Air Staff visiting Zhuhai for an air show.

Maldives

The bilateral relations between India and the Maldives continued to be close, friendly. Both the countries remained engaged in further strengthening this relationship through high-level exchanges and implementing various developmental projects in mutually identified areas. Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon visited Maldives from 27-29 January, 2008 to hold bilateral discussions with Maldivian authorities. He called on President of Maldives. He also met Foreign Minister of

Maldives, besides meeting other senior Government officials.

Minister of State for Commerce, Jairam Ramesh led an Indian delegation to Maldives from 29-31 January, 2008. During his meetings with Maldivian dignitaries, the Minister discussed ways and means to enhance bilateral relations and economic cooperation between India and the Maldives.

President of the Republic of Maldives, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom paid a State Visit to India from 6-12 February, 2008. During his visit, President Gayoom met the President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and Raksha Mantri. An Agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Science & Technology was signed on 11 February, 2008. Both the countries also agreed to sign a new MoU on the Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Male and set up an India-Maldives Foundation. The Maldives President also received the Sustainable Development Leadership Award conferred on him by TERI on 7 February, 2008.

Mr. Abdulla Shahid, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives visited India from 19-20 September 2008. Two MoUs - one concerning the manpower requirements of Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH), Male and the other relating to the establishment of India-Maldives Foundation were signed on 19 September, 2008.

Maldives made an important stride in its history with the ratification of the new Constitution of Maldives on 7 August, 2008 paving the way of holding first multi-party Presidential elections in Maldives. Mr. Mohamed Nasheed, the Presidential candidate of the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), won the election by securing 54.21% of votes as against 45.79% of votes secured by the incumbent President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Vice President represented India at his inaugural Ceremony on 11 November, 2008.

Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives, paid an official Visit to India from 30 November to 2 December, 2008. This was the first high-level visit to India from Maldives after the new Government came to power in Maldives. Dr. Shaheed met the External Affairs Minister and Union Home Minister on 2 December, 2008.

India continued to provide training facilities to Maldivian nationals in areas of both civil and defence related areas.

Mr. Mohamed Nasheed, President of the Republic of

Maldives paid a State Visit to India at the invitation of President of India from 23-25 December, 2008. During his visit, President Nasheed called on President of India on 24 December, 2008. The Vice-President of India, External Affairs Minister, Chairperson of UPA and the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha called on President Nasheed.

Two agreements – Agreement on Standby Credit Facility of US\$ 100 million to Maldives and an Air Services Agreement, were signed between the two countries on 24 December, 2008.

Mr. Ahmed Naseem, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives visited India from 8-10 January, 2009.

Mr. Ameen Faisal, Minister of Defence and National Security of Maldives visited India from 1-5 February, 2009, to discuss cooperation in the Defence Sector.

Dr. Aminath Jameel, Minister of Health and Family of the Republic of Maldives visited India from 22-26 February, 2009. During her visit, Dr. Jameel met the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare on 26 February, 2009 and discussed matter of mutual interest covering public healthcare. She also met the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Women and Child Development.

Dr. Mustafa Lutfi, Minister of Education of the Republic of Maldives visited New Delhi from 24-28 February, 2009 for attending the Asia-Pacific Sub-Regional Preparatory Conference for the World Conference on Higher Education organized by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in New Delhi from 25-26 February, 2009.

Myanmar

India-Myanmar relations are rooted in shared social, cultural, religious and historical ties. Both countries have a long land border of nearly 1650 km. Four north-eastern states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram border Myanmar. Myanmar also has a large population of Indian origin estimated at 2.5 million. Geo-strategic factors make it important for India and Myanmar to have a close relationship.

India-Myanmar relations are reflective of the two countries' common desire to cooperate with each other in order to promote peace and tranquillity along their border, achieve sustained economic development, foster people-to-people interaction and work towards achieving common goals in the sub-regional, regional and international contexts. Recent years have seen a steady

growth of exchanges in a variety of sectors, resulting in the deepening and widening of bilateral ties.

The 14th National Level Meeting (NLM) at the level of Home Secretary/ Deputy Home Minister was held in New Delhi from 7-10 March, 2008. During the visit, U Nyan Win called on Prime Minister on 2 January, 2008. He also met EAM and Vice President on 2 January, 2008.

Myanmar Minister of Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win visited India from 31 December to 4 January, 2008. H.E. U Kyaw Thu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs visited India as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister from 23-26 January, 2008. Vice Senior General Maung Aye visited India from 2-6 April, 2008. PM Thein Sein and FM U Nyan Win visited India for the BIMSTEC Summit in November 2008. From Indian side, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry visited Myanmar in April, June and October 2008.

Foreign Secretary, Shri Shivshankar Menon visited Myanmar in February, 2008 at the invitation of Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. U Kyaw Thu. The discussions during the visit covered a wide range of bilateral issues, including security and border issues, trade and economic cooperation and cooperation in cross-border developmental projects, IT, Energy, Power and Education & Training. Foreign Secretary visited Myanmar again in November 2008 for foreign office consultation.

India seeks to obtain Myanmar's cooperation on a sustained basis to check the activities of Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) in Myanmar. For this purpose, institutional mechanisms have been developed. These include annual Foreign Office Consultations (FOC); annual National Level Meeting (NLM); Sectoral Level Meetings (SLM) and the bi-annual Army Border Liaison Meetings. Myanmar vowed at the highest level not to allow its territory to be used by any organizations that harm neighbouring countries including India.

A five-member delegation led by Myanmar Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig. Gen. Phone Swe visited India to attend the 14th NLM between India and Myanmar held in New Delhi from 7-10 March, 2008. Security related issues, drug trafficking, border management issues, border trade and cross border projects were discussed at the meeting. The ninth round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Myanmar were held in Yangon from 22-23 November, 2008.

The cooperation and exchanges in the defence sector continued. Government of India provided assistance in

collection of technical data & training to Myanmarese experts for delimitation of Myanmar's continental shelf.

India remains committed to provide assistance in developing infrastructure within Myanmar. A number of projects are under implementation between the two sides including Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, Trilateral Highway Project, maintenance and resurfacing of Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo Road and upgradation of Rhi-Tidim and Rhi-Falam Roads.

The Framework Agreement on the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, a Protocol on Facilitation of Transit Transport and a Protocol on Maintenance and Administration and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement were signed between India and Myanmar during the visit of Vice Senior General Maung Aye, Vice Chairman, SPDC in April 2008. During the visit of Minister of State for Commerce and Power, Shri Jairam Ramesh, to Myanmar from 22-25 June, 2008 the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) was signed.

As regards bilateral trade, Myanmar's exports to India during 2007-08 were US\$ 984.48 million, whereas India's exports to Myanmar for the same period stood at US\$ 189.95 million. The Third Meeting of the Joint Trade Committee (JTC) was held in Myanmar from 13-15 October, 2008 in which both Countries agreed to upgrade border trade to normal trade at the border points Moreh-Tamu and Zowkhathar-Rhi, the opening of a new border trade point at Avangkhung in the state of Nagaland in India and Robermi in Myanmar and to expand the list of commodities under the Indo-Myanmar Border Trade Agreement from 22 to 40 items. A business delegation from Myanmar visited New Delhi from 11-14 November, 2008 to participate in BIMSTEC Business meeting. A Government-to-Government agreement to ensure steady export of pulses from Myanmar to India was reached in November 2008.

India and Myanmar are also emerging as partners in the field of energy, IT and power. In September 2008, a MoU was signed between NHPC (India), Ltd. and Ministry of Power (1) of Myanmar for developing the Tamanthi Hydro-Power Project in the Chindwin river in Myanmar. C-DAC has set up an India Myanmar Centre for Development of IT Skill (IMCEITS), which was inaugurated by Prime Minister of Myanmar, General Thein Sein, on 16 October, 2008.

India was one of the first countries to rush emergency relief assistance to Myanmar in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis in May 2008. Two Indian Naval ships and eight

Indian Air force aircrafts delivered immediate relief material, including food grains and medical supplies to Myanmar. Two self-sustained medical teams were in the affected areas for more than two weeks. In the rehabilitation phase, supply of corrugated steel sheets for providing roofing, replacement of 16 damaged transformers, delivery of 500 solar torches & lanterns, installing 20 biomass gasifiers, and 1.8 lakh bottles of IV fluids were undertaken by India. Cash assistance of US\$ 200,000 (approximately Rs. 85 lakhs) for the reconstruction of the Shwedagon Pagoda complex in Yangon was also handed over to Myanmar.

Under the India-Myanmar Cultural Exchange programme, an Indian Puppet Theatre Group visited Myanmar and presented puppet shows in Yangon and in Mandalay in November.

Dr. M. Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India visited Myanmar from 5-8 February, 2009. During the visit he called on H.E. Senior General Than Shwe and Vice Senior General Maung Aye. He visited Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay. His discussions covered a range of issues including security, roads, trade, IT, power, agriculture, oil and natural gas, education, training and developmental projects. Agreements for setting up an Industrial Training Centre by HMT(I) and a Centre for English Language Training were signed. The Optic Fibre Link between Moreh and Mandalay was commissioned. Vice President also inaugurated the Entrepreneurial Development Centre in Yangon.

The Tenth India- Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi from 5-6 March, 2009. The Indian side was led by Foreign Secretary Shri Shivshankar Menon and the Myanmar side by Deputy Foreign Minister, U Maung Myint. The discussions covered a wide range of bilateral issues.

Nepal

India extended all possible support to the Government and people of Nepal in consolidating the peaceful democratic transition and in its developmental efforts. The Government remained engaged with the Government of Nepal with a view to strengthen the multi-faceted ties and wide-ranging cooperation with Nepal. India stands ready to assist in every possible way, Nepal's transition to a democratic, stable, peaceful and prosperous State.

The ongoing democratic transition in Nepal passed several key milestones during the year. Elections to the Constituent Assembly were held on 10 April, 2008 in

which CPN (Maoist) emerged as the single largest party. Nepal was declared a Federal Democratic Republic by the Constituent Assembly in its first sitting on 28 May, 2008. Through amendments to the interim constitution, the posts of President and Vice-President were created. Dr. Ram Baran Yadav from Nepali Congress and Mr. Parmananda Jha from Madhesi Janadikar Forum were sworn-in as the President and Vice President of Nepal on 23 July, 2008. A coalition government led by Prime Minister and CPN (Maoist) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, also known as 'Prachanda' with support from UML, Madhesi Janadikar Forum and other smaller political parties was formed in August 2008.

Following the formation of a new elected government in Nepal, there had been a regular exchange of high-level visits between the two countries. Prime Minister of Nepal visited India on an Official visit from 14-18 September, 2008 and again from 11-14 November, 2008 to participate in the BIMSTEC Summit. In accordance with the decisions taken during visit of Prime Minister of Nepal in September 2008, bilateral mechanisms in various sectors were re-activated. The Government also provided assistance of Rs. 20 crores for flood relief, committed to rebuild the segments of the East-West Highway damaged in the Kosi floods and Rs. 150 crores credit for POL supplies to the Government of Nepal. Foreign Minister of Nepal visited India in August 2008 to participate in the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting.

In the first high-level visit from India after the declaration of Nepal as a Federal Democratic Republic, External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Nepal from 24-26 November, 2008 at the invitation of Foreign Minister of Nepal. He also extended an invitation to the President of Nepal to visit India at an early mutually convenient date. Minister for Commerce and Supplies of Nepal visited India in January 2009 to participate in the Petrotech International Oil and Gas Conference and to meet his counterparts.

Cooperation in water resources sector with Nepal made further progress. On the Multi-Purpose Projects, it was decided to set up the Pancheshwar Development Authority for the Pancheshwar Project and to complete the Joint Project investigations for the Sun Kosi Sapta Kosi Project at the earliest.

India continued to contribute to the development efforts of Government of Nepal by undertaking development projects in the areas of infrastructure, education, health, rural and community development. The MoU for the

Small Development Project Scheme was further renewed for a period of three years. Strengthening of border infrastructure along the India-Nepal border was high on the Government's priority. Projects related to development of Integrated Check-Posts, road and rail connectivity between the two countries were under various stages of implementation. Cooperation in the area of development of human resources, training and capacity building of Nepali institutions was strengthened further.

Pakistan

Composite Dialogue Discussions

The Composite Dialogue covering eight subjects namely Peace and Security including Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), Jammu & Kashmir; Terrorism and Drug trafficking; Friendly Exchanges; Economic and Commercial Cooperation; Tulbul Navigation Project; Sir Creek and Siachen was resumed in 2004 to deepen and expand bilateral relations. This followed an assurance conveyed by the then President of Pakistan on 6 January, 2004 that Pakistan would not permit territory under its control to support terrorism in any manner. The Fourth Round of the Composite Dialogue was reviewed in the meeting of Foreign Secretaries in May 2008 and the Fifth Round of the Composite Dialogue was launched by the External Affairs Minister and Pakistan Foreign Minister on 21 May, 2008. During this meeting, an Agreement on Consular Access was also signed.

Transport links established in the previous rounds of the dialogue continued to operate successfully, facilitating the movement of people and boosting bilateral trade. Cross-LoC trade by movement of trucks commenced on 21 October, 2008 on Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalkot routes. Triple entry permits for LoC Crossings were introduced with effect from 1 October, 2008. Frequency of Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalkot bus services increased from fortnightly to weekly with effect from 21 August, 2008 and 25 August, 2008 respectively. An MoU was signed on 15 February, 2008 to upgrade the Air Services Agreement between India and Pakistan by increasing the frequencies per week from 12 to 28, the designated airlines from one to three and adding Islamabad and Chennai to the existing four points of call viz. Mumbai, Delhi, Karachi, and Lahore. In July 2008, India included M/s Jet Lite and M/s Deccan Aviation Limited in the list of designated airlines for air services to Pakistan. In the first meeting of the India-Pakistan Standing Committee on Bus Services held on 21 February, 2008 it was decided to increase the frequency of Delhi-Lahore bus service from two to three trips per week.

Terrorism

Notwithstanding the considerable progress made in the initial months after the launch of the Fifth Round of the Composite Dialogue, the issue of terrorism continued to strain the dialogue process and thereafter led to a pause in it. Prime Minister Gilani promised India's Prime Minister in their meeting in Colombo on 2 August, 2008 on the sidelines of SAARC Summit that he would conduct an independent investigation into the attack on our Embassy in Kabul on 7 July, 2008. In the meeting between Prime Minister and President Zardari in New York on 24 September, 2008, it was further agreed that a special session of the Joint Anti-Terrorism Mechanism (JATM) would be held to discuss matters of mutual concern including the bombing of the Indian Embassy in Kabul. This special meeting of JATM was held on 24 October, 2008, and the information on leads on the attack on the Embassy was shared with Pakistan. There has been no response from Pakistan on our concerns and information shared with reference to the Kabul attack.

Terrorist attack on Mumbai on 26 November, 2008: On 1 December, 2008, Pakistan was informed that the terrorist attack on Mumbai was carried out by elements from Pakistan. On 22 December, 2008, a letter written by the arrested terrorist and addressed to Pakistan High Commission was handed over. On 5 January, 2009, India handed over to the Pakistan High Commissioner in New Delhi material linking the Mumbai attack of 26-29 November, 2008 to elements in Pakistan. This material included: Material from the interrogation of arrested terrorist; the Pakistani national who is in police custody; Details of the terrorists' communication links with elements in Pakistan during the Mumbai attack; Recovered weapons and equipment and other articles; and data retrieved from recovered GPS and satellite phone instruments used by the terrorists. The evidence was also presented to the international community. Pakistan is yet to respond to the evidence presented to it and notwithstanding the high level statements promising cooperation, in terms of actual action taken, its response has been disappointing.

Diplomatic efforts after the terrorist attack on Mumbai on 26 November, 2008

In the wake of the terrorist attack, Prime Minister said in the Lok Sabha that the international community needed to be galvanized into dealing sternly and effectively with the epicenter of terrorism, which is located in Pakistan. Effective steps were to be taken to bring those responsible for the Mumbai attacks to justice and to ensure such acts of terrorism do not recur. In pursuance of these, major



Prime Minister of Nepal, Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' calling on the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in New Delhi on 12 November, 2008.



President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa meeting the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in New Delhi on 13 November, 2008.

diplomatic steps were taken bilaterally and internationally. As a consequence, the United Nations, Al Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee listed under Security Council Resolution 1267, individuals and entities based in Pakistan including leaders of the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba. The Jamat-ud-Dawa was also listed as an alias of the LeT. To present the full details of the terrorist attacks and also the well-founded evidence linking the attacks to elements in Pakistan, detailed briefings for all resident Heads of Missions based in India were organised in the Ministry of External Affairs. Our Heads of Mission abroad similarly briefed their Governments of accreditation. In addition, the External Affairs Minister wrote to his counterparts in all countries forwarding detailed dossiers on the terrorist attacks and with the evidence incriminating elements in Pakistan.

High Level Meetings

Prime Minister's Meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister
The Prime Minister met the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Yousuf Raza Gilani in Colombo on 2 August, 2008 on the sidelines of SAARC Summit and also in Beijing on 24 October, 2008 on the sidelines of ASEM Summit. In the meeting with the Pakistan PM on 2 August, 2008 in Colombo, Prime Minister expressed our concerns about events which have had an impact on our bilateral relations: the attack on our Embassy in Kabul, the ceasefire violations and continued attempts at infiltration across the Line of Control. Both Prime Ministers expressed the determination that two countries need to overcome these events and to move back on the track of improving relations. Prime Minister Gilani also promised that he would conduct an independent investigation into the attack on our Embassy.

Prime Minister's meeting with Pakistan President

Prime Minister met President of Pakistan Mr. Asif Zardari on the sidelines of UNGA meeting in New York on 24 September, 2008. In this meeting, the commitment of Pakistan to its assurance contained in the 6 January, 2004 Joint Press Statement was reiterated by President of Pakistan. It was agreed that both countries would schedule meetings of the Fifth Round of the Composite Dialogue in the next three months; the ceasefire should be stabilized; a special meeting of the Joint Anti-Terror Mechanism would be held in October 2008 to address mutual concerns including the bombing of the Indian Embassy in Kabul; the expansion of people-to-people contacts, trade, commerce and economic cooperation by opening of the Wagah-Attari road link and Khokrapar-Munabao rail route to all permissible items of trade;

commencement of Cross-LoC trade on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot roads on 21 October, 2008. It was also agreed that Modalities for the opening of the Skardu-Kargil route will be discussed soon.

External Affairs Minister's interactions

External Affairs Minister visited Pakistan from 20-21 May, 2008. The visit was in the wake of the installation of a new democratic dispensation in Pakistan following the victory of the PPP in the General Election. During this meeting the fourth round of Composite Dialogue was concluded and the fifth round launched. Mr. Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Foreign Minister of Pakistan visited New Delhi on 27 June, 2008. Foreign Minister Qureshi visited New Delhi again from 26-29 November, 2008. In this meeting the Ministers noted that the substantial achievements have already been made in the Fifth Round of Composite Dialogue such as the opening of cross-LoC trade, the agreement in principle to open the Wagah-Attari route for all permissible items of trade, the opening of Khokrapar-Munabao rail link for trade in cargo, discussion on modalities of the Kargil-Skardu link, etc.

Humanitarian Issues

A significant number of Indian prisoners, fishermen and boats are in Pakistani custody. Pakistan too has concerns about its nationals in jails in India. The first meeting of India-Pakistan Judicial Committee on Prisoners was held on 26 February, 2008. The Committee made recommendations to the two Governments, which *inter alia* include immediate release of and consular access to fishermen and exchange of consolidated list of nationals in each others' jails on 31 March, 2008. The Committee visited jails in Pakistan in June 2008 and jails in India in August 2008 and made several recommendations.

Commerce and Trade

India attaches importance to bilateral economic and commercial cooperation including transit trade with Pakistan as a part of the overall normalisation of relations. Total bilateral trade was of the order of US\$ 2.12 billion in the year 2007-2008, 27% more than in 2006-2007 (US \$1.67 billion). In the period April-December 2008 total trade however was of the order of US\$ 1.3 billion. Pakistan's export to India in this period was however 30% higher (US\$293 million) as compared to 2007-08 as a whole (US\$ 211 million). Unofficial trade through third countries is also of significance which increases the transaction costs for end users in Pakistan. While India has accorded MFN status to Pakistan, Pakistan continues to restrict items of import from India to a positive list. On SAFTA, Pakistan has refused to extend the negotiated

tariff concessions to items outside the positive list to India thereby negating the letter and spirit of SAFTA as exports are limited only to items on the positive list.

Pakistan announced a new Trade Policy on 19 July, 2008 and added 139 more items to be added in the Positive List. Incremental expansion to the Positive List is the preferred policy in Pakistan as the means to expand bilateral trade rather than address issue of MFN status frontally.

Other Issues

India extended a flood relief assistance of Rs.1.3 Crores to the government of North West Frontier Province for the relief supplies in September 2008 following severe floods in the Province.

Sri Lanka

India's bilateral engagement with Sri Lanka maintained the positive momentum of the previous year. Exchange of visits at the highest political level contributed to the strengthening of bilateral relations. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Mahinda Rajapaksa during the 15th SAARC Summit in Colombo on 2 & 3 August, 2008. The Summit was preceded by the meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers, during which Minister of External Affairs Mr. Pranab Mukherjee met with his Sri Lankan counterpart, Mr. Rohitha Bogollagama. Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama had visited India on 16 June 2008 to deliver invitation for the SAARC Summit in Colombo. The two Foreign Ministers again met in New Delhi on 26 August, 2008 on the sidelines of the Tenth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and in New York on 1 October, 2008 on the sidelines of the UNGA. External Affairs Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherjee visited Sri Lanka on 27 January, 2009 and held discussions with President Mahinda Rajapaksa. This was preceded by Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon's visit to Sri Lanka from 16-17 January, 2009.

The security situation in Sri Lanka, especially the conflict in the North and the resultant plight of civilians and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), remained important issues in the bilateral dialogue between India and Sri Lanka. External Affairs Minister reiterated India's concern at the deteriorating humanitarian situation during his visit in January 2009 and emphasized the need for a pause to enable civilians to move to safety. He underlined the need to ensure the safety and security of the civilians, to respect and expand safe zones, and to minimise the effects of the conflict on civilians.

India reiterated the belief that there was no military solution to the conflict and the way forward lies in a peacefully negotiated political settlement acceptable to all the communities within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. This should include, among other things, a credible and genuine devolution package and implementation of the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution.

As a gesture of goodwill, India has extended humanitarian relief assistance to civilians and Internally Displaced Persons in the northern part of Sri Lanka. Three instalments of relief material have been dispatched so far. In the first instalment, 80,000 family packs of relief material mobilised by the State Government of Tamil Nadu were distributed in the affected areas in December 2008 by the ICRC office in Sri Lanka. The second and third instalment comprising of medicines were handed over to Sri Lanka in the first three months of 2009. Further, in March 2009, India has sent a 52-member emergency medical unit with hospital to North Eastern Sri Lanka to cater to the urgent medical requirement of civilians coming out of the conflict zone.

India and Sri Lanka have also reached an understanding on fishing arrangements under which both sides agreed to put in place practical arrangements to deal with bonafide fishermen crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line from either country. This was agreed to during the visit of Sri Lankan Member of Parliament and Special Envoy of the President, Basil Rajapaksa, to New Delhi on 26 October 2008.

Bilateral economic and trade ties continued to expand during the period under review. India is Sri Lanka's largest trade partner, accounting for 16.8% or 1/6th of the total trade turnover of Sri Lanka. Total trade in 2008 stood at US \$3.265 billion. With FDI approvals of over US\$ 500 million, India is also the fourth largest investor in Sri Lanka. Bharti Airtel, which was allowed entry as the fourth mobile operator in Sri Lanka, has begun operations. India has also extended a \$100 million Line of Credit for the upgradation of the Colombo-Matara railway line by RITES-IRCON.

The two countries have concluded their negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which is expected to further widen and deepen our trade and economic engagement. An Agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology was signed between India and Sri Lanka in New Delhi in October 2008 which provides for seminars, workshops and exchange of visits by scientists and researchers. A Mutual Recognition

Agreement and another agreement on cooperation among tea research institutions were signed by the Tea Boards of India and Sri Lanka in September 2008. Earlier, in May 2008, the Sri Lankan Roads Development Authority (RDA) and the Indian National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) signed an MoU on Cooperation.

Development assistance to Sri Lanka is another significant plank of India's bilateral engagement with Sri Lanka. Projects include financial assistance to set up 20 Nenasalas (e-learning kiosks), providing fishermen in the Eastern Province, who were affected by the ethnic conflict, with fishing boats and nets, and grant of ten buses to augment the infrastructure of the newly set up government in the Eastern Province. During the year, India also implemented a project under which 41 English teachers from Sri Lanka were sent for training to Hyderabad as teacher trainers.

Another project to create facilities for vocational training at Puttalam is near completion.

In the education sector, India continued to push the initiative to upgrade the educational infrastructure of schools in the Central Province, including teachers' training, setting up of computer labs, the Mahatma Gandhi scholarship scheme for A-level students and 20 scholarships to Indian Origin Tamils to undertake four year degree courses in Gandhigram Rural University in India. India also contributed to the Ceylon Workers Education Trust that gives scholarships to children of estate workers every year.

On the cultural side, an exhibition of photographs of Buddhist art and heritage by the noted photographer, Benoy Behl was organized in Matara. The exhibition will also go to other cities.



South East Asia and the Pacific

2

Australia

India-Australia bilateral relations continued to develop in various spheres and several high-level visits from both sides took place during the year. This started with the visit of Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, Shri Shyam Saran to Australia in January 2008 for discussions with Foreign Minister Mr. Stephen Smith in Perth. Trade Minister of Australia, Mr. Simon Crean visited India from 15-19 January and discussed bilateral issues relating to Trade, Commerce and Investment. During this visit, he delivered a speech in CII Partnership Summit held from 16-18 January and also met RBI Governor and Ministers of Agriculture, Finance, Mines, Commerce & Industry, Science & Technology and the Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission. Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences Shri Kapil Sibal visited Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in February 2008 at the invitation of Minister for Innovation, Science and Research Mr. Kim Carr. Shri Sibal interacted with five Universities and seven Research institutions. The subsequent meetings of the Joint Science & Technology Committee and the Joint Biotechnology Committee within three months of the visit of Shri Sibal were indicative of the strong desire to enhance our interaction with Australia in these sectors. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, Minister of Development for North Eastern Region visited Australia to participate in the North East India Investment Opportunities Seminar in Sydney from 30-31 March 2008.

The 11th meeting of the Joint Ministerial Commission, co-chaired by Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Kamal Nath and Australian Trade Minister Mr. Simon Crean, took place in Melbourne on 20 May, 2008. The Joint Business Council meeting anchored by FICCI and the Australia-India Business Council; the second meeting of the Joint Study Group on FTA feasibility study also took place in Melbourne, on 21 May, 2008. Minister of State for Civil Aviation Shri Praful Patel visited Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra at the invitation of Australian Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Mr. Anthony Albanese. Minister of State for Steel Shri Jitin Prasada visited Sydney and Perth in June 2008 for interactions

with the State Governments of New South Wales and Western Australia. External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Canberra for the bilateral Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue on 23 June, 2008. An Extradition Treaty and a Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters were signed during the visit. Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed also visited Sydney in August 2008.

From Australia, Foreign Minister Stephen Smith visited India in September 2008. A Joint Working Group (JWG) on Passports, Visa and Consular Matters was established during the visit. A delegation led by Minister of Resources, Energy and Tourism of Australia Mr. Martin Ferguson visited India from 3-6 November, 2008. Action Plans for co-operation were signed by the Australian side with the Ministries of Mines, Coal, Power, Petroleum & Natural Gas and New & Renewable Energy.

India-Australia bilateral trade during 2007-08 reached A\$ 10.9 billion, comprising of A\$ 9.3 billion in Australian exports to India and A\$ 1.6 billion in exports from India to Australia. India was Australia's sixth largest export destination. India was also the third largest source of immigrants, the second largest source of skilled workers, and the second largest source of overseas students for Australia.

Brunei

Bilateral relations with Brunei Darussalam continued to be cordial and friendly. Important areas of interactions were political, defense and commercial.

At the invitation of the President of India, Sultan of Brunei, Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah paid a four-day state visit to India from 20-23 May, 2008. The visit took place after more than 15 years since his last visit to India. The Sultan met various Indian leaders and held discussions with Prime Minister on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. During the visit, the following MoUs/Agreements were signed: (i) Agreement on Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments; (ii) MoU of Cooperation in Information and Communication Technology; (iii) MoU

on Cooperation in the fields of Culture, Arts and Sports; (iv) MoU on the Establishment of Joint Trade Committee; (v) Renewal of MoU on Cooperation in the Operation of the Telemetry Tracking and Telecomm and Station for Satellite and Launch Vehicles and for Cooperation in the field of Space Research Science and Applications.

Two Indian Naval Ships, INS *Gharial* and INS *Kulish* visited Maura Port in Brunei from 18-20 October, 2008 for a three day goodwill visit. The visit by the Indian Naval ships was a part of increasing engagements between Indian and Bruneian Armed Forces under expanding bilateral ties spurred by the Sultan's visit to India in May 2008.

Shri G.K. Pillai, Commerce Secretary led a delegation for the ASEAN Senior Economic Ministers-India Consultations held in Brunei from 5-7 August, 2008 and concluded the negotiations on India-ASEAN FTA on Trade in Goods.

The Dy. Minister of Communications, Dato Mohd Yusof attended the ICT Forum organized by the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organizations in Kochi from 15-18 April, 2008.

A nine-member delegation from the Ministry of Communication of Brunei Darussalam, headed by Dato Eusoff Agakia, Deputy Minister at the Prime Minister's Office, paid a working visit to India from 7-11 April, 2008.

Cambodia

Bilateral relations between India and Cambodia remained cordial and friendly.

India continued its bilateral assistance to Cambodia through grants and Lines of Credit. Several projects under India's assistance in the areas of hydro electric power, irrigation, and restoration of temples are under implementation. Other major assistance for installation of hand pumps for drinking water supply in rural Cambodia and establishment of Centre of Excellence in IT are being processed. Prof. Saifuddin Soz, Minister of Water Resources, visited Cambodia from 15-19 February and met Mr. Lin Kean Hor, Minister of Water Resources & Meteorology.

A new Line of Credit of US\$ 15 million for three mini hydel projects was approved for Cambodia in June 2008, which will be utilized for a transmission line between Paling and Battambang in Cambodia.

As a part of our close cultural ties, India provided assistance for preparation of a Management Plan for the

Preah Vihear Temple in Cambodia for its inscription on World Heritage List of UNESCO. The temple was successfully inscribed on World Heritage List of UNESCO.

Bilateral trade has steadily grown during the year. To promote increased exports from Cambodia to India, Custom Notification has been issued in August 2008 extending Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme to Cambodia. Cambodia is an important partner in combating terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal arms smuggling and related crimes.

Two Indian Navy Ships visited Cambodia during the year. Under ITEC Scheme, Indian Army is continuing to train Cambodian personnel in specialized de-mining operations since 1995, and slots in peace-keeping training were also offered. India gifted medical stores comprising ambulance vans, equipment and supplies and medicines worth Rs. 2.5 crores, and engineering and artillery stores worth Rs. 1.025 crores to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.

Cambodia has been consistently supportive of various Indian initiatives and interests in regional and international fora including our candidature for a permanent seat on the UNSC. Cambodia has formally communicated its support for our candidature for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the years 2011-12. In the context of our 'Look East' policy and the ASEAN, Cambodia is an important interlocutor and a good partner.

Fiji

India continued its engagement with the interim Government of the Republic of Fiji Islands led by the Interim Prime Minister, Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama. India focused on social and economic assistance to Fiji while continuing its emphasis on the need for Fiji to return to democratic system, and aiming at promoting peace and harmony amongst major communities for sustained economic development.

Mr. Mahendra Pal Chaudhry, Interim Minister for Finance, National Planning and Sugar Industry and Public Utilities visited India from 25 April to 2 May, 2008 during which, he called on Prime Minister, and met with Minister for Finance, Minister for Science and Technology & MoS for Railways. Commissioner of Police Mr. Teleni visited India from 24-28 June, 2008 and interacted with the Indian officials in order to understand the structure, capacity and functioning of Indian Police Force. Mr Francis Narayan, Chairman, Fiji Islands Trade & Investment Bureau (FTIB) led a trade and investment delegation to India from 20 September to 3 October, 2008 with focus on enhancing



*Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh with Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, of Brunei,
in New Delhi on 21 May, 2008.*

cooperation in the field of Information and Communication Technology.

Indian experts from the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute visited Fiji Islands from 26 June to 23 August, 2008 and assisted Fiji's Coconut Industry Development Authority and presented a blueprint for the development of coconut industry in Fiji Islands. Indian Culture Centre is offering classes in Indian classical music, yoga and Hindi language. To assist Fiji's recent implementation of three-language formula, India donated 19,000 Hindi language books, thereby supplying study materials in all the primary and secondary schools of Fiji. India has also provided assistance in the form of sewing machines for the economically backward women of Fiji.

Indonesia

The year 2008-2009 witnessed continued close bilateral relations with Indonesia. There has been regular exchange of high-level visits and other delegation-level visits between the two countries. This has further strengthened the already close political, security, defence, commercial and cultural contacts between India and Indonesia.

President, Smt. Pratibhadevi Singh Patil paid State Visit to Indonesia from 28 November to 1 December, 2008. During the visit, the President visited Bali and Jakarta. In Bali, the Governor of Bali called on the President. The President visited the Taman Ayu Temple and addressed a gathering of prominent citizens, cultural personalities and members of the Indian community in Bali. In Jakarta, the President held bilateral talks with President Yudhoyono of Indonesia. During the discussions, the two leaders expressed satisfaction at the development of bilateral relations and resolved to carry the bilateral relationship to a new level in consonance with the objectives of the Strategic Partnership between India and Indonesia. After the bilateral talks two MoUs - on Agricultural Cooperation and Cooperation in Youth Affairs & Sports - were signed. This was followed by Joint Press Statements by the two Presidents. President also called on the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the House of Regional Representatives and the Chairman of the People's Consultative Assembly.

There have been regular Parliamentary contacts between the two sides. A Parliamentary delegation of the Indonesian House of Representatives from Committee-IX (Health and Labour) visited India on a Study Tour from 11-17 October, 2008. An Indonesian delegation of the Parliamentary Friendship Group for India led by Mr. Fahri Hamza visited India from 2-6 November, 2008.

Indonesian Minister of Health Siti Fadilah Supari visited India in 2008. The Indonesian Trade Minister also visited India in 2008. Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Kamal Nath visited Indonesia in April 2008 to attend the ASEAN-India Economic Ministers' meeting. A delegation led by Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Shri Namo Narain Meena visited Bali for COP nine Meeting of Basel Convention in June 2008. Minister of State for Labour and Employment Shri Oscar Fernandez visited Bali to participate in the Second ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference in October 2008. Secretary (East), MEA led an Indian delegation to participate in ASEAN-India meeting in Bali in April 2008.

During the year, there has been a rapid development of our ties in all fields. The two countries have had regular defence exchanges including exchange of high level visits, ship visits, officers studying in Staff Colleges in either country and joint coordinated patrols in the mouth of the Malacca Straits. Chief of Army Staff visited Indonesia in February 2009.

Indonesia is our third largest trading partner in ASEAN. Bilateral trade was US\$ 6.5 billion in 2007 and amounted to US\$ 5.8 billion in the first half of 2008. We have active cultural exchanges leveraging the strong imprint of Indian culture in Indonesian society. Various cultural activities were organized throughout the year by our two Cultural Centres established in Jakarta and Bali. During the year, Indonesia was offered 75 training slots under ITEC, 38 training slots under TCS of Colombo Plan, 25 GCSS scholarships slots and two Hindi one-year course scholarships. The Mission celebrated ITEC Day on 14 November, 2008 in which 200 ITEC alumni participated.

In the international arena, Indonesia holds positions favourable to India on many of the issues of concern. Indonesia strongly condemned the Mumbai terrorist attacks and is deeply conscious of its own vulnerabilities to terrorism as a pluralistic and archipelagic nation. Indonesia favours a resolution of the Kashmir issue through peaceful dialogue and broadly maintains a neutral stance on India-Pakistan issues and records its reservations on anti-India resolutions in the OIC. Indonesia, however, enjoys warm relations with Pakistan and has been careful not to alienate Pakistan in pursuing friendly relations with India. Indonesia has been supportive of India's 'Look East Policy' and is currently the ASEAN Coordinator for India's Dialogue Partnership with the ASEAN. Indonesia was also a strong advocate of India's participation in the East Asia Summit.

The Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East



President, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil meeting the President of Republic of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, at Jakarta, Indonesia on 1 December, 2008.



President of Lao PDR, Choummaly Sayasone laying wreath at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat, in Delhi on 27 August, 2008.

Asia (ERIA) was established in Jakarta on 3 June, 2008 to enhance economic integration in East Asia. Shri Ratan Tata is India's nominee on the ERIA Governing Board. Indonesia held the first meeting of the Bali Democracy Forum in December 2008. This is a new regional initiative to promote democracy and good governance in the Asia-Pacific region. Under the initiative of New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP), Indonesia hosted a Ministerial Conference on Capacity Building for Palestine which was held in Jakarta from 14-15 July, 2008. The Conference agreed to establish a follow-up mechanism for the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the capacity building programmes.

Lao PDR

The highlight of bilateral relations this year was the State Visit of President of Lao PDR to India from 26-30 August, 2008. It was the first visit by a Lao President to India after a gap of more than 30 years. During the visit, India announced humanitarian assistance of US \$ 1 million for flood relief in Vientiane, and construction of Buddhist College at Champassak, Lao PDR. Gifting of 50 parachutes for the 60th Anniversary of Lao Defense Forces in 2009 was also announced. India's commitment for construction of neurological hospital, and Air Force Academy in Lao PDR was reiterated. The two countries signed a Line of Credit Agreement for US\$ 33 million to be utilized for three hydro-power projects. India also increased the ITEC training slots from 60 at present to 80 and from 14 scholarships to 20 for Lao nationals to study in India from this year.

A five-member delegation led by the Lao Vice Minister of Education, Mrs. Sengduane Lachanthaboun visited India from 23-27 June, 2008. The delegation had interaction with the senior officials and different agencies of the Ministry of Human Resource Development of India.

The first Indian Trade exhibition was held in Vientiane from 14-17 November, 2008 and an Indian Puppet group visited on the occasion. The Indian Air Force Suryakiran Aerobatics team performed in Laos from 16-17 November, 2008. It was the first ever show of this magnitude in Laos.

Lao PDR supports India for a permanent seat in the expanded Security Council as well as on nuclear issue.

Malaysia

The year saw significant progress in strengthening of bilateral relations between India and Malaysia. Bilateral relations gathered further momentum in various sectors of our relations with Malaysia as both sides followed up

on the decisions taken at the Fourth India-Malaysia Joint Commission meeting. This was evident in marked forward movement on issues relating to economic, commercial, defense and consular spheres.

The Foreign Office Consultations between India and Malaysia took place in New Delhi on 13 May, 2008 which allowed both the sides to review the status of bilateral relations. Both sides agreed to strengthen and deepen engagement and cooperation, as well as exchange of experiences between the two countries. The year was marked by high level visits from both the sides and by a number of important economic/commercial events organized in Malaysia.

The bilateral trade during the January-October 2008 period matches with the performance during 2007 performance. The two-way trade during the first ten months (January-October) of 2008 has reached US \$ 9.1 billion registering 34% growth over the corresponding period in the preceding year. This compares favourably with the two-way 2007 trade figure of US \$ 8.14 billion (Indian exports US \$2.1 billion and imports US \$6.03 billion) or about 24% growth over the previous year. The bilateral trade is expected to touch US \$ Ten billion by the end of the current year, ahead of the target date of 2010. Significantly, India's exports during January-October 2008 of US \$2.7 billion marks a 58% over the corresponding period during the last year.

One of the notable developments in 2008 is a decision of the Malaysian Ministry of Transport to award IRCON a major Railway Double Tracking Project worth over US \$ 1 billion.

Based on the recommendations of a Joint Study Group, India and Malaysia have started negotiations in February 2008 to work out a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with a view to conclude it in 2009. So far, two meetings of Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) were held, one in Kuala Lumpur in February 2008 and the second in New Delhi in June/July 2008.

Indian investments during first ten months of 2008 amounted to US \$48.44 million. Announcements have also been made by Indian companies namely Hyderabad-based Vivo Bio Tech Ltd to invest US \$ 140 million, Malladi Group US \$300 million over the next 3-5 years and Ad labs to invest US \$ 29 million. India's Reliance Capital Asset received an Islamic fund management license from Malaysian Government in November 2008. Malaysia is the 21st largest investor in India as per the cumulative FDI approved since January, 1991 with more

than 210 FDI approvals, valued at US\$ 1.84 billion. Malaysian investments into India are also increasing in recent years. Maxis plans to invest in India between US \$ 4 to 5 billion in 2009-10 and another company TMI US \$ 1.8 billion in 2009. If we include investments made through Mauritius route, cumulative Malaysian investments in India till date stands in excess of US\$ 4.5 billion.

The Second Malaysia-India Economic Conference (MIEC) 2008 was held in September 2008, which was attended by over 600 businessmen from Malaysia and India. The First Malaysia-India Strategic Dialogue under the aegis of CII and Asian Strategic and Leadership Institute (ASLI) of Malaysia were held in Kuala Lumpur in September 2008. Ambassador Satinder Lamba, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister led the Indian delegation. This was the first important Track-II dialogue in recent years held between the two countries, which recommended the setting up an India-Malaysia Foundation to provide a strategic depth to the bilateral relationship. The First India-Malaysia CEOs Forum was also held on the margins of the Strategic Dialogue.

India figures in as one of the focus countries for promoting inbound tourism to Malaysia. The tourist inflow from India has increased substantially over the years. During January-November 2008, Indian tourists visiting Malaysia crossed 0.5 million mark, as compared to 0.28 million in 2007 and 0.18 million in 2006. Malaysia is the Tenth largest source country for foreign tourists with a total of 0.113 million visiting India in 2007, accounting for 2.22% of total foreign tourist inflows into India, marking an increase of six per cent over the figures of 2006 (0.107 million).

Indo-Malaysia Defense Cooperation received a major boost with highly successful visit of the Raksha Mantri, A. K. Antony to Malaysia from 6-8 January, 2008, followed by the visits by the Chiefs of Army and Air Staff in February and August 2008 respectively. The enhanced scope of cooperation included operationalisation of the Service-specific staff talks for the Army and Air Force (Navy-to-Navy staff talks had been activated earlier). The high point in the defense cooperation was the signing and implementation of the protocol on training of the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) personnel for operation and maintenance of the Su-30 MKM aircraft, by the Indian Air Force (IAF) in India and in Malaysia. The technical training was conducted in India from January to June 2008. For the 'flying' and 'ground' training in Malaysia, a 31 member IAF Training team has been deployed in Malaysia for a period of two years, commencing February 2008. RMAF has also requested for logistic and spares' support for the Su-30 MKM (being pursued by HAL), as

also for the range facility and allied support for firing its air-to-ground weapons (under consideration).

The Chief of Army Staff, General Deepak Kapoor, paid an official visit to Malaysia from 4 -6 February, 2008 at the invitation of his counterpart, Chief of Army, General Muhammad Ismail. His main engagements included in-depth discussions with General Ismail and call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Mohd. Najib. He also visited Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter Terrorism and the Army Combat Training Centre (PULADA). This was the first visit of our COAS to Malaysia since 1999.

Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal F H Major made an official visit to Malaysia from 17-21 August, 2008. During the visit, the CAS called on Deputy Prime Minister Mohd Najib and the Deputy Defence Minister Wira Abu Seman as also the CDF, General Abdul Aziz, besides his discussions with his counterpart, General Azizan bin Ariffin, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force. He also visited two strategic airbases on the Eastern coast of Malaya Peninsula: Kuantan (MiG-29 and F-18 Base) and Gong Kedag (Su-30 MKM Base). At Gong Kedak, the CAS met the IAF Training Team (deployed in Malaysia for a period of two years to train RMAF personnel on (Su-30MKM) personnel and their families. The CAS also visited Aerospace Inspection, Repair and Overhaul Depot (AIROD) and Aerospace Systems Technology Corps (ASTC), the two companies responsible for maintenance of aerospace assets in Malaysia.

Indian Navy and Coast Guard ships visited Malaysia as part of their Overseas Deployment in Southeast/East Asia. The Malaysian ports visited included Lumut (by two Naval ships) and Penang and Port Clang (by three Coast Guard ships). Chief of Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) visited India to participate in Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)-2008 from 13-18 February, 2008. He also visited the defense exhibition, *DefExpo-2008* in New Delhi.

Indian Defense Minister, A. K. Antony visited Malaysia on a three-day visit on 6 January, 2008. He was accompanied by Defense Secretary Vijay Singh, Deputy Chief of Army Staff Lt-Gen ZU Shah, Deputy Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Nok Browne and Vice-Admiral KN Sushil.

Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad was in Kuala Lumpur from 14-17 May, 2008, to witness the award of the RM 3.45 billion 100 km electrified double-tracking railway from Seremban to Gemas in the Southern part of Peninsular Malaysia to Indian Railway Construction Co (IRCON).

Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Shri A. Raja was in Kuala Lumpur for an official visit from 19-21 May, 2008, during which he addressed the Ministerial Forum at the 16th World Congress on Information technology (WCIT 2008), and also attended the First International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyber-Terrorism (IMPACT) Ministerial Summit.

Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Somnath Chatterjee led an Indian delegation of six Members of Parliament and Speakers from 26 State Assemblies, for the 54th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) in Kuala Lumpur from 1-9 August, 2008. Km. Selja, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation attended the CPA in her capacity as the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarian (CWP) Member. The General Assembly of the CPA elected Shri Somnath Chatterjee, along with Shri Uday Pratap Singh, Speaker from Bihar and Shri Tanka Bahadur Rai, Speaker from Assam as Regional Representatives from India Region, on the Executive Committee of the CPA.

Former President Abdul Kalam visited Malaysia from 27-29 August, 2008 at the invitation of Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to deliver the Khazanah Global Lecture. The title of the lecture was "Dynamics of Societal Transformations". He delivered a lecture at University Malaya (UM) and also gave a Lincoln Inn Memorial Lecture on "Law and Development". His other engagements included, meeting corporate leaders at the Carcosa Seri Negara and scientists and academicians at Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB). He was also conferred with an Honorary Doctorate from University Sains Malaysia in Penang.

Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Shri Vayalar Ravi visited Malaysia from 11-13 October, 2008 and met Malaysian Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr S. Subramaniam. The Memorandum of Understanding on the exchange of workers between both countries was signed in New Delhi on 3 January, 2009.

New Zealand

Shri Namo Narain Meena, MoS for Environment and Forests attended the State Funeral of Sir Edmund Hillary at Auckland on 22 January 2009. MoS for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma signed the Condolence book on Sir Edmund Hillary in New Zealand High Commission in New Delhi on 15 January 2009.

Shri Anand Satyanand, the Governor-General accompanied by Mrs Susan Satyanand paid a State Visit to India from 8-14 September, 2008. The visit had a special

significance as it was the first ever visit of a New Zealand Governor General to India as also the fact that Anand Satyanand is of Indian heritage. The Governor General met the President, the Prime Minister and various other Indian leaders. He also met with state authorities in Mumbai and Hyderabad.

The Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Kamal Nath, visited New Zealand from 21-24 May, 2008. During the visit he held talks with his New Zealand counterpart Phil Goff and Agricultural and Fishery Minister Jim Anderton. A Joint Trade Committee meeting and Joint Business Council Meeting were also held during the visit. The Padma Vibhushan Award conferred on Sir Edmund Hillary by the Government of India posthumously on Republic Day, 2008 was handed over to Lady June Hillary, wife of Sir Edmund by Shri Kamal Nath on 22 May, 2008.

Minister of Youth, Sports & Local Government, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, visited New Zealand in April 2008.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed led the Indian delegation to the Pacific Islands Post-Forum Dialogue Partners' Meeting in Niue on 21 August, 2008.

Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Secretary (ER), visited New Zealand on 11 August, 2008 as PM's Special Envoy and held meetings with Mr. Phil Goff, Minister for Defence, Disarmament, Arms Control & Trade and senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade in connection with the US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement and the NSG exemption.

An Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between the Indian Council for World Affairs and the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs was signed on 7 November, 2008.

Papua New Guinea (PNG)

India's relations with Papua New Guinea (PG) are warm and friendly. There is commonality of views on most global issues.

Papua New Guinea has extended support for India's candidature to various international organizations and UN. PNG is supportive of India's candidature for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

PNG is keen for a tie up with IGNOU and also considering India's assistance for building and launching of an educational satellite of their own for remote/inaccessible areas to cover applications like tele-education, tele-medicine, e-governance and general telecommunications.

A CHEMEXCIL (Chemicals and Allied Products Export Promotion Council) delegation visited Papua New Guinea in April 2008.

Bilateral trade between India and PNG is growing steadily. During the year 2006-07, it stood around US\$290 million.

An Indian company has signed an MoU with a major oil company, Oil Search Ltd. for establishing a urea fertilizer plant in Papua New Guinea. Besides, Indian companies are in touch with Papua New Guinea for cooperation in the natural gas sector.

Under the ITEC Programme, Government of India has offered 20 slots to Papua New Guinea for short-term training courses in India. These are well-utilized and appreciated by the respective Governments. Another four slots are offered to Papua New Guinea for such training courses under the TCS of Colombo Plan of the Ministry Finance.

India has offered a grant-in-aid of US\$ 100,000 to Papua New Guinea under GoI's Regional Assistance Initiative for Pacific Island Countries.

Philippines

Following a series of recent high level visits from both sides (President Dr. Abdul Kalam visited Philippines in February 2006, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited in January 2007 for the ASEAN-India and East Asia Summit and President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo paid a state visit to India in October 2007), bilateral relations between India and the Philippines have gained both in strength and purpose, and various institutional mechanisms have been put in place to carry these forward. This is also evident in the increased trade and investment flows between the two countries.

Shri N. Ravi, Secretary (East) visited Manila in July 2008 as Special Envoy and had a meeting with Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Alberto Romulo. Minister for Urban Development, Shri S. Jaipal Reddy visited Manila from 7-10 September 2008. He was the keynote speaker at a transportation forum organized by the Asian Development Bank. Shri Reddy also called on Mr. Leandro Mendoza, Secretary, Department of Transport and Communications and had meetings with the Light Rail Transport Authority and the Metro Manila Development Authority.

Various Joint Working Group Meetings took place during the year. A two-member delegation from the Department of Tourism visited Philippines for the First Joint Working Group Meeting on Tourism held in Manila on 4 July, 2008. The first meeting of the India-Philippines Joint Working

Group on Agriculture was held in New Delhi on 21 August, 2008. Discussions for enhanced cooperation were held on a wide range of subjects including dairy development, oil palm production, rice genetics, bio-fuels, processed food, bamboo and dry land agriculture. The Tenth Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Trade and Economic Relations was held in New Delhi from 21-22 November, 2008. A delegation from the Department of Science and Technology visited Manila from 6-9 July, 2008 to participate in the Eighth ASEAN Science and Technology Week. The delegation also participated in the Sixth ASEAN-India Joint Working Group on S&T and also had a bilateral discussion with the Philippines' Secretary for Science and Technology, Ms. Estrella Alabastro.

There has been a steady increase in bilateral trade and investment links. Total trade increased from \$ 749.34 million in 2006-07 to \$ 823.29 million in 2007-08. In 2007-08, Indian exports were valued at \$ 618.65 million and India's imports were valued at \$ 204.64 million. In the area of investment, several Indian IT companies began operating out of the Philippines. Similarly, Filipino companies have been investing in India in sectors like real estate, food processing, financial services and IT.

In the course of the year, several business delegations from India visited the Philippines. A delegation from CAPEXIL visited the Philippines from 2-5 April, 2008 and participated in a Buyer-Seller Meet. A business delegation led by FICCI visited Philippines for the Seventh Meeting of the Joint Business Council held on 21 October 2008. A five-member delegation from the Department of Commerce visited Philippines in October 2008 for the Meeting of the ASEAN-India Trade Negotiating Committee.

Two Indian naval ships visited Manila from 17-21 April, 2008 as part of the overseas deployment of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy. From the Philippines, the Naval Chief, Rear Admiral Rogelio Calunsag paid an official visit to India in May 2008 and visited Kolkata, Visakhapatnam and New Delhi.

The Philippines is one of the largest beneficiaries of ITEC and Colombo Plan Training with more than 90% utilization of allotted seats in recent years. During the current year 2008-09, 23 out of 25 slots under ITEC and 23 out of 35 slots under Colombo Plan have been utilized.

Following the signing of an MoU on Exemption of Visa Requirements on Diplomatic and Official passport holders during President Arroyo's visit to India in October 2007,

visa requirements were lifted during the year. All diplomatic and official passport holders can now get their visas on arrival at the airport for a period of 30-day stay.

There has been a steady increase in Filipinos travelling to India for business, tourism and employment. In the calendar year 2007, 12,297 visas were issued. 11,356 visas were issued during the period January to 5 November, 2008.

The Indian community in the Philippines continues to grow with the influx of large number of professional managers and IT specialists. In recent years, there has also been a large influx of Indian students enrolling in medical colleges and private pilot training schools in the Philippines.

Singapore

The qualitative transformation in India-Singapore bilateral relations in recent years has been underpinned by strong economic and commercial ties. The two way bilateral trade reached US\$ 10.38 billion during the period from April to September 2008 while the total trade for FY 2007-08 was US\$ 17.46 billion. Singapore has emerged as the second largest source of FDI inflows amounting to US\$ 5.8 billion from April 2000 to July 2008. As part of the efforts to further consolidate the bilateral relations, the First India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue and first meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee were held in the course of the year. Apart from continued high level visits, holding of "Pravasi Bharatiya Divas" Singapore and celebration of India@60 were the major highlights of growing bilateral interactions between the two countries.

The India-Singapore Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) held its first meeting in New Delhi on 22 April, 2008. The meeting was co-chaired by External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee and Singapore's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. George Yeo. The Senior Officials' meeting on 21 April, 2008 preceded the Ministerial Meeting. The JMC would serve as the mechanism to review overall bilateral relations between the two countries. The first meeting of India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue (ISSD) was held from 5-7 May, 2008 in Singapore. The Indian delegation was led by Ambassador S.K Lambah. Discussions took place over five sessions devoted to bilateral relations, regional and international issues of common concern.

Singapore became the second city after New York to witness the *India@60* celebrations jointly organized by GoI and CII. The programme focused on business, tourism, and culture. The celebrations saw a strong

political presence from the Singapore government. A business conference was jointly inaugurated on 4 April 2008 by Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Kamal Nath and Singapore Minister of Youth, Community Development & Sports, Mr. Vivian Balakrishnan. The culture and tourism segment was launched as "Incredible India@60" by Minister of Culture and Tourism, Smt. Ambika Soni jointly with her Singaporean counterpart, Minister for Information, Communication & Art, Mr. Lee Boon Yang on 5 April, 2008. Artists from the East Zone Cultural Centre and craft persons supported by the UNDP's rural tourism initiative participated in the celebration.

PBD Singapore, an international conference aimed at reaching out to the Indian Diaspora within Asia-Pacific region and beyond was held in Singapore from 9-11 October, 2008. Modelled after the "Pravasi Bharatiya Divas", the conference was jointly organized by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, CII and Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI) with the support of the Governments of India and Singapore. More than 700 delegates from 20 countries attended the Conference. The Conference was attended by Singapore's President, Prime Minister, Senior Minister and Minister Mentor reflecting the importance attached by Singapore's leaders to the conference. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Shri Vayalar Ravi.

At the Sixth ASEAN Economic Ministers-India Consultations on 28 August, 2008, Ministers announced the conclusion of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement negotiations for trade in goods. The heads of the India-Singapore CEO's Forum- Ratan Tata and Koh Boon Hwee of DBS Bank met on 29 August, 2008 to discuss modalities for the meeting of the Forum. The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the Airports Authority of India to promote mutual cooperation in civil aviation in May 2008.

In the field of defence cooperation, India and Singapore concluded on 12 August, 2008 an MoU for joint exercises and training between the respective armed forces. The MoU was signed by the Defence Secretaries of the two countries in New Delhi. The Fifth India-Singapore Defence Policy Dialogue was held in Singapore from 7-8 October, 2008. The Third India Singapore Defence Tech Steering Committee meeting was held in Singapore from 17-18 April, 2008. The annual Staff Talks between each of the three services were also held. The Singapore Armed Forces and Indian Army conducted a bilateral armour

exercise, code name Bold Kurukshestra, from 25 March to 5 May, 2008 in central India.

Shri K. G. Balakrishnan, Chief Justice of India visited Singapore from 6 - 9 October, 2008 to deliver the "Annual Lecture for the year 2008" at the Singapore Academy of Law. Former President Dr. Abdul Kalam visited Singapore from 26-27 August, 2008 to open the third campus of the Global Indian International School and accept an honorary doctorate from the Nanyang Technological University. Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Kamal Nath visited Singapore in August 2008 to attend the ASEAN-India Economic Ministers meeting. Union Railway Minister Shri Laloo Prasad visited Singapore from 11-14 May, 2008 to deliver an address at INSEAD on "Turnaround of the Indian Railways". Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences visited Singapore in October 2008 to participate in "PBD Singapore". He also visited Singapore from 4-6 November, 2008 to deliver a keynote address on "Changing our way of life" at the Singapore Energy Conference. Shri Anand Sharma, MoS for EA led the Indian delegation to the 41st ASEAN Ministers Meeting and the 15th ARF Meeting from 22-24 July, 2008. Other important visits from India were: Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission (September 2008); Governor of RBI, Dr. Y. Venugopal Reddy (May 2008); Rajya Raksha Mantri Shri M.M. Pallam Raju for participation in Shangri La Dialogue (May 2008), Lt. Governor of Delhi Shri Tejender Khanna (August 2008); Kerala Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Mrs. P. K. Sreemathi Teacher (November 2008); MoS for Water Supply and Sanitation, Govt. of Maharashtra Shri Ranjit Kamble and Union Secretary for Urban Development Dr. M. Ramachandran, among others, for participation in Singapore International Water Week, from 23-26 June, 2008.

From Singapore side, Minister of Trade and Industry Mr. Lim Hng Kiang paid an official visit to India from 23-24 June, 2008. In his meeting with Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Kamal Nath, Mr. Lim presented a draft roadmap for the next phase of India-Singapore economic cooperation and the two sides agreed, among others, to double bilateral trade to S\$ 48 billion by 2012. Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Dr. Balaji Sadasivan led a business mission to Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Kerala from 17-23 June, 2008. The business mission was organized by the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry together with International Enterprise Singapore and Singapore Gujarati Society. In Gujarat, the Singaporean delegation met the Gujarat Chief Minister and evinced keen interest in infrastructure projects, real estate, ports, pharma, oil and gas, petrochem

and other industries. The Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation held an interactive session with the visiting Singapore delegation during their visit to Kerala.

As on 31 October, 2008, Mission has provided 78,703 consular services including 44,200 visa services and 14,370 passport services. Mission had outsourced the visa services since September 2007 and passport services were outsourced in December 2008.

Thailand

India-Thailand relations are multifaceted and have grown substantially in diverse fields in recent years, and are poised to expand further in coming years.

Prime Minister Surayud's State visit to India in June 2007 was a result of the desire of two sides for greater engagement. Various high level bilateral meetings have taken place since then. A comprehensive institutional framework has also been put in place through numerous sector specific agreements.

Princess Maha Chakri Siridhorn paid an official visit to India in March 2008.

High level visits at various levels from both sides have been taking place regularly. Smt Ambika Soni, Minister of Tourism & Culture visited Bangkok in January 2008 to participate in the India-ASEAN Tourism Ministers meeting. The Deputy Minister of Industry, H.E. Mr. Piyabutr Cholvijarn led another high level Thai business delegation to three North Eastern States, viz., Assam, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh in January 2008.

Bilateral trade has crossed US\$ 5 billion mark. There is immense potential for sustained growth in investment flows between the two countries. Recently, the Tatas, through Tata Steel and Tata Motors have started operating in Thailand. FDI inflow from Thailand into India has been US\$ 41 million during April 2000-August 2007. The major Thai companies that have invested in India are C P Aquaculture Ltd., Ital Thai Development Pcl., Krung Thai Bank Pcl., Charoen Pokphand Private Limited, Stanley Electric Engineering India Pvt. Ltd., Thai Summit Neel Auto Pvt. Ltd. and Thai Airways International Pcl. Approved Indian investments in Thailand from 2001-2006 amounted to US\$ 268.8 million. The major Indian companies Aditya Birla Group, Thai Baroda Industries, Usha Siam Steel Industries, Ranbaxy Laboratories, Lupin Laboratories, Indo-Rama Group, Infotech, Satyam Computers, NIIT, Tata Steel (Thailand) and Tata Motors.

The first meeting of the Joint Working Group, set up under

an MoU for Cooperation in the field of Education, was held in January 2008 in Bangkok. An MoU on Air Services between India and Thailand was signed in Bangkok in March 2008. Bangkok is connected by air to nine destinations in India. There are 106 weekly flights between the two countries. India offers 106 training slots to Thailand every year under various GoI programmes. Indian nationals are eligible for visa on arrival in Thailand. There is significant tourist traffic between the two countries. In 2007, 5.3 lakh Indians visited Thailand and about 40,000 Thais visited India. There are approximately 100,000 people of Indian origin in Thailand, many of them having been in the country for several generations. The Indian community is prosperous and well regarded.

Timor Leste (TL)

As a contribution towards the Timor Leste's efforts towards nation-building, India has offered to TL support and assistance, in particular in capacity building. India extends training slots under the ITEC and GCSS Scholarships to TL. For 2008-09, five ITEC training slots and ten GCSS Scholarships were provided, though utilization has been abnormally low due to the inability of TL Government to spare their personnel for training. India has extended a US\$ 100,000 grant to Timor Leste in 2008 for purchase of equipment and materials for sustainable development.

Ambassador Shri Biren Nanda presented his credentials to President of Timor Leste Dr. Jose Ramos Horta in October 2008.

Vietnam

Mr. Vu Dung, Deputy Foreign Minister of Vietnam visited India from 3-4 January, 2008. He had meetings with Secretary (East), Secretary (Commerce), Secretary (Petroleum & Natural Gas) and Managing Director of ONGC Videsh Ltd and discussed bilateral issues.

Mr. Le Hong Anh, Minister of Public Security visited India from 20-25 March, 2008. He met the Home Minister and discussed issues on Bilateral Security Co-operation, Training courses for Vietnamese Police Personnel and setting up of a Cyber Forensic Lab in Vietnam with Indian assistance. He called on the PM on 25 March, 2008.

President, Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil paid a State Visit to Vietnam from 24-28 November, 2008. During the visit, she met the President of Vietnam, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Prime Minister of Vietnam, and other Vietnamese leaders and discussed a wide range of bilateral and international issues of mutual

concern. President visited Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi. A Joint Statement was issued during the visit. An MoU between Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Indian Business Chamber was signed.

Defence exchanges are continuing apace. Defence Secretary of India visited Vietnam for the fourth round of security dialogue in October 2008. Visit of two Indian naval ships - INS Kora and INS Kirpan took place in April 2008.

A team of 12 Vietnamese journalists (both print and visual media) led by an official from Press and Information Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) visited India from 26 April to 2 May, 2008. The purpose was to create publicity in Vietnam before the first anniversary of strategic partnership on 7 July, 2008.

The Indo-Vietnam bilateral trade has been making steady progress over the years. The bilateral trade is expected to cross US\$ 3 billion in 2008.

Vietnam has consistently supported India's candidature for a Permanent Membership of the UN Security Council. India has supported Vietnam's candidature for a Non Permanent Seat on the UNSC for the years 2008-09.

Pacific Islands Forum

India attended the 20th Post-Forum Dialogue (PFD) Partners Meeting in Niue on 21 August, 2008, after the conclusion of the 39th Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Summit meeting there.

During the PFD Partners Meeting, MoS(EA), E. Ahamed emphasized that India's focus was on the development of human resources, bilateral assistance and greater engagement on investment and trade so as to assist the Pacific Island Countries in capacity-building and project assistance based on their needs with a view to contribute to these countries' economic & social development.

There was a thematic discussion on following issues of interest to the region: (a) Climate Change, (b) Energy Security, (c) Food Security, (d) Fisheries. Dialogue Partners were given a chance to make interventions on any of these themes. MoS Shri E. Ahamed spoke on Climate Change.

The following '**Regional Assistance Initiative**' announced by the Minister of State, E. Ahamed, at the PFD Partners meeting for Pacific Islands Forum members, was well received. In fact, it was the only concrete offer from the PFD Partners. Under this initiative, over the coming year, India will implement the following assistance package for Pacific Islands Countries:

1. Grant-in-aid of US\$ 100,000 each for the 14 eligible Pacific Island Countries for the supply of equipment and materials for social and economic programmes and for sustainable development projects.
2. Organization of a “Workshop on Capacity Building for Strengthening India-Pacific Island Countries Cooperation” for officials of Pacific Island Countries by the TERI [The Energy & Resources Institute, New Delhi] in Suva where the Pacific Island Secretariat is located.
3. Organization of a **course for diplomats** of the Pacific Island Countries in the Foreign Service Institute in New Delhi.
4. Offer of continued training opportunities to all Pacific Island Countries under India’s **ITEC** programme.
5. Grant of **One scholarship** for undergraduate or post graduate studies to each Pacific Island country.

Commonwealth Secretary General (CSG), Kamalesh Sharma, attended the 39th Pacific Island Forum Summit. MoS(EA) and CSG met in Niue.

Solomon Islands and Vanuatu has extended support for India’s candidature to various international organizations and UN.

Solomon Islands are also supportive of India’s candidature for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Solomon

Islands also confirmed support for our candidature for the UNSC non-permanent seat (2011-12). Solomon Islands supported the candidature of Shri Kamalesh Sharma for the post of Commonwealth Secretary General.

Under the ITEC Programme, Government of India has offered five slots each to Solomon Islands and Vanuatu for short-term training courses in India. These are well-utilized and appreciated by the respective Governments.

Niue: an amount of US\$ 100,000 representing the grant-in-aid announced in 2007, was disbursed in June 2008 for projects on road improvement, village upliftment and internet communication facility improvement.

Nauru: General elections were held in Nauru on 26 April, 2008. The elections produced a convincing victory for President Marcus Stephen who was re-elected for the new Parliament.

Republic of Palau and Republic of the Marshall Islands: Government of India granted a sum of US\$ 100,000 to the Republic of Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands for their projects for economic and social development.

Fiji: An amount of US\$ 26,900 was paid to the Government of Fiji for its project to improve the economic condition of women.



Japan

India-Japan relations have undergone a significant and qualitative shift in recent years, propelled by the successful regular summit level exchanges. Prime Minister Koizumi and Prime Minister Abe visited India in April 2005 and August 2007 respectively. The Joint Statement signed during Prime Minister's visit in 2006 established an India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Japan in December 2006 and from 22-23 October, 2008. The Prime Minister held talks with Japanese PM Aso. He also met the Emperor, Japanese Foreign Minister, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry and leaders of new Komeito party and the Democratic Party of Japan. PM addressed a business lunch by Keidanren, the apex chamber in Japan, at which leading CEOs from major Japanese corporations were present. The Second India-Japan Business Leaders' Forum was held and presented recommendations on strengthening the India-Japan economic relationship, to the two Prime Ministers. A Joint Statement on the Advancement of the Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan and a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between India and Japan were signed by the two Prime Ministers during this visit.

Japanese Foreign Minister, Masahiko Koumura also visited India from 4-5 August, 2008 for second round of strategic dialogue. From the Indian side, Minister for Science and Technology, Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister for Commerce and Industry, Shri Kamal Nath and Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia visited Japan. Defense and Security has emerged as an important area of bilateral relations with the Chief of Naval Staff of India visiting Japan from 19-24 August, 2008. President of the Japanese Upper House of the Parliament (House of Councillors) Mr. Satsuki Eda visited India from 1-3 July, 2008.

From the Indian side, Minister for Science and Technology, Shri Kapil Sibal visited Japan from 5-7 October, 2008. Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, visited Japan for the third round of the Ministerial-level Energy Dialogue with the Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry on 17

September, 2008, and Commerce & Industry Minister, Shri Kamal Nath visited Japan on 21 October, 2008 for the Second Japan-India Policy Dialogue. Minister for Railways Shri Lalu Prasad visited Japan from 12-16 January, 2009. Defence Minister Shri A. K. Antony visited Japan in late February 2009.

The India-Japan Energy Dialogue, co-chaired by Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission of India and the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, met for the third round on 17 September, 2008 in Tokyo. The objective of the Dialogue is to promote cooperation in the energy sector in a comprehensive manner. A Joint Statement was issued by the two Ministers on outlining areas for future cooperation in electricity generation, energy efficiency, coal, petroleum and natural gas and renewable energy.

The second meeting of the Japan-India Policy Dialogue was held in Tokyo on 21 October, 2008 with the objective of establishing broader and deeper economic relationship between the two countries. The two sides led by Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce & Industry and Mr. Nikai Toshihiro, Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry respectively reviewed the progress in talks relating to the proposed bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), cooperation at the global trade talks, promotion of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, support for Indian SMEs, as well as cooperation in the ASEAN and East Asian regions.

Foreign Secretary, Shri Shivshankar Menon visited Japan on 6 October, 2008 for the annual Foreign Office Consultations. During the visit, he also called on the Japanese Foreign Minister, Masahiko Koumura.

A High-Level Strategic Economic Dialogue has been established in order to develop an overarching dialogue mechanism on all economic issues. The second meeting, co-chaired by Finance Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister of Japan, was held in Tokyo on 24 July, 2008.

Bilateral economic relations have vast potential for growth. During Prime Minister Abe's visit, it was agreed to work towards a trade target of US \$ 20 billion by the year 2010. After a period of stagnation, recent trade figures

indicate healthy growth in bilateral trade. Two-way trade in 2007-08, according to our Ministry of Commerce and Industry statistics, was US\$ 9.89 billion (exports at US \$ 3.5 and imports at US \$ 6.3 billion), an increase of 37% over previous year.

Japan presently ranks sixth largest in cumulative foreign direct investment flows into India. Japanese companies have made actual investment of US\$ 3 billion between 1991 and March 2008, excluding FDI inflows received for acquisition of existing shares, Reserve Bank of India's NRI Schemes, stock swapped and advance pending issue of shares. Most direct Japanese investment in India is in Automobile Industry (39%), Electrical Equipments (17%), Trading (6%), Services Sectors (financial & non-financial) (5%) and Telecommunications (3%). The year also witnessed two high-profile acquisitions by Japanese companies: Daiichi Sankyo's purchase of 34.8% stake in Ranbaxy Laboratories worth Rs. 215.6 billion or US\$ 4.6 billion, and NTT DoCoMo's acquisition of 26% stake in Tata Teleservices valued at Rs. 13,070 crores or US\$ 2.7 billion.

For the last five years, India has been the largest recipient of Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) (Cumulative commitment of Japanese ODA loan to India has reached Yen 2662.56 billion (Rs.101497 crores approx. at the current exchange rate) on commitment basis till March 2008. During Prime Minister's visit, Notes were exchanged to formalize the first batch of ODA of approximately US\$ 1 billion for the current financial year.

The two sides have also initiated negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) beginning January/February 2007. This dialogue is led by the Commerce Secretary from the Indian side and Deputy Foreign Minister from the Japanese side. Ten rounds of talks have been held so far. Both sides have agreed to complete negotiations in a two-year time frame.

Japan has conveyed its readiness to assist in the entire Western Dedicated Freight Corridor project through ODA/STEP loan assistance. During PM's visit, both sides agreed that the total volume of the ODA loan for the first phase of the Western Corridor would be approximately 450 billion Yen. The two Prime Ministers also expressed their commitment to work together for early finalization of Japanese assistance for the Western Corridor.

The proposal for the development of Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) was agreed during the visit of Prime Minister to Japan in December 2006. The alignment of the 1483 km DMIC is via Ahmedabad,

Palampura, Phulera, Rewari and Dadri. A Joint Task Force (JTF), co-chaired by the Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) and Japanese Vice Minister, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) has been established to work out the details. During Prime Minister's visit, the two sides confirmed that they would work together closely for the establishment of the Project Development Fund for DMIC. During Prime Minister's visit a MoU between India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited and Japan Bank for International Cooperation and Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Limited was signed.

The bilateral Consultative Mechanism for High Technology met for the third round in Tokyo on 13 June, 2008 with the objective of facilitating two-way high technology trade and to address matters relating to their respective export control systems. In June 2008, Japanese Government de-listed seven Indian companies from its End-User List reducing the total number of Indian entities on the list to 26.

Japan joined the consensus at the IAEA and in the NSG on giving a waiver to India from NSG guidelines in the context of the India-US civil nuclear energy agreement.

Defence and security has emerged as an important area of bilateral relations. A calendar of events for 2008 was finalized for promoting exchanges and cooperation in an institutionalized framework. The annual Defence Policy Dialogue at Secretary-level was held in April 2007 and the second round in New Delhi in November, 2008. A Squadron of three Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force ships visited Mumbai on a Goodwill mission in August 2008. Comprehensive Security Dialogue (CSD) and Military to Military talks were held in Tokyo on 14 February, 2008. The Chief of Naval Staff of India visited Japan from 19-24 August, 2008.

Following the terror attacks on Mumbai in November 2008, a condolence message was received from Prime Minister Taro Aso and a statement was made by Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone. Prime Minister Taro Aso spoke to Prime Minister over telephone on 30 November and re-confirmed Japan's willingness to cooperate with India on fighting terrorism.

Bilateral Civil Aviation Talks were held in Tokyo from 17-18 June, 2008. Significant progress was achieved in expansion and liberalization of air traffic between India and Japan. Flight frequencies have been doubled to 42 per week. After completion of Tokyo-Narita airport in summer 2010, slots available to India would increase to 28 per week from eight at present. After the on-going

Tokyo-Haneda airport expansion is completed, Japan will offer India additional 28 slots. fifth freedom frequencies have been increased from 14 to 21 per week.

Science and Technology cooperation is emerging as a key element of the strategic partnership. Under the Science and Technology Initiative, the two sides are working on launching joint Research and Development Programme in areas such as nanotechnology, life science and information and communication technology; and collaboration in the area of scientific deep sea drilling. An MoU was signed in October 2008 in Tokyo during Prime Minister's visit, which would permit us to construct a "beam line" at a Japanese facility, KEK in Tsukuba at our own cost, for experiments in high-energy physics.

During Prime Minister Abe's visit in August 2007, it was decided that the two sides would initiate a Working Group to study and explore possible collaboration in setting up a new IIT. The Working Group's second meeting was held in New Delhi on 1 May, 2008. During PM's visit in October 2008, the JWG submitted a report to the two Prime Ministers. Both sides confirmed their commitment to collaborate in the establishment of a new IIT in Hyderabad that will become a symbol of joint efforts in promoting educational excellence in India, including through financial support from Japan. Modalities are being discussed by both sides.

Two way trade in 2007-2008 according to Ministry of Commerce statistics has been US \$9.89 billion, an increase of 37% over previous year. Japan presently ranks sixth largest in foreign direct investment flows into India. For the last five years India has been the largest recipient of Japanese official development assistance (ODA).

Republic of Korea (ROK)

Our relations with the Republic of Korea have been steadily growing and have become more diversified in the recent years. Our political relations are excellent and there is a growing convergence of views on regional political, security and economic issues.

Former President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam attended the swearing-in ceremony of the new President of the ROK in February 2008 at the personal invitation of President-elect Mr. Lee Myung-bak.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Lee Myung-bak of the ROK in the margins of the G-8 Summit at Sapporo, Japan on 8 July, 2008. The two leaders exchanged views on bilateral relations and international issues of mutual interest. President Lee personally invited PM to visit ROK.

Bilateral cooperation and exchanges in the field of defence between India and the ROK made significant progress. The ROK Chief of Naval Operations visited India from 18-21 May, 2008 and our Chief of the Naval Staff visited ROK from 24-28 August, 2008. GOC-in-C of Central Command visited ROK from 17-19 September, 2008. The Flag Officer Commanding in Chief, Eastern Naval Command represented the Indian Navy at the Western Pacific Naval Symposium and the International Fleet Review in ROK from 5-10 October, 2008. Two Indian Navy vessels participated in the Review. Two ROK naval ships, with 625 personnel, paid a goodwill visit to the Port of Cochin from 30 September-3 October, 2008.

The Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Indian and ROK Coast Guard is being successfully implemented. The Director General, Indian Coast Guard visited ROK from 27-29 August, 2008 and held high level talks with the Korean Coast Guard. The third high level meeting between the Indian Coast Guard and the Korean Coast Guard was held in New Delhi on 15 December, 2008. Director General of Guard Bureau of the Korean Coast Guard led the Korean delegation.

The second meeting of the India-ROK Joint Committee on Defence Industry and Logistic Cooperation was held in New Delhi on 13 October, 2008. At the meeting the two sides discussed various areas of cooperation in the field of defence industry and logistics including Research and Development.

India and ROK have so far completed 12 rounds of talks and made significant progress on the proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the two countries. Both India and Korea hope to conclude the CEPA within 2009.

There has been remarkable growth in bilateral trade between India and ROK in recent years. In the year 2007 it reached US\$ 11.22 billion, surpassing the target that was set for the year 2010. During the first half of 2008, our bilateral trade with ROK has been over US\$ 6 billion. ROK is ranked Ninth in the Foreign Direct Investment and is a major investment partner.

ROK established a Tourism Promotion Office in New Delhi in May 2008.

Mongolia

India and Mongolia have interacted directly and through the medium of Buddhism over a period of 2000 years. Relations between the two countries were elevated to a "new level of partnership" during the visit of the

Mongolian Prime Minister, Mr. N. Enkhbayar to India in 2004.

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh had a meeting with President N. Enkhbayar of Mongolia on the margins of the Seventh ASEM Summit in Beijing in October 2008. The two leaders reviewed the development of Indo-Mongolia bilateral relations and exchanged views on international and regional issues of mutual interest. The meeting was very warm and cordial.

India-Mongolia cooperation in the field of defence progressed well during 2008. The Chief of the General Staff of the Mongolian Armed Forces, Lt. Gen. Ts. Togoo visited India in February 2008. The Fourth India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise, "Nomadic Elephant 2008" took place in India from 17-30 November, 2008. India also participated in "Khan Quest 2008", the annual multi-national peace keeping exercise in Mongolia from August-September 2008.

The regular interactions between the National Security Councils (NSCs) of India and Mongolia continued during the year. Mr. R. Bold, Director, General Intelligence Agency of Mongolia visited India in February 2008. A five member delegation from National Security Council of India led by Chairman JIC, Shri H. Upadhyay visited Ulaanbaatar in September 2008 and held discussions with the National Security Council of Mongolia.

A three-member delegation led by the Director General, Border Security Force (BSF) visited Mongolia in July 2008 to discuss with the Mongolian side matters of mutual interest. A six member delegation led by Maj. Gen. Baatartsogt Azad, Chairman, Border Protection General Board of Mongolia visited India from 20-26 January, 2009 and held discussions with the BSF on strengthening cooperation between the two sides.

The second meeting of the India-Mongolia Joint Working Group (JWG) on Defence Cooperation was held in New Delhi from 5-6 February, 2009.

The Mongolian Defence Minister H.E. Mr. L. Bold visited India from 10-12 February, 2009.

The India-Mongolia Joint School was inaugurated in 2003 under an MoU signed in 2002. The MoU has been

extended for five more years, up to 2012. The Rajiv Gandhi Vocational Training Centre and the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Centre for Excellence in Information and Communications Technology which were set up with Indian assistance in 1992 and 2002 respectively have been functioning well.

At the request of the Mongolian Government, Government India provided 5000 MT of Rice and 5000 MT of sugar as emergency food assistance to Mongolia in May 2008.

The Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh had a meeting with President N. Enkhbayar of Mongolia on the margins of the Seventh ASEM summit in Beijing in October 2008. The two leaders reviewed the development of India Mongolia bilateral relations and exchanged views on international and regional issues of mutual interest.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

The relations between India and DPRK have traditionally been and continue to be cordial with a focus on humanitarian and human resource development assistance. Exchanges in the area of culture, sports and education continued to make progress.

Shri N. Ravi, Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, visited Pyongyang from 27-28 May, 2008 for the fifth round of annual Foreign Office Consultations with Mr. Kim Yong Il, Vice Foreign Minister of DPR of Korea.

Indian films participated in the 11th Pyongyang International Film Festival held from 17-26 September, 2008 and the Bengali film "Ek Nadir Galpo" (Tale of a River) won the award for music at the festival.

Our assistance for development of human resources in DPRK continued to expand. DPRK had been allotted 18 slots under ITEC Programme for the year 2008-09. We have also offered two slots for English language courses for training in Army Education Corps Training College and Centre, Panchmarhi under the ITEC Programme to DPRK. Five kgs of high quality Barley seeds were also sent to DPRK under ITEC Programme in April 2008. India and DPRK have continued cooperation at UN bodies and other international organizations.



India maintained and advanced friendly and cordial relations with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asian and Caucasian countries during the year through visits, conclusion of bilateral agreements, periodic bilateral and multilateral engagements, cooperation programmes, cultural events and other initiatives. Inter-governmental meetings for reviewing and expanding cooperation in diverse spheres were held with all the countries of this region. 2008 was celebrated as the Year of Russia in India and 2009 is being held as the Year of India in Russia. Some of the important bilateral engagements during the year included the State visits of the President of the Russian Federation Mr. Dmitry A. Medvedev to India in December 2008, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev as Chief Guest at the Republic Day 2009 and visit of the Vice President of India to Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan in April 2008. India participated in the meetings of India-Russia-China as well as Brazil-Russia-India-China Foreign Ministers held in Russia in May 2008 and, as Observer, in the Heads of State and Heads of Government meetings of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in August and October 2008 respectively.

Russia

During the year, India engaged actively with Russia at all levels to further diversify and consolidate the bilateral strategic partnership and ongoing multi-dimensional cooperation in areas such as political dialogue, trade, economy, energy, defence, science & technology and culture. President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Dmitry A. Medvedev paid a State visit to India from 4-5 December, 2008 for the bilateral annual summit. During his visit, the Russian President met the President, the Vice President, the Prime Minister and other Indian dignitaries. Indian and Russian Presidents participated in the closing ceremony of the 'Year of Russia' in India. A Joint Declaration was signed by PM Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Medvedev which outlines major directions of bilateral cooperation and common positions on major regional and international issues. Nine other documents were signed during the visit including an inter-Governmental Agreement on cooperation in the construction of additional nuclear power plant units at

Kudankulam site as well as in the construction of Russian designed nuclear power plants at new sites in the Republic of India; a Memorandum of Understanding between ISRO and Russian Federal Space Agency on joint activities in the field of human space-flight programme; an Agreement on cooperation between the Financial Intelligence Unit of India and Russian Financial Monitoring Service; and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Securities & Exchange Board of India and Federal Financial Markets Service of Russian Federation in relation to mutual cooperation and information sharing.

In addition to above, following important bilateral visits took place during the year:

- Minister of Industry and Trade, Mr. Viktor Khristenko visited India from 25-27 November, 2008 and inaugurated the Russian National Exhibition in India.
- Minister of Energy, Mr. Sergei Shmatko visited India from 25-26 November, 2008 and participated in the Indo-CIS Hydrocarbon Conference.
- Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Murli Deora visited Moscow from 4-5 November, 2008 and met the Russian Prime Minister, Mr. Vladimir Putin and Russian Energy Minister, Mr. Sergei Shmatko.
- Secretary, Security Council of Russia, Mr. Nikolai Patrushev visited India from 21-24 October, 2008 and met the National Security Adviser.
- Foreign Minister, Mr. Sergey Lavrov, visited India on 20 October, 2008 and met the External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee and the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh.
- Defence Minister of Russia, Mr. Anatoly Serdyukov visited India from 28-30 September, 2008 for the Eighth meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation, co-chaired by Minister of Defence of India.
- National Security Adviser, Shri M.K. Narayanan visited Moscow on 13 August, 2008 and met the Russian President and the Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation.



Union Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee meeting with the President of Russia, Dmitry A. Medvedev in New Delhi on 5 December, 2008.



President Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, Union Minister of External Affairs, Shri Pranab Mukherjee at the ceremonial reception of President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on 24 January, 2009.

- External Affairs Minister visited Yekaterinburg, Russia from 14-16 May, 2008 for the India-Russia-China trilateral Foreign Ministers meeting and the Brazil, Russia, India, China (BRIC) Foreign Ministers meeting and met the Foreign Ministers of Russia and China in bilateral fora.
- Two parliamentary delegations from the Russian Federation visited India in April 2008 - one led by Chairman of the Commission on Parliamentary Procedures and Organization of Parliamentary Activities of the Federal Council (Upper House of the Russian Parliament), Mr. Nikolai Tulaev and another comprising of five Young Parliamentarians of the State Duma (Lower House of the Russian Parliament).
- A Moscow City Government delegation visited Delhi from 17-21 June, 2008 to discuss holding the Days of Moscow in Delhi within the framework of the "Year of Russia" with the Delhi State Government.

Besides, the following high level meetings also took place on the sidelines of multilateral events:

- Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh met the Russian President Mr. Dmitry Medvedev on 9 July, 2008 at Toyako, Japan on the sidelines of the G8 Summit.
- External Affairs Minister met Foreign Minister, Mr. Sergey Lavrov on 29 September, 2008 in New York on the sidelines of the 63rd UN General Assembly meeting.
- Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma participated in the Foreign Ministerial meeting of BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) in New York on 26 September, 2008 on the sidelines of the 63rd UN General Assembly session.

14th session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation, co-chaired by the External Affairs Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Mr. Alexander D. Zhukov, was held in New Delhi on 3 December, 2008. The Commission held detailed discussions on ongoing bilateral cooperation and measures to expand it in economic, scientific and cultural spheres. A Protocol on the deliberations of the Commission was signed by the co-chairs. India-Russia Business CEOs' Council was formed to promote and pursue bilateral economic and business ties under the co-Chairmanship of President of Sistema Group of Companies, Mr. Vladimir Evtushenkov and the Chairman of Reliance Industries Ltd., Shri Mukesh Ambani.

Foreign Office Consultations between the Foreign Secretary Mr. Shivshankar Menon and the Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Andrei Denisov took place on 30 June, 2008 in Moscow. In addition, the two Foreign Offices also held consultations on the following subjects: India-Russia-China trilateral dialogue (February 2008, Moscow); European Union (March 2008, Moscow); consular issues (October 2008); Iran & Afghanistan (November 2008, Moscow); international terrorism (December 2008).

About 140 events in various spheres, including culture, economy and science were organized in India in 2008 within the framework of the 'Year of Russia' in India.

The fifth meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism was held in New Delhi from 16-17 December, 2008. The Indian side was led by Shri Vivek Katju, Special Secretary (IO&Pol) from MEA and the Russian side was led by Mr. Anatoly Safonov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for International Cooperation in the Fight against Terrorism and Transnational Crime.

Smt. L. K. Ponappa, Deputy National Security Advisor visited Moscow from 3-4 February, 2009 to co-chair a meeting of the Joint Coordination Group between the Security Councils of India and Russia.

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia, Mr. Alexey Borodavkin called on the External Affairs Minister and met Secretary (East), Shri N. Ravi on 25 February, 2009. EAM also collectively received DFM Borodavkin and Ambassadors of Russia to South Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Nepal).

Armenia

India's historically close and friendly relations with Armenia were marked in 2008 by the visit of the Mayor of Yerevan, Mr. Yervand Zakharyan to India from 12-15 September, 2008 at the invitation of the Chief Minister of Delhi, Smt. Sheila Dikshit. The visiting delegation held bilateral talks with the Delhi Government. The Yerevan Mayor and Delhi Chief Minister signed an Memorandum of Understanding on friendship between Delhi and Yerevan on 13 September, 2008 and on the same day, the Mayor of Yerevan and Delhi (Smt. Arti Mehra) named a street in Delhi (the third in India) after Armenia. The visiting delegation also visited Agra.

Exhibiting Armenia's growing interest in expanding commercial ties with India, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Embassy of

Armenia jointly organized the first ever India-Armenia Business Forum in Delhi from 1-2 December, 2007. The Armenian First Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Samvel Avetissian and the Deputy Minister of Economy, Mr. Mushegh Tumasyan were accompanied by a ten-member business delegation comprising representatives from information technology, processed foods, textiles and consumer goods sectors. Besides interaction amongst the business communities and visits to export oriented units, the official delegation called on the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed and Secretary (Textiles), Shri A. K. Singh.

A three-day India-Armenia Friendship Chess Tournament was held in Delhi in the first week of December 2008 with the participation of Chess Grand Masters from both sides. It was the first event of its kind between India and Armenia.

Azerbaijan

The relations between India and Azerbaijan continued to be cordial during this period. Several working and business level visits took place within the framework of multilateral events, including that of Central Vigilance Commissioner and Special Secretary, Department of Personnel to Baku for the Personnel to Baku for the Executive Committee meeting of the International Association of Anti-Corruption authorities in April 2008; ONGC Videsh Limited and FICCI to Baku for the First Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan International Conference on Oil and Gas in September 2008; Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd. (TCIL) delegation, led by the Chairman and Managing Director, for the exhibition BAKUTEL 2008 in November 2008.

A nine-member Gems & Jewellery delegation visited Baku from 12-13 December, 2008. Bilateral trade recorded a good growth up to the month of October 2008 which stood at US\$ 323.78 million.

Belarus

Bilateral exchanges with Belarus at high and working levels maintained their momentum in 2008. Secretary (East), Shri N. Ravi visited Belarus on 25 July, 2008 and met Deputy Foreign Minister of Belarus, Prof. Viktor A. Gaisenok and handed over a letter from the Prime Minister addressed to President of Belarus, Mr. Aleksandr Lukashenko. During the visit, Belarusian Deputy Minister affirmed Belarus' support to international civil nuclear cooperation with India in the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The fourth session of the India-Belarus Inter-Governmental Commission on Economic, Trade, Industrial, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IBIGC) was held in New Delhi from 17-18 November, 2008. The Belarusian delegation was led by the Minister of Industry, Mr. Anatoly Rusetsky, who was accompanied by a seven-member official delegation and an 18-member business delegation including representatives from chemicals and fertilisers, petrochemicals, timber, heavy engineering, automobiles, breweries, information technology etc. The Indian side was led by the Minister of State for Industry, Shri Ashwani Kumar. The visiting Minister met the External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev and Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Food Processing Industries, Shri Subodh Kant Sahai. Working level meetings were held in the fields of trade, information technology, food processing, science and technology and agricultural cooperation. Following the deliberations of the IBIGC a joint protocol was signed. Belarus also participated in the India International Trade Fair 2008 in New Delhi from 14-27 November, 2008.

Chairman, Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus, Mr. Justice Pyotr P. Miklashevich and Deputy Head of the Legal and Expert Department of the Belarusian Constitutional Court, Mr. Vasili I. Seledevski visited India from 13-15 November, 2008 on the invitation of the Chief Justice of India, Shri K. G. Balakrishnan.

The First session of the Indo-Belarusian Joint Commission on Military Technical Cooperation was held in Minsk from 27-30 May 2008. The five-member Indian delegation was led by Special Secretary, Department of Defence, Shri P. K. Rastogi. The two countries discussed opportunities of cooperation in the field of defence, joint research and training.

A Department of Commerce delegation visited Belarus from 15-16 May, 2008 for the First meeting of the Joint Working Group on technical regulation and protection of sanitary and phytosanitary measures. A four-member Agriculture Ministry delegation led by Principal Advisor, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Dr. S. M. Jharwal, visited Belarus from 10-14 June, 2008 for the First meeting of the Indo-Belarusian Joint Working Group on agricultural cooperation. Besides holding talks and signing a Work Plan, the delegation visited various agricultural and agro-industrial research and development facilities.

Georgia

India's relations with Georgia remained cordial during the year 2008-09. Our Ambassador in Yerevan (concurrently accredited to Georgia) held meetings with various high ranking Georgian government officials in Tblisi. There were exchange of business delegations and continuation of economic and cultural cooperation programmes between the two countries.

In August 2008, there was an armed conflict between Georgia and Russia and later Russia recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states and established diplomatic relations with them.

Kazakhstan

India's relations with Kazakhstan developed and diversified further during the year. Vice President, Shri. M. Hamid Ansari, visited Kazakhstan from 6-10 April, 2008 at the invitation of the Chairman of the Senate of Parliament of Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kasim Tokayev. During the visit, Vice President called on President Nursultan Nazarbayev, had a useful meeting with Prime Minister Mr. Karim Massimov, and addressed the Kazakh Senate. He also addressed the students of Kazakh Institute of Public Administration in Astana and Al Ferabi National University in Almaty. The Al Ferabi National University conferred an Honorary Doctorate degree on the Vice President. An Indian cultural troupe visited and performed in several parts of Kazakhstan to coincide with the visit of the Vice President.

Secretary (East) and Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, Shri N. Ravi visited Kazakhstan from 26-27 July, 2008 and met the Chief of the Presidential Administration Mr. Kairat Kelimbetov, Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Anatoli V. Smirnov and Deputy Minister of Energy & Mineral Resources, Mr. Lyazzat K. Kiinov to discuss bilateral and international issues, including international civil nuclear energy cooperation with India.

There were other engagements in the fields of economy, science and technology, energy and polity. The Chairman of Supreme Court of Kazakhstan, Kairat Mami, led a delegation to India from 13-20 October, 2008 and had extensive interactions with Chief Justice, Judges and Attorney General of India. The First meeting of the Joint Working Group on Textiles was also held to discuss prospects of cooperation in this sector.

The President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev paid a State visit to India from 23-26 January, 2009. He was the guest of honour at the Republic Day parade. This was the first time that a leader from the Central Asian region

was the chief guest at Republic Day celebrations. President Nazarbayev was accompanied by a high level official delegation including Foreign Minister, Mr. Marat Tazhin, and a business delegation representing various sectors.

During the visit, President, Nazarbayev held delegation level talks and was hosted to a State banquet in his honour by the President of India. A number of agreements were signed including agreements on supply of uranium from Kazakhstan to India, cooperation in Space, on Kazakhstan's accession to WTO, on exploration and production of oil and gas by ONGC Videsh Ltd. in Kazakhstan. An extradition treaty was also signed.

Shri Ashwani Kumar, MoS, Ministry of Industry paid a visit to Kazakhstan from 4-6 March, 2009. He travelled with a business delegation. In addition to several business meetings, he also met with Mr. Sauat Mynbayev, Kazakh Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources.

The Seventh Session of the India-Kazakhstan Inter-Governmental Commission was held in Astana from 12-13 March, 2009. The Commission was co-chaired by Shri Murli Deora, Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Mr. Sauat Mynbayev, Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources of Kazakhstan. The ambit of the Commission included cooperation in trade, economic, science & technology, culture & consular matters. A Protocol was signed in conclusion. During the visit to Astana, Shri Deora called on President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and on Prime Minister Massimov.

Kyrgyz Republic

India and the Kyrgyz Republic sustained friendly and cordial ties in 2008-09. The decisions taken during the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Adnan Karabaev to India in February 2008 were implemented and resulted in further consolidation of bilateral relations. Exchange of official level visits in the field of economy, education, defence, etc. and of business delegations pursued further opportunities for bilateral cooperation in these areas. The India-Kyrgyz Information Technology Centre (established with Government of India's grant assistance) entered into collaboration with Vellore Institute for Technology for certification of degrees for students of the Centre.

Tajikistan

Shri Murli Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas led the Indian delegation to a Summit meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation held in Dushanbe on 28 August, 2008. During the visit, he called on the

President of Tajikistan, Mr. Emomali Rahmon and held wide ranging discussions on bilateral and regional matters. During the visit, the Minister inaugurated the GoI assisted project for the modernization and upgrading of the Varzob-I hydroelectric plant.

The fifth Session of India-Tajikistan Inter Governmental Commission was held in New Delhi from 19-20 November, 2008. The Indian delegation was led by Commerce Secretary, Shri G. K. Pillai and the Tajik delegation by Minister of Finance and Economy, Mr. Gulomjon Bobozoda. A Protocol was signed on the conclusion of the meeting. India and Tajikistan also signed a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement on 20 November, 2008.

Days of Tajik Culture in India were celebrated in October 2008 under the framework of a bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme. The Minister of Culture of Tajikistan visited India for the occasion and met the President of ICCR, Dr. Karan Singh.

Turkmenistan

India's multi-faceted relations with Turkmenistan developed further during the year in the political, economic, trade and cultural spheres. Vice President, Shri M. Hamid Ansari paid an official visit to Turkmenistan at the invitation of the President of Turkmenistan, Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov from 4-6 April, 2008. This was his first visit abroad as Vice President. During the visit, he called on President Berdimuhamedov and the two dignitaries chaired delegation level talks between the two countries. Vice President was accompanied by Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed. The Vice President also visited the city of Mary in Turkmenistan. The two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the Oil and Gas sector during the visit.

There were other bilateral exchanges between the two countries involving official and business delegations. The Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Murli Deora visited Turkmenistan in November 2008 and met the Minister of Oil & Natural Gas of Turkmenistan. There were various business-level exchanges in the field of oil and gas, infrastructure, trade, information technology and other areas.

Ukraine

India and Ukraine maintained friendly relations and engagement in various spheres during the year. The bilateral trade and economic cooperation developed further and the two countries continued exchanges in the field of science & technology, defence, culture, polity etc. Indian companies and organization participated in numerous exhibitions and fairs in Ukraine during the year to promote and expand bilateral trade in respective

spheres.

The Seventh round of Foreign Office Consultations between Secretary (East) and Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, Shri N. Ravi, and Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine, Shri Oleksandr Gorin was held in Kyiv on 24 July, 2008. Secretary (East) also met the senior officials of the Presidential Administration in Ukraine, where, among other things, international regime for civil nuclear cooperation with India was discussed.

Mr. Mykola Tomanko, Deputy Speaker of *Verkhovna Rada*, Ukrainian Parliament, visited India from 7-14 February, 2009. During his visit, he called upon Shri K. Rahman Khan, Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha and on Shri Charanjit Singh Atwal, Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha and discussed Parliamentary practices and procedures and proposed enhanced Parliamentary exchanges between India and Ukraine. He called on Smt. Ambika Soni, Minister of Tourism and Culture and also held discussions with Shri Anand Sharma, MoS (EA) and discussed issues of bilateral, regional and global interest.

Uzbekistan

India-Uzbekistan relations progressed well in 2008-09 in the framework of inter-governmental mechanisms, various cooperation programmes and other interaction. The bilateral Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 1 August, 2008 which discussed the entire gamut of bilateral, regional and global issues. Secretary (East), Shri N. Ravi, led the Indian delegation and the Uzbekistan delegation was led by Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Rustam Askarovich Tuhababaev.

The Eighth Session of India-Uzbekistan Inter Governmental Commission on trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation was held from 16-17 September, 2008 in New Delhi. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce and Power. The Uzbek delegation was led by Mr. B. Khodjaev, Minister of Economy of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Commission deliberated on the progress in trade, investment, scientific and cultural relations and measures for strengthening relations in these areas. A Protocol on the conclusions of the Commission meeting was signed by the two countries.

India-Russia-China Trilateral Dialogue Mechanism

India continued its regular dialogue with Russia and China in the trilateral format at the level of the three Foreign Ministers. The last trilateral Foreign Ministers meeting

was held in Yekaterinburg (Russia) on 15 May, 2008 when trilateral cooperation, regional issues and global developments were discussed. The trilateral dialogue has also been initiated in the areas of agriculture, disaster management and public health. The three countries have expanded trilateral dialogue to business and academic sectors.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

As an Observer state in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), India participated in the annual meetings of the Heads of State and Heads of Government in Dushanbe and Astana in August and October 2008 respectively. The Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Shri Murli Deora represented India at the Heads of State Meeting and the Minister of Power, Shri Sushil K. Shinde

led the Indian delegation at the Heads of Government Meeting. During the meeting of SCO Heads of State, the SCO decided to raise the cooperation with the Observer states of the Organisation to a qualitatively new level. Subsequently, India has been invited to SCO Ministerial meetings in the field of economy and transport.

On the invitation extended by Shri N Ravi, Secretary (East), Mr. Bolat Nurgaliev, Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation visited New Delhi from 26-27 February, 2009. SCO-SG called on EAM and held delegation level official talks with Secretary (East). The Indian Council of World Affairs organized a talk by SG-SCO on 'Shanghai Cooperation Organisation-Evolution, Growth and Future'. He also participated in a round table discussion organized by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.



The Gulf

India maintained its historical and traditionally cordial relations and cooperation with the Gulf region countries. In parallel with increasing imports of oil and gas, growing trade and investment opportunities, active steps were taken in cooperation with the countries of the region in 2008 to strengthen this relationship and to diversify in new areas. The year witnessed several high level visits bilaterally manifesting the importance of the region in our relationship, peaking with Prime Minister's visit to Qatar and Oman in November 2008, opening up new facets for cooperation.

The Gulf region is a major trading partner of India. During 2006-2007 the total two-way trade was US \$ 47 billion and in the year 2007-08 it reached more than US\$ 76 billion. Gulf countries together provide 70% of our total crude requirement and play a key role in our energy security. About 4.5 million Indians live and work in the Gulf region. They are a vital support to our economy and remit more than US\$ Ten billion annually.

Bahrain

The relations between India and Bahrain remained cordial and friendly, marked by several important visits. According to the official figures of the Government of Bahrain there are 3,00,776 Indian nationals in Bahrain out of a total of 1.04 million residents of Bahrain.

From Bahrain the Labour Minister Dr. Majeed Mohsin Al Alawi visited India on 25 April, 2008 and discussed with Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Shri Vayalar Ravi, the MoU on Labour and Manpower Development. Dr. Fatima Bint Al Balooshi, Minister of Social Development, Bahrain, visited India from 17-21 August, 2008 and held talks with the Minister of Textiles and Minister of State for Women & Child Development among others. From India, Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Bahrain from 28-29 September, 2008. Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Shri Vayalar Ravi visited Bahrain from 29-31 August, 2008 and interacted with the Indian community in Bahrain.

Iran

Bilateral Relations

Relations between India and Iran were maintained and further strengthened through exchange of high level visits and regular meetings of the bilateral Joint Commission, Foreign Office Consultations and Consultations between the two National Security Councils. The momentum generated thereby increased bilateral cooperation in different sectors such as energy, trade, commerce, transit, investment, culture as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest.

High-level bilateral exchanges

Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of External Affairs visited Tehran from 28-30 July, 2008 to attend the 15th NAM Ministerial Conference. He again visited Tehran from 31 October-2 November, 2008 for the 15th Session of the India-Iran Joint Commission. This was EAM's third visit to Iran in last two years. During the visit, a meeting of the Joint Business Council and a Seminar on "India-Iran relations" were also organized. An Extradition Treaty and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty on Criminal Matters and MoUs on Agriculture, Sister Port Arrangements and on holding of Trade Exhibitions were signed.

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs attended the Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation in Tehran from 4-5 May, 2008. Kumari Selja, Minister of State for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (Independent Charge) participated in the Second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing & Urban Development held in Tehran from 10-15 May, 2008 and handed over the Chairmanship of the Conference to Iran.

Shri M. K. Narayanan, National Security Adviser paid a visit to Tehran from 30 June-2 July, 2008, at the invitation of his Iranian counterpart.

Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran paid a visit to New Delhi on 29 April, 2008. Mr. Isfandyar Rahim Mashae, Vice President, who accompanied the Iranian President, inaugurated the 'Days of Iranian Culture' festival in New Delhi and Mumbai on

30 April, 2008. Mr. Mohammad Saiedi Kia, Minister of Housing and Urban Development participated in the Bureau Meeting of the Second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development in New Delhi from 12-14 October, 2008.

Foreign Office Consultations

The sixth annual Foreign Office Consultations at the level of Foreign Secretary from India and Deputy Foreign Minister from Iran were held in India from 17-18 December, 2008. Bilateral relations, economic and commercial cooperation, cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector, the situation in Afghanistan and other regional issues were discussed.

Joint Commission Meeting

The India-Iran Joint Commission has seven subcommittees dealing with Petroleum & Natural Gas; Trade; Transport and Communications; Industry, Agriculture & Rural Development; Culture; Science & Technology & Information Technology; and Consular Matters. The India-Iran Joint Commission was established in July 1983 and so far 15 Joint Commission meetings have held. The 15th Joint Commission meeting was held in Tehran from 31 October-2 November, 2008. It was co-chaired by EAM with Dr. Seyed Shamseddin Hosseini, Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Consultation between National Security Councils

The sixth round of consultations between the National Security Advisors was held during NSA's visit to Tehran in July 2008. The Deputy to the Secretary SNSC Iran visited India from 10-14 November, 2008 for consultations with the National Security Council Secretariat. Bilateral Trade and Investment Trade between Iran and India grew from US\$ 9.5 billion (exports from India - US\$ 1.5 billion and imports by India - US\$ 8 billion) in 2006-2007 to US\$ 13 billion (exports from India - US\$ 2 billion and imports by India - US\$ 11 billion) in 2007-2008, registering a growth of about 40%.

During the period April 2008 to January 2009, the total trade between US\$ 12.8 billion. Important Indian goods being exported to Iran include primary & semi-finished iron & steel, manufactures of metals, machinery & instruments, drugs and pharmaceuticals, processed minerals, inorganic/agro chemicals, tea, yarn fabric etc. India also exports petroleum products to Iran in sizeable quantities. India's imports from Iran include crude oil, fruits & nuts, pulses, non-ferrous metals, organic & inorganic chemicals, chemicals metal scrap, iron & steel, organic chemicals and leather.

Several Indian companies are active in Iran, either through Joint Ventures with Iranian companies or by way of investments, in areas including shipping, mining, railways, steel, ICT, automotives, cement etc.

The Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) and the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) are expected to be finalised shortly.

The finalization of and coming into effect of these two Agreements will provide a sound basis to future economic and investment cooperation between the two countries.

Exchange of Business delegations

Economic and commercial exchanges continued. Business delegations from India to Iran included a Railway delegation led by the Chairman of the Railway Board, the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council, Mumbai, National Productivity Council, All India Association of Industries, Tea Board of India, Spices Board of India, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd., NALCO, Automotive Components Manufacturing Association, New Delhi, and Federation of Indian Export Organizations.

The Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Organized the Ninth Joint Business Council meeting alongside the 15th JCM

Business delegations from Iran included those sponsored by the Iran National Carpet Centre, Tehran Jewellery Syndicate, Rice Research Institute of Iran, Ministry of Economic Affairs & the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines for the Mining and SME Exhibition organized by the CII, the Tehran Stock Exchange and the Iran International Exhibition Company.

Cooperation in the Energy Sector

India attaches high importance to cooperation in the energy sector in the interests of its energy security as also a means to bolster regional cooperation. India is a major consumer of energy and Iran a major source of hydrocarbons. Cooperation, therefore, extends to different dimensions – import of crude oil from Iran, export of petroleum products from India, gas field exploration and development. Import of LNG from Iran and the project to build a pipeline to transfer gas from Iran to India through Pakistan also remain under discussion.

Transit

Iran is essential for the transit of our goods to Central Asia and Afghanistan. India's large assistance programme for Afghanistan also depends on Iran for transit, in the absence of transit through Pakistan. A consortium of



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh with the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in New Delhi on 29 April, 2008.



Minister of Finance, Kuwait, Mustafa Jassim Al-Shamali calling on the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in New Delhi on 3 July, 2008.

Indian companies has been pursuing a project for the development of Chabahar port the fructification of which would improve our access to Central Asia and Afghanistan. We attach importance also to the International North-South Transport Corridor through Iran.

Kuwait

Bilateral relations between India and Kuwait continued to be warm and friendly. The relationship was marked by exchange of high level visits. MoS, Shri E. Ahamed visited Kuwait from 29-31 January, 2008. During the visit, MoS called on the Kuwaiti Prime Minister. A wide range of bilateral and regional issues, including the revised format for Labour Contract to be signed between the Kuwaiti Employer and Indian Worker were discussed in his meetings with the Deputy PM/Foreign Minister and Minister of Social Affairs in Labour. According to official statistics of the Government of the State of Kuwait, there were 579,409 Indian nationals in Kuwait in February 2008. Shri E. Ahamed, MoS (EA) visited Kuwait to convey condolences to the royal family and the people of Kuwait on the demise of the Father Amir Sheikh Sa'ad Abdullah Al-Sabah on 13 May, 2008.

The Second Kuwait-India Joint Ministerial Commission was held in Delhi from 1-3 July, 2008 chaired jointly by MoS (EA), Shri E. Ahamed from Indian side and Minister of Finance Mr. Mustafa Al-Shamali from the Kuwaiti side. An MoU for cooperation between the CAG of India and Kuwait's State Audit Bureau was signed on 15 July, 2008.

Kuwait Cell

The final phase of compensation distribution started with UNCC sending to SKC a list of 8615 Untraced Claimants. This was our last chance given by UNCC to locate and pay these persons. Undisbursed funds were to be returned to UNCC and would lapse in UNCC with no further chance of getting this money. The work of locating the claimants started in October 2005 with sending the list of claimants who responded to the advertisements as per the list sent by UNCC. The work ended in October 2006 as UNCC refused to accept any further lists. UNCC sent money between January 2007 and July 2007, which had to be disbursed within six months and un-disbursed money returned to UNCC within six months of its transfer by UNCC to India. The last instalment of un-disbursed money was returned in January 2008. UNCC has made it very clear that they will not entertain any requests by any of the Governments to send the returned money after

this exercise irrespective of the justifications and the pleadings that may be put forward by the claimants or their Governments.

This Division attended to 12 Right to Information Act cases from April-December 2008 regarding queries from the claimants of the United Nations Compensation.

Oman

Shri Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs Minister accompanied by MoS (EA), Shri E. Ahamed and Secretary (East) paid an official visit to Muscat from 13-14 January, 2008. During the visit, EAM called on Deputy PM for Council of Ministers and Mr. Yousef bin Alwai bin Abdullah, Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs of Oman. EAM inaugurated the Indian Embassy cum Residence Complex and chaired the Regional Meeting of Indian HoMs in Gulf and West Asia and North Africa countries. The existing cordial relations between India and Oman were further strengthened with the visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Oman from 8-9 November, 2008. The highlight of the visit was signing of the MoU on Manpower and the MoU for establishing an India-Oman Joint Investment Fund with a seed capital of US\$ 100 million and going up to US\$ 1.5 billion.

Minister of State for External Affairs visited Oman in September 2008. He called on Dr. Omer bin Abdul Munim Al Zawawi, Special Adviser to HM the Sultan for External Liaison and Mr Yousuf Bin Alawi Bin Abdullah, Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs to exchange views on issues of mutual concern. Shri Shankersingh Vaghela, Union Minister of Textiles, visited Oman from 29-31 August, 2008. He held a meeting with Mr. Maqbool Ali Sultan, Minister of Commerce of the Sultanate. Minister for Legal Affairs Mr Mohammed bin Ali bin Nasir Al Alawi visited New Delhi in June to attend the 47th meeting of Asian-African Legal Consultative.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Yusuf bin Alawi visited New Delhi on 16 December, 2008. The sixth meeting of Indo-Oman Strategic Consultative Group was held in New Delhi on 7 May, 2008 and the seventh meeting was held in Muscat from 18-19 January, 2009.

Economic and commercial ties were further consolidated. Bilateral trade (non-oil) grew steadily and is poised to cross US\$ 2 billion by end 2008 compared to US\$ 1.4 billion in 2007.

Qatar

India's friendly relations with Qatar were further consolidated in 2008.



Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Prince Saud Al-Faisal meeting with the Union Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, in New Delhi on 28 February, 2008.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Qatar on 9 November, 2008. During the visit, Qatar and India signed two documents on defence cooperation and security as well as law enforcement matters. Means of bolstering the bilateral relations and a number of regional and international issues were discussed during the high level meetings.

Shri Murli Deora, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas met his Qatari counterpart Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy and Industry, Mr. Abdullah bin Hamad al Attiyah on 10 November, 2008. Currently, India buys 7.5 million tones of LNG from RasGas under a long-term deal with Qatar.

Saudi Arabia

The year, marked by several high level visits, witnessed an upswing in bilateral relations between India and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal visited India from 28-29 February, 2008 and called on Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee. He again visited India on December 26th and called on the Vice President, EAM and NSA.

Minister of External Affairs (EAM) Pranab Mukherjee paid a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia from 19-20 April, 2008 and called on Saudi King, Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and Governor of Riyadh Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud. He also held discussions with Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal. MoS for External Affairs, E. Ahamed visited Saudi Arabia on 17 April, 2008 and signed Haj agreement with Saudi Haj Minister, Dr. Fouad Al-Farsy.

Finance Minister, P. Chidambaram, along with Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister, Murli Deora, attended the Oil Summit, a meeting of major oil producer and consumer countries, held in Jeddah on 22 June, 2008, held at the behest of Saudi King Abdullah.

The economic relations strengthened during the year. A high level delegation, led by Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, visited Riyadh in May 2008 and met with the Saudi Ministers of Economy & Planning and Commerce & Industry.

India and Saudi Arabia signed a new bilateral air services agreement in January 2008. A composite delegation from Ministry of Fertilizer and Ministry of Petroleum, led by Secretary (Fertilizers), visited Riyadh from 25-27 October, 2008 to discuss bilateral cooperation in the fertilizer sector. Indian delegation from Centre of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) visited Riyadh in October 2008.

Indian Vice-Chief of Army Staff visited Saudi Arabia in May 2008 and called on Saudi Assistant Minister of Defence Prince Khalid bin Sultan. In July 2008 two Saudi naval warships, 'Al-Dammam' and 'Al-Yanbu,' visited Mumbai on the first ever goodwill visit to India in July 2008.

Haj

The total number of Indian pilgrims performing Haj in December 2008 was about 175,000. 122,213 Indian pilgrims visited Saudi Arabia through the Haj Committee of India, and remaining pilgrims visited the Kingdom for Haj through the private tour operators. Shri Syed Sibtey Razi, Governor of Jharkhand led the Indian Haj Goodwill Delegation to Saudi Arabia. He attended a reception hosted by HRH Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, the King of Saudi Arabia on 9 December, 2008.

United Arab Emirates

The year 2008 was a year of consolidation in the friendly bilateral ties between India and UAE. External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited UAE in May 2008. He met Foreign Minister, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Kamal Nath visited UAE in April and met Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Vice President and PM of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, Minister of Economy and Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research. Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Shri Vayalar Ravi visited UAE in November and discussed issues of interest with UAE Labour Minister, Saqr Ghobash Saeed Ghobash. From the UAE side, Minister of Foreign Trade, Shaikha Lubna Al Qasimi visited India on 25 April. She was awarded "Woman achiever of the year" by FICCI. The first ever India-UAE Joint Air Forces exercise took place in September 2008 in Abu Dhabi.

Yemen

India and Yemen bilateral relations remained friendly. During the year the relations were further strengthened with exchange of visits between the two countries. Secretary (East) led the Indian delegation to hold the Foreign Office consultation with Yemen in March 2008. Other important delegation visits to Yemen were those of Gas Authority of India Ltd, Indian Oil Corporation, Electronics Corporation of India Ltd and NTPC. From Yemen side the important delegation visits were Yemen Oil delegation, Yemen Oil and Gas Corporation delegation, Yemen military (education and training) delegation etc.

Iraq

India and Iraq have enduring political, economic and cultural ties. These were guided by the resolution passed by Indian Parliament on 8 April, 2003, by which India stands for an early restoration of sovereignty to the Iraqi people and the right of Iraqi people to freely determine their political future and control their natural resources. India supported a free, democratic, pluralistic, federal and unified Iraq, and extended assistance to the Iraqi Government and its people directly and as part of international efforts under the United Nations auspices.

In the year 2008-09, India contributed towards development of Iraq's human resources. India provided 100 slots to Iraq under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme to train its officials in various prestigious training and professional institutions all over India. The Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) provided training in India to 228 Iraqi oil officials. India offered academic slots to Iraq for higher studies under the 'Cultural Exchange Programme Scholarship Scheme' (CEP) and the 'General Cultural Scholarship Scheme' (GCSS) organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

India donated 800 metric tons of fortified biscuits to Iraqi refugees in Syria through the World Food Programme in New Delhi. The Embassy of India in Baghdad, on an average, issued around 1350 visas every month to the Iraqi nationals during the period April-October 2008. The majority of Iraqis visited India on Tourist and Medical visas and included around 400 Iraqi students.

India – Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

The India-GCC relations remained friendly and witnessed further strengthening in 2008. The fourth round of India-GCC dialogue took place on 29 September, 2008 at New York signifying the institutionalization of the mechanism. EAM led the Indian delegation and Secretary General GCC led the GCC delegation. They discussed issues of mutual concern and ways to strengthen and promote India-GCC relations.

The second round of India-GCC Free Trade Agreement negotiating team meeting took place in Riyadh (September 2008) after a hiatus of two and half years. It was agreed to establish a continuous process of exchange of information through electronic means before the next round scheduled at New Delhi.

West Asia and North Africa

Relations with the region as a whole

In keeping with the importance of the WANA region to India's foreign policy objectives, relations with the countries concerned were lent further substance in diverse spheres of interaction including through high-level political and economic interactions, consultations through established bilateral mechanisms, project assistance and, as with the Arab Republic of Egypt and the League of Arab States, through the establishment of innovative dialogue mechanisms. India's support for the Palestinian cause was further underlined during what was a trying period especially for the civilian population of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, marked additionally by lack of progress in the Middle East Peace Process.

Algeria

A Parliamentary Friendship Group between India and Algeria was established in the Algerian Parliament in April 2008. Mr. Ahmed Ouyahia, the Personal Representative of the President of Algeria, led the Algerian delegation to the India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi in April 2008. The Special Envoy on West Asia and the Middle East Peace Process, Shri C. R. Gharekhan, visited Algeria on 22 July, 2008. He met with Foreign Minister of Algeria, Mr. Mourad Medelci and was received by the President of Algeria, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika. External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee met Foreign Minister, Mr. Mourad Medelci on the sidelines of the NAM Foreign Ministers meeting held in Tehran in July 2008.

India-Algeria trade and economic relations have grown significantly during the year. Indian firms actively explored prospects in the automobile, petrochemical and other sectors in Algeria.

Djibouti

India's relations with Djibouti remain warm and cordial. Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs met the Foreign Minister of Djibouti, Mr. Mahmoud Ali Yossoff on 28 June, 2008 on the sidelines of the African Union Summit at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

INS *Sindhuvijay* made a port call at Djibouti in October, 2008 and *INS Tabar*, which is deployed for anti-piracy efforts, also made a port call at Djibouti the following month.

Egypt

There were important exchanges of high-level visits with Egypt during the year. External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee paid a bilateral visit to Egypt from 1-3 July, 2008 during which he called on President Mohammed Hosny Mubarak at Sharm el-Sheikh and held delegation level talks with the Foreign Minister of Egypt, Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit in Cairo. During his visit, the External Affairs Minister also met the Secretary General of the League of Arab States, H.E. Mr. Amre Moussa.

President Hosny Mubarak paid a State visit to India from 16-19 November, 2008. He was accompanied, among others, by Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Industry, Communications & Information Technology, the Minister of Information as well as a large business delegation. During his visit, President Mubarak called on the President. The Vice-President, the External Affairs Minister, and the Chairperson of the UPA called on President Mubarak. The Prime Minister held wide-ranging delegation-level discussions with President Mubarak on 18 November, 2008. The following documents were signed during the visit: (i) Extradition Treaty; (ii) Agreement on abolition of visa requirement for holders of diplomatic, special and official/service passports; (iii) MoU on Cooperation in the field of Health & Medicine; (iv) MoU on Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes; and, (v) MoU on Trade & Technical Cooperation. External Affairs Minister and the Foreign Minister of Egypt also signed a Joint Declaration on the State Visit of President Mubarak establishing a Strategic and Security Policy Dialogue between the two countries. During the visit, the President conferred the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for the year 1995 on President Mubarak. President Mubarak also addressed Indian business persons. On the margins of the visit, several Indian information technology companies signed memoranda of intent with Egypt's Ministry of Communications & Information Technology. NASSCOM and the Information Technology Industry Development Agency (ITIDA) of Egypt also signed an MoU on cooperation in the software sector.

Other visits exchanged between the two countries included those by Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce and Power in May 2008 during which he also represented India at the World Economic Forum -

Middle East held in Sharm el-Sheikh; Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs in June 2008 to attend the 11th Summit of the African Union, also at Sharm El-Sheikh, Shri C. R. Gharekhan, Special Envoy for West Asia & the Middle East Peace Process, who visited Cairo in April 2008 and Smt. Ambika Soni, Union Minister of Tourism and Culture, who visited Cairo in November 2008. High-level Egyptian visitors have also included the Minister for International Cooperation, Ms. Fayza Aboul Naga who led the Egyptian delegation to the India Africa Forum Summit, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Eng. Rachid Mohamed Rachid and the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Mr. Amin Abaza, who also visited India in April 2008.

In keeping with expanding trade and economic relations with Egypt, the Apparel Export Promotion Council participated in EGYTEX 2008 exhibition in Cairo from 16-18 November, 2008; a Tea Tasting-cum-Business Meet was held in Cairo on 20 May, 2008; a trade delegation from CAPEXIL visited Egypt from 29 November-4 December, 2008; a delegation from Egypt's General Authority for Investments and Free Zones visited India from 12-18 April, 2008 on an investment promotion campaign; the Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Ltd. signed a concession agreement for two oil and gas exploration blocks in Egypt on 9 March, 2008; & on 13 November, 2008, ONGC Videsh Ltd. announced that it had made a second oil discovery in the North Ramadan Concession, Gulf of Suez.

An Egyptian Defence delegation, led by Maj Gen Mohamed Mohsen Saad El Shazly, Deputy Chief of Operation Authority of the Egyptian Armed Forces visited India from 7-13 June, 2008 for the second meeting of the Indo-Egypt Joint Defence Committee. The Indian delegation to the meeting was led by Shri P. K. Rastogi, Special Secretary, Ministry of Defence.

The 'Days of Indian Culture in Egypt', a week-long event comprising performances by Indian music and dance troupes, exhibitions of paintings and photographs and screening of Indian films, was held from 10-17 November, 2008 under the framework of the Cultural Exchange Programme.

The Egyptian Vice Minister of Culture, Dr. Faisal Abdel Kader Younis participated in the India Arab Partnership Forum and the India Arab Festival held in New Delhi from 2-7 December, 2008.



President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mohamed Hosny Mubarak meeting the Union Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee in New Delhi on 18 November, 2008.



President of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas meeting the President, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, in New Delhi on 7 October , 2008.

Israel

Secretary (Agriculture and Cooperation), Dr. P.K. Mishra, led a delegation to Israel from 1-8 April, 2008. An Action Plan for Bilateral Agricultural Cooperation for 2008-10 was agreed to during the visit. Secretary, Department of Science and Technology Dr. T. Ramasami along with Secretary, Department of Bio-Technology Shri MK Bhan visited Israel from 8-10 November, 2008 to discuss cooperation in science and technology. Defence Secretary, Shri Vijay Singh visited Israel in November 2008 for the Seventh India Israel Joint Working Group meeting on Defence Cooperation. The Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel, Mr. Aaron Abrahamovich visited India from 7-8 July, 2008 during which he called on External Affairs Minister and held delegation-level talks with Shri N. Ravi, Secretary (East).

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations signed an MoU with Tel Aviv University, to establish a rotating Chair in Indian studies. A team comprising the Vice-Chancellors of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jamia Millia Islamia University, North East Hill University and the University of Calcutta, visited Israel from 6-12 July, 2008. A Kuchipudi dance group led by Ms. Vyjanthi Kashi and a Hindustani violin group led by Ms. Anupriya Deostale, sponsored by ICCR, performed at the Karmiel Dance Festival on 24 July, 2008.

Jordan

External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, met the Jordanian Foreign Minister, Dr. Salaheddin Bashir on the sidelines of the 63rd session of the United Nations General Assembly on 29 September, 2008 and discussed bilateral relations and the situation in West Asia. Ambassador C.R. Gharekhan, Special Envoy for West Asia & MEPP, visited Jordan in April 2008.

The Export Promotion Council for Export Oriented Units & Special Economic Zone Units signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Jordan Chamber of Commerce on 4 May, 2008 in Amman for mutual cooperation in trade and economic matters. A business delegation from 40 Indian companies under the aegis of Engineering Export Promotion Council and Export Promotion Council for EoUs & SEZs participated in the Fifth Re-build Iraq Exhibition held in Amman from 5-8 May, 2008. A delegation from Jordan Investment Board (JIB) visited India from 2-9 August, 2008 and interacted with several industry leaders and business bodies in Mumbai, Bangalore and New Delhi. JIB has identified India as one the 14 target countries for attracting investments into Jordan.

A seven-member delegation representing the Jordanian leather industry participated in the 16th Delhi Leather Fair held in New Delhi from 16-18 October, 2008.

A 25-member cultural troupe from Jordan took part in the India-Arab Cultural Festival held in New Delhi from 2-7 December, 2008.

Morocco

Shri C.R. Gharekhan, Special Envoy on West Asia and the Middle East Peace Process visited Morocco from 23-26 July, 2008.

Indian group "Oberoi Hotels and Resorts" and Moroccan real estate group "El Alami Holding" signed a joint agreement in September 2008 to build a US\$ 76.3 million tourist complex in Marrakech. The complex would include 90 luxury suites and 50 villas to be erected on 30 hectares.

A seven-member Electronics & Software Export Promotion Council's delegation visited Morocco from 31 March-3 April, 2008 for promoting export of electronics and IT products from India in the Moroccan market.

A two-member delegation from the PLASTINDIA Foundation visited Morocco from 14-17 October, 2008.

A Rajasthani Gypsy Music Group participated in the eight-day music festival "Mawazine, Rhythms of the World" organized in Rabat on 16 May, 2008. Ms. Madhup Mudgal, classical singer from India gave a performance at the 14th Fez Festival of World Sacred Music held from 6-15 June, 2008. Smt. Padmavathi Paradin and Beena Paradin from India participated in the Fez Culinary Festival held from 24-26 October, 2008. An 18-member Gnawa music group is visiting India to perform at the Indo-Arab Cultural Festival from 2-7 December, 2008.

A Moroccan cultural troupe took part in the India-Arab Cultural Festival held in New Delhi from 2-7 December, 2008. Deputy Minister of Culture Mrs. Khadija Alghour participated in the India Arab Partnership Forum and the India Arab Festival held in New Delhi from 2-7 December, 2008.

Shri Jaouad Kadiri was appointed India's honorary consul in Marrakech.

Palestine

India remained committed to its unwavering support for the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a homeland of their own and supported the comprehensive dialogue between Palestine and Israel, which was initiated at the Annapolis Peace Conference in November 2007.

India participated in the New Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership Ministerial Conference on Capacity Building for Palestine at Jakarta in July 2008. In the conference, India committed to provide 60 ITEC slots to the Palestinian people for training courses annually, which later was increased to 80 slots.

The President, Palestinian National Authority Mr. Mahmoud Abbas paid a State visit to India from 6-9 October, 2008. President Abbas called on President, Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil. Vice President, Shri M. Hamid Ansari called on President Abbas. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Abbas held delegation level discussions. The Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance, Smt. Sonia Gandhi, the External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, and the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed, called on President Abbas.

A Memorandum of Understanding regarding construction and equipping of the Jawaharlal Nehru High School at Abu Dees (Palestine) was signed during the visit. In the presence of the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, President Mahmoud Abbas laid the foundation stone of the Chancery-cum-Residences Complex of the Embassy of Palestine, being built in New Delhi as a gift of the Government and people of India. The Palestinian side deeply appreciated India's traditional and steadfast commitment to the Palestinian cause.

In the course of discussions, India renewed its commitment to the economic development of Palestine. In this regard, reaffirming the Government of India's commitments in project assistance for Palestine, the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh announced a grant of US\$ 10 million as budgetary support to the Palestine National Authority as well as an additional US\$ 10 million in project assistance for Palestinian development programmes.

Through a series of statements, the Government of India strongly condemned the Israeli military incursion into Gaza which began in December, 2008. Reiterating India's unstinted and unwavering support for the just Palestinian cause, the Prime Minister also called upon the international community help restore peace in the region. Further, the Government of India contributed \$1 million to UNRWA for relief efforts in Gaza.

Lebanon

India and Lebanon continued to enjoy cordial and friendly relations. India welcomed the election of Gen. Michel Sleiman, as the new President of Lebanon in May 2008.

Dr. M.M. Pallam Raju, Minister of State for Defence, visited Lebanon from 10-12 September, 2008 to meet the Indian contingent deployed in Southern Lebanon as part of United Nations peace keeping force (UNIFIL).

Sponsored by the ICCR, a Rajasthani music group led by Shri Samundar Khan Langa and a Shehnai group led by Pandit Daya Shankar visited Lebanon from 17-22 October, 2008.

The India Tourism Office in Dubai participated in the Tourism Exhibition held in Beirut during October 2008.

Libya

India-Libya bilateral relations during the year continued to grow. Minister for African Affairs, Mr. Ali Abdul Salam Treiki visited New Delhi as Head of the Libyan Delegation to participate in the India-Africa Forum held in New Delhi in April 2008. A Libyan cultural performed in the associated cultural events.

An MoU was signed between RITES and Railroads Project Execution and Management Board for cooperation in the field of Railways in November 2008. This will include projects as well as exchange of expertise and training. An MoU for operationalisation of a consortium between Indian Oil-Sonatrach (Algeria) was signed between the two sides in May 2008.

Indian companies and Oil PSUs remained engaged in developmental activities such as oil and oil pipelines, housing, construction and infrastructure, power, computerization and training etc. in Libya.

ICCR-sponsored cultural troupes performed in Tripoli and Sirte in August 2008.

19 Indian companies participated in the Tripoli International Fair held in April 2008. 40 of the 100 training slots offered to Libya by Minister of Petroleum, Shri Murli Deora during his visit to Libya last year, have been utilized by Libyan officials from the National Oil Corporation.

Somalia

India's High Commissioner to Kenya was concurrently accredited to Somalia. Piracy off the Somali coast affected Indian flagged ships and Indian merchant sailors with greater frequency during this period. Consent of the Somali authorities was obtained for the Indian Navy to participate in anti-piracy operations in Somali waters.

Sudan

Mr Salman Suliman Alsafi, the Sudanese Minister of State for Investment attended the FICCI- Indo-Arab Investment Projects Conclave I in April 2008. The Under Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, HE Dr. Mutrif Siddig visited India in July 2008 during which he called on Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed. Dr. Awad Al-Jaz, Minister of Finance and National Economy visited India in October 2008 as Special Envoy of the President of Sudan. He called on the External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee during which he handed over a letter for the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh from the Sudanese President. During this visit, the Special Envoy also met the Minister of Railways, Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav, the Finance Minister of Finance, Shri P. Chidambaram and the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Shri Murli Deora.

The Vice Chief of Army Staff visited Sudan to inspect Indian peacekeepers in the United Nations Mission in Sudan.

During the year, two Indian nationals remained missing in Sudan.

The public sector company, WAPCOS won a donor-funded tender for consultancy for water and electricity supply projects in southern Sudan.

In November 2008, a folk song and dance ensemble from Goa visited Khartoum, Kadugli and Malakal under the auspices of the ICCR. Training was also provided at the Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi to 15 officials from the Ministry of Regional Cooperation of the Government of Southern Sudan.

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Sudan, Mr. Mohamed Yousif Abdalla participated in the India Arab Partnership Forum and the India Arab Festival held in New Delhi from 2-7 December, 2008.

Syria

The President of Syria, Dr. Bashar Al-Assad, accompanied by Mrs. Asma Assad, paid a State visit to India from 17-21 June, 2008. During the visit, the President of Syria also visited Bangalore and Agra. Dr. Bashar al-Assad was also accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Walid al-Moualem, Minister for Expatriates, Dr. (Ms.) Buthaina Shaaban, Minister of Economy and Trade, Mr. Amer Husni Lutfi and Minister of Telecommunication & Technology, Mr. Emad Sabouni. The President of Syria called on the President, Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, Vice-President, Dr. M. Hamid Ansari, External Affairs

Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee and Chairperson UPA, Smt. Sonia Gandhi called on the Syrian President.

President Bashar Al-Assad and the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh held delegation level talks on 18 June. Efforts aimed at strengthening bilateral economic and commercial cooperation between India and Syria, the encouragement of joint ventures in a variety of areas, including in the Syrian phosphatic fertilizers, hydrocarbon and power sectors were highlighted in the talks. India offered to conduct a consultancy study on the integrated development of the Syrian phosphoric sector. Subsequently, a delegation led by Secretary (Fertilizers) visited Syria.

Documents signed during the visit included (i) Agreement on the Mutual Promotion & Protection of Investments (ii) Agreement on the Avoidance of the Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion and (iii) Work Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors for 2008-2009.

The Minister of Culture of Syria, Dr. Riyadh Nassan Agha, participated in the India Arab Partnership Forum and the India Arab Festival held in New Delhi from 2-7 December, 2008. Syria also participated in the Painting exhibition, handicraft exhibition and the cultural festival during the event.

Tunisia

The first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Small and Medium Enterprises was held in New Delhi from 8-9 April, 2008. The fourth meeting of the Joint Working Group on Drugs and Pharmaceuticals was held in Tunis from 5-7 October, 2008. Partnership between the Pasteur Institute of Tunisia and the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, for research as well as commercial production of vaccines and serum in Tunisia and India, was examined and biotechnology was identified as an area of cooperation.

An eight-member cultural troupe, sponsored by ICCR under the India-Tunisia Cultural Exchange Programme visited Tunisia from 29 July-7 August, 2008. The Troupe gave seven performances in various cities across Tunisia.

The League of Arab States

As a follow-up to discussions held in Cairo in July, 2008 during the visit of the External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the Secretary General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Amre Moussa visited India from 30 November-2 December, 2008. The Secretary General and the External

Affairs Minister held delegation level talks on 2 December, 2008 following which, an Memorandum of Cooperation was signed providing for the establishment of the India-Arab Cooperation Forum as a formal mechanism to strengthen and diversify relations in various fields. The External Affairs Minister and the Secretary General inaugurated the “India-Arab Forum: Partnership through Culture,” a week-long cultural festival organised by FICCI

in cooperation with the ICCR and the Ministry of External Affairs that brought together nearly 200 artistes from various Arab countries from 2-7 December, 2008. The festival also included film shows, cultural performances, a handicrafts fair, a painting and photo exhibition and a seminar on “India-Arab Civilizational Linkages” organised by the ICWA. Ministers for Culture from Sudan, Syria, Morocco, Egypt, Yemen and Oman also attended the event.



East and Southern Africa

India-Africa Forum Summit

The India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi from 8-9 April 2008, was a landmark event. The Summit created a new architecture for the relationship between India and Africa for the early part of the 21st century. The Delhi Declaration and the Africa-India framework for cooperation that emerged from the Summit set out an ambitious road map.

The Prime Minister announced the doubling of the existing levels of Lines of Credit to Africa to US \$ 5.4 billion over the next five years. These Lines of Credit will be utilized in such crucial areas as enhancing agricultural production, food processing, small and medium enterprises, irrigation, infrastructure, IT, energy and pharmaceutical sectors, among others. These projects will be prioritized by the African governments, reflecting their own needs.

A separate grant of US \$ 500 million was also announced for projects specially in the areas of capacity building and human resources development. These include an entire range of programmes, namely, doubling of educational scholarships under ITEC, general scholarship schemes of the ICCR, organization of courses in water resources, health, agriculture, mining, establishment of apex institutions in such diverse areas as trade, IT, vocational training, diamond, coal etc.. These programmes will keep Africa as the largest recipient of the ITEC programme.

The Prime Minister also announced an offer of the Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme for access to products from African LDCs. Out of the 50 LDCs of the world, 34 are in Africa. A number of African nations have already joined the Scheme. This was a fulfilment of a promise made by us earlier at the WTO.

This new architecture of the India Africa Forum Summit has been built upon a solid foundation of the historical and civilizational ties that have existed between India and Africa, and which were strengthened during the long periods of struggle against colonialism, imperialism and apartheid, in which India and Africa were partners.

India hosted several high level visits from the region:

- South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki visited India to participate in the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi from 7-9 April, 2008.
- The then Vice President of Zambia, Mr. Rupiah Bwezani Banda, attended India-Africa Forum Summit held in Delhi from 8-9 April, 2008.
- President of Uganda, Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, as Head of the East African Community, participated in the India-Africa Forum Summit from 8-9 April, 2008. He was on State Visit on 10 April, 2008.
- President of Tanzania, Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, as Chairman of the African Union, visited India and participated in the India-Africa Forum Summit from 8-9 April, 2008.
- Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Mr. Meles Zenawi, visited India and participated in the India-Africa Forum Summit from 8-9 April, 2008.
- The new President of South Africa, Mr. Kgalema Motlanthe, accompanied by several South African Ministers, visited India to attend Third IBSA Summit in New Delhi on 15 October, 2008.
- Mr. Angidi Veeriah Chettiar, Vice President of Mauritius visited Chennai to participate in the Seventh Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention from 7-9 January, 2009.
- At the invitation of the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, EGH, MP, Prime Minister of Kenya, visited Gujarat to participate in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors' Summit (VGGIS) 2009 from 11-14 January, 2009.
- Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, visited India from 18-23 January, 2009 to participate in the FICCI-organized India-Africa Business Partnership Summit (19-20 January) in New Delhi as the Chief Guest.
- Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, visited India from 4-5 February, 2009 to participate in the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2009 organized by TERI.

- From Indian side, President Smt. Pratibha Patil made a brief technical stop over in Cape Town on 24 April, 2008 on her way back to India after her visit to Latin American countries.

Other important visits to India during the year included:

- Foreign Minister of Kenya, representing President of Kenya (April).
- President of the African National Congress, South Africa (June).
- Speaker of the House of Federation of Ethiopia (May)
- Foreign Minister Namibia (June).
- The Minister for Natural Resource and Tourism of Tanzania (June)
- State Minister of Labour & Social Affairs of Ethiopia (June).
- Minister of Education, South Africa (June-July).
- Minister of Health, South Africa (July).
- Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, President of South Africa's Inkatha Freedom Party and Chairman of the House of Traditional Leaders (July)
- Minister of Interior, Mozambique (July).
- State Minister for Technical and Vocational Education and Training of Ethiopia (July).
- Minister for Public Service and Administration, South Africa (August).
- Minister of Health of Madagascar (August)
- Deputy Attorney General/Minister of State for Justice and Constitutional Affairs of Uganda (August).
- Minister of Infrastructure Development of Tanzania (September)
- Minister for Communications, Science and Technology of Tanzania (September)
- Minister of Natural Resources of Rwanda (October)
- Minister for Agriculture of Eritrea (October)
- Mauritian Parliamentary delegation (23-member) led by the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Mauritius (October)
- Minister of Housing, South Africa (October).
- Minister for Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives of Tanzania (November)
- Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources of Rwanda (November)
- Minister of State for Fisheries of Uganda (November)
- Minister of Minister for Public Service Management of Tanzania (November)
- State Minister of Capacity Building of Ethiopia (November)
- Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, Malawi (November).
- Assistant Minister of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing, Lesotho (November).
- President of Mauritius (private visit) (December)
- Minister of Information, Communication Technology, Namibia (December)
- Minister of Energy and Mines of the State of Eritrea (January).
- Hon. Raila Odinga, Prime Minister of Kenya. visited Gujarat to participate in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors' Summit (VGGIS) 2009 (January)
- Minister of Agriculture of Kenya and Mr. Amason Kingi Jeffah, Minister for the East African Community visited India (January).
- Minister of Environment and National Development Unit of Mauritius (January).
- Minister for Energy of Mozambique (January).
- Minister of Commerce, Industry & Trade, Swaziland (January).
- Minister for Health and Social Welfare, and Deputy Foreign Minister of Tanzania (January).
- Minister for Industry, Trade and Marketing of Tanzania (January).
- Minister for Information & Communications Technology (ICT) of Uganda (January).
- Minister of State for Economic Monitoring, Office of the President of Uganda, (January).
- Deputy Minister of Health, Zambia (January).
- Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique (February)
- Minister for Coordination for Environmental Action of Mozambique (February)
- Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare and Reforms Institutions of Mauritius (26 January to 8 February)
- Minister of Health of Rwanda (February).
- Minister of Natural Resources of Rwanda (February).
- Minister of Medical Services of Kenya (February)

- Minister of Defence, Justice and Security of Botswana (February)
- Dy. Minister of Defence of Namibia (February)
- Minister of Energy and Minerals of Tanzania (March)
- Minister of Trade & Industry of Botswana (March)
- Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Empowerment of Mauritius (March).
- Vice Minister of Agriculture, Mozambique (March)
- Minister of Natural Resources and Energy, and Minister of Information, Communication and Technology, Kingdom of Swaziland (March)
- Minister of State for Investment, Minister of Trade and Industry, and Minister of State for Finance of Uganda (March).
- Minister of Regional Integration and International Cooperation of Zimbabwe (March).

From India:

- Parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha to Mauritius and South Africa (April).
- External Affairs Minister to South Africa (May).
- The Special Envoy of the Prime Minister on Climate Change visited Mauritius (May).
- Commissioner for NRI Affairs, Government of Goa to Kenya (May).
- Commissioner for NRI Affairs, Government of Goa to Mozambique (May).
- Minister of State for External Affairs to Ethiopia (July).
- Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Anand Sharma to South Africa (July & September).
- Minister for Tourism and Culture to South Africa (August).
- Minister of State for External Affairs to Tanzania (August).
- Raksha Utpadan Rajya Mantri to South Africa (September).
- Minister of State for Commerce & Power to Ethiopia (October).
- Health Minister, Government of Kerala to South Africa (November).
- Chief Minister of Gujarat to Uganda and Kenya (November).
- Minister for Industry and Commerce, Government of Assam to Kenya (January 2009)

Botswana

India and Botswana enjoy cordial relations which former Botswana's President described as excellent. The year 2008 has seen the follow-up on the six agreements signed during the visit of former President Festus Mogae in December 2006. The two countries are also discussing a number of other agreements, including an MoU on Cooperation in the field of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and another on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors. Bilateral defence relations got a big boost with the visits of Chief of Air Staff (CAS) Air Chief Marshal J H Major to Botswana from 14-17 September, 08 at the invitation of the Lt. Gen T H C Masire, Commander, Botswana Defence Force (BDF) and Chief of Army Staff, General Deepak Kapoor from 27-28 November, 2008.

To enhance the bilateral technical cooperation, a delegation from Ministry of Education of Botswana visited India to discuss the implementation of tele-education project. TCIL has already installed the tele-medicine hardware in Nyangabgwe hospital in Francistown. Work on VVIP connectivity in the President's Office has been completed. There is appreciation for Pan-African e-network project in Botswana. An Innovation hub similar to a Cyber City in India has been established in Botswana. Another Botswana delegation visited India from 25-27 November, 2008 to take part in the third round of India and SACU PTA negotiations.

A delegation led by Dr. Harjit Singh Anand, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, visited Botswana from 11-14 April, 2008 to participate in an exhibition-cum-seminar on 'Innovative Building Materials & Construction Technologies for Sustainable Housing in Africa'.

On the bilateral economic and commercial front, a ten-member IT industry delegation led by Electronics & Computer Software Export Promotion Council visited Gaborone from 29-30 September, 2008 and participated in a "Buyer-Seller-Meet" and "One-to-One" interactions with the IT companies of Botswana.

A Children's Film Festival under India-Botswana CEP was held in Gaborone from 10-15 November, 2008 in collaboration with Department of Culture and Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture wherein 14 children's films from India were screened.

Brig. (Retd) Dikgakganatso Ndelu Seretse, Minister of Defence, Justice and Security of Botswana visited India

in connection with the Seventh International Aerospace Exposition, 11-15 February, 2009, held in Bangalore.

Hon. Daniel N. Moroka, Minister of Trade & Industry, Govt. of Botswana attended the “5th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership: 22-24 March, 2009” in New Delhi.

Burundi

The two-way trade during 2007-08 was US\$ 9.89 million which saw a growth of nearly 25%. Indian exports were worth US\$ 8.04 million.

A delegation of businessmen from the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry paid a visit to Burundi on 14-15 November, 2008 to explore possibilities of increasing bilateral trade and investment.

Comoros

Comoros signed an MoU with TCIL for setting up the Pan-African e-network in the country. Necessary equipment has reached Moroni and the implementation process would commence once Govt. of Comoros finalises the sites for the tele-medicine, tele-education and VVIP connectivity.

Another project costing US\$ one million has been offered to Comoros in the field of agro-processing under IBSA. Govt. of Comoros has been requested to furnish the feasibility study enabling the Govt. of India to implement the project.

Eritrea

Two vessels of the Indian Navy, viz., INS Godavari and INS Aditya paid a goodwill visit to Massawa port from 3-6 September, 2008 and to Assab port from 7-8 September, 2008.

The Eritrean Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Arefaine Berhe, accompanied by Director General in the President's Office, Mr. Yemani Ghebremeskel, paid an official visit to India from 28 September to 5 October, 2008. The Eritrean Minister met Union Minister of Agriculture on 29 September, 2008 to discuss and review cooperation in the area of agriculture between the two countries.

Mr. Tesfai Ghebreselaissie, Minister of Energy and Mines of the State of Eritrea, visited India from 18-23 January, 2009 to participate in the India-Africa Business Partnership Summit in New Delhi organized by FICCI and supported by Government of India. The Minister and delegation had a meeting with the Secretary, Ministry of Mines to discuss areas of bilateral cooperation.

Ethiopia

Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Mr. Meles Zenawi, accompanied by Foreign Minister Mr. Seyoum Mesfin, attended the India-Africa Forum Summit at New Delhi in April 2008.

Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Ethiopia on 30-31 July, 2008 as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister seeking support of Ethiopia, which is an IAEA Governing Body Member, regarding the proposed Indian Safeguards Agreement with IAEA. Ethiopia fully supported India in Vienna and the Prime Minister told MOS (AS) that India's re-emergence on the world stage was good for Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular.

Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce & Power, visited Ethiopia from 5-7 October, 2008, leading an Indian official and business delegation, to attend the Fifth India-Ethiopia Joint Trade Committee meeting held in Addis Ababa.

Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of External Affairs, met Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi on the sidelines of UNGA, New York and discussed issues of bilateral relations.

The Speaker of the House of Federation, Degefe Bula, led a nine-member delegation on a study visit to Delhi from 6-9 May, 2008. Another seven-member delegation led by the Deputy Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives visited BPST, New Delhi, from 4-8 August, 2008, on a benchmarking mission. A regional parliamentary delegation headed by the Speaker of the Southern Nations, Nationalities Peoples Regional Council also visited BPST from 26-28 August, 2008, as a Parliamentary experience sharing programme.

Mr. Mohamed Malin Ali, State Minister of Labour & Social Affairs visited India from 16-21 June, 2008. The Ethiopian State Minister met Minister of State (IC), Labour & Employment on 17 June, 2008 and discussed issues of mutual interest.

H.E. Mr. Wondwosen Kiflu, State Minister for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Ethiopia visited India from 14-17 July, 2008. The Ethiopian Minister met MOS, HRD on 17 July, 2008 and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Mr. Fikru Desalegne, State Minister of Capacity Building of Ethiopia visited India from 23-28 November, 2008 on an experience sharing visit. The delegation had meetings/presentations at Department of Personnel & Training and

Indian Institute of Public Administration. The delegation also visited Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie.

The year 2008 has been celebrated as the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Postal Service issued a set of three postage stamps commemorating 60 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and India.

Second International Non-Violence Day was organized on 2 October, 2008 at the UN Conference Centre where PM Meles Zenawi, delivered the Gandhi Memorial lecture. The Ethiopian PM released the first ever publication in Amharic of the book "India - A Dynamic Democracy". It was organized by the Embassy in cooperation with the UNECA.

TERI signed an MoU with UNECA for establishing Africa Centre for Climate Change Policy Studies to strengthen Africa's effort to address the challenge of climate change.

Ethiopia is the first beneficiary of the Pan African e-Network project in Africa, which was launched in 2007.

A Bharatnatyam dance troupe led by Guru Saroja Vaidyanathan visited Ethiopia in June 2008. Goan music and dance troupe 'Pioneers of Quepem' visited Ethiopia from 27 October to 2 November, 2008 and gave performances in four cities.

Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, visited India from 4-5 February, 2009 to participate in the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2009 organized by TERI. During the visit, External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee called on the Ethiopian Prime Minister and discussed issues of bilateral cooperation.

Bilateral trade between the two countries has steadily been increasing and is heavily in India's favour. According to the Ethiopian Customs Authority, India's exports to Ethiopia in 2007-08 are worth US\$ 426.9 mn. while imports are to the tune of US\$ 14 mn. Indian investments in Ethiopia have crossed US\$ 3.5 billion in 2008 and India is now the second largest investor in Ethiopia after Sudan.

Kenya

Foreign Minister of Kenya, Mr. Moses Wetang'ula, visited India from 6-10 April, 2008 to participate in the India-Africa Forum Summit, representing President Kibaki. Shri Eduardo Faleiro, Commissioner for NRI Affairs, Government of Goa visited Kenya from 21-25 May, 2008 to promote the welfare of the Goan expatriate community in Kenya in particular and to interact with the overseas

Indian community in general. Shri Faleiro also met Kenya's Education Minister, Prof. Sam Ongeri. As part of their study tour abroad, a team of 15 senior defence officials from the National Defence College of India visited Kenya from 11-16 May, 2008. INS Godavari paid a goodwill visit to Mombasa from 17-21 August, 2008.

A delegation of Customs officials visited Kenya from 6-8 August, 2008 to help Kenya Revenue Authority to launch an IT-based software programme for revenue collection. Senior officers of the National Human Rights Commission of India including its Chairperson Shri Justice S. Rajendra Babu visited Kenya from 19-25 October, 2008 to attend the Commonwealth Human Rights Institutions Forum meeting and the Ninth International Conference of the International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions.

Shri Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Gujarat visited Kenya from 18-20 November, 2008 as part of a Road Show to promote the *Vibrant Gujarat: Global Investors' Summit 2009*. He was accompanied by a composite delegation of senior State officials and leading businessmen of Gujarat. The Chief Minister had meetings with Kenya's Vice President and Minister of Home Affairs Mr. Kalonzo Musyoka, the Prime Minister Mr. Raila Odinga and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Local Government Mr. Musalia Mudavadi.

A Kenya Railways delegation led by its Managing Director visited India in May 2008 to explore the possibility of tie-ups and to study the working of the Metro project.

The Fifth India-Kenya Joint Trade Committee meeting was held on 16-17 December, 2008 in New Delhi. The Kenyan delegation was led by Dr. (Eng.) Cyrus Njiru, Permanent Secretary in the office of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and the Indian delegation was led by Shri Jairam Ramesh, MOS for Commerce and Power.

A tea delegation led by Shri Pradyut Bardoloi, Minister for Industry and Commerce, Government of Assam visited Kenya on a study tour from 11-16 January, 2009 to learn about the mechanism put in place in the small tea growers sectors of Kenya and held meetings with Kenya Tea Development Authority officials.

Attorney General Hon. Amos Wako visited Ahmedabad to attend an International Meeting on Peace and Law held from 28 December, 2008 to 5 January, 2009.

A high-level delegation led by Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, attended the Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors' Summit (VGGIS) from 11 to 14 January 2009



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi, in New Delhi on 9 April, 2008.



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting with the President of Namibia, Hifikepunye Pohamba on the sidelines of the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly in New York, USA on 26 September, 2008.

held at Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat. He held discussions with top Indian industrialists and businessmen. He also visited various industrial establishments including Mundra Port and Porbandar, etc. PM Raila Odinga also held discussions with Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Narendra Modi who took him on a tour to Fair Price Shops to observe the working of Public Distribution System to distribute foodgrains among the poor sections of the society.

Mr. William Ruto, Minister of Agriculture of Kenya and Mr. Amason Kingi Jeffah, Minister for the East African Community visited India and participated in the India-Africa Business Partnership Summit organized by FICCI from 19-20 January, 2009, in New Delhi.

Mr. P.A. Nyong'o, Minister of Medical Services of Kenya visited India from 1-4 February, 2009 in connection with the Fifth Meeting of the International Advisory Panel (IAP)

There has been increase in the bilateral trade in the last 4-5 years with the volume being US \$ 650 million in the year 2007. Major items of exports from India to Kenya include drugs and pharmaceuticals, chemicals, machinery etc. Major items imported by India include cashew, leather and leather products, scrap metal etc.

Indian Company ESSAR with Econet wireless International launched a fourth GSM network mobile service on 26 November, 2008 under brand name YU. The ESSAR group has invested US\$ 500 million in to the venture. In addition ESSAR group through ESSAR oil has purchased 50% stake in Kenya Petroleum Refineries Ltd. at a cost of US\$ 11 million. Other major investments include purchase of US\$ 200 million property by Reliance Group in Nairobi, Sher Karunturi, a flower firm of Karunturi Group invested US\$ 78 million and construction of LPG plant in Nairobi by Bharat Petroleum Corporation at total cost of US\$ 70 Million. The Road Show on 'Vibrant Gujarat' at Oshwal Centre and "Business Meet" at Kenya International Conference Centre (KICC) on 20 November, 2008, organized during the visit of Chief Minister of Gujarat, was attended by more than 500 Kenyan industrialists and businessmen. During the meeting bilateral cooperation between two countries in the sectors like small scale industries, infrastructure development, energy, information and communication technology (ICT) and mineral exploration were discussed.

Lesotho

India's relations with Lesotho continued to grow steadily. At the request of the Prime Minister of Lesotho, the term of the Indian Army Training Team (IATT) in Maseru was

extended till 2011. The performance of the IATT has been uniformly praised by the Lesotho leadership.

The first session of the India-Lesotho Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on 17 March, 2009. the meeting discussed cooperation in areas such as SMMEs, human resources development, mining, health, agriculture, rural development, and water resources.

On exchange of visits, Mr. Khotso Matla, Assistant Minister of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing, Government of Lesotho visited India on 26 November, 2008 to witness the signing of an MoU for negotiating the PTA between India and SACU.

On the technical cooperation side, Lesotho has been making full use of the training opportunities offered under the ITEC Programme. India is also setting up an IT Centre at Lerotholi Polytechnic in Maseru. MoUs on agricultural cooperation and Local Government between India and Lesotho are under discussion.

Madagascar

Govt. of India extended Line of Credit of US\$ 25 million to finance two projects viz. (i) project for rice productivity (US\$ 10 mn) and (ii) project for fertilizer production (US\$ 15 mn) in Madagascar. An agreement in this regard was signed in New Delhi on 14 November, 2008 between Exim Bank of India and the Malagasy Minister of Agriculture, Live Stock and Fisheries H. E. Mr. Armand Panja Ramanoelina. President of Madagascar H.E. Mr. Marc Ravalomanana also made a specific mention of India's assistance in agriculture sector during a seminar on Madagascar Action Plan (MAP) on 18 November, 2008 in Antananarivo.

India will soon be installing an intranet project linking the Malagasy Presidency with all the Ministries and Departments of the Government of Madagascar. An MoU for implementation of the project, estimated to cost US\$ 6 million, was signed on 18 September, 2008. Necessary process is already underway to set up another prestigious IT project, Pan African e-network, to provide Indian expertise in healthcare and education to the Malagasy people.

Dr. Ralainirina Paul Richard, Minister of Health of Madagascar, visited India from 17-24 August, 2008, leading a three-member delegation. The delegation visited Mumbai and Goa and had discussions with CIPLA Ltd. including visiting their manufacturing facilities.

An India-Madagascar Business Seminar was organized in

Antananarivo on 1 September, 2008 during the visit of a 15-member multi-sectoral delegation from the Confederation of Indian Industry to explore the opportunities of bilateral trade and investment.

India exported 50,000 tonnes of non-basmati rice to Madagascar enabling it to resolve its food scarcity at a very critical juncture.

The year 2008 witnessed a new momentum in the bilateral relationship with the opening of resident Malagasy Embassy in New Delhi in October 2008.

Malagasy imports from India during the year 2007 were to the tune of US\$ 76.75 million while the exports from Madagascar to India stood at US\$ 18.68 million. As per figures available upto September 2008, India's exports to Madagascar amount to US\$ 58.50 million while Madagascar's exports to India amounted for US\$ 6.8 million.

M/s Escorts are sending 450 tractors and allied equipments worth US\$ 10 million to Madagascar under India's LoC. M/s Lucky Exports have been awarded the contract for setting up seed fertilizer plants and bio-fertilizer plants worth US\$ 15 million by the Government of Madagascar under the above LoC. Three Indian companies namely, Gimpex, Varun Trading and Sahara India have opened their offices in Madagascar during 2008 and are exploring opportunities for investments in the mining sector. M/s Essar has been involved in the exploration of oil and gas in Madagascar for over two years. They have invested nearly US\$ 5 million so far. A large number of Indian companies, including Tatas, Birlas, Ashok Leyland, Kirloskars, HCL, Ercom, Angelique, Jaguar, etc. had made exploratory visits to Madagascar to avail of the investment friendly climate.

Malawi

Mr. Frank Tumpala Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Food Security visited New Delhi to attend the conference on India-Africa Cooperation for Sustainable Food Security from 10-12 November, 2008.

On 14 May 2008, through an Agreement signed between Exim Bank of India and Government of Malawi, a credit line for US\$30 million for irrigation, grain storage, tobacco threshing and one village one project was extended to Malawi. On 16 June, 2008 a cheque for US\$ 260,689/- (Rs. 1 crore) for flood relief was handed over to President of Malawi. Malawi has been regularly utilizing the facilities of Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) civilian training programme. Subsequent to India Africa Forum summit in April 2008, ITEC civilian training slots

to Malawi were increased to 35 in 2008-09.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations sponsored dance and music troupe led by Odissi dancer Ranjana Gauhar and classical music artiste Dr. Mustafa Raza gave performances in Malawi from 28-31 October, 2008.

Mauritius

During the year, India's comprehensive engagement with Mauritius continued in various fields.

A 16-member Parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri Charanjit Singh Atwal, visited Mauritius en route to attend the 118th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting in Cape Town from 10-12 April, 2008. The delegation called on the Speaker of the National Assembly of Mauritius, Mr. Rajkeswur Purryag.

A 23-member Mauritian Parliamentary delegation led by the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Mauritius, Mr. Marie Joseph Noel-Etienne Ghislain Sinatambou, visited India from 12-17 October, 2008 to participate in the Orientation Programme conducted by the Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry. The delegation called on the Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister. Besides Delhi, the delegation also visited Mumbai.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth, President of Mauritius, was on a private visit to India from 14-21 December, 2008.

A high-level delegation led by the Vice President of Mauritius, Mr. Angidi Veeriah Chettiar, and including Members of Parliament Mr. Yatin Varma, and Mr. Cader Sayed Hossen, attended the Seventh Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention in Chennai from 7-9 January, 2009. Mr. Angidi Chettiar was conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman during the Convention by the President of India. He is the fourth Mauritian dignitary to be honoured with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman. Earlier recipients of the Samman include Sir Anerood Jugnauth, President of Mauritius in 2003, Mr. Abdul Raouf Bundhun, former Vice President of Mauritius in 2006 and Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius in 2008.

Mr. Lormus Bundhoo, Minister of Environment and National Development Unit of Mauritius visited India from 4-11 January, 2009 in connection with the 57th Afro-Asian Rural Development Organisation (AARDO) Executive Committee Session and the 16th General Session of the AARDO Conference. During the visit, the Minister had meetings with Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, Minister of Rural Development, Shri Namdeo Narain

Meena, Minister of Environment and Forests, Kum. Selja, Minister of State for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Shri Shyam Saran, Special Envoy of PM on Climate Change, and Dr. R. K. Pachauri, DG, TERI.

Mrs. Sheilabai Bappoo, Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare and Reforms Institutions visited India from 26 January to 8 February 2009. The Minister visited Mahila Unnati Kendra (Manasi), Pune. The Minister paid a courtesy call on Chief Minister of Maharashtra in Mumbai. Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam was conferred Degree of *Honoris Causa* by the Dr. D. Y. Patil University, Mumbai and, while in Mumbai, Mrs. Sheila Bappoo accepted the degree on his behalf on 4 February, 2009.

Mr. Mohammed Asraf Ally Dulull, Minister of Information and Communication Technology of Mauritius, led a delegation to Mumbai to participate in NASSCOM's ITES-BPO Leadership Summit from 11-13 February, 2009. An MoU between Controller of Certifying Authorities, Department of Information Technology and the Information and Communication Technologies Authority of Mauritius to set up a Mauritian Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) based on the Indian PKI model was signed in New Delhi during the visit.

A team of IT experts from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology visited Mauritius from 27 April to 19 May, 2008 to assist the National Computer Board of Mauritius in the setting up of the National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-MU).

Dr. Rama Krishna Sithanen, Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Empowerment of Mauritius, visited India to participate in the India-Africa Project Partnership 2009 held in New Delhi from 22-24 March, 2009. During the visit, he called on the Minister of External Affairs, on 23 March, 2009, wherein bilateral issues were discussed. Dr. Sithanen also visited Mumbai.

The Special Envoy of the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Shri Shyam Saran visited Mauritius from 22-25 May 2008 to brief the Government of Mauritius on India's position on climate change issues.

In April 2008, INS *Investigator* was deployed in Mauritian waters to undertake hydrographic survey in the Saint Brandon area. Director General Indian Coast Guard paid an official visit to Mauritius from 7-10 April, 2008. INS *Mumbai* and INS *Karmuk* visited Mauritius from 16-19 April, 2008 en route to participation in the India-Brazil-South Africa Maritime Exercise (IBSMAR). The two ships

undertook joint training exercises with the Mauritius National Coast Guard. The First Training Squadron of the Indian Navy, INS *Tir*, INS *Krishna* and CGS *Vivek* visited Mauritius from 24-28 September, 2008. During the visit, the ships conducted exercises with the Mauritian Coast Guard. Spare parts for the Mauritius National Coast Guard vessel *Observer* were handed over to Mauritian authorities. Coinciding with the visit, Vice Admiral Sunil Damle, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command visited Mauritius from 23-28 September, 2008. A 33-member team of officers undergoing the Naval Higher Command Course visited Mauritius from 27 April to 1 May, 2008. An Indian Naval Training Team conducted Ships Diver Refresher course and Marine Commando course in Mauritius for the Mauritian National Coast Guard from 19 May to 6 June, 2008.

An India-Mauritius Inter-Governmental MoU was signed on 27 February, 2009 for the supply of one Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) to Mauritius.

Due to the severe shortage of rice in Mauritius, Government of India exported 9,000 metric tonnes of rice to Mauritius as a special case despite export ban.

The total bilateral trade between India and Mauritius during the financial year 2007-08 was US\$ 1096.11 million (Rs. 441,301.74 lakhs). The exports from India to Mauritius were US\$ 1086.04 million (Rs. 437,245.95 lakhs) and imports from Mauritius to India were US\$ 10.07 million (Rs. 4,055.79 lakhs).

Mauritius was the single largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India during the period April 2008-January 2009, with FDI inflows from Mauritius to India amounting to US\$ 9.5 billion or approximately 41% of the total FDI inflow during the period.

The fourth meeting of the India-Mauritius Joint Committee on Hydrography was held from 4-6 February, 2009. The Mauritian side was led by Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Lands and Housing, Ms. Asha Devi Burrenchobey.

The launch on 26 February, 2008 of the Pan-African E-Network project providing for tele-education and tele-medicine to Mauritius was warmly welcomed in Mauritius.

The Sankara Nethralaya Medical Research Foundation of Chennai is setting up an eye hospital in the New Souillac Government Hospital in Mauritius. ITC-Welcomegroup is planning to establish a five-star hotel in Mauritius. The Apollo-Bramwell Hospital, a joint project of the Mauritian British American Investment (BAI) group and the Apollo Group of India, will

commence activities in 2009. An agreement was signed between the State Trading Corporation (STC) of Mauritius and the State Bank of India International (Mauritius) Limited (SBIIML) on 27 August, 2008, under which SBIIML will extend a credit line to STC of Mauritius for purchase of petroleum products from the Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) of India. The State Bank of India Mauritius completed the takeover of the Indian Ocean International Bank and merged into a single entity on 27 October, 2008. The Mauritius Agricultural Marketing Co-operative Federation and the Ceres Beeja Research Group of India signed a MoU in July 2008 for assistance from the later for improving agricultural production and technical capability of the Federation. Indian Oil (Mauritius) Limited reached the 16th position in the Top 100 Companies of Mauritius, with a revenue of around US\$ 135 million. Binani Cement of India received approval of the Government of Mauritius to set up a cement factory to produce 500,000 tonnes of cement. The Fortis-Clinique Darne hospital was inaugurated on 25 March 2009. Fortis and its partner, the CIEL Group, have a 58% controlling stake in the hospital. The Birla Institute of Technology (BIT); Dr D.Y. Patil University and the Asian School of Cyber-Law (ASCL) decided to set up their campuses in Mauritius.

The Government and the people of Mauritius contributed a sum of Rs. 1.72 crores towards the Prime Ministers National Relief Fund in connection with the floods in Bihar.

Various cultural troupes continued to be sent to Mauritius by India under the cultural exchange programme.

Mozambique

India's relations with Mozambique continued to be very warm and cordial during the period. Two Indian Naval Ships-INS Mumbai and INS Karmuk visited Mozambique in May 2008 for a port call on the port of Maputo from 20-23 May, 2008. INS Karmuk also called on the port of Nacala on its way back to India. Prof. Venancio Massingue, Minister of Science & Technology was one of the high profile visitors to the ship during its stay at Maputo port. Three Mozambican Navy Personnel were also given training aboard INS Karmuk during its journey from Maputo to Nacala port.

Shri Eduardo Faleiro, Commissioner for Non-Resident Indians, Government of Goa visited Mozambique from 16-21 May, 2008. Apart from meeting a cross section of PIOs/NRIs, Mr. Faleiro called on Mr. Joaquim Chissano, former President of the Republic of Mozambique and met

with the Prof. Venancio Massingue, Minister of Science & Technology. Mr. Atul Chaturvedi, Secretary (Fertilizers) led a 12-member delegation to Maputo on 18-19 September, 2008. He held discussions with the Minister of Mineral Resources of Government of Mozambique on setting up an Urea plant in Mozambique. While from Mozambican side, Mr. Jose Antonio Pacheco, Minister of Interior visited India as a special envoy to the President from 17-22 July, 2008 and held high-level talks on Beira Rail Project being executed by the Indian Company RICON - the consortium of RITES and IRCON which has won a 25-year concession for the rehabilitation and management of the Beira railway system (SENA line). He also met Home Minister Shri Shivraj Patil during his stay in Delhi.

Dr. Managala Rai, Secretary, Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), ICAR, Ministry of Agriculture visited Maputo to attend the Annual General Meeting of Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research held from 2-5 December, 2008.

H.E. Mr. Salvador Namburete, Minister for Energy of Mozambique visited India from 11-19 January, 2009 to participate in the PETROTECH-2009 held in New Delhi from 11-15 January, 2009. The visiting Minister called on the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Shri Murli Deora, Minister of Power, Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde and Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma and discussed bilateral cooperation with them. He also participated in the India-Africa Business Partnership Summit held from 19-20 January, 2009 in New Delhi.

Mr. Oldemiro Baloi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique visited India from 18-20 February, 2009. He co-chaired the second session of the India-Mozambique Joint Commission on Scientific, Technical and Economic Cooperation held on 19 February, 2009. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs. Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement was signed between the two Ministers on the occasion. The Foreign Minister of Mozambique called on Shri M. Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India and had meetings with Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of External Affairs and Shri Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs.

Dr. Alcinda Antonio de Abreu, Minister for Coordination for Environmental Action, Mozambique visited India to attend the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit from 5-7 February, 2009. She met with MOS (Environment).

An Exhibition cum Seminar on Innovative Building Materials and Construction Technologies for Sustainable

Housing in Africa was organized in Maputo jointly by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MHUDA), Government of India and the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Government of Mozambique on 3 & 4 April, 2008. Towards the technical assistance, Government of India approved a Third Line of Credit of US\$20 million in April, 2008 for water drilling projects in Nampula and Zambezia provinces and the agreement on this was signed between EXIM Bank and the Mozambican Government in Maputo in May 2008. The Fourth Line of Credit for US\$25 million for setting up IT Park in Mozambique has also been approved by the Government of India. A Fifth Line of Credit for US\$30 million has also been approved for rural electrification in Inhambane, Gaza, Zambezia and Nampula provinces of Mozambique.

Government of India proposed an assistance package of US\$333,000 to Mozambique for developing Youth Centre with special emphasis on sports (football), in the backdrop of World Cup in South Africa in 2010, under IBSA Fund. An emergency assistance of Rs one crore (US\$ 256,000/- approx.) was also provided to Mozambican Government in May, 2008 towards relief for the flood victims.

Trade relations between India and Mozambique have also been growing steadily. India is among eight major trading partners of Mozambique. Bilateral trade between the two countries increased by 34% from US\$ 113.591 million in 2006 to US\$152.58 million in 2007 largely due to increase in exports from India to Mozambique, which rose from US\$78.246 million in 2006 to US\$ 135.858 million in 2007.

An 11-member business delegation under the auspices of Capexil, India visited Maputo from 23-26 November, 2008 and held a Buyer-Seller Meet during their stay in Maputo.

A delegation from NTPC also visited Maputo from 16-20 February, 2009 to explore the possibility of acquiring coal mines and setting up a thermal plant in Mozambique. During their stay, the delegation held talks with the concerned Government authorities and private coal mine owners.

Coal India was awarded two coal blocks in Moatize, Tete province in Mozambique in March 2009 through participation in open tender floated by the Mozambican Government.

Namibia

India and Namibia enjoy excellent and time-tested ties characterised by mutual appreciation of a strong tradition of cooperation between the two countries and that were further consolidated during 2008-09. Namibia consistently

supported India in the UN, Commonwealth and other regional and international fora; supported India's candidature to numerous UN bodies; and significantly, continued to support India's candidature for Permanent Membership to an expanded UNSC. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met Namibian President Pohamba on the sidelines of the UNGA Session on 26 September 2008 and had fruitful discussions on a wide range of topics of mutual interest.

A number of high-level visits between the two countries during the year underscored once again the warm and cordial ties existing between the two countries and further broadened and deepened the bilateral engagements.

Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State (Commerce), paid a successful visit to Namibia from 26-28 March, 2008 when he called on the Namibian Prime Minister Mr. Nahas Angula and Founding President and Father of the Namibian Nation, Dr. Sam Nujoma and met Namibian Minister of Mines & Energy, Mr. Erkki Nghimtina, Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Immanuel Ngatjizeko, Minister for Works, Transport & Communication, Mr. Joel Kapaanda and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Marco Hausiku. The visit was very fruitful resulting in a number of initiatives covering- diamond, trade and industry, railways, agriculture (schemes to grow pulses in Namibia with buy back arrangements), mining and SMEs. On the margins of the visit, STC and LLD Diamonds (Pty) Ltd. signed a MoU for setting up a Joint Venture Company for processing of rough diamonds for jewellery (ex-Namibia).

Namibian Minister for Information and Communication Technology H. E. Mr. Joel Kaapanda visited India to attend the third meeting of the Internet Governance Forum in Hyderabad from 3-6 December, 2008.

The Second India-Namibia Joint Trade Committee (JTC) meeting was held in Walvis Bay on 18 & 19 February, 2008. The meeting was very fruitful and covered: trade and investment; customs cooperation and revenue matters; line of credit to Government of Namibia; agricultural sector; ITEC/SCAAP programmes; water resources; IT sector; telecommunications; mining exploration and development; gems and jewellery; warehousing and logistics; cooperation in industrial sector; energy sector; transport infrastructure; health; film industry and tourism. It was also agreed that a Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement (BIPA) and a Mining Agreement/MoU would be signed between the two countries to promote trade and investment and develop close ties in the mining sector. The successful holding of the JTC meetings was a very positive

development, aimed at boosting India's trade and investment with Namibia and with the Southern African Customs Union (SACU).

A 16-member National Defence College (NDC) team visited Namibia from 11-16 May, 2008. This was the first ever visit by an NDC team to Namibia. During the visit, the team called on the President of Namibia, Mr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, Founding President and Father of the Namibian Nation, Dr. Sam Nujoma, Prime Minister, Mr. Nahas Angula, Defence Minister, Maj. Gen. (Rtd.) Charles Namoloh and Chief of the Namibian Defence Force Lt. Gen. Martin Shalli.

From the Namibian side, the Namibian Minister of Defence, Mr. Charles Namoloh visited India from 14-19 February, 2008 to attend "Fifth Land and Naval System Exhibition - DefExpo India 2008". The Minister was accompanied by Namibian Navy Commander and met the Minister of Defence Shri A.K. Antony. The Namibian Minister of Works, Transport and Communication Mr. Joel Kapaanda visited India from 18-25 February, 2008 and met Minister of Railways Shri Lalu Prasad.

A Namibian Parliamentary delegation headed by Peya Mushelenga, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic, Natural Resources and Public Administration of Namibian Parliament participated in a conference on SME Financing, Better Banking Regulations and Integration of SMEs in Mumbai on 3 May, 2008.

Namibian Foreign Minister, Marco Hausiku, visited India to attend the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (I-IDEA) Council meeting held in New Delhi from 15-22 June, 2008 and went directly to Sharm-el-Sheikh to participate in AU Summit where MOS (AS), Shri Anand Sharma had a fruitful discussions on matters of mutual interest.

Mr. Victor Simunja, Dy. Minister of Defence of Namibia visited India in connection with the Seventh International Aerospace Exposition from 11-15 February, 2009, held in Bangalore.

Ms. Angelica Bergmann, Executive Director of Mukwamahlang Tukondjeni Community, a Trust established by the First Lady of Namibia, Madam Pohamba and Ferdi Roulen Titus (Namibia Agrimine) participated in the "Youth and Women Dialogue" an outreach event for India-Africa Forum Summit in April 2008. The Namibian participants returned highly impressed by their special experience and exposure in India at the event and were determined to use their Indian experience as a

reference point for their social and economic welfare programmes in Namibia.

Towards enhancing the bilateral, economic and commercial ties, several high powered commercial delegations visited Namibia. A three-member Diamond India Ltd (DIL) delegation visited Namibia, 9-12 September, as a follow up of decisions taken during the visit of MOS (C) to Namibia in March 2008. The delegation called on the Minister of Mines and Energy, Mr. Erkki Nghimtina, Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Hage Geingob and Founding President, Dr. Sam Nujoma. Again as a follow-up to the same visit, a joint STC/Sanghavi Group delegation of six members visited Namibia in May 2008 to move forward on the MoU signed between STC and LLD Diamond (Pty) Ltd., Namibia. A team from RITES visited Namibia, 16-22 April, 2008 as a follow up on the visit of Namibian Minister of Works, Transport and Communication Mr. Joel Kapaanda to India in February 2008.

A two-member team from the Wild Life Trust of India visited Namibia from 6-17 September, 2008 and explored the possibility of importing Namibian Cheetahs to India where Cheetahs, in wild, are now extinct. An Odissi dance performance by Ranjana Gauhar and Vichitra Veena recital by Dr. Mustafa Raza were organised by ICCR at the National Theatre of Namibia, Windhoek on 4 November, 2008. The cultural performance generated lot of public interest and much goodwill.

Rwanda

Rwandan Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. Kamanz Stanislas, visited India from 14-15 October, 2008 to co-Chair the Sixth session of the Council International network for Bamboo and Rattan in New Delhi on 15 October, 2008 along with the Minister of State (Environment & Forests) Shri S. Ragupathy.

Mr. Christophe Bazivamo, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources of Rwanda, visited India to participate in the International Conference on "India-Africa Cooperation for Sustainable Food Security" held in New Delhi from 10-12 November, 2008, organized in line with the declaration and recommendation of the India-Africa Forum Summit held in April 2008.

Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, visited India from 18-23 January, 2009 to participate in the India-Africa Business Partnership Summit (19-20 January) in New Delhi as the Chief Guest. The Summit was organized by FICCI with the support of Ministries of External Affairs and Commerce & Industry. During the visit, President of Rwanda met Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to

discuss bilateral cooperation issues. He also gave lectures at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade and at Indian Council for World Affairs.

Dr. Richard Sezibera, Minister of Health of Rwanda, visited India from 1-4 February, 2009 in connection with the Fifth Meeting of the International Advisory Panel (IAP). The Rwandan Minister called on Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss, Minister of Health and Family Welfare for discussions on bilateral cooperation.

Mr. Stanislas Kamanzi, Minister of Natural Resources, Republic of Rwanda visited India to participate in the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2009 from 5-7 February, 2009 organized by TERI.

The two-way trade was US\$ 13.58 million in which Indian exports were worth US\$ 12.92 million.

A delegation of businessmen from the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry paid a visit to Rwanda from 12-13 November, 2008 to explore possibilities of increasing bilateral trade and investment.

Seychelles

Two Indian Navy Ships - INS Mumbai and INS Karmuk, paid a goodwill visit to Seychelles from 1-3 June 2008.

Two Indian warships INS Godavari and INS Talwar paid a four-day goodwill visit to Seychelles on 2 September, 2008.

A five-member Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) visited Seychelles from 28 September to 1 October, 2008 for installation/execution of the pan-African e-Network project.

A five-member Kathak Dance Group, led by Mrs. Paramita Maitra, visited Seychelles from 4-6 July, 2008.

Exports from India for the year calendar 2007 were US\$ 7.63 million. The main items of exports were food and live animals, beverages, tobacco, crude materials, inedible mineral fuels, lubricants, animal and vegetable oils and chemicals.

South Africa

India's strategic partnership with South Africa expanded to new areas and was further consolidated through a series of high level visits and other interactions. South Africa lent strong proactive support to the proposal to enable full civil nuclear cooperation with India at the meetings of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). There was fruitful

cooperation between the two countries on multilateral issues, in particular the reform of the UN system, the WTO Doha Round and the global financial crisis. The two countries signed new Agreements on Customs Cooperation, S&T, visa free travel for diplomatic and official passport holders, and a Programme of Cooperation in Culture during 2008.

The President of South Africa, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, accompanied by Foreign Minister Dlamini-Zuma visited India from 7-9 April, 2008 to participate in the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi. He also had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during which progress in implementing the Tshwane Declaration of 2006 was reviewed.

The new President of South Africa, Mr. Kgalema Motlanthe attended the Third IBSA Summit in New Delhi on 15 October, 2008, his first visit aboard since becoming President of South Africa. He also called on the President of India and had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister. Several South African Ministers accompanied President Motlanthe on the visit.

The President of India Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil made a brief technical stop over in Cape Town on 24 April, 2008 on her way back to India after her visit to Latin American countries.

Shri Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs Minister visited South Africa on 10 & 11 May, 2008 to attend the Fifth IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission Meeting held in Somerset West. He also had a bilateral meeting with South African Foreign Minister to discuss the follow up to the Seventh India-South Africa Joint Ministerial Commission Meeting which was held in Pretoria from 20-22 February, 2008. Later, on the sidelines of the 63rd session of UNGA, the EAM again met the South African Foreign Minister on 29 September, 2008.

Mrs. Ambika Soni, Minister for Tourism and Culture visited South Africa from 14-17 August, 2008 and met with her South African counterpart Mr. Pallo Jordan. Together with ANC Deputy President Mr. Kgalema Motlanthe, she also led a peace walk in Johannesburg to mark the commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's historic passive resistance movement resulting in the bonfire of 1908. Other events aimed at reinforcing Mahatma Gandhi's teachings included a public lecture by Prof. Kader Asmal, a symposium at University of Witwatersrand, an essay competition for high school students and a film week.

Shri Anand Sharma, MOS(AS) visited South Africa on

29 & 30 July, 2008 as Prime Minister's Special Envoy. He called on President Mbeki. MOS(AS) visited South Africa again on 15-18 September, 2008 to launch the Centre for Indian Studies in Africa at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, the first such Centre in the African continent and jointly inaugurated the Gandhi-Luthuli Chair of Peace Studies in the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban with ANC President Jacob Zuma. A three-member delegation from the Government of Kerala, led by Health Minister P K Sreemathi Teacher, visited Cape Town from 14-17 November, 2008.

An Indian Parliamentary delegation, led by Shri Charanjit Singh Atwal, Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha visited South Africa from 13-18 April, 2008 to attend the 118th Assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union held in Cape Town.

Several South African Ministers also visited India. Dr. Zola Sidney Themba Skweyiya, South African Minister of Social Development travelled to India from 2-8 March, 2008 to attend the Second Ministerial Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Social Development from South Asia organized by UNESCO and Ministry of HRD in New Delhi on 5 & 6 March, 2008. Dr. Lindiwe Nonceba Sisulu, South African Minister of Housing visited India from 9-13 March, 2008 at the invitation of the Ministry of Urban Development to discuss matters of mutual interest. She returned to India in October 2008 for an international conference organized by Slum Dwellers International. Ms. Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, South African Minister of Education visited India from 29 June to 3 July, 2008 and discussed ways and means of strengthening cooperation in the HRD sector, particularly in the areas of technical and vocational education with her Indian counterpart. Dr. Mantombazana Tshabalala-Msimang, South African Minister of Health visited India on 29 & 30 July, 2008 and held discussions with Dr. Anbumani Ramdoss, Minister for Health and Family Welfare. A South African health delegation also visited India to discuss recruitment of pharmacists from India. Ms GJ Fraser-Moleketi, South African Minister for Public Service and Administration visited India from 9-17 August, 2008.

Dr. Jacob Zuma, President of the African National Congress (ANC) along with several ANC Executive Committee Member visited India from 8-12 June, 2008, when a MoU between the ANC and the Indian National Congress (INC) was signed. Dr. Jacob Zuma and the delegation also met with UPA Chairperson, Smt. Sonia Gandhi.

Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, President of the Inkatha

Freedom Party and Chairman of the House of Traditional Leaders visited India from July 7-13, 2008 under the ICCR's Distinguished Visitors' Programme.

Apart from the VVIP & ministerial visits, several high level official visits also took place including visit of Secretary, Mines on 11-16 February, 2008 to explore the possibility of setting up of an aluminium smelter by the National Aluminium Company Ltd. (NALCO) in South Africa, Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to attend the Annual Small Business Summit organized by the South African Department of Trade and Industry from July 31 to August 2, 2008, Secretary, Civil Aviation on 6 & 7 August, 2008 to discuss cooperation in civil aviation in the trilateral IBSA as well as bilateral context and Health Secretary, in November 2008 to attend the Third Convention of Parties Conference to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in Durban and Textiles Secretary from March 19-24, 2009 in connection with hosting of Mega Textiles Show in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Defence has emerged as an important area of cooperation between the two countries. The Sixth meeting of the Joint Defence Committee was held in New Delhi on 13 & 14 March, 2008. The meeting discussed issues such as exchange of observers in military exercises, South African participation in training courses in India, visit of training delegations, exchange of senior level military courses and sports and adventure activities. Two Indian naval ships, INS Mumbai and INS Karmuk visited South Africa to participate in the inaugural trilateral IBSA navies' exercise IBSAMAR I in May 2008 at Simon's Town. The ships also paid a goodwill visit to Durban. Raksha Utpadan Rajya Mantri Shri Rao Inderjit Singh visited South Africa in September 2008 to attend the Africa Aerospace and Defence (AAD) Exhibition in Cape Town. He also met the South African Deputy Minister of Defence. India's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen. Deepak Kapoor visited South Africa from 24-27 November, 2008 at the invitation of the South African Chief of Army. During the visit, COAS held detailed discussions on army-to-army cooperation. He also called on the South African Defence Minister.

India's economic and commercial relations continued to flourish with the value of bilateral trade increasing by 33% from about US\$ 4.7 billion in 2006-07 to US\$ 6.27 billion in 2007-08. India's exports to South Africa were valued at US\$ 2.65 billion and imports at US\$ 3.61 billion.

Towards enhancing our commercial exchanges further,

India participated in several sectoral exhibitions, including Tenth Annual Africa Power & Electricity Congress, Computer Faire 2008, Africa Rail Conference & Exhibition, Africa Big Seven and the Johannesburg International Motor Show. In collaboration with CII, a major Doing Business with India Conference was held on 23 September, 2008 in Johannesburg, aimed at providing the participants with an overview of the Indian economy and specifics on different facets of doing business with India. The success of the conference has encouraged CII to consider making it an annual event. Inspired by the success of the India Business Forum launched in May 2007 to provide a platform for Indian companies that have established offices in South Africa, a South African Business Forum was launched in Mumbai. This brings together the heads of South African companies which have established a presence in India. The India-South Africa Working Group on Coal and Hydrocarbons met for the first time in Delhi on 29 & 30 July, 2008. In addition, there were visits by delegations from AEPC in April 2008 to promote exports by the garment industry, ASSOCHAM in August 2008, IEEMA in November 2008 representing the electrical manufacturing industry and a Gujarat Investment Corporation delegation in November 2009 to promote Vibrant Gujarat.

Two-way investment continued to rise, with Indian companies estimated to be executing projects worth approx. US\$ 2.5 billion in South Africa.

A strong impetus to academic interaction between the two countries was given with the launch in September 2008 of the Centre of Indian Studies in Africa (CISA) in September 2008 at the University of the Witwatersrand, the first 'India focus' centre in Africa, and the Gandhi-Luthuli Chair of Peace Studies at the University of KwaZulu Natal. A number of Vice Chancellors from South African universities visited India to strengthen academic linkages with counterpart institutions. These included the Vice Chancellors of Universities of Pretoria, Johannesburg, North-West, Witwatersrand and Stellenbosch. The University of Stellenbosch hosted an India evening on 28 August, 2008. The University of Western Cape also hosted an India evening on 14 November, 2008 during which a bust of Mahatma Gandhi and books on India were gifted to the University.

A Programme of Cooperation in the fields of Arts and Culture between India and South Africa was signed during the visit of Minister of Tourism & Culture Mrs. Ambika Soni in August 2008. A number of cultural troupes sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) visited various cities in South Africa. A major

highlight of the cultural calendar was the 'Shared Histories' programme organized as a public-private partnership with Teamwork Productions whose second edition from August-October 2008 featured Indian literature, dance, theatre, music, art, cuisine, cinema and textiles. India also participated in the inaugural edition of the Capital Arts Festival organized by the City of Tshwane in Pretoria in September 2008.

Swaziland

India's relations with the Kingdom of Swaziland also grew steadily through this period. The two countries signed an MoU on setting up of four Hole-in-the-Wall Learning Stations (HITWLS) in Swaziland. The agreement was signed by Indian High Commissioner to Mozambique (who is also concurrently accredited to the Kingdom of Swaziland) and Swaziland's Minister for Enterprise and Employment, Mr. Lutfo Dlamini on 12 July, 2008. The Hole in the Wall Project has since been completed and inaugurated by the Deputy Prime Minister of Swaziland on 2 March, 2009. High Commissioner of India in Mozambique, concurrently accredited to Swaziland, was the Chief Guest at the inauguration ceremony.

The Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Ms. Jabulile Mashwama led the Swaziland's trade delegation to attend the FICCI organized "India-Africa Business Partnerships Summit" held in New Delhi from 19-20 January, 2009.

Her Royal Highness Princess Tsandzile Dlamini, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy and Hon. Pastor Nelisiwe Shongwe, Minister of Information, Communication and Technology, of Kingdom of Swaziland visited India to participate in the India-Africa Project Partnership 2009 held in New Delhi from 22-24 March, 2009.

Tanzania

Bilateral relations between India and Tanzania were warm and cordial during the period under report.

Following the election of the President of Tanzania Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete as the Chairman of the African Union, an invitation was extended to him to attend the India-Africa Forum Summit, which was held in Delhi on 8 & 9 April 2008. President Jakaya Kikwete co-Chaired the Summit with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

President Kikwete also called on Prime Minister Manmohan Singh before the commencement of the Summit to discuss bilateral cooperation between India and Tanzania. The issues discussed were Food Security, Energy Security, Counter-Terrorism, Technical

Cooperation and Human Resources Development. India has extended a line of credit of US \$ 40 million to Tanzania for the purchase of agricultural implements.

During 27-29 August, 2008, Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Dar es Salaam as the Leader of the Indian delegation to the Tenth Regional Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership, organized by Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). The event was co-chaired by Mrs. Mary Nagu, Minister for Industry, Trade and Marketing of Tanzania. Shri Sharma also held discussions with Mr. Seif Ali Iddi, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Tanzania during the visit. He also laid the foundation stone for the High Commission of India Chancery-cum-Residential Complex in Dar es Salaam on 28 August, 2008.

The Minister for Natural Resource and Tourism of Tanzania, Mrs. Shamsa Selengia Mwangunga, accompanied by a delegation of the Tanzania Tourist Board (TTB) and tourism sector businessmen visited India from 17-24 June, 2008. Minister Mwangunga called on Minister of Tourism and Culture, Smt. Ambika Soni and sought India's help in developing hospitality sector and training of manpower in Tanzania.

Tanzanian Minister of Infrastructure Development, Dr. Shukuru Kawambwa, visited India in September 2008 at the invitation of Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav. During the meeting, he requested for a loan from the Indian Government for the Tanzania Railway Limited in which the RITES has majority shareholding major stakes. The Railway Minister assured the Tanzanian Minister that the request would be considered and pledged India's commitment to provide all necessary assistance in the operation and management of railways in Tanzania.

The Tanzanian Minister of State for Public Service Management, Mrs. Hawa A. Ghasia, led a six-member delegation and undertook study tour to India to learn and study Indian Government's operation in general and employment management.

In connection with the setting up of Centre of Excellence in ICT, a six-member expert team from C-DAC visited Tanzania from 11-24 December, 2008. During the visit the team completed identification of ICT Centre in Dar es Salaam and ten other Centres across Tanzania. Selection procedure for training of the ten Tanzanian experts by C-DAC in India was also completed.

Mr. Stephen Masatu Wasira, Minister for Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives of Tanzania visited India to participate in the International Conference on "India-

Africa Cooperation for Sustainable Food Security" held in New Delhi from 10-12 November, 2008, organized in line with the declaration and recommendation of the India-Africa Forum Summit held in April 2008.

The Seventh Session of the India-Tanzania Joint Commission on Economic, Technical and Scientific Cooperation was held in New Delhi from 13-14 January, 2009. The Indian delegation was led by Mr. Nalin Surie, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and the Tanzanian side by Prof. David H. Mwakyusa, MP, Minister of Health and Social Welfare. Mr. Seif Ali Iddi, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation was also a member of the delegation. The Agreed Minutes signed after the meeting identified key areas for cooperation in the field of Agriculture, Small and Medium Industries, Trade and Industry, Information Technology, Health, Education, Water Resources and Capacity Building. Special emphasis will be given to short and long term technical training and graduate courses.

The Tanzanian Minister for Industry, Trade and Marketing, Dr. Mary Nagu, visited India to attend the Partnership Summit 2009 from 19-20 January, 2009 at the invitation of our Minister for Commerce and Industry.

Mr. William Mganga Ngeleja, Minister of Energy and Minerals of Tanzania, visited India from 6-8 March, 2009 to attend a meeting on Renewable Energy (Solar Power) at the invitation of Astonfield Renewable Resources Ltd. During the visit, the Tanzanian Minister paid a courtesy call on Shri Sis Ram Ola, Minister of Mines and discussed issues of bilateral cooperation.

An 11-member ICCR-sponsored composite group of Ms. Ranjana Gauhar, Odissi and Dr. Mustafa Raza, Vichitra Veena visited Tanzania from 18-24 October, 2008 and gave four performances in Dar es Salaam and one performance in Zanzibar.

The total bilateral trade between India and Tanzania for the period January-October 2008 stood at US\$ 852 million with India's exports - US\$ 709 and India's imports from Tanzania - US\$ 143 million (Source: Tanzanian Revenue Authority). Major items of Indian exports were Pharmaceuticals, transport equipment, electrical machinery, construction material/ machinery, textiles & garments, ICT hardware and software, etc.

Bank of India resumed operations in Tanzania June 2008. Air India operates tri-weekly flights between Dar es Salaam and Mumbai (via Nairobi). Tanzindia Assurance Company Ltd, owned by Kenindia Assurance Co Ltd, whose main promoters are Life Insurance Corporation

of India, General Insurance Corporation of India, The New Indian Assurance Co Ltd, National Insurance Co Ltd, United India Insurance Co Ltd. Tata International Limited has a subsidiary in Dar es Salaam. Tatas have signed a MoU with the National Development Corporation (NDC) of Tanzania for creating a facility for soda ash extraction from Lake Natron in north-western Tanzania. National Mineral Development Corporation has a prospecting concession at Nzega, Ibungu in north-central Tanzania. RITES has a small project office at Tabora for the locomotives leased to the Tanzania Railway Corporation. In March 2006 RITES was awarded the concession worth US\$100 million to run Tanzania Railway Corporation for 25 years. Reliance Industries Ltd has acquired a majority stake and management control of Gulf Africa Petroleum Corporation (GAPCO), headquartered in Mauritius and having a significant presence in east Africa in the downstream petroleum sector.

Uganda

India's relations with Uganda continued to be warm and friendly. In April 2008, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni paid a visit to India during which he attended the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi (8 & 9 April) in his capacity as the Head of the East African Community. It was followed by a State Visit on 10 April, 2008. He was accompanied by Mr. Sam Kutesa, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka, Minister of State of Finance, Planning & Economic Development (Investments).

During the State Visit, President Museveni met President Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, who hosted a banquet in honour of President Museveni. President Museveni held talks with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee called on President Museveni. The two sides discussed possibilities of intensifying cooperation in a number of areas including agro-processing, railways, energy, mining, small and medium enterprises and defence. They also agreed to begin talks on signing a Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement. In his banquet speech, President Museveni lauded the contribution of the Indian expatriate community to Uganda's economy. In his talks with Prime Minister, he called for a greater role for India in Uganda's economic development, which elicited a positive response from the Indian side. A number of areas were identified in which the Indian side agreed to assist Uganda in terms of investment, capacity building and market access. The visit produced a roadmap for cooperation between the two countries in the next few years, and helped to strengthen bilateral relations.

H.E. Mr. Freddie Ruhinda, Deputy Attorney General/ Minister of State for Justice and Constitutional Affairs visited India on 11 & 12 August, 2008 leading a three-member delegation for a study tour. The Ugandan MOS for Justice and Constitutional Affairs met Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Minister of State for Industry, Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce & Power and Shri K. Venkatapathy, Minister of State for Law & Justice and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Mr. Fred Mukisa, Minister of State for Fisheries of Uganda visited India to participate in the International Conference on "India-Africa Cooperation for Sustainable Food Security" held in New Delhi from 10-12 November, 2008, organized in line with the declaration and recommendation of the India-Africa Forum Summit held in April 2008.

The two-way trade during 2007-08 was US\$ 168.76 million which registered a 50% growth. Exports from India to Uganda were US\$ 153.64 and imports from Uganda were US\$ 15.12 million.

A 12-member delegation from ASSOCHAM visited Uganda from 27-31 May, 2008. The delegation held meetings with the Ugandan Minister of State for Planning and Investment, Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Minister of Economic Monitoring, Minister of Education, Minister of State for Local Administration, Director of Export Promotion Board and other members of the Ugandan business community.

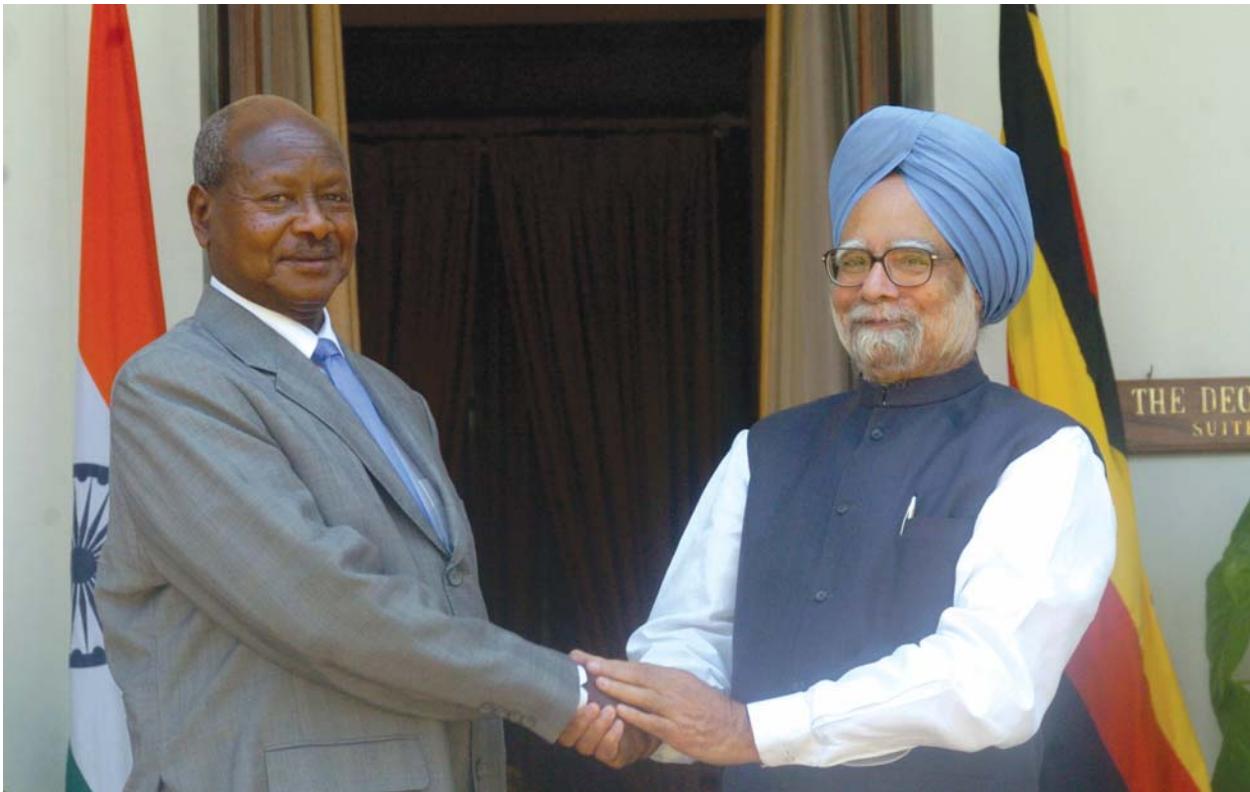
The Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Narendra Modi, visited Uganda on 17 & 18 November, 2008. He was accompanied by a 15-member delegation that included chief executives of several Indian companies. During the visit, the delegation held talks with a number of Ugandan companies to explore possibilities of increasing bilateral trade and investment.

A delegation of businessmen from the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry paid a visit to Uganda from 8-11 November, 2008 to explore possibilities of increasing bilateral trade and investment.

Prof. Gilbert B. Bukenya, Vice President of Uganda paid a private visit to Gujarat from 12-20 January, 2009. During the visit, he also participated in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors' Summit 2009 from 11-14 January, 2009. The Ugandan delegation also included Prof. Semakula Kiwanuka, Minister of State of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Prof. Ephram Kamuntu, Minister of State for Industry and Technology and Mr. Hope Mwesigye, Minister of State for Local Government.



Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh meeting with the President of Tanzania, Jakaya Kikwete,
in New Delhi on 7 April, 2008.



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting with the President of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni,
in New Delhi on 10 April, 2008.

Shri Ham Mulira, Minister for Information & Communications Technology (ICT) of Uganda visited India to participate in the India-Africa Business Partnership Summit organized by FICCI from 19-20 January, 2009 in New Delhi.

Mr. Maurice P. Kagimu Kiwanuka, Minister of State for Economic Monitoring, Office of the President of Uganda, was on a study tour of India from 18-20 January, 2009. The Minister met with Shri Kanti Lal Bhuria, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Shri Anwar-ul-Hoda, Member, Planning Commission of India. The Minister also participated in the FICCI event.

Mr. Aston Kajara, Minister of State for Investment, Mr. Gagawala Wambuzi, Minister of Trade and Industry and Ms. Ruth Nankabirwa, Minister of State for Finance, Uganda, visited India and participated in the India-Africa Project Partnership 2009 held in New Delhi from 22-24 March, 2009. During the visit, the three Ministers called on Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs and discussed issues of bilateral cooperation.

Zambia

The bilateral relations between India and Zambia continued to grow. Mr. Felix C. Mutati, Zambia's Commerce, Trade & Industry Minister, visited Delhi to participate in Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)'s India-Africa Conclave from 19-21 March, 2008. The then Vice President Mr. Rupiah Bwezani Banda accompanied by Foreign Minister Mr. Kabinga J. Pande, Health Minister Mr. Brian Chituwo, Education Minister Mr. Geoffrey Lungwangwa and other government officials attended India-Africa Forum Summit held in Delhi on 8 & 9 April, 2008.

Vice President of Zambia Mr. Rupiah Bwezani Banda was handed over on 14 May 2008 a cheque for US\$ 250,689/- (Rs. 1 crore) for flood relief from India. Zambia has been fully utilizing the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) civilian training programme. Subsequent to India Africa Forum summit in April 2008, ITEC civilian training slots to Zambia were increased to 80 for 2008-09. India has offered a line of credit of US\$ 50 million to Zambia for Itezhi-Tezhi hydro power project.

An 11-member dance and music troupe led by Odissi dancer Ranjana Gauhar and classical music artiste Dr. Mustafa Raza gave a performance in Lusaka on 2 November, 2008 to a wide acclaim.

Two Hole-in-the-wall projects funded by Government of India were inaugurated on 12 December, 2008 in two Lusaka schools with one computer learning kiosk in each.

H.E. Mr. Mwendoi Akakandelwa MP, Deputy Minister of Health, Zambia visited India to participate in the India-Africa Business Partnership Summit held from 19-20 January, 2009 in New Delhi.

Zimbabwe

The India-Zimbabwe Small and Medium Enterprises Project was launched by President Mugabe on 4 August, 2008, financed by a grant of US\$ 5million from the Government of India. The project will help development of small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe and contribute significantly to country's efforts to turnaround its economy.

The ITEC slots for Zimbabwe have been increased from 40 to 50 per annum for 2008-09. The slots have been further increased to 65 recently based on the utilization of ITEC slots till date.

Three delegates from Zimbabwe participated in the Outreach Programme for Women and Youth organised on the sidelines of India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi from 27 March to 8 April, 2008.

A six-member delegation led by Mr. K.C.D. Mohadi, Home Minister of Zimbabwe, visited Chennai from 29 December 2008 to 3 January, 2009 to inspect the plant and production facilities of M/s. Eagle Press Pvt. Ltd.

A six-member delegation led by Mr. K.M. Kangai, Secretary for External Relations of ZANU-PF and ex-Deputy Speaker of Parliament of Zimbabwe and including O. M. Mpofu, Minister for Industry & International Trade, visited Surat, India from 2-5 January, 2009 to explore possibilities of setting up a diamond polishing plant in Zimbabwe.

Mrs. Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonda, Minister of Regional Integration and International Cooperation of the Republic of Zimbabwe, was on a visit to India from 23-25 March, 2009 to attend the "5th CII EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership Conclave: 22-24, March, 2009". She had a wide-ranging discussion with Hon. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma, covering bilateral cooperation issues.

A 12-member Gujarati Folk Dance Group "Panghat", sponsored by ICCR, visited Zimbabwe from 22-31 October, 2008. The group's performances in Harare, Kwekwe and Bulawayo were attended by capacity crowds and received standing ovations for its performances. India participated in the 11th edition of Zimbabwe International Film Festival (ZIFF) held in Harare from 5-14 September,

2008. India also participated in the International Images Film Festival (IIFF) for Women on the theme ‘enriching women’ held in Harare from 21-29 November 2008 where the Indian entry ‘DAATU’ (Kannada) won the award for ‘Best Depiction of a Woman’.

Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)

India continued to participate in the meetings of the Harare-based Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). India is the first Asian country to have become a full member of the ACBF – a premier institution for sustainable development and poverty alleviation in Africa.

African Union

As a follow-up to decisions taken at the India-Africa Forum Summit, MOS (AS) Shri Anand Sharma led a delegation to the AU Summit at Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, in June 2008, and had a discussion with Chairperson of the AUC and various Ministers of the Member States. Discussions with senior officials of AUC were held on 27 & 28 November 2008 in Addis Ababa in which proposals under the India Africa Action Plan were discussed.

The Fifth Steering Committee meeting of the Pan-African E-network took place in Addis Ababa on 1 & 2 December 2008. 32 countries have signed the MoU with TCIL so far and by 31 March, 2009, the project will become operational in 12 countries. The hub of the network, which is in Dakar, is already operational and the pilot project in Ethiopia is already functioning.

Common Market for Eastern & Southern Africa (COMESA)

A high powered COMESA delegation attended the India-Africa Forum Summit in April 2008. The period saw the follow-up on the Communiqué issued during the visit of COMESA ministerial delegation to New Delhi in October 2006. An energy expert from India joined COMESA Secretariat, Lusaka, on deputation since 1 July, 2008.

East African Community (EAC)

Amb. Juma V. Mwapachu, Secretary General of EAC attended the India-Africa Forum Summit in April 2008 at the invitation of MEA. Subsequently a meeting was held in Arusha in July 2008 at the EAC Secretariat to review the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. Amb. Mwapachu also attended the fifth CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership from 22-24 March, 2009 in New Delhi.

SACU

The negotiations between India and South African Custom Unions (SACU) for a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) was carried forward during this period. The second round of the India-SACU PTA negotiations were held on 21 & 22 February 2008 at Walvis Bay. The negotiations were productive and covered much ground towards conclusion of an India-SACU PTA.

The Third round of negotiations between India and SACU for the PTA was held in New Delhi from 25-27 November, 2008. An MoU for negotiating the PTA which was finalized and agreed to by the two sides during the second round of negotiations was signed on 26 November, 2008 in presence of Sh. G.K. Pillai, Commerce Secretary and Mr. Khotso Matla, Assistant Minister of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing, Government of Lesotho. Lesotho is currently in Chair of SACU.

South African Development Community (SADC)- India Forum

A four-member Indian technical team visited SADC Secretariat as follow-up of the decisions taken in the India-SADC Forum meeting held in Windhoek in April 2006. Seven projects have been short-listed out of the 11 projects proposed, for implementation.

West Africa

India's relations with the 25 West African countries assumed significant importance during the year, with the hosting of first-ever India-Africa Forum Summit in April 2008 at New Delhi and the initiatives announced by the leadership at the Summit. The region is rich in minerals and metals and hydrocarbons. Indian companies have invested in exploration. As a part of South-South cooperation and policy of inclusive development, Government of India has endeavoured in improving the manpower skills of this region in the fields of education, science & technology, information technology etc. The importance attached by India to developing relations further is demonstrated by the announcement to open resident Missions in Mali and Niger. Gabon opened its Mission in New Delhi and Gambia announced its intention to open one soon. Government of India increased the ITEC slots for these countries from 279 to 575, while the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in collaboration with MEA, increased the number of scholarships from 21 to 66.

Angola

Vice Minister of Industry represented Angola in the India-Africa Forum Summit. MOS for Commerce Jairam Ramesh visited Angola in March 2008 and held

discussions with the Ministers of Geology, Mines & Petroleum and the External Relations. Bilateral trade more than doubled in 2007-08 to reach nearly US\$ 1,200 million. ITEC slots have been increased to 18.

Benin

Dr. Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin, was on a five-day State visit to India from 3-7 March, 2009 as Head of a 34-member official delegation, the first by a Head of State from Benin.

During the plenary level discussions, led by PM Dr. Manmohan Singh, on the Indian side and President Dr Boni Yayi on the Benin side, the two sides discussed the entire gamut of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. Prime Minister offered a concessional Line of Credit to the tune of US\$ 15 million to Benin in addition to a grant of US\$ 2 million.

Five bilateral documents were signed during the visit, which pertain to establishment of Joint Commission, Foreign Office Consultations and an IT Centre of Excellence in Benin and MoUs providing for cooperation in capacity-building and SSI sector.

Benin reiterated its support for India's bid for Permanent Seat on the UN Security Council as well as for India's candidature for a Non-Permanent seat in 2011-2012. Benin also strongly condemned the dastardly terrorist attacks on Mumbai and pledged to work closely with India in tackling the scourge of international terrorism.

Burkina Faso

Prime Minister Tertius Zongo visited India in 2008 to attend the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi and held discussions with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh on matters of bilateral interest. GoI offered an LoC of US\$ 25 million for rural electrification project. In June 2008, GoI sent a consignment of medicines valued at US\$80,000 for flood affected people.

Cameroon

Foreign Office Consultations were held in September 2008 at New Delhi. The two sides agreed to set up a Joint Commission. India agreed to set up an IT Centre of Excellence in Cameroon. Government of India has offered a Line of Credit of US\$38 million for agro-processing products. ITEC slots were increased to 15.

Central African Republic

In August 2008, GoI approved a Line of Credit of US\$ 29.5 million for utilization for (a) setting up a modern dry process cement plant of 400 TPD capacity (US\$ 24 million) and (b) for procurement of 100 buses for internal transport (US\$ 5.5 million). An agreement for disbursement of the above amount was signed in Bangui in October 2008 between EXIM Bank of India, Dakar and the Government of the Central African Republic.

Chad

Government of India extended a Line of Credit of US\$ 50 million under the TEAM-9 Initiative and projects for establishing a bicycle plant, assembly of agricultural implements plant, steel billet plant and rolling mill plant, cotton yarn plant are under implementation.

Cote D' Ivoire

Bilateral economic relations got further boost with a Line of Credit of US\$ 25.5 million awarded to the Government of Cote d'Ivoire for financing (i) Mahatma Gandhi IT& BT Park (\$ 20 million), (ii) Fisheries Processing Plant (US\$ 4 million) and (iii) Coconut Fibre Processing Plant (US\$ 1.5 million) projects. A project for setting up the Centre for Demonstration and Promotion of Technologies (CDT) with GoI financial assistance has been completed. Ivorian Minister of Industry and Promotion of Private Sector participated in CII-EXIM Bank India Africa Project Partnership Conclave held in Delhi from 18-21 March, 2008. ITEC slots for Cote d'Ivoire have been increased to 45.

Democratic Republic of Congo

President Joseph Kabilo visited New Delhi in April 2008 to attend the First India-Africa Forum Summit. During the visit, he also held bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. India donated medicines worth US\$ 1 million and offered an immediate Line of Credit of US\$ 25 million for a priority project. Based on Prime Minister's directives, Commerce Secretary led a high-level delegation of government officials and representatives of public and private sector companies to Kinshasa in June 2008. Based on the discussions held with the Ministers of the Congolese Government, Commerce Secretary has recommended several projects for consideration by the Government of India under its Line of Credit. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Federation of Congolese Enterprises during the visit. A delegation from the Confederation of



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh with the President of Republic of Benin, Dr. Boni Yayi
at the signing ceremony, in New Delhi on 4 March, 2009.

Indian Industries visited DRC in August 2008 to explore trade and business possibilities.

Gambia

GoI approved an EXIM Bank LoC of US\$10 million to finance construction of the National Assembly building complex. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Dr. Oumar A. Touray visited India in May 2008 and during his meeting with MoS (AS), informed of his Government's decision to open a Resident Mission in New Delhi.

Ghana

Bilateral ties were further consolidated with high level visits from both sides. President J. A. Kufuor visited India to participate in the India-Africa Forum Summit. During his visit to Accra in April 2008, Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath met President J.A. Kufuor and discussed matters of mutual interest. MoS Shri Anand Sharma visited Ghana in 2008 to inaugurate "Seat of Government and Presidential Complex" built by an Indian company (Shapoorji Pallonji & Co). Government of India had provided a LoC of US\$ 30 million for the project. MoS (AS) was conferred "*The Companion of the Order of the Volta*" award by the President of Ghana. During the visit, MoS (AS) also laid the foundation stone for the Foreign Service Training Institute. An auditorium in the Institute will be named after Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. Escorts Limited of India set up a tractor assembling plant in Tema while Mahindra & Mahindra set up another tractor assembling plant in Kumasi. Government of India provided a LoC of US\$ 25 million to finance projects in the fields of information and communication technology, railway corridors and agro processing.

Guinea

Minister of Transport and Minister of Energy & Hydraulic and delegation participated in CII-EXIM Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership 2008 held from 19-21 March, 2008 in New Delhi. A LoC of US\$ 8.51 million through ECOWAS Bank of Investment and Development (EBID) was awarded to Govt. of Guinea for improvement of urban transportation system. Besides, a second LoC of US\$20 million, also through EBID, has been announced for Rehabilitation and Expansion of Electricity Network in Guinea. ITEC slots for Guinea have been increased to 15.

Mali

Minister of Economy, Industry and Trade of Mali and the National Director for Commerce and Agreements visited India from 26-30 May, 2008. During the visit, they met

Minister of Commerce and Industry. GoI announced its decision to open a resident Mission in Bamako.

Niger

GoI announced its decision to open a Resident Mission in Niamey. A Line of Credit of US\$ 25 million has been approved for power supply and electrification.

Nigeria

Pursuant to the bilateral strategic partnership established with Nigeria during Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit in October 2007, a road map for further cooperation was charted out. Vice-President Goodluck Jonathan represented Nigeria in the First-ever India-Africa Forum Summit at New Delhi in April 2008. Minister of State Anand Sharma visited Nigeria in July 2008 and during his call on President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, the latter supported India's quest for international cooperation in peaceful uses of civil nuclear energy. External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee reviewed bilateral issues with the Nigerian Foreign Minister Chief Ojo Maduekwe in September at New York. High Commission of India organized a photographic exhibition at Lagos on India-Nigeria relations on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Nigeria. Several other cultural events, seminars and conferences were also organized. Bilateral trade during 2007-08 exceeded US\$8.5 billion and Indian exports registered a 20% growth to cross US\$1 billion. Nigeria continued to remain our single largest source of hydrocarbons. ITEC slots to Nigeria were increased to 85 for the year 2008-09.

Senegal

President of Senegal Abdoulaye Wade participated at the India-Africa Forum Summit. EXIM Bank set up its office in Dakar. MoS Shri Anand Sharma paid a visit to Senegal in July 2008. He inaugurated an IT Centre of excellence which was established as a part of US\$10 million LoC extended by India. MoS Shri Sharma called on the President of Senegal and also held bilateral meetings with the Foreign Minister, Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio and Minister of Mines and Industries Qusmane Ngom. Dr. Gadio expressed Senegalese Government's gratitude for developmental assistance provided by India. During the visit a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement was signed. GoI extended US\$25 million Line of Credit through EXIM Bank to finance rural electrification and fishing industry development projects. Government of India exported 15,000 tonnes of rice to Senegal.



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting with the President, Democratic Republic of Congo, Joseph Kabila Kabange, in New Delhi on 9 April, 2008.



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting with the President of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade, in New Delhi on 8 April, 2008.

Sierra Leone

At the invitation of MoS(AS), Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone visited India from 6-11 October, 2008 and held bilateral discussions. The two sides identified areas for bilateral cooperation in agriculture, energy, education, IT, health, transport and industry sectors. At the request of Sierra Leone Government, India exported 40,000 tons of non-Basmati rice. GoI extended a US\$15 million Line of Credit to Sierra Leone for financing the development of commercial agriculture. Another LoC of US\$29.45 million, through ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development, for rehabilitation of Telecom sector was signed. ITEC slots for Sierra Leone were increased to 25.

Togo

GoI sent a consignment of medicines worth US\$ 225,000 for the flood affected people. Rehabilitation of hospitals by Indian Government started under the GoI' LoC of US\$ 20 million.

Economic Commission for West African States (ECOWAS)

President, Ibn Mohammed Chambas participated in the India-Africa Forum Summit. ECOWAS countries successfully utilized US\$ 250 million line of credit granted to ECOWAS Industrial Bank.

Pan-African e-Network

The ambitious project of Government of India, announced in September 2004, to connect all 53 countries of the African Union to provide effective communication and connectivity among them, progressed further with the signing of an agreement between the Ministry of External Affairs and Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL). 32 of the 53 countries have signed country agreements and identified national coordinators, consignees and sites. Installation and commissioning activities were undertaken. Hub station and submarine Cable Landing station in Dakar, Senegal became operational in August. Equipment installation and testing has been completed in 12 countries. Live demonstration of tele-medicine and video-conferencing sessions were successfully held in Senegal and Addis Ababa with the assigned hospitals and universities in India.



India's engagement with EU as well as individual countries in Europe has intensified and diversified in fields such as defense, security, nuclear, space, trade and investment, energy, food security, climate change, science and technology, culture and education.

Exchange of high level visits between India and Europe has been maintained. Summit-level interactions have taken place with EU, France, Belgium and UK. In addition, multilateral events provided occasions for PM level interactions with UK, Germany and Italy. Regular telephonic conversations between the leadership ensured that India and Europe remained closely in touch discussing issues of mutual interest. Extensive interaction at Ministerial and official levels continued besides growing exchanges of Parliamentarians and civil society dialogues.

Special envoys were sent to all the EU countries seeking support for waiver in the NSG for Civil Nuclear Cooperation with India. Belgium went public in its support to India's candidature for the Permanent Membership of the expanded UNSC during the visit of the King of the Belgium in November 08. Following the Mumbai terrorist attacks, leaders of EU and member states sent condolence messages and made telephone calls condemning the attacks and reaffirmed solidarity in the fight against terrorism.

Central Europe

Introduction

India has traditionally enjoyed warm, friendly and close relations with countries of the Nordic as well as Central and Eastern Europe. Efforts to diversify and deepen our friendly relations with these countries are being pursued assiduously. The expanded EU poses new challenges and opportunities.

The relatively high rates of economic growth in India as opposed to Europe, the availability of skilled technical personnel at very competitive costs in India, the large Indian market, and niche areas of excellence including IT and Pharmaceuticals, and the growing capacity of Indian companies to invest abroad, taken together with the prospect of ageing populations and shrinking academic and labour force, have all led to renewed interest of

Nordic, Central and Eastern European countries in India. Trade with most of these countries is increasing at a faster pace, and is moving away from traditional commodities to engineering goods and value-added items. Investments from India are also increasing. The potential for high technology manufacturing in India, cooperation in petroleum, non-conventional energy, biotechnology, nanotechnology and engineering, together with areas like deep-sea fishing and food processing are raising new possibilities for collaboration. Nordic countries are also beginning to view the Indian stock market and financial instruments as safe and remunerative for their large investable funds. The relatively high growth rates in the former East Europe, coupled with the new possibilities arising from a dynamic and economically vibrant India is further boosting mutually beneficial economic activity between India and these parts of Europe.

Albania

The Foreign Minister of Albania, Mr. Lulzim Basha, visited India from 17-20 December, 2008. This was the first ever visit by a Foreign Minister from either side. Apart from delegation level talks held with EAM, Foreign Minister Basha had an interactive session at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA). During the visit, the Embassy of Albania was formally inaugurated on 18 December, 2008 by the Albanian Foreign Minister. He also visited Kolkata where he had a meeting with the Chief Minister of West Bengal and visited Mother Teresa Memorial House. The Foreign Minister and the accompanying business delegation also had a meeting with the Indian businessmen, organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Kolkata. Secretary (ER) visited Albania on 28 July as Special Envoy of Prime Minister to seek support for India's civil nuclear energy initiative. He met Prime Minister Sali Berisha and Foreign Minister Lulzim Basha during the visit. Albania extended unambiguous support at IAEA. Albanian Cd'A of Albania arrived to open their Resident Mission in New Delhi.

Belgium

The King of the Belgians His Majesty Albert II visited India from 3-12 November, 2008. He was accompanied by Queen Paola, Foreign Minister, Karel De Gucht and a

sizeable academic and business delegation. Besides Delhi, they visited Agra, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Mammalapurum and Chennai. FM, Karel De Gucht publicly declared, Belgian support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the expanded UNSC during their interaction with the industry. Several MoUs were signed with public and private sector firms on banking, port embarkation, application of nuclear / radiology techniques to agriculture modernization, information technology, etc. Academic cooperation MoUs too were concluded. Both countries agreed to uplift the level of bilateral relationship from good to global level and also to double the quantum of bilateral trade in the next five years. Secretary (West) visited Belgium on 29 July, 2008 for First round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC).

An Economic and Trade Mission led by Jean-Claude Marcourt, Minister of Economy and Commerce from the Regional Government of Walloon visited India from 20-27 September, 2008.

Under ICCR sponsorship, Ms Uma Sharma with her troupe performed *Kathak* dance in Brussels and Leuven in June 2008. A Rajasthani cultural troupe performed in the Ghent Trade Fair in September 2008 in which India was the Guest Country.

Bulgaria

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met with Bulgarian President Georgi Purvanov on 24 October, 2008 on the sidelines of the Seventh ASEM Summit in Beijing. Speaker of Lok Sabha, Somnath Chatterjee led a 13-member parliamentary delegation to Bulgaria from 16-20 June, 2008. A three-member Parliamentary delegation led by Shri S. S. Ahluwalia, MP (RS) attended the Sixth General Assembly of International Parliamentarians' Association for IT (IPAIT VI) in Sofia from 8-12 June, 2008. Secretary (West) visited Sofia from 20-22 July, 2008 as Special Envoy of Prime Minister to seek support for India's civil nuclear energy initiative and as leader of Indian delegation for the Foreign Office Consultations. Bulgaria extended its support at the NSG meeting for India's specific waiver. 13th session of the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Defence Committee meeting took place in New Delhi from 8-9 May, 2008. Deputy Minister of Interior of Bulgaria led a four-member delegation to India from 9-13 June, 2008. The Government of India has appointed, an Honorary Consul in Bourgas. Protocol for Exchange of Instruments of Ratification in respect of the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons was signed on 9 September, 2008 in Sofia. The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign

Minister of Bulgaria paid an official visit to India from 27 February-4 March, 2009. The official engagement day was 3 March, 2009.

Croatia

Shri Nalin Surie, Secretary (West) visited Zagreb from 30-31 July, 2008 as the Special Envoy of Prime Minister and met with Croatia's Foreign Minister, Gordan Jandrokovic, to canvas Croatia's support for facilitating international cooperation with India's civilian nuclear energy programme. Croatia supported for India's specific waiver in NSG meeting. The bilateral trade registered a growth of 40% over 2006. ICCR sponsored five-member *Mohiniattam* dance group gave performances at Zagreb, Zabok, Sisak and Cakovec in April 2008. From Rajasthan, a 43-member Manganiyar Sufi Musicians Group performed at the Croatian National Theatre in July 2008.

Cyprus

Cyprus lent its valuable support to India during the NSG meeting held in Vienna on 6 September, 2008. In this connection, C.R. Gharekhan, Prime Minister's Special Envoy, visited Cyprus from 30 July-1 August, 2008. He called on President, Demetris Christofias and Minister of Foreign Affairs Markos Kyprianou. The Cyprus-India Business Association, organized a business seminar, in October 2008, in Nicosia. Minister for Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Cyprus delivered the key note address and emphasized the need to upgrade economic cooperation between the two countries. Internally, the election of Demetris Christofias as the sixth President of the Republic of Cyprus on February 24 raised hopes for settlement of the Cyprus issue. Foreign Office Consultations with Cyprus is scheduled to be held in New Delhi on 3 July, 2009.

Czech Republic

Secretary (ER) visited Prague as a Special Envoy of PM in July 2008 and sought support of Czech Republic for India's Civil Nuclear Energy Initiative. The Czech Republic had supported and voted for India at the NSG meeting held in September 2008. During the period, there have been regular high level visits from both sides. From the Indian side the visits included that of MoS (AS) Shri Anand Sharma from 7-9 September, 2008 and Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Kamal Nath from 10-12 September, 2008. From the Czech side, Industry and Trade Minister Martin Riman visited India in November 2008, while the Chief of General Staff of Czech Armed Forces Lt. Gen. Vlastimil Picek's visit to India took place in April 2008. Trade and Economic relations with Czech Republic

have been expanding rapidly and bilateral trade is expected to cross the \$ 1 billion mark in 2008. Negotiations on the Social Security Agreement between India and Czech Republic have been completed and the signing of the Agreement is likely to take place in 2009.

Denmark

Following the visit of Danish Prime Minister to India in February 2008, bilateral interaction further strengthened. Shri Vilas B. Muttemwar, MoS for New and Renewable Energy, visited Denmark in April 2008 to attend the First meeting of the India-Denmark Joint Committee for Cooperation in New and Renewable Energy. A three-member Danish Energy Agency delegation, accompanied by a business delegation, visited India from 24-28 November, 2008 for the Second Joint Committee meeting and took part in Wind India 2008 Seminar. A 12-member delegation of the Danish Parliamentary Committee for Health visited India from 10-17 September, 2008 on a study tour. The delegation met Indian Parliamentary Health Committee, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs and Minister of Health. The Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, visited Copenhagen from 29-30 September, 2008 in connection with expeditious conclusion of a Social Security Agreement and an MoU on Labour Mobility Partnership with Denmark. Denmark launched a Work-in-Denmark Centre at Danish Embassy in New Delhi in October 2008 aimed at attracting Indian talent to Denmark especially in the IT, engineering and healthcare sectors. An MoU between India and Denmark for cooperation in Environment was signed on 27 October, 2008 in New Delhi. Bilateral trade with Denmark in 2007-08 was US\$ 1074.6 million. As a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science & Technology had spoken with Danish Foreign Minister on 25 July, 2008 to seek their support for India-US Civil Nuclear Energy Agreement. Denmark had supported and voted for India's specific waiver at the NSG meeting held in September 2008.

Estonia

Relations with Estonia are fast acquiring substantive content. Foreign Minister of Estonia, Mr. Urmas Paet visited India from 23-25 November, 2008 and held talks with EAM, Shri Pranab Mukherjee besides meeting Minister of Science and Technology, Shri Kapil Sibal. The Annual Foreign Office Consultations were also held in Tallinn from 8-9 October, 2008. Earlier, Special Secretary (Ad), visited Estonia in July 2008 as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister to brief the Estonian authorities on the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. Estonia had

extended its unconditional support to India's specific waiver at the NSG meeting. Estonia continues to be a beneficiary of the ITEC programme and its slots for the year 2008-09 have been increased to 20. Bilateral trade during 2007-08 is expected to be about Euro 45 million.

Finland

During 2008, bilateral relations with Finland continued to grow in content and substance. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma paid bilateral visit in June 2008 and called on the Finnish Prime Minister and held talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs. He also met Speaker of the Finnish Parliament and Chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and State Secretary for Political Affairs in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Minister of Science & Technology and Earth Sciences Shri Kapil Sibal visited Helsinki as a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister in July 2008 to brief the Finnish Government about the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. During the visit he met Minister officiating for Prime Minister and Finance Minister besides State Secretary in the Prime Minister's office. Finland had extended its unconditional support at the NSG meeting for India's specific waiver. He had earlier visited Helsinki in March 2008 and signed a bilateral agreement on Science and Technology with Finland. Minister of State for Industry Dr. Ashwani Kumar visited Finland from 25-29 May, 2008 to inaugurate the Second Global Innovation Summit which was attended by a number of leading Indian and Finnish companies. Former President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam visited Finland from 14-16 April, 2008 as the Chief Guest for SITRA's Inclusive India Seminar. Bilateral trade with Finland in 2007 grew by 31.54% and it was Euro 645 million. In order to further strengthen the trade relations, the 15th Joint Economic Commission met in Delhi in April 2008. The FOCs with Finland was held in New Delhi in March 2008. Mrs. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland visited India from 5-7 February, 2009 in connection with the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) organized by The Energy & Resources Institute (TERI). She was accompanied by Minister of Foreign Trade and Development, Mr. Paavo Vayrynen and a business delegation.

France

President Nicolas Sarkozy was on a State visit to India from 25-26 January 2008. He was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day Parade. He was accompanied by five high ranking French Ministers and a large business delegation. Discussions focused on wide-ranging bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. Emphasis was laid on civil nuclear

cooperation, energy, trade and emerging areas of cooperation. At the conclusion of the visit, in addition to a Joint Statement, a Joint Declaration on the Fight Against Global Warming was issued. The Agreements signed during the visit included Agreement on Mutual Protection of Classified Information in the field of Defence, Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners, Agreement between Commissariat L' Energie Atomique (CEA), France and DAE, India for construction and operation of Jules Horowitz (JH) Reactor, Agreement on India-France Development Cooperation through AFD and an MoU on an International Associated Laboratory in the field of Neuro Science.

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Paris for the India-France Bilateral Summit on 30 September, 2008. Both PM and President Nicolas Sarkozy reaffirmed the Strategic Partnership between India and France and their commitment to further strengthen cooperation in core areas such as civil nuclear cooperation, space and defence. In addition, emphasis was laid in furthering cooperation in scientific, technical and education fields and on environmental issues. A High-Level CEOs Forum was created. Agreements signed during the Summit covered areas of Civil Nuclear Cooperation, cooperation in outer space, use of PSLV for launch of satellites and Social Security.

French Minister for State for External Affairs and Human Rights, Ms. Rama Yade had a bilateral meeting with EAM in New Delhi during her visit for the 19th India-EU Troika Ministerial Meeting on 30 May 2008. MoS for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma led Indian delegations to the International Conferences in Support of Afghanistan in Paris; first held from 11-14 June, 2008, and later again on 14 December, 2008. A delegation from the Indo-French Parliamentary Friendship Group led by Senator Mr. Pierre Fauchon visited India from 14-22 September, 2008. The 19th Round of the Indo-French Strategic Dialogue was held in Paris on 11 August, 2008 between NSA and the Diplomatic Adviser to President Sarkozy Jean-David Levitte and the 20th round was held in New Delhi on 17 January, 2009. India-France Foreign Office Consultations were held on 6 February, 2009 in Paris. Foreign Secretary led the Indian delegation.

The 11th meeting of the High-Level Committee on Defence (HLCD), held in Paris from 25-26 November, 2008, decided to enhance maritime security and anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and to improve coordination. Joint exercises, staff talks at the level of the Armed Forces and other professional exchanges at the mid-career level have been proceeding well. The Varuna

naval exercises were conducted in May 2008 and the second operational coordinated maritime patrol took place off the Horn of Africa.

The Sixth Indo-French Joint Committee Meeting on Atomic Energy was held at Kalpakkam from 2-3 December, 2008. French nuclear group Areva and Department of Atomic Energy signed an Agreement on 17 December, 2008 for the supply of 300 tonnes of uranium.

Efforts to increase Indo-French business interaction continued during the year. Commerce and Industry Minister (CIM) Shri Kamal Nath visited France thrice, first from 3-5 July, 2008 to hold discussions with his counterparts, second time in September 2008 in the context of India-EU and India-France Summits and third time from 8-9 January, 2009 to attend the economic seminar entitled "New World, New Capitalism" held at the behest of President Sarkozy and co-chaired by former British PM Tony Blair. The CIM level Indo French Joint Committee on Economic and Technical cooperation held its annual meeting in New Delhi from 16-17 September, 2008. Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade Ms. Anne-Marie Idrac visited India in January 2009 to attend the Sustainable Development Summit.

France and India view each other as important partners in space technology and applications. Arianespace continues to provide launch facilities for Indian Satellites (INSAT). The agreements in the space sector signed during PM's visit to France in September 2008 provide legal framework for cooperation in this area. In December 2008, W2M satellite was launched by Ariane Space in Korou, French Guyana which was jointly built by Antrix/ISRO and EADS – Astrium for Eutelsat.

The Governing Board meeting of the Indo-French Centre for Promotion of Advanced Research (CEFIPRA) took place in Paris on 14 January, 2009.

In the field of education, a meeting of the Indo-French Consortium of Universities was held in Shillong from 16-18 November, 2008 along with the Annual Meeting of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU).

The Indian cultural calendar in France since January 2008 included 31 dance performances, 28 music concerts, nine cultural festivals, 24 photographic exhibitions & 20 art exhibitions including Indian participation in the Biennale of Design at Saint Etienne in 2008, and 14 film festivals with Indian participation. India was the "Country of Honour" in about a dozen cultural events covering diverse fields which include cinema, performing arts, visual arts,



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh with the President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, at Elysee Palace, in Paris on 30 September, 2008.



Minister for Foreign Affairs and Vice-chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Frank Walter Steinmeier meeting the Union Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, in New Delhi on 20 November, 2008.

literature, fashion etc. India was guest of honour in some of the prominent cultural events in the first half of 2008 including at the Annecy Animation Film Festival and Poetry Market in Paris both held in June 2008.

Germany

Germany is India's largest trading partner within the EU, second most important source of technological collaborations globally and an important investor. The year saw continued exchanges of bilateral visits, an expansion of trade and investment ties and a substantial expansion of partnerships in science and technology.

Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, German Federal Vice Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs visited India from 19-21 November, 2008 accompanied by Members of Parliament and a large delegation of officials and businessmen. Besides Delhi, Dr. Steinmeier also visited Bangalore, where he inaugurated the German Consulate.

The fifth meeting of the India-Germany Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism was held in Berlin from 16-17 October, 2008.

Important progress was registered in defence cooperation. India was the partner country of the Berlin Air Show, ILA 2008 held in May 2008 and the Indian pavilion was inaugurated jointly by Defence Minister, Shri A.K. Antony and Chancellor Angela Merkel. A group of 20 CEOs of German Aerospace industry attended a CEO's Round Table with MoS Defence Production, Shri Inderjit Singh, while nearly 200 business delegates participated in a business conference on India during the event. Defence Secretary level High Defence Committee met in April 2008 and met again in March 2009; its three sub-groups in April 2008 and in January 2009.

Exchange of trade and economic delegations and organization of promotional events continued apace. Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Kamal Nath led a 90-member business delegation comprising of SMEs to Germany from 8-9 September, 2008. Bilateral Civil Aviation talks were held in Berlin from 10-11 April, 2008 when both sides agreed to add a further 26 flights weekly taking the total to 69 flights a week to each side. Secretary, Labour and Employment, visited Germany from 6-10 October, 2008 for discussions on the issue of Technical and Vocational Education and Training. First meeting of the Joint Working Group on Agriculture was held on 12 November, 2008 in Hannover. German Federal Environment Minister Mr Sigmar Gabriel led a large German business delegation to India from 17-18 November, 2008 when he co-inaugurated the First Indo-

German Environment Forum along with Shri Sevugan Regupathy, Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment & Forests. During the Second India Week organized in Hamburg from 9-16 November, 2008, business conferences were organised on "Doing Business with India", "Aviation and Hi-tech Logistics", renewable energy, tourism and Chemical and Pharmaceuticals. India was the partner country at the "5th International Automotive Suppliers Fair IZB" organized by M/s Wofsburg AG in Wolfsburg from 29-31 October, 2008. A German Centre, established in Gurgaon jointly by two of Germany's banks, viz. Bavarian Landesbank (BLB) and Landesbank Baden Württemberg (LBBW), to facilitate the activities of German SMEs became operational during 2008. Mr. Christian Wulff, Minister President of Lower Saxony visited India from 3-7 October, 2008.

Science and Technological Cooperation has emerged as one of the key elements in the Indo-German interaction. Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Shri Kapil Sibal, visited Germany from 26-30 June, 2008 to attend the Festive Assembly of the Max Plank Society held in Dresden, Germany on 27 June, 2008. He and Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel jointly addressed the Festive Assembly. Mr. Sibal also addressed the Nobel Laureates gathering at Lindau. Dr. Annette Schavan subsequently visited India from 8-10 September, 2008 for the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of IIT-Madras. An MoU was signed between DAAD and IIT-Madras on the setting up of a Centre for Sustainable Development Studies. She also announced the STAR Scholarships for Scholars from IIT-M visiting Germany. Meanwhile, the Science Express carrying an exhibition mounted by the Max Planck Society completed its journey after visiting 55 cities in India and receiving over 2 million visitors.

Ms Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, German Federal Minister of Economic Cooperation and Development visited India from 20-24 October, 2008 for celebrating 50 years of Partnership in Indo-German Development Cooperation. The strategic framework for further Indo-German development cooperation was finalized.

17th meeting of ICGC (Indo-German Consultative Group) was held in Munich from 11-14 September, 2008.

Greece

Shri Nalin Surie, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, visited Athens in July 2008, as PM's Special Envoy to seek Greece's support in the Nuclear Suppliers' Group for India's civil nuclear agreement. Greece had supported at the NSG meeting for India's specific waiver. A 16-member team from the National Defence College (NDC),

New Delhi visited Greece in May 2008. India participated in the Thessaloniki International Trade Fair held at Thessaloniki, Greece, from 6-14 September 2008. Instruments of Ratification of India-Greece Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement, signed during the visit of the former President A. P.J. Abdul Kalam to Greece in April 2007, were exchanged on 30 September, 2008.

Holy See

A 13-member Indian delegation led by Shri Oscar Fernandes, Minister of State (IC) for Labour and Employment, visited Vatican from 10-13 October, 2008 to participate in the Canonization ceremony of Sister Alphonsa on 12 October, 2008.

Hungary

India's relations with Hungary are close, friendly and multifaceted. The State Visit of Hungarian Prime Minister to India in January 2008, besides diversifying and consolidating the relationship, gave the necessary momentum and resulted in meaningful cooperation in various sectors. Seven agreements in the fields of agriculture, health, S&T, defence and oil exploration were signed during the visit. The other important visit from Hungary to India was that of Hungarian Defence Minister Imre Szekeres in February 2008. Visits from the Indian side to Hungary included that of Shri Anand Sharma, MoS (AS), Shri Kamal Nath, Commerce and Industry Minister in September 2008 and Dr. M.S. Gill, MoS (IC) for Youth Affairs and Sports, in November 2008. Secretary (ER) visited Hungary as a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister in July 2008 to seek their support. Hungary supported the India-US civil nuclear energy agreement and voted in favour of it in the NSG meeting held in September 2008. This period witnessed enhanced cooperation between the two countries in various fields. India was the first-ever country to be invited as the guest of honour country at the Budapest International Trade Fair in September 2008. Another significant initiative was the progress made in the finalization of the Totalisation/Social Security agreement between India and Hungary, which is expected to be signed in 2009. Foreign Office Consultations with Hungary was held in New Delhi on 15 January, 2009. Secretary (West) led the Indian delegation.

Iceland

In the backdrop of taking relationship with Iceland to a qualitatively high levels following President of India's visit to Iceland in May 2005 and President of Iceland's visit to India in 2000, 2007 and 2008. India's resident Mission

was opened in August 2008. A high level team headed by Additional Secretary (AD), visited Iceland and apart from making proposals for the opening of resident Mission in Iceland also called on Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland and the Mayor of Reykjavik. A delegation comprising officials from the Ministries of External Affairs & Commerce, Scientists from Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, ONGC and representative of CII, FICCI & Air India visited Iceland to discuss cooperation in Geothermal and Civil Aviation. The delegation met Ministers, senior officials in the Government of Iceland and CEOs. The instruments of Ratification for entry into force of the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement signed between India and Iceland in June 2007 was exchanged on 16 December, 2008 in New Delhi.

Ireland

A 16-member National Defence College team visited Ireland in May 2008 for a study tour.

Mr. Billy Kelleher, TD, Minister for Labour Affairs led an education mission to India in April 2008 to give a boost to admission of Indian students to Irish higher educational institutions.

A delegation from National Human Rights Commission of India headed by Justice S. Rajendra Babu, Chairman, visited Ireland and exchanged views with its counterpart.

Italy

In the general elections held from 13-14 April, 2008, the centre-right coalition led by Mr. Silvio Berlusconi was voted to power. Mr. Berlusconi was sworn in as the Prime Minister on 8 May, 2008.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met PM Berlusconi on 24 October, 2008 on the sidelines of the ASEM Summit in Beijing.

The Seventh India-Italy Joint Defence Committee Meeting was held along with the Fourth Joint Working Group Meeting and the fourth meeting of the Military Cooperation Group in Rome in March 2008. A bilateral Cooperation Plan for 2008-09 was drawn up and agreed to by both sides. Visits from India to Italy included those of Chief of Air Staff from 16-19 January, 2008 and that of Vice Chief of Naval Staff in October 2008. The Chief of Italian Army staff visited India from 17-21 November, 2008.

Among other visits from India were those of Minister of Agriculture, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; Minister of State for Labour and

Employment; Minister of State for Environment and Forests; and, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Defence Secretary and Secretary (Urban Development).

The Fifth MCG meeting for bilateral staff talks was held in New Delhi from 25-26 February, 2009.

Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Suresh Mehta, visited Italy from 15-20 March, 2009 while the Italian Undersecretary for Defence Guido Grosetto attended the Aero India 2009 show at Bangalore from 10-14 February, 2009.

Principal Scientific Advisor to the GoI, Dr. R Chidambaram visited Italy from 11-18 March, 2009 for the 700th Anniversary of the founding of the University of Perugia.

Latvia

Relations between India and Latvia are warm and growing. During the period Shri Sharat Sabarwal, Special Secretary (AD) visited Riga on 30 July, 2008, as Special Envoy of our PM, and met with Mr. Normans Penke, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also Political Advisor to the PM and sought their active support in the NSG to the Indo-US Nuclear deal. Latvia gave the NSG deal a clear support. Foreign Office Consultations with the Latvian Foreign Ministry were held on 5 May, 2008 in New Delhi. The bilateral trade is far short of potential, but Indian exports to Latvia increased to US\$ 34.8 million in 2007 and imports stood at US\$ 13.1 million, representing a 30% increase in the bilateral trade. Latvia's diplomats have been regularly attending the Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats, conducted by the FSI in Delhi.

Lithuania

A new government headed by Mr. Andrius Kubilius was formed on 9 December, 2008. Mr. Kubilius is the Chairman of Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats (Conservatives). From a trade figure of Euro 21 million in 1998, in 2007 the turnover reached to Euro 32.23 million. Bilateral trade for the first six months in 2008 has reached to Euro 100 million. The significant development in bilateral relations was opening of a full-fledged Lithuanian Embassy in New Delhi in July 2008 and is presently headed by Cd'A. Special Secretary (AD & CPV) as Special Envoy of Prime Minister visited Lithuania in July 2008 and met with Undersecretary of State in the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry seeking an NSG waiver. Lithuania had extended its unconditional support for India's specific waiver at the NSG meeting. The fourth round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Lithuania took place in Vilnius on 10 October, 2008.

Official level talks on Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement took place in New Delhi from 10-12 November, 2008. On the cultural side, eminent Kathak dancer Uma Sharma and her eight-member troupe performed in Vilnius on 2 June, 2008 to an appreciative audience in a programme.

Luxembourg

Secretary (West), Shri Nalin Surie visited Luxembourg on 28 July, 2008 as Special Envoy of the PM on nuclear issue during which he held discussions on wide ranging issues with the Luxembourg authorities.

India and Luxembourg signed the Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation (DTAA) in New Delhi in June 2008, after two rounds of negotiations.

The L&T-Paul Wurth consortium commissioned the largest blast furnace in India at Tata Steel at Jamshedpur on 31 May, 2008. The Consortium also bagged a Rs.1205 crores order from Bhushan Steel Limited for turn-key construction of a 2.5 million TPA Blast Furnace for their plant in Meramandali, Orissa.

Macedonia

The Government of Macedonia decided to open its Embassy in New Delhi and the Government of India appointed an Honorary Consul in Macedonia. The Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement between India and Macedonia, which was signed on 17 March, 2008 in Skopje, came into force on 17 October, 2008. The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Macedonia visited India from 20-24 January, 2009. The official engagement day was 20 January, 2009.

Malta

Malta has been a Member of EU since 2004 and joined Euro Zone in 2008. Special envoy to Prime Minister Shri C.R.Garekhan visited Malta in July 2008 and held meetings with President and Deputy Minister & Foreign Minister of Malta and briefed them on India's position on Indo-US nuclear cooperation agreement. Malta had supported at the NSG meeting for India's specific waiver. Bilateral trade has shown downward trend during 2007-08 due to the commencement of EU import-export regime. The main areas of engagement are in the health sector, IT, services and shipping. ICCR-sponsored cultural troupes performed in Malta to packed audiences in July-August.

Netherlands

There was regular exchange of high-level ministerial visits leading to conclusion of important bilateral agreements.

Minister of State for Food Processing Industries, Mr. Subodh Kant Sahai, visited the Netherlands from 22-23 May, 2008 to attend an investment seminar organized by Netherlands India Chamber of Commerce and Trade (NICCT).

Minister of Law & Justice Shri H.R. Bhardwaj visited the Netherlands from 17-20 September, 2008 and attended the 115th Anniversary of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HccH). During the visit, Minister Bhardwaj signed the Host Country Agreement with the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) to establish a regional PCA facility in New Delhi.

Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi visited the Netherlands from 4-6 June, 2008 to attend the commemorative function to mark the 135 years of immigration of Suriname Hindustani community from India to Suriname.

A Festival of India in the Netherlands, envisaged as a major cultural and economic bilateral event, was organized in Amsterdam in November 2008. It was inaugurated on 12 November, 2008 in Amsterdam in the presence of Princess Maxima, wife of Crown Prince Willem Alexander; Dr. Karan Singh, President, ICCR; and six Dutch Ministers. The inauguration was attended by close to 2000 guests. The Festival presented 127 events/ performances by leading Indian artists, musicians, music conductors, painters, sculptors, individual performance by numerous style & genres, participation by high profile Indian contemporary photography exhibitions, top fashion designers and screening of Indian films of leading directors. The Festival of India not only projected India's diverse cultural heritage but also had a mega bilateral economic content which included the Netherlands India Business Meet (NIBM) and CEOs Roundtable held from 20-21 November, 2008 during Finance Minister, Shri P Chidambaram's visit. There was an Indian business delegation of around 30 SMEs accompanying Finance Minister, Shri Chidambaram. 300 Dutch companies participated in the business event.

Norway

There was extensive interaction at official and ministerial levels. The Norwegian State Secretary of Defence visited India in May 2008 and he met Raksha Mantri and NSA. Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Oslo in June 2008 to co-chair the third session of Indo-Norwegian Joint Commission Meeting held in Oslo. During the visit, he called on the Speaker of the Norwegian Parliament, and held discussions with Foreign Minister, Environment & International Development

Cooperation Minister, Minister of Research & Higher Education and State Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum & Energy and State Secretary, Ministry of Defence. An MoU on cooperation in the field of Education was signed during the JCM. Shri K. Sibal, Minister of Science & Technology and Earth Sciences paid an official visit to Norway in June 2008. An MoU on Cooperation in the field of Polar and Glacial Research was signed during the visit. He inaugurated the Indian Research Station 'Himadri' at Ny Alesund. He also visited Svalbard Global Seed Vault. Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss, Minister of Health and Family Welfare visited Norway in November 2008. Secretary (Health & Family Welfare) visited Norway in August 2008 to participate in the Joint Steering Committee Meeting of the Norway India Partnership Initiative (NIPI). On 11 March, 2008 the fourth meeting of Indo-Norwegian JWG on Hydrocarbons took place in Oslo. A Norwegian delegation visited India in September 2008 for negotiations on draft MoU on Social Security Agreement. The Special Envoy of PM, Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science & Technology met the Norwegian Foreign Minister in Switzerland and sought Norway's support for India's specific waiver at the NSG.

Poland

There have been regular visits at various levels. Chief of Indian Army, General Deepak Kapoor paid a goodwill visit to Poland in March 2008. The Indo-Polish Joint Working Group for Defence cooperation was held in New Delhi in October 2008. The visit of Polish Defence Minister to India took place in the first week of November 2008. Polish Deputy Economy Minister, Mr. Adam Szejnfeld visited India in May 2008 leading an official delegation to attend the first session of the reconstituted Indo-Polish Joint Commission meeting held New Delhi. The fifth round of FOCs was held in New Delhi in June 2008. The Special Envoy of Prime Minister visited Poland in July 2008 to seek an NSG waiver. Poland extended its unconditional support for India's specific waiver at the NSG meeting. Minister of State for Coal, Santosh Bagrodia led a delegation to participate in the 21st World Mining Congress (WMC) at Krakow and the "Expo-Mining 2008" from 9-12 September, 2008 at Sosnowiec, Poland. Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests attended an informal meeting of Environment Ministers in Warsaw in October 2008.

The President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil paid a successful State visit to Poland from 23-26 April, 2009. The visit is significant in terms of Poland's vibrant economy and active membership of EU. The President

held meetings with the President and Prime Minister of Poland. Agreements on Tourism Co-operation and Health & Medicine were signed during the visit.

Portugal

Portuguese Foreign Minister Dr Luis Amado visited India from 7-9 July, 2008, when, besides holding discussions with EAM, addressed the opening session of the Indo-Portuguese Business Meeting at FICCI.

A ten-member business delegation from CII visited Lisbon from 2-5 July, 2008 to explore business and investment opportunities between Portugal and India mainly in the areas of automobile, Information Technology and Energy Sectors.

Romania

Following the General Elections of 30 November, 2008, Mr. Emil Boc was nominated by President as the next Prime Minister of Romania on 15 December, 2008. The new Government led by Mr. Boc won the vote of confidence in Parliament on 22 December, 2008. Earlier, Mr. Theodor Stolojan was nominated as Prime Minister on 10 December but he withdrew his name on 15 December, leading to the appointment of Mr. Boc. Minister of Economy and Finance, Mr. Varujan Vosganian, visited India from 3-4 March, 2008. Secretary (West), Shri Nalin Surie, visited Romania on 23 July, 2008 and met Foreign Minister Lazar Comanescu to hand over a letter from Prime Minister to Prime Minister of Romania to garner support for India's civil nuclear energy initiative. Romania extended their support for India's specific waiver at the NSG meeting. Secretary (West) also had meetings with Adviser to President Mrs. Anca Ileana and Adviser to PM Stejarel Olaru. Foreign Office Consultations with Romania were also held during the visit.

Serbia

Following the elections in Serbia in May 2008, the new government led by Prime Minister Mirko Cvetkoviæ reiterated that Serbia would focus on developing economic and political relations with India. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Vuk Jeremiæ, visited India in September 2008 and exchanged views with the EAM on bilateral, regional and international issues. During the interactions it was emphasised that the excellent political relations between the two countries were not adequately reflected in commercial ties which was much below the potential. The other high level visit from Serbia was that of Serbian Minister Dr. Ana Pešikan in February 2008. Serbia was

included as a partner country under ITEC Programme. An Agreement for cooperation in the Field of Agriculture between India and Serbia was signed in Belgrade during the visit of Secretary (Agriculture) from 1-5 March, 2009. Serbia has conveyed its support to India's candidature in the UNSC for non-permanent seat.

Slovakia

Secretary (ER) visited Bratislava as a Special Envoy of PM in July 2008 and sought support of Slovak Republic for India's Civil Nuclear Energy Initiative. The Slovak Republic had supported and voted for India at the NSG meeting held in September 2008. During 2008, two important visits from Slovakia to India took place. Chairman of the Slovak Parliament Pavol Paska visited India in March 2008. Besides having detailed discussions with Lok Sabha Speaker, he also called on Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Shri Hamid Ansari and Minister of External Affairs, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. Slovak Foreign Minister Jan Kubis visited India in April 2008 and held delegation level talks with EAM. He also called on the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The talks covered a range of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. Slovakia reiterated its support for the Indian candidature for permanent membership of the UNSC.

Slovenia

MoS, Shri Anand Sharma visited Ljubljana from 30 March to 1 April, 2008 and inaugurated the new Chancery premises of our resident Mission in Slovenia. MoS held discussions with his counterpart on bilateral, regional and international issues. Secretary (ER), Shri H.S.Puri visited Slovenia as a Special Envoy of PM seeking Slovenia's support to resume civil nuclear energy cooperation with India. Slovenia extended their support at the NSG meeting for India's specific waiver. The Special Envoy of the Prime Minister on climate change and nuclear issues, Shri Shyam Saran participated as a panelist in the Bled Strategic Forum meeting held in Bled (Slovenia) from 31 August to 1 September, 2008. Slovenia held the six-month rotating Presidency of EU during the first half of 2008. The Slovenian Foreign Minister Dr. D. Rupel participated in the India-EU Ministerial Level Troika Meeting held in New Delhi on 30 May, 2008 and also held discussions on bilateral, regional and international issues with EAM.

Spain

In the general elections on 9 March, 2008, Socialist Party PSOE won 169 seats out of 350 in the Congress of Deputies. Incumbent Prime Minister Mr. Jose Luis



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, at the joint press conference, in New Delhi on 21 November, 2008.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh with the Prime Minister of United Kingdom, Gordon Brown, during his visit to the United States, in New York on 26 September, 2008.

Rodriguez Zapatero was elected to second term on 11 April, 2008.

Deputy Prime Minister Ms. Maria Teresa Fernandez de la Vega visited India from 3-9 January, 2009. Among other visits from Spain focusing on promoting trade and economic relations were: Mr. Jose Maria Aznar Lopez, leader of the Popular Party and a former Prime Minister of Spain, 16-20 September, 2008; Ms Esperanza Aguirre, President of the Madrid Regional Government, 23-26 November, 2008; Mr. Miguel Sebastian, Spain's Minister for Industry, Tourism and Trade, 10-12 December, 2008.

Indian Ministers of Finance, Health and Family Welfare and Petroleum & Natural Gas visited Spain for multilateral events/international conferences when they used the occasions to also have bilateral engagements.

Minister of Tourism and Culture Smt. Ambika Soni visited Madrid from 13-15 October, 2008 to attend the Annual Meeting of the Executive Council of World Tourism Organization which India presently chairs. Shri Jawahar Sircar, Secretary, Ministry of Culture attended the inaugural function of 28th International Contemporary Art Fair (ARCO).

Secretary of State of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain Mr Angel Lossada visited India from 16-17 October, 2008 for attending the India-Spain Tribune Meeting.

Sweden

There were a number of Ministerial visits from Sweden to India including Trade Minister, Ms. Ewa Börling (April 2008), Public Health Minister, Ms. Maria Larsson (in May 2008) Minister for Migration & Asylum Policy, Mr. Tobias Billström (November 2008), and Crown Princess Victoria (October 2008). Some of these visits were accompanied by High Level Business Delegations from key industries. Trade and Investment are becoming the principle drivers of India-Sweden engagement. Bilateral trade has grown by over 450% since 2001, and has crossed the US\$ 2.4 billion mark in the year 2007. India has emerged as the 19th largest export market and third largest trade partner after China and Japan in Asia. Minister of Science & Technology, Shri Kapil Sibal visited Stockholm in July 2008 as a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister to seek their support for the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. Sweden gave India a clear support in the NSG to the Indo-US Nuclear deal.

The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs from the Swedish Parliament paid an official visit to India from

11-16 January, 2009. They met the members of the Standing Committee on External Affairs of the Indian Parliament on 12 January, 2009. Besides Delhi, the Swedish Parliamentarians also visiting Mumbai.

Switzerland

Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh led a five-member delegation to Switzerland from 21-24 September, 2008; two MoUs were signed with (i) Reiter Group of Switzerland for setting up a plant to manufacture cotton spinning machinery, and (ii) Kuoni Travel (India) Pvt. Ltd. for promoting tourism in Maharashtra. The 60th Anniversary of the signing of the Indo-Swiss Treaty of friendship was celebrated in 2008 by organizing cultural events, seminars and exhibitions. Messages signed by EAM and the Swiss Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey were also exchanged on the occasion. Bilateral trade crossed US dollars 2.8 billion in 2007. Foreign Secretary visited Switzerland in July 2008 as Special Envoy for seeking India specific waiver at the NSG.

Turkey

There was increased interaction between India and Turkey in 2008-2009. The bilateral trade between India and Turkey was US\$ 2.65 billion in 2007. The Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, accompanied by three senior Ministers, MPs and approximately 120 businessmen, paid an official visit to India from 21-24 November, 2008. PM Erdogan called on the President and the Vice President and had bilateral discussions/delegation level talks with the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. EAM, Shri Pranab Mukherjee and the leader of opposition, Shri L K Advani called on him. Earlier, Turkish Foreign Minister, Ali Babacan visited India from 5-10 February 2008, during which an agreement on mutual exemption of visa requirement for holders of diplomatic passports was signed. Turkish Minister for Foreign Trade Kuroad Tüzmen visited India in March 2008. Foreign Office Consultations with Turkey was held in New Delhi in May 2008. The NSA visited Ankara in July 2008 to seek support for India's civil nuclear energy initiative. During the visit, he called on President Abdullah Gül, Foreign Minister Ali Babacan and had bilateral discussions with the Secretary General of National Security Council and the Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister. Turkey extended their support for India's specific waiver at the NSG meeting. Air Chief Marshall Fali Homi Major visited Turkey in March 2008 and Turkish Land Forces Commander Gen. İdoðan Balaoðlu visited India in May 2008.

United Kingdom

Prime Minister met UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown in London on the sidelines of the G-20 summit on 1 April, 2009. The two Prime Ministers also maintained regular telephonic contact.

UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband visited India from 13-15 January, 2009. India-UK Foreign Office Consultations took place on 6 February, 2009 in London.

India & UK Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism was held on 2 December, 2008 and Strategic Dialogue on 3 December, 2008 in New Delhi. Defence Secretary level Defence Consultative Group met on 20 May, 2008 preceded by the meeting of Defence Equipment Sub-Group on 19 May, 2008.

Parliamentary linkages have been strengthened through regular visits. All three Friends of India Groups from Labour (10-17 February, 2008), Liberal Democratic (1-6 September, 2008) and Conservative (27 November-2 December, 2008) Parties visited India at the invitation of the Indian government.

Ministerial visits exchanged included those of Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Minister of State for Industry, for India Investors' Summit (19-21 May, 2008); Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister for Science & Technology, for the first ever India-Scotland Business Forum (13 June, 2008), Dr. M. S. Gill, MoS for Sports (2-4 July, 2008), Shri H.R Bhardwaj, Law Minister to attend Commonwealth Law Ministers' Meeting (7-10 July, 2008), Shri P. Chidambaram for the second meeting of the India-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue and to witness signing of an MoU to encourage sharing of best practices in the development of PPP (Public Private Partnerships) (11 August, 2008); Shri Kamal Nath, Commerce and Industry Minister (11-14 September, 2008); and, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas Murli Deora, to represent the Government of India at the London Energy Ministers' Meeting (19 December, 2009). Among Ministers from UK visiting India were Minister of Justice Jack Straw (13-15 September, 2008); Hazel Blears, Minister of Communities and Local Government (30-31 July 2008); Douglas Alexander, DFID Minister (17-19 November, 2008); and, Peter Mandelson, Secretary of Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (likely from 19-23 January, 2009). PM Brown was on a working visit to India on 13 December, 2008.

UK is the fourth largest investor in India and the cumulative investment by UK from April 2000 till September 2008 was US\$ 5,058 million. India has emerged as the third largest foreign investor in the UK and the second largest overseas investor in London and Northern Ireland in terms of number of acquisitions / investments.

London Stock Exchange hosts 52 Indian companies, with a combined market cap of £9 billion. Indian firms have raised a total of £3 billion through listings on the exchange. In March 2008, Tatas acquired Jaguar and Land Rover for £2.3 billion.

The first meeting of the UK India Education Forum took place in London on 26 September, 2008 when it was decided to set up an official level Joint Working group to concretize various collaborative arrangements in the field of education.

The 11th India-UK Round Table was held in India from 2-5 May 2008 at Shimla.

European Union

India and the EU (European Union) are indispensable poles in the emerging multi-polar structures. The EU is still trying to come to terms with the Irish 'No' vote on the Lisbon Treaty. While ratification of the Lisbon Treaty by EU Member States is proceeding and completed by most of them, its entry would have to await the result of another referendum in Ireland likely in 2009. Lisbon Treaty aims to reform the EU institutional structures to cope with the pressures brought about by the rapid expansion of the EU and to strengthen the internal coordination mechanism for better harmonization of its policies and more effective articulation of its external policies.

The EU is India's largest trading partner. Bilateral trade crossed Euro 55 billion in 2007 and is targeted to reach Euro 100 billion in five years. India and Europe have been seeing a very dynamic investment relationship. Main FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) source countries for India from Europe are: UK (US\$ 5.06 bn), Netherlands (US\$3.41 bn), Germany (2.07 bn), Cyprus (US\$ 1.5 bn), France (US\$ 1.05 bn) and Switzerland (US\$ 0.74 bn); the figures in parenthesis being the cumulative FDI inflows during the period 2000 - September 2008. Indian outward investment too has also been growing steadily particularly in UK (second largest in terms of acquisitions), Germany and Italy.

To improve working conditions for professionals, India and its partner countries in Europe have been negotiating Social Security Agreements. Belgium was the first country to have signed such an Agreement with India, France followed on 30 September, 2008, the Netherlands has concluded negotiations and Germany, after signing an Agreement on Social Insurance on 8 October, 2008, has agreed to commence talks on a Comprehensive Social Security Agreement. Cultural festivals, scientific and student exchanges are being given constant attention.

However, notwithstanding minor improvements, hurdles in movement of people from India to the EU remain a concern and yet need satisfactory resolution.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Marseille, France for the Ninth India-EU Summit on 29 September, 2008. During the Summit, PM had discussions with EU/French President Nicolas Sarkozy and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso. The Summit, inter alia, reviewed India-EU Joint Action Plan of 2005 and issued a revised plan extending the Strategic Partnership to new areas; took note of the signature of India-EU Horizontal Civil Aviation Agreement signed on 28 September, 2008; issued a Joint Work Program (JWP) for cooperation in Energy, Clean Development and Climate Change; agreed to aim towards conclusion of BTIA (Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement) during 2009; and adopted a target of Euro 100 billion for bilateral trade in the next five years. The JWP envisages cooperation on, among others, clean coal technology, energy efficiency, fusion energy research and renewable energy; as also conclusion of fusion energy research cooperation agreement between EURATOM and India. The Summit adopted a Joint Press Communiqué. PM also attended the India-EU Business summit titled "New Synergies for Partnership" which was held on 30 September, 2008 in Paris.

The 19th India-EU Troika Foreign Ministerial Meeting took place on 30 May, 2008 in New Delhi. The Indian

Parliament constituted a 22-member Indian Parliamentary Friendship group for relations with the European Parliament in June 2008; Mr. V. Kishore Chandra S. Deo (Indian National congress) is the President of the group while Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey (BJP) and Mr. Suresh Kurup (CPI-M) are the vice presidents of the group. India-EU Strategic Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 5 December, 2008.

The India-EU Security dialogue was held on 5 December, 2008 in New Delhi.

4th round of India-EU Energy Panel meeting was held on 8 September, 2008 in New Delhi when the two sides agreed, inter alia, to explore joint R & D on solar photovoltaics; to continue and strengthen cooperation in the field of energy efficiency/clean coal technology; and, to speed up the negotiations on proposed bilateral agreement between EURATOM and India in the field of fusion energy research; to take forward the civil nuclear energy cooperation.

The 11th Meeting of the India-EU Joint Working Group on Consular Issues was held in New Delhi on 23 May, 2008. The meeting discussed consular issues including facilitation and expeditious issue of visas and work permits. The 12th meeting of the India-EU Civil Society Round Table took place in Paris on 15-16 July, 2008. The fifth meeting of the India-EU ad-hoc dialogue on Human Rights was held on 27 February, 2009.



United States of America

The year 2008 was marked by an intensification of the bilateral engagement between India and the USA. The signing of the Indo-US civil nuclear Agreement in Washington on 10 October, 2008 was a culmination of the civil nuclear energy initiative announced during the visit of Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh to the USA in July 2005. It has been a symbol of the transformed nature of the bilateral dialogue and has added strategic content to the relationship between the world's oldest and the largest democracies. It has also opened up vast opportunities for bilateral economic and high technology engagement. While economic and commercial ties, defence cooperation and people to people contacts were other priority areas of focus in the bilateral agenda, Indo-US consultations on global issues of common concern and the dialogues, work plans and implementation groups for bilateral initiatives in energy, education, science and technology, health, space, agriculture among others continued to add depth and strengthen the Indo-US linkages.

High Level Visits

External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Washington DC from 24-25 March, 2008. He met his counterpart Dr. Condoleezza Rice and also called on President George Bush. He interacted with a select group of scholars at the Carnegie Foundation, a Washington based think tank.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh (PM) visited Washington on 25 September, 2008 and met with President George W. Bush. The two leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction at the achievements and progress made on the bilateral agenda that was set out in the Joint Statement of 18 July, 2005, issued during the visit of PM to Washington and of 2 March, 2006, issued during the visit of President Bush to India. They took note of the strengthening of cooperation in the areas of energy and environment, defence, counter terrorism, economic partnership with focus on innovation and knowledge, health, high technology trade, space, agriculture, climate

change, democracy and development and the steps taken by the two sides to meet the global challenges of the 21st century in keeping with their strategic partnership. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Bush appreciated and hoped that the transformation in Indo-US bilateral relations would provide a foundation for continued strengthening of the relationship in the future. Prime Minister Dr. Singh expressed his gratitude to President Bush for the support rendered by the United States of America (USA) in getting the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to make exemptions in its guidelines for India. The two leaders also exchanged views on issues of international importance including the Doha round, global energy security and environment. PM addressed a gathering of Indian community members in New York on 26 September, 2008 wherein he announced the opening of two additional Indian Consulates in Atlanta and Seattle in the USA.

Dr. Condoleezza Rice, US Secretary of State, visited New Delhi from 4-5 October, 2008. External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee (EAM) and Secretary Rice reviewed bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as high technology cooperation, education and people to people linkages, and defence relations. EAM, Shri Pranab Mukherjee conveyed India's appreciation of the US Government's support in bringing the India-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement to a conclusion and in transforming Indo-US relations. They noted that during the last few years, Indo-US relations had strengthened and diversified significantly. The two leaders expressed the hope that successor Governments in India and the US would further build the bilateral relationship on the basis of this strong foundation. They also discussed the security situation in the region and issues of global concern such as counter-terrorism, climate change, etc. Secretary Rice called on Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and held a meeting with Leader of Opposition, Shri Lal Krishan Advani.

PM Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Washington, USA from 14-15 November, 2008 to attend the G-20 Summit. At the Summit, the leaders of the G-20 countries pledged to take steps to tackle the global financial crisis and expressed

their determination to enhance cooperation and work together to restore global growth and achieve the required reforms in the world's financial systems. A Declaration of the Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy was issued on the occasion.

Dr. Condoleezza Rice, US Secretary of State, visited New Delhi again from 3-4 December, 2008 to offer condolences for the victims of the Mumbai terror attack and express solidarity with India. She met with External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Home Minister, Shri. P. Chidambaram, and Leader of Opposition, Shri Lal Krishan Advani and called on Prime Minister Dr. Singh. During her interaction with the Indian leadership, she offered the support of the US Government in investigating the Mumbai attack and in India's efforts to prevent such attacks in the future. Secretary Rice reiterated her Government's steadfast support to India in fighting the scourge of terrorism.

Foreign Secretary, Shri Shiv Shankar Menon visited Washington on 2 December, 2008 and met with his US counterpart, Mr. William Burns, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, US State Department and reviewed Indo-US bilateral relations.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation

India successfully concluded an India specific Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on 1 August, 2008 which paved the way for the USA to approach the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) for an adjustment of the NSG guidelines to enable its members to enter into civil nuclear cooperation and trade with India. On 6 September, 2008, the NSG agreed by consensus to such an adjustment which ended 34 years of international technology denial and isolation imposed by the Group on India. With this step completed, as per the India-US understandings of July 2005 and March 2006, the US Government then took the India-US civil nuclear agreement to the US Congress for approval. The US House of Representatives approved the relevant Bill on the Agreement on 28 September, 2008 and the US Senate passed it on 1 October, 2008. On 8 October, 2008, the US President, George W. Bush, signed the legislation on the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement, approved by the US Congress, into law. The formal signing of the Agreement by External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee and his US counterpart Secretary of State, Dr. Condoleezza Rice took place on 10 October, 2008 in Washington.

Dr. David E. Klein, Chairman of the US Nuclear

Regulatory Commission, USA visited India from 17-21 November, 2008. He attended the IAEA conference on "Topical issues in Nuclear Installation Safety" in Mumbai and interacted with the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board authorities to further bilateral cooperation on nuclear safety and regulatory issues.

Energy Dialogue

The Third meeting of the Steering Committee of the India US Energy Dialogue took place in New Delhi on April 4, 2008. The Working Groups focusing on (i) Oil and Natural Gas (ii) Coal (iii) Power and Energy Efficiency and (iv) New Technologies and Renewable Energy met in New Delhi from 31 March-3 April, 2008. The two sides looked forward to a series of time-bound actions in bilateral energy cooperation towards the common objective of clean energy, energy efficiency, and energy security while pursuing the goal of sustainable development.

Trade and Economy

The USA continued to be the largest economic partner of India. A delegation from the Brookings Institution, Washington DC led by former Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott visited India from 15-29 January 2008. A US delegation led by Acting Assistant Trade Representative, Mr. Claudio Lilienfield held exploratory talks on bilateral investment treaty from 12-13 February 2008 with the Indian counterparts.

US Under Secretary, Department of Treasury, David McCormick visited India from 22-24 April, 2008 and discussed bilateral cooperation in the financial sector. Dan Sullivan, US Assistant Secretary for State for Economic, Energy and Business Affairs visited India from 21-23 May, 2008.

Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Kamal Nath visited Washington from 11-12 June, 2008. Shri Kamal Nath met with US Trade Representative (USTR), Ambassador Susan C. Schwab on 12 June, 2008 and held discussions focusing on how to move the Doha Development Agenda forward. Shri Kamal Nath also met with US Secretary of Agriculture Mr. Ed Schafer, US Commerce Secretary Mr. Carlos Gutierrez, Ambassador Rob Portman, former USTR, Congressman Gary Ackerman, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia and Congressman Jim McDermott, Chairman of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans.

A technical level meeting of the Indo-US Financial and Economic Forum was held in Washington in June 2008. An Indo-US Bio Pharma Summit was organized by FICCI in Boston from 12-14 June, 2008. Deputy Chairman

Planning Commission, Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Indian Co-chair of the Indo-US Economic Dialogue visited Washington from 8-10 April, 2008 and held discussions with his counterpart Mr. Dan Price, Deputy National Security Advisor and Assistant to the US President for International Economic Policy.

The second round of exploratory talks on the proposed Indo-US Bilateral Investment Treaty was held in Washington from 11-13 June, 2008.

The second round of informal discussions on the Indo-US social security cooperation to pave the way for negotiating a Totalisation Agreement between the US Social Security Administration and the Indian Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs took place in Washington from 24-26 June, 2008.

The Sixth Indo-US Information and Communication Technology Working Group held its meeting in Washington from 30 June-2 July, 2008. Bilateral issues concerning IT, ITES, E-Commerce and the broadcasting sector were discussed at the meeting.

A Renewable Energy Trade delegation from the USA led by Mr. David Bohigan, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of Commerce visited India from 7-12 September, 2008.

USA was the partner country at the First Biennial Civil Aviation Show – India Aviation 2008 held in Hyderabad from 15-18 October, 2008. A large US delegation including 20 US aviation companies participated in the show exhibiting products and services in varied sectors of the aviation industry. The second meeting of the India-US Aviation Steering Committee was held on 14 October at Hyderabad. The Federal Aviation Administration, USA held a bilateral consultation with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Government of India in New Delhi from 5-6 November, 2008. During the consultations, the two sides discussed aviation safety issues.

US Assistant Trade Representative Mr. Michael Delaney visited New Delhi from 4-5 November, 2008. He interacted with officers in the Ministries of Commerce, Finance and External Affairs.

The 7th meeting of the Indo-US Information and Technology Working Group was held on 10 December, 2008 in New Delhi. Discussion centred on amendments to the IT Act 2000, implementation of a flexible, robust Information Technology Agreement (ITA) and issues related to taxes on computer hardware and software.

A civil nuclear trade delegation led by the US India

Business Council (USIBC) and the Nuclear Energy Institute, Washington visited New Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad from 11-17 January, 2009 to explore business opportunities in the civil nuclear energy sector in India. The delegation called on External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee, MoS (PMO) Shri Prithviraj Chavan and Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy Dr. Anil Kakodkar. The delegation attended the CII-USIBDC Joint Working Group on civil nuclear energy meeting and met with several Indian public sector undertakings engaged in the energy sector.

Defence Relations

The India-US Defence Procurement and Production Group met from 7-11 August, 2008 in Delhi to discuss various issues related to defence procurement from USA.

Raksha Mantri, Shri A. K. Antony visited USA from 8-11 September, 2008, to reciprocate the visit of US Defence Secretary, Robert Gates to India in February 2008. He interacted with the US Defence Secretary, the US Secretary of State and the US National Security Adviser to review ongoing bilateral and discuss the regional security situation.

India and USA conducted a joint search mission with participation of the US Joint Pacific Action Command (JPAC) in Arunachal Pradesh from 15 October-21 November, 2008 to retrieve remains of US airmen who were lost in plane crashes over the area during the Second World War. General George W. Casey, US Chief of Army Staff visited Delhi and Agra from 16-18 October, 2008 at the invitation of his counterpart and interacted with the Chief of Army Staff and Defence Secretary. He visited the 14th Corps in Northern Headquarters. The visit provided an opportunity to review ongoing defence cooperation with USA.

India and USA held bilateral joint exercises, such as Yudh Abhyas (Army, Hawaii, USA October-November 2008), Vajra Prahar (Army, Vairengate, India and Guam, USA, August 2008), Malabar (Navy, off Goa, October 2008) and Habunag (Visakhapatnam, September 2008). India also participated in the multilateral air exercise, RED FLAG at the Nellis Airforce Base, USA in August 2008.

Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of US Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee visited India from 3-4 December, 2008 and exchanged views with Raksha Mantri, Chief of Naval Staff and the National Security Adviser.

Engagement on global issues

The sixth meeting of the US-India Global Issues Forum was held on 24 April, 2008 in New Delhi. Discussions

were held to strengthen cooperation on a range of global issues of common concern such as promotion of democracy and human rights, controlling avian flu and mitigating a future pandemic, accelerating polio eradication, addressing climate change, food security, cooperation in disaster management, protecting endangered wildlife and promoting science and technology cooperation.

Mr. James Connaughton, Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality, The White House, USA visited New Delhi and Kolkata from 15-18 June, 2008 to discuss Climate Change issues with the leadership in India. He met with Minister of State for Environment and Special Envoy of Prime Minister on Climate Change Shri Shyam Saran.

The Eighth meeting of India-US Joint Working Group on Peacekeeping was held in Washington from 12-13 May, 2008. The tenth meeting of the India-US Joint Working Group on Terrorism was held on 25 August, 2008 in Delhi.

Ambassador John Herbst, Coordinator, Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization, US State Department visited New Delhi from 6-7 November, 2008. He interacted with senior officials in the Ministry of External Affairs during which he gave a briefing on the ongoing reconstruction and stabilization efforts of the US Government in post conflict and conflict ridden societies such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. John D. Negroponte, US Deputy Secretary of State, visited India on 12 December 2008 to further Indo-US strategic partnership and to discuss bilateral cooperation on counter-terrorism. He called on the Minister of External Affairs and exchanged views with Foreign Secretary and National Security Adviser.

Mr. Michael McConnell, Director of the US Directorate of National Intelligence visited India from 22-23 December, 2008. He called on the Home Minister and had discussions with the National Security Adviser on India-US cooperation in security and counter terrorism.

High Technology Cooperation

The sixth India US High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG) meeting was held in New Delhi from 28-29 February. The meeting was co-chaired by the Foreign Secretary on the Indian side and Mr. Mario Mancuso, Under Secretary Bureau of Security and Industry, Department of Commerce on the US side.

A mini India-US High Technology Cooperation Group meeting was held on the sidelines of the BIO 2008 Conference in San Diego, USA on 18 June, 2008. Officials

from the Ministry of Chemicals, Ministry of Health, Department of Bio-technology and Embassy of India, Washington participated in this meeting. The delegation from the Ministry of Health also interacted with the US Food and Drug Administration in Washington.

A delegation led by the Deputy Assistant Secretary, US Department of Commerce, Mrs Holly Vineyard visited India from 23-27 August, 2008 for strengthening cooperation in the field of bio-technology, pharmaceuticals and medical devices. A roundtable on Technology Transfer was organized by the Department of Commerce and US-India Business Council on the occasion.

Education Cooperation

An agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of India for Financing Certain Educational Exchange Programmes was signed on 4 July, 2008. This Agreement supersedes the Fulbright Agreement revised in 1963 (after it was first signed in 1950 between PM (late) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the then US Ambassador to India, Mr. Loy Henderson). The new Agreement provides for expansion of the existing programme with, for the first time (i) a direct financial contribution by the Government of India, (ii) Government of India co-chairing the Board of Directors of the Foundation and (iii) participating equally in policy and decision making on the exchange of Indian and US scholars under the India-US Programme. The Foundation will now be called the US India Educational Foundation awarding "Fulbright-Jawaharlal Nehru Scholarships and Grants".

Science and Technology

During the visit of Minister for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Shri Kapil Sibal to the Massachusetts Institute of technology (MIT), USA on 13 June, 2008, the possibility of cooperation between the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and MIT in the area of energy was discussed. MIT has established a program called MIT Energy Initiative. The two sides have proposed to form a group of three members each to work out the details of this initiative. Dr. R. Ramachandran, former Secretary, DST has been requested to lead the Indian side. An agreement to create an Indo-US Endowment Fund to strengthen scientific cooperation is under consideration of the two sides. An Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the DST and the Ohio State University is under consideration and likely to be signed soon. Indo-US science and technology cooperation continued under the various bilateral frameworks established for the purpose such as the Indo-US Science and Technology



Secretary of State of the United States of America, Dr. Condoleezza Rice meeting the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in New Delhi on 4 October, 2008.



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh with the President of the Republic of Chile, Dr. Michelle Bachelet at the delegation level talks, in New Delhi on March 17, 2009.

Agreement, the Indo-US Science and Technology Forum and the partnership between the DST and the National Science foundation, USA.

The Tenth Board meeting of the Indo-US Science and Technology Forum was held on 8 December, 2008 at IIT Kanpur. The Board discussed the achievements of the Forum in promoting bilateral science and technology collaboration and the agenda for future cooperation.

Congressional/Parliamentary Visits

Senators of the US Congress visited India on 20 February for the purpose of holding consultations with Government of India Officials and interact with Indian Experts on South Asia.

US Speaker, Ms. Nancy Pelosi, visited India from 19-25 March accompanied by a ten member congressional delegation. She called on the Prime Minister and met the EAM and Special Envoy on Climate Change Shri Shyam Sharan. She visited Dharamshala and met His Holiness Dalai Lama.

Three US Congressional delegations visited India in the last week of May 2008. Senator Benjamin Nelson led a congressional delegation from 25-26 May, 2008, accompanied by three Congressmen. Senator Robert Casey and Senator Russell Feingold visited India from 28-30 May, 2008. These Congressional delegations interacted with senior leadership in India including National Security Adviser, Minister of External Affairs and Raksha Mantri to seek our perceptions about the region.

An Indian Parliamentary delegation led by Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs and Parliamentary affairs Shri Vayalar Ravi visited New York, Washington and Los Angeles, USA on a goodwill mission from 13-23 September, 2008.

Senator John Kerry, Chairman of US Senate Foreign Relations Committee visited India from 13-15 December, 2008 and engaged the Indian political leadership on counter-terrorism and the future of Indo-US relations. He called on the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Minister of External Affairs, Leader of Opposition and the National Security Adviser.

Senator John McCain, the highest ranking Republican in the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator Joseph Lieberman (Senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Chairman of Senate Homeland Security & government Affairs Committee) and Senator Lindsey Graham (member of Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Select Intelligence Committee) visited

India on 2 December, 2008. They called on the Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs and exchanged views on Indo-US relations.

Agriculture Cooperation

The sixth India US Agricultural Knowledge Initiative Board Meeting was held in New Delhi from 15-16 April, 2008. The Board discussed cooperation in areas of Human Resources and Institutional Capacity Building, Agro Processing and Marketing, Water Management and Biotechnology.

Canada

India's relations with Canada were substantively reinvigorated during the year with the Canadian Government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper continuing to accord Canada's relations with India the status of a foreign policy priority.

Head of Government Interaction

Prime Minister met his Canadian counterpart, PM Stephen Harper, on the sidelines of the G-8 Summit in Hokkaido (Japan) in July 2008. The two leaders reviewed the bilateral relationship in areas of mutual interest, exchanged views on issues of common concern and reaffirmed their commitment to broadening the scope of the India-Canada bilateral engagement.

Canadian Prime Minister telephoned PM on 3 November 2008 to discuss the global financial crisis. The two leaders met on 15 November, 2008 on the sidelines of the G-20 meeting in Washington.

Visits

Canada's Foreign Minister Mr. Maxime Bernier visited India from 10-12 January. Canada's Deputy Minister, Citizenship and immigration, Mr. Richard B Fadden visited India from 12-18 January. Minister for National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Canada opportunities agency, Mr. Peter Mackay visited India from 18-22 February.

Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) Ms. Helena Guergis visited India from 15-16 April, 2008. While in New Delhi, Secretary Guergis met with Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri M S Gill, and Minister of State for Industry. Shri Ashwini Kumar. Issues of mutual interest were taken up for discussion during her visit.

Shri M.K Narayanan, National Security Adviser, visited Canada from 28-29 July, 2008 to seek Canada's support

for the India-specific safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) of which Canada is a member. NSA met with Canadian Minister of Defence, Mr. Peter MacKay, Minister for Public Safety, Mr. Stockwell Day, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. David Emerson, besides calling on Prime Minister Stephen Harper. India and Canada opened a new chapter in their relations when Canada supported India's Safeguard Agreement with the IAEA and it also joined the NSG's consensus decision to allow nuclear trade with India.

A delegation of 27 senior Public Service executives visited India from 18-22 November, 2008, under the aegis of the Canadian School of Public Service's Advanced Leadership Program.

Dr. Stephen Inglis, Director General of Research & Collection, Canadian Museum of Civilization visited India from 24 September-7 October, 2008 under the Distinguished Visitors Programme. During his visit, he made presentations at the National Museum, New Delhi, Benaras Hindu University and the Department of History, Kolkata University and held discussions to enhance India-Canada linkages in heritage and culture. He also participated in a Conference in Khajuraho on the 'Indigenous Art and Economic Development in Canada and India'. During his stay in India, Dr. Inglis was also joined for a week by Dr. Victor Rabinovitch, President and the CEO of the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) organized - the India Lecture series in 2008 which included speakers Shri M. J. Akbar (on the Art of Turbulence), Shri Pratap Bhanu Mehta (on India's Great Transformation), Ms. Alka Acharya (on India-China relations) and Shri Rajeev Bhargava (on Multiple conceptions of Secularism).

Minister for Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Government of Canada, Mr. Jason Kenney, visited India from 11-18 January, 2009. He met with EAM, Chief Ministers of Punjab and Haryana and the Governor of Maharashtra.

Minister for Agriculture, Government of Canada, Mr. Reginald Ritz, visited India from 10-14 January, 2009. During his visit, an MoU between the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India and the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Government of Canada, on Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors was signed. Mr. Ritz also met Commerce and Industry Minister.

Deputy Premier and Minister for International and Intergovernmental Relations, Government of Alberta, Mr. Ron Stevens, visited India from 7-16 January, 2009 to attend the PetroTech 2009. He met with Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and Secretary (West).

Minister for International Trade, and Science & Technology, Government of Canada, Mr. Stockwell Day, visited India from 16-23 January, 2009. He met with Ministers of Commerce and Industry and Science & Technology, NSA, and Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Foreign Office Consultations

India-Canada Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) took place on 12 December, 2008 in Ottawa, Canada. The FOC was co-chaired by Secretary (West), Shri Nalin Surie on the Indian side and by Mr. Leonard Edwards, Deputy Minister, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade on the Canadian side. Talks were held on bilateral, regional as well as multilateral issues.

Trade and Economy

Mme Marie-Lucie Morin, Canada's Deputy Minister of International Trade visited India from 6-12 September, 2008, to participate in the annual Trade Policy Consultations with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Commerce Secretary and Mme Marie-Lucie Morin co-chaired the Fifth Round of India-Canada Trade Policy Consultations in New Delhi on 12 September, 2008. The desire to remove Non-Tariff barriers and other impediments to trade and promotion of relations in sectors as diverse as diamonds, clean technologies, new and renewable energy, coir, recognition of certificates of export inspection agencies, mutual recognition of technical qualifications, liberalized business visa regime, etc. were discussed during the Trade Policy Consultations. It was also decided to explore commercial opportunities through participation in trade fairs, science & technology collaboration, use of Atlantic Gateway ports, investment in Indian SEZs, agriculture, infrastructure, civil aviation sectors, etc. The Canadian side announced the opening of additional trade offices in India.

Mr. Ken Sunquist, Assistant Deputy Minister in Canada's Department for Foreign Affairs and International Trade, who accompanied Minister Morin, reviewed bilateral relations during his meetings with officials in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Responding to the un-tapped potential in engaging with Canada, a G-8 and highly resource rich trading economy

and obvious complementarities with the emerging economy of India, the India-Canada CEOs' Roundtable recommended to the two Governments commencement of negotiations for a broad based Free Trade Agreement. The CEOs' report was tabled on the sidelines of the Fifth Round of Trade Policy consultations which were held in Delhi on 12 September, 2008.

An official delegation from the Canadian Province of Manitoba led by Mr. Barry Todd and Ms. Doris Gingera-Beauchemin – the Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister, respectively, of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives of Manitoba, visited India from 27 November-1 December, 2008. The delegation met with officials in the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India, and the Ministries of Agriculture of the Governments of Punjab and Haryana, to discuss the interest of Manitoba province in pursuing, within different regions of India, Food Development Centre projects for food processing.

Given the economic complementarities between the two countries, a bilateral trade target of 20 billion Canadian dollars over five years has been set by the two countries. While Canada is a resource-rich country and amongst the largest producers of potash, oil seeds, oil & gas, uranium, etc. and has cutting edge technology in life science, mining, aviation and energy sectors, India is a huge market and its economy is on a high growth trajectory. During the first nine months of 2008 (Jan-Sep), the bilateral trade between India and Canada stood at 3.07 billion Canadian dollars with India's exports to Canada at 1.59 billion Canadian dollars and imports at 1.48 billion Canadian dollars. The major export commodities from India to Canada are cotton, drugs, pharmaceuticals, fine chemicals, machinery and instruments, garments, gems and jewellery and rice. India's major items of imports from Canada are pulses, wheat, fertilizers, electronic goods, ores, metal scrap, transport equipment and newsprint. Canadian entities - SNC-Lavalin and Bombardier - emerged as among the major investors in the infrastructure sector in India. Both sides increased their presence in the financial services sector in India and Canada. Canada opened new trade offices in India.

Science & Technology

Minister of Science and Technology, Shri Kapil Sibal visited Canada in June 2008 and reviewed ongoing cooperation in the area of science and technology while interacting with senior Canadian interlocutors. During the visit, both sides announced the launch of ten new India-Canada Science and Technology (S&T) joint initiatives worth \$17 million. Under this eight projects

have been finalized in the fields of agriculture, environment, food processing, health, IT, energy, aeronautics and watershed management and two are related to partnership development activities. Under the latter, the University of Toronto in collaboration with Tata Institute of Fundamental Research will undertake projects of mutual benefits. Dr. Joseph Hulse, Canadian biochemist and one of the world's leading experts in bio-technology received the Padma Shree 2008 Award from the President of India on 8 May, 2008.

Canada was a partner country in India's Technology Conference with special emphasis on clean technologies held on 5 December, 2008.

Education

Canada was a partner country at the Summit on Higher Education organized by the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and held in New Delhi from 24-26 November, 2008. Dr. R. P. Agarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development visited Canada from 11-18 June, 2008 to participate in the Annual Meeting of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. The Indian Council of Cultural Relations, New Delhi has approved the establishment of one chair on Indian studies in the University of Toronto.

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman 2009

Canadian Member of Parliament, Mr. Deepak Obhrai, visited India to attend the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2009, and was awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman 2009.

Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC)

Our engagement with the 39 countries and dependent territories of the Latin American and Caribbean countries continued to strengthen during the year. Cross-sectoral dialogue was facilitated at various levels and a total of 14 agreements and MoUs were signed with these countries. Bilateral trade to the tune of US\$ 11.69 billion was transacted between India and LAC countries during 2007-08. The signing of a JV agreement between the national oil company (PDVSA) of Venezuela and ONGC Videsh for oil production and development activities in the San Cristobal oilfield in eastern Venezuela, acquisition of the rights of Encana Corporation of Canada in ten offshore blocks in Brazil by the BPRL-Videcon JV, waiver of commercial debt and interest to the tune of Rs. 128 crores owed by Cuba to India and sale of seven Advanced Light (Dhruv) helicopters by HAL to Ecuador were among the important milestones in our economic/commercial relations with LAC countries. Line of Credit assistance to the tune of US\$ 160 million was announced and

disaster relief to the extent of US\$ 2.125 million was disbursed. As part of our Development Partnership initiative, IT Centres were set up in three Latin American countries. A total of 382 ITEC scholarships were announced and utilized by candidates from these countries. High level dialogue was facilitated during the visit of President of India to Brazil, Mexico and Chile in April 2008 and during the visit of the SICA Foreign Ministers /Vice Ministers to India in June 2008. FM of Ecuador visited Delhi in November 2008 for bilateral talks with EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh met Prime Minister of Jamaica on the sidelines of UNGA 2008 and President of Mexico on the sidelines of G-8-05 meeting in Japan in July 2008. EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee also held bilateral discussions with Finance Minister of T&T on the sidelines of UNGA 2008 in New York.

Antigua & Barbuda

Dr. Leon Erol Cort, Minister for Finance & Economy of Antigua & Barbuda visited India as Chief Guest at a special function at the Manipal University in October 2008. He met MoS Shri Anand Sharma and held discussions on various bilateral and multilateral issues. Six Indian consultants handling matters pertaining to treasury, finance and tax issues visited Antigua & Barbuda in 2008. A feasibility study for setting up of an IT centre by India was also completed. In an equity buy-out, Manipal Education Trust established management control over the American University in Antigua in December 2008.

Argentina

MoS for External Affairs, Sh. Anand Sharma visited Argentina from 7-12 February. He had talks with the Foreign Minister and the Vice Foreign Minister. During this visit, a new Chancery of the Indian Mission in Argentina was jointly inaugurated by the MoS and the Argentine Foreign Minister

Minister of Textiles, Shri Shankarsinh Vaghela, led a GoI handicrafts delegation to Argentina from 6-9 April, 2008 and held discussions with the Argentine Economy Minister, Mr. Martin Lusteau, on 8 April, 2008.

Commerce Secretary visited Buenos Aires on 9-10 June, 2008. Besides bilateral discussions, a seminar on "Business with India" was organized and an India-Argentina Chamber of Commerce and Industry was launched on the occasion.

Sports ties between India and Argentina received a boost when senior and junior Indian women hockey teams

visited Argentina and played friendly matches there. Indian Army polo team visited Argentina from 26 November- 6 December, 2008. Diego Maradona visited Kolkata in December 2008, at the invitation of the Indian Football Academy to open a Sports complex named after him.

Bilateral trade between the two countries in 2008 touched US\$1.4 billion with Indian exports registering an increase of 28% in 2008 and imports declining by 5% in comparison with the trade transacted in 2007.

Bolivia

Bilateral relations with Bolivia remained cordial. Jindal Steel and Power Limited, which had been allocated the US \$ 2.1 billion Mutun iron ore project in Bolivia, completed preliminary exploratory, licensing and infrastructure building processes. Government of India provided cash assistance of US\$ 100,000 to the Government of Bolivia as disaster relief assistance in the wake of floods due to the "La Nina" climatic phenomenon.

Brazil

EAM, Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Brazil from 16-18 February and held detailed discussions with Brazilian Foreign Minister, Mr. Celso Amorin on the state of bilateral relations and the ongoing co-operation EAM also called on President Mr. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, and President of the Lower House of Brazilian Parliament, Mr. Arlindo Chinaglia. During the visit, three MoUs, on the Co-operation in the field of infrastructure, combating hunger and Poverty and on Co-operation in Sports and Youth Affairs were signed.

President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, accompanied by Minister of State for Renewable Energy, Shri Vilas Muttemwar and three Members of Parliament, paid a state visit to Brazil from 13-16 April, 2008. During the visit, President met President Mr. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. Four agreements - an Extradition Treaty, an MoU for Cooperation in Oil and Natural Gas, an MoU on Civil Defence and Humanitarian Assistance and an MoU for Cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Sectors, were signed.

Brazilian Minister of Health, Mr. Jose Temporao visited India on 28 July-1 August, 2008. During the visit, he held talks with Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Shri Anbumani Ramdoss.

Growing bilateral ties between the two countries received a further boost with the visit of President Lula to India in October 2008 on the occasion of the Third IBSA Summit.

He was accompanied by the Brazilian Minister of External Relations, Mr. Celso Amorim, Minister of Science & Technology, Mr. Sergio Machado Rezende, Minister for Development, industry and Foreign Trade, Mr. Miguel Jorge and Minister of the Secretariat for Women Policies, Ms. Nilceia Freire.

Shri P. Chidambaram, Finance Minister visited Sao Paulo from 6-10 November, 2008 to participate in the G-4, BRIC and G-20 meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors.

The first meeting of the Trade Monitoring Mechanism (TMM) between India and Brazil was held on 3 February, 2009. The meeting was co-chaired by Commerce Secretary of India and Executive Secretary of the Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade. Various trade-related matters were reviewed and prospects of strengthening ongoing bilateral trade were discussed.

Trade between India and Brazil, which touched US\$ 3.1 billion during January-December 2007, increased further to US\$ 4.66 billion in 2008.

Chile

President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil paid a State visit to Chile from 20-23 April, 2008. The President announced a one-time donation of US\$ 65,000 for maintenance of the *Plaza da la India* monument, where statues of three Indian leaders are installed. During the visit, an amount of US\$ 19500 was gifted for Science Lab to the Republic of India School, Santiago. Besides bilateral discussions with the President of Chile, the President also met with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Santiago. The Mayor of Santiago presented our President with a key of the city of Santiago. President also met with Presidents of the Chilean Senate and Chamber of Deputies. President was also conferred a Doctorate degree by the University of Chile. Two Agreements (Air Service Agreement and Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology) and two MoUs (on Cooperation in Sports and Joint Research in Antarctica) were signed during the visit.

At the invitation of Rashtrapati, Dr. Michelle Bachelet, President of Chile paid a state visit to India from 16-20 March, 2009. She was accompanied by Chilean Minister of Agriculture, two vice Ministers, ten Parliamentarians and a delegation of 25 businessmen. The visit coincided with the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between both countries. President Bachelet had bilateral talks with PM. Vice-President of India, EAM, Leader of the Opposition and Chairperson UPA called on

her. During the visit, four Agreements/MoUs i.e. MoU on Cooperation in the field of new and renewable energy; Exchange Programme on Cooperation in the field of Education; Agreement on Cooperation in the Exploration and Utilization of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes; and an MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Geology and Mineral Resources were signed. A Joint Press Statement was issued after bilateral talks with PM. The Chilean delegation also had extensive interaction with the Indian business community during business seminars at Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. The University of Madras conferred an *honoris causa* doctorate degree on President Bachelet.

Colombia

Colombian Minister of Commerce, Industry & Tourism, Mr. Luis Guillermo Plata, accompanied by a delegation of businessmen, visited India from 26-30 April, 2008 and called on Minister of Commerce and Industry, Minister of Finance and MoS Shri E. Ahamed. Issues pertaining to bilateral trade, investment and the finalization of the treaties on Protection and Promotion of Investments and Avoidance of Double Taxation were discussed.

In September 2008, the First Colombia-India Chamber of Commerce was launched in Bogota.

Minister of Energy and Mines of Colombia, Mr. Hernan Martinez, visited India from 3-7 September, 2008 and met with the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and signed an MoU on Cooperation in the Hydrocarbons sector. He also met Minister of State (Mines) and Indian businessmen. OVL of India secured three concessions for exploring gas fields offshore in the Caribbean, and two oil fields onshore, through the bidding process launched by the Colombian government.

India signed an MoU on Defence Cooperation with Colombia on 4 February, 2009. The Deputy Chief of Air Force of Colombia visited the International Aerospace Exposition-Aero 2009 held at Bengaluru from 11-15 February, 2009.

Costa Rica

Foreign Minister, Mr. Bruno Stagno Ugarte, visited India as part of the delegation of SICA Foreign Ministers on 10 June, 2008. He held discussions with EAM and signed an MoU on bilateral Foreign Office Consultations.

Cuba

In order to revive trade relations between the two countries, Government of India waived outstanding Cuban commercial debt and interest [to the tune of Rs.



President of the Republic of Chile, Dr. Michelle Bachelet meeting the President, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, in New Delhi on 17 March, 2009.



Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, Maria Isabel Salvador, meeting the Union Minister of External Affairs, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, in New Delhi on 17 November, 2008

128 crores] owed by Cuba to India. The waiver will facilitate allocation of credit facilities and insurance cover by EXIM Bank and Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) to Indian companies doing business with Cuba. A 19-member Cuban business delegation led by Mr. Eduardo Escandell Amador, Vice Minister, Ministry of Foreign Trade visited India from 15 May-1 June, 2008. An Indian business delegation participated in the 26th Havana International Trade Fair from 2-5 November, 2008.

Bilateral relations in the energy sector were strengthened with the finalization of the India-Cuba hydrocarbon Agreement for cooperation in the oil and gas sector. This was finalized at a meeting between the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Murli Deora and his Cuban counterpart, Ms. Yadira Garcia Vera, Minister of Basic Industry, on 30 June, 2008 at Madrid, Spain on the occasion of the 19th World Petroleum Congress. ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) already has stakes in eight exploration blocks in Cuba.

A three-member delegation from the Indian Department of Bio-technology visited Cuba from 19-23 December, 2008 for discussing possibilities of strengthening ongoing co-operation in the field of biotechnology.

Government of India approved extension of the India-Cuba Knowledge Centre project until February 2010 where 800 Cubans have already been trained in IT skills.

Ecuador

Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, Mr. Jose Valencia, held Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with Secretary (West) in Delhi on 18 July, 2008 and discussed a wide range of bilateral matters. He also called on MoS(EA) and MoS (Mines).

The Foreign Minister of Ecuador, Ms. Maria Isabel Salvador, visited India from 16-17 November, 2008 and held discussions with EAM. An MoU for promoting Cooperation in Agriculture and the Cultural Exchange Programme for 2009-11 were signed during the visit. Minister Salvador also called on Raksha Mantri.

Ecuador awarded a contract to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for supply of seven Advanced Light (Dhruv) helicopters to the Ecuadorian Air Force.

General Rodrigo Bohorquez, Chief of the Ecuadorian Air Force, visited the International Aerospace Exposition-Aero 2009 held at Bengaluru from 11-15 February, 2009.

El Salvador

An IT Training Centre was established in San Salvador in May 2008. El Salvador opened its first resident Mission in New Delhi in April 2008, and Ms. Patricia Figueroa presented her credentials as the first Ambassador of El Salvador to the President in May 2008.

Grenada

An MoU was signed with the Government of Grenada on 21 October, 2008 for setting up an IT Centre at St. George's.

Guyana

The Fourth India-Guyana Joint Commission Meeting was held in Georgetown, Guyana on 14 May, 2008. An additional line of credit of US\$ 50 million was extended for promoting cooperation in new priority sectors such as mining, energy, oil and hydrocarbons, infrastructure, high technology, ICT and agriculture. MoS, Shri Anand Sharma held bilateral discussions with the President and the Prime Minister of Guyana where views on bilateral, regional and international issues of interest were exchanged. The Guyanese side was led by Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, Minister of Foreign Trade and International cooperation.

Haiti

A 140-member Formed Police Unit (FPU) from India joined the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) to participate in ongoing international efforts for ensuring a safe environment in Haiti.

Under the IBSA Trilateral Initiative, a Solid Waste Management Project was inaugurated in Haiti on 14 December, 2008. This project offers good potential for generating employment for Haitians in accordance with IBSA guidelines and supports India's objectives for promoting South-South Co-operation.

Honduras

Defense Minister, Aristides Mejia visited India from 20-25 April, 2008 for discussions with Indian companies such as BEL, BEML, Ashok Leyland and the EXIM Bank of India which were involved in executing the US \$30 million Line of Credit offered by GoI to Honduras. An IT Training Centre was established by GoI in Tegucigalpa in May 2008.

Jamaica

An MoU for setting up an IT center in Kingston with Indian assistance was signed. This center is expected to be operational in the first quarter of 2009. Possibilities of cooperation in the solar energy sector, vocational and



*President Pratibha Devi Singh Patil meeting the President of Mexico, Felipe Calderon Hinojosa,
at the Los Pinos in Mexico on 17 April, 2008.*

educational training and in the IT sector are currently under consideration.

Mexico

President of India paid a State Visit to Mexico from 16-20 April, 2008. A CII business delegation also visited Mexico on the occasion of President's visit. Two agreements, pertaining to air services and cooperation in the non-conventional energy sources, were signed during the visit.

Delegations led by Shri Dinesh Rai, Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Shri Rakesh Vaid, Chairman, Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) and Shri K. Vijay Mani, Executive Director of Synthetic and Rayon Textiles Export Promotion Council (SRTEPC) visited Mexico for strengthening interaction in sectors handled by these organizations. A delegation of the National Defence College of India headed by Air Vice-Marshal Shankar Mani, visited Mexico for discussions with their counterparts.

Shri Abumani Ramadoss, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, Minister for Panchayati Raj and Development of North-East Region, Shri V. N. Kaila, Controller General of Accounts, Ministry of Finance, Shri Ravi Dhingra, Secretary, Inter-State Council, Ministry of Home Affairs visited Mexico to attend international conferences on AIDS Conference Decentralization, Local Power and Women's Rights, Plan Accounting and Finance Management Systems and the fourth meeting of the Strategic Council of the Forum of Federations.

Nicaragua

An IT Training Centre was established by GoI in Managua in June 2008. The Centre was formally inaugurated by Ambassador of India and the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua on 16 June, 2008.

Panama

The IT Training Centre, set up by Government of India in 2005, in Panama City, was handed over to local Panamanian authorities in August 2008. During their two-year term, three India-based TCS instructors trained more than 1300 Panamanian nationals in basic, intermediate and advanced computer courses.

Suriname

The Fourth India-Suriname JCM held in Paramaribo in May 2008. MoS (AS) and the Foreign Minister of Suriname, Mrs. Lygia Kraag-Keteldijk co-chaired the

meeting. An additional Line of Credit of US\$ 30 million was announced for strengthening cooperation in new priority areas such as mining, infrastructure development, pharmaceuticals and generic medicines, banking and financial services, renewable energy, satellite linking, agricultural research.

A fact-finding trade mission from the Association of Small and Medium Entrepreneurs in Suriname (AKMOS) and Suriname-India Investment & Trade Promotion Organisation (SITPO) visited India in November/December 2008. Besides holding a seminar on "Business opportunities in Suriname", it signed an MoU with the PHD Chamber and FISME.

The Vice-President of the Republic of Suriname, Mr. Ramdien Sardjoe, visited India as the Chief Guest at the Seventh Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, held in Chennai from 7-9 January, 2009.

Mr. Ivan Christian Fernald, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Suriname, attended Aero India 2009 held at Bengaluru from 11-15 February, 2009.

Trinidad & Tobago

On the sidelines of the UNGA 2008 meetings, EAM, Shri Pranab Mukherjee held bilateral talks with Foreign Minister of Trinidad & Tobago (T&T) on 29 September, 2008 at New York. Besides reviewing bilateral relations, the two leaders exchanged views on regional and international matters of mutual interest. An Indian trade mission, organized by the T&T High Commission in New Delhi, visited T & T in June 2008.

ONGC Videsh (OVL) and Mittal Energy formed JV, OMEL won rights to explore two gas blocks off the Southern east of Trinidad and Tobago with estimated gas reserves of two trillion cubic feet.

A production-sharing contract between ONGC Mittal Energy Ltd (OMEL), Petrotin (a State owned oil and gas company) and the Ministry of Energy & Energy Industries of T&T was signed on 30 December, 2008 for offshore exploration of oil and gas in Block NCMA 2.

Uruguay

MoS for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma visited Uruguay from 7-12 February. He had bilateral meetings with the Uruguayan President and the Foreign Minister. A bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement between India and Uruguay was also signed. A delegation from ANCAP, Uruguay's state-owned company involved in the production of petroleum products and portland cement, visited India in 2008 to

explore opportunities for cooperation and joint ventures for oil exploration in Uruguay.

Venezuela

Shri Murli Deora, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas (P&NG), led a high-powered delegation to Venezuela from 7-10 April, 2008 for signing of a joint venture between OVL and PDVSA on the *San Cristobal* oil field. During his stay in Venezuela, Minister (P&NG) also had meetings with President Hugo Chavez, Minister of Energy and Petroleum, Rafael Ramirez, and Foreign Minister, Nicolas Maduro.

Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Venezuela from 18-20 May, 2008. He held detailed discussions with President Hugo Chavez on 20 May, 2008. He also held meetings with the Venezuelan Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Culture, Energy, Science & Technology, Education and Higher Education, and Vice Ministers of Tourism and Light Industry & Commerce.

India-SICA Foreign Ministers Meeting

An India-SICA (Central American System of Integration) Foreign Ministers' meeting was held in New Delhi on 10 June, 2008. The meeting was co-chaired by EAM. Foreign Ministers of Panama, Nicaragua and Costa Rica along with

Vice Foreign Ministers of Honduras, Dominican Republic and El Salvador attended the meeting. Three Agreements for Waiver of Visas for Diplomatic and Official Passport holders were signed with El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. An MoU on Foreign Office Consultations was also signed with Honduras. During the meeting, it was agreed to establish an India-SICA Joint Technical Committee and an India-SICA Business Forum for further enhancing cooperation in various sectors. ITEC slots for SICA countries were increased from 68 to 100.

India announced Line of Credit facilities of US\$ 10 million to each SICA country and a commercial Line of Credit of US\$ 10 million to CABEI (Central American Bank of Economic Integration) through the EXIM Bank of India.

MERCOSUR (Common Market of the South)

In March 2009, the India-Mercosur PTA was ratified by the Parliaments and governments of the four Mercosur member countries and the Instruments of Ratification were deposited with the Mercosur Secretariat. The PTA will come into effect 30 days after both sides have notified each other about completion of ratification procedures.



United Nations and International Organizations

India continued to play an active role in the United Nations (UN) focusing on the ongoing process of reforming the UN Organization with a view to enhancing its representativeness, and credibility, and consequently, its effectiveness. India, in collaboration with other Member States, continued to press for taking forward the process of reforming the Security Council, both by expanding the membership of the Security Council and improving its working methods; revitalizing the General Assembly; and reforming the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In this context, strengthening the role of the UN as the leader in international development issues remained a key area of interest for India.

In addition, India also emphasized the need for better implementation of other elements of the reform of the UN system that have already been put into place. These include the process of providing international assistance to post-conflict societies through the Peacebuilding Commission, ensuring more effective and result oriented international cooperation in the protection of human rights through the newly-established Human Rights Council, and to ensure that effective international assistance is provided in emergencies created by natural disasters.

Taking into account the heavy and continuing toll of life due to terrorism, India remained seized of the need to conclude continuing negotiations within the UN on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT), while simultaneously ensuring the better implementation of the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. UN observed the second International Day of Non-Violence on 2 October, 2008, thus establishing this day as an important event in the international calendar. An informal plenary session of UN General Assembly was held on this occasion, which was presided over by the UN Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly. The guests of honour were the Foreign Minister of South Africa and the External Affairs Minister of India.

The UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, accompanied by his wife Mrs Yoo Soon-Tack, the UN Secretary General for Political Affairs, Mr. B. Lynn Pascoe

and a delegation of UN officials, visited India from 30-31 October, 2008. He again visited New Delhi on 4-6 February 2009 to participate in the Delhi sustainable development Summit.

63rd Session of the UN General Assembly

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the General Debate of the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly during his visit to New York from 23-27 September, 2008. In his address to the UN General Assembly on 27 September, 2008, Prime Minister underlined the need for progress on core elements of the agenda of reforming the UN. He also highlighted the need for coordinated action by the international community in dealing with the crisis in the world financial system, and global food and energy crisis. These challenges, the Prime Minister noted, threaten development gains achieved by many countries over the years. In the context of the fact that the year 2008 marked the mid-point of international efforts to achieve the developmental targets set by the Millennium Development Goals, the Prime Minister's statement emphasized the indivisible nature of global prosperity and welfare.

On Climate change, Prime Minister mentioned that this issue required a collaborative and cooperative international effort. Recalling the challenge posed by stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, Prime Minister reiterated India's vision of a global, non-discriminatory and universal nuclear disarmament regime, first put forward by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi two decades ago. He added that the opening of international civil nuclear energy cooperation with India was a vindication of India's impeccable record of non-proliferation. He also referred to the global menace of terrorism, exhorting the world to strengthen international cooperation in this regard, and reaffirming the need for the early conclusion of a CCIT.

During his visit to New York, the Prime Minister attended the plenary segment of a High Level Event on Mid-term Review of the Millennium Development Goals. On the margins of the UNGA Session, Prime Minister also met the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic

of China, Mr. Wen Jiabao, the President of Pakistan, Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Mr. Gordon Brown, the President of Namibia, Mr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, and the President of the World Bank, Mr. Robert Zoellick. Prime Minister also held brief interactions with the Prime Minister of Jamaica, Mr. Bruce Golding, and the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mr. Jan Peter Balkenende.

Following PM's visit, the External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited New York from 28 September-2 October, 2008 and participated in the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly. During his visit, EAM led the Indian delegation to the informal plenary of UN General Assembly held on 2 October, 2008 to commemorate the Second International Day of Non-Violence. He also attended the annual working meeting of Foreign Ministers of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Fourth Political Dialogue between India and the Gulf Cooperation Council, a Ministerial meeting of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) group, and the Midterm Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries. EAM also met his counterparts from the Czech Republic, Jordan, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, and the President of the 63rd UN General Assembly, and the UN Secretary-General.

Shri P Chidambaram, former Finance Minister (currently Home Minister), visited the UN for participating in the High Level Event on Midterm Review of the Millennium Development Goals held on 25 September, 2008 as PM's special representative. In addition to attending the plenary of the MDG Midterm Review with the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister made an intervention on poverty alleviation at the round table on Poverty and Hunger. The Finance Minister also participated in a special Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) convened by the President of Uganda, as well as the regular Commonwealth Ministerial meeting that is annually convened on the margins of the General Assembly session.

Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited UN from 22-28 September 2008 and represented India at a High Level Plenary Event on Africa's Development Needs, a Ministerial Meeting of the Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) group, and a Ministerial Meeting of the G-77. Shri E Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited UN from 3-10 December 2008 and represented India at a special high level event on

"Culture of Peace", convened by H.M. the King of Saudi Arabia. The Minister also participated in a high-level event relating to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), where he pledged a multi-year contribution from India amounting to US\$ 1.5 million.

In addition, 21 Indian dignitaries including 18 Parliamentarians, participated in the 63rd session of the General Assembly as members of the non-official delegation of India and delivered statements on India's position on a number of topical issues.

Political, Economic and Social issues in the General Assembly

India made statements in the UNGA Plenary and its committees on the issues of revitalization of the General Assembly, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, Migration and Development, Human Security, Reform of the Security Council, the administration of Justice, on Macro-Economic policy questions including the eradication of poverty, the question of Self-Determination and the Financial Situation of the United Nations and the report of the UN Secretary General on the work of the Organization. Interventions were also made on social issues such as human rights, and on political issues such as the situation in Afghanistan and on the situation in the Middle East.

Middle East: India remained engaged in the consideration in the UN of the Middle East issue in the UN General Assembly (both in the Fourth Committee and at the Plenary). India underscored its belief in the need for progress to be made in the bilateral Israel-Palestine dialogue process that was resumed by the Annapolis Conference in November 2007. Following Israel's military operations in Gaza between December 2008 and January 2009, the President of the 63rd UNGA called for the resumption of the Tenth Emergency Session of the UNGA in the third week of January 2009 which was suspended since December 2006, to press for an immediate ceasefire by Israel in line with the UNSCR 1860 of January 2009. India's statements continued to reflect the balanced position of the Government of India on the larger situation in the Middle East, and on the primacy of humanitarian concerns in the immediate context of the conflict in Gaza. India's long-standing, historic and consistent affirmation of support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people was underlined at all occasions, while reiterating its resolute opposition to all acts of terror and violence. India's discomfort with disproportionate responses by Israel to acts of terror was also conveyed. India has consistently stressed the need for an early end to the cycle

of violence and counter-violence. India continued to contribute funds to the UN Relief Works Agency for its relief work in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Second International Day of Non-Violence: An informal plenary session of the UN General Assembly was held on 2 October, 2008 to mark the Second International Day of Non-Violence. The event witnessed statements by the President of the General Assembly (PGA), Mr Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, Secretary General of the United Nations (SG), Mr Ban Ki-moon, Foreign Minister of South Africa, Ms Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. The speakers paid special homage to Mahatma Gandhi and urged Member States to emulate his teachings. In his address to the plenary, EAM highlighted the continued relevance of Mahatma Gandhi and his message in the present world troubled with problems of poverty, inequality, violence, armament and terrorism. He called on member states to use Mahatma Gandhi's inspirations to achieve world peace and harmony.

UN Security Council

India intervened in discussions in the UN Security Council only on specific issues of concern, and when permissible under the Rules of Procedure of the Council. Main issues upon which India intervened include the situation in Afghanistan, the issue of the Nepalese request for assistance from the UN, Threats to International Peace and Security caused by terrorist acts, Peacebuilding, reform of the working methods of the Security Council, and the Situation in Somalia.

Reform of the UN Security Council

India continued to press for a comprehensive reform of the UN Security Council, including expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories, and improvement in its working methods. The Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) of the General Assembly on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and other Matters held a number of meetings during 2008. However, no substantive progress could be made, including towards commencing intergovernmental negotiations on the subject. In September 2008, India, with the support of other G-4 countries (Brazil, Germany, Japan) and other like-minded African, Asian, Caribbean and Pacific Island States led the demand for urgent commencement of intergovernmental negotiations in an informal plenary of the General Assembly. Following the efforts of G-4 countries and others for early implementation of the UNGA decision, the President of the UN General

Assembly announced the launch of intergovernmental negotiations from 19 February 2009. The first round of negotiations on five key issues of the UNSC reform started on March 2009 and took place in several meetings held during March-April 2009, to be followed by a second round of negotiations.

Terrorism: Building up effective international cooperation in countering terrorism remains a key priority for India in its efforts in the United Nations. In this context, India continued to press hard for early finalization of a Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism and its adoption. Though substantive provisions of the Draft Convention have already been agreed, further progress on the Convention has been stalled by objections raised by some countries on the definition of terrorism and the scope of the Convention. Meanwhile, India continued to fully support implementation of the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006. The General Assembly conducted a review of the Strategy in August 2008, that gave Member States an opportunity to outline national experiences and to share best practices in countering terrorism.

Following the terrorist attack on Mumbai from 26-30 November, 2008, India successfully pressed for the inclusion of the Jamaat-ud-Dawah, and its founder Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, among others, in the Consolidated List of entities and individuals linked to Al Qaeda and the Taliban, who are subject to sanctions under UN Security Council resolution 1267. Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. E. Ahamed, addressed the thematic debate on terrorism held by Security Council on 9 December, 2008. In his address, MOS emphasized that all those who were in any way responsible for the Mumbai terrorist attacks, wherever they might be, should be brought to justice. He stressed that the international community needs to determinedly pursue and eliminate terrorist organisations to prevent further attacks. He reiterated that Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism that India tabled in 1996 needs to be adopted immediately to provide a framework of international law against terrorism.

Peacekeeping: India continues to be one of the oldest, largest and consistent contributors to the UN peacekeeping operations. In 2008, India was the third largest troop contributor with approximately 8,500 troops, located in ten different peacekeeping missions. The largest Indian presence was in the UN Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (4,696), followed by UN Mission in Sudan (2,704). India came in for high praise for providing the first full Female Formed Police Unit, which has been

assisting the UN Mission in Liberia. India actively participated in the 2008 session of Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations held at UN Headquarters from 10 March-4 April, and on 3 July, 2008. India was in the forefront on issues relating to restructuring; safety and security; conduct and discipline besides strengthening cooperation with Troop Contributing Countries of UN Security Council and Secretariat.

UN Democracy Fund

The UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) launched in 2005 has received voluntary contributions of USD 86.8 million from 35 countries/made. India is the second largest contributor to UNDEF with US\$ 15 million. UNDEF has committed approximately US\$ 60 million for 205 projects, of which, 15 projects were completed. These projects aimed at supporting democratic institutions and processes. On 15 September, 2008, the First International Day of Democracy was organised by the UNDEF. The highest governing body of the UNDEF, i.e. the Advisory Board, held two meetings in March 2008 and October 2008. It was recommended that UNDEF launch the third round of funding for new projects. India has had a prominent role in this body since its inception, besides being one of its founding members. Within the Fund, India has focused on monitoring the effective utilization and disbursement of the Fund and has also supported the evolution of methodologies to streamline UNDEF's internal processes.

Non Aligned Movement (NAM)

As mandated by the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement at their XIV Summit Meeting in Havana in 2006, the Ministers of the NAM convened their 15th Ministerial Meeting in Tehran, from 27-30 July. The Ministers issued a Communique at the end of the meeting, which reflected the Movement's position on global developments, including international political, economic, social and humanitarian issues. The Ministerial meeting also issued a Declaration on Palestine; on Iran's nuclear issue, and on the situation in Zimbabwe.

The Indian delegation to the Inter-summit NAM Ministerial meeting was led by External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee. His statement outlined India's position on the continuing relevance of NAM, in the context of current international challenges facing developing countries in particular. He noted that the Movement needs to overcome social and economic difficulties arising out of the simultaneous impact of crises in food, fuel and finances, as well as threats to our political and security systems. Taking this into account, EAM

underlined that "these and other challenges facing the international community make it more imperative than ever before that our Movement collectively focus on issues that unite us".

The Commonwealth

Largest among the 53 member-states of the Commonwealth, India is fourth largest contributor to its budget. From British Pound (GBP) 800,000 in 2005-06, India increased its annual contribution to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) by GBP 50,000 every year to reach GBP 950,000 in 2008-09. India also provides the largest number of technical experts after UK under the CFTC for providing assistance to developing Commonwealth countries. India is the largest contributor (with a commitment of Euro 1 million) to the Commonwealth Connects Special Voluntary Fund created at CHOGM 2005 in Malta to bridge the digital divide in the Commonwealth Countries. It provides 50-75 slots in select courses under ITEC and SCAAP and up to five ICT experts for periods upto six months under Commonwealth Connects Programme. It is also a member of the Steering Committee established to carry forward Commonwealth Connects action programme. India has also proposed to undertake the responsibility for upgrading the physical infrastructure of the CYP Asia Centre in Chandigarh and the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Sriperumbudur, which is estimated to cost approximately £1 million out the total project cost of £2 million. India has supported and ensured approval of US\$ 260,000 by the UNDEF through its advisory board to the Commonwealth Local Government Forum for its project on Councillor training for local democracy and good governance in South Asia. India continues to be one of the principle supporters and contributors of the Commonwealth Joint Office in New York and has also agreed, in principle, to support the establishment of Small States Permanent Mission in Geneva.

India successfully hosted the Third Commonwealth Youth Games in Pune from 12-18 October, 2008. Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports (Independent Charge) had participated at the Seventh Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting in Colombo from 27-30 April, 2008. The 54th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Conference was held in Kuala Lumpur from 1-10 August 2008 in which the Speaker of the Lok Sabha led the Indian delegation. Minister of Law and Justice participated at the Commonwealth Meeting of the Law Ministers from 7-10 July, 2008 in Edinburgh, Scotland. Shri Kamlesh Sharma, former High Commissioner of

India to the United Kingdom who was elected as the Secretary General of the Commonwealth in November 2007, assumed office on 1 April, 2008. He paid an official visit to India from 16-22 October, 2008.

Economic issues

India worked actively in order to ensure that development remains at the core of the United Nations agenda, particularly against the backdrop of the global financial crisis, coupled with the food and energy crisis. In this regard, the need for developed countries to fulfil their commitments to provide enhanced aid, greater market access, debt relief and technology transfer to developing countries was emphasized, so that the Internationally Agreed Developed Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, could be achieved. India also pushed for an enhanced role of the United Nations and for an enhanced voice and participation of the developing countries towards ensuring a greater development focus in the international regimes on trade, finance and economic bodies.

India participated in a High-Level Event on the Millennium Development Goals, which was jointly convened by the President of the UN General Assembly and the UN Secretary-General on 25 September, 2008. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh participated in the opening plenary session, while Finance Minister, P. Chidambaram addressed the Round Table on "Poverty and Hunger". Chief Minister of Delhi Smt. Sheila Dikshit was the lead discussant at the Round Table on "Environmental Sustainability" at the invitation of the UN.

India participated in the thematic debate of the UN General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, titled "Recognizing the achievements, addressing the challenges and getting back on track to achieve the MDGs by 2015", which was convened by the President of the UN General Assembly from 1-4 April, 2008.

India participated in the special plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly on the "Global food and energy crisis", which was convened by the President of the UN General Assembly on 18 July, 2008.

India participated in the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, held in Doha from 29 November-2 December, 2008. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed led the Indian delegation. India was also active in coalescing the Group of 77 positions during the negotiations for the Doha Declaration.

India participated in the 12th Session of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries of the Group of 77 (IFCC-XII), held in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire from 10-13 June, 2008. Joint Secretary (Technical Cooperation), Ministry of External Affairs led the Indian delegation.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for 2007 was held in July 2008 in New York. The highlight was the holding of the first session of the Development Cooperation Forum, which is a new event mandated by the strengthening of the ECOSOC in 2006. The Spring High-level Meeting of the ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conferences on Trade and Development was held in New York on 14 April, 2008. Chief Economic Adviser, Department of Economic Affairs represented India at the meeting as Observer. India participated in the Special Meeting of the ECOSOC on the Global Food Crisis, held in New York from 20-22 May, 2008.

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

India participated actively in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the high-level commission within the UN system for sustainable development with the role of reviewing and promoting the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The 16th session of the Commission, which was a review session of the two-year implementation cycle, was held in New York from 5-16 May, 2007. The session focused on the thematic cluster of Agriculture, Rural development, Land, Drought, Desertification, and Africa. Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests led the Indian delegation.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP)

The 64th annual session of UNESCAP was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 24-30 April, 2008. The theme of the session was 'Energy Security and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific'. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce & Industry.

During the period April- November, 2008 the first Sessions of the Committees on Social Development, Transport and Information & Communication Technology were held in Bangkok, wherein India was represented by the high level officials of the concerned Ministries/ Departments besides the Embassy officials.

Humanitarian Issues

India participated actively in oversight processes concerning the working of the Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). India piloted on behalf of the Group of 77 a resolution entitled “International Cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance for Natural Disasters, from Relief to Development.”

Central Emergency Response Fund

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed participated at the High Level Meeting on the Central Emergency Response Fund held in New York on 4 December, 2008. India made a commitment of US\$ 1.5 million to the Fund, to be disbursed over three years.

United Nations Operational Activities for Development

India supported the ongoing efforts in reforming the development operations of the United Nations directed at making them more responsive to the needs of developing countries. We participated actively in the ongoing debate on System wide Coherence in the United Nations.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

During the visit of UN High Commissioner for Refugees Mr. Antonio Guterres to India in December 2006 the two sides had agreed to initiate regular wide-ranging bilateral consultations. The first formal bilateral consultations were held at the UNHCR headquarters in Geneva on 31 January with the Indian side being led by Additional Secretary (Pol & IO) and UNHCR by High Commissioner Mr. Antonio Guterres.

Disaster Risk Reduction

India maintained close contact with the two main organizations based in Geneva in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction, namely, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR). A high-level delegation led by Smt. V. Radhika Selvi, Minister of State for Home Affairs, participated at the 2008 International Disaster and Risk Conference, held in Davos, Switzerland, from 25-29 August, 2008.

Human Rights Council

The United Nations Human Rights Council largely completed its institutional-building mandate and addressed a number of thematic and country-specific issues of concern to the international community. The

Council held three regular and two special sessions (on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the world food crisis). In keeping with its traditional commitment to the human rights and values, India actively participated in the process of institution-building of the Council as well as in the consideration of substantive human rights issues.

The Council operationalized the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism. India was reviewed under this Mechanism on 10 April, 2008. The discussion, while positively recognizing our efforts for the promotion and protection of human rights, also identified some concrete suggestions on further measures.

The Human Rights Council began the preparatory process for the Durban Review Conference on Racism which is scheduled to be held in Geneva in April 2009. India has actively contributed to the preparations for this Conference inter alia as a Member of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee.

India was one of the main-sponsors of the proposal to renew the mandate of the Special Representative of UNSG on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises which was adopted without a vote and co-sponsored by 50 States.

India's combined second to fifth periodic reports under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural (ESC) Rights were considered by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights from 7-8 May, 2008, at its 40th session in Geneva. The Inter-Ministerial delegation from India was led by our Permanent Representative and included the Solicitor General of India as a member.

India assumed the coordinatorship of the Asian Group on human rights issues in October 2008 for a period of one year.

A number of eminent Indians continued to serve with distinction as members of important Treaty Monitoring Bodies and human rights mechanisms. These include Shri P. N. Bhagwati (Member of the Human Rights Committee), Shri Chandrashekhar Dasgupta (Member, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), Shri Dilip Lahiri (Member of the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination), and Shri Arjun Sengupta (Chairperson, Inter-Governmental Working Group on the Right to Development). Ms. Indira Jaisingh was elected as our new Member to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Shri Anand Grover was appointed as Special Rapporteur on

the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)

India was the Chair of the KPCS for 2008. Under India's chairmanship, the UN General Assembly adopted, by consensus, a draft resolution which expressed support for the efforts of the Kimberley Process.

Further, India hosted a plenary meeting of the Kimberley Process in New Delhi from 3-6 November, 2008.

Elections

India continued to witness success in its electoral efforts at the United Nations. The following elections were contested successfully by India in the year under review:

- ECOSOC: India was elected by the UN General Assembly for a three-year term (2009-2011) to the ECOSOC on 22 October, 2008.
- Dr. P Chandrasekhara Rao was elected to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) at the elections held during the 18th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the law of the Sea on 13 June, 2008.
- Ms. Indira Jaising was elected to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) at the elections held during the 15th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women on 31 July, 2008.
- During the Congress of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) held in Barcelona on 11 October, 2008 Mr. Ashok Khosla was elected as President of the IUCN.

Climate Change Negotiations and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The 29th Session of Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was held in Geneva from 27 August-4 September, 2008. Shri Rajendra Pachauri was re-elected as Chairman of the IPCC.

Negotiations under the UNFCCC Bali Action Roadmap, including both the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long Term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) and the Ad Hoc Working Group on further commitments by Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP), were held in Bangkok (31 March-4 April, 2008), Bonn (4-13 June, 2008), Accra (21-27 August, 2008) and in Poznan (1-12 December, 2008). India participated actively in these meetings and has made detailed submissions on Adaptation, Mitigation,

Technology Transfer, Financing, MRV (Measurable, Reportable and Verifiable) issues and on REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation).

Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forest led the Indian delegation to the 14th Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Fourth Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP) in Poznan, Poland from 1-12 December, 2008. The delegation included officers of the Ministry.

Prime Minister participated in a Summit level meeting of the world's largest economies under the rubric of the Major Economies Meeting (MEM) in conjunction with the G8 Summit in Hokkaido Toyako, Japan on 9 July, 2008. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh made a strong intervention outlining India's position on climate change and sustainable development. After the Summit, a Major Economies Meeting (MEM) Declaration was issued.

The Programme & Implementation Committee of the Asia-Pacific Partnership for Clean Development and Climate met twice in the year, in Seattle, USA from 19-20 May, 2008 and in Vancouver, Canada from 29-30 October, 2008 to carry forward its work. Considerable work has been done on the various projects in the eight task forces in the APP and many of the projects have been completed on schedule.

International Organization on Migration (IOM)

The period witnessed enhanced engagement on part of India at the international level on migration issues. Most notably, India became a member of the International Organization on Migration (IOM) in June 2008. A full membership will enable us to develop a closer relationship with this principal organization dealing with the issue of migration.

Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)

A high-level inter-ministerial delegation led by Special Secretary (PP&R), MEA, represented India in the second meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, held in Manila from 29-30 October, 2008.

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

An Indian delegation led by Secretary, Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication and IT attended the 24th Congress of the UPU held in Geneva (23 July-12 August, 2008). India was elected to the Council of Administration of the Union (CA) and Postal Operations Council (POC) of the Universal Postal Union (UPU).

International Telecommunication Organization (ITU)

Secretary, Ministry of Communication and IT led a delegation to attend the 2008 Session of ITU Council was held in Geneva from 12-21 November, 2008. He attended the High Level Segment as a panelist during a session on 13 November, 2008 on the topic "Adapting to Climate Change: The role of emergency telecommunications."

Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

India hosted the Third Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Hyderabad from 3-6 December, 2008. About 1300 participants from 94 countries representing Governments, Civil Society, the private sector and the internet community attended the meeting. The overall theme of the Hyderabad IGF was 'Internet for all'.

United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT)

India is a founding member of UN-HABITAT and has been its active partner since its inception in 1978. As part of India's long standing cooperation with this organization, it participated in the Fourth Session of the World Urban Forum organised by the UN-HABITAT was in Nanjing, China from 3-6 November, 2008. The theme of this meeting was "Harmonious Urbanisation: The Challenge to Balanced Territorial Development". The Indian delegation was led by Kumari Selja, Minister of State (IC) for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, who is also currently Chairperson of the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT. Kumari Selja also participated as a panelist in the Ministerial Round Table at the World Urban Forum.

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

India, which is a founding member of the inter-governmental organisation International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) based in Stockholm, continued to play a prominent and effective role within the organisation during the year. India held the Chair of the Governing Council of International IDEA for the period June 2007 to June 2008. Under India's Chairmanship, strategic evolution of International IDEA took tangible shape with its programmatic focus addressing issues such as Democracy in Development, Democracy in Diversity, Gender Empowerment and recognising the contribution of South-South Cooperation.

As the Chair of the Council, India hosted the annual

meeting of the Governing Council of International IDEA in New Delhi from 17-18 June, 2008. A Round-table on 'Democracy and Development' was also hosted in New Delhi on the occasion of the Council meeting, which was inaugurated by Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce and Power. During the year, the cooperation between the Election Commission of India and the International IDEA also continued wherein the Election Commission contributed with its expertise on electoral processes towards the development of International IDEA's knowledge base.

Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU)

The 119th Assembly of the IPU was held in Geneva from 10-12 October, 2008. An Indian delegation of Parliamentarians headed by Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri C. S. Atwal participated in the deliberations.

Important items of agenda included (i) Debate of emergency item pertaining to current global financial situation; and (ii) Panel discussions on Advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and securing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; The Role of Parliaments, Freedom of Expression and the Right to Information; and Climate Change, sustainable development models and renewable energies. A Workshop on ensuring transparency in parliamentary processes was also held.

A four-member Parliamentary delegation led by Shri Rupchand Pal, MP Lok Sabha visited Geneva to attend the annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO.

Smt. Ranjeet Ranjan MP attended the third Conference of the members of Parliamentary Committees on the Status of Women and other Committees dealing with Gender Equality from 6-8 December, 2007.

Disarmament and International Security Affairs

India's commitment to the goal of general and complete disarmament, including global nuclear disarmament continued to be expressed in all policy pronouncements and diplomatic initiatives. India's stand on disarmament and international security issues was based on India's national security interests and its tradition of close engagement with the international community to promote cooperative efforts in dealing with these challenges.

The year 2008 marked the 20th anniversary of the "Action Plan for Ushering in a Nuclear-weapon free and Non-

Violent World Order" proposed by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to the Third Special Session on Disarmament of the General Assembly. India's commitment to universal, non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons was reiterated by Prime Minister on 9 June, 2008 at the Conference "Towards a world Free of Nuclear Weapons" organized in New Delhi as a Track-II initiative to mark the Anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan.

India participated actively in the meetings of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA). Regular contacts were maintained with non-governmental organizations in the field of disarmament to disseminate India's views on various issues. Outreach activities were carried out with the Indian industry and other stakeholders on India's export control laws and implementation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 2005.

UNGA

In a statement to the United Nations General Assembly on 23 September, 2008 Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh recalled India's longstanding commitment to nuclear disarmament that was global, universal and non-discriminatory in nature. Prime Minister recalled the Action Plan, which was spelt out by former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in the General Assembly twenty years ago. Prime Minister also reiterated India's support for a Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and providing for their complete elimination within a specified time frame.

During the General debate at the First Committee of the General Assembly India's Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament underlined India's commitment to nuclear disarmament and suggested a set of practical measures to stimulate debate and promote consensus on the way forward. These measures had already been put forward in General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament and include:

- Reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of all nuclear-weapon States to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons;
- Reduction of the salience of nuclear weapons in the security doctrines;
- Taking into account the global reach and menace of nuclear weapons, adoption of measures by nuclear-weapon States to reduce nuclear danger,

including the risks of accidental nuclear war, de-alerting of nuclear weapons to prevent unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons.

- Negotiation of a global agreement among nuclear-weapon States on 'no-first-use' of nuclear-weapons;
- Negotiation of a universal and legally-binding agreement on non-use of nuclear- weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States;
- Negotiation of a convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;
- Negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and on their destruction, leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time-frame.

In the first Committee, India's resolution on 'Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction', which was first introduced in 2002, was again adopted by consensus, highlighting the unanimity in the international community on the need to avert such a danger. The resolution called upon UN Member States to take measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and underlined that the international response to this threat needed to be inclusive, multilateral and global. This year, the resolution was co-sponsored by 64 States showing the importance the international community accorded to this resolution.

India again tabled the resolution 'Convention on the prohibition of use of nuclear weapons'. The operative part of the resolution reiterated the call to the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations to reach agreement on an international convention on prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

India's resolution on 'Reducing Nuclear Danger' highlighted the importance of de-alerting and other measures required to mitigate the accidental use of nuclear weapons. The operative part of the resolution called for a review of nuclear doctrines, as also immediate steps to reduce the risk of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, including through the de-alerting and de-targeting of nuclear weapons and requests the Nuclear Weapon States to take measures to implement the suggested steps.

The two resolutions were adopted by the First Committee with a considerable majority of member states voting in

the favour of the resolution. In the General Assembly, 118 countries voted in favour of the resolution 'Reducing Nuclear Danger', while 121 countries voted in favour of the resolution 'Convention on the prohibition of use of nuclear weapons'.

The First Committee and the General Assembly adopted without a vote a draft decision proposed by India on "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament".

The Conference on Disarmament

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is the 'sole multilateral disarmament treaty negotiating body' and comprises of 65 States. In 2008 Session, it met at Geneva from 21 January-28 March, 13 May-27 June and 28 July-12 September. The 2008 session saw no consensus on the CD's Programme of Work, as differences amongst States persisted on the priorities for negotiations. The Indian delegation worked with other delegations to make progress towards the common goal of reaching a consensus on a Programme of Work so as to enable the CD to move forward. India's approach was predicated on arriving at common understandings on fundamentals and clarity on mandates to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of negotiations and the need to respect the rules of procedure. India's approach was to be supportive of the commencement of substantive work on the basis of a Programme of Work, including negotiations on an FMCT.

UN Disarmament Commission

The three-week 2008 Session of the UN Disarmament Commission was held in New York from 7-24 April. The UNDC's 2008 session was the third in a three-year cycle focusing on two agenda items, namely, 'Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons' and 'Practical-confidence building measures in the field of conventional weapons.' The UNDC was unable to reach consensus on the two agenda items.

Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)

Pursuant to the decision of Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the BWC held at Geneva in 2006, to hold an annual Meeting of Experts to be followed by annual Meeting of States Parties till the next review conference scheduled in 2011 on topics identified by it, a Meeting of Experts (18 - 22 August) and a Meeting of the States-Parties (1-5 December) were held in Geneva. The meetings discussed and promoted common understanding and effective action on (i) National, regional and international measures to improve bio-safety and

biosecurity including laboratory safety and security of pathogens and toxins (ii) Oversight, education, awareness, raising, and adoption and/or development of codes of conduct with the aim of preventing misuse in the context of advances in bio-science and bio-technology research with the potential of use for purposes prohibited by the Convention.

India participated actively in the deliberations at the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties. India was one of the few countries whose delegations at the Meeting of Experts included industry representative. India made two presentations at the Meeting of Experts, one on India's "Bio-industry Overview" and the other on "Education, awareness raising and Codes of Conduct". At the Meeting of States Parties, India contributed substantively to the discussions and played a constructive role in the drafting of Chairman's Report.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

India is a High Contracting Party to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, Which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and has ratified all five of its protocols, including Amended Protocol II on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby traps and other devices and Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War. India has also ratified the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention.

The annual meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on CCW was held at Geneva from 13-14 November, 2008. In 2007, the States Parties Meeting had requested a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) to negotiate a proposal to address urgently the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions, while striking a balance between military and humanitarian considerations and present it before the 2008 meeting. The GGE met five times during 2008 for a total of seven weeks, reporting that it was unable to conclude its negotiations. The annual meeting decided that the GGE would continue its negotiations and make every effort to conclude it as rapidly as possible and report to the next meeting of High Contracting Parties (2009). The GGE was mandated to meet for up to two weeks in 2009 for this purpose. An Indian delegation consisting of officials from Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Defence participated in the GGE meeting on cluster munitions held from 16-20 February, 2009.

The Second Annual meeting on Protocol V of CCW on Explosive Remnants of war, which entered into force in

November 2006, was held on 10 November, 2008 in Geneva. While Lithuania chaired the meeting as the President, India and Australia served as Vice-Presidents. India coordinated one of the subjects for the 2008 meeting of MSP. India has been designated as President for Protocol VMSP in 2009.

The Annual Meeting of the States Parties to the Amended Protocol II to the Convention on CCW on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby traps and other devices was held at Geneva on 12 November, 2008. India informed the Meeting about the steps taken by it to implement the provisions of Amended Protocol II and its commitment to the vision of a world free of landmines.

India is not a State party to the "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction" or the Ottawa Convention as it continues to regard landmines, when used responsibly by States, as a legitimate tool for defence. However, India shares the vision of the United Nations for a mine-free world, and is ready to replace landmines with alternative technologies, when it becomes available. With this spirit, India has been attending the meetings of the Convention, as an observer, since the first Review Conference of the Convention held at Nairobi in December 2004. India attended, as an observer, the Ninth Annual Meeting of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention in Geneva from 24-28 November. Likewise, India also participated as an observer in the Standing Committee Meetings of the Convention held in Geneva from 2-6 June, 2008.

Small Arms and Light Weapons

The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPOA) adopted in July 2001 provides for a comprehensive set of national, regional and global measures to achieve its goal. India has supported international co-operation to achieve this goal multilaterally, regionally and bilaterally. In 2008, India participated in the Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) held in New York from 14-18 July, 2008 which adopted a substantive document for implementation of UNPOA and the International Tracing Instrument.

IAEA

As Member of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), India took active part in the deliberations of the IAEA and made substantial contribution towards the attainment of the Agency's objectives, including through various training programmes conducted on behalf of the Agency under the technical

cooperation programme, and Resolutions on substantive issues such as promotion of nuclear power, nuclear power applications in food and health, nuclear security, strengthening of Agency's safeguards system etc, adopted at the annual General Conference of the IAEA .

At its special session held on 1 August, 2008, the Board of Governors (BoG) of the IAEA approved by consensus a India Specific Safeguards Agreement between India and the Agency. On 2 February, 2009, India and IAEA signed the "Agreement on Application of Safeguards to Civilian Nuclear Facilities" (ISSA) in Vienna. On 3 March, 2009, the IAEA BoG approved by consensus the text of an Additional Protocol negotiated by India and IAEA.

The India-specific Safeguards Agreement builds on the IAEA's INFCIRC 66 provisions and covers civilian nuclear facilities that have been offered by India under the India Separation Plan and those which may be built in the future for which materials/technology/equipment is received from abroad. India's strategic nuclear programme is outside the ambit of the Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol negotiated by India with the IAEA. As per India's Separation Plan, facilities which are offered by India for IAEA Safeguards have been identified and the application of safeguards will commence in a phased manner once India has notified these facilities. The India-specific Safeguards Agreement will facilitate implementation of relevant bilateral or multilateral civil nuclear cooperation arrangements.

India's delegation at the 52nd General Conference (GC) of IAEA, held from 29 September-4 October, 2008, was led by Dr Anil Kakodkar, Secretary DAE and Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, who besides delivering the national statement at the plenary also chaired the presentation on the utilisation of thorium as a resource for nuclear energy. India's exhibition during the GC also focussed on the potential of thorium for addressing the challenges of fulfilling the energy needs of the world cleanly, safely, securely, sustainably and expeditiously.

Nuclear Suppliers Group

On 6 September, 2008 the NSG adopted a statement on civil nuclear cooperation enabling full civil nuclear cooperation with India. India welcomed the NSG decision as forward-looking and momentous, for it will open a new chapter in India's cooperation with other countries in peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in helping India meet its energy and developmental requirements. This will be of significance to global energy security, and one which would also contribute to meeting the challenges of climate change. More importantly, the NSG's decision ending 30 years of technology denial in the nuclear field, is a

recognition of India as a country with advanced nuclear technology and its responsible record on nuclear non-proliferation.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

India continued to play an active role at the Organization for the Prohibition of the Chemical Weapons (OPCW) at The Hague during the year. India played a key role both at the Second Review Conference of the CWC held from 7-18 April, 2008 and at the 13th Conference of the States Parties to the CWC held from 2-5 December, 2008 at The Hague. India continued to fulfil all its obligations under the Convention in line with its commitments.

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

India hosted the CICA Special Working Group/Senior Officials Committee meeting in New Delhi from 18-20 February, 2009. Earlier, Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma attended the Third CICA Ministerial Meeting in Almaty, 25 August, 2008. India expressed its belief that CICA can help contribute to the development of a cooperative and pluralistic security order in Asia, based on mutual understanding, trust and sovereign equality.

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma led the Indian delegation at the 15th ARF Meeting held in Singapore from 23-24 July, 2008. India and Indonesia co-hosted the Sixth Inter-sessional Meeting (ISM) on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime at Semarang (Indonesia) from 21-22 February, 2008. The Indian Coast Guard organized two training programmes on maritime security for ARF members in Chennai. The first programme was held from 24-29 March, 2008. Based on the success of the first programme, an advanced training module was organized from 17-22 November, 2008. The module covered themes of anti-piracy, search & rescue, offshore and port security, anti-smuggling and narcotics control and anti-poaching operation. India also participated in various other ARF activities including on disaster relief and terrorist use of the internet.

Strategic Exports Control

India has been exercising control over exports of sensitive goods and technologies which can have direct or indirect application for weapons of mass destruction or their means of delivery. Industry outreach activities, as envisaged in the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems Act enacted in 2005, were organized in cooperation with industry associations. A Technology Unit

has been set up in the Ministry to oversee the work related to strategic exports control.

Legal and Treaty Division

The important activities of the L&T Division for the year 2008 are as follows:

Agreement on Draft Convention by BIMSTEC JWG-CTTC

The L&T Division organised the Fourth Meeting of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (JWG-CTTC) which was held at New Delhi from 22-23 October, 2008. The Meeting was Chaired by Mr. Narinder Singh, Joint Secretary (L&T), MEA. The Meeting considered the Draft BIMSTEC Convention in Combating International Terrorism, Transnaional Organised Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking along with the reports of the Lead Shepherds on the progress of work of their respective Sub-Groups i.e. (i) Intelligence Sharing; (ii) Combating of Financing of Terrorism; (iii) Prevention of Illicit Drug Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals; & (iv) Legal and Law Enforcement Issues.

The JWG-CTTC also agreed on the Draft BIMSTEC Convention in Combating International Terrorism, Transnaional Organised Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking and recommended it for adoption at the BIMSTEC Summit.

The Convention will provide a strong legal basis for cooperation among the law enforcement agencies of BIMSTEC Member States. It will provide a much needed thrust to the enforcement agencies of the BIMSTEC Member States to effectively cooperate in areas such as intelligence sharing and capacity building and make joint efforts with a view to counter terrorism and fight organized crime and illicit drug trafficking amongst the BIMSTEC Member States. The Convention would thus provide an enabling mechanism for the law enforcement agencies to effectively locate persons/links/networks operating from other countries and engaged in carrying out such offences. Once adopted, Member States would be in a position to provide each other the widest possible measure of mutual assistance in the prevention, investigation, prosecution and suppression of such crimes pursuant to this Convention. It would also send a signal to the perpetrators of terrorist and organized crimes that any country in the BIMSTEC region cannot be used as safe haven.

Oceans and the Law of the Sea

The Legal and Treaties Division examined issues related to the law of the sea on agenda of different international forums. At its 63rd session, the United Nations General

Assembly (UNGA) adopted two resolutions 63/111 and 63/112 on the agenda items “Oceans and Law of the Sea” and “Sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments.”

Emphasizing the universal character of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982, which sets out the legal framework for all activities to be carried out in the oceans and seas, GA stressed the need for the harmonization of national legislations with the Convention for the purpose of implementation of its provisions. It called upon the donor agencies and international financial institutions to ensure the availability in all States, particularly in developing States, of the economic, legal, navigational, scientific and technical skills necessary for full implementation of the Convention. The GA also called upon States to provide technical assistance to developing States to prepare their submissions to the Commission on the Limit of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). It recognized the decision of the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention to the effect of submitting to the Secretary-General preliminary information indicative of the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles and a description of status of preparation and intended date of submission of claims. Expressing serious concerns over the problem of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, the GA has urged the States to fully implement all legal measures adopted by the IMO and the United Nations to combat piracy.

On matters relating to fisheries, the GA urged the States to exercise effective control over their nationals, including beneficial owners, and vessels flying their flags, in order to prevent and deter them from engaging in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. The GA called upon the States to apply the precautionary and ecosystem approach to the conservation, management and exploitation of fish stocks, including straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks in accordance with the Fish Stocks Agreement and to harmonize their national laws with the provisions of the Agreement.

United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea

At its 63rd session, the GA adopted the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea by resolution 63/122.

The GA authorized a signing ceremony for the Convention in Rotterdam, Netherlands in September 2009. The Convention will be known as “Rotterdam Rules”.

The Convention aims to create a harmonized and uniform legal regime for the international transportation of goods. The scope of the Convention is not limited to the port-to-port but covers door-to-door transportation with applicability over the land transportation preceding and subsequent to the sea carriage. An international sea leg is a mandatory requirement for a contract of carriage under the Convention. Additionally, there are many innovative features which the Convention incorporates to the benefit of the parties to a contract of carriage, which would balance their interests and promote the development of international trade. These features include the introduction of new concepts such as the electronic transport records, the performing party, the controlling party, transfer of rights and other technical features to fill the perceived gaps in the existing transport regimes.

The Convention creates a practical balance between the shipper and the carrier protecting adequately the interests of both sides. It creates a negotiations based regime and no party to a contract of carriage could impose its viewpoint on the other unilaterally.

The harmonized and modernized legal regime under the Convention will lead to an overall reduction in transaction costs, increased predictability when problems are encountered, and greater commercial confidence when doing business internationally. It would help ensure the safe reaching of the goods at their destination. It reflects the progressive development in the evolving process of international law in the field of international transportation of goods, which in most part of the world dates back to the 1920s or earlier.

The Legal and Treaties Division actively participated in negotiations of the Convention from inception in the years 2002 through its completion in 2008. India is one of the major maritime powers of the world. The greater part of India's international trade is carried through the sea. The delicate balance established between the ship and cargo, the broader scope of application, freedom of contract, and introduction of the new and technical concepts to give a practical approach to the international carriage of goods, will benefit the shipping industry.

Extradition and other international Judicial Assistance

The Legal and Treaties Division participated in bilateral negotiations for concluding extradition treaties, agreements on mutual legal assistance in criminal and in

civil matters with foreign countries. Following successful negotiations of Extradition Treaties with Belarus, Mauritius and Ukraine, the procedure for their entry into force and effectiveness was completed in the year 2008. Treaties with Egypt and Iran were also negotiated and signed during 2008, which are pending the process of entry into force. Negotiations on Extradition Treaty with Malaysia and Israel also took place.

The Legal and Treaties Division prepared the Draft SAARC Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters. On successful negotiations, the SAARC Convention was adopted and signed during the 15th SAARC Summit at Colombo, Sri Lanka on 3 August, 2008. The Convention will enter into force after ratification by all SAARC member States. Bilateral treaty in this area was negotiated with Egypt and has been signed. Text of the Treaty has also been negotiated and finalized with Bosnia Herzegovina. Negotiations were also held in this area with Malaysia, Oman, and Israel.

The Legal and Treaties Division examined extradition requests and other requests for international cooperation received from the domestic as well as foreign jurisdictions and rendered legal advice therein.

International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)

UNIDROIT is an independent inter-governmental organization with its seat in Rome. Its purpose is to examine ways of harmonization and coordinating the private law of States and Groups of States and to prepare gradually for adoption by the various States of uniform rules of private law. It performs in the field of private international law the same function the International Law Commission does in the field of public international law and UNCITRAL in the field of international trade law.

Elections to the Governing Council of the UNIDROIT were held during the 63rd session of the UNIDROIT General Assembly on 11 December, 2008. India had nominated Mr. B. Sen for re-election to the Governing Council, who got elected by securing the highest number of votes.

Hague Conference on Private International Law

India became a member of the Hague Conference in March 2008. Presently, 69 States/Regional Economic Integration Organisations are Members of the Hague Conference.

The Hague Conference on Private International Law is an inter-governmental organization, whose purpose is to

work for the progressive unification of the rules of private international law or conflict of laws. This objective is carried by finding internationally agreed approaches to issues such as jurisdiction of courts, applicable law, and recognition and enforcement of judgments in a wide range of areas such as commercial laws, international civil procedures and matters relating to child protection, marriage and personal issues.

The Hague Conference has so far adopted a total of 39 conventions/protocols relating to civil procedures, family law and commercial law.

The work undertaken under the auspices of the Hague Conference is of great relevance to India in view of the increasing legal issues that arise when Indian citizens engage in foreign trade activities, or in disputes when one party to the dispute is resident outside India, and also in case of family disputes involving persons of Indian origin settled abroad or other foreign nationals, especially when they enter into family relationships with Indian citizens.,

As a Member State of the Hague Conference, India would be entitled to participate as of right in all the meetings and conferences of the Hague Conference, and would also have a role in deciding on the work programme of the conference, especially in deciding on the new areas of work to be taken up for codification as well as examination of the working of existing conventions.

Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)

India signed the Host Country Agreement with the PCA at The Hague on 19 September, 2008 for establishing a Regional Facility of PCA in New Delhi.

The PCA administers arbitration, conciliation and fact finding in disputes involving various combinations of states, private parties and intergovernmental organizations. Not only do states more frequently seek recourse to the PCA, but international commercial arbitration can also be conducted under PCA auspices. Although initially conceived as a body for settling State-to-State disputes, the PCA has adopted Rules for arbitration in cases where only one party is a State.

The PCA Regional Facility in New Delhi would provide a forum for international arbitrations concerning disputes arising in the region, both in disputes between two States and between a State and a non-State entity, such as foreign companies, which have made investments in the region and where the parties have agreed to settle their disputes through arbitration. Besides, the costs of international

arbitrations will be reduced which would also encourage more frequent recourse to arbitration as a means of settling disputes. Parties to a dispute will have opportunity for selecting the persons of their own choice, who are knowledgeable in the field, as arbitrators for the amicable settlement of their dispute. It will further strengthen the policy of the Government of India of promoting alternative methods of dispute resolution. It would also enable more legal experts from India to participate in arbitrations conducted under the auspices of the Regional Facility and to acquire expertise in this field, which would also have a beneficial effect on domestic arbitrations.

To meet the increasing demand for arbitration and other alternate dispute resolution methods, the PCA has also established Regional Facilities in Lebanon, South Africa, Singapore and Costa Rica.

47th Session of Legal Sub-Committee of United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS)

Indian delegation to this Committee actively participated in the debates on all the agenda items of the Legal Sub-Committee. The focus of this session was on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Under this agenda item, statements were made by a number of States as to how a national legislation could be fashioned in providing national authorities to have jurisdiction regulating the space activities, licensing procedures, liability, indemnification procedure and insurance for the space objects launched from the State. According to a decision reached in this Session, in addition to the current agenda items, the 48th Session will have a new agenda item on "national mechanisms on space debris mitigation measures".

Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Prohibition or Restrictions on the use of certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects: During 2008 the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) met five times in Geneva to negotiate a proposal to address urgently the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions, while striking a balance between military and humanitarian considerations. India played an active role in the negotiations by tabling a number of proposals. Although, by the end of the fourth session, the Chairman of GGE prepared a text for the fifth meeting of the GGE to consider, negotiate and complete the process of agreeing to a text protocol on cluster munitions, agreement could

not be reached on the text during the Fifth Meeting of the GGE. This process will be continuing on a fresh mandate in 2009 also.

SAARC (South Asian) University

This Division has actively participated in drafting an Agreement for the Establishment of the South Asian University (SAU), which was eventually signed on behalf of the Member States of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation on 4 April, 2007. Pursuant to this Intergovernmental Agreement, the SAU was established in Delhi. Thereafter an Headquarters Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the SAARC Secretariat for the establishment of the South Asian University was signed on 30 November, 2008. To implement the intergovernmental agreement and to operationalize the University, a draft legislative bill was prepared by this Division in consultation with the Ministry of Law & Justice. The bill was introduced in both Houses of the Parliament on 23 December, 2008. The Bill has received the assent of the President of India on 11 January, 2009 which is being published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 1, dated 13 January, 2009.

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)

This Division has actively participated in the ICAO Special Sub Committee of the Legal Committee meeting, Montreal, 19-21 February, 2008 to discuss the proposed amendments to the Hague Convention, 1970 and the Montreal Convention 1971. The amendments, in essence, reflect the idea of advancing both counter-terrorism and counter-proliferation goals. It is proposed to add various acts which States would have to make punishable under their domestic laws. This includes: Use of civil aircraft as a weapon; Use of civil aircraft to unlawfully spread biological, chemical and nuclear substances; Attacks against civil aviation using biological, chemical and nuclear substances; Threats to commit any of these acts; and acts contributing to such acts including abetment, participation, organizing, delivering etc would be punishable as offences prohibited under the Convention.

This Division also participated in the 33rd Session of the Legal Committee Meeting of the ICAO to be held at Montreal from 21 April-25 May, 2008. The Committee discussed the Draft Convention on Compensation for Damages caused by Aircraft to Third Parties, in the case of Unlawful Interference (Unlawful Interference Convention) and also the Draft Convention on Compensation for Damage Caused by Aircraft to Third Parties (General Risks Convention) with a

view to approving a final draft on each Convention. The texts as finalized during the 33rd Session would be adopted at the Diplomatic Conference to be held at Montreal in the year 2009.

Investments

During the period, the instrument of ratification regarding Bilateral Investment Promotion Agreements (BIPA) with Iceland has been exchanged in Delhi for bringing the Agreement into force. Negotiations with Iran have been completed and final text is ready for signing. The exploratory talks with United States of America are completed and negotiations are underway. Negotiations on amending the existing BIPA's with Bulgaria, Romania and Czech Republic were completed so as to accommodate their respective EU obligations in the respective bilateral investment agreements with India.

Participation in Meetings

During the year, negotiations on Bilateral Investment Promotion Agreements (BIPA) with Hong Kong, Estonia and Azerbaijan were initiated and negotiations were completed with Mexico and the Agreement was signed. Negotiations with Canada are still going on. The Division also participated in the negotiations on Free Trade Agreements with Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, European Union and ASEAN.

The Legal and Treaties Division examined a number of defence co-operation agreements, agreements on international co-operation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, science and technology agreements.

India has signed/ratified many multilateral/bilateral treaties/agreements with foreign countries during the year. These *inter alia* include: The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Agreement for the Establishment of SAARC University; SAARC Agreement on Establishing the SAARC Food Bank; Intergovernmental Agreement on Trans Asia Railway Network; and the International Convention against Doping in Sports and India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty.

The officers of the L&T Division also participated in various meetings in India and abroad, including in the following meetings:

- The XXXI Antarctic Treaty Consultative Committee Meeting (ATCM), Kiev, Ukraine, from 2-7 June, 2008.
- Fifth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Liability and Redress in the context of Article 27 of the Cartegena Protocol, held in Cartegena, Colombia, from 12-19 March, 2008.
- Friends of the Chair Meeting on Liability and Redress and the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP-MOP-4) to the Cartegena Protocol on Biosafety, Bonn, Germany from 7-9 May and 12-16 May 2008.
- Meeting of Senior Government Officials Expert in Environmental Law for the Preparation of a Fourth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme IV), Nairobi, 29 September-3 October, 2008.
- Negotiations on Extradition Treaty, MLAT in Criminal Matters and MLAT in Civil and Commercial Matters between India and Iran, in Tehran from 22-24 June, 2008.
- The Intergovernmental Working Group of the Human Rights Council to prepare an Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 31 March-4 April, 2008, Geneva.
- The First Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiation Body (WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control), Geneva, from 11-16 February, 2008.
- The Second Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB-2) on a Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, Geneva, 20-25 October, 2008.
- 47th Session of Legal Sub-Committee of United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS)
- Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Prohibition or Restrictions on the use of certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects.
- India-Sri Lanka CEPA Negotiations, Colombo, 2-4 January, 2008.
- India-ASEAN Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) 18th Meeting, Bhopal, 7-9 January, 2008
- India-Thai TNC 16th Meeting, Bangkok, 31 January-1 February, 2008
- India-ASEAN TNC 19th Meeting, Vientiane, Lao PDR, 13-15 February, 2008

- SAFTA Meeting on DSM, Delhi, 1-2 March, 2008
- BIMST-EC TNC Meeting, Delhi, 17-18 March, 2008
- India-Japan Investment Group Meeting, Delhi, 25-26 March, 2008
- India-Korea Investment Group Meeting, Delhi, 2-4 April, 2008
- India-Sri Lanka CEPA Negotiations, Colombo, 7-9 April, 2008
- India-Japan Jt. Task Force Sixth Meeting, Tokyo, 10-14 April, 2008
- India-Malaysia Second TNC Meeting, Delhi, 16-18 April, 2008
- 7th India-Japan Joint Task Force Meeting, Delhi, 12-15 May, 2008
- India-Korea Jt. Task Force Tenth Meeting, Seoul, 29 May-2 June, 2008
- 12th Session of Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, Muscat, 7-9 June, 2008
- India-US Bilateral Investment Agreement Meeting, Washington, 10-13 June, 2008, India-ASEAN TNC 20th Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, 16-18 June, 2008
- India-ASEAN TNC 21st Meeting, Jakarta, 26-27 June, 2008
- India-Sri Lanka CEPA Negotiations, Colombo, 8-12 July, 2008
- 8th India-Japan Jt. Task Force Meeting, Tokyo, 14-17 July, 2008
- India-Korea Jt. Task Force 11th Meeting, Delhi, 29-31 July, 2008
- India-Korea Jt. Task Force 12th Meeting, Seoul, 22-25 September, 2008
- Indo-Nepal Negotiations on Trade Agreement Revision, Delhi, 16-17 October, 2008
- India-ASEAN TNC Special Meeting, Manila, 20-22 October, 2008
- India-Korea CEPA Legal Vetting, First Meeting, Seoul, 23-25 October, 2008
- India-Korea CEPA Legal Vetting, Second Meeting, Delhi, 5-6 November, 2008
- India-SACU Trade Negotiations, Delhi, 26-28 November, 2008
- India-Thailand 17th TNC Meeting, Delhi, 22-23 December, 2008

In addition to the above meetings, the Division also participated in the negotiations of bilateral agreements, with Honk Kong, Israel and Korea on transfer of prisoners/sentenced persons. Division also participated in the bilateral negotiations on combating international terrorism, transnational organized crime and drug trafficking with Azerbaijan, Vietnam, Turkey, Malta, Maldives, Tunisia and Taiwan.

The Division also gave valuable inputs during the finalization of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2008.

The Legal and Treaties Division also examined and vetted a number of agreements and MoU's received from various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India. The Division also examined various proposals from international law angle on projects in India and abroad. The Division also gave legal opinions on various court cases involving MEA and on passport and consular issues. The Division also gave inputs and opinions on various RTI requests addressed to the MEA. The Division processed for the payment of India's annual contribution to the international organizations like Hague Academy of International Law, Permanent Court of Arbitration, International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) and AALCO.

The list of various Treaties/Conventions/Agreements concluded or renewed by India with other countries in 2008, list of instruments of Full Powers processed by the L&T Division in 2008, and the list of instruments of ratification/accession processed by the L&T Division during 2008 is given in the Appendices.



Agendas of the multilateral fora, during the year, were generally under the shadow of international financial turmoil, high food prices and volatile energy prices. Conscious of the global risks of the economic downturn despite its high-growth trajectory, India continued its active engagement with ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China), G8-05, G-20, IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa), IOR-ARC (Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation), ACD (Asia Cooperation Dialogue) etc. where it presented its perspective on financial crisis and other critical issues such as, food security, energy security, climate change and sustainable development.

India hosted the Second BIMSTEC and the Third IBSA Summit in New Delhi during 2008. The year under reference also saw India's first highest level participation with Prime Minister leading Indian delegations to the ASEM Summit in Beijing, the G-20 Summit in Washington and an informal interaction of Heads of State/Government of BRIC member countries. Conclusion of the negotiations on the Agreement on 'Trade in Goods' under the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and ASEAN, which continued for almost four years, is yet another milestone in India's 'Look-East' policy.

Prime Minister attended the G8-Outreach Sessions in Toyako, Japan on 9 July. Following the conclusion of the India-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, the G8 countries expressed their willingness to work with India in this field. At the Leaders' Meeting of Major Economies on Climate Change on the sidelines of G8 Summit, bringing together the G8, India, China, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, Australia, Indonesia, South Korea, the European Commission and the UN, Prime Minister reiterated the importance of the provisions and principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities under UNFCCC. Prime Minister underscored that there must be new and additional resources made available to developing countries to help them in their efforts to tackle the challenges of climate change.

At the G-20 Summit convened by US President in Washington on 15 November, 2008, Prime Minister emphasized the importance of broad-based multilateral approaches in tackling the global financial crisis.

SAARC

The South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation, (SAARC) was created in 1985, as an expression of the region's collective decision to evolve a regional cooperative framework. Presently, there are eight-member countries in SAARC namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

India was the Chair of SAARC in 2007-2008 (since the 14th SAARC Summit held in New Delhi from 3-4 April, 2007 upto the 15th Summit held in Colombo from 2-3 August, 2008). The period was the most productive that SAARC has ever known with SAARC transforming from declaratory to implementation phase. Each of PM's announcements at the 14th Summit in Delhi has been implemented, with India discharging its responsibilities in a non-reciprocal (asymmetric) manner. The landmark projects include operationalization of the SAARC Food Bank; the establishment of the SAARC Development Fund (SDF); setting up of the project office of the South Asian University; the institutionalization of the SAARC Cultural Festival; the launching of negotiations to bring services into SAFTA; signing of the Convention of Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and our unilateral grant of zero duty access to SAARC. Regional and sub-regional project in Women's Empowerment, Maternal and Child Health Care, including Immunisation are under implementation.

Consequently, the 15th SAARC Summit, held in Colombo (2-3 August, 2008), where Sri Lanka took over as Chair was a resounding success with the signing of the four key agreements at the Summit:

- (i) Charter of SAARC Development Fund with three windows – social, economic and infrastructure. India has voluntarily committed US\$100 million to the social window, in addition to its assessed contribution of US\$ 100 million.

- (ii) Agreement establishing the South Asian Regional Standards Organization in Bangladesh to harmonize standards in SAARC.
- (iii) SAARC Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters. This Convention provides for mutual legal assistance in investigations, prosecution and resulting proceedings in criminal matters including terrorism.

Protocol on accession of Afghanistan to agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area.

The 15th Summit also agreed to accord Observer status to Australia and Myanmar thereby increasing the number of Observers to nine (China, ROK, Japan, US, Iran, Mauritius, EU, Australia and Myanmar). The Summit finalized the modalities of cooperation with (a) Observers; & (b) Inter Governmental Organizations; and decided to impose moratorium on the admission of new Observers for three years. It was decided that Inter Governmental Organizations will interact with SAARC through signing of MoUs after approval of the Standing Committee and the Council of Ministers.

In continuing with its commitment to discharging its responsibilities in SAARC in a non-reciprocal manner, India hosted the first meeting of SAARC Ministers of Science & Technology (15-16 September, 2008) and the Extraordinary Meeting of SAARC Agriculture Ministers (5 November, 2008). Both the Meetings identified a number of concrete, focused regional projects that are in various stages of implementation.

The Project Office for the South Asian University is fully functional with the appointment of the Officers to assist the CEO in his functions, the necessary Intergovernmental experts, Convenors of Task Forces and the Task Forces themselves, in the areas of Academics, Business plan, Governance and Legal Structure and Infrastructure. 100 acres of land for the University are being acquired in New Delhi. The Headquarters Agreement between Government of India and SAARC Secretariat has been signed on 30 November 2008. The Bill for establishing the South Asian University was passed by the Parliament in December 2008 and will become an Act after receiving Presidential Assent. The Headquarters Agreement on establishing the University was signed between Government of India and the SAARC Secretariat on 1 December, 2008.

The Third Meeting of SAARC Energy Ministers will be held in Colombo from 28-29 January, 2009. India hosted

the Expert Group Meeting to prepare a concept paper on SAARC Energy Ring (21 November, 2008, New Delhi) and the Meeting of the Task Force to evolve a common template on Technical and Commercial Aspects of Electricity Grid Interconnections among SAARC Member States (4 December, 2008, New Delhi). The Energy Ministers Meeting will discuss issues related to energy cooperation in the region.

The Meeting of SAARC Ministers of Parliamentary Affairs will be held in Colombo from 10-11 February, 2009. The Meeting will discuss issues related to good governance through Parliamentary Democracy and cooperation between Ministers of Parliamentary Affairs in the region.

The 31st Session of the Council of Ministers will be held on 27-28 February, 2009 in Colombo. The Meeting will be preceded by the 36th Session of the Standing Committee (25-26 February, 2009) and the 35th Session of the Programming Committee (23-24 February, 2009). The Meetings will review the progress of implementation of decisions taken during the 15th SAARC Summit (Colombo, 2-3 August, 2008) including issues related to the South Asian University and the SAARC Development Fund.

The Inter-Governmental Meeting to establish the permanent premises of the SAARC Museum of Textiles and Handicrafts held in New Delhi (11-12 November, 2008) decided that the Museum will be based in Dilli Haat, Pitampura with funds for premises provided by India and running costs provided through the assessed contribution of Member states. India will also be organising another bands festival and a students exchange programme this 2008.

India has paid its assessed contribution of US\$ 89.8 million and the first instalment of its voluntary contribution of US\$ 33.9 million for the SAARC Development Fund (SDF). A consultant has been appointed by Government of India for implementing the projects on maternal and child healthcare under SDF.

A manifestation of SAARC's transformation from declaratory to implementation is the successful implementation of the SAARC telemedicine project funded by India, in Bhutan, through a hub-and-spoke mechanism. The other spokes of the Project are being implemented in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. The SAARC tele-education project starting with Sri Lanka, the SAARC Rain water harvesting projects starting with Sri Lanka and Bhutan, the SAARC Project on strengthening of the SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk



President, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil with the Heads of State of BIMSTEC Summit,
in New Delhi on 13 November, 2008.



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the President of Brazil, Lula da Silva and the President of South Africa, Kgalema Motlanthe witnessing the signing of the trilateral Agreements/MoUs, at the Third Summit of the India, Brazil & South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum, in New Delhi on 15 October, 2008.

(STOMD) and SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk (SDOMD) based in Sri Lanka and the SAARC Project on networking of National Police Authorities of Member States, are also under implementation using the hub-and-spoke design, and are funded by Government of India.

Due to India's dynamic commitment to SAARC, to engage neighbouring countries on core developmental aspects of Health, Education and Infrastructure, the number of SAARC activities/meetings held per annum has made a quantum jump from 33 to 75. The 34th Session of the Programming Committee, at its meeting in Kandy from 19-20 November, 2008 has scheduled 133 more activities and meetings for 2009 until 2010, reflecting the new dynamic SAARC that is being increasingly seen as the premier vehicle of regional economic cooperation to bring the fruits of development to the people of South Asia.

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)

Under India's Chairmanship since August 2006, BIMSTEC (which brings together Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand) registered significant progress in its activities. The Second BIMSTEC Summit – held in New Delhi on 13 November, 2008 – was attended by Heads of States/Governments from all BIMSTEC partner countries. The Summit signalled India's continued commitment to BIMSTEC, which is integral to our 'Look East' policy.

Prime Minister called for a comprehensive review of BIMSTEC activities and for providing a blue print for future cooperation in priority areas having maximum potential, for producing visible results. BIMSTEC being a bridge between South Asia and South East Asia, the need to focus on transport, infrastructure and logistics, marine resources, disaster management and people-to-people contacts, was emphasised. Prime Minister announced 150 scholarships to BIMSTEC partner countries in addition to the 300 scholarships already available to BIMSTEC countries.

The Summit noted the finalisation of BIMSTEC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking, Memorandum of Association (MoA) regarding BIMSTEC Energy Centre in India, Memorandum of Association (MoA) regarding BIMSTEC Weather and Climate Centre in India and Memorandum

of Understanding (MoU) on BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission and BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory in Bhutan. Summit provided further momentum to early conclusion of BIMSTEC FTA for 'Trade in Goods' which has registered substantial progress. Retreat focused on international financial crisis, energy security, food security and climate change.

Other BIMSTEC events/meetings hosted by India during the year 2008 included the Second Expert Group Meeting on Agriculture Cooperation (24-26 April, 2008), 12th Senior Officials Meeting and Tenth Ministerial Meeting (from 26-29 August, 2008), the fourth meeting of BIMSTEC Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) (22-23 October, 2008), a BIMSTEC Business Summit - jointly organised by apex chambers – CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM (12 November, 2008) with focus on Energy including hydel-power, transportation and connectivity, and agribusiness including fisheries and a 'curtain raiser' to the Second BIMSTEC Summit on 8 November 2008 in Kolkata by Indian Chamber of Commerce organized at which External Affairs Minister was the Chief Guest.

India – ASEAN

India has been following a conscious "Look East" policy since early 1990s. India's engagement with ASEAN through India – ASEAN mechanism and our participation in the East Asia Summit are integral to this approach and reflect our growing ties with larger Asia-Pacific community. Therefore, we see our continued and increasing participation in both ASEAN and EAS as supplementing, at the regional level.

As a consequence of India's increasing economic engagement and integration with the East Asia region, the ASEAN-India bilateral trade had already reached US\$ 30 billion in 2007-08 and is expected to achieve the target of US\$ 50 billion in 2010.

Making tangible progress on various commitments made by Prime Minister during Sixth India – ASEAN Summit, India established an India-ASEAN S&T Fund with (an initial contribution of US\$ 1 million and hosted the first batch of 50 students from ASEAN member countries. The annual special training course for ASEAN diplomats has been conducted in August/September where 24 young ASEAN diplomats participated. MoS(AS) participated in the Post Ministerial Meeting of ASEAN in July in Singapore. India hosted the 14th ASEAN-India Working Group Meeting in New Delhi on 30 October.

India ASEAN Free Trade Agreement

The negotiations for the agreement on ‘Trade in Goods’ under the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and ASEAN which commenced in the year 2004 were concluded following the Seventh ASEAN – India Economic Ministers Meeting held on 28 August in Singapore and the Senior Economic Officials Meeting held in Pattaya, Thailand, on 7 November.

Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC)

Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) is another building block of our Look East policy. India continued to provide annual scholarships to MGC Member countries.

Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC)

The year 2008 saw the first Standalone meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers hosted by Russia in Yekaterinburg in May. The idea of quadrilateral cooperation in BRIC format was first mooted by the then Russian President Putin in 2006. Secretary (ER) led the Indian delegation to the preparatory meeting of BRIC Deputy Foreign Ministers held in Rio de Janeiro from 10-11 March, 2008 to prepare the roadmap for the first formal meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers meeting in Russia in May 2008. Indian delegation to the Meeting was led by External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. A Joint Communiqué was issued following the first standalone BRIC FMs’ Meeting. The Joint Communiqué *inter alia* emphasized the prospects of the BRIC dialogue based on mutual trust and respect, common interests and the similarity of approaches toward the pressing problems of global development. It set forth BRIC’s position that today’s world order should be based on the rule of international law and the strengthening of multilateralism with the United Nations playing the central role and reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN with a view to make it more efficient so that it can deal with the current global challenges more effectively.

Another significant development in cooperation in BRIC format was the first informal meeting of BRIC Heads of State/Government hosted by the Russian President on the sidelines of G8 Summit in Toyako, Japan on 9 July. Prime Minister attended this meeting. BRIC Finance/Economic Ministers also held their first meeting on the margins of G-20 Meeting in Sao Paulo on 7 November.

G8 – Outreach Sessions

Prime Minister attended the G8-Outreach Sessions in Toyako, Japan on 9 July. India was invited as one of the Outreach countries. Issues discussed at the G8 – Outreach

Sessions included Heiligendamm Process, world economy, climate change, environment and development with focus on Africa and Regional issues. India’s participation in the G8 – Outreach Sessions afforded us an opportunity to present India’s perspectives on a wide range of issues in a forthright manner. G8 countries expressed willingness to work with India in the field of Civil Nuclear Cooperation. Chair’s Summary of the 2008 G8 Summit included a para to this effect.

At an exclusive session as expanded G8 – Outreach Session (called Leaders Meeting of Major Economies, bringing together G8, India, China, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, Australia, Indonesia, South Korea, the European Commission and the UN) devoted to Climate Change, Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh emphasised that given the critical importance of sustained and accelerated economic growth for all developing countries, for the present, developing countries cannot consider quantitative restrictions on their emissions. He underscored that there must be new and additional resources made available to developing countries to help them in their efforts to tackle the challenges of climate change. Following the Meeting a Declaration of Leaders Meeting of Major Economies on Energy Security and Climate Change was issued.

O-5 (Brazil, China, India, Mexico & South Africa) Leaders met on 8 July prior to G8 – Outreach Sessions and held discussions covering a wide range of issues including world economy, food security, climate change, energy security and South-South Cooperation. A Political Declaration was issued following the meeting.

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

India participated in various Senior Officials and other meetings of ASEM during the year leading up to the Seventh ASEM Summit in Beijing from 24-25 October. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the Summit. This was India’s first Summit participation at the highest level after the consensus decision to invite India to join was taken at the Sixth ASEM Summit held in Helsinki in September 2006. The Seventh ASEM Summit took place in the backdrop of prevailing international financial turmoil. Prime Minister intervened in the first Plenary Session on the International Economic and Financial Situation and the Third Session on Sustainable Development. The Summit resulted in release of Chair’s Statement of the Seventh ASEM Summit, Beijing Declaration on Sustainable Development and a Statement on International Financial Situation.

G-20 Summit

Prime Minister attended the G-20 Summit convened by US President in Washington on 15 November. Prime Minister emphasized that the future global economic architecture must be designed to deal with failure of regulatory and supervisory mechanisms, inadequate appreciation and management of systemic risks and inadequate transparency in financial institutions, which led to the current global financial turmoil. He also emphasised the importance of broad based multilateral approaches in this regard including with broader representation in the specialized forums dealing with financial stability, notably the Basle Committee on Banking Supervision and the Financial Stability Forum than they have at present. The Group of Twenty (G-20) brings together the following countries, namely, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA)

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh chaired the Third India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Summit held in New Delhi on 15 October. President of Brazil and the newly appointed President of South Africa attended the Summit.

The Third IBSA Summit focused upon implementation of agreements by drawing up programmes of cooperation and resolving connectivity problems and strengthening of civil society involvement as highlighted by the Prime Minister during the Second IBSA Summit in Pretoria (October 2007) and as also accepted by Brazil and South Africa. The Third Summit also addressed the critical current issues on the international agenda which have a major bearing on the three countries, e.g.: the Financial Crisis, Energy and Food Security issues, WTO, Climate Change and Terrorism. A trilateral trade target of USD 25 billion has been set to be achieved by 2015. It was agreed that the negotiations on the proposed India-MERCOSUR-SACU trade arrangement would be pursued in a time-bound manner.

MoUs/Action Plans/Agreements in seven areas, viz. Tourism, Trade Facilitation for Standards, Technical Regulations & Conformity Assessment, Environment, Human Settlements Development, Five Year Action Plan for Maritime Transport, Five Year Action Plan for Civil Aviation and Women's Development and Gender Equality Programmes were signed at the Summit.

The Summit was preceded by 14 Working Groups held in India during September-October, 2008 and meetings of the Academic, Business Summit, Editors' and Women's Forums, which are important segments of the evolving IBSA process and represent civil society outreach. Action-oriented work programmes were drawn during the Working Group meetings. The areas of cooperation under IBSA are diverse and relevant to socio-economic development. India also organized the IBSA Cultural Festival and the first Food Festival during the Summit and an IBSA Film Festival is on the anvil.

Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)

The First IOR-ARC Film Festival was held in New Delhi from February-March 2008 as part of Indian initiative announced at the Seventh IOR-ARC Council of Ministers (COM) meeting held in Teheran in March 2007. Australia, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Thailand participated in the Festival.

MoS Shri E. Ahamed led the Indian delegation to the Eighth Council of Ministers (COM) meeting of Indian Ocean Rim Association of Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) was held in Tehran on 4 May. The Council of Ministers called for the implementation of the Action Plan and the need to prepare a ten-year road-map for future direction of the Association, expedite the Track II mechanism to enhance private sector involvement in the activities of the Association in the areas of business, trade and economic cooperation and called for strengthening of the Secretariat including its financial capacity, salary and allowances of personnel to make the Secretariat efficient and dynamic.

The Eighth COM meeting was an important milestone in the history of the organization and particularly for India. A 3-4 year Plan of Action cycle has been prepared wherein six priority areas have been highlighted pertaining to the areas of (1) Trade and Investment, Finance and Energy; (2) Education, Culture and Technology; (3) Fisheries; (4) Tourism; (5) Disaster Management and Risk reduction ; and (6) Information and Communication Technology (ICT). India proposed that over and above the six identified areas, any new areas having a bearing on the Indian Ocean and which would be unique to the organization bringing value to regional cooperation could also be taken up as priority areas. The Chair of Indian Ocean Studies has been filled up by selection. An Indian candidate Prof. Rao from

Osmania University, Hyderabad has been selected for the post.

India offered training and scholarships to strengthen capacity building according to the requirements of member countries, under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. Under the General Agreement agreed by the UMIOR and Academic Group, wherein funding for two students per member country by respective countries has been proposed, India offered, in the first year of its implementation, a total of 36 scholarships under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) for postgraduate studies in India. India also offered training for IOR-ARC Secretariat staff under the ITEC Programme as well as training on IORNET with FICCI. India also offered a Specialized Training Course for Foreign Diplomats for IOR-ARC member countries to be organized by the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs. India also reiterated its offer to host a Film Festival every two years after the success of the First IOR-ARC Film Festival hosted by India in February 2008.

Asia Cooperation Dialogue

The Seventh Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Ministerial Meeting (AMM) was held in Astana on 16 October. The items on the agenda for discussion by the Ministers were ACD Progress, its future directions, issues relating to lifting of the temporary moratorium for ACD membership, regional and international issues of interest. Meeting agreed to Kyrgyz Republic's membership as 31st country, and accepted Morocco as ACD Partner for Development. The Ministers adopted a declaration at the end of the meeting reviewing the progress of ACD and expressing concern about the challenges of Food, Energy and Financial Crisis. The Ministers also recognized cultural cooperation as the 20th area under ACD framework with Iran as Prime Mover and India as Co-Prime Mover. India's active role in the ACD process and its initiatives to host the Track II seminar, fourth ACD Tourism Business Forum in 2009 as well as its initiative to be Co-Prime Mover for Cultural Cooperation Project was commended by all the delegations.



11 Technical & Economic Cooperation and Development Partnership

The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme (SCAAP), focussing on sharing of experiences, transfer of technology and capacity building, formed a very important component of India's development partnership and cooperation with the developing world. The usefulness and relevance of these cooperative interactions in different countries was reflected in the increasing number of participants in the programmes confirmed by high level representatives from developing countries in Africa, Asia, Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean at bilateral meetings with their Indian counterparts and at various bilateral and multilateral fora.

ITEC and SCAAP continued to draw large numbers of participants to the training programmes conducted by institutions in India, both Government and in the private sector, under the civilian and defence training programmes. Around 5000 professionals, in Government and other sectors from 158 developing countries (Serbia and Montenegro became partner countries in 2008), attended the courses in areas of interest and advantage to them. The website launched last year for ITEC and SCAAP applicants has been working efficiently and has resulted in marked improvement in the implementation of the ITEC Programme. A brochure of the training programme was brought out in English and five other foreign languages, namely, Arabic, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian. (List of 158 ITEC partner countries is at Annexure XIII.)

Civilian Training Programme

The civilian training programme, fully sponsored by the Government of India with 43 institutions on the panel, conducted around 200 courses, primarily short-term, for working professionals on a wide and diverse range of skills and disciplines. The most sought after courses were in the field of information technology and linguistics (English). Training was imparted to Government officials in areas such as finance & accounts, audit, banking, education, planning & administration, parliamentary studies, crime records, etc. Others availed of training

facilities in technical/specialised courses such as textiles, rural electrification, tool design and ophthalmologic equipment. In addition, general courses pertaining to rural development, SMEs and entrepreneurship development also attracted many participants. List of institutions offering civilian training courses under ITEC and SCAAP programmes of the Ministry of External Affairs is at the Appendices.

The ITEC Programme is essentially bilateral. However, in recent years the scope of ITEC's activities has increased and it has also been associated with regional and multilateral organisations. These organisations and groupings include the Association of South East Asia Nations (ASEAN), G-15, Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC), African Union (AU), Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO), Pan African Parliament, Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Commonwealth and World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Apart from the regular courses, the Technical Cooperation (TC) Division also organizes special courses and study visits. In the wake of the India-Africa Forum Summit held in April 2008, outreach programmes for 70 African women and youth were organized. The women's group having representatives from 28 African countries visited Bhuj, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Agra, Jaipur and Delhi to get a glimpse of both rural and modern India. Interactive sessions were organized with women self-help groups in Bhuj, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Jaipur. The youth group visited Anand near Ahmedabad to see the White Revolution of India and Infosys, Biocon, Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore before heading to Guwahati and Shillong in the North East where a friendly football match was played between the local University students and members of the African youth group.

Pursuant to the India-Africa Forum Summit, this year the focus was Africa-centric. A special course on 'Auditing in IT Environment' for Africa, IOR-ARC countries and Afghanistan was conducted through International Centre for Information Systems & Audit (ICISA), NOIDA.

Courses for the year 2009-10 were finalized and conveyed to both ITEC-participating Missions as well as ITEC-empanelled Institutes. Country-wise slots were finalized and conveyed to all ITEC participating Missions.

Defence Training

Growing interest in defence training was evident with the three wings of the Defence Services, i.e. Army, Navy and Air Force accepting 757 officers/trainees in various defence training institutions, showing an increase from 572 participants in the previous year. The courses were general and specialized in nature and included security and strategic studies, defence management, artillery, electronics, mechanical engineering, marine hydrography, counter insurgency and jungle warfare as also foundation courses for young officers in the three services. Applications to the premiere defence courses at the National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi, and the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington, were oversubscribed and saw officers from developed countries also attending them on a self-financing basis. The increasing interaction attests to the importance attached to defence training in India by developing and developed countries. Distribution of slots for DSSC (Defense Services Staff College) course was finalized and conveyed to the concerned Missions.

Deputation of Experts

At the request of Governments and international organizations, 45 experts in the civilian and defence fields were on deputation to advise and provide expertise in areas including information technology, auditing, legal expertise, diverse agricultural fields, pharmacology, statistics and demography, public administration and textiles. The services of defence teams were availed of by Lao PDR, Lesotho, Seychelles and Zambia in training and advisory capacities.

Other Assistance

During the year, wheat seeds were presented to Mongolia.

Study Tour

- (i) At the request of Mongolia, two experts from International Statistical Education Centre, Kolkata, were deputed to Mongolia for a week to organize a short-term training programme for the staff of Mongolian National Statistical Office.
- (ii) At the request of Nigeria, a team of four experts from the Planning Commission of India was deputed to Nigeria to attend a workshop on 'Effective formulation of development plans in Nigeria for the

federal and state government senior planning officers'.

Development Partnership & Projects Cooperation

A number of bilateral projects were undertaken in 2008-09 notably in the field of information technology and small and medium enterprises, civil construction and vocational training. The focus of the projects under the bilateral cooperation programme was on setting up the requisite physical infrastructure and capacity building to ensure long-term sustainability of the projects.

The main projects under implementation included the following:

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR): Information Technology project to strengthen capacity building in IT sector in Lao PDR was run for the second year by the implementing agency, i.e. NIC.

Indonesia: A feasibility study was being undertaken by the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad, at Aceh, Indonesia for establishment of an Administrative Staff College at Aceh.

Latin & Central American Countries: In the information technology field, three IT Training Centers in Latin and Central American countries of El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua have been set up and training has already started. An agreement has been signed to set up an IT Centre in Jamaica by NIIT Limited. These Centres aim at capacity building as also strengthening the IT infrastructure in the respective countries.

Maldives: The civil construction work on the 'India Maldives Friendship Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies' has commenced and is expected to be completed in 2009.

Zimbabwe: Following the bilateral agreement with Zimbabwe in 2006, the project on Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) was in an advanced stage of implementation. Equipment and machinery has been supplied. 19 Zimbabwean personnel have been imparted training in India.

Aid to other developing countries

IT Centres in El-Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras were set up and training commenced. IT Centre in Jamaica was set up and training commenced. Conservation and restoration work at the Wat Phou Temple complex Project in Lao PDR commenced. Funds released to Archeological Survey of India for Phase I work.

Feasibility studies

Several other projects in the field of consultancy services for setting up infrastructure projects are at various stages of implementation, notably the feasibility study for setting up of software technology park in **Antigua & Barbuda**. Feasibility study for setting up an IT centre in Riyadh, **Saudi Arabia** has been conducted by the experts from C-DAC. Similar feasibility study for setting up of an IT centre in **Syria** was under implementation. Feasibility study for setting up an IT Centre in Syria completed. Feasibility study in Antigua & Barbuda for sewerage treatment plant completed. Feasibility study for establishing Administrative Staff College in Aceh (Indonesia) commenced in March 2009.

Aid for Disaster Relief

India rendered immediate disaster relief assistance to countries affected by natural calamities. 5000 MTs of Sugar and 5000 MTs of Rice to Mongolia were supplied. Medical relief for cyclones and floods affected areas in Belize, Haiti and Dominican Republic was provided. Flood relief to Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique was provided. Humanitarian assistance was extended to countries like **China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Cuba, Lao PDR** and **Haiti** affected by earthquake, cyclones, floods etc. Flood relief to Lao PDR granted. Generator sets & other equipments supplied to Tajikistan. Earthquake Relief Assistance provided to China.



Lines of Credit (LoC) are an important instrument of our foreign policy. Requests for Lines of Credit from friendly foreign Governments were processed by the ITP Division in consultation with the concerned Territorial Divisions. The LoCs helped project our growing economic strength and capabilities, as well as our willingness to contribute to infrastructure development and capacity building in the recipient countries. During the period April 2008-December 2008, 15 LoCs amounting to a sum of US\$ 672.68 million were approved. The policy governing our LoCs was also reviewed for more effective implementation and to bring about greater transparencies in the processing and award of contracts by the borrowing governments in LoC funded projects.

ITP Division supported FICCI in organizing the India-Africa Business Partnership Summit in New Delhi in January 2009. The President of Rwanda, Mr. Paul Kagame was the Chief Guest at this Summit, which was attended by over 250 delegates from 32 African countries, more than half of which were represented by Ministers. The Summit focused on key sectors including, Railways, Road and Construction; Healthcare and Pharma; ICT; Power; Mining; and, Agriculture. Earlier, in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), the first of a series of seminars titled 'India-Latin America and Caribbean: Opportunities for Trade and Investments' was organized in September 2008 in Hyderabad. The seminar was conceived and organized outside the capital so as to expand the outreach and sensitize Indian business houses located in our states about the commercial opportunities available in the different parts of the world.

ITP Division remained actively engaged in the meetings of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board, Reserve Bank of India, WAPCOS, EXIM Bank, other trade bodies and in the bilateral civil aviation talks conducted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Trade promotion bodies and delegations, both at the centre and state-level were assisted in their external interface. Trade and investment issues relating to important products like fertilizer and ayurvedic products were also taken up in this period.

An updated edition of '*India-Dynamic Business Partner: Investor Friendly Destination*' was published in October 2008 and circulated to all Missions/Posts abroad. This

publication projected a comprehensive picture of India's economic growth, sectoral development and was useful as an aid to promote business and investment opportunities. Our Missions/Posts used this book to widely publicize the country's economic strengths, financial viability and prospects business and investment returns in India.

The ITP Division's website: www.indiainbusiness.nic.in hosts comprehensive information on commercial and investment opportunities in India. The website was useful in providing information to potential foreign investors and trade partners.

Energy Security Unit

As the Indian economy grows, energy issues become an increasingly important focus of our diplomacy. With the approval of the External Affairs Minister, an Energy Security Unit (ESU) was established in September 2007, to facilitate our multifaceted global engagement in pursuit of our interests in the energy sector. ESU serves as the nodal point in MEA for energy security issues and maintains close coordination with the concerned Energy Ministries in order to support their international engagement through appropriate diplomatic interventions and an active interface with our Missions.

The unit was actively involved in energy security related seminars and conferences hosted by other Ministries and Departments, including apex Chambers of Commerce. On several occasions, the Unit actively interceded on behalf of Indian companies to resolve difficulties faced in their dealings with energy-surplus countries.

ESU worked closely with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in organizing the *India-CIS Roundtable on Hydrocarbons* in November 2008 and *Petrotech 2009*. The unit hosted/co-hosted seminars on India's energy options, commissioned studies on energy surplus countries and regions and extended assistance to Indian companies dealing with overseas energy collaborations and opportunities. The Unit also took the initiative in setting up a Working Group on Energy with senior representatives of oil and infrastructure PSUs.



The Policy Planning and Research Division served as a nodal point for interaction with the University Grants Commission (UGC) and its affiliates and the Area Study Centers (ASC) located in various universities, specializing in research on various regions of the world.

The Division extended financial assistance to various academic institutions/think-tanks located in different parts of the country for holding conferences, seminars, preparation of research papers, exchange of scholars on issues related to India's external relations and security. A list of seminars/conferences/meetings/NGOs partly funded by the Policy Planning and Research Division is given as Appendix. A computerized database of experts and institutions specializing in policy research and analysis has also been developed by the Division and is updated on regular basis.

National Interest Project is funded by MEA through PP & R Division. It is conducting studies on 20 important issues, which have bearing on India's national interests and foreign policy. Few studies have already been completed.

Policy Planning and Research Division continued issuing Monthly Summary for the Cabinet. This covers the broad spectrum of India's relations with different countries of the world during the month.

The Division continued to edit and publish the Annual Report of the Ministry. The Report serves as a compendium of India's interaction with the rest of the world in the political, economic, and cultural fields, including the views of the government on various facets of international relations.

The Division reviewed the functioning of Business Centers set up in some of the Indian Missions and Posts abroad as also content, scope and frequency of reporting by the Missions.

Situation Room

The Situation Room is a multifaceted, multi facility state of the art complex of the Ministry. Set up in 2007, it has the requisite communication connectivity and display

panels which would be required for handling any crisis situation. Besides its primary role as a Crisis Management Cell of the Ministry, the complex has been effectively utilized by all Divisions for various purposes such as presentations & conferences including telephone /video conferences etc. The role of the Situation Room is as given below:

- (a) Act as a multi facility complex facilitating conferences, presentations, periodic briefings, video/telephone conferences with Head of Missions, discussions on maps and images as required by various Divisions of the Ministry.
- (b) Act as a Crisis Management Cell (Control Room) in case of crisis.

Activities During the Period of the Report

Situation Room as Crisis Management Cell: A 24-hour operational Control Room was set up in the Situation Room during the recent Mumbai Crisis from 27 November to 1 December, 2008. The Control Room operated in coordination with another Control Room set up at Mumbai. This Control Room was facilitated and coordinated the information flow to all countries across the globe regarding the well being of foreign nationals affected by the incident. Help Lines were set up in the complex wherein the queries of Indians as well as foreign nationals were taken and promptly responded to.

Establishment of Video Conferencing Facility in Missions. In consonance with the vision of the FS to add a new dimension of communication, 'Video Conferencing' in the Ministry, video conferencing facility is being established in selected Missions in a phased manner. As part of Phase 1, the facility was established in Missions at Paris, Brussels and London in June 2008, Dhaka & Colombo in November 2008 and Beijing in December 2008. The facility was established in Missions at New York, Washington, Moscow, Geneva and Vienna by March 2009. In addition, it is proposed to establish the facility in Missions in other SAARC countries in near future. The technical feasibility of communication connectivity required for video conferencing facility in these Missions is being ascertained, once these are obtained the facility would be installed in these Missions.

Alternate Means of Communication to Selected Missions. An INMARSAT terminal was installed in the Situation Room Complex in May 2008. This terminal is being utilized as an alternate means of communication with few Indian Missions (10) where normal land line communication is not reliable.

Boundary Cell

1. The functions of Boundary Cell, established as part of PP&R Division, is enumerated as under:
 - (a) Examine all aspects of India's external boundaries, scrutiny of map sheets involving international boundaries of boundaries of India in coordination with the Survey of India, for publication.
 - (b) Provide cartographic advice and technical support on border related matters to Territorial Divisions.
 - (c) Assist in collection, collation and digitization of the available cartographic strip/Basis maps.
 - (d) Liaise with Survey of India/State Government regarding joint boundary survey work including maintenance/repairs of Boundary pillar and on reports of any encroachment into Indian Territory (maintaining database etc.)
 - (e) Assist in the collection, collection and digitization of information pertaining to the maritime boundary, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and delineation of the Continental Shelf.
 - (f) Scrutinize restricted map sheets - in coordination with the Ministry of the Defence- requested by various Government and semi-Government Organisations, for the purpose of development work.
 - (g) Liaise with the Naval Hydrographic Office and Department of Ocean Development.
 - (h) Be a repository of all maps/documents/ information pertaining to India's international borders.
 - (j) Scrutinize inaccurate maps published in foreign magazines, journals and atlases and take necessary action for getting these maps corrected.
2. Boundary Cell has participated in various Internal/ Inter Ministerial meetings on International Land & Maritime Boundary of India as given below:
 - (a) Participated in China study group meetings and provided requisite as directed by the CSG in the month of May held on 22 May, 2008.
 - (b) Attended Inter Ministerial meeting joint working group convened by Ministry of Home Affairs.
 - (c) Participated in Inter Ministerial meeting on Bangladesh in July 2008 convened by JS (BSM).
 - (d) Participated in Inter Ministerial meeting on Bangladesh convened by JSG, Ministry of Defence on 18 July, 2008.
 - (e) Attended Inter Ministerial meeting on continental shelf with Ministry of Earth Sciences.
 - (f) Attended Inter Ministerial meeting convened by JS (Navy), Ministry of Defence on baseline system of India on 21 July, 2008.
 - (g) Participated in Inter Ministerial meeting on status of Land & Maritime boundary of India convened by Special Secretary (PP) on 12 September, 2008.
 - (h) Participated in India Pakistan NSA level talks on 13 October, 2008.
 - (j) Participated in Inter Ministerial meeting on India-Myanmar and India-Bangladesh boundary convened by JS (BSM) on 22 October, 2008.
 - k) Visited Land records Department of Government of West Bengal for collection of records pertaining to International Boundary (West Bengal sector).
 - l) Convened Inter Ministerial meeting for relocation & reconstruction of missing and maintenance of existing International boundary pillars on India-Pakistan Boundary, to be undertaken during the current field season 2008-2009 and coordinated the same with various Central/State Government agencies.
 - (m) Preparation of CCS note on baseline system of India.
 - (n) Provided inputs (maps) for CCS note on Extended Continental Shelf claims of India.
 - (o) Provided inputs to Inter ministerial meeting on Continental Shelf claim of:
 - (i) Myanmar
 - (ii) Sri Lanka
 - (p) Briefing to NSA on Continental Shelf and Baseline System.

- (q) Desktop exercise on India- China Boundary (Sikkim Sector).
- 3. In addition to the above, the following tasks were carried out during the year:-
 - (a) Building data base for boundary strip maps covering the external boundary of India. (Bhutan, Pakistan Completed)
 - (b) Archival and Digitization of boundary strip maps.
 - (c) Archival of Topographical Maps, in digital and hard copy form, published by Survey of India covering International Boundary of India.
 - (d) Provided cartographic support to various Divisions of the Ministry on need basis.
 - (e) Authentication of IB in Topographical maps being published by SOI and trans-frontier maps being published by Ministry of Defence.
 - (f) Presentation given on India boundary issues.
 - (a) India's High Commissioner to Pakistan on Sir Creek.
 - (b) Ambassador Designate to Bhutan
 - (g) Clearance of Archival Maps on Assam Nagaland Boundary.
 - (h) Afghanistan map indicating India's assistance.
 - (j) Presentation given to IFS Probationers on surveying and mapping technologies.

■ ■

Reflecting India's active engagement with the world, there were 62 incoming visits during 2008 at the level of Head of State, Vice President, Head of Government, and Foreign Minister; and 27 outgoing visits at these levels during the year. Three Summits were held in Delhi- the India-Africa Forum Summit in April 2008; the Third India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum Summit in October 2008; and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technological and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Summit in November 2008. Five countries opened Resident Missions during the April-December 2008 period and these included Lithuania, Macedonia, Madagascar, Gabon, and El Salvador. New Consulates General were approved for five countries in 2008: Turkey in Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai, and Hyderabad; France in Kolkata and Bangalore; Iraq in Mumbai; Argentina in Mumbai; and Japan in Bangalore.

12 countries: Botswana, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Finland, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Lithuania, Maldives, Poland, Russian Federation, Switzerland, and Zambia were accorded permission to open Honorary Consulates in 2008. Sweden and New Zealand opened trade representations in Mumbai in 2008. New guidelines have been framed for setting up trade representations and four new cases are being processed. 143 new posts were created by foreign missions and international organizations in 2008. The Conference Cell of the Division, besides assisting in the three Summits, also facilitated the Sistema Integracion de Centro America (SICA) Foreign Ministers Conference in New Delhi (June 2008); the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting (August 2008); the IBSA Focal Points and Foreign Ministers Meeting (October 2008) and the 14th ASEAN Working group meeting (October 2008).

State Visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

S.No.	Dignitary	Dates
1	H.E. Mr. Kostas Karamanlis, Prime Minister of Greece	January 10-13
2.	H.E. Mr. Ferenc Gyurcsany, Prime Minister of Hungary	January 16-19
3.	Rt. Hon Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of United Kingdom	January 20-21
4.	H.E. Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France	January 25-26
5.	H.E. Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark	February 04-08
6.	H.E. Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives	February 06-12
7.	H.E. Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of Uganda	April 07-11
8	H.M. Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam	May 20-23
9.	H.E. Mr. Bashar Al Assad, President of Syria	June 17-21
10.	H.E. Lyonchen Jigmi Y Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan	July 14-17
11.	H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan	August 03-05
12.	H.E. Mr. Anand Satyanand, Governor General of New Zealand	September 08-14
13	H.E. Mahmoud Abbas, President of Palestine	October 06-09
14	Their Majesties King Albert II and Queen Paola of Belgium	November 03-12

15	H.E. Mr. Mohamed Hosny Mubarak, President of Egypt	November 17-19
16	H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister of Turkey	November 20-24
17	H.E. Mr. Dmitry A Medvedev, President of Russia	December 04-06

Summits

1	Prime Minister of Burkina Faso [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
2	President of Congo [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
3	Prime Minister of Ethiopia [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
4	President of Ghana [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
5	Vice President of Nigeria [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
6	President of Senegal [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
7	President of South Africa [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
8	President of Tanzania [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
9	President of Uganda [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
10	Vice President of Zambia [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
11	President of Brazil (IBSA Summit)	October 14-16
12	President of South Africa (IBSA Summit)	October 14-16
13	H.E.Lyonchhen Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan (BIMSTEC Summit)	November 12-13
14	H.E. Dr. Fakiruddin Ahmed, Chief Advisor, Bangladesh (BIMSTEC Summit)	November 12-13
15	H.E.Gen Thein Sein, Prime Minister of Myanmar (BIMSTEC Summit)	November 12-13
16	H.E. Mr.Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Prime Minister of Nepal (BIMSTEC Summit)	November 12-13
17	H.E.Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Srilanka (BIMSTEC Summit)	November 12-13
18	H.E. Mr. Somchai Wongsawat, Prime Minister of Thailand (BIMSTEC Summit)	November 12-13

Official/Working visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

1.	H.E. Mr. Navinchandra Ramghulam, Prime Minister of Mauritius	January 6-10
2.	H.E. Mr. Jens Stoltenberg, Prime Minister of Norway [Delhi Sustainable Development Summit]	February 5-7
3.	H.E. Mr. Matti Vanhanen, Prime Minister of Finland [Delhi Sustainable Development Summit]	February 6-8
4.	H.E. Dr. Olafur R Grimsson, President of Iceland [Delhi Sustainable Development Summit]	February 6-10
5.	H.E. Mr. Victor A Zubkov, Chairman of the Government of Russian Federation	February 12-13
6.	H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand	March 17-22
7.	H.E. Dr. Ali Mohamed Shein, Vice President of Tanzania	March 18-25
8.	H.H. Aga Khan	May 12-19
9.	H.E. Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, Prime Minister of Nepal	September 14-18

Official visits by Foreign Minister and equivalent level

1	H.E. Mr. U Nyan Win, Foreign Minister of Myanmar	January 01-04
2	Hon. Maxime Bernier, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada	January 10-12
3	H.E. Rashid Meredov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan	January 20-22
4	H.E. Mr. Ednan Karabaev, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kyrgyz Republic	February 04-06
5	H.E. Mr. Ali Babacan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey	February 05-10
6	His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia	February 28-29
7	H.E. Mr. Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Congo Foreign Minister of Kenya [India-Africa Forum Summit]	March 12-14 April 08-09
8	Minister of African Affairs of Libya [India-Africa Forum Summit]	April 08-09
9	H.E. Mr. George Yeo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore	April 21-25
10	H.E. Mr. Jan Kubis, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovak Republic	April 29-May 01
11	H.E. Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia [EU Troika meeting]	May 30-31
12	H.E. Ms. Rama, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of France [EU Troika Meeting]	May 30-31

SICA Ministerial Meeting (9-11 June, 2008)

1	Costa Rica H.E. Mr. Bruno Stagno Ugarte, Minister of Foreign Affairs
2	El Salvador H.E. Mrs. Marisol Argueta de Barillas, Minister of Foreign Affairs
3	Guatemala H.E. Mr. Rodas Haroldo, Minister of Foreign Affairs
4	Nicaragua H.E. Mr. Samuel Santos Lopez, Minister of External Relations

5	Panama H.E. Mr. Samuel Lewis Navarro, First Vice-President and Minister of External Relations	
6	Dominican Republic H.E. Ms. Clara Quinones de Longo, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs	
7	Honduras H.E. Mr. Eduardo Enrique Reina Garcia, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs	June 09-11
8	H.E. Mr. Rohitha Bogollagama, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka	June 15-16
9	H.E. Mr. Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Foreign Minister of Pakistan	June 27
10	H.E. Dr. Luis Amado, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal	July 7-10
11	H.E. Mr. Masahiko Koumura, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan	August 03-05
12	H.E. Mr. Yang Jiechi, Foreign Minister of China	September 07-09
13	H.E. Mr. Stephen Smith, Foreign Minister of Australia	September 08-12
14	H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremic, Foreign Minister of Serbia	September 18-20
15	H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, Foreign Minister of Maldives	September 19-20
16	H.E. Dr. Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State, USA	October 04-05
17	H.E. Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone	October 7-11
18	H.E. Mr. Mahmud Ali Durrani, NSA of Pakistan	October 11-15
19	H E. Shri Kamlesh Sharma, Secretary General, Commonwealth	October 19-22
20	H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation	October 19-20
21	Secretary General of UN	October 30-31
22	Secretary General of Arab League	Nov 29- Dec 02
23	Foreign Minister of Ecuador	November 14-17
24	H.E. Dr. Frank Walter Steinmeier, Foreign Minister and Vice Chancellor of Germany	November 19-21
25	Foreign Minister of Estonia	November 24
26	H.E. Ms. Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State, US	December 03-04

Private/Transit visits of Heads of State/Government/Vice President and First Ladies and equivalent level

1	H.E. Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius [Guest of Govt. of Bihar] Patna, Jaipur, Agra	February 17-24
2	H.E. Alhaji Ali Mahama, Vice President of Ghana [CII Conclave]	March 18-22
3	Former President of Sri Lanka	May 27-30

Visits abroad of President/Vice-President/Prime Minister of India

1	Prime Minister's visit to China	January 12-15
2	Vice President's visit to Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan	April 4-10
3	President's visit to Brazil, Mexico and Chile	April 12-25

4	Prime Minister's visit to Bhutan	May 16-17
5	Prime Minister's visit to Japan	July 7-10
6	Prime Minister's visit to Sri Lanka	August 1-3
7	Prime Minister's visit to USA and France	September 22- October 1
8	Prime Minister's visit to Japan & China	October 21-25
9	President's visit to Bhutan	November 5-8
10	Prime Minister's visit to Oman and Qatar	November 8-11
11	Vice-President's Visit to Maldives	November 10-12
12	Prime Minister's visit to USA	November 13-17
13	President's visit to Vietnam and Indonesia	November 24 –December 01

Visits abroad of Minister for External Affairs

1.	Oman	January 13-14
2.	Brasilia & South Africa	February 16-19 and February 20-23
3.	Washington and London	March 23-27
4.	Saudi Arabia	April 19-20
5.	South Africa	May 09-16
6.	Pakistan	May 20-21
7.	China	June 04-07
8.	Australia	June 21-24
9.	Colombo	July 30-August 03
10.	New York	September 28-October 02
11.	Washington	October 10-11
12.	Iran	October 31-November 02
13.	Bhutan	November 05-07
14.	Kathmandu	November 24-26

List of Conferences organized/assisted by the Conference Cell (from 1 April, 2008-31 January, 2009)

1.	Central America Integration System Foreign Ministers Meeting	10 June 2008
2.	BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting	29 August 2008
3.	3 rd Summit of the IBSA Dialogue Forum	13-15 October 2008
4.	14 th ASEAN-India Working Group Meeting	30-31 October 2008
5.	3 rd BIMSTEC Summit	11-13 November 2008
6.	Conference of Indian Heads of Mission(s)	22-24 December 2008

Scheduled Conferences/Meetings

7.	Ministers' Meeting for Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC)	January 2009
8.	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures (CICA)	February 2009

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners who Presented their Credentials during the Period**1.4.2008 to 30.11.2008**

S.No.	Name	Presentation of Credentials
1	H.E. Mr. Marco Antonio D. Brandao, Ambassador of Brazil	4 April 2008
2	H.E. Mr. Durgesh Man Singh, Ambassador of Nepal	4 April 2008
3	H.E. Mr. Desire Koumba, Ambassador of Gabon	4 April 2008
4	H.E. Mr. S.J. Claude Apithy, Ambassador of Benin (Non-Resident)	4 April 2008
5	H.E. Mrs. Angel Patricia Figueroa Rodriguez, Ambassador of El Salvador	16 May 2008
6	H.E. Mr. Hj. Sidek Ali, High Commissioner of Brunei	16 May 2008
7	H.E. Mr. Levent Bilman, Ambassador of Turkey	16 May 2008
8	H.E. Mr. Rainer Imperti, Ambassador of Monaco (Non-Resident)	16 May 2008
9	H.E. Mr. Khalid Salman, Ambassador of Lebanon	10 July 2008
10	H.E. Mr. Andi Muhammad Ghalib, Ambassador of Indonesia	10 July 2008
11	H.E. Mr. Voroshilov Enkhbold, Ambassador of Mongolia	10 July 2008
12	H.E. Mr. Manuel Picasso, Ambassador of Peru	10 July 2008
13	H.E. Mr. Humaid Bin Ali Al-Maani, Ambassador of Oman	3 November 2008
14	H.E. Mr. Zady Gbaka Richard, Ambassador of Cote d' Ivoire	10 November 2008
15	H.E. Mr. Joseph Caron, High Commissioner of Canada	10 November 2008
16	H.E. Mr. Roberto Toscano, Ambassador of Italy	10 November 2008
17	H.E. Mr. Francisco L. Benedicto, Ambassador of Philippines	10 November 2008
18	H.E. Mr. Kenneth Thompson, Ambassador of Ireland	10 November 2008

Following countries opened their resident Missions in New Delhi during the period from 1/04/2008 to 30/11/2008

- 1 Lithuania
- 2 Macedonia
- 3 Madagascar
- 4 Gabon
- 5 El Salvador



Passport Offices

There are presently 37 Passport Offices and 15 Passport Collection Centres in India. During the year 2008 three new Passport Offices were opened at Amritsar, Dehradun, and Coimbatore. All Passport Offices are computerized and they issue machine-printed and machine readable passports as per the guidelines laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organisation. Passport applications are being scanned and stored electronically.

Passport Services

There has been a significant increase in the number of passports issued over the years. A total of 53.10 lakh passports were issued in 2008, an increase of approximately 7.45% over the corresponding figure in 2007. A total of 54.11 lakh applications were received in 2008, an increase of approximately 10.52% over the corresponding figure in 2007. The total revenue generated from all Passport Offices also increased to about Rs. 617 crores, an increase of 8.81% compared to the total revenue in 2007. The Ministry has been taking a number of measures to make the passport issuance system simpler and speedier for the comfort and convenience of the public. Some of the important steps are delineated as under:

Decentralization through District Passport Cells and Speed Post Centres

With a view to taking the passport issuance and related services nearer to the doorsteps of the applicants, District Passport Cells (DPCs) have been opened at the district level where the office of the District Magistrate/ Superintendent of Police receives passport applications and after scrutiny and police verification, forwards them to the concerned Passport Office for issuance of passports. Currently, there are 463 DPCs. The passport applications are also received through the network of 1095 Speed Post Centres.

Online Applications

Online submission of passport applications has been introduced in all Passport Offices. The District Passport Cells referred to above and Speed Post Centres have also been allowed to file applications on-line and transfer the

data to the Passport Offices which facilitates quicker turnaround in the issuance of passports.

Infrastructure

During 2008, Passport Offices at Lucknow, Jaipur, Bareilly and Surat shifted to newly constructed Government owned buildings. Construction is nearing completion in respect of the Passport Office at Bhubneswar and the office is expected to shift in June 2009. Construction for the new office at Visakhapatnam is expected to begin by mid 2009.

Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism

Steps have been taken to strengthen the public grievance redressal mechanism in all Passport Offices. Facilitation Counters and Help Desks have also been set up to assist applicants and also to attend to grievances/complaints expeditiously. A public grievance redressal mechanism has also been set up in the CPV Division under the close supervision of the Joint Secretary (CPV) and Chief Passport Officer.

Passport Adalats

Passport Offices have been holding Passport Adalats periodically to redress the grievances of passport applicants. These Adalats have been very useful in disposing of old cases.

Right to Information Act (RTI)

A Central Public Information Officer and Assistant Public Information Officers have been appointed in every Passport Office to provide information to applicants under the RTI.

Website

The website of CPV Division www.passport.nic.in, which was established in 1999, is being updated from time to time to make it more user-friendly. It has detailed information on passports, visas, consular matters and PIO cards. It also has downloadable forms. In 2008, the CPV Division website has been launched in Hindi. The main website also provides status enquiry check of passport applications submitted at all the Passport Offices.

Consular Attestation

During the year (April 2008-March 2009) 2,50,958 personal and educational documents and 2,23,017 commercial documents were attested by the Ministry.

Issuance of Visas

Over the years, the procedure for grant of visas by our Missions and Posts has been simplified including computerisation of the issuance system. Most Missions and Posts grant visas either across the counter on the same day or at the most within 48 hours.

Visa-Waiver Agreements

During 2008, visa-waiver agreements were signed with Egypt, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, South Africa and Turkey.

Issuance of Diplomatic/Official Passports

CPV Division issued 2,775 diplomatic and 22,948 official passports in 2008, as compared to 1,950 diplomatic and 24,867 official passports in 2007. CPV Division issued 8,754 visas to foreign diplomatic and official passport holders in the year 2008.

New Projects

The Ministry has embarked on several projects with a view to modernizing and upgrading the passport/visa issuance system. These are as follows:

(i) Centralized Printing of Passports

The Ministry has successfully implemented the project for centralised printing of Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) at CPV Division, New Delhi in respect of 140 Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

(ii) Issuance of E-Passports

The President launched the issuance of e-passports, also known as bio-metric passports on 25 June 2008. All diplomatic and official passports are now being issued as e-passports as part of the pilot project. Based on the experience gained from the pilot project, it is proposed to start issuance of e-passports in the ordinary category by end 2009.

(iii) Passport Seva Project

The Government had entrusted the National Institute of Smart Government (NISG), Hyderabad, with the task of undertaking a time-bound study on the passport issuance system, including its IT aspects with the objective to deliver passport related services to the citizens in a timely, transparent, more

accessible, reliable manner. The Government accepted the NISG report as a result of which "Passport Seva Project" has been launched.

The proposal is to have 77 Passport Seva Kendras all over the country where the non-sovereign functions, involved in the passport issuance process, such as initial scrutiny of the application forms, acceptance of fee, scanning of the documents, taking photos, etc., will be performed by Tata Consultancy Services, the Service Provider. The sensitive activities such as granting will be performed by the Government staff. The project is expected to result in the issue of passports within three days, and where police verification is required, within three days after completion of the verification process. The pilot project is expected to begin at Chandigarh and Bangalore by June 2009 and the Project is expected to be implemented fully to cover the entire country by the beginning of 2010.

(iv) Outsourcing of Visa Work

Fifty one Indian Missions/Posts abroad have been authorized to outsource visa application collection work out of which 30 Indian Missions/Posts at Seoul, Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, Washington, New York, Chicago, Houston, San Francisco, Tel Aviv, Bangkok, Paris, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Colombo, Singapore, The Hague, Beijing, Shanghai, Guanzhou, London, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Islamabad, Dhaka, Chittagong, Milan and Kabul have already outsourced the work.

(v) Launch of Apostille Convention Project

In view of the convenience of the thousands of people coming from all over India to Delhi for attestation, the attestation and apostille of the documents was also started at Branch Secretariat Offices of the Ministry at Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad and Kolkata with effect from 15 June, 2008. 1,11,331 documents were apostilled for use abroad in the members countries.

Extradition Cases and Legal Assistance

The Ministry has been pursuing actively with various countries for negotiating bilateral agreements to provide a legal and institutional framework to combat international terrorism, organized crime including financial frauds and drugs trafficking. These consular agreements include Treaties on Extradition, Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Mutual Legal Assistance



President, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil receiving her "E-Passport" from the Union Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on 25 June, 2008.



Union Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee presenting an E-Passport to the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in New Delhi on 25 June, 2008.

in Civil and Commercial Matters and Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners.

During the visit of the President of India to Brazil, an Extradition Treaty was signed between the two countries on 16th April 2008. External Affairs Minister signed Extradition Treaty with Australia on 23 June, 2008 and with Iran on 2 November, 2008, during his visit to those countries. An Extradition Treaty was signed between India and Egypt in New Delhi on 18 November, 2008, during the visit of the President of Egypt to India.

The instrument of ratification was exchanged between India and Mauritius on 23 June, 2008 at Port Louis, Mexico on 18 December, 2008 at Mexico and Tajikistan on 18 February, 2009 at Dushanbe and all the Extradition Treaties came into force from the date of exchange of

instrument of ratification. The Agreement on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Portuguese Republic has entered into force with effect from 13 November, 2008. During the year, an Indian official delegation visited Iran and an Israeli delegation visited India to negotiate Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties.

During the year, six persons were extradited from India to various foreign countries and four person were extradited from foreign countries to India. A number of warrant/summons/notices and Letter Rogatories (LRs) received from various Judicial Authorities/State Governments/Investigation Agencies in India were forwarded to the concerned authorities abroad for execution.



There are 171 resident Indian Missions and Posts abroad. In the year reported upon, one Indian Mission was opened namely Embassy of India, Reykjavik, Iceland. three new missions will be opened shortly in Niamey, Bamako and Guatemala City. 514 new posts have been sanctioned for induction in the Ministry in a phased manner over a period of ten years.

With a view to streamline the administrative machinery of the Ministry, constant efforts are on to achieve greater decentralization of decision making and simplification of process. Keeping in view the hard living conditions in Afghanistan and Iraq, separate set of Home Leave Fare rules has been issued and an insurance cover of up to Rupees 30 Lakhs has been provided to each India-based personnel posted in these two countries. Compilation of "Guide to Selective Administrative/Establishment Rules and Procedures" is under process and is at the stage of final proof-reading. After implementation of Sixth Pay Commission, the process of pay fixations of all cadres in the Ministry at Head Quarters has been completed and due arrears have been disbursed. A process for relevant amendments to IFS (PLCA) Rules in light of Sixth Pay Commission has been initiated with special focus on elimination of ambiguities in interpretation and updating the Rules to suit the changed scenario. Cases, where relaxation of Rules was necessary, have been processed and relief has been provided to deserving officials after obtaining approval of the competent authorities, keeping in view the human and welfare approach to their problems.

Indents for fresh recruitment were placed on time and review of deployment of manpower at all levels was conducted periodically. A comprehensive exercise to review deployment of manpower in all the Missions and Posts has been initiated.

Management of different cadres in the Ministry was undertaken through regular Departmental Promotion Committee meetings, and through implementation of provisions under Assured Career Promotion Scheme. Regular meetings of Joint Consultative Machinery were also held to consult the Staff Associations on issues of concern to them, and consider the possible ways to addressing the same.

The current strength of Ministry is 3551. Details are given in Appendix I. These Personnel are deployed in India and in 171 Missions/Posts abroad. This includes officials from Indian Foreign Service(IFS), Indian Foreign Service, Branch "B", Interpreters' Cadre, Legal and Treaties Cadre and the Library Cadre, but excludes Group 'D' and ex-cadre posts.

Recruitment made to various groups in the Ministry on 1 April-30 November, 2007 through Direct Recruitment (DR), Departmental Promotion (DP) and Limited Departmental Examination (LDE), including against reserved vacancies, are given in the table at Appendix II. The table at the Appendix III gives details of language proficiency of officers of the Ministry.

Gender Issue

Gender equality has been a key element of Ministry's overall policy. In keeping with this, equal opportunities are provided to women officers to take up important responsibilities. There are 53 officers of the rank of Director and above in the Ministry. (8 at Head Quarters and 38 at Missions abroad). Out of 38 lady officers posted abroad 25 are HOMs/HOPs.

Persons with Disability

Ensuring adequate opportunity to persons with disability and to have suitable representation of persons with disability among its personnel is an important objective of the Ministry. Towards this goal, the Ministry has identified posts suitable for appointments of persons with disability, including in Indian Foreign Service.

A&RM Division

After having digitized all records stored in RM Section in the first quarter of 2008, the project entered into the next phase i.e. Phase-III, whereby fresh records being received from Headquarters and Missions/Posts are being digitized.

A&RM division has also called for the services of an official from National Archives of India (NAI) for appraisal of pre-1983 records with a view to transferring of appraised records to NAI and destruction of records which have outlived their life. So far a total of 1727 records

have been transferred to the NAI and 1820 destroyed. The process of de-classification, review and destruction of records continues.

The Browsing Room to scan documents of the Ministry meant for use by Select public was inaugurated by Foreign Secretary on 9 January, 2009.

Implementation of Official Language Policy and Propagation of Hindi Abroad

World Hindi Day was celebrated on 10 January, 2008. Hindi Essay Competition was organized for foreign students studying Hindi at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Establishment Division

The charge of the Establishment Division primarily includes renting and maintenance of properties, fixation of foreign allowance and representational grant, purchase supply and maintenance of office equipment, furniture and official vehicles, supply of Object d' arts, management and maintenance of MEA housing complexes and hostels, maintenance of Toshakhana and purchase and supply of stationery.

During the year efforts continued to streamline the rules, regulations and procedures governing some of these issues in order to make them simple and transparent. As part of this exercise, rules governing foreign allowance, special grants, allotment of housing, maintenance of equipments at Headquarters, and Car Code were reviewed and made more transparent.

Annual review of the foreign allowance was undertaken under the indexation scheme by a joint team of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Finance. For the first time since 1954, the basket of goods and services determining the foreign allowance was revised and made more realistic keeping in tune with the modern lifestyle.

A landmark decision on slab deduction for officers posted abroad was taken with the approval of Ministry of Finance. Since a large part of basic pay of officers posted abroad used to be taken away in the form of slab deduction, there was considerable resentment on this account. With effect from 1 September, 2008, the system of slab deduction has been done away with, to address the long pending grievance of officers posted in Indian Missions abroad.

The Division undertook preparatory work for opening of four new Missions in Iceland, Mali, Niger and Guatemala. For this purpose following the visit of property teams, steps

were taken to identify appropriate premises for locating the Indian Embassies, empanelment of hospitals, hotels and schools and fixation of allowances.

As part of the inspection of Indian Missions abroad, our missions in Santiago, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, Suva, Brunei, Port Moresby, Tashkent, Dushanbe, Bishkek, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Dar-es-Salaam, Johannesburg, Kampala, Canberra, Singapore and Bangkok were inspected by a high level team of inspectors. Their reports helped considerably in streamlining the functional as well as administrative issues in these missions.

Renovation of External Affairs hostel at K G Marg and Gole Market which was initiated last year continued during the current financial year. As a result, considerable improvements have taken place in the living conditions in these hostels. Similarly, further steps were taken to improve the living conditions in the MEA housing complex in Dwarka. As a result, the occupancy rate in the complex has gone up over 90%. Steps were also taken for renovation of Jinnah House in Mumbai which was halted due to ongoing litigation concerning this property. After legal opinion, the process of renovation has been restarted.

The Division initiated the task of taking over the Chanakyapuri Housing Complex of MEA. For this purpose an integrated building management company was appointed to take over the complex and detect construction defects so that they could be rectified within the defect liability period. After obtaining Completion Certificate of the building, housing complex was made functional in the last week of March. This will go a long way in addressing the housing problem of the Ministry.

The exercise initiated for digitalization of all Od'A items in the Ministry is near completion. For the first time digital records of almost all Od'A items in the Ministry have been created in the form of a software and an internal website. The recording system and the stock registers for Od'A items purchased by the Ministry have already been considerably modernized and made foolproof. A video camera has already been installed in the Od'A cell to monitor movement of people and objects.

The new policy governing mobile phones and residential phones facilities was implemented facilitating smooth functioning of our Missions abroad. Similarly, steps were taken to update the provision of crockery, cutlery and kitchen wares supplied to HoMs for representational use. Before introducing these improvements a committee had been setup to suggest changes in these items keeping in

view of the changing needs of representational obligations abroad.

The deficient areas regarding replacement and maintenance of official vehicles abroad were identified following a comprehensive exercise. Thereafter a proposal was moved to bring the Car Code in tune with the needs of modern times. After seeking Ministry of Finance's approval, the Car Code has since been amended which will facilitate the functioning of our Missions abroad.

The Division also introduced a new system for better maintenance of Government as well as rented properties abroad to avoid unnecessary litigation and financial loss to the Government. New policy guidelines on these issues were issued to all Missions and Posts.

Further steps were taken at Headquarters to improve cleanliness and maintenance of Government Offices, particularly South Block, Akbar Bhawan and Patiala House. Steps were also taken to further streamline the purchase and maintenance of office equipment for all MEA offices.

Vigilance

Details of cases as on 1 April, 2008

- Number of cases pending as on 31.3.2008 : 162
- Number of cases received during the period 01.04.2008 to 31.3.2009 : 50
- Total number of cases up to 31.3.2009 : 212 (162+50)
- Number of cases closed with imposition of formal penalty up to 31.3.2009 : 28
- Number of cases closed without imposition of formal penalty, on account of VRS, death etc up to 31.3.2009 : 50
- Total number of cases closed up to 31.3.2009 : 78 (28 + 50)
- Total number of cases pending as on 31.3.2009 : 134 (212-78)

Vigilance Awareness Week was observed from 3 November- 7 November. All Indian Missions/Posts abroad and various departments in Ministry of External Affairs administered the pledge prescribed by the Central Vigilance Commission.

During the year, various circulars on incurring expenditures within delegated financial powers, constitutional provisions on acceptance of titles, CVC guidelines regarding tendering process etc. were issued.

e-Governance and IT

During the year, computerization of Passport & Visa services at Moscow, Doha, Washington, San Francisco, Chicago and Houston was completed. Outsourcing of

passport services at Jeddah was completed. Outsourcing of passport and visa services at Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, Riyadh, Kuala Lumpur is underway.

Ministry has developed a Management Information System (MIS) to store and make available information regarding Personnel, Budget, Foreign Visits and Parliament Questions. The software has been put to use and is operating satisfactorily. Outsourcing of Passport and Visa services was completed in our Mission in Singapore in January 2009.

Projects Division

Projects Division is responsible for reconstruction of buildings and purchase of land and buildings in India and abroad for the use of Ministry of External Affairs for its offices and residences for employee. Repairs and renovation of Government owned buildings in stations abroad are also handled by Projects Division. As of now, 80 Chancery buildings at 77 stations abroad ,residences for Heads of Missions/Posts at 91 stations abroad and 634 residences for Officers/staff in 47 stations abroad are owned by the Ministry of External Affairs. In addition, properties for Cultural Centers in two stations and one Liasion Office in one station are also owned by the Government. Currently, over 40 construction/re-development/renovation projects are at different stages of implementation.

Amongst projects abroad, construction work on Chancery and residences in Beijing, Tokyo & Kathmandu and residences in Singapore is presently going on. Work is also going on for renovation of three properties in Karachi, renovation of Chanceries in Bogota, Colombo, Prague .Construction projects in Budapest, Brasilia, Dhaka, Islamabad, Kabul, London, Tashkent and Warsaw are at tendering stage.

Built-up properties have been acquired for Chancery in Bogota, residences for Ambassadors in Sofia & Tripoli, residence for Consul General in Hamburg and five staff residences in Milan in 2008-09. Vacant plots of land for construction of Chancery & residences has been acquired in Gabarone. The Ministry is making continuous and vigorous efforts to acquire built-up properties at as many stations as possible and priority in this regard is accorded to stations where expenditure on payment of rents is higher. Major proposals under process for purchase of built-up properties include Colombo, Dublin, Hanoi, Pretoria, Rome, and Santiago. Proposals are also under process for purchase of land at Brunei & Wellington for Chanceries &residences and in New Delhi for South Asian University. Three surplus properties in Aden (Joshi Building), Dar-

es-Salaam (vacant flat) and Buenos Aires (old Chancery) have been disposed off through sale.

Among projects in India, construction work for future headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs i.e. Jawahar Lal Nehru Bhawan and transit accommodation at Canning Lane, New Delhi is in full swing. Construction work has been completed for Residential complex for officers of the Ministry of External Affairs and building for headquarters of Afro-Asian Legal Consultative

Committee and residence of its Secretary General in Chanakyapuri New Delhi and Regional Offices of ICCR in Kolkata.

A budget of Rs. 300 crores has been allocated for construction/acquisition of properties under Capital Outlay in approved budget allocations for 2008-09. Provision of Rs. 612 crores has been sought under Capital Outlay Budget for 2009-10 for acquisition/construction of more properties.



Coordination Division consists of three wings viz. Parliament Section, Coordination Section and Education Section.

Parliament Section

Coordination Division functions as the nodal point of the Ministry of External Affairs for all work relating to Parliament including questions-answers, assurances, debates on foreign relations and laying of reports on the Table of both Houses of Parliament. The Division also has the responsibility to organize the meetings of the Consultative Committee on External Affairs, and coordinates the work relating to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs and other Parliamentary Committees.

Coordination Section

Coordination Section processes all proposals for grant of no objection from the political angle for the foreign visits of Governors, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Union Ministers, Ministers in the State Governments, Members of Parliament, Members of State Legislative Assemblies, Members of the Judiciary, Government officials, etc. Political clearance is accorded by the Ministry of External Affairs after taking into consideration the guidelines laid down by the government for the purpose, the political and functional justification for the visit, meetings arranged and the recommendation of the Indian Mission/Post concerned. During April to November, 2008, Coordination Division had issued 2539 political clearances for such visits as against 2106 during the corresponding period in 2007, thus registering an increase of about 21%. The Section also handled work relating to grant of diplomatic clearances for foreign non-scheduled flights and visits by naval ships. During April – November 2008, Coordination Division issued 971 clearances for foreign non-scheduled flights as against 859 during the same period in 2007, thus registering an increase of 13%.

The Division has initiated the process of revision of guidelines on Channel of Communications between Government of India and the State Governments on the one hand and foreign Governments or their Missions in India, Heads of Diplomatic Missions/Posts abroad and

international organizations on the other, in consultation with various Ministries/Departments.

Coordination Section had also processed a large number of approvals for participation of Indian sports teams and sportsmen in international events abroad and visits of foreign sports persons/teams to India. The Section also examines requests for grant of no objection for holding international conferences, seminars, workshops, grant of Amateur W/T Licence under the Indian Telegraph Act 1885, grant in aid to Indo-foreign cultural friendship and cultural societies located in foreign countries.

Coordination Section coordinates the work relating to grant of Padma Awards to foreign nationals. The nominations are obtained by the Coordination Division from Indian Missions/Posts abroad and the recommendations of the Ministry are conveyed to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Observance of Quami Ekta Week/Diwas (19-25 November) in the Ministry and Missions/Posts abroad was also undertaken by the Coordination Division; pledges were administered to the officials, both at Headquarters and in Missions/Posts abroad.

Coordination Section assisted the Ministry of Defence in interaction with the Ministry and the Indian Missions/Posts abroad during DEFEXPO India – 2008 organized by the Ministry of Defence in February, 2008. The Division is also assisting MOD in interaction with the Ministry of External Affairs/Missions & Posts abroad for the forthcoming Aero India- 2009 scheduled to be held in February, 2009 at Bangalore.

Coordination Section represented and gave Ministry's input at various inter-ministerial meetings on divergent issues. Similarly, the Coordination Section collated inputs from various Divisions of the Ministry in preparation of documents, notes and briefs on important subjects. As Ex-officio Director, Joint Secretary (Coord) also attended Board Meetings of the Educational Consultants India Limited, a public sector organization and provided advice on their current activities and future programmes.

Education Section

Education Section deals with the selection, nomination and admission of foreign students from 63 friendly,

neighbouring and developing countries for MBBS/BDS// BE/B.Pharmacy and diploma courses in various institutions in India under the Self Financing Foreign Students Scheme against seats allocated to this Ministry by the Ministries of Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development respectively. Political clearances of foreign students seeking admission to Graduate and Post-Graduate courses in Engineering, Medicine, Management, other technical and professional courses

including elective training/internship in various medical institutions and research courses were also processed by the Education Section.

For the academic year 2008-09, Education Section received and processed 52 and 93 applications for admission to the MBBS/BDS and B.E./B.Pharmacy courses respectively. In addition, during the period from April to November 2008, 433 applicants were granted no objection from the political angle to pursue various courses in India.



External Publicity (XP) Division of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) continued to articulate the views / positions of the Government of India on various national and international issues through interaction with Indian and international media. This was done through regular and special press briefings, statements, backgrounder and postings on MEA's website.

The main activities of the Division were focussed on dissemination of information on India's relations with its immediate neighbours as also with major countries of the world. The signing of Agreement for Cooperation on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy with USA, also known as the 123 Agreement and the hosting of various international summits and seminars, were some of the events, which were accorded due emphasis by the Division.

The Division launched the first phase of the Media Monitoring Project for all users at Headquarters. This is aimed at streamlining the monitoring of media sources for the Ministry. The Project monitors Print, Web and Internet based media in a systematic manner and provides five daily products to users on a real time basis.

Press Coverage of Incoming VVIP Visits

India's robust engagement with international community was marked by a number of visits by foreign dignitaries to India. Notable among them were the visit of the President of Iran, Mr. Ahamadnejad; President of Syria, Dr. Bashar Al-Assad; President of Egypt, Mr. Hosny Mubarak; Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda"; Prime Minister of Bhutan, Mr. Lyonchen Jigmi Y. Thinley and the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Anatoly Medvedev. The Division used the opportunities provided by these visits to articulate India's position on important bilateral, regional and international issues. The Division also arranged joint press interaction with the visiting dignitaries during these visits. Special briefings by the official spokesperson and other senior officials of the Ministry were also held regularly to keep the media updated on important international issues of concern to India.

Press Coverage of Indian Dignitaries' Visits Abroad

All logistical arrangements, including setting up and operation of Media Centres fully equipped with facilities for filing of stories by journalists, media briefings and other arrangements enabling Indian delegations accompanying the President, Vice President, Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister on their visits abroad formed an important part of work of the Division to ensure timely media coverage of events. During the year, accompanying media delegations on President's visit to Brazil, Medico, Chile, Vietnam and Indonesia; Prime Minister's visits to Bhutan, Japan (G-8 Summit), Sri Lanka (15th SAARC Summit), USA and France (UNGA and Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement), China, Oman and Qatar (bilateral); the Vice President's visits to Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and the External Affairs Minister's visits to Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Russia, Australia, Egypt and USA were facilitated.

Liaison with National and International Media

The official spokesperson's office liaised with the Indian and foreign media throughout the year by conducting regular briefings on major developments having a bearing on India's foreign policy, incoming and outgoing high level visits and important day-to-day developments. During the year (up to November 2008) 177 press releases, 91 press briefings and 25 joint press statements and 66 media advisories were issued by the Division on various issues of concern. Interviews with the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and other dignitaries were arranged with Indian and international newspapers and TV organizations. These were simultaneously placed on the Ministry's website.

Official Spokesperson's Office

The Official Spokesperson's Office functioned as the hub for information dissemination on day-to-day developments related to the conduct of India's foreign policy. The Office conducted regular media briefings by the Spokesperson, which were duly supplemented by press

releases, briefing points and statements. During April-November 2008, about 91 press briefings were organized by Official Spokesperson's office. In addition, more than 200 press releases and statements were issued during this period. These were circulated to the media through emails and simultaneously placed on the Ministry's website. The Division continued to make use of SMS alerts for informing the media about briefings and updates to the website. During the year, External Affairs Minister, Foreign Secretary and other senior officials of the Ministry addressed special media briefings on important issues of concern. Additionally, constant efforts were made to communicate the position and perspective of the Government on various significant issues by providing background briefings to media persons. Interviews with the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister, Ministers of State for External Affairs and other dignitaries were arranged with Indian and international newspapers and TV organizations.

Maintenance and Regular Updating of MEA Website

Ministry of External Affairs' website continued to serve as a useful instrument in the dissemination efforts of the Division. The press section of the website was regularly updated with the speeches / interviews / statements on foreign policy by the Prime Minister, Minister(s), press releases, briefings by the Official Spokesperson and other Senior Officers. The website is widely accessed both inside and outside India and is hyperlinked to the websites of Indian Missions / Posts abroad and various Ministries.

The Division continued to use the Ministry of External Affairs' Notice Board to provide the Missions/Posts abroad with professionally written features on various aspects of India for publicity purposes in local media. News clippings of interest from national newspapers were also uploaded on daily basis on the Board for use by our Missions/Posts.

Hindi version of the website, launched in 2006, was greatly appreciated particularly by the Hindi language media. The Division constantly updated the website.

Logistical Support to Foreign Media Based in India

Over 300-odd foreign media representatives based in India were provided necessary facilitation to enable them to function smoothly through provision of relevant information on various issues of interest as well as

assistance in matters of credential documents, visas and residence permits. Visa extensions and / or accreditation facilities were extended to foreign journalists.

Familiarization Visits by Foreign Journalists

Familiarization visits by foreign journalists to India constitute a key element of the Division's efforts to bring about a more accurate and contemporary depiction of India in the foreign media as the journalists obtain a unique, first-hand impression of developments in India's politics, foreign policy, economy, culture and science and technology. Based on the recommendations of Indian Missions/Posts abroad, the Division organized the familiarization visits of 72 foreign journalists to India during the period April-November 2008. During these visits, all logistical arrangements to enable the journalists to visit important institutions and centers of excellence in India were made by the Division. The Division also organized meetings for visiting foreign journalists with Ministers, Senior Officials, Academicians, Intellectuals and Business Representatives.

Documentaries and Films

An important area of work of the Division pertains to the clearance of documentaries by foreign audio-visual agencies. An exercise to streamline the procedure for granting approval for making documentary films in India by foreign producers was undertaken by the Division. As a result of inter-ministerial consultations, the process has largely been streamlined. During the year, 370 proposals for making documentaries by foreign producers from USA, UK, Japan, Australia, France, Sweden, Italy, South Africa, Malaysia and China were cleared by the Division.

Training, Workshops, Conferences and Special Events

The Division, on recommendations of the concerned Territorial Divisions, undertook specialized programmes and media assistance measures in countries like Bhutan and Maldives. The Division also organized the IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) editors' meet where editors of leading media houses from India, Brazil and South Africa participated. The Division also helped organize the media facilitation for the BIMSTEC Summit meeting. In the aftermath of dastardly terrorist attacks on Mumbai, the Division facilitated issue of as many as 272 special visas in the first week following the attacks and facilitated the foreign media to cover the tragic event.



Ever since its creation in April 2006, the Public Diplomacy Division of MEA has been in contact with researchers, think tanks, academia, civil society and industry, both within India and abroad, to highlight the contours of Indian foreign policy, as well as initiate debate and discussion within the wider public about the key foreign policy issues confronting India. The Division's mandate includes, inter-alia, outreach activities inside and outside India, and audio visual and print publicity. The aim is to effectively project India's Foreign Policy to the wider public to enable a more informed understanding and appreciation of India and its external relations. Such an understanding requires that issues of International politics are enriched by the inputs from the civil society and general public. The Division, therefore oversees the matter of public involvement/public interest in the shaping of the Indian foreign policy.

The Division continues to draw upon the resources of the Ministry of External Affairs, as well as, independent experts and researchers through seminars, workshops and interactions on various foreign policy related issues. Foreign policy events continue to be organized outside Delhi to increase people's participation in the policy formulation.

Outreach Activities

The Division organized a number of outreach activities, including conferences and seminars on various foreign policy related issues as well as orientation programmes on India for visiting MPs from other countries.

The Division organized a programme on important domestic and foreign policy issues from 11-16 February in Chennai, Hyderabad and New Delhi for a seven-member delegation of Parliamentarians from Labour Friends of India (LFIN), UK.

The Division in association with the Government of Bihar, organized a seminar on "**Emerging Trends in India-Nepal Relations**" at Patna from 26-27 April, 2008. Chief Minister of Bihar and Minister for Physical Planning and Works of Nepal participated in the inaugural session of the seminar. Minister of State for Commerce and Industry

delivered the valedictory address. A 45 member Nepalese delegation participated in the seminar which also saw the participation of a large number of academicians, think tanks, representatives of Industry, intelligentsia, journalists and civil society from India. The objective behind the seminar was to discuss key aspects of our bilateral relations and the seminar covered the broad canvas of political and cultural relations, trade and economic cooperation, border security and its management, cooperation in the hydroelectric sector, sharing of common river waters and problems of floods.

The Patna Seminar was followed up by an interactive discussion on "**India and Nepal : Partners for Democracy and Development**" at Varanasi from 26-27 September, 2008, which was organized in association with the Government of Uttar Pradesh. Minister of External Affairs, Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the session. H. E. Shri Dev Gurung, Minister of Law, Justice and Constituent Assembly of Nepal led a 30 member Nepalese delegation. Consolidation of Peace Process in Nepal, Processes of Rehabilitation in Post Conflict Situation, Federal Structure and Inclusiveness, Making of a New Constitution, Open Border were some of the key issues discussed.

The Division and the Center for Strategic Studies of the Foreign Ministry of Afghanistan has jointly organized a meeting on "**India-Afghan relations: A framework for Future Cooperation**" from 31 May to 1 June, 2008. The meeting was inaugurated by the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan and was attended by around fifty persons. The objectives behind the meeting was to brainstorm in free and frank manner on the critical issues that are of immediate concern to Afghanistan and to discuss the role India could further play in assisting the people and the government. This was the first meeting which brought together a wide cross-section of stake holders. It was agreed that such meetings should become a regular component of the dialogue process.

The Division in association with the Book Review Literary Trust organized an international colloquium "*Superpower Rivalry in the 20th Century: Lessons for the 21st Century*" in

New Delhi. A large number of Indian and foreign academicians and think-tanks from China, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Pakistan, Egypt, Australia participated in the colloquium which discussed the regional fallout of the Cold War, prospects for multi polarity in the 21st century and the emerging world order.

The Division in association with Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh organized a workshop 'Total Agriculture – Workshop cum field visits – Connecting India and Pakistan through knowledge sharing on Agriculture' earlier in the year. A 16 member delegation from Pakistan exchanged production, marketing and research experiences with Indian experts. The dialogue was aimed at generating awareness and enhancing confidence in areas having direct socio-economic relevance to the people of the two Punjabs.

The Division supported a day long seminar on 29 April, 2009 in Addis Ababa to mark the 60th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Ethiopia. The seminar discussed the present state of India-Ethiopia relations and how the two countries could further their economic and social partnership.

Public Diplomacy Division participated and partly funded a conference on "Sixty Years of North East: Revising the Experience" organized in Shillong from 15-17 May, 2008 by Divya Jeevan Foundation Society. A total of about 200 people from all over North East participated in this conference. As a part of this Conference MEA organized presentations by a number of senior GoI officials and experts from business and industry on issues related to foreign policy and issues specific to development of the North East. Participants from MEA, MOC, DIPP, DONER and CII made presentations. While appreciated the presentations, the participants said that there was urgent need to prioritize and realize them in a time bound manner.

A ten-member Taiwanese delegation comprising MPs and academicians dealing with strategic and political issues, members of think tanks and business persons visited New Delhi, Chennai and Cochin from 27 July to 3 August, 2008. The idea behind the visit was to expose the delegation to modern India and the various concerns and interest that India has on social, economic and international issues as well as investment opportunities in India.

Deputy Speaker of the Mauritius Parliament led a delegation of 25 Mauritius MPs at the invitation of Public Diplomacy Division from 12-16 October, 2008. Besides Delhi the delegation also visited Mumbai. The idea behind organizing this visit was to provide the visiting delegates

a comprehensive exposure to India and detailed briefings on various subjects and issues of concern to us through site visits and briefing meetings with industry, academia, think-tanks, officials and political leadership. The delegation called on PM, EAM, Governor of Maharashtra and also met the Chairman and Members of Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs. The delegation received detailed briefing on India's position on Climate Change and also on ongoing impasse in the Doha Round talks of the WTO. They were also given detailed briefing on Indian economy and had an interaction with CII members and also interacted with the Senior Officers of Western Naval Command.

Two delegations of 'Liberal Democrat Friends of India' and 'Conservative Friends of India' MPs from the UK Parliament visited India for an orientation programme in September and November 2008 respectively. The delegations called on political leadership and also had briefings on Indian economy, WTO and multilateral economic issues, climate change, energy security, terrorism and regional security, Indian peace keeping forces and also visited some business enterprises and social institutions.

A ten- member delegation of Indian Origin South African MPs from all the major political parties visited India for an orientation programme from 7-12 December, 2008. Besides Delhi the delegation visited Agra and Kolkata. The delegation met EAM, MoS (AS), Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Governor and Chief Minister of West Bengal. Briefing were organized on centre-state relations, local self governance, future outlook for Indian economy, Indian defence forces, public health programmes to combat AIDS besides interaction with businessmen and, with faculty and students of Jadavpur University to enable the delegation to get an accurate picture of the modern India.

In view of increasing focus on Climate Change related issues, the Division organized a series of outreach activities on this issue. In association with CII a Conference on Climate Change was organized in Mumbai on 21 April, 2008 where Shri Shyam Saran, Social Envoy of Prime Minister delivered the keynote address on India's negotiating position on Climate Change to create greater awareness among the corporate sector. This was followed by another talk by Shri Shyam Saran on Climate Change, on 30 May, 2008 at Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad where Shri Saran discussed the current debate in multilateral fora on tackling climate change and also spoke on the elements that constitute India's National Action Plan on Climate Change. The ISB was attended by about 150 students and faculty members as well as by the press and corporate executive.

To encourage scholarship and writing on Foreign Policy and diplomatic matters, the Division organized the release of the book "**The Ultimate Prize: Oil and Saddam's Iraq**". EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee released the book in front of a large number of dignitaries including Cabinet Ministers, Foreign Ambassadors, diplomats, think-tanks and journalists. Another book titled "**A life across three continents: Recollections of a Diplomat's wife**" was released in front of a large gathering by Ms. Gursharan Kaur, wife of Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh.

Audio-Visual Publicity

The Division commissions/acquires documentaries aimed at positive projection of India's image abroad and sends these to Indian Missions abroad for screening and telecast on foreign TV channels. The procurement and supply of feature films for participation in film festivals and Indian film weeks abroad, organizing cultural publicity and exhibitions, are other audio-visual publicity activities undertaken by the Division.

Several documentaries were completed during the year. They are: '*Song of the Sanctuary*'; '*Cosmopolitan Culture of India*'; '*India Innovates*'; '*Pather Panchali*'; '*A short history of Indian Spices*'; '*The Sky is not the limit*'; '*On the life of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan*'; '*Back to Gondwanaland*'; '*Beating Retreat*'; '*Shillong Chamber Choir*'; '*Kazi Nazrul Islam*'; '*Cradle by the Stream*'; '*Path Breakers*'; '*Path Breakers II*'; '*Dismantling the Digital Divide*'; '*Does Gandhi Matter*'; '*India and the UN*'; '*Commonwealth Games-2010-New Delhi welcomes*'; '*Jammu & Kashmir – Quest for Lasting Peace*'; '*Rocking the Hills*'; '*Story of Tagore's Gitanjali*' and a three part documentary series titled '*Jammu and Kashmir – From Peace to Prosperity*' ((a) Women's Empowerment (b) Kashmariat & Shrines and (c) Youth and Development.

The Missions/Posts were supplied audio-visual material in the form of Betacam cassettes, CD-ROMs, audio and video CDs, DVDs and Cassettes for library and presentation purposes. The following CDs Bollywood: *60 years of Romance, Music as Therapy* and *The De-Stress* series were purchased and sent to Missions.

During the year 18 documentary films, viz., *Can You Hear Me, Commonwealth Games-2010 New Delhi Welcomes, Healing the World, Maadhyam, India and the UN, Urdu and Modern India, Through a Lens Clearly: Raghu Rai's India, The City of Music, Beyond Traditions, Mast Qalandar, Indian Elections – A Mammoth Democratic Exercise, Watering the Grass Roots, Religious Linkages between Bhutan and Ladhak* have been approved for commissioning.

The following documentaries were also telecast / screened by foreign TV channels and in film festivals:

- Beating Retreat was telecast by TV Asia, a local channel in New York on 15 August, 2008.
- Botswana Television aired five documentary films viz., Bismillah and Benaras, Footsteps of Nikitin, The oneness of creation, Renewing India and India Infrastructure-An opportunity on 17 August, 2008.
- Pather Panchali and Footprints of Nikitin were nominated / screened at the International Festival for Documentary and Short Feature Films in Ashgabat. Pather Panchali was awarded a Special Prize in the festival.
- Shillong Chamber Choir received a special mention in the Lisbon Film Festival.
- Pather Panchali was short listed by the Short Film Center Goa in November 2008.

Print Publicity

India Perspectives is the flagship magazine of the Ministry. The magazine covers a range of subjects varying from India's rich cultural heritage, art, literature, wildlife, film/book industry, the country's achievements in the fields of information technology, space, nuclear energy, healthcare and science & technology. The magazine is a medium to disseminate widely information on various facets of India's progress and development across the world. It also seeks to articulate India's concerns in a subtle manner. With the addition of the Italian edition this year, the magazine is now published in 16 languages and distributed both within India and abroad. Issues of *India Perspectives* are available in the electronic format in Hindi and English on Ministry's website. The magazine in its new format and content, commencing with the January-March 2008 issue, has been very well received. The September-October 2008 Special Issue on book publishing in India was released this year at the Frankfurt Book Fair. The magazine has also been appreciated for its content in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung dated 29 October, 2008. The 20th Anniversary edition of the magazine will be released by Foreign Secretary on 7 January, 2009.

Projecting India through books and publications is an integral part of the Division's publicity strategy abroad. Two Books Purchase Committee meetings in 2008 selected books on Indian economy, foreign policy, art & culture, history and science & technology, etc. which have been supplied to Missions abroad for presentation and use in their libraries. Books were also provided for presentation

by/to outbound/inbound dignitaries/delegations and participants for MEA's international seminars/conferences.

100 sets of primary level text books (25 nos. in each set) were sent for presentation to Indian Associations in Greece. 90 titles on Indology were sent for presentation to Lanzhou University, Gansu in China .Similarly 36 titles on Indology were sent for presentation to Pula University, Zagreb and 27 titles on Indology were sent to our Embassy in Madrid for presentation to Casa de la India Cultural Centre. Books on Indology were also sent for presentation to Centre for Oriental Studies, Vilnius University, Lithuania.

Around 300 books on Indian literature and culture, including books in Tamil language, were sent to HCI, Colombo for a book exhibition from SAARC countries. PD Division also dispatched about 2000 books to our Embassy in Oman for gifting to colleges, universities and Indian schools in Oman, where "India Corner" in the libraries of two Omani Universities have been established.

Public Diplomacy Division funded a proposal from E/I, Bogota for printing 1000 copies of Gandhiji's autobiography "My Experiments with Truth" in Spanish language by a local publisher at a cost of US\$ 5100. PD Division extended financial support to International

Academy of Bulgarian Studies, Innovation & Culture and the UNESCO Club of Varna for publishing 1000 copies of a book on Mahatma Gandhi entitled "Bible of Humanism" in Bulgarian language. Another proposal from E/I, Sofia regarding publishing a special volume of Tagore's poems in Bulgarian language has also been approved.

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Israel, PD Division funded a proposal from the Indian Mission in Tel Aviv for procurement of 750 copies of the book "Karmic Passages : Israeli scholarship on India" authored by well known Israeli scholars Prof. David Shulman and Shalva Weil. A proposal from E/I, The Hague regarding publishing a special volume on India-Dutch Relations for the Amsterdam-India Festival was approved.

Public Diplomacy Division funded a proposal from CGI, Durban regarding preparation of a Teachers' Manual in Telugu language for local Indian community. Among the publications, the Division published a book entitled "*Strategic Shape of the World*" which was a record of the proceedings of the MEA-IISS Foreign Policy Dialogue held at New Delhi in December 2007. Other major publications during 2008-09 include "Millennium Development Goals: India Country Report 2007" and "Prime Minister's speech at the SAARC Summit 2008".



Training for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Probationers

One of the primary activities of the Institute is the training of IFS probationers. The objectives of the training programme for IFS probationers is to prepare them to handle the wide range of tasks that they would be required to perform during their professional careers, both in Missions and Posts abroad as well as in India.

The 45th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats commenced on 15 January, 2008. 22 participants from 21 countries participated in the Course.

Dr. Raghuram Rajan, Professor, University of Chicago, Former Chief Economist, IMF, spoke at FSI on 16 January 2008 on "The future of the IMF and the World Bank" and Dr. Vishaka Desai, President, Asia Society, New York, spoke on 28 January on "Soft Power of India and China"

IFS probationers of the 2007 Batch were put through a comprehensive and elaborate training programme spanning the whole year of 2008. The training programme included modules on a large number of subjects, such as international relations and foreign policy, international law, defence and security, cultural diplomacy, economic diplomacy, right to information and official language policy etc. The programme also included modules on practical skills such as administration, establishment, accounts, protocol, communications skills, representational skills and relations with media.

The training programme was implemented through lectures, interactive sessions as well as attachment to various leading institutions. Accordingly, attachment to India-Africa Partnership Forum Summit, Air Force and Army, Boundary Cell of the Ministry, National Human Rights Commission, and Ministry of Commerce etc. also formed part of the training programme. The Probationers also attended a three-month training course on economic diplomacy, management and leadership at IIM Bangalore, specially conducted for them.

In order to familiarize the Probationers with India's geography, history and cultural diversity, the Probationers visited nine States as part of their Bharat Darshan tour.

With the objective of enabling the probationers to enhance their knowledge of India's immediate neighbourhood and to familiarize them with the work of the Indian Missions abroad, the training programme also included a Mission Orientation Visit to Dhaka, Bangladesh for one week in the month of April, 2008.

Library facilities for the probationers were upgraded by computerizing the library catalogue and installing the requisite library system software.

IFS probationers of 2008 batch joined the Institute in December 2008.

Training of Officials of the Ministry

In addition to the training of IFS Probationers, the Foreign Service Institute continued to conduct several training courses for the Ministry officials. These included five Basic Professional Courses (BPCs) for Assistants/UDCs/LDCs and two Refresher Courses for Section Officers. In 2008, FSI started a detailed training module in Integrated Mission Accounting Software (IMAS) for the benefit of Section Officers and staff members proceeding on transfer abroad, with the assistance of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the Office of the Chief Controller of Accounts. Around 200 Ministry personnel attended these training modules.

Promotion of links with Other Ministries and Training Institutes

The Institute maintained regular contacts with other training institutions such as the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, the National Academy of Direct Taxes, and the Institute of Secretarial Training etc. with a view to further develop the relationship between the Indian Foreign Service and other Services. With this objective in mind FSI conducted training modules for 32 Senior and 12 Junior Officers of the Cabinet Secretariat. FSI also organized the Third Vertical Interaction Course for the Indian Police Service and Indian Foreign Trade Service in February, 2008. The course covered a wide range of topics including consular work, foreign policy, economic diplomacy, bilateral relations, etc.

Special Programmes for Diplomatic Correspondents

The Sixth Programme for Diplomatic correspondents was organized in April/May, 2008 by FSI in association with the External Publicity Division of the Ministry. 17 diplomatic correspondents, including eight from India and nine from abroad, participated in the course.

Programmes for Foreign Diplomats

Foreign Service Institute continued to conduct various training programmes for the Foreign Diplomats in its efforts at building bridges of friendship with countries around the world.

The 45th and 46th Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) were successfully organized by FSI from 15 January-20 February and 5 November-15 December, 2008 respectively. 24 diplomats from various countries attended each of the two courses.

The Institute also organized two special courses, one for 15 diplomats from Southern Sudan and another for 24 ASEAN Diplomats. During the Special Courses and PCFD the foreign diplomats were taken to various places of historical, cultural, and industrial importance in and around Delhi. They also visited Kolkata, Goa, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kerala and Bangalore etc.

The Foreign Defence Officers attending 48th Course at National Defence College visited FSI on 31 July, 2008 and a special lecture was arranged for them.

Linkages with Counterpart Institutes Abroad

A Memorandum of Understanding providing an

institutional framework of cooperation between FSI and its counterpart institute in Ukraine was signed in March 2008.

Delegation of Bangladeshi diplomats led by Vice Principal of Bangladesh Foreign Service Academy called on Dean (FSI) in March 2008.

The Director General of Romanian Diplomatic Institute, visited FSI and had a meeting with Dean (FSI) in April, 2008 to further deepen and strengthen cooperation between the two Institutes under the ambit of the MoU signed in October 2006.

The Second Meeting of Deans of Diplomatic Institutes of IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa) countries was held at FSI from 15 September-16 September, 2008. A Seminar on the Subject of "India-Brazil-South Africa Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities" was also held on this occasion.

A delegation of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China called on Dean (FSI) in November 2008.

World Hindi Day was celebrated by the Ministry of External Affairs at FSI on 10 January, 2009. The Chief Guest on this occasion was MoS (AS).

FSI organized a Special Course for Diplomats from Norway from 19-21 January, 2009.

The 47th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) will be organized by FSI from 11 February-23 March, 2009.

FSI conducted a Refresher Course (BPC) for assistants/clerks in January 2009. Another Refresher Course for SOs was conducted in February 2009.



The Indian Council for Cultural Relations was formally set up in 1950, with the primary objective of establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. Its aims, as enunciated in the Memorandum of Association, are:

- To participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations
- To promote cultural exchanges with other countries and Peoples
- To promote and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries
- To establish and develop relations with national and international organizations in the field of culture

The Council has worked steadily to attain these objectives.

The major activities of the Council are:

Administration of scholarship schemes for overseas students on behalf of the Government of India and other agencies; welfare of international students; grant of scholarships to foreign students to learn Indian dance and music; exchange of exhibitions; organization of and participation in international seminars and symposia; participation in major cultural festivals abroad; organization of "Festival of India" in countries abroad; exchange of groups of performing artistes; organization of lecture-demonstration by performing artistes abroad; Distinguished Visitors Programme under which eminent personalities from abroad are invited to visit India, and the outgoing visitor's programme in which experts are sent abroad for delivering lectures, presentation of books, audio-visual material, art objects and musical instruments to institutions abroad; providing the secretariat for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding; organization of the annual Maulana Azad Memorial Lecture, conducting Maulana Azad Essay Competition; publication of books and journals for distribution in India and abroad; maintaining Indian Cultural Centres abroad; maintaining a well stocked library and the manuscripts of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad; digitization of rare manuscripts.

The Council has 11 Regional Offices which continue to function in Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Thiruvananthapuram, Jaipur, Pune and Varanasi. Efforts are being made to open new Regional Offices in Shillong, Cuttack and Guwahati in line with recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs. The activities of the Regional Offices include coordination with local bodies/organizations and providing assistance to foreign students studying under the Council's scholarships schemes. The Regional Offices also extend logistic facilities to incoming and outgoing cultural delegations and the Council's distinguished visitors.

The Council's flagship project, the Rabindranath Tagore Centre (RTC) was inaugurated on 1 June, 2008 by Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for External Affairs in the presence of Dr. Karan Singh, President, ICCR and Shri. Buddhadev Bhattacharya, Chief Minister of West Bengal. The building has state-of-the-art facilities such as multiple art galleries, auditorium, conference hall, library, guest rooms, café, souvenir shop, etc. The Centre would not only be ICCR's outreach in the Eastern region, but also be a bridge with neighbouring countries of Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Bhutan in the region.

The primary objective of the Council is to establish, revive and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. In order to promote awareness and appreciation of India's composite cultural heritage abroad, the Council is maintaining 20 Cultural Centres. These are located in Cairo (Egypt), Berlin (Germany), Port Louis (Mauritius), Paramaribo (Suriname), Georgetown (Guyana), Jakarta (Indonesia), Moscow (Russian Federation), London (U.K.), Almaty, (Kazakhstan), Tashkent, (Uzbekistan), Durban and Johannesburg (South Africa), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Suva (Fiji), Tokyo (Japan), Kathmandu (Nepal) and Kabul (Afghanistan). There are also two sub-Centres at Bali (Indonesia) and Lautoka (Fiji). The Council is also funding the Music & Dance Academy at Dhaka (Bangladesh) and a proposal to open a new centre is being pursued. The Council

maintains Chairs of Indian Studies in various Universities and institutions abroad. Indian Professors are deputed to these Chairs on Short-term and long-term basis. Presently the Council is maintaining 20 Chairs of Indian Studies abroad to teach Indian languages and other subjects under the Bilateral Cultural Exchange programmes, Scheme of Propagation of Hindi abroad and Council's own programme. The Chairs are in the field of Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Modern Indian History, Indian Civilization in Paramaribo (Suriname) Budapest, (Hungary), Moscow (Russia), Seoul, (South Korea), Warsaw, (Poland), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago), Sofia (Bulgaria), Bucharest (Romania), Beijing (China), Madrid (Spain), Ankara, (Turkey) Bangkok (Thailand), Paris (France), Osh (Kyrgyzstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Brussels (Belgium), Durban (South Africa) and Jalalabad (Afghanistan).

The Council is also maintaining eight Rotating short term Chairs in the field of Sanskrit and Buddhist Studies in Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia) Indian Literature in Pennsylvania (USA), Indian Studies in three Universities in Germany, Indian Economy at Sciences Po, Paris, (France), Indian Studies at Witswatersrand University, Johannesburg, (South Africa) and Humanities at Shenzhen University, Guangzhou (China).

Scholarship and Welfare of International Students

One of the important activities of the ICCR is the implementation of scholarship schemes for overseas students for doctoral, postgraduate, undergraduate courses as well as professional courses such as engineering, pharmacy, business administration and accountancy. Around 2200 foreign students are currently studying in India under the various scholarship schemes administered by the ICCR. During April-November, 2008, the Council offered 1868 new scholarships, including 500 scholarships for Afghan students.

The Council regularly organizes camps and study tours for the international students.

The section also organized a One Day Conference on 30 April, 2008 at ICCR, Azad Bhavan to discuss various issues concerning the Afghanistan scholarship scheme. The Afghan Minister of Higher Education accompanied by three officials of his Ministry, attended the Conference. The delegates also visited Bangalore and Pune universities and interacted with Afghan scholars studying there to get first hand information.

Meeting of Regional Directors/Regional Officers

A meeting of the Regional Offices Head was convened by the Deputy Director General on 10 April, 2008 at Azad Bhavan, IP Estate, New Delhi to discuss various issues concerning the welfare of the foreign students and to review the activities undertaken by the Regional Offices for the foreign students. All Sectional Heads at Headquarters also attended the meeting.

Meeting of International Students Advisors

An International Students Advisors Meeting was organized under the Chairmanship of Dr. Karan Singh, President, ICCR on 11 April, 2008 at Azad Bhavan, IP Estate, New Delhi to discuss issues concerning foreign students sponsored by the ICCR who are studying in various Indian Universities. International Student Advisers from 15 Universities, representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Human Resources Development, Ministry of External Affairs, Association of Indian Universities and all Regional Directors, Officers, ICCR attended the meeting.

Orientation Programme

An Orientation programme for the IFS probationers – 2007 batch was organized by the Council from 28 April- 2 May, 2008. Lectures / lecture-cum-demonstrations/ sightseeing to Museums, Galleries and Historical places were arranged for them. The lectures were delivered by eminent personalities on Indian traditional & modern art, culture and contemporary Indian arts.

Meeting with Heads of African Missions

A meeting of the Heads of African Missions in India was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Pavan K. Varma, Director General, ICCR on 21 August, 2008 at Azad Bhavan, IP Estate, New Delhi as a follow-up to the India-Africa Summit, in which Prime Minister of India had announced the doubling of the existing scholarships for nationals of African countries.

Setting-up of Inter-Ministerial Committee

Pursuant to the meeting taken by Principal Secretary to Prime Minister of India on 15 April, 2008 on the issue of the welfare of foreign students in India, an Inter-Ministerial Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of the DG, ICCR. The Committee held four meetings in Delhi. It also made field trips to Pune,

Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad to interact with representatives of Universities/Educational Institutions, FRO/FRRO, concerned State Government Departments and foreign students. Feedbacks from Indian Missions abroad and major Universities/ Educational Institutions in the above five cities were also sought. The Committee submitted its report to the Principal Secretary to Prime Minister of India on 13 October, 2008.

The Council would also be organizing the XVI International Students Cultural Festival on 18 December, 2008 at Sirifort Auditorium, New Delhi.

Incoming Cultural Delegation

ICCR organizes the visits of foreign performing artistes to India for performances in various cities of India. These groups are hosted under the ambit of Bilateral Cultural Exchange Programmes as well as in response to recommendations of Indian Missions abroad and requests received from Foreign Diplomatic Missions and Cultural Centres in India. During the period April - November 2008, the Council hosted the visits of 39 foreign cultural groups from Pakistan, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Spain, Russia, Iran, Israel, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, Syria, Botswana, South Korea, Brazil, Tajikistan, Hungary, Colombia, Italy, China, Japan, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, and Yemen. The Council also organized 25 special events, such as the Festival of Indian Classical Dance by foreign artists residing in India, Malhar Festival and Sufi Music Festival at Srinagar.

Publications

The Council has an ambitious publication programme, which has grown over the years. The Council published six journals in five different languages namely, "Indian Horizons" and "Africa Quarterly" (both English Quarterlies), "Gagananchal" (Hindi Quarterly), "Papeles de la India" (Spanish, bi-annual), "Rencontre Avec L'Inde" (French bi-annual) and "Thaqafat-ul-Hind" (Arabic Quarterly).

Conferences and Seminars

During the period under review, the Council collaborated in the holding of various Conferences and Seminars with a view to facilitating interactions between intellectuals, opinion makers and academicians representing various countries. These included a) the Fourth International Seminar on Indo-Thai Historical and Cultural Linkages titled " Reflections on Indo-Thai Historical and Contemporary Cultural Relations" at Thammasat

University, Bangkok from 7-9 July, 2008; 18 scholars from India and Thailand participated in the Seminar, b) Indo-Israel Colloquium at India International Centre, New Delhi and Kolkata from 8-15 September, 2008; eminent scholars, film makers, journalists, authors from India and Israel participated. The Council organized a Colombian Cultural Week in Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai in association with Embassy of Colombia in New Delhi from 21-26 October 2008. The Council also assisted various organizations/Institutes in organizing 14 International Conferences in India.

Busts and Exhibitions

ICCR sent one bust of Mahatma Gandhi for installation at Cape Town, (South Africa). Five major exhibitions were sent overseas. These included the Exhibition Entitled "Celebrating Women-Amrita Shergil Revisited" to Prague, Astana, Edinburgh & London, Exhibition of "Women by Women" to Algeria, "SAARC Paintings Exhibition" to Nepal, "The Murals of India" to Egypt, and the Exhibition "Dolls & Dresses" to Prague.

The Council sponsored various other exhibitions abroad, such as Solo Exhibition of Late Shri S L Parashar curated by Ms. Bela Sathi to Tagore Centre, Berlin, Germany; Exhibition "Return to Roots" by seven Indian Bengali artists to Dhaka, Bangladesh; Solo Exhibition by Ms. Bharati Kapadia to Vienna, Austria; Painting Exhibition by Ms. Ranjeeta Kant to Nehru Centre, London; Paintings and Photographs exhibition by Ms. G S Bhavani in Hanoi, Vietnam; Photo Exhibition by Smt. Shobha Deepak Singh to London; Exhibition and lecture-demonstration sessions on "Chittara Art" by Mrs. Geetha Bhat, Ms. Mousumi & Mrs. Gowri Chandrashekhar, Photographic Exhibition by Ms. Gauri Gill "The Americans" in United States; Exhibition "Abstract Paintings" by Ms. Neelam Dhar in Muscat; Exhibition "Satyagraha", for the Literature Festival of Shared Histories – in South Africa and "Abstract Paintings" by Ms. Prabha Shah & Ms. Vandana Shourie in Muscat.

The ICCR organized Incoming Exhibitions of Photos, folk Dresses, Handicrafts and Books to mark the Days of Iranian Culture in India, organizing by the Council and Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in collaboration with the National Museum, New Delhi & Mumbai; Painting Exhibition by Women Artists from Afghanistan; Exhibition "KALPANA – Masterpieces of Figurative Indian Contemporary Paintings" curated by Ms. Anjolie Ela Menon in New Delhi; Exhibition, "History in the Making – Visual Archives" of Kulwant Roy curated by Aditya Arya and Sabeena in New Delhi; Photo Exhibition,

“Gabo the Writer” on Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Nobel Laureate from Colombia to celebrate Colombian Cultural Week in New Delhi; Photo exhibition “ Days of Tajik Culture in New Delhi; and Exhibition “Lost City” curated by Ms. Sadia Sayed a Visual Artist, in New Delhi.

Outgoing Cultural Delegations

During the period, the Council sponsored 70 cultural delegations till 3 November, 2008 and seven groups are in the pipeline to be sponsored in November 2008 to 72 countries, covering all continents of the world.

The Council sponsored many outstanding artistes, including Ms. Prerana Shimali (Kathak), Ms. Padmini Roy (Popular Music), Ms. Pratibha Prahlad (Bharatanatyam), Shri Prateek Chaudhary (Sitar), Ms. Uma Sharma (Kathak), Ms. Saroja Vaidyanathan (Bharatanatyam), Ms. Ranjana Gauhar (Odissi), Ms. Anita Singhvi (Ghazal).

The Council provided 34 travel grants to Composite Dance group of Outstanding artistes (Odissi Dance group of Ms. Madhavi Mudgal, Manipuri Dance group of Ms. Charu Mathur, Bharatanatyam Dance group of Ms. Geeta Chandran, Kathakali Dance group of International Centre for Kathakali and Kathak Dance group of Kathak Kendra) to present Glimpses of Classical Dances of India at the Bangkok International Dance and Music Festival. Apart from this, the Council also provided travel grants to many outstanding artistes such as Dr. Shanno Khurana (Vocal), Shri Rudra Prasad Sen Gupta (Theatre), Prof. C. V. Chandrasekhar, Guru Vempati Chinna Satyam (Kuchipudi), Ms. Rama Vaidyanathan (Bharatanatyam). The Council also provided 38 travel grants to a theatre group for Pakistan.

The main Festivals for which the Council provided collateral support are, the Izmir Festival in Turkey, Arab Cultural Festival in Syria, First International Folk Festival “Dukat” in Bosnia and Herzegovina, National Arts Festival Grahamstone in South Africa, Bali Arts Festival in Indonesia, Seventh Choir Competition in Germany, Theatre Festival “Contacting the World” in U.K., Karmiel Festival in Israel, SAARC Cultural Festival in Sri Lanka, 25th Year Jubilee Convention of Fokana in USA, Gyongyos Festival in Hungary, India Summer Festival in Switzerland, Fifth AKKA World Kannada Conference 2008 in USA, International Trade Fair in Belgium, Barcelona Festival in Spain, Cervantino Festival in Mexico, Music Beyond Borders in Hongkong, DIG Chain Tour in Germany, Namaste India Festival in Japan, Thyagaraja Festival in France, Annual Music Festival in Canada, Carnival of FICCI in Myanmar, Abuja Carnival in Nigeria, Indian

Arrival Day in Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname, World Performing Arts Festival in Pakistan, and APPAN Festival in Canada. The Council sponsored groups for India’s Independence Day Celebrations, Janmashtami celebration, and Navaratri Festival Celebrations in Sri Lanka, Diwali Festival in Australia and New Zealand and Zimbabwe, and Commemoration of 300 years of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Festival of India

As part of its effort to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries, the Council organized the following Festivals:

Festival of India in Syria

Following groups were sponsored for participation in the festival.

- 1) Seven-member Rajasthani Group led by Samandar Khan Langa from 10-18 October, 2008. The group also visited Beirut as part of chain tour.
- 2) Five-member Shehnai Group of Shri Dayashankar from 10 -17 October, 2008. The group also visited Beirut for performances.
- 3) 12-member Bhangra Group led by Shri Major Singh from 7-18 October, 2008.

Days of Indian Culture in Egypt

Following groups were sponsored for participation in the festival.

- 1) 12-member Group of Goan dance from 27 October- 13 November, 2008. The Group also visited Ethiopia, Sudan for performances, which were organized by the respective Embassy of India.
- 2) Six-member Talvadya Kacheri group of Dr. Anil Chaudhary from 8-13 November, 2008.
- 3) 11-member Rajasthani Group led by Ms. Rakhi Poonam Sapera from 12 November 2008-8 December, 2008. The group also visited Argentina, Chile as part for performances which were organized by the respective Embassies of India.
- 4) Six-member Kathak Dance Group led by Ms. Madhumita Roy and Shri Shouvik Chakraborty from 10 November-8 December, 2008. The Group also visited Italy, Argentina and Chile for performances which were organized by our respective Missions.

Amsterdam-India Festival in Netherlands

The Council, in coordination with the Concertgebouw organized the longest ever Festival of India in Netherlands.

Dr. Karan Singh, President, ICCR visited Netherlands for the inaugural ceremony. The following performing art groups participated in the Festival.

- 1) Seven-Member Bhajan Group of Shri Anup Jalota from 19-24 November, 2008
- 2) 14-Member Kathak Group of Pt. Birju Maharaj from 7-25 November, 2008. The Group also visited Germany, Hungary and Poland for performances, which were organized by the respective Embassy of India.
- 3) Five-Member Carnatic Vocal Group of Shri Sanjay Subramanyam from 18-24 November, 2008. The Group also visited Italy and Spain for performances which were organized our respective Missions.
- 4) Four-Member Hindustani Vocal Group of Ms. Ashwini Bhide from 10-15 November, 2008. The Group also visited Italy, where performances were organized by the Embassy of India in Rome.
- 5) Ten-Member Odissi Group of Nrityagram from 16-28 November, 2008. The Group also visited Italy, where performances, which were organized by the Embassy of India in Rome.
- 6) 14-Member Kathakali Group from 11-18 November, 2008. The Group also visited Spain, where performances were organized by the Embassy of India in Madrid.

Festival of India in Hungary

The Council sponsored a ten-member Rajasthani Group of Shri Allah Bhaya to Hungary for participation in the Festival from 28 November 2008-6 December, 2008.

Coronation Ceremony in Bhutan, a 38-Member Contemporary Dance Group led by Astad Deboo was sent to Bhutan from 3-9 November, 2008, for performing at the King's Coronation Ceremony.

Outgoing Visitors Programme

The Council sponsors the visit of Indian intellectuals; scholars, academicians and artistes to facilitate their participation in seminars, symposia, study tours and conferences abroad.

During the period April 2008 to November 2008, the Council sponsored the visits of 82 eminent scholars to various parts of the world.

Distinguished Visitors Programme

As part of its effort to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries, the Council facilitates the visits to India of eminent figures in public life as well as those of scholars, intellectuals, academicians and artistes from other countries under its Distinguished Visitors Programme. During the period, the Council hosted ten distinguished visitors from different countries such as China, Germany, South Africa, France, Bahrain, Tajikistan, Russia and nine European countries.

Awards

President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil presented the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for the year 1995 to President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mr. Mohamed Hosny Mubarak, at a special function on 18 November, 2008.



During the period April 2008-November 2008, the Indian Council of World Affairs organized the following events successfully:

i) Lectures	7
ii) Seminars-Conferences	9
iii) Bilateral dialogues	6
iv) Background briefings, Book Release/Panel Discussions and other events	14
Total	36

The events were very well attended. A list of all the events mentioned above may be seen in the Appendix.

During the period, the ICWA signed three MoUs for bilateral cooperation with:

1. Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan.
2. New Zealand Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Wellington.
3. Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) Melbourne

The Council hosted the following foreign dignitaries during the year:

- (1) H.E. Mr. Christoffel Braendli, President of the Upper House of the Swiss Parliament - 13 August, 2008
- (2) H.E. Mr. Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, The People's Republic of China - 9 September, 2008
- (3) Mr. Stephen Smith, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs - 11 September, 2008
- (4) Mr. Fritz Schramma, Lord Mayor of Cologne -17 November, 2008

ICWA sponsored a Joint Study between India-Central Asia Foundation (ICAF), ICWA and Deptt. of International Relations, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan on "Contemporary

Process of Political Modernization: Experience of Central Asian States and India".

ICWA Research Fellows regularly participated in seminars and contributed papers/lectures in various reputed journals.

ICWA's journal '**India Quarterly**' was brought out regularly during the period of this Report. Three issues of 'India Quarterly' namely: January-March 2008; April-June 2008 and July-September 2008 were brought out during the period. October-December, 2008 issue will be published by the end of January 2009.

Following CSCAP-related events were organized from April-November, 2008

1. CSCAP SGM on Facilitating of Maritime Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific held in Seoul from 2-3 April, 2008
2. CSCAP SGM on Countering the Proliferation of Weapons and Mass Destruction in the Asia Pacific held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam from 26-27 May, 2008
3. 29th SCM held in Kuala Lumpur from 2 June, 2008
4. 22nd Asia Pacific Round Table Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur from 2-5 May, 2008
5. 4th Meeting of Energy Security held in Brunei from 8-9 July, 2008
6. CSCAP SGM on Export Control Experts Group held in Manila, Philippines from 24-26 August, 2008
7. 3rd ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) Meeting held in Beijing, China from 13-15 November, 2008

Library environment has been improved and its membership is on the increase. The membership has grown to 477 from last year's 289. The ambience, look and feel of the library has been greatly enhanced attracting more members. Reference queries are being received on a day to day basis from American Centre, British Council, India International Centre, Teen Murti Secretariat and

various other renowned libraries. Chief correspondents of prestigious newspapers have been visiting library for information. 200 books on key issues in International affairs and foreign policies pertaining to Africa, South Asia, Central, East and West Asia have been added so far. About 90 research scholars from reputed Indian Institutions and Universities subscribed to the library and referred to the books, periodicals and press clippings

available in the library. Key Government Officials have utilized and applauded the library services. Various systems are being streamlined. Additional measures for modernising the library are being processed.

ICWA continued to develop as a think tank and an important platform for foreign affairs discussions in India in the above period.



Overview

RIS, as an autonomous policy think-tank, conducted policy research on international economic issues and provided analytical support in preparations for major Summit meetings and other important negotiations such as East Asia Summit, IBSA Summit, SAARC and BIMSTEC Summits, WTO negotiations, Track-II Study Group of CEPEA, joint study groups for comprehensive economic partnerships with different countries, among others. It continued to hold policy dialogue on the relevance and the way forward for an Asian Economic Community in collaboration with leading policy think-tanks in Asia, and has networked with policy think-tanks in other countries to bring policy coherence and capacity building on international economic issues and development cooperation.

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

RIS is a New Delhi based think-tank specialized in international economic relations and development cooperation. RIS is an autonomous institution under the Ministry of External Affairs. Its mandate is to function as an advisory body to the Government of India on matters pertaining to multilateral economic and social issues, including regional and sub-regional cooperation arrangements, as may be referred to it from time to time. RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue among developing country think-tanks on international economic issues.

Highlights of the RIS' work during the year 2008/09 are presented below:

Research and Policy Inputs Provided to the Government

RIS conducted research studies to assist the policy formulation and preparations for major Summit meetings and other negotiations besides track-II initiatives held in the year. Some of these inputs include the following:

- **SAARC Summit:** RIS brought out the *South Asia Development and Cooperation Report 2008* which was launched on the eve of the Colombo Summit of the

SAARC by the External Affairs Minister and was provided to the country delegations.

- **BIMSTEC Summit:** RIS prepared a policy brief *Deepening Regional Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal: Agenda of the BIMSTEC Summit* which was launched and presented at the BIMSTEC Business Summit 2008 organized by apex chambers in conjunction with the Second BIMSTEC Summit in November 2008. RIS also provided inputs to the MEA on BIMSTEC Economic Cooperation.
- **East Asia Summit and India-ASEAN Summit:** RIS has been deeply involved in the two track-II processes emanating from the East Asia Summit, namely the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and the Track II Study Group on Comprehensive Economic Partnership of East Asia (CEPEA). RIS represents the country on the ERIA Expert Group and the Regional Research Network. It has contributed to its various research programmes and coordinated the regional study on infrastructure development in East Asia. It also organizes a capacity-building programme in collaboration with ERIA. RIS is also represented on the Track-II Study Group on CEPEA. It hosted a meeting of the CEPEA study group in New Delhi in February 2008 besides contributing to the draft report. The first phase report was concluded and was presented to the Economic Ministers of EAS in Singapore in August 2008 which asked the Group to continue its work and produce a more detailed report. RIS has also provided a number of inputs in preparation of the fourth session of EAS to be held in Thailand in early 2009 such as those on Chiang Mai Initiative and Financial Cooperation in Asia, inputs for statement on financial crisis. Inputs were also provided for the 13th ASEAN-India Working Group, the Tenth ASEAN-India JCC, and Tenth ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting. Some inputs on emerging regional architecture in Asia were also provided to the Department of Commerce and to the Special Envoy to PM.

- **Mekong-Ganga Cooperation:** A note on 'India's Air Connectivity Potentials with Mekong Subregion: An Appraisal' was provided to the MEA. RIS also provided a more detailed note on India-MGC partnership for the MEA.
- **Third IBSA Summit:** RIS coordinated the IBSA Academic Forum at the Third IBSA Summit with participation of senior academics from the three IBSA countries. The Academic Forum focused on the financial crisis, food and energy security, and the potential of IBSA partnership besides a discussion on the future activities of the IBSA Academic Forum. The report of the Forum was presented by DG-RIS to the IBSA leaders at their Summit. RIS has published the report of the Forum. RIS also provided to the government inputs on Energy and Food Security in preparations of the IBSA Summit.
- **India-Africa Forum Summit:** RIS jointly with ICWA, organized a conference on India-Africa Economic Partnership on the eve of the preparatory process of the India-Africa Forum Summit hosted by the Government of India. A number of studies prepared by RIS on the subject were presented at the conference besides those prepared by African experts and other Indian experts.
- **WTO Doha Round:** RIS brought out a discussion paper and a policy brief on the ongoing Doha Round of trade negotiations. RIS also hosted a discussion meeting on the outcome of the July 2008 ministerial conference.
- **Asian Cooperation Dialogue:** RIS is represented on the high-level expert group on the future directions of the ACD. It participated in its meetings and prepared a concept paper on Prospects and Modalities of Track II Participation.
- **IOR-ARC Academic Group (IOR-AG):** RIS coordinates the activities of IOR-AG and represented India at the meeting of the group held at the Ministerial Meeting in Tehran in 2008.
- **Joint Study Groups for Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Arrangements with Indonesia, New Zealand and Australia:** RIS is represented on the three joint study groups set by the government with counterparts from the respective countries. RIS regularly participates in their meetings and contributes to the draft reports as per the division of labour worked out between the members.
- **Other Policy Papers and Inputs:** RIS provided to

the Government of India a number of policy inputs and briefings during the year including a Notes on 'Lessons Learnt from European Economic Integration and Consequent Implications for Asia', inputs for the high level meetings of the UN-ECSOC on Brettonwoods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD to the Department of Economic Affairs (Ministry of Finance); a note on National Security Exceptions for FDI Policy to the Dy. National Security Advisor; inputs on regional mechanism for infrastructure investment to the Cabinet Secretary, among others.

Policy Dialogue, Conferences and Symposia

During 2008/09 RIS organized a number of policy dialogues, conferences and symposia to fulfil its mandate of fostering intellectual dialogue among developing countries. The select major events organized in the period include the following:

High-level International Conference on Financial Crisis, Global Economic Governance and Development: Responses of Asia and the Global South, 6-7 February, 2009: To launch the Silver Jubilee celebrations of RIS, a High-level International Conference on Financial Crisis, Global Economic Governance and Development: Responses of Asia and the Global South was organised from 6-7 February, 2009 in New Delhi. This Conference combined the major themes of RIS work. The Conference was organized in collaboration with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore; Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Indonesia; Global Development and Environment (GDAE) Institute at Tufts University, Medford, USA; Centro De Investigaciones Para La Transformacion, (CENIT), Buenos Aires, Argentina; Commonwealth Secretariat, UK; Asian Development Bank, Manila; Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan and Ford Foundation, USA. The High-Level Conference brought together heads or senior experts from policy think-tanks across the world and international development agencies with whom RIS has developed institutional networking links. It had a representation of more than 35 institutions from outside India and numerous institutions within the country.

Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs and Finance Minister delivered the Inaugural Address, H.E. Mr. Haruhiko Kuroda, President, Asian Development Bank delivered a Keynote address in the Inaugural Session chaired by Dr. Arjun Sengupta, M.P. and Chairman, RIS.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General H.E. Mr. Kamlesh Sharma delivered a dinner address on 6 February, the SAARC Secretary-General H.E. Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma delivered a Keynote Address on 7 February and Ambassador H. S. Puri, Secretary (ER), Ministry of External Affairs, delivered the Valedictory Address at the Session chaired by Ambassador Leela Ponappa, Vice-Chairperson, RIS.

The Report of the Conference has been issued as RIS Policy Brief#41. The documentation of the Conference is available at www.ris.org.in.

Third IBSA Summit Academic Forum - IBSA Partnership for Shared Prosperity and Inclusive Globalization: As a part of the IBSA Summit, RIS coordinated a high-level Academic Forum from 13-14 October, 2008 to raise and discuss the contemporary issues of development and policy challenges facing the developing world. The Academic forum brought together senior academics and experts from leading think-tanks and other members of civil society from three countries for a discussion on themes of mutual interest and common concerns of development. Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for External Affairs delivered the inaugural session. The report of the Forum was presented at the Third IBSA Summit.

Regional Conference on Deepening South Asia Economic Integration: RIS organized a Regional Conference on Deepening South Asian Economic Integration in collaboration with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on 24 July, 2008 in New Delhi to set the stage for the Colombo Summit. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for External Affairs inaugurated the Conference and launched the RIS publication *South Asia Development and Cooperation Report 2008*. Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry delivered the valedictory address. Some key participants from other SAARC countries included Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma, SAARC Secretary-General; Dr. Kamal Hossain, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh; Mr. Nihal Rodrigo, Advisor to President of Sri Lanka; Dr. Saman Kelegama, Executive Director, Institute of Policy Studies, Sri Lanka; Dr. Behk Bahadur Thapa, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nepal; Mr. Tariq Sayeed, President, SCCI, Mr. Sultan Chawla, Chairman (R&D Committee), Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

International Conference on Africa-India Partnership in the 21st Century: RIS, jointly with Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and in collaboration with African

Studies Association of India (ASA), organized the International Conference on Africa-India Partnership in the 21st Century in New Delhi from 2-3 April, 2008 as a precursor to the India-Africa Forum Summit. It was addressed by senior experts from Indian and African academic and think-tanks. Mr. Nalin Surie, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs delivered the inaugural address. Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs delivered the Valedictory Address. H.E. Mr. Carlos Agostinho Do Rosario, Ambassador of Mozambique and Dean of African Diplomatic Corps in New Delhi also addressed the conference.

Session at WTO Public Forum on Trade and Development Policy for the 21st Century – Towards a Southern Consensus: RIS, jointly with Global Development and Environment Institute (GDAE) at the Tufts University, Medford, MA, USA; and Research Centre for Economic Change (CENIT), Argentina, organized a special session on Trade and Development Policy for the 21st Century: Towards a Southern Consensus at the WTO Public Forum on Trading into Future in Geneva on 25 September, 2008. The distinguished panelists included Mr. Faizel Ismail, Head of the South African Delegation to the WTO, Geneva; Dr. Kevin Gallagher of GDAE; Dr. Mehdi Shafaeddin, IRENE, Universite de Neuchatel, Switzerland, and Dr Nagesh Kumar, DG-RIS.

Conference on Emerging Asian Regionalism: ASEAN India FTA and Beyond: RIS, jointly with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Manila, organized the conference on Emerging Asian Regionalism: ASEAN-India FTA and Beyond in New Delhi on 29 September, 2008. Dr. Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State, delivered the inaugural address. Key speakers included Dr. M. Kawai, Dean, ADB Institute, Tokyo.

Conference on ‘India-ASEAN Economic Partnership: Trade and Investment Opportunities’, 24 November 2008: RIS, jointly with India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), New Delhi organized a Conference on India-ASEAN Economic Partnership: Trade and Investment Opportunities on Monday, 24 November, 2008 in New Delhi. A number of presentations on different aspects of the recently concluded Indian-ASEAN FTA were made by different experts from Indian and ASEAN side.

Silver Jubilee Eminent Persons Lecture, 24 March, 2009: In commemoration of Silver Jubilee of its establishment, RIS has launched an Eminent Persons Lecture Series. The First Silver Jubilee Eminent Persons

Lecture was delivered by Professor Jan Pronk formerly Minister for Development Cooperation, the Netherlands and a leading development thinker, on Globalization, Sustainable Development and Conflict on 24 March, 2009 in New Delhi. Professor Muchkund Dubey, President, CSD and Chairman, RIS Research Advisory Council chaired. Dr. Arjun Sengupta, Chairman, RIS made the opening remarks. Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Director-General, RIS extended the vote of thanks.

RIS/NARC/UNESCO: Fourth Asian Conference on Biotechnology and Development 12-13 February, 2009:

The Fourth Asian Conference on Biotechnology and Development was organized by RIS in collaboration with Nepal Agriculture Research Council (NARC) in Kathmandu from 12-13 February, 2009. The Conference was supported by UNESCO.

Mr. Tek Bhadur Thapa, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives chaired the inaugural session. Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, Senior Fellow, RIS made the welcome remarks. H.E. Mr. Jayaprakash P. Gupta, Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives, Government of Nepal delivered the inaugural address. Prof Govindan Parayil, Vice-Rector, United Nations University and Director, Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), Japan delivered the keynote address. Prof. Parashuram Lal Karna, Executive Director, Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC), Kathmandu proposed the vote of thanks. About 90 participants from 19 countries and seven international organizations participated in the Conference. From India Dr. S. R. Rao, Advisor, Department of Biotechnology; and Dr. K. Ravi Srinivas, Associate Fellow, RIS, among others, participated.

The Conference was an effort to collectively explore how best Asia and other developing countries may strategize optimum returns on their technological and R&D investments. It was part of the RIS initiative launched in collaboration with UNESCO and with the support from many other national agencies. The report of the Conference is available at RIS website.

First South Asia Economic Summit on Economic Integration in South Asia: The First South Asia Economic Summit on Economic Integration in South Asia: SAFTA and Beyond was held in Colombo from 28-30 August, 2008. This Summit was organized by the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) and Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL) in collaboration with RIS, India among other organizations. The RIS' *South Asia Development & Cooperation Report 2008* was launched at the summit by Mr. Alok Prasad, High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka.

Workshop on National Biosafety Legislations and Cartagena Biosafety Protocol: RIS and International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) organized a workshop on National Biosafety Legislations and Cartagena Biosafety Protocol: How far we are from Convergence?" in Bonn, Germany on 14 May, 2008. Among the speakers were Mr. John Komen, from PBS, The Netherlands, Dr. Adrian Ely, SPRU Research Fellow, Sussex University, UK; Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, Fellow, RIS; and Dr Maria Julia Oliva, Senior Programme Officer, ICTSD, Geneva.

Seminar on the Doha Round on Trade Negotiations: Challenges and Prospects: RIS organized a Seminar on 13 August 2008 to discuss the key negotiating positions of developed and developing countries, the emerging areas of convergence and challenges remaining to be addressed in the Round and the future prospects. Mr. Gopal K. Pillai, Commerce Secretary, Government of India, and Dr. Anwarul Hoda, Member, Planning Commission addressed the participants.

Outreach, Global Presence and Networking

RIS has taken steps to strengthen the institutional networking and international visibility of its work by organizing seminars at the global events. In the past year a number of policy dialogues were organized jointly with partner institutions e.g. ICTSD, Geneva; ADB, Manila; Institute for Policy Studies, Sri Lanka; IDE/Jetro and ERIA, Japan; GDAE at Tufts University, USA; CENIT, Argentina; ADB Institute, Tokyo; FICCI, CII, ITPO, Institute of Chinese Studies, Indian Council of World Affairs, among others. RIS has entered into MoUs providing a framework for joint activities with a number of similar institutions in different countries such as with Development Research Centre (DRC) of the State Council of China, Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP), Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, Institute of Developing Economies (IDE/JETRO) in Tokyo, International Institute of Trade and Development in Bangkok, NAM Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation in Jakarta, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Jakarta among others.

Capacity Building and Training Programmes

A four-week capacity-building programme on *International Economic Issues and Development Policy* (IEIDP) is conducted during February-March every year under the

auspices of ITEC/SCAAP Programme of the MEA. In 2008, ten participants from nine different countries participated in the programme. In February-March 2009, another group of 16 participants from 14 countries participated.

Another capacity-building programme on *Global and Regional Economic Issues* (GRECI) was launched in February-March 2008 for participants from EAS countries with the support of ERIA. In 2008, eight participants from East Asian countries participated in it. In February-March 2009, another batch of 12 participants from 11 East Asian countries participated.

Training Programme on Global Economic Regime and India's Regional Economic Engagements: RIS, on behalf of the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, organized a training programme for IFS Probationers in New Delhi from 3-4 June, 2008.

Training Programme on India's Economic Security in the Globalized World: A training module was organized by the RIS for senior officers of the Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India from 24-25 June, 2008.

Training Module on 'Global Economic Issues: Implications for Developing Countries': RIS organized

a Training Module in conjunction with 46th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats conducted by Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External affairs in New Delhi on 10 November, 2008.

Training Module on 'Understanding Regional Economic Cooperation in Asia' 5 November, 2008: RIS organized a Training Module on Understanding Regional Economic Cooperation in Asia for College and University Teachers conducted by Academic Staff College, Department of Economics, Jamia Millia Islamia University.

RIS Publications

During 2008/09 RIS published five books/reports, issued five Policy Briefs and fifteen Discussion Papers. Two issues of the *South Asia Economic Journal*, three issues of the *Biotechnology and Development Review* and three issues of *New Asia Monitor*, and one issue of *RIS Mekong-Ganga Policy Brief* were brought out. In addition four issues of *RIS Diary* were also published. RIS publications can be downloaded from its website <http://www.ris.org.in>.

Budget

RIS received a budgetary support of Rupees Rs 260 lakhs during 2008-09 from the MEA.



The Ministry's Library has over 100,000 books, rich resource materials and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents. It is also equipped with modern facilities to support policy planning and research. The library subscribes/ receives and maintains about 480 Periodicals / Journals (including on-line journals and databases) and Newspaper titles.

The Library has an in-house computer system consisting of a Server, and 12 PCs. The system supports data entry and retrieval in Hindi as well. The Library has CD-ROM databases on foreign affairs and current affairs. The Library PCs are also equipped with CD-writers and laser printers. It also has a colour scanner (with OCR capability as well as facility for storage and retrieval of Image), a microfilm / fiche reader printer, plain paper photocopiers and a HP Office-jet pro laser printer with Desk Top Publishing (DTP) software.

A Library Committee manages library activities including purchase of books and subscription of journals / periodicals. In April 2008, Foreign Secretary has reconstituted the Library Committee. The current Library Committee consists of Joint Secretary (PP & R) as Chairman, Three Directors from territorial divisions as Members and Director (Lib & Info) as Member Secretary.

All Documentation / Bibliographic Services as well as other library operation and services have been computerized, using an integrated library software package LIBSYS covering all the features of library. LIBSYS follows MARC as well as non-MARC format. It supports word-based free text searching using Boolean operators. It also provides online validation of input data prior to updating the database. Information on all books, maps, documents and selected articles from periodicals received in the Library since 1986 [and also pre-1986 publications in active use] are available online through intranet in all PCs of Ministry of External Affairs Library at Patiala House. Library's information can also be accessed through Internet on MEA Library's website: <http://mealib.nic.in>.

All new documents received in the Library i.e. books, maps, microfilms, selected articles from periodicals are being fed on a regular basis in the database on foreign

affairs. Using this database and CD-ROM Databases, the Library provides Current Awareness Service and Bibliographical and Reference Service. In addition, the Library regularly issues:

Foreign Affairs Documentation Bulletin (FADB): a list of Selected articles on International Relations and related subject.

Recent Additions: an annotated list of Books / Publications added to the Library.

The Library regularly send Article Alert Service, which consists of abstracts of important articles from Journals / periodicals subscribed by MEA library through group e-Mails IDs to all Foreign Service officers in the Ministry and Missions abroad.

In addition to this, MEA Library has become a virtual Library in reality as have started subscribing "**EIU online databases / services**", "**J-GATE: Social Science and Management Science: a full text multi-user database**" and "**JSTOR Data base**" for the users at Head Quarters in New Delhi and all Indian Missions Abroad. In addition to this library have also subscribing 91 online periodicals / journals along with print copies. These online databases and journals / periodicals can be accessed on Internet via username and passwords. A list of such titles has also been circulated at Head Quarters as well as Missions abroad and also available on MEA Library's Website: <http://mealib.nic.in>.

The Library in cooperation with NIC has brought out a full text CD-ROM version of Annual Report of Ministry of External Affairs [from 1948 to 1998-99] and Foreign Affairs Record [1955 to 1999 (August)]. The Information on the CD can be retrieved via combination of searches including search on any given word or combination of words. This CD-ROM version was prepared based on material available as on 1 January 2000. This CD can be consulted in the Library at Patiala House, New Delhi.

Weeding out of old and obsolete books and journals had commenced few years back is still continuing and a substantial progress has been made in this regard.

Retro-conversion and bar-coding of MEA Library records project has been approved. The work has been awarded and will be completed in this financial year.

Library also provides practical training to the student of Library Science studying in various Institutions of Delhi from time to time.

The library renovation work has also started after a gap of almost ten years. The work has been awarded to CPWD and will be completed in this financial year.

Director (Lib & Info) and other professionals attended / participated International and National Conferences / Seminars of various Library Associations / IFLA from time to time.

The Library has also processed case for Category V Library as per orders of Ministry of Finance after a gap of 17 years.

MEA Library website (<http://mealib.nic.in>) has been redesigned and updated. A circular in this regard has been sent to all officers in the Ministry including Indian Missions abroad as per instructions of Foreign Secretary.

Library users including research scholars are welcome to access the Library and its database, including CD-ROM Database, and the Foreign Affairs Information Retrieval system (FAIRS). Photocopy and Computer Print-out facilities are also available to all Library users including research scholars.



Appendices

Appendix I

Cadre strength at Headquarters and Missions abroad during 2008-09 (including Posts budgeted by Ministry of Commerce and those ex-cadred etc.)

S. No	Cadre/Post	Posts at Headquarters	Posts at Mission	Total
1	Grade I	5	26	31
2	Grade II	9	34	43
3	Grade III	38	140	178
4	Grade IV	36	110	146
5	Junior Admn. Grade/Senior scale	44	147	191
6	(i) Junior Scale	10	39	49
	(ii) Probationers Reserve	62	-	62
	(iii) Leave Reserve	15	-	15
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	19	-	19
	(V) Training Reserve	7	-	7
	Sub Total	245	496	741
IFS(B)				
7	(i) Grade I	84	212	296
	(ii) Deputation Reserve	6	-	6
8	(i) Integrated Grades II&III	147	236	383
	(ii) Leave Reserve	30	-	30
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	16	-	16
	(iv) Training Reserve	25	-	25
9	(i) Grade IV	189	416	605
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	-	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	55	-	55
10	(i) Grade V/VI	168	101	269
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	-	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	14	-	14
11	(i) Grade II of Cypher Cadre	41	147	188
	(ii) Leave Reserve	24	-	24
12	(i) Stenographer's cadre	174	488	662
	(ii) Leave Reserve	47	-	47
	(iii) Training Reserve(Hindi)	10	-	10
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	12	-	12
13	Interpreter's Cadre	7	26	33
14	L&T cadre	14	1	15
	Sub Total	1183	1627	2810
	Grand Total	1427	2123	3551

Appendix II

Data on recruitment through direct recruitment, departmental promotion and Ltd Departmental Examination made in the Ministry along with the reserved vacancies for April 2008 to November 2008

Groups	Total No. of Vacancies	Number of Vacancies			Unreserved
		SC	ST	OBC	
Group A	19	4	1	4	10
Group A (Ex-Cadre)	-	-	-	-	-
Group B	34	6	2	6	20
Group C	8	-	-	2	6
Grou D	-				
Total	61	10	3	12	36

Appendix III

Number of IFS Officers with Proficiency in various languages

Language	Number of Officers	Language	Number of Officers
Arabic	91	Korean	3
Bahasa Malaysia	2	Nepalese	3
Bhasa Indonesia	12	Persian	20
Burmese	2	Portuguese	21
Chinese	60	Russian	77
Dutch	1	Serbo-Croatian	3
French	68	Sinhalese	1
German	31	Spanish	58
Hebrew	4	Thai	2
Italian	3	Turkish	7
Japanese	24	Ukrainian	1
Kazakh	1	Vietnamese	2
Kiswahili	5		

Appendix IV

Statement showing the number of passport applications received and passports issued including under Tatkaal Scheme, miscellaneous applications received and services rendered as well as Revenue (including revenue under Tatkaal Scheme) and Expenditure figures of the Passport Offices from 1 January - 31 December 2008.

Name of RPO/PO	No. of Applications received	No. of Passports issued	No. of miscellaneous applications received	Miscellaneous services rendered	Passports issued under Tatkaal	Revenue under Tatkaal Scheme	Total Revenue	Total expenditure
Ahmedabad	272609	280415	12626	12286	20203	27542450	303428770	47001756
Amritsar#	53306	34190	7439	6868	3559	7194400	62590600	*
Bangalore	321287	310436	28664	27976	36527	64993400	342337850	34177234
Bareilly	70852	65950	3556	3551	3309	536250	78505430	15780475
Bhopal	69394	70187	2761	2750	8302	12373000	81537072	11169915
Bhubaneswar	46620	49938	2934	2565	17262	19330600	67363240	5333674
Chandigarh	295120	307760	36517	34895	22066	49553422	337646760	35104863
Chennai	292756	307433	24377	23689	85414	131617500	446284553	41226878
Cochin	249626	249513	52937	52360	47778	72509000	340196000	39582000
Coimbatore##	20926	11409	1757	1514	5139	13955700	28107900	2992559
Dehradun###	20668	14314	1238	1127	928	3594700	23500700	**
Delhi	272075	280168	25649	24481	58338	13560000	35840000	5370000
Ghaziabad	93610	92645	7238	7046	7146	14858300	80555965	11730373
Guwahati	35036	31872	4029	3842	8643	20988100	44978500	6431960
Hyderabad	373172	372001	18209	13556	44440	101139980	480497925	46163557
Jaipur	195568	174081	11767	8828	20087	39335300	221283240	26054479
Jalandhar	198787	191409	34806	33369	3916	6259600	228692862	40407428
Jammu	15937	16938	1099	995	111	166500	17534010	3690765
Kolkata	232897	200007	17521	17248	14204	34178000	243976200	24468070
Kozhikode	193747	195112	31318	30642	34514	55600000	259700000	27900000
Lucknow	332521	334233	19667	18204	12827	34000000	364800000	39300000
Madurai####	149670	131602	9286	8564	28993	75579500	203241683	17943800
Malappuram	155941	152176	23372	23358	19903	30400000	207800000	20800000
Mumbai	298569	293427	20707	20289	22361	30226000	333569177	88261531
Nagpur	56768	59701	1834	1771	5568	7040200	63768414	6093239
Panaji	30381	30755	4553	4445	1602	2532000	35227143	5595033
Patna	206974	164020	7403	7872	2869	4532000	209222121	16365075
Pune	119895	120786	7913	7888	14589	19345500	141775510	11271480
Raipur#####	22101	16115	975	966	2857	7142500	25853800	***
Ranchi	42286	38409	4083	3760	6218	9421000	42636000	5475609
Shimla	27292	26257	1481	1450	1611	4505600	29337828	****
Srinagar	15247	14812	1197	1167	260	386000	16388230	7819874
Surat	87901	89479	7737	7644	1946	2745600	91465100	*****
Thane	149925	151497	5842	5752	8731	15441500	166470450	*****
Trichy	143907	177306	8998	8983	16575	26139000	190112030	26689783
Trivandrum	164699	163077	35231	34148	28795	44056000	226450679	20660807
Vishakapatnam	83234	90737	12453	11777	9700	14901500	99629759	9636910
	5411304	5310167	499174	477626	627291	1017680102	6172305501	700499127

* expenditure incurred by RPO Jalandhar

** expenditure incurred by PO Bareilly

*** expenditure incurred by RPO Bhopal

**** expenditure incurred by RPO Chandigarh

***** expenditure incurred by RPO Ahmedabad

***** expenditure incurred by RPO Mumbai

Amritsar opened on 28 June 2008

Coimbatore opened on 13 September 2008

Dehradun opened on 17 June 2008

Madurai opened on 17 December 2007

Raipur opened on 17 December 2007

Appendix V

Finances of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2008-2009

The Budget Allocation of the Ministry of External Affairs in the Budget Estimates (BE) 2008-2009 is Rs. 5062.00 crores, which is Rs. 628.40 crores i.e. 14.17 % more than the BE 2007-08 of Rs. 4433.60 crores. There is an increase in the Revised Estimates for 2008-09 by Rs. 1806.42 crores i.e. by 35.68 % over BE 2008-09 allocation.

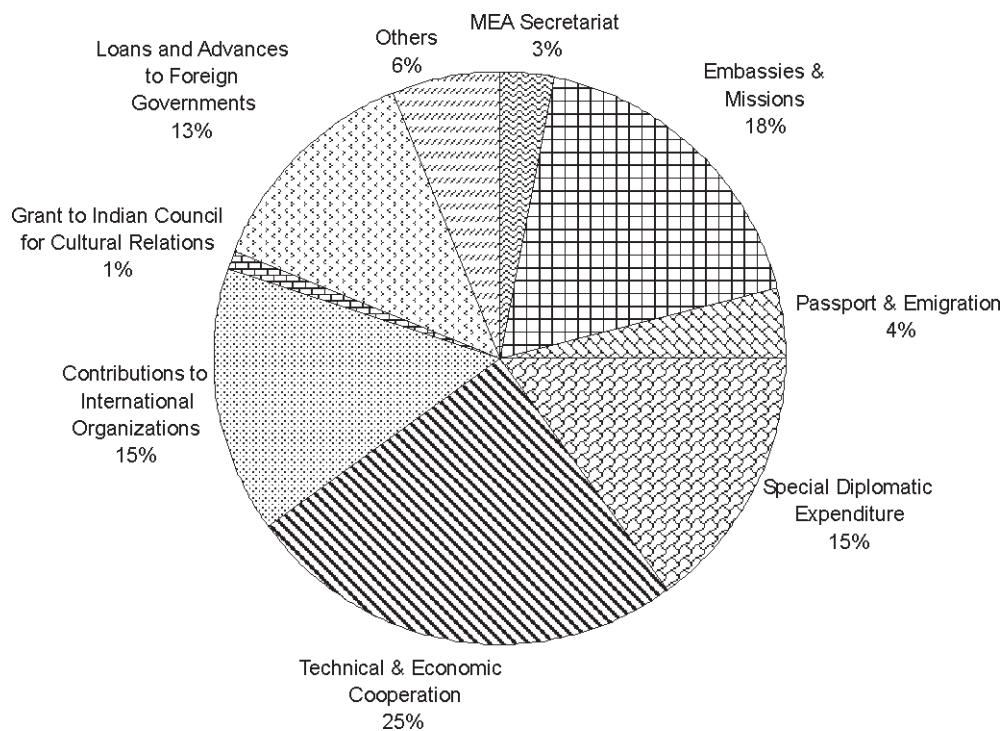
MEA Expenditure and Budget (2002-2003 to 2008-2009)
(Revenue & Capital)

Years	Actuals (in Rs. Crores)	Percentage variation from previous year
2002-2003	3253.79	23.98
2003-2004	3344.53	2.79
2004-2005	3756.15	12.31
2005-2006	4089.67	8.88
2006-2007	3949.68	-3.43
2007-2008	4572.39	15.77
2008-2009 (BE)	5062.00	14.17
2008-2009(RE)	6868.42	54.92

Appendix VI

The Major Sectoral Allocations in the 2008-2009 Budget (Revised Estimate) (Revenue & Capital)

Sectors	Allocation (in Rs. Crores)
MEA Secretariat	186.21
Embassies & Missions	1230.96
Passport & Emigration	247.76
Special Diplomatic Expenditure	1041.39
Technical & Economic Cooperation	1730.09
Contributions to International Organizations	1015.56
Grant to Indian Council for Cultural Relations	86.75
Loans and Advances to Foreign Governments	914.60
Others	415.10
Total	6868.42



Appendix VII

Principal Destinations of India's Aid & Loan Programmes

The principal beneficiaries of our Aid and Loan Programmes in the Current Financial Year (2008-09) are as under:
(Revised Estimates)

Aid & Loan to Countries	(In Rupees Crores)	% of India's total aid and loan budget
Bhutan	1205.92	45.60
Maldives	504.70	19.08
Afghanistan	418.50	15.82
Other Developing Countries	215.75	8.16
Nepal	113.00	4.27
African Countries	95.00	3.59
Myanmar	35.00	1.32
Sri Lanka	30.00	1.13
Central Asia	18.82	0.71
Bangladesh	6.00	0.23
Latin American Countries	2.00	0.08
Total	2644.69	100.00

1. The Government of India has extended loans to the Government of Bhutan to assist in the implementation of developmental projects. During 2008-2009, the loan extended to the Government of Bhutan amounts to Rs.114.60 crores. This year a standby credit facility of Rs. 300 crores has also been extended to Bhutan.
2. The Budget of the Ministry of External Affairs is essentially a Non-Plan Budget. However, from 1996-97, a Plan Head has been established with the approval of the Cabinet. This primarily caters to certain large developmental projects undertaken in Bhutan, as part of project assistance requested by Government of Bhutan in the Government of India's "Aid to Bhutan" Programme. The Tala-Hydroelectric Project has been commissioned. The other projects in Bhutan being funded from the Plan head are the Punatsangchu Hydroelectric Project and the Dungsum Cement Plant Project. The Kabul-Pul-e-Khumri double circuit transmission line in Afghanistan and the Kaladan Multimodal Transport project in Myanmar are also being funded from Plan allocations. The Plan segment also caters to the loans extended to the Government of Bhutan, which is Rs. 114.60 crores for the current financial year(2008-2009).
3. The estimated expenditure on the Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs during the current financial year is Rs. 186.21 crores, which is 3.56 % of the total estimated revenue budget of Rs. 5227.57 crores . Estimated expenditure on Indian Missions and Posts abroad is expected to be Rs. 1230.96 crores which is about 23.55 % of the total revenue expenditure of the Ministry.
4. The Ministry of External Affairs' revenue from Passport and Visa fees and other receipts for 2008-09 are likely to be of the order of Rs. 2000.36 crores. It is estimated that Passport fees would account for Rs. 950 crores, Visa fees for Rs. 1000 crores and other receipts for Rs. 50.36 crores .

Appendix VIII

Extracts from C&AG's Report on Ministry of External Affairs

Ministry's approval for unwieldy large Haj goodwill delegations to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for long duration of 18 – 20 days, which is inconsistent with the role of the delegations, renders it extravagant. No criteria have been established for nomination of the members for the delegation. Ministry arranges hotel accommodation for the accompanying spouse/family members of the delegates at Government cost which is irregular.

(Report No. CA 1 OF 2008)

Appendix IX

Treaties/Conventions/Agreements Concluded or Renewed by India with other countries in the year 2008

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit	Date of Entry into force
A. MULTILATERAL				
1	Seventh Additional Protocol to the Constitution of the Universal Postal Union	5.10.2004	7.3.2008	
2	International coffee agreement 2007	28.8.2008	18.9.2008	22.9.2008
3	Amendment of Annex B to the Kyoto Protocol adopted by the Conference of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.	17.11.2006	30.9.2008	18.11.20008
4	International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006.	23.4.2008	19.6.2008	25.7.2008
5	Charter of the SAARC Development fund(SDF)	3.8.2008	27.10.2008	
6	Protocol of Accession of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area(SAFTA)	3.8.2008	27.10.2008	
7	SAARC Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters	3.8.2008	29.8.2008	
8	Agreement on the Establishment of South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO)	3.8.2008	27.10.2008	
9	Convention 174 Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993.	3.4.2008	6.6.2008	6..6.2009
10	Headquarters Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the South Asian University(SAU).	30.11.2008		30.11.2008
B. TRILATERAL				
IBSA				
1	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on cooperation in the field human settlements development.	15.10.08		15.10.08
2	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on cooperation in the area of environment under IBSA forum	15.10.08		15.10.08
3	Tripartite agreement among the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa for cooperation in the field of tourism under IBSA.	15.10.08		
4	Memorandum of Understanding on trade facilitation for standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment among the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	15.10.08		

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit	Date of Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
5	Memorandum of Understanding among the Governments of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on cooperation in the field of women's development and gender equality programmes.		15.10.08		
6	Agreement on Wind Resources between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.		17.10.07		
7	Agreement on Public Administration & Governance between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.		17.10.07		
C. BILATERAL					
1	Australia Extradition Treaty between The Republic of India and Australia.	23.6.2008		11.8.2008	
2	Treaty between the Republic of India and Australia on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	23.6.2008		14.8.2008	
3	Belgium Agreement on Social Security between the Kingdom of Belgium and The Republic of India	3.11.2006		3.6.2008	
4	Bhutan Memorandum of Understanding on telemedicine project in Bhutan between Government of India and the Government of Bhutan.	28.3.2008			
5	Brazil Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Federative Republic of Brazil.	16.4.2008		14.8.2008	
6	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on audio visual co production.	4.6.2007		22.8.2008	
7	Bosnia & Herzegovina Agreement between India and Bosnia & Herzegovina for Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection.	12.9.2006		27.11.2007	14.2.2008
8	British High Commission Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India and British High Commission regarding her Majesty's Government.	21.1.2008			
9	Belarus Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Republic of Belarus	16.4.2007		17.4.2008	

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit	Date of Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
10	Bulgaria Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria amending the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria for the Promotion and Protection of Investment signed in New Delhi on the twenty sixth day of October in the year nineteen thousand and ninety eight	12.9.2007	8.11.2007	12.5.2008	
11	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Republic of Bulgaria .	12.9.2007	24.9.2008	9.10.2008	
12	Treaty on the Transfer of sentenced persons between the Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria .	12.9.2007	28.2.2008	9.10.2008	
13	Agreement on Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria	12.9.2007	20.3.2008		
14	Brunie Darussalam Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement(BIPA)	22.5.2008	14.7.2008		
15	Cambodia Agreement between the government of the Republic of India and the Royal Government of Cambodia of the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.	8.12.2007	5.6.2008		
16	China Memorandum of Understanding between National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development and Agricultural Development Bank of China on Mutual Cooperation.	14.1.2008	14.1.2008		
17	Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation of the Republic of India and Ministry of Construction of the People's Republic of China .	14.1.2008		14.1.2008	
18	A Shared Vision for the 21 st Century of the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China .	14.1.2008		-	
19	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and Ministry of Railways of the People's Republic of China .	14.1.2008		14.1.2008	
20	Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for the Export of Tobacco Leaves from India to China between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China .	14.1.2008		14.1.2008	

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
21	Memorandum of Understanding on Scientific Cooperation between Geological Survey of India and China Geological Survey in Geosciences.	14.1.2008		14.1.2008
22	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Rural Development of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Land and Resources of the People's Republic of China for Cooperation in Land Resource Management, Land Administration and Resettlement & Rehabilitation.	14.1.2008		14.1.2008
23	Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Ayush, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare of the Republic of India and State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SATCM), People's Republic of China concerning Cooperation in Traditional Medicine.	14.1.2008		14.1.2008
24	Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries on Cooperation in Culture.	14.1.2008		14.1.2008
25	Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries on India-China Joint Medical Mission.	14.1.2008		14.1.2008
26	Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation between the Planning Commission of the Republic of India and The National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China .	14.1.2008		14.1.2008
27	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Water Resources, the Republic of India and the Ministry of Water Resources, the People's Republic of China upon Provision of Hydrological Information of the Yaluzangbu/Brahmaputra River in Flood Season by China to India.	5.6.2008		5.6.2008
28	Cyprus Agreement between Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Combating International Terrorism Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking	25.5.2007		25.1.2008
29	Canada Agreement between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India and The University of Saskatchewan, Canada on Indo-Canadian Renewable Energy Cooperation.	28.3.2008		28.3.2008
30	Agreement for scientific and technological cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Canada .	17.11.2005		10.9.2008

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit	Date of Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
31	Denmark Arrangement between the Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the Kingdom of Denmark on Gainful Employment for Family Members of a Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post.		6.2.2008		6.2.2008
32	Djibouti Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Djibouti for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	19.5.2003		16.10.2008	
33	Ethiopia Agreement between the Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Government of the Republic of India for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.	5.6.2007		3.9.2007	13.8.2008
34	Egypt Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.	8.1.2008		5.6.2008	
35	Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt	8.1.2008		24.1.2008	
36	Extradition Treaty Between Government of India and the Government of Arab Republic of Egypt	18.11.2008		8.12.2008	
37	Memorandum of Understanding in the fields of Health and Medicine between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Egypt.	18.11.2008			18.11.2008
38	France Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the French Republic concerning to the Protection of Classified information and Material in the Field of Defence.	25.1.2008		19.12.2008	
39	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of France on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.	25.1.2008		16.7.2008	
40	Bilateral Agreement for the Jules Horowitz Reactor Construction and Operation between Commissariat A L'energie Atomique a French State and Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India.	25.1.2008			
41	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic on India-French Development Cooperation Through AFD.	25.1.2008			

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit	Date of Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
42	Agreement concerning cooperation to set up an International Associated Laboratory “Project” between National Brain (NBRC) Government of India and The National Institute for Health and Medical Research.	25.1.2008			
43	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and The French National Railways(SNCF) .	14.5.2008		14.5.2008	
44	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic on the Development of Peaceful uses of Nuclear Energy.	30.9.2008			
45	Germany Agreement between the Federal Ministry of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of India on the Mutual Protection of Classified Information.	30.10.2007		30.10.2008	
46	Hellenic Republic Agreement between the Government of the Hellenic Republic of Greece and the Government of the Republic of India on scientific technological cooperation.	26.4.2007	18.7.2007	29.2.2008	
47	Agreement between India and Hellenic Republic of Greece for Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection.	26.4.2007	21.8.2007	12.4.2008	
48	Hungary Plan of Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Hungary .	18.1.2008		18.1.2008	
49	Agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Hungary on Cooperation in the filed of Agriculture and Allied sectors.	18.1.2008		18.1.2008	
50	Iran Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	2.11.2008	18.11.2008		
51	Italy Agreement on cultural cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Italy and the Government of Republic of India.	12.7.2004		6.10.2008	
52	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies on cooperation in the fields of Agriculture and Phytosanitary issues.	16.1.2008		16.1.2008	

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
53	Iceland Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Iceland for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	29.6.2007	19.10.2007	16.12.2008
54	Ireland Agreement on Scientific and Technological cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ireland	19.1.2006		19.2.2008
55	Japan Joint statement between the Planning Commission of India and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan on the Occasion of the third Meeting of the Japan-India Energy Dialogue.		17.9.2008	
56	Joint Statement on the advancement of the Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan .	22.10.2008		
57	Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between India and Japan .	22.10.2008		
58	Joint Statement signed between Minister for Commerce and Industry and the Japanese Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry.	21.10.2008		
59	Memorandum of Understanding between Japan Bank for International Cooperation and India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited and Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Limited.	21.10.2008		
60	Memorandum of Understanding on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and the High Energy Accelerator Research Organization(KEZ), Japan .	22.10.2008		22.10.08
61	Kyrgyz Republic Programme of Cooperation between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic.	4.2.2008		4.2.2008
62	Macedonia Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	17.3.2008	30.4.2008	17.10.2008
63	Madagascar Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Madagascar	18.9.2008		
64	Mauritius Extradition Treaty between India and Mauritius.	21.11.2003	21.8.2007	23.6.2008

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
65	Myanmar Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar on Intelligence Exchange Cooperation.		2.4.2008	
66	Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar for the Construction and Operation of a Multi-Modal Transit Transport Facility of Kaladan River connecting the Sittwe Port in Myanmar with the State of Mizoram in India.		2.4.2008	
67	Protocol on Facilitation of Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar .		2.4.2008	
68	Protocol on Maintenance and Administration of Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Facility between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar .		2.4.2008	
69	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.	24.6.2008		1.10.2008
70	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income.		2.4.2008	
71	Montenegro Convention between Montenegro and the Government of the Republic of India for the avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion	8.2.2006.	12.9.2008	23.9.2008
72	Maldives Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and Maldives concerning Manpower requirements of Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital(IGMH), Male.	19.9.2008		19.9.2008
73	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives for the Establishment of the India-Maldives Foundation.	19.9.2008		19.9.2008
74	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives on cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology.	11.2.2008		11.2.2008
75	Mexico Agreement between India and Mexico for Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection.	21.5.2007	2.7.2007	23.2.2008

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit	Date of Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
76	Netherlands Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands on Cooperation in the Fields of Science, Technology and Innovation.		28.3.2008		
77	Norway Memorandum of Understanding Between the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Republic of India and the Ministry of Education and Research, Kingdom of Norway on Cooperation in the Field of Education.		18.6.2008		
78	Pakistan Agreement on Consular Access between India and Pakistan.	21.5.2008		21.5.2008	
79	Memorandum of Understanding between Securities and Exchange Board of India and Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan.	28.1.2008		28.1.2008	
80	Memorandum of Understanding between Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi, India and Institute for Strategic Studies, Islamabad, Pakistan.	4.2.2008			
81	Memorandum of Understanding between India and Pakistan on Air Services.	15.2.2008		15.2.2008	
82	Palestine Memorandum of understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Palestine Liberation Organization for the benefit of the Palestine Authority regarding.	7.10.2008			
83	Qatar Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Qatar concerning cooperation on Defence.	9.11.2008		9.11.2008	
84	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Qatar on Cooperation in Security and Law enforcement matters.	9.11.2008	19.12.2008		
85	Romania Agreement on Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Romania	23.10.2006	20.3.2008		
86	Russian Federation Agreement between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on cooperation to combat illicit trafficking in Narcotics Psychotropic substances and their Precursors.	12.11.2007	1.10.2008		

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit	Date of Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
87	Memorandum on Cooperation in the Field of Archives between National Archives of India and the Federal Archival Agency (Russian Federation)		12.2.2008		
88	Protocol for consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation for 2009-2010.		20.10.2008		
89	Memorandum on the Development of Cooperation in Law Enforcement Matters between the Central Board of Excise and Customs, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Republic of India and the Federal Customs Service (Russian Federation).		12.2.2008		
90	Joint Declaration between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation		5.12.2008		
91	Protocol on the Fourteenth Session of the Indo- Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation.		5.12.2008		
92	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on cooperation in the construction of additional nuclear power plant units at Kudankulam site as well as in the construction of Russian designed nuclear power plants at new sites in the Republic of India.		5.12.2008		
93	Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Russian Federal Space Agency on joint activities in the field of human spaceflight Programme.		5.12.2008		
94	Joint Action Programme for the period 2009-10 for the implementation of the agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on cooperation in the field of Tourism.		5.12.2008		
95	Memorandum on cooperation between the National Academy of Customs, Excise and Narcotics of India and the Russian Customs Academy.		5.12.2008		
96	Memorandum of Understanding between the Securities & Exchange Board of India and Federal Financial Markets Service of Russian Federation in relation to Mutual Cooperation and information sharing.		5.12.2008		
97	Contracts for supply of 80MI-175V-5 Helicopters.		5.12.2008		
98	Agreement between the Financial Intelligence Unit of India and Federal Financial Monitoring Service of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Sphere of Counteracting Legalization (laundering) of proceeds from Crime.		5.12.2008		
99	Memorandum of Understanding between Co-chairs of India-Russia CEO's Council .		5.12.2008		

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
100	Protocol for Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation from 2009-2010	20.10.2008		20.10.2008
101	Senegal Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Senegal for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	3.7.2008		25.8.2008
102	Serbia Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with respect to taxes on Income and on Capital.	8.2.2006		10.1.2008
103	Syrian Arab Republic Work Plan under Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors for 2008-2009.	18.6.2008		18.6.2008
104	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government the Syrian Arab Republic on the Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments.	18.6.2008		12.9.2008
105	Saudi Arabia Memorandum of Understanding on combating crime between India and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia .	25.1.2006	22.2.2006	14.8.2008
106	Agreement between India and Saudi Arabia for Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection.	25.1.2006		20.6.2008
107	Sri lanka Memorandum of Understanding on Telemedicine Project in Sri Lanka between Government of India and the Government of Sri lanka .	12.6.2008		21.11.2007
108	Memorandum of Understanding on Tele education Project in Sri Lanka between Government of India and Government of Sri lanka	28.6.2008		
109	Memorandum of Understanding between Government of Sri Lanka and Government of India relating to Grant Assistance from Government of India for Artificial recharge to Groundwater in Export Processing Zone at Katunayake, Sri lanka .	4.9.2008		
110	Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening of SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk (STOMD) and the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk (SDOMD) based in Sri Lanka between Government of India and the Government of Sri lanka	4.10.2008		
111	Memorandum of Understanding between Government of Sri Lanka and Government of India regarding the Rural Solar Energy Electrification Project in Sri Lanka . Not available on records			

Appendix X

Instruments of Full Powers Issued during the period 1 January 2008 to December 2008

Sl. No.	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Powers
1	In favour of Shri M. Lal Dingliana , Ambassador of India to Macedonia for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	18.1.2008
2	In favour of Shri Debashish Chakravarti , Ambassador of India to Romania for signing the Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Romania amending the Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Government of the Republic of India on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments signed in New Delhi on the seventeenth day of November in the year nineteen hundred and ninety seven	31.1.2008
3	In favour of Shri Anand Sharma , Minister of State for External Affairs, for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Uruguay for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	6.2.2008
4	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal , Minister of Science & Technology and Earth Sciences for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Finland on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology.	24.3.2008
5	In favour of Shri R.K. Goyal , Additional Member Planning, Railway Board, for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and the French National Railways (SNCF) .	3.4.2008
6	In favour of Shri Vayalar Ravi , Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, for signing the Memorandum of Understanding on the Employment of Workers between the Government of India and the Government of Malaysia .	4.4.2008
7	In favour of Shri P. Chidambaram , Finance Minister for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.	19.5.2008
8	In favour of Shri M. Madhavan Nambiar , Special Secretary, DIT for signing the Agreement between the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of India and the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Finland for Co-operation in the Field of Information Security.	22.5.2008
9	In favour of Shri R. S. Mathoda , Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes, for signing the Agreement and the Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital.	22.5.2008
10	In favour of Shri E. Ahamed , Minister of State for External Affairs for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Republic of India and the Palestine Liberation Organization for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority regarding construction and equipping of Jawaharlal Nehru High School at Abu Dees.	4.6.2008
11	In favour of Shri Jairam Ramesh , Minister of State for Commerce & Power for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.	23.6.2008
12	In favour of Shri Shiv Shankar Mukherjee , High Commissioner of India to United Kingdom for signing the International Coffee Agreement, 2007 .	7.8.2008

Appendix X

Sl. No.	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Powers
13	In favour of Shri K. Mohandas , Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs Agreement between the Republic of India and the Federal Republic of Germany on Social Insurance.	7.10.2008
14	In favour of Shri Anil Kumar Upadhyay , Additional Secretary, Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) & Secretary, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Republic of Ecuador for Cooperation in the Field of Agricultural Research and Education.	14.11.2008
15.	In favour of Shri N.B. Singh , Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes, for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	17.11.2008
16	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal , Minister, Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, for signing the Agreement between the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Singapore on Science and Technology Cooperation.	17.11.2008
17	In favour of Shri. Vayalar Ravi , Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, for signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Labour and Manpower Development between the Government of India and the Kingdom of Bahrain .	21.11.2008

Appendix XI

Instruments of Ratification/Accession issued during the period 1 January 2008 to December 2008

Sl. No.	Instruments of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification
1	Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital	10.1.2008
2	Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt .	24.1.2008
3	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Combating International Terrorism, Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking	25.1.2008
4	Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ireland	19.2.2008
5	Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons between the Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria	28.2.2008
6	Seventh Additional Protocol to the Constitution of the Universal Postal Union was adopted by the XXIII Congress of the Union held at Bucharest on the fifth day of October in the year two thousand and four	7.3.2008
7	Agreement on Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Romania	20.3.2008
8	Agreement on Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria	20.3.2008
9	Convention 174 Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993	3.4.2008
10	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments	30.4.2008
11	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Uruguay for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	30.4.2008
12	Agreement on Social Security between the Kingdom of Belgium and the Republic of India	3.6.2008
13	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons	5.6.2008
14	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Royal Government of Cambodia on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons	5.6.2008
15	International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006	9.6.2008
16	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of France on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons	16.7.2008
17	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments	14.7.2008
18	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and Australia .	11.8.2008
19	Film Co-Production Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	11.8.2008
20	Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Federative Republic of	

Appendix XI

Sl. No.	Instruments of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification
	Brazil	14.8.2008
21	Treaty between the Republic of India and Australia on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	14.8.2008
22	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on audio visual co production.	22.8.2008
23	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Senegal for the promotion and protection of investments.	25.8.2008
24	Agreement for scientific and technological cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Canada .	10.9.2008
25	Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Montenegro for the avoidance of double taxation with respect to taxes on income and capital.	12.9.2008
26	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on the mutual promotion and protection of investments.	12.9.2008
27	International coffee agreement.	18.9.2008
28	Extradition Treaty between Government of India and Government of Arab republic of Egypt .	8.12.2008
29	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Qatar on Cooperation in Security and Law Enforcement Matters.	19.12.2008
30	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic concerning protection of classified information and material in the field of Defence.	19.12.2008

Appendix XII

Conference/ Seminars/ Study projects organized/ undertaken by Institutions/ NGOs, which were funded, partially or wholly, by Policy Planning & Research Division till January 2008

Sl. No.	Event	Institution / Beneficiary
1.	Seminar on “India-China Border Trade-a Strategy for Frontier Development” on 5-6 March 2007 at Gangtok.	Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) North Eastern Regional Centre, Shillong (Meghalaya)
2.	International Seminar on “Envisioning A New South Asia” from 29-31 March 20007 at Visakhapatnam.	Centre for SAARC Studies, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam (A.P.)
3.	Study on “Newer Dynamics of India’s Nepal Policy: Challenges, Options and Way Forward” by Prof. Mahendra P. Lama.	Centre for Public Affairs (CPA), Noida (UP)
4.	Research Projects on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Indo-Myanmar Geo-political and security relations: Measures for improving trade & economic tie-ups. ii. Impediments in India’s “Look East” policy: suggested remedies. iii. Indo-Russian strategic relations in the new world order: Opportunities/Challenges. iv. New realities in the Indian Ocean Region: How can India benefit from them? 	Asia Centre, Bangalore
5.	Study on “The National Interest Project”.	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi.
6.	Study by the Task Force on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation set up by Ministry of External Affairs consisting of Dr. K. Subrahmanyam, Arundhati Ghose, Shyam Saran and others.	Ministry of External Affairs
7.	Financial assistance to the Centre for the Advanced Study of India (CASI).	University of Pennsylvania (USA)
8.	7 th India-Korea Dialogue in October 2007 at Seoul (Korea).	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi.
9.	3 rd International Congress of the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA) at New Delhi from 23-25 November 2007.	Developing Countries Research Centre(DCRC), University of Delhi.
10.	Seminar on “India and the Gulf”	Association of Indian Diplomats (AID), New Delhi
11.	Publication of “Foreign Affairs Journal”	Association of Indian Diplomats (AID), New Delhi
12.	Research Project on “Contemporary Myanmar: From Isolation to Active Engagement - By Dr. K. Yhome	Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi
13.	7 th International Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation - Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar (BCIM) at Dhaka	Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), New Delhi
14.	5 th Conference on “International Dimension of Environmental Law” on 8-9 December 2007	Indian Society of International Law (ISIL)

Appendix XII

Sl. No.	Event	Institution / Beneficiary
15.	International Seminar on “Democracy, Nation Building and Peace in South Asia: Challenges and Prospects” from 10-12 December 2007	Rajiv Gandhi Chair in Contemporary Studies, Allahabad University University of Allahabad.
16.	2nd Sustainability Summit: Asia 2007 held on 11-12 December 2007	Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), New Delhi
17.	Research Study on “Foundational Crisis in South and South East Asia - A study of Bangladesh, Indonesia & Malaysia” - By Dr. Abu Nasar Saied Ahmed	Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development (OKDISCD), Guwahati
18.	Research Project on “Central Asia-China Relations, 1991-2006” by Prof. K. Warikoo, JNU, New Delhi	The Centre for South, Central & South East Asian Studies (CSCSEAS), JNU, New Delhi
19.	International Seminar on “India and South-Asia : Strategic Convergence in the 21 st Century” from 3-5 January 2008	Centre for SAARC Studies (CSS) Andhra University, Vishakapatnam (AP)
20.	Conference on “The Landscape of Regional Integration” on 11-12 January 2008	Association of Asia Scholars (AAS), New Delhi.
21.	International Conference on “Afghanistan” February 2008.	Centre for South, Central Southeast Asia and Southwest Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi.
22.	Seminar on “State and Society in Pakistan” and “India-Pakistan Relations”	India-Pakistan Friendship Society (IPFS), New Delhi
23.	28 th Round Talks of Track-II Dialogue with Pakistan at Islamabad.	India-Pakistan Neemrana Initiative (IPNI), New Delhi
24.	Seminar on “Cooperation Development and Peace in Central Asia: An Indian Perspective”	The Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID), Chandigarh
25.	Study Project on “Analysis of Alternative Course for India: Post Kyoto Negotiations”	Integrated Research and Action for Development (IRAD), New Delhi

Appendix XIII

List of ITEC/SCAAP partner countries

S. No	Countries	S. No	Countries
1	Afghanistan	41	Democratic Republic of Congo
2	Albania	42	Djibouti
3	Algeria	43	Dominican Republic
4	Angola	44	East Timor
5	Anguilla	45	Ecuador
6	Antigua and Barbuda	46	Egypt
7	Argentina	47	El-Salvador
8	Armenia	48	Equatorial Guinea
9	Azerbaijan	49	Eritrea
10	Bahamas	50	Estonia
11	Bahrain	51	Ethiopia
12	Bangladesh	52	Fiji
13	Barbados	53	Gabon
14	Belarus	54	Gambia
15	Belize	55	Georgia
16	Benin	56	Ghana
17	Bhutan	57	Grenada
18	Bolivia	58	Guatemala
19	Bosnia – Herzegovina	59	Guinea
20	Botswana	60	Guinea Bissau
21	Brazil	61	Guyana
22	Brunei Darussalam	62	Haiti
23	Bulgaria	63	Honduras
24	Burkina Faso	64	Hungary
25	Burundi	65	Indonesia
26	Cambodia	66	Iran
27	Cameroon	67	Iraq
28	Cape Verde Island	68	Ivory Coast
29	Cayman Island	69	Jamaica
30	Central African Republic	70	Jordan
31	Chad	71	Kazakhstan
32	Chile	72	Kenya
33	Colombia	73	Kiribati
34	Commonwealth of Dominica	74	Korea (DPRK)
35	Comoros	75	Kyrgyzstan
36	Congo	76	Laos
37	Costa Rica	77	Latvia
38	Croatia	78	Lebanon
39	Cuba	79	Lesotho
40	Czech Republic	80	Liberia

Appendix XIII

S. No	Countries	S. No	Countries
81	Libya	120	Samoa
82	Lithuania	121	Senegal
83	Macedonia	122	Seychelles
84	Madagascar	123	Singapore
85	Malaysia	124	Sierra Leone
86	Malawi	125	Slovak Republic
87	Maldives	126	Solomon Island
88	Mali	127	South Africa
89	Marshall Islands	128	Sri Lanka
90	Mauritius	129	St. Kitts & Nevis
91	Mauritania	130	St. Lucia
92	Mexico	131	St. Vincent & Grenadines
93	Micronesia	132	Sudan
94	Moldova	133	Suriname
95	Mongolia	134	Syria
96	Montserrat	135	Swaziland
97	Morocco	136	Tanzania
98	Mozambique	137	Tajikistan
99	Myanmar	138	Thailand
100	Namibia	139	Togo
101	Nauru	140	Tonga
102	Nepal	141	Trinidad & Tobago
103	Nicaragua	142	Tunisia
104	Niger	143	Turkey
105	Nigeria	144	Turkmenistan
106	Oman	145	Turks & Caicos Island
107	Palau	146	Tuvalu
108	Palestine	147	Uganda
109	Panama	148	Ukraine
110	Papua New Guinea	149	Uruguay
111	Paraguay	150	Uzbekistan
112	Peru	151	Vanuatu
113	Philippines	152	Venezuela
114	Poland	153	Vietnam
115	Qatar	154	Yemen
116	Republic of Sao Tome	155	Zambia
117	Romania	156	Zimbabwe
118	Russia	157	Serbia
119	Rwanda	158	Montenegro

Appendix XIV

List of ITEC Training Institutes in India (2008-09)

S.No.	Name of Institute	City
1	Administrative Staff College of India	Hyderabad
2	Aptech Limited	New Delhi
3	Bureau of Indian Standards	New Delhi
4	Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training	New Delhi
5	Central Fertilizer Quality Control & Training Institute	Faridabad, Haryana
6	English and Foreign Languages University	Hyderabad
7	Central Institute of Tool Design	Hyderabad
8	Central Institute for Rural Electrification	Hyderabad
9	Central Scientific Instruments Organisation	New Delhi
10	Centre For Development of Advanced Computing	Mohali(Chandigarh)
11	Centre For Development of Advanced Computing	Noida, UP
12	CMC Ltd.	New Delhi
13	Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India	Bhat, Gujarat
14	Fluid Control Research Institute	Kerala
15	Human Settlement Management Institute	New Delhi
16	Indian Institute of Mass Communication	New Delhi
17	International Centre for Information and System Audit (CAG)	Noida, UP
18	Indian Institute of Production Management	Orissa
19	Indian Institute of Remote Sensing	Dehradun
20	Indian Institute of Technology	Roorkee
21	Institute of Applied Manpower Research	New Delhi
22	Institute of Government Accounts Finance	New Delhi
23	International Management Institute	New Delhi
24	International Statistical Education Centre	Kolkata
25	National Crime Records Bureau	New Delhi
26	National Institute of Bank Management	Pune
27	National University of Educational Planning & Administration	New Delhi
28	National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development	Noida, UP
29	National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education & Research	Punjab
30	National Institute of Rural Development	Hyderabad
31	National Institute of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (formerly NISIET)	Hyderabad
32	National Institute of Technical Teachers Training and Research	Chennai
33	NIIT Limited	New Delhi
34	Research & Information System for the Non-aligned and Other Developing Countries	New Delhi
35	Shri Ram Institute of Business and Information Technology	New Delhi
36	South India Textile Research Association	Coimbatore
37	Centre for Excellence in Telecom Technology and Management	Mumbai
38	The Energy Research Institute (TERI)	New Delhi
39	V.V. Giri National Labour Institute	Noida, UP
40	UTL Technologies Ltd.	Bangalore
41	Indian Institute of Management	Ahmedabad

Appendix XV

Lectures/Seminars-Conferences/Bilateral Dialogues/Book Releases organised by ICWA

No.	Date	Event
Lectures		
1.	9.9.2008	Speech on “China-India Strategic Partnership” by H.E. Mr. Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, The People’s Republic of China (in collaboration with the Institute of Chinese Studies and Embassy of the People’s Republic of China at Hyatt Hotel)
2.	11.9.08	Lecture by Hon’ble Stephen Smith, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs on ‘Australia and India in the Asia Pacific Century’
3.	17.11.08	Presentation on Cologne Region & India: New Partnership & Opportunities by Mr. Fritz Schramma, Lord Mayor of CologneChief Guest: Shri M.M. Pallam Raju, Hon’ble Minister of State for DefenceChair: Ambassador V. K. Grover, Former Secretary to the Government of India
4.	19.1.09	Lecture on “Imperatives of Nation Building in Africa: Security, Peace & Reconciliation” by H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda
5.	5.2.09	(ICWA Auditorium) ‘Annual Lecture 2009’ of the Association of Indian Diplomats by H.E. Mr. Kamlesh Sharma, Secretary General of the Commonwealth on “Managing Change and Diversity in a Compacting World” [in cooperation with the Association of Indian Diplomats]
6.	26.2.09	Lecture by Mr. Bolat Nurgaliev, Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (in collaboration with the ICAF)
7.	27.3.09	Lecture by H.E. Miguel Angel Ramirez Ramos, Ambassador of Cuba in India on “Caribbean Region from the eyes of Havana”
Seminars		
8.	2-3 April, 08	International Conference on “Africa-India Partnership in the 21 st Century”[Seminar of Intellectuals from Africa and India - in collaboration with the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) & African Studies Association of India (ASA)]
9.	9-10 June, 08	International Conference on “Towards a World Free of Nuclear Weapons”[in collaboration with the Centre for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), Gurgaon] (The ITC Maurya)
10.	13 Aug 08	Seminar on ‘Indo-Swiss Relations: Blossoming Cooperation’ on the occasion of 60 th Anniversary of the Indo-Swiss Treaty of Friendship, 1948And Release of the book: “Friendship in Diversity” Sixty Years of Indo-Swiss Relations Edited by Bernard Imhasly, in cooperation with the Embassy of Switzerland
11.	27-28 Nov 08	Seminar on “India-Russia Strategic Partnership: Challenges and Prospects” in collaboration with the Moscow Institute for International Cooperation, MOSCOW
12.	2-3 Dec 08	Roundtable on India-Arab Historical Linkages and Civilizational Dialogue Inaugural Address: Shri E. Ahamed, Hon’ble MOS for External AffairsKeynote Address: Dr. Amre Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States in cooperation with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) – on the occasion of the India-Arab Forum: Partnership Through Culture – jointly organized by FICCI, MEA, ICWA and League of Arab States on 2-7 December 2008.
13.	12-14 Jan 09	International Seminar in association with Cross Cultural Conversation on Human Solidarity: Visions and Projects
14.	24-26 Mar 09	Seminar on Gulf and Emerging Asia: Defining Regional Architecturein collaboration with Gulf Studies Programme, JNU
15.	30 Mar 09	Seminar on India-Kazakhstan Relations : New Horizons
16.	31 Mar 09	Seminar on India-Kazakhstan Strategic Partnership
Bilateral Dialogues		
17.	8-11 Aug 08	Visit of Indian delegation to Kabul, Afghanistan for signing of MoU between ICWA and Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan
18.	18 Aug 2008	India-Nigeria Track II Dialogue on ‘International Affairs’ and Lecture on‘Dynamics of Indo-Nigerian Relations in the Age of Globalization’ by Prof. Osita C. Eze, Director General,

Appendix XV

No.	Date	Event
		Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) on the occasion of the visit of a 5 member delegation from the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs
19.	16-17 Oct 08	Fourth India-Spain Dialogue Forum
20.	6-8 Nov 08	Visit of ICWA delegation to New Zealand Institute of International Affairs(NIIA), Wellington (to sign a MoU also)
21.	9-11 Nov 08	Visit of ICWA delegation to Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) Melbourne (to sign a MoU also)
22.	12-13 Nov 08	Visit of ICWA delegation to Lowy Institute, Sydney. First Australia-India Roundtable
		Panel Discussions/Background Briefings
23.	5 Jun 08	Press Conference on the occasion of the International Conference on Towards a World Free of Nuclear Weapons on 9-10 June, 2008 in collaboration with the Centre for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) Briefing by Ambassador Lalit Mansingh, Air Cmde. Jasjit Singh, AVSM, Vrc, VM (Retd.), Director, Centre for Strategic and International Studies and Shri Ashok Kumar, Acting Director General, ICWA
24.	6 Jun 08	Background briefing by Shri Shyam Saran, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, Air Cmde. Jasjit Singh, AVSM, Vrc, VM (Retd.), Director, Centre for Strategic and International Studies and Shri Ashok Kumar, Acting Director General, ICWA on the occasion of the International Conference on Towards a World Free of Nuclear Weapons on 9-10 June, 2008 in collaboration with the Centre for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS)
25.	29 Aug 08	First Meeting regarding project on Towards a New Asian Security Architecture – An Indian View in collaboration with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies
26.	12 Sep 08	Second Meeting regarding project on Towards a New Asian Security Architecture – An Indian View in collaboration with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies
27.	15 Sep 08	Roundtable Discussion on Recent Developments in the Caucasus
28.	18 Sep 08	Discussion on 'New Nepal - Its Aspirations and Dreams' Participants from Nepal: 1.)Dr. Devendra Raj Panday, Civil Society activist and Member, International Board of Directors, Transparency International;2.) Shri Vijay Kumar Panday, TV Journalist, Nepal3.) Shri Suresh Ale Magar, Advisor to the Central Committee, CPN(Maoist)4.) Shri Bimlendra Nidhi, General Secretary, Nepali Congress5.) Shri Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Member of Central Committee, CPN (UML)6.) Shri Shyamananda Suman, Head of International Department, Madhesi Janadikar Forum and Advisor to the Foreign Minister of Nepal
29.	26 Sep 08	Third Meeting regarding project on Towards a New Asian Security Architecture – An Indian View in collaboration with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies
30.	25 Nov 08	Function to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People Chief Guest: Shri E. Ahamed, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs
31.	23 Feb 09	Panel Discussion on Indian and EU Approaches to Security in collaboration with the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)
		Book Publicity
32.	1 May 08	On the occasion of the 53 rd Anniversary of inauguration of Sapru House Launch of the book: India-Kyrgyz Relations: Perspectives & Prospects a joint project of the ICWA and ICAF
33.	16 Jun 08	Release of the book: Ta Prohm: A Glorious Era in Angkor Civilisation written by Shri Pradeep K. Kapur, OSD & Joint Secretary(FSI), MEA and Prof. Sachchidanand Sahai by Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs
34.	26 Nov 08	Panel Discussion on and Release of the book: Nuclear Synergy: India-US Strategic Cooperation and Beyond Edited by Prof. N.K. Jha, Rajiv Gandhi Chair in Contemporary Studies, University of Allahabad, by Ambassador Lalit Mansingh, Former Foreign Secretary of India
35.	13 Jan 09	Panel discussion on the book: Bahudha and the Post 9/11 World Authored by Shri B.P. Singh, Governor of Sikkim Chief Guest: Dr. Karan Singh, M.P.
36.	29 Jan 09	Panel Discussion on and Release of the Book: Post 9/11 Indian Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities Edited by Dr. Sudhir Kumar Singh Chief Guest: Ambassador A.N. Ram

Appendix XVI

Seminars Organized by RIS

- Seminar on Development Cooperation: Emerging Trends, Patterns and Policies, New Delhi on 20 November 2008.
- Seminar on the Global Financial Crisis and India, New Delhi on 24 December 2008.
- A Seminar on Regional Infrastructure for Asia's Economic Integration, New Delhi on 22 December 2008.
- Seminar on Globalization, Productivity and Employment, New Delhi, on 16 December 2008.
- Seminar on India-East Asia Economic Cooperation: The Case of Logistics Network, New Delhi, jointly with the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS).
- Seminar on Pricing to Market in Indian Exports: The Role of Market Heterogeneity and Product Differentiation, New Delhi on 17 July 2008.
- Launch of the Special Issue of *Asian Biotechnology and Development Review* (ABDR), Bonn on 20 May 2008
- Seminar on Sovereign Wealth Funds: Issues and Challenges for India, New Delhi on 5 May 2008.
- Seminar on Global Economic Crisis: Responses from the South, New Delhi, 12 November 2008 (jointly with Institute of Chinese Studies and Council for Social Development).

RIS Publications

Books and Reports

- *South Asia Development and Cooperation Report* 2008 Published by Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Industrial Agglomeration, Production Networks and FDI Promotion-the Experience of Auto Component Industry in Two Clusters in India. RIS, 2008. Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Tokyo: IDE-JETRO.
- The Study on Infrastructure Development in India and RIS Infrastructure Index. 2008. Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Tokyo: IDE-JETRO
- Asian Biotechnology, Innovation and Development: Issues in Measurement and Collection of Statistics
- Regional Study on SAARC Trade in Services, RIS and the SAARC Secretariat, 2008

- Resurgent China: Implications for India, RIS, 2009.

Policy Briefs

- #34 Towards a Global Compact for Managing Climate Change, November 2007
- #35 Building a Development- Friendly World Trading System, March 2008
- #36 Back to the Drawing Board: No Basis for Concluding the Doha Round of Negotiations, April 2008
- #37 Emerging Aid Architecture: Tightening the Conditionalities? July 2008
- #38 Deepening Regional Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal: Agenda of the BIMSTEC Summit, November 2008
- #39 IBSA Partnership for Shared Prosperity and Inclusive Globalization- Report of Third IBSA Summit Academic Forum, December 2008
- #40 Reforming the Bretton-woods System for Development and Democratic Global Governance

Discussion Papers

- #132 The WTO's Doha Negotiations: An Assessment by Bhagirath Lal Das
- #133 Towards An Asian "Bretton Woods" for Restructuring of the Regional Financial Architecture by Ramgopal Agarwala
- #134 India-Africa Economic Partnership: Trends and Prospects by S. K. Mohanty & Sachin Chaturvedi
- #135 East Asian Infrastructure Development in a Comparative Global Perspective: An Analysis of RIS Infrastructure Index by Nagesh Kumar & Prabir De
- #136 Potential of Asian Economic Integration: A Perspective from the Strategy of Japanese Enterprises by Tetsuji Kawamura
- #137 Emerging Countries as Sources of Investment and Appropriate Technology: Case Study of India by Sachin Chaturvedi
- #138 Emerging Countries and the World Economy: Implications of India's Recent Expansion on Developing Countries by S.K. Mohanty
- #139 Emerging Patterns in Architecture for

Appendix XVI

Management of Economic Assistance and Development Cooperation: Implications and Challenges for India by Sachin Chaturvedi	
#140	Internationalization of Indian Enterprises: Patterns, Strategies, Ownership Advantages and Implications by Nagesh Kumar
#141	Rediscovering the Role of Developing Countries in GATT before the Doha Round by Faizel Ismail
#142	Transportation Cost and Trade Competitiveness: Empirical Evidence from India by Prabir De and Bhisma Rout
#143	Changing Economic Power by Manmohan Agarwal
#144	Exchange Rate Pass-through in India's Exports to Developed and Emerging Markets by Sushanta Mallick and Helena Marques
#145	South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Asia-Pacific: Towards a New Paradigm in Development Cooperation by Nagesh Kumar
Periodicals	
1.	<i>South Asia Economic Journal</i> (Vol. 9 No. 1) January-June 2008. <i>South Asia Economic Journal</i> (Vol. 9 No. 2) July-December 2008.
2.	<i>Asian Biotechnology and Development Review</i> , Vol. 10 (1&2), November 2007 to February 2008. <i>Asian Biotechnology and Development Review</i> , Vol. 10(3), July 2008. <i>Asian Biotechnology and Development Review</i> , Vol. 11(1), November 2008.
3.	<i>New Asia Monitor</i> , Vol. 5 No. 1, January 2008. <i>New Asia Monitor</i> , Vol. 5 No. 2 &3, April & July 2008. <i>New Asia Monitor</i> , Vol. 5 No. 4, October 2008. <i>Mekong-Ganga Policy Brief</i> , No.3, May 2008.
Newsletter	
	<i>RIS Diary</i> , Vol. 6 No. 1, January 2008. <i>RIS Diary</i> , Vol. 6 No. 2, April 2008. <i>RIS Diary</i> , Vol. 6 No. 3, July 2008. <i>RIS Diary</i> , Vol. 6 No. 4, October 2008.

Abbreviations

AALCO	Asian African Legal Consultative Organisation	EAS	East Asia Summit
AMM	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting	ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum	EIL	Engineers India Limited
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations	EMM	East Asia Energy Ministers Meeting
ASEM	Asia Europe Meeting	EU	European Union
ASSO-CHAM	Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry	EXIM	Export Import Bank of India
AU	African Union	FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
AYUSH	Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy	FIPB	Foreign Investment Promotion Board
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation	FOC	Foreign Office Consultations
CCIT	Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism	FTA	Free Trade Agreement
CECA	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement	GAIL	Gas Authority of India Limited
CEP	Cultural Exchange Programme	GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meet	GST	Goods and Service Tax
CIC	Central Information Commission	HAL	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry	HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno Virus / Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	IBF	India Business Forum
CORPAT	Coordinated Patrol	ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
COSC	Chiefs of Staff Committee	ICRIER	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations
CPIO	Central Public Information Officer	ICT	Information and Communication Technology
CPV	Consular Passport and Visa	ICWA	Indian Council of World Affairs
CSCAP	Council for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific	IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
CSD	Comprehensive Security Dialogue	IFS	Indian Foreign Service
DIPP	Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion	IIBF	Indian Institute of Banking and Finance
DSSC	Defence Services Staff College	IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
DTAC	Double Taxation Avoidance Convention	ILO	International Labour Organisation
EAC	East African Community	INS	Indian Navy Ship
		INSTC	International North-South Transport Corridor
		IOR-ARC	Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation

Abbreviations

ISCS	Inter-State Council Secretariat	RBI	Reserve of Bank of India
ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation	RITES	Rail India Technical Economic Service
JWG	Joint Working Group	RTI	Right to Information
LNG	Liquified Natural Gas	SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
MERC-OSUR	Market of Southern Cone Countries	SADC	Southern African Development Community
MFN	Most Favoured Nation	SAFTA	South Asia Free Trade Agreement
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding	SBI	State Bank of India
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development	SCAAP	Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme
NAFED	National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited	SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement	SEBI	Securities and Exchange Board of India
NASSCOM	National Association of Software and Service Companies	SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	SEZ	Special Economic Zone
NELP	New Exploration Licensing Policy	SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development	STPI	Software Technology Parks of India
NIC	National Information Centre	TEAM-9	Techno-Economic Approach for Africa India Movement
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	UNCTAD	United Nations Conferences on Trade and Development
NSC	National Security Council	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group	UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
OCI	Overseas Citizenship of India	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	UPA	United Progressive Alliance
ONGC	Oil and Natural Gas Corporation	VSNL	Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited
PIO	Persons of Indian Origin	WTO	World Trade Organisation