

Introduction and Synopsis

During the year 2000-01, several initiatives of the previous two years reached fruition and India consolidated further its relationship with the major powers and other friends and partners underscoring its position as a factor of peace, stability, security and balance not only in Asia but on a much wider canvas in the world. The first ever Indo-EU Summit and the inauguration of the Ganga-Mekong Cooperation Project launched new avenues of engagement with countries of these two regions whilst, at the same time, reflecting the level of maturity that had been reached in relations with them. The visit of President, Shri K.R. Narayanan, to China as well as the visits to India of the Prime Minister of Nepal, the President of Sri Lanka as well as those of the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China and the Deputy Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of Myanmar further strengthened India's bilateral relations with neighbouring countries which are of historical, civilisational and geopolitical significance. In addressing the Millennium Summit at the United Nations, Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, spelt out India's vision of a new multi-polar order. His visit to the United States reflected a hitherto unprecedented degree of engagement between the world's two great democracies, putting into practice the dialogue architecture drawn up by them. Fresh impetus was imparted to the traditional close and mutually-reinforcing strategic ties with Russia with the Russian President's visit to India. Visits to India by the Prime Ministers of Australia and Japan, the King of Morocco, the President of Algeria, the President of Colombia and the Prime

Minister of Mauritius were telling examples of the global reach of India's diplomatic engagement. In furthering the objectives of the U.N. Charter, India led the international community's effort to restore democracy and constitutionality in Fiji and contributed to U.N. peace-keeping efforts in Sierra Leone and the Horn of Africa. The global trend towards democratisation drew sustenance from the success of democratic governance in a country of one billion people; at the same time, democracy's antithesis, international terrorism was decisively condemned and rejected by the international community. The strength and resilience of India's economy and science & technology made it an attractive partner in trade and investment and in international cooperation in knowledge-based and cutting edge industries. India's cultural diversity and international programmes contributed to the enrichment of mankind's reservoir in this field.

Certain essential priorities and objectives that inform India's foreign policy can broadly be encapsulated as follows:

- ❑ To safeguard India's territorial integrity and sovereignty, enhance India's strategic space and preserve the autonomy of our decision-making processes.
- ❑ To strengthen further India's role as a factor of peace, stability, security and balance in Asia and in the world.
- ❑ To win international understanding and support for India's national interests, priorities, aspirations and concerns and, wherever possible, to develop international synergies in furthering common objectives.

- ❑ To create such conditions in the Indian sub-continent and in our immediate neighbourhood as would enable India to devote its resources and attention to developmental and infrastructural activities.
- ❑ To strengthen peace and stability in the region and further enhance friendship, cooperation and mutually beneficial inter-dependencies with our neighbours. In enhancing the constituency of peace in the Indian sub-continent, India would cooperate actively with like-minded countries to isolate and defeat negative phenomena of extremism, obscurantism and terrorism.
- ❑ To strengthen the trends of cooperation, friendship and trust with countries of India's extended neighbourhood based on old civilisational and historical ties as well as strong contemporary relevance. Countries of South-East Asia, the Gulf and the Indian Ocean region have a common stake with India in promoting peace, stability and development in this space.
- ❑ To work with the P-5 countries and other major powers to promote bilateral relations and to work towards strengthening peace, stability and multi-polarity in the world based on the new architecture of dialogue and cooperation established with them.
- ❑ To promote the cause of democracy and individual freedom to unleash the creative genius of peoples in all countries and to promote greater realisation that democratic governance and systems are essential ingredients of international peace and stability.
- ❑ To promote civilisational tolerance and interaction in the world and to preserve the unique cultural heritage of mankind in all its diversity and splendour through common action and international programmes.
- ❑ To work constructively with other countries in multilateral institutions and international organisations such as the U.N., NAM, ARF, IOR-ARC, etc. to generate international common approaches to contemporary challenges.
- ❑ To give greater focus and priority to economic diplomacy with the objective of promoting foreign trade and investments, ensuring equitable transfer of technology and strengthening our general economic and commercial links with the rest of the world. The size and positive trends of India's economy give us the potential of playing a leading role in shaping the international economic order and pace of development.

With Bangladesh, the high-level interaction included the areas of water resources, trade and defence. The 34th Joint Rivers Commission met in January 2001 to review all areas of cooperation in sharing of waters. Preparatory work for this meeting had taken place through important bilateral visits from both sides. In December 2000, the Foreign Office consultations led to agreement on expediting the introduction of the Agartala-Dhaka bus service, review of measures to enhance commercial interaction, liberalisation of visa arrangements and a sharing of concerns on the growth of terrorism in the region. The Agreement concerning the Demarcation of the Land Boundary between India and Bangladesh and Related Matters was also discussed and two Working Groups were set up to address the pending issues. Border Management and security issues were also taken up at the Home Secretary level and through the interaction between the BSF and the Bangladesh Rifles. Several agreements were reached to increase the communication links between the two countries both by road and rail, as evidenced in the inauguration of a third broad gauge rail link for freight, in January 2001. Similarly, active cooperation characterised the areas of education and technical training, with many Bangladeshi students pursuing their studies in India.

India consistently reiterated its commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, and to a peaceful, political process as being the only means of achieving a lasting peace, through a negotiated settlement, which would meet the aspirations of all elements of Sri Lankan society. The high-level contact between the two neighbours continued with the President of Sri Lanka visiting India in February 2001. The broad-ranging talks with Indian leaders were reflective of the high priority attached by both countries to the maintenance of close and friendly relations based on mutual trust and understanding. Earlier, in June 2000, the External Affairs Minister had visited Sri Lanka to study the evolving situation and had expressed India's willingness to extend to Sri Lanka a line of credit of US \$ 100 million on mutually acceptable terms. The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister had also visited India in December 2000. There were a series of initiatives to address the problems faced by fishermen from both the countries. There was also considerable movement on publicizing the benefits from the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement, which was operationalised on March 1, 2000. Cultural interaction flourished through the activities of the India Culture Centre in Colombo and the India-Sri Lanka Foundation.

The close, friendly and problem-free relations between India and Maldives were given added warmth with exchanges of high-level visits, including the State visit of President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom of Maldives in August 2000. Earlier, in March 2000, the Foreign Minister of Maldives had attended the Fourth Session of the India-Maldives Joint Commission in New Delhi. Raksha Mantri visited Maldives from January 9-12, 2001 and held detailed discussions. There was also productive interaction and Joint Exercises between the two Coast Guards. Parliamentary and educational exchanges also remained active.

Constructive engagement with Myanmar focused on broad-basing the areas of cooperation and restoring the tradition of high-level bilateral exchanges between the two countries. Gen. Maung Aye, Vice Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council led a high-level delegation to India in November 2000, and had wide-ranging discussions covering economic cooperation, trade, cross-border projects and activities, international terrorism, drug trafficking, cooperation in the field of culture, human resource development, science and technology and regional cooperation within the framework of BIMST-EC and the India-ASEAN Dialogue partnership. The two sides agreed to take steps to ensure peace and tranquillity along the India-Myanmar border. Minister of External Affairs visited Myanmar in February 2001 and inaugurated the Tamu-Kalemyo-Kalewa highway, which is expected to enhance economic relations between the two countries. The EAM also held talks with the Myanmar leaders on all areas of mutual interest. The first meeting of the India-Myanmar Joint Working Group on Science and Technology was held in April 2000 (in Yangon). There were also high-level military visits to Myanmar and the visit to India by the Myanmar Home Minister in November 2000. Regular institutional dialogue on border management-related matters was maintained. Cultural contacts were also active with the Myanmar Culture Minister visiting India in January-February 2000 and the signing of the India-Myanmar Cultural Agreement.

In its immediate neighbourhood, India continued to build on historical commonalities. On the north, Indo-Nepali relations were close and friendly with extensive social and people-to-people contacts. From 31 July to 6 August 2000, the Prime Minister of Nepal, Shri Girija Prasad Koirala was on a goodwill visit to India. Several agreements were worked out to ensure better cooperation, with focus on better border management and the development of border districts. Cooperation in

the area of security was sought to be enhanced through the Home Secretary level talks in July 2000. There was an understanding that neither country would permit its territory to be used for activities prejudicial to the other. A Joint Committee on Water Resources was constituted. As in past years, India continued to be involved in several development projects in Nepal.

Relations between India and Bhutan are characterised by mutual trust, understanding and close friendship. Economic cooperation between the two countries has been steadily growing and continues to provide a firm foundation to the expanding bilateral relationship. As part of the close bilateral cooperation, India has been extending financial assistance to Bhutan by supporting its Five Year Plans since 1961 – the level of assistance for the 8th Five Year Plan was approved at Rs. 900 crores. The projects proposed to be financed by Indian assistance cover diverse areas in the fields of hydroelectricity generation and transmission, roads, bridges and social infrastructure. The Bhutanese Foreign Minister paid a goodwill visit to India in April 2000. The visit allowed an across-the-board review of relations on all fronts. Several high-ranking Indian officials, including the Foreign Secretary, also visited Bhutan.

As in the past, India remained committed to establishing a relationship of peace, friendship and cooperation with Pakistan. India called on Pakistan to abandon its compulsive hostility and adhere to the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration. Pakistan, however, continued its support to the infiltration in Kashmir and kept up the shrill anti-India tirade in international fora. There was, in fact, an ominous upgrading in the quality of weapons and training being supplied to the terrorist groups by Pakistan. Pakistan also persistently sought to sabotage any prospect for peace in Jammu and Kashmir, whenever initiatives were taken in this regard. The international community also took notice of the Pakistani practice of using cross-border terrorism as an instrument of state policy, in the past year.

The Samjhauta Express and the Delhi-Lahore Bus Service ensured that people across the borders were able to maintain contacts with relatives or travel for business and pilgrimage purposes. Regular hotline contact was maintained between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMO) of the two countries, and the paramilitary forces in charge of managing the sensitive border met periodically to sort out day-to-day issues.

The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan continued to be a matter of deep concern for India. India remained firm in its belief that there can be no military solution to the Afghan problem and that Afghanistan's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity must be preserved. One of the Indian initiatives in this regard is the process of institutionalised dialogue with the US on the subject of Afghanistan. There was a similar coordination of efforts with Russia through the formation of a Joint Working Group.

There was an expansion of cordial and multi-faceted ties with Iran over the year. The 11th meeting of the Indo-Iran Joint Commission in May 2000 was attended by the External Affairs Minister. Among other areas of bilateral cooperation, there were important initiatives regarding the transmission of Iranian natural gas to India. It was also decided to set up an Indian Cultural Centre in Tehran. In July 2000, the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister visited India and discussed all outstanding issues, especially the situation in Afghanistan.

This year also saw an intensification of India's engagement with the countries of South-East Asia. This is as much an acknowledgement of the impressive economic performance of this part of the world as also a demonstration of India's desire to develop a multifaceted partnership with the region. This commonality of interests saw India draw progressively closer to these countries – individually and with ASEAN – over the past year.

After a brief lull in the wake of Pokhran II, there has been a renewal of friendly relations with Australia and New Zealand. The visit of the Australian PM in July 2000 was an eloquent assertion that the two countries are keen to weave a more intricate tapestry of interaction. Resumption of defence ties also got underway. New Zealand and India saw a strengthening of economic relations with trade growing in both directions. As dominant countries of the region, Australia and New Zealand were important interlocutors during the hostage crisis in Fiji.

India was appreciative of the support that Cambodia expressed over the past year for India's claim for a permanent membership of the UN Security Council. The cooperation is expected to gain further substance after the Mekong-Ganga programme deliberations in Vientiane (November 2000).

The year saw considerable consternation due to the civilian coup in Fiji. As the rebels held several dignitaries (including Prime Minister

Choudhary) captive, India was deeply concerned about the safety of the hostages as well as the large Indian community in Fiji. Consultations were held with Australia and New Zealand on the issue, and PM Choudhary also visited India after his release to confer with the top political leadership. India continues to be worried by this unfortunate recidivism of racial politics in Fiji. India supports the return to the non-discriminatory 1997 constitution and hopes to see the early establishment of pluralistic and multi-racial norms, where the Indian community shall enjoy its legitimate rights.

The cordial ties between India and Laos were further cemented in November this year, when the External Affairs Minister visited Laos for the inaugural Ministerial meeting of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation. The Third Indo-Laos Joint Commission Meeting was also held during the visit, in which important agreements were signed in the areas of trade, investment and agricultural cooperation.

Indian ties with Vietnam were given further impetus by the visit of the Indian Prime Minister in January 2001. A Joint Business Council meeting was held in Hanoi during this visit and agreements were signed in the areas of Tourism and Nuclear Energy. Vietnam also extended support to India's candidature for permanent membership of the UNSC. Earlier, in November 2000, the Minister for External Affairs had visited Vietnam for the 10th session of the Joint Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation.

Bilateral relations with Indonesia were further strengthened this year with the visit of the Indian Prime Minister in January 2001. There was a Joint Business Council meeting in Jakarta and important agreements in the areas of defence, Science and Technology, Agriculture and Culture were signed. The Prime Minister reiterated India's support for the territorial integrity of Indonesia, while the Indonesian side voiced support for India's candidature for the UNSC.

There was fruitful exchange with Malaysia over the year and October 2000 saw the convening of the Second session of the Indo-Malaysian Joint Commission. The session comprehensively examined the avenues for further strengthening relations, resulting in agreements on Trade and Cultural Exchange. From July 2000, Malaysia is also the country coordinator for India's interaction with the ASEAN.

Relations remained cordial with Thailand. Economic, Commercial and Cultural links were strengthened through the exchange of high level

visits. India's membership in the BIMST-EC has given further impetus to this cooperation and the launching of the Mekong-Ganga initiative is likely to add to it. The year saw a handsome growth in bilateral trade.

There were a series of important visits to and from Singapore during the year. The External Affairs Minister visited Singapore in June 2000 and President of India Hon'ble Shri K. R. Narayanan paid a State Visit in November 2000. Commercial interaction increased with the signing of MOUs in Information Technology and the Economic Field.

Relations remained similarly cordial and cooperative with the other countries of South-East Asia. With the Pacific Island countries, India's engagement was low in quantitative terms but excellent qualitatively.

As India and China celebrated a half-century since the establishment of diplomatic relations, there was an implicit mutual recognition of the important role the two most populous countries have to play in the next century. For this, both India and China showed willingness to enhance a feeling of mutual trust and confidence. They agreed that the Joint Working Group and the Expert Group form an effective institutional mechanism for ironing out the differences on the boundary issue. They also stressed the common interest they have in fostering stability in Asia as a whole and recognised that bilateral talks are the best instrument to resolve all outstanding disputes between nations.

After a gap of eight years, there was a visit by the Indian President to China in May-June 2000. Besides the commitment to enhance official level cooperation, the two sides formed an Eminent Persons' Group. From the Chinese side, there was first the visit of the Foreign Minister in July 2000. This led to an agreement to expedite the process of clarification of the boundary. At the beginning of the New Year, Chairman Li Peng of the Standing Committee of the National Peoples Congress visited India. He stressed that China did not see India as a threat and desired good neighbourly relations between the two countries. The Joint Working Group on the Boundary Question met for the twelfth time and the sides agreed on a mutual exchange of maps. Besides the border issue, the two countries also talked on the entire spectrum of issues of mutual concern. Interaction at all levels – both official and non-official – remained high throughout the year. There were a series of important ministerial level visits and a resumption of exchanges between the armed forces. Indo-Chinese trade also recorded a healthy growth.

Traditional cultural links and strong economic ties make Indo-Japan

relations robust and abiding. These natural affinities were further augmented when the Prime Minister of Japan visited India in August 2000. Several important initiatives were agreed upon to enrich the bilateral relationship and to tap the potential of this partnership in the new areas of Information Technology. There were important Ministerial visits from the Indian side too, including the visit of the Raksha Mantri in June 2000, which allowed a productive discussion on a bilateral security dialogue. Economically, trade flows remained buoyant and had amounted to about 1987 million dollars in the first half of the financial year itself.

India and Mongolia celebrated 45 years of cordial and multifaceted diplomatic relations with the State Visit of the Mongolian President in January 2001. Mongolia voiced its support for India's claim for a permanent membership of the UN Security Council. It further echoed India's call for a multilateral effort against state-sponsored and cross-border terrorism.

The economic interaction with the Republic of Korea has been on an upswing ever since the liberalisation drive in India. This was strengthened with the visit of the ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister in July-August 2000. India extended its support to the reconciliation process currently underway in the Korean peninsula. In November 2000, an MoU was signed between the two countries for cooperation in the area of Information Technology. Relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea also remained friendly. The visit of the DPRK Vice Foreign Minister enabled consultations between the Foreign Offices. There was also significant interaction on the cultural front, with a number of artistic performances and film festivals being organised.

The Central Asian Region and India have always had civilisational links, with economic, commercial and cultural links going back to centuries. With the emergence of Central Asian countries as independent nations, the discovery of fossil fuel reserves in them and the emergence of international and cross-border terrorism as problems common to India and them, it has become all the more necessary for India to engage them. On its part, India is in a position to provide useful technical expertise to aid the development effort of these nations. All this has resulted in a concerted effort to renew past connections and strengthen relations on all fronts during the year.

The new mission in Baku has given India a functional presence in

Azerbaijan and has been actively pursuing Indian interests and disseminating information. Relations with Kazakhstan have been cordial and gained in substance with the active Indian participation in the Kazakh initiated Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia. Economic cooperation has also been on an upward trend. Contacts with Kyrgyzstan were maintained in all areas – political, commercial and cultural. They were substantiated by the important visit by the Head of the Kyrgyz Foreign Policy Department.

India shares several regional security concerns with Tajikistan, which benefited from extensive consultations between the two Foreign Offices. Similar concerns were shared with Turkmenistan when the Turkmen Foreign Minister visited India in April 2000. There was also a commitment to expand economic ties. The 500th birth anniversary of Bairam Khan – a memorable medieval figure – provided the two countries an opportunity to look back upon a common historical and cultural heritage.

During the year, relations with Turkey were active with a series of high level visits that gave greater content to the bilateral ties. This was reflected in the highly successful State Visit of the Prime Minister of Turkey in March-April 2000. Significant agreements leading to cooperation in the political, agricultural and cultural fields were signed. Economic cooperation is also seen as an area of promise, especially in the area of infrastructure development.

May 2000 saw the visit of the Uzbek President to India and provided an opportunity to the two countries to review common concerns on the issue of international terrorism and the rise of religious intolerance in the world. A number of promising agreements were signed.

India remained attentive to the developments in West Asia and North Africa. The Gulf countries of the region house a large number of Indian expatriate workers and are the principal source of India's energy supplies. India also continued to monitor the protracted and tortuous progress of the Middle East Peace Process.

The 14th Session of the India-Iraq Joint Commission took place in Delhi in November 2000 and was followed by the visit of the Iraqi Vice President. There were important meetings with representatives of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry, and India increased the ITEC slots for Iraq. Earlier in the year, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Ajit Kumar Panja had visited Iraq to facilitate closer ties between the two countries.

Relations with Kuwait retained their traditional warmth with an important visit by the Union Minister for Human Resource Development and goodwill visits by two Indian Naval ships to Kuwait. The Minister of State for External Affairs also visited Kuwait in July 2000 and held meetings with important dignitaries.

The Third Session of the India-Oman Joint Commission was held in April 2000. Oman's Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs visited India in July 2000. An Indo-Oman Strategic Consultative Group was planned and there were productive discussions on the IOR-ARC initiative.

The traditionally friendly relations between India and Bahrain were strengthened and diversified over the year. The Bahraini Minister of Transportation visited India in April 2000.

India and Qatar continued a productive relationship, with useful collaboration in the area of Natural Gas trading. This was facilitated by the visit of the Minister of Energy, Industry, Electricity and Water of Qatar in October 2000.

Cordiality also marked relations with Yemen with the renewing of the Joint Business Council Agreement in May 2000.

India's important relationship with Saudi Arabia was further enriched this year. The Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas visited Saudi Arabia in November 2000 to attend the International Energy Forum. There was a productive trade fair featuring Indian goods held in September 2000. The one and a half million strong Indian workforce continued to be the largest expatriate community in Saudi Arabia and underlined the importance of close engagement between the two countries. Over a lakh pilgrims also made the Haj journey from India, which necessitated extensive preparatory logistical coordination between the two countries. In January 2001, the Hon'ble External Affairs Minister paid the first ever visit at this level to Saudi Arabia.

There were a spate of important visits between India and the United Arab Emirates, which helped to cement traditionally close ties. April 2000 saw the visit of the UAE Minister of Information and Culture while the Chairman of Emirates Airlines was in India in September 2000. The Instruments of Ratification of the Treaty on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance were exchanged in May 2000. The Indian Minister for Commerce and Industry presided over a meeting of Commercial Representatives, at Dubai in June 2000. A Confederation

of Indian Industry (CII) delegation that visited UAE in May 2000 gave further momentum to this significant economic partnership.

Traditional relations with Egypt progressed well over the year. The G-15 Summit was held in Cairo in June 2000 and was attended by the Vice President of India. The Minister of State for Commerce and Industry inaugurated the INDIA TECH exhibition, in September 2000.

The Foreign Minister of Jordan visited India in December 2000. The consultations covered all areas of bilateral cooperation as well as the situation in the Middle East. Economic cooperation also grew, especially in the area of textiles, with a successful exhibition in October 2000.

India's traditional support for the territorial integrity of Lebanon provided a firm basis for continued friendship and trust between the two countries.

Relations also remained cordial with Libya, with increasing emphasis on economic interaction. The July 2000 visit of the Foreign Minister of Libya provided an opportunity to reiterate this sense of friendship.

India continued to extend political, moral and material support to Palestine. India conveyed its concern at the stalling of the Middle East Peace Process and maintained that a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region can only be established on the basis of UNSC resolutions 242 and 338. President Yassir Arafat visited Delhi in August 2000. There were several important visits from the Indian side too, including those of the Home Minister and the Minister for External Affairs.

Over the year, bilateral ties of friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation with Israel were strengthened. The visit of the Home Minister in June 2000 led to a Working Group on counter-terrorism. Later, the External Affairs Minister also visited Israel and put the bilateral dialogue on a firm footing by agreeing on a Ministerial level Joint Commission. Israel's Minister for Regional Cooperation made two trips to India over the course of the year to foster closer economic ties and to keep India informed about the Middle East Peace Process.

Bilateral cooperation with Sudan was given a fillip by the visit of the Minister of State for External Affairs in April 2000. He co-chaired the second meeting of the Indo-Sudan Joint Commission, which led to agreements in a wide variety of areas.

India mourned with Syria the loss of Late President Hafez al Assad

this year. The Minister of Human Resource Development and Science and Technology represented India at the funeral. Among other important visits, a high-level delegation visited New Delhi in July 2000 for the fourth session of the Joint Trade Committee.

Minister of State for External Affairs was in Tunis to co-chair the first Meeting of the Indo-Tunisian Joint Commission in April 2000. The Foreign Minister of Tunisia visited India in December 2000 and had a series of useful talks.

Relations were similarly cordial and forward looking with Morocco, with cooperation increasing in a variety of areas, to the mutual benefit of both countries.

In June 2000, the Indo-Algerian Joint Commission met in Algeria. Later, the October 2000 visit of the External Affairs Minister helped draw the two countries closer. As a culmination of this process, the President of Algeria visited India in January 2001 and was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day Parade.

A changing Africa has provided new areas for cooperation and interaction for the mutual benefit of both India and Africa. This allowed a progressive strengthening of relations in the year. There were important visits by the Foreign Minister of Benin, a large business delegation from Botswana and Parliamentary delegations from Cameroon, Madagascar and Kenya. The war between Eritrea and Ethiopia did not prevent India from drawing closer to both the countries or providing them assistance in their fight against a terrible drought. Assistance was also extended to Mozambique when it faced the fury of floodwaters and cyclone. The first non-socialist government of Senegal showed its keenness to strengthen commercial relations with India. Cooperation also increased with Seychelles after the 5th Joint Commission Meeting in October 2000; in the educational field, the visit of the Seychelles Minister for Education gave a fillip to collaboration. Relations also remained cordial with Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

With Mauritius, relations continued on an upswing, on the defence, economic and education fronts. This special friendship has endured after the new coalition government headed by Sir Anerood Jugnauth took office. The Foreign Minister of Mauritius visited India in January 2001 and Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth paid a visit later in the same month.

Already India's largest trading partner in Africa, Nigeria signed a

further agreement on the petroleum sector with India. In a gratifying acknowledgement of India's democratic institutions, Nigeria decided to train 360 members of its National Assembly in the Lok Sabha Secretariat. The Honourable Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Shri Omar Abdullah, paid a productive visit to Nigeria in October 2000.

In Sierra Leone, India participated in the multi-nation force that sought to control the spiralling violence. The year saw some tension as some Indian soldiers were first captured by the rebels and then brilliantly rescued. From September 2000, India started withdrawing its forces from this operation in a phased manner.

Due to its economic strength and status as a founding member of the IOR-ARC, South Africa remains one of the most important countries in the region from the Indian perspective. The past year saw trade continue to grow at a healthy pace and defence cooperation was stimulated by the visit of the Raksha Mantri in September 2000.

India continued to have cordial and mutually beneficial relations with the European continent. With the easing of cold war tensions, and the adoption of similar politico-economic regimes in both Eastern and Western Europe, there is today a wide appreciation of the liberal democratic norms of the Indian nation. This is further tinged with respect for India's economic potential as a likely powerhouse of the new century. Most European nations share India's perspective on the dangers posed by international terrorism and realise the validity of India's claim for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council.

This mood was in evidence in the first-ever India-EU summit in June 2000, which was attended by an Indian delegation headed by the Prime Minister. India and the EU aimed to build a 'strategic partnership' with active cooperation in the political, economic and commercial fields. India continued to monitor with interest the proposed expansion plans of the European Union and the suggested changes in its working to include common foreign and security policy issues. The EC External Relations Commissioner paid an official visit to India in January 2001. A forum of non-official eminent personalities, the India-EU Round Table, was launched. A Joint Working Group on Terrorism has also been agreed on.

India also continued to participate actively in all the forums under the Commonwealth umbrella, with the External Affairs Minister leading the Indian delegation to the Summit Meeting of the Commonwealth

High Level Group in September 2000 at New York. Earlier in April, the Commonwealth Secretary General visited India.

The close relationship between India and France was celebrated in April 2000 by the State Visit of the Indian President. The two countries reiterated the vitality of a 'strategic partnership' and put into effect important agreements on promoting bilateral investment. Economic ties were further strengthened by the visit of the Commerce and Industry Minister for the session of the Indo-French Joint Committee on Economic Cooperation. Joint Working Groups were planned to concentrate on the high potential sectors. The Home Minister also visited France to explore the modalities of closer interaction on battling terrorism. Defence and Security cooperation continued under the aegis of the Joint High Committee on Defence Cooperation and through the bilateral strategic dialogue, the sixth round of which was held in January-February 2001. It received impetus with the visit of the French Defence Minister in May 2000.

India's history binds it to a warm and advantageous partnership with the United Kingdom. The time-honoured friendship benefits from a functional institutional structure for cooperation on all fronts. UK was sympathetic to India's claim for a permanent place on an expanded UNSC. The determined intent of both countries to increase bilateral trade led to a one-third rise in the commercial traffic in the first half of year 2000. Over the past year, India and UK have recognised international terrorism, drug and arms trading and the rise of religious intolerance as issues of mutual concern that require close coordination at the political and official levels. The first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Terrorism and Drug Trafficking was held in January 2001. There was an important visit by UK's Foreign Secretary in April 2000. India and UK stressed the importance of this partnership to both countries and inaugurated India-UK Round Table as a constructive forum for cooperation. The External Affairs Minister visited the UK in May 2000 and again in November. Other important bilateral visits were by the British Secretary of State for Defence in December 2000 and the British Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in January 2001. Parliamentary and Non-Governmental exchanges were also actively pursued.

Germany remains an important economic partner for India and, given its importance in the European Community, India considers it a key interlocutor on several global issues. The year saw the resumption

of German development assistance as well as the establishment of a Strategic Dialogue process. The gamut of bilateral relations was reviewed when the Deputy Chancellor and Foreign Minister of Germany visited India in May 2000 and again in September. This led to the adoption of a forward-looking 'vision statement' between the two countries. Early in 2001, the External Affairs Minister visited Berlin to inaugurate the new Indian Embassy premises. Economic relations remained important and received further impetus with the Finance Minister's visit to Germany in April 2000. In the past year, Germany also expressed its willingness to tap the vast skilled manpower pool India enjoys in the area of Information Technology.

Prime Minister visited Italy in June 2000 and the resultant dialogue has led to closer cooperation in all areas especially on the fronts of combating international terrorism and promoting tourism. Among other important exchanges was the visit of the Italian Foreign Minister to India in November 2000.

There was a similar forward movement in relations with the other Western European countries, with a widely shared sense of concern at the scourge of terrorism and an appreciation of the potential advantages of closer ties with the emergent Indian economy, especially in the area of Information Technology.

With the countries of Eastern Europe, India has enjoyed close and friendly relations for many years. There has been fairly active interaction in the area of culture and science and technology. However, of late, the economic facet of this relationship is also being pursued with equal enthusiasm.

As the successor state to the Soviet Union, Russia continues to have a special place in Indian foreign policy. The past year was marked by the State Visit of the newly elected Russian President in October 2000. During the visit, agreements covering all possible areas of bilateral cooperation were signed. The two countries envisioned a productive 'Strategic Partnership' for the next century. Russia extended support for the Indian position on resolving the Kashmir dispute through bilateral talks, and also agreed that India was an obvious contender for a permanent place in the UNSC. Besides the Presidential visit, there were a number of opportunities for interaction at the highest level including the External Affairs Minister's trip in June 2000.

Relations moved visibly forward with the other East European

countries. There were a series of cordial exchanges and visits – the Foreign Minister of Armenia, the Defence Minister of Bulgaria, the Deputy Prime Minister of Croatia, the Foreign Minister of Georgia, the Deputy Prime Minister of Poland and the Defence Minister of Romania were only some of the important dignitaries to visit India from this region during the year. The countries were virtually unanimous in their support to Indian positions – on terrorism, on the reform of the United Nations or on the importance of democracy.

Among the more important trends noticed over the year was the marked enhancement in India's engagement with the United States of America. The year was, in fact, something of a watershed in Indo-US relations as these two 'natural partners' stepped into an entirely new phase of broad and multifaceted affiliation. The underlying identity of values in the two countries – democracy and individual freedom – served to unite them towards a common world vision. Of late, the growing economic interaction between India and the US has also become a major driving force towards mutually beneficial strengthening of relations. The most visible signal of this growing economic interdependence is, of course, the vital role being played by the highly successful Indian community in the US.

The two sides celebrated this growing intimacy in the grandest manner possible – by an exchange of State visits in the same year. The March 2000 visit of the US President led to the drawing up of a 'vision statement', which outlined the commonalities in the way both countries look towards the new century. An institutionalised mechanism for regular exchange of views on all matters of interest has also evolved. This involves periodic dialogue at the 'Summit' level as well as at other political and official levels. The proposed dialogue would cover the entire spectrum of issues of mutual concern, including UN peacekeeping and the situation in Afghanistan.

In September 2000, the Prime Minister visited the US and became the only foreign leader to address the Joint Sitting of the 106th Congress. There were also a host of other important banquets, receptions and meetings with the top political and official figures besides thinkers and representatives of the Indian community. The visit provided a further catalyst to the process of progressive engagement.

Both countries recognise that the forces of democracy have come to hold centre stage in the entire world today, and, as established and vibrant democracies, both India and the US wish to stand behind these forces.

They also agree on the dangers posed to civil society as a whole, and to democracy in particular, by the emergence of global and state sponsored terrorism. These dangers can be effectively challenged only if the two great democracies put up a joint front against them. India and the US also stressed the importance of strategic stability in Asia and recognised that this can be best ensured through the efforts of the relevant states themselves.

With Canada, there was productive interaction on the front of terrorism. The Joint Working Group on Terrorism had met in February 2000, which allowed an interchange of information on terrorist groups. The Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas led a delegation for the 16th World Petroleum Congress held at Calgary, Canada in June 2000.

India has always had the best of relations with the Latin American and Caribbean countries. On a variety of issues confronting the world, India and the countries of this region have found themselves on one side – besides, of course, the close interaction in the portals of the Non-Aligned Movement. There is also considerable respect and knowledge about Indian culture in the area. There is a realisation, however, that the economic potential of the relationship has never been fully exploited, leading to a series of attempts to correct this. There was a step up in the participation of Export Promotion Councils and business houses in trade exhibitions in Latin America. This has allowed a better appreciation of each other's economic strengths and comparative advantages, and is expected to lead to a burgeoning of trade flows over the near future. India is making a concerted effort to fashion a working institutional relationship with MERCOSUR as part of this pursuit. There were a number of important bilateral visits in the course of the year including the visit of the Minister of State for External Affairs to Argentina and Trinidad & Tobago in August 2000. The Minister of State for Commerce and Industry also made a valuable trip to the region, helping to set up the framework for a productive economic interaction. New ground was broken with some countries in the region as first ever Foreign Office Level consultations began with Peru and Uruguay.

Earlier in the year, the External Affairs Minister visited Cartagena, Colombia for the Ministerial Conference of the NAM Foreign Ministers in April 2000. In the same month, the Minister for Human Resource Development led the Indian delegation for the G-77 South Summit in Havana.

In India's opinion, the United Nations, due to its inclusive nature, is the appropriate platform for resolving most global issues. However, India believes that the world body needs necessary reform so that it can legitimately speak for the entire planet. This led India to actively participate in all the UN forums and strongly advocate the kind of restructuring that is required. The most significant event under the UN aegis was the Millennium Summit in September 2000. The Prime Minister addressed the Summit and outlined India's stand on a variety of issues facing the UN and the world today. India's call for refocusing and restructuring of the UN found echo in the representations of most other countries. Many countries also agreed that given India's size, its unblemished democratic record, its economic promise and its contributions to UN peacekeeping efforts, India deserves to be a permanent member of the Security Council.

On the issue of global disarmament, the country stuck to a principled and consistent standpoint, keeping India's security interests as the ultimate litmus test of any initiative. As before, it was stressed that India believes that a nuclear free world would best protect its security concerns and India shall be at the forefront of any universal and non-discriminatory regime for nuclear disarmament.

As bilateral security dialogues continued with the major partners, and began with several others, there was greater understanding and appreciation of this nuanced stand. At the multilateral level too, India continued to play an active role in international disarmament debates, as, for example, in the 55th UN 'Millennium' General Assembly. A new Permanent Mission to the Conference on Disarmament was established.

India also participated actively in UN forums on the issue of Human Rights, calling for a culture of tolerance and pluralism but also warning against politicisation of the Human Rights debate. High-Level delegations from India also attended other UN meets on issues like Women's Development, Climate Change, Social Development and Children.

While the boom in the world economy continued in the first half of year 2000, ensuring an equitable distribution of the benefits of globalisation remained a challenge. India was at the forefront in the efforts to highlight the impact of globalisation on the markets of developing countries. India's trade and economic relations registered a steady growth over the year, with exports rising by 20.51% in the first seven months of the financial year. There was progressive relaxation of the post-Pokhran

economic restrictions against India by some countries, while Sweden, Germany, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands resumed development cooperation.

India maintained over the year that there should be a global convergence on development, with focus on technology flows from the North to the South. The Hon'ble Union Minister for Human Resource Development and Science and Technology led the Indian delegation to the first ever Summit level meeting of the developing countries at Havana in April 2000. India played a leading role in the discussions. The Hon'ble Vice President of India led the Indian delegation to the G-15 summit in Cairo in June 2000 and helped to highlight India's stand on issues like a new WTO Round, Special and Differential needs of Developing Countries under WTO and revamping of the global financial architecture. India continued its active participation in the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation under which it is involved in four projects. The Ministry was actively involved in the ongoing inter-ministerial consultation on the finalisation of the Government's proposals regarding the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. At various multilateral meetings, India highlighted the existing inequities in the WTO agreements, especially the restrictions imposed on developing country exports through non-tariff barriers. India participated as a Full Dialogue Partner of the ASEAN in the 33rd Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) in July 2000. As the head of the Indian delegation, the External Affairs Minister emphasised early action in regulating international financial flows and the use of Information Technology for development. At the PMC, India, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar and Lao PDR also announced the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation initiative for cooperation in tourism, culture, education and transport and communication. The MGC was formally launched in November 2000 at Vientiane in Lao PDR. India's active participation in the BIMST-EC continued with the Trade Ministers' meeting in New Delhi in April 2000 and the Third BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting in New Delhi in July 2000, where India took over the Chairmanship of this sub-regional grouping.

There were concerted efforts to encourage the flow of FDI into India, particularly in key areas like infrastructure, energy, telecom and Information Technology. The Investment Technology Promotion Division of the Ministry spearheaded the promotion and publicity efforts

through the Indian Missions and Posts. Regular feedback was received from the Missions of investor perceptions about India.

In tandem with India's active engagement with all the major powers, traditional partners and other interlocutors and in response to challenges posed by developments in Fiji and UN peace keeping operations in Sierra Leone, the External Publicity Division was an active instrument of foreign policy management, of projecting and explaining India's perspective on foreign policy and international security issues. Simultaneously, the External Publicity Division also undertook the commissioning of a number of documentary films consonant with our foreign policy priorities, the maintenance of an updated website, supply of books for Indian libraries abroad, publication of the monthly India Perspectives and occasional volumes on important events and issues such as peace keeping, monitoring the international and domestic media and managing media related activities for the visits of the President, the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, the External Affairs Minister and other dignitaries.

With more Indians travelling and working abroad, the importance of consular services has increased dramatically. There is also a far greater rush for passports than before. Appropriate improvements, including computerisation, were continued in these directions to provide efficient and expeditious service to the citizens. Steps are also being contemplated to streamline the Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) Cards scheme to make it more attractive and popular.

In a bid to tap the potential of the vast and successful expatriate community, and to serve them better, a separate NRI/PIO Division headed by an Additional Secretary was set up in April 2000. This cell will act as a focal point for all issues regarding the Overseas Indians. A High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora was also set up in September 2000 to study the issues and recommend a suitable policy framework that will facilitate the participation of NRIs and PIOs in the country's development efforts. A special website on Indian Diaspora was inaugurated in December 2000. In January 2001, the Prime Minister inaugurated the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin in New Delhi.

Under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme and the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan, assistance was offered to 144 developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America,

Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Gulf and the Pacific Island countries. The programmes earned goodwill for India and boosted the image of its indigenous skills and expertise. In response to increasing demand for these programmes, the budget for year 2000-2001 was enhanced to Rs. 42.5 crores. The assistance included Civil and Military Training, Project related assistance, Deputations of Experts and Study visits of senior officials.

The Ministry persisted in its efforts to promote the use of Hindi in its offices as well as Missions/Posts abroad. All important documents – bilateral treaties, MoUs, Credentials, Speeches or President, Annual Report of the Ministry and Parliament Questions – were issued bilingually. Being the Golden Jubilee year of the Declaration of Hindi as the Official Language, special programmes were organised in the Missions. Seven Hindi teachers were appointed in Missions abroad to teach the children of Embassy and other officials. The Leap Office Hindi Software has been provided to 67 Missions abroad.

The Policy Planning and Research Division, in its role as the nodal point for interaction with the National Security Council Secretariat, the University Grants Commission and its affiliates and the Area Study Centres located in various universities, continued financial assistance to academic institutions for holding conferences and seminars, preparation of research papers, exchange of scholars and the promotion of Track II diplomacy. The PP&R Division also rendered all possible assistance to territorial divisions whenever required. Modernisation work in the Ministry's library, which functions under the overall control of the Division, continued.

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) Ordinance, 2000 was promulgated on the 1st of September 2000. The Ordinance declared the Indian Council of World Affairs to be an institution of national importance and provided for its incorporation and matters connected therewith. The Ordinance was re-promulgated on the 5th of January 2001. As a nodal Division dealing with academic/research institutions, the PP&R Division administered the government funding to the ICWA and supervised actions for renovation of the premises and for early commencement of the normal activities of the Council.

The Foreign Service Institute continued its task of training the personnel of the Ministry, both officers and staff, through regular modules. The 25th and 26th Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats were also completed in the financial year. The Computer Centre of the Institute held a number of courses for MEA personnel, to spread familiarity and hone skills with computers.

The External Publicity Division of the Ministry is the nodal source for disseminating the viewpoint of the government on the entire gamut of international issues. Through regular press briefings, commissioning of documentary films, maintenance of the Ministry website, supply of Indian (and its own) publications and audio-visual material abroad, and the coordination of media related activities, the Division furthered Indian interests both within and outside the country.

The legal and Treaties Division of the Ministry discharged its usual duty, defending India's foreign interests in legal fora abroad and enshrining them in various international treaties and agreements. In particular, the legal experts of this Division contributed to the efforts that led to the International Court of Justice deciding that it had no jurisdiction to adjudicate on the Pakistani complaint regarding the downing of its naval aircraft by the Indian Air Force in 1999.

The Indian Council of Cultural Relations carried on its role of acting as a cultural ambassador for the country by organising exhibitions, administering scholarships to foreign students and hosting seminars and performances. With ever-increasing global interest in Indian artistic and cultural legacies, the council's activities provide one of the finest ways to reach directly to the people of the world.

Internally in the Ministry, steps were taken to rationalise the workforce aimed at reduction of non-plan expenditure and achieving greater efficiency as also encourage Track II diplomacy and to revitalise institutions like Indian Council of World Affairs for greater interaction with academicians, scholars and intellectuals. India also warmly appreciated and gratefully accepted the spontaneous gesture of the world community in rushing relief supplies for the quake affected areas of Gujarat.



India's Neighbours

India remained concerned with the continuing conflict and resultant upheaval in Afghanistan which impacts on India's national interests including security concerns. India, therefore, closely monitored the evolving situation in Afghanistan. The Taliban controlled areas in Afghanistan continued to remain major centres of terrorism and a large source of opium production and illegal flow of narcotics in the world, posing a serious threat to the peace and stability of the whole region. India remained firm in its belief that there can be no military solution to the Afghan problem and that Afghanistan's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity must be preserved.

The months of July-September 2000 witnessed intense fighting in Afghanistan. The Taliban launched an attack across Shumali plains and Bagram airbase in July 2000. In August, the Taliban launched a multipronged attack to capture Takhar province and succeeded in capturing Nahreen in Baglan province and Iskamish in Takhar province. In another attack on 5-6 September 2000, the Taliban also captured Cal and Taloqan city, the capital of Takhar province. Subsequently, important towns of Khajagahar, Hazarabagh and Imamsahib (in Kunduz) were also taken by the Taliban. Commander Masood launched a counteroffensive in mid-October and retook all the important towns from the Taliban except the city of Taloqan.

India maintained an active profile in addressing its security concerns and national interests as impacted upon by the developments in Afghanistan. The issue was discussed during the visit of US President Bill Clinton to India in March 2000 and the return visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee to the US in September 2000. India and US agreed to institutionalize their bilateral discussions on Afghanistan. The situation in Afghanistan also came up for discussion during the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to India. India and Russia agreed to coordinate their efforts on Afghanistan and form a Joint Working Group on Afghanistan. The first meeting of the Joint Working Group was held on 20-21 November 2000.

Considering the ongoing war and the resultant suffering of the civilian population, India has been providing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan bilaterally and through the UN. During the current financial year, India has till now sent medicines worth Rs. 33.5 lakhs to Afghanistan.

India's engagement with Iran to expand their multi-faceted bilateral ties continued during the year under review. The Minister of External Affairs visited Iran on May 20-23, 2000 to lead the Indian delegation for the 11th Meeting of Indo-Iran Joint Commission. The

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of civilians in Jammu & Kashmir on 1st and 2nd August 2000. Prime Minister's initiative, announced on 19th November 2000, wherein directives were given to the Security Forces not to initiate combat operations against militants in Jammu & Kashmir, was sought to be eroded through an escalation of violence which included attacks by Pakistan sponsored terrorists on the Red Fort in New Delhi and the airport in Srinagar, an aborted assassination attempt on the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir and threats to attack the office of the Prime Minister.

India maintained its desire to resume the Composite Dialogue Process, which was put in place at its initiative in 1998, and which seeks to build confidence and trust, put in place a stable structure of cooperation and address all outstanding issues between the two countries. An appropriate environment free from terrorism and propaganda is an obvious requirement for the resumption of the dialogue. Pakistan took no action to facilitate such an environment.

Functional level contacts between the Governments of India and Pakistan, as well as people-to-people contacts between the two countries, have continued. The Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMO) of both Armies maintained weekly contacts. Officials from BSF and Pak Ranger met regularly to settle border management issues. The Samjhauta Express and the Delhi Lahore bus service have continued uninterrupted. And, fishermen who inadvertently stray into each other's territorial waters were released. Exchanges between academics, retired government officials, journalists and other opinion makers, as well as visits by religious pilgrims also continued to take place.

During the year under review the international community also began focusing on Pakistan's state sponsorship of terrorism. Leaders and official spokesmen of several countries openly acknowledged the involvement of extremist Pakistani groups in international terrorism.

In December 2000, Pakistan announced a policy of "maximum restraint" along the Indo Pakistan border by bringing down the level of its unprovoked firing and claiming to withdraw some of its troops, but continues to support cross-border infiltration and terrorist operations in India. These self-serving measures did not address India's concerns relating to cross border terrorism being sponsored by Pakistan.

On 10th August 1999, an intruding Pakistan Naval surveillance cum combat aircraft, Atlantique, was shot down over Indian airspace after it made hostile maneuvers in response to signals given to it by intercepting Indian Airforce aircraft. Pakistan made the absurd and untenable claim for compensation by India for the loss of the intruding aircraft and for the lives of naval personnel on board. To pursue its claims for compensation Pakistan filed a case with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1999. It was clear from the beginning that there was no real legal basis for the claim; it was intended for purely propaganda purposes.

India submitted to the International Court of Justice that it did not have any jurisdiction in the case on account of the reservations submitted by it in 1974, while accepting the Compulsory Jurisdiction of the Court. Verbal hearing were held in April 2000 and the Court delivered its judgment on 21st June 2000, in which it upheld by 14-2 India's stand that the Court had no jurisdiction to entertain the application filed by Pakistan.

In the Year 2000, SGPC again did not send any Sikh jathas to Pakistan in protest against the formation of Pakistan Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (PGPC) headed by a former ISI Chief. However, some private jathas did visit Pakistan to celebrate various Sikh religious functions. Over 2000 Sikh pilgrims visited Pakistan on these occasions. The opportunity was availed of by the Pakistan government to attempt to indoctrinate the pilgrims against India. A

jatha of Hindu pilgrims from Shadani Darbar visiting Hayat Patafi in Sindh (Pakistan) cut short its visit in protest against Pakistani's back-tracking on its visit to Hinglaj temple and the restrictions imposed on the jatha's movements. Two Pakistani pilgrim groups visited India on the occasion of the Urs of Hazarat Khawaja Nizamuddin Aulia and the Urs of Hazarat Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti.

Regular interaction and exchanges at different levels with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Myanmar succeeded in extending and deepening the broad-based relationships that exist in diverse areas. Government's focus has been on enhancing mutually beneficial linkages in the economic and infrastructural fields, promoting mutual trust and cooperation in key areas such as security, including the growing threat of terrorism and religious extremism in the region and border management; and facilitating people-to-people contact through programmes for human resource development, cultural exchanges and travel.

This was done in close coordination with other Ministries/agencies of the Government of India and with the States bordering these countries.

There was high-level interaction in areas including water resources, trade and defence.

The Minister of Water Resources Shri Arjun Charan Sethi, visited Bangladesh for the 34th Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting on 12-13 January 2001 in Dhaka. The JRC reviewed India – Bangladesh cooperation in the field of water resources. The discussions covered, *inter alia*, issues relating to sharing of Teesta waters, implementation of the Treaty on Sharing of the Ganga Waters at Farakka (1996), strengthening of existing cooperation in flood forecasting and warning, and matters relating to common / border rivers. India has agreed to Bangladesh's request for financial and technical assistance

for carrying out feasibility and detailed engineering works of the proposed Ganges barrage project in Bangladesh. Both sides agreed to cooperate in combating the problem of arsenic contamination of ground water.

The Minister of State for Water Resources, Smt. Bijoya Chakravarty had earlier paid a goodwill visit to Bangladesh from 25-29 September 2000. The Bangladesh Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources paid a goodwill and familiarization visit to India from November 1-15, 2000. The delegation visited projects of interest and interacted with officials, *inter-alia* from the State governments of West Bengal and Maharashtra.

Bangladesh faced severe floods in September - October 2000 in the southwestern region. As a gesture of solidarity and support, the Government of India contributed Rs. 5 crore to the Bangladesh Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

Mr. C. M. Shafi Sami, Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh visited New Delhi from August 6-8, 2000 as the Special Envoy of the Bangladesh Prime Minister and handed over a letter from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He also called on EAM and held discussions with the Foreign Secretary.

Mr. C. M. Shafi Sami, Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh visited New Delhi on 13-14 December 2000 for Foreign Office consultations. The talks covered the entire range of the multi-faceted relations between India and Bangladesh. The Foreign Secretaries reviewed the measures for restoration of multi-modal communication links between the two countries, noted with satisfaction the smooth operation of the Calcutta-Dhaka bus service and agreed to expedite the early introduction of a bus service between Agartala and Dhaka. The two sides reviewed ways and means of enhancing mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation, promotion of cooperation in the areas of water resources, science & technology, the liberalization of visa arrangements, cultural exchanges, and shared concerns about the growth of terrorist activities in the region. Detailed discussions

were held on pending issues relating to the Agreement concerning the Demarcation of the Land Boundary between India and Bangladesh and Related Matters. The Foreign Secretaries decided to set up two joint Working Groups, which would systematically address these matters.

Commerce Secretary-level trade review talks were held in New Delhi in May 2000 where bilateral trade and economic relations were reviewed and means to further strengthen ties were discussed. Ongoing efforts for the improvement and upgradation of infrastructural links between the two countries continued. The Calcutta – Dhaka bus continued to operate successfully. Initial discussions were held to work out modalities for an Agartala – Dhaka bus service. A working agreement between the Indian Railways and Bangladesh Railway was signed in Dhaka in July 2000 for restoration of a third broad gauge rail link for cargo traffic between Petrapole (India) – Benapole (Bangladesh). The freight service was jointly inaugurated on January 21, 2001 by the Railway Minister Ms Mamata Banerjee and the Bangladesh Communication Minister Mr. Anwar Hossain Manju.

Institutional dialogue on key issues relating to border management and security-related matters included Home Secretary-level talks in April 2000, Director General-level meetings between the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in April 2000 and October 2000 in New Delhi and Dhaka respectively and the meeting of the Joint Working Group from the respective Home Ministries in New Delhi from February 15-17, 2001. Another Director General level meeting between the Border Security Force and the Bangladesh Rifles is scheduled for March 2001.

As part of the regular interaction between the Armed Forces of India and Bangladesh, the Chief of Army Staff, Gen V P Malik paid an official visit to Bangladesh in May 2000. The first India – Bangladesh Army Joint River Rafting Expedition was held in April 2000 on the Teesta and Brahmaputra (Jamuna in Bangladesh).

Active cooperation in the areas of education and technical training was maintained. Several thousand students from Bangladesh pursued their studies in India, many of them on ICCR scholarships. Cultural exchanges and media interaction were intensified. The Indian High Commission in Dhaka organized a series of cultural events including music concerts, dance performances, film shows and art exhibitions etc., which were widely attended. Indian missions in Bangladesh issued 3,63,204 visas to Bangladeshi nationals in the year 2000.

India's multi-faceted relations with Sri Lanka saw particularly intense engagement in the political, economic and cultural fields. India consistently reiterated its commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka; to the restoration of lasting peace in Sri Lanka and to a peaceful, political process being the only means of achieving a lasting peace, through a negotiated settlement which would meet the aspirations of all elements of Sri Lankan society.

Continuing the practice of maintaining high level contact between the two Governments, the President of Sri Lanka, Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga visited India from February 22-25, 2001. Her talks with the President, Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs covered bilateral, regional and international issues and were reflective of the high priority attached by both countries to the maintenance of close and friendly relations based on mutual trust and understanding. The Sri Lanka President apprised the Indian leadership of recent developments in the attempt to establish peace in Sri Lanka.

On June 11-12, 2000, Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Affairs had visited Sri Lanka for an exchange of views with the Sri Lankan President and the Foreign Minister on the evolving situation in Sri Lanka, regarding which Government had expressed concern in identical statements made in both Houses on May 4, 2000. During

this visit, EAM also met the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe and representatives of other political parties. EAM conveyed India's willingness to extend to Sri Lanka a line of credit of US \$ 100 million on mutually acceptable terms. The terms and conditions of the credit line were subsequently worked out and an agreement for the first tranche of US\$ 45 million was signed in January 2001.

Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, former Sri Lankan Prime Minister passed away on October 10, 2000. The Vice President represented India at the State funeral near Colombo on October 14, 2000.

Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar, Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, earlier visited India on December 15, 2000 and held wide-ranging talks with the Minister of External Affairs on, *inter-alia*, regional cooperation and the problems faced by fishermen from both the countries. Sri Lanka would be sending a team to India in order to study the legal procedures involved. The Minister of External Affairs said that the team would receive full cooperation in India. The Minister of External Affairs reiterated India's concern at firing on Indian fishermen and emphasized the need to avoid such incidents.

The India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement, which was operationalised on March 1, 2000, is expected to provide new opportunities for the growth of trade and investment. Business communities in both countries joined the Governments in taking steps to publicize the scope and potential benefits of the Agreement. The Joint Customs Group met in Colombo on September 14-15, 2000 to review progress and problems in Customs-related areas. The Indian Economic Summit 2000 of the World Economic Forum held in New Delhi in November 2000 had a special session devoted to the Agreement. Professor G.L.Peiris, Minister of Constitutional Affairs and Industrial Development led the Sri Lankan delegation to the event.

Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, Minister for Buddha Sasana, Culture and Religious Affairs visited Delhi as a Special Envoy of the Sri Lankan

President, from July 4-6, 2000. He visited India again at the head of a high-level delegation for talks with the Union Minister for Agriculture, Shri Nitish Kumar on September 23, 2000. The talks covered issues relating to fishermen and fishing boats of either country in the custody of the other. There was a focus on the problems faced by bona fide fishermen from both countries and the humanitarian aspect of the problem faced by poor people for whom fishing is the only means of livelihood. It was agreed that they should be dealt with in a spirit of compassion and understanding and that their release should not be delayed beyond the period required for completing necessary procedures.

Other visits included those to India by Mr Mahinda Rajapakse, Sri Lankan Minister for Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development from May 24-30, 2000; Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe, M.P., Leader of the Opposition, Sri Lanka, from April 18-21, 2000 and December 21 to January 02, 2001; and Vice Admiral HCAC Tissera, Commander of the Sri Lankan Navy, from November 2-9, 2000 and Chief of Air Staff Air Marshall A.Y.Tipnis paid a goodwill visit to Sri Lanka from May 11-14, 2000.

Cultural interaction flourished through the activities of the India Culture Centre in Colombo and the India-Sri Lanka Foundation.

ives

India-Maldives relations have been close, friendly and problem-free. India has been assisting Maldives in its developmental efforts especially in the field of human resource development and public health. Exchange of high-level visits during the period under review added to the warmth of the relationship.

The State visit of President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom of Maldives in August 2000 helped in further consolidating the existing ties between India and the Maldives. In March 2000, Mr. Fathulla Jameel, Foreign Minister of Maldives was in India on an official visit during which the Fourth Session of India-Maldives Joint Commission was

held in New Delhi from March 6-7, 2000. A number of new areas of cooperation were identified at this meeting for further implementation. Raksha Mantri visited Maldives from January 9-12, 2001 at the invitation of Maldivian MOS for Defence and National Security, Major General Abdul Sattar Anbaree. Besides detailed discussions with General Anbaree, RM called on President Gayoom, Foreign Minister Fathulla Jameel and visited various defence establishments. Earlier, the Maldives MOS for Defence and National Security visited India from November 19-23, 2000.

The fifth India-Maldives Joint Coast Guard Exercises – the Dosti series - were conducted off Male harbour in the Maldives from October 8-12, 2000. The Director General, Coast Guard visited Maldives on the invitation of his Maldivian counterpart and witnessed the conduct of these exercises, which have been found professionally useful.

Other important visits included those of Mr. Abdullah Hameed, Speaker, People's Majlis of Maldives, who led a Parliamentary delegation from Maldives to India from May 9-12, 2000, and the visit of the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Sushil Kumar to Maldives in March 2000.

Cooperation on security-related matters is ongoing in the areas of military training, police training and provision of sniffer dogs and dog handlers.

India continued to provide training facilities to Maldivian students in areas such as medicine, engineering, computers, education, nursing and agriculture.

India's policy of constructive engagement with Myanmar focused on broad-basing the areas of cooperation and restoring the tradition of high-level bilateral exchanges between the two countries. Interaction at the technical and official levels continued.

At the invitation of the Vice President, Gen. Maung Aye, Vice

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council led a high-level delegation consisting of the Deputy Prime Minister and 7 Ministers to India for a seven-day visit from 14-21 November 2000. Gen. Maung Aye called on the President and had discussions with the Vice President, Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs, Home Minister, MOS for Commerce and Industry and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. The discussions were wide-ranging and covered economic cooperation, trade, cross-border projects and activities, international terrorism, drug trafficking, cooperation in the field of culture, human resource development, science and technology and regional cooperation within the framework of BIMST-EC (of which both countries are members) and the India-ASEAN Dialogue partnership. The two sides agreed to take steps to ensure peace and tranquility along the India-Myanmar border.

An agreement to extend a US\$ 15 million Indian credit to Myanmar was signed during the visit.

Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Affairs visited Myanmar from February 13-15, 2001. The visit continued the tradition of personal contacts between the leaders of two friendly neighbours. The highlight of the visit was the inauguration of the Tamu-Kalemyo-Kalewa highway starting from the India-Myanmar border in Manipur. The road provides a cross-border link between the two countries and is expected to promote economic development, cross-border trade and tourism in the region. The India-Myanmar Friendship Centre for Remote Sensing and Data Processing in Yangon was inaugurated during the visit. EAM visited Mandalay and Yangon, where he called on Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council and Prime Minister and Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt, Secretary-I. These discussions and the talks with the Myanmar Foreign Minister and other Ministers covered all aspects of bilateral relations including border trade and infrastructure projects.

As part of the growing interaction in science and technology,

the first meeting of the India-Myanmar Joint Working Group on Science and Technology was held in Yangon from 4-9 April 2000 and devised a Work Plan for 2000-2002. Secretary, Department of Science and Technology led the Indian delegation. In September 2000, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology led a 4-member team to Myanmar for the first India-Myanmar Joint Workshop on Biotechnology.

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar visited New Delhi twice during the year, as a Special Envoy of the Government of Myanmar in May 2000, to seek India's support at the International Labour Conference, and as leader of the delegation for the Foreign Office Consultations from October 15-20, 2000. These talks provided a useful opportunity to review the entire gamut of bilateral relations. It was decided that these consultations would be held annually.

The Chief of Army Staff, Gen. V.P. Malik paid a visit to Myanmar from July 3-6, 2000, at the invitation of Gen. Maung Aye, Vice Chairman, State Peace and Development Council and C-In-C of the Myanmar Army. The Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Sushil Kumar visited Myanmar from January 16-19, 2001.

The Myanmar Home Minister, U Tin Hlaing visited India from November 2-8, 2000. He held discussions with the Union Home Minister, EAM and Raksha Mantri on a range of bilateral issues including cooperation in the areas of border management.

Regular institutional dialogue on border management-related matters was maintained. The 7th National Level Meeting was held in Myanmar from August 28-30, 2000; the Indian delegation for the meeting was led by the Home Secretary. Other meetings were also held, as part of the institutional dialogue between the drug control authorities and local military commanders at the border.

The Indian Embassy in Yangon successfully organized a number of varied cultural programmes including an exhibition on Buddhism, which attracted over 50,000 visitors. Ramayana and puppet troupes from Myanmar came to India.

The Myanmar Culture Minister, U Sin Wein visited India from January 24 to February 2, 2000 at the invitation of the Minister of Culture and Tourism. The two ministers signed the India-Myanmar Cultural Agreement, which would provide the framework for further cultural exchanges between the two countries. Myanmar's Deputy Minister for Science & Technology led a 15-member business delegation in February 2001 to study the Information Technology sector in India.

India continued to provide education and technical training to students from Myanmar.

India and Nepal enjoy traditionally close and friendly relations characterised by extensive social and people to people contacts. Bilateral co-operation with Nepal has continued to grow and strengthen over the years. During the period under review, besides the exchange of high level visits, several initiatives were taken with a view to further enriching this relationship and consolidating the close and multifaceted co-operation between the two countries.

At the invitation of the External Affairs Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, Mr Chakra Prasad Bastola paid an official visit to India from 7-10 May 2000. During his visit, the Nepalese Foreign Minister had detailed discussions with the External Affairs Minister. The most significant outcome of the visit was the announcement for the resumption of Indian Airlines flights to Kathmandu. It was also agreed that meetings of bilateral institutional forums should be scheduled soon to provide renewed momentum to bilateral relations.

In pursuance of the decision taken during the Nepalese Foreign Minister's visit, Foreign Secretary level talks were held in Kathmandu on 20 & 21 May 2000 and the discussions covered the entire canvas of our bilateral relations.

The Foreign Secretary's visit was followed by the visit of a high-

level Indian delegation led by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Shri Brajesh Mishra, to Kathmandu from 6-7 June 2000 for the 5th Meeting of the India-Nepal High Level Task Force (HLTF) to review the status of the ongoing projects under bilateral cooperation and to recommend new projects to be implemented in Nepal with Indian assistance. The HLTF recommended that future cooperation should focus on improvement of infrastructure by border check-posts and in adjoining border districts; pilot schemes for integrated rural development including dairy development, information technology and a small/medium size hydel project.

The new Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Shri Deb Mukharji, presented his credentials to the King of Nepal on 23 June 2000 at a ceremony in the Royal Palace in Kathmandu.

Home Secretary level talks were held in Kathmandu from 5-7 July 2000 and all matters relating to security were discussed in detail. At these meetings, views were exchanged on our respective security perceptions and modalities to enhance cooperation in combating activities of terrorists, criminals and other undesirable elements, including along the India-Nepal border were discussed. Cooperation between law enforcement agencies of both countries and improved management of the India-Nepal border were also discussed in this meeting.

The Minister of State for Railways, Shri Digvijay Singh visited Nepal from 9-11 July 2000 for the foundation laying ceremony of the Raxaul-Birgunj Broad Gauge Rail Link being built with Indian assistance.

The Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, paid an official goodwill visit to India from 31 July to 6 August 2000 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India. He was accompanied by the Foreign Minister of Nepal, Mr Chakra Prasad Bastola and senior officials of His Majesty's Government of Nepal. During his official engagements in New Delhi on August 1 and 2, 2000, the Prime Minister of Nepal, *inter alia*, called on the President and the Vice-

President of India and had a meeting with the Prime Minister of India, which was followed by delegation level talks. The discussions covered all aspects of our bilateral relations with Nepal.

The Joint Press Statement issued at the conclusion of the visit highlighted the wide-ranging discussions and the decisions taken to further strengthen the close and friendly relations between the two countries. These, *inter alia*, included endorsement of the new economic cooperation projects in Nepal recommended by the India-Nepal High Level Task Force (HLTF), exemption of Nepalese exports to India from the levy of 4 % Special Additional Duty (SAD) on Customs, permission for the import of Indian vehicles into Nepal under Nepal's new emission norms, setting up of a Joint Committee on Water Resources as the apex body to discuss and implement cooperation in the water resources sector. The two Governments agreed to devise effective modalities and measures to strengthen their existing cooperation with regard to the management of the open India-Nepal border with the objective of combating terrorism and cross-border crimes. They reiterated their commitment not to allow their respective territories to be used for activities directed against or prejudicial to the security of the other.

The outcome of the visit confirmed the stable foundation of and steady progress in relations besides reflecting a common approach to attaining meaningful economic development through mutually beneficial cooperation.

The Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr C P Thakur, visited Nepal from 23-25 August 2000 to attend the 18th Meeting of the Health Ministers of South East Asia Region organised by the World Health Organisation in Kathmandu.

The Nepalese Minister for Science & Technology, Mr Surendra Prasad Choudhary visited India from 4-7 September 2000 for interaction with Mumbai-based Information Technology firms and professionals whose co-operation he sought for the development of the IT sector in Nepal.

The 4th Indian Trade Exhibition, ITE-2000, was organised by the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) from 19-24 September 2000 in Kathmandu. The ITE - 2000, which showcased Indian products and services, brought together the business community of the two countries. There were 96 participants from India. A high-level Indian business delegation, representing both the private and public sectors, participated in the event and interacted with their Nepalese counterparts for further strengthening trade ties between the two countries.

The Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Dr Raman Singh visited Nepal from 18-22 September 2000 to participate in the inaugural ceremony of the ITE-2000. On 19 September 2000, the Exhibition was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala.

In pursuance of the decision taken during the visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal to India in August 2000, an India-Nepal Joint Committee on Water Resources (JCWR) at the level of Water Resources Secretaries of the two countries was constituted. The first meeting of the Joint Committee was held from 1-3 October 2000 in Kathmandu during which the two sides undertook a comprehensive review of India - Nepal bilateral co-operation in the water resources sector including implementation of existing agreements and understandings.

India attaches high priority to the development of economic and commercial ties with Nepal. India's contribution to Nepal's economic development in diverse areas has increased over the years. Major projects funded by the Government of India currently under implementation include construction of an Emergency and Trauma Centre at the Bir Hospital in Kathmandu, broad-gauging of the Raxaul-Sirsiya Rail Link and construction of the Tanakpur - Mahendranagar Link Road. One of India's prestigious projects, construction of 22 bridges on the Kohalpur-Mahakali sector of the East-West Highway in Nepal has recently been completed. Built in

some of the most difficult terrain, these 22 bridges have opened up this part of Nepal bordering India to new possibilities in trade, investment and economic growth. This would result in the socio-economic development, and substantially benefit the entire western region of Nepal.

Initiatives taken by Government of India to liberalise the trade and investment regime with Nepal are expected to provide a boost to bilateral economic exchanges in the coming years. Indian investments as of date accounted for about 36% of total foreign investments in Nepal. Bilateral trade during 1999-2000 amounted to Rs. 1153.67 crores, as against Rs. 1124.36 crores registered in 1998-99. For the period April-July 2000, the two-way trade was Rs. 453.98 crores.

A large number of Nepalese students continued to avail of academic and training facilities in India. Several scholarship schemes, such as the Silver Jubilee Scholarship and the B P Koirala Foundation Scholarship supplemented normal scholarships and self-financing opportunities for studies in India offered by the Government of India to Nepalese students in diverse fields - notably engineering, medicine and technical areas. Specific professional training and orientation programmes were conducted for select candidates from Nepal under the Nepal Aid Scheme. A large number of Nepalese students also directly sought admission to schools and colleges in India.

Relations between India and Bhutan are characterized by mutual trust, understanding and close friendship. Economic cooperation between the two countries has been steadily growing and continues to provide a firm foundation to the expanding bilateral relationship.

As part of the close bilateral cooperation, India has been extending financial assistance to Bhutan by supporting its Five-Year Plans since 1961. The 8th Five-Year Plan (July 1, 1997 - June 30, 2002) of Bhutan is currently under implementation. Government of India's support

to the 8th Five-Year Plan has been approved at the level of Rs. 900 crores. Of this total commitment, Rs.500 crores is earmarked for project-tied assistance. Major projects under project-tied assistance are Hospital Projects at Thimphu and Mongar, mini hydel projects, the eastern grid transmission line and other infrastructure projects covering bridges and roads.

In addition, three Mega Projects are being implemented in Bhutan with assistance under Indian Plan Funds, namely - 1020 MW Tala Hydroelectric Project (THEP); 60 MW Kurichu Hydroelectric Project (KHEP); and the 0.5 Million Tonnes Per Day Dungsum Cement Project (DCP). The financing pattern for Tala and Kurichu Projects is 60% grant and 40% loan. Dungsum Project is being funded totally by grant.

During the year, various high level visits have marked the continuing close interaction between India and Bhutan. Bhutanese Foreign Minister, Lyonpo Jigmi Y. Thinley, visited India from April 17-26, 2000. It was a goodwill visit aimed at further strengthening the close ties of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. During this visit, both sides reviewed the wide-ranging cooperation between the two countries and expressed their satisfaction at the timely progress of ongoing projects, particularly in the hydel sector. The two sides also agreed to organize a Bhutanese exhibition - The Living Religious and Cultural Traditions of Bhutan - in India during October/November 2001.

Shri Lalit Mansingh, Foreign Secretary of India, visited Bhutan from March 7-9, 2000. During his visit, he had an audience with His Majesty the King of Bhutan, who expressed his confidence that the close friendship, cooperation and understanding between the two countries would continue to grow. The Foreign Secretary again visited Bhutan from October 19-21, 2000 and held talks on issues of mutual interest.

There were other important visits from India to Bhutan during the year. Secretary (Agricultural Cooperation) and Director General (Indian Council for Agricultural Research) visited Bhutan from July

20-24, 2000. During the visit, issues pertaining to mutual cooperation in the areas of improving productivity of crops like rice, wheat and maize, horticulture development, seed development programme, cooperation in the field of agricultural machinery, tools and small implements were discussed.

Secretary (Post) visited to Bhutan from March 30 - April 2, 2000 when possible cooperation in postal services was explored. The main areas identified were (a) Indian Post's assistance to Bhutan Post in providing Megdoot 98 software and (b) training and technical exchange cooperation. The regular and high level interactions continue to reflect the unique and special ties that exist between the two countries.

The two Governments continued to be in close touch with each other on the issue of ULFA-Bodo militants in Southern Bhutan. The Royal Government of Bhutan is seriously concerned with this problem. The National Assembly of Bhutan in its 77th session in July 1999 had unveiled a three pronged strategy to address this issue - (a) to cut off supply routes to the militants; (b) to initiate firm action under the National Security Act of 1992 against persons found to be collaborating with the militants in any form; and (c) to continue the process of dialogue with the militants to persuade them to leave Bhutan peacefully. The 78th session of the National Assembly in July 2000 passed a resolution reiterating the decisions taken in the 77th session and also authorized the Government to launch military operations against ULFA/Bodo, in case the on going peaceful dialogue with militants fails to achieve the desired objectives.

The new Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Shri K. S. Jasrotia, presented his credentials to the King of Bhutan on 6 November 2000 at a ceremony in the Royal Palace in Thimpu.

Despite the shadow cast by the October 1999 military coup in Pakistan on the SAARC process and the postponement of the

Eleventh SAARC Summit (November 1999), technical and functional cooperation under SAARC continued. The growing people-to-people contact of all kinds was a notable development during the year.

The Sixth Meeting of the Governing Board of the South Asian Development Fund (SADF) was held in Maldives on May 22-23, 2000 in which the activities of the Fund were reviewed and proposals for placing the Fund on a professional footing discussed.

The First Meeting of the Steering Committee of the SACODIL was held at the SAARC Secretariat from August 28-29, 2000. It examined proposals for cooperation in the SAARC region to promote the use of open and distance learning at all levels of education.

The Third Meeting of the SAARC Network of Researchers on Global, Financial and Economic Issues was held at the SAARC Secretariat on October 31, 2000. Consisting of economists and government experts, the Network undertakes an in-depth study of select global issues and their impact on the region, with a view to formulating common strategies and approaches, where possible. The Research and Information System for Non-Aligned Countries (RIS), the nodal institute in India for the Network, brought out the first issue of the South Asia Economic Journal, in collaboration with the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) of Sri Lanka. The RIS will also bring out as an annual feature an economic and development survey for SAARC.

The Nineteenth Meeting of the SAARC Audio Visual Exchange Committee held in Dhaka from December 19-20, 2000. The Committee finalised TV and Radio programmes for the year 2001 for telecast/broadcast in the Member Countries on the agreed schedules. The Committee also decided to organise an annual SAARC Tele Film Festival.

A special SAARC Senior Officials' Meeting was held in Colombo, from November 13-15, 2000. The Meeting, *inter alia*, finalised the calendar for holding meetings of the Technical Committees, Expert-level meetings of the South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) and the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). The schedule for holding meetings relating to the SAARC Social Charter, Avoidance of Double Taxation, and of Legal Experts to review the Convention on Terrorism was also finalised. India proposed to host (being the current coordinator) the Meeting of the TC on Science and Technology from January 22-25, 2001 and the Second Meeting of the Standing Group on Standards, Quality Control and Measurement in Delhi.

The SAARC Technical Committees are the primary mechanism for the implementation of the SAARC Integrated Programme of Action (SIPA). As the SIPA was reconstituted in 1999, the Meetings of the restructured Technical Committees commenced when the First Meeting of the (restructured) Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development was held in Kathmandu from July 4-5, 2000. It focussed attention on issues relating to the development of rural infrastructure; the enhancement of food production through better storage, processing and quality; the use of bio-mass energy; marketing the dairy products fisheries; livestock development and sanitary and phyto-sanitary aspects of agriculture.

The First Meeting of the Technical Committee on Communications and Transport was held in Islamabad from January 5-6, 2001. The Committee finalised its terms of reference and discussed various aspects of cooperation in the Communications and Transportation sectors.

The first meeting of the Technical Committee on Science and Technology was held in New Delhi from January 23-25, 2001. The meeting discussed cooperation in the field of science and technology with a special focus on bio-technology.

At the civil society level in the region, a variety of activities, including workshops and seminars were organised, fostering linkages among cross sections of the South Asian society.

A Regional Meeting on “Financing Renewable Energy for Sustainable Development and Alleviation of Rural Poverty in South Asia” was held in Colombo from June 12-14, 2000, jointly with the World Energy Council (WEC). It provided a forum for government officers, policy makers, and experts to deliberate upon regional perspectives on a sustainable energy future.

The SAARC Secretariat, in collaboration with the Urban Governance Initiative, hosted a Conference on “Urbanisation and Good Urban Governance” on July 10-12, 2000. Government officials, urban authorities, and civil society organisations sharing the same platform, deliberated on the partnership between urban authorities and the civil society; human resources development and optimum resource utilisation, etc.

A South Asian Business Leaders’ Summit was held in Bangalore from August 18-19, 2000, as a joint initiative of the Federation of Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI), the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). The Summit featured detailed Country Presentations, which identified

specific areas of each country’s comparative advantage. These included the textiles and garments sector, information technology, leather goods, telecommunication, tourism, tea etc.

The SAARC Law Conference, a Recognised Regional Apex SAARC Body, held its Eighth Annual Conference in Nepal from September 22-24, 2000. In keeping with the SAARC tradition, the Fifth Conference of the Chief Justices of SAARC countries was held concurrently with the SAARC Law Conference.

As part of its efforts to improve the health sector in the South Asian region, SAARC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the WHO on August 23, 2000. The MOU provides for collaboration with the SAARC Tuberculosis Centre in Kathmandu and other institutions in South Asia, particularly those active in the eradication of malaria, TB, and HIV/AIDS.

ESCAP held a Regional Workshop in Delhi on August 3-4, 2000 on Trade Facilitation in the SAARC region. It dealt with issues relating to the simplification of procedures, and trade facilitation including Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and E-Commerce.

The European Union took a decision to offer the SAARC Member Countries the benefit of regional cumulation of origin from the 1st of October 2000.



2

South East Asia and the Pacific

The Southern Division has under its charge countries belonging to South-East Asia – ASEAN member countries minus Myanmar, Australia and New Zealand and Pacific Island countries including Fiji and Papua New Guinea. India's relations with these countries in South East Asia have traditionally been close and warm as we share a common and historical legacy. With the termination of cold war and introduction of economic reforms in the last decade of the last century, there has been a renewed vigour in our relationship with these countries, both at bilateral level, as well as at the level of regional grouping i.e. with ASEAN. India following the "Look East" policy and our potential as a major market has contributed significantly towards expanding and diversifying India's relations with the ASEAN region. This proximity was further translated into high level visits taking place from both the sides. India became ASEAN's Sectoral Dialogue Partner in 1992 and Full Dialogue Partner and member of the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1996. This partnership has certainly led India to significantly broaden and diversify its relationship with ASEAN member countries.

The total bilateral trade between India and ASEAN has reached a new pinnacle of US\$ 7.3 billion in 1999-2000 from US\$ 2.5 billion in 1993-94. This phenomenal increase is despite the fact that most of the ASEAN members are still in the process of consolidating their economies in the wake of the financial and economic crisis they suffered during 1997-1999.

With Australia and New Zealand, there has been a renewal of friendly relationship, after a brief lull in the wake of Pokharan-II. The visit of PM Howard of Australia in July 2000, which followed the visit by FM Downer initiated a series of ministerial contacts between the two countries which included Australian Immigration Minister, Trade Minister and a Parliamentary Delegation. Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Murasoli Maran visited New Zealand in April and his counterpart from New Zealand Mr. Jim Sutton came to India in November last year.

India had cordial and friendly bilateral relations with South Pacific Island countries with Fiji, because of its internal situation, being the sole exception. India co-sponsored the entry of Tuvalu as the newest member to the United Nations. With Papua New Guinea, the contacts were made at the Ministerial level in Bangkok on the sidelines of the ARF-PMC meetings.

Bilateral relations between India and Australia gained a new momentum and vigour after the visit of PM John Howard in July, 2000. The important visits during this year included visit of Mr. Kim Beazley, the leader of Opposition (April), Mr. Philip Ruddock, the Australian Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (July 17-20), Mr. Mark Vaile, Australian Minister of Trade (October 17-20) and Australian Parliamentary delegation (November 17-23).

Defence talks were held in May, 2000 to discuss resumption of defence ties after both the countries announced in principle the resumption of Defence Relations during the visit of the Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer in March, 2000. This was followed up by the visit of the then Defence Secretary, Shri T. R. Prasad to Australia in August/September 2000. The putting in place of Defence Attaches on reciprocal basis is underway.

From the Indian side, the important visits to Australia included the visit of Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Murasoli Maran (April 11-12) who led Indian delegation of officials and business persons, Shri Arun Shourie, Minister for Disinvestments (September 11-13) to attend World Economic Forum, Shri Shah Nawaz Hussain, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports to attend the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, and Shri Kanshi Ram Rana, Minister of Textiles (November 5-12). Shri S.T. Devare, Secretary (ER) visited Australia from (May 31st to June 1) in connection with the crisis in Fiji. During his stay in Australia, he called on FM Downer and held round-table meeting with the officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. EAM, Shri Jaswant Singh had a bilateral dialogue with the Foreign Minister of Australia, Mr. Alexander Downer in Bangkok in July 2000 on the sidelines of the ASEAN PMC meetings.

The Australian Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Mr. Richard Alston led a business mission to India from 8 to 11 December, 2000. The delegation was composed of representatives from Information Technology and Telecommunications sectors. During his visit, Senator Alston attended the IT World 2000/COMDEX India, the largest IT event in the subcontinent Besides meeting with his counterpart, Minister of Information Technology, Shri Pramod Mahajan, representative of Pentasoft, NIIT, Infosys and counterparts of the Australia India Information Industries Business Network (AIIIBN), Senator Alston also addressed the NASSCOM Business Networking lunch on 8th December 2000.

Col. Paul Power, Military Adviser, arrived in Indian in January

2001 to take up his appointment at the Australian High Commission in New Delhi after a gap of over two years. Australia had withdrawn its Defence Adviser after Pokharan II.

A 7-member delegation led by Mr. N. L. Lakhanpal, Director General of Foreign Trade, visited Australia from January 21 to 27 to interact with concerned Ministries and Departments of the Australian government on issues relating to agriculture and animal husbandry and to study the SPS standards and implementation mechanism in Australia.

Other events included the participation of a 3-member Indian Yachting team led by Lt. Col. R. Mahesh in Sail Melbourne International Regatta 2001 in January 2001 and an Australian Naval ship, Darwin, which will participate in the scheduled International Fleet Review (IFR) being organized at Mumbai on 17th February 2001.

Bilateral relations with Brunei Darussalam continued to be cordial and friendly, and marked by mutual goodwill and understanding. Both sides sustained their efforts to further carry forward the ongoing dialogue and upgrade and expand bilateral relations.

Sultan's sister, HRH Princess Masna, Ambassador-at-large Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited India in April 2000. In the oil & gas sector, of particular importance to Brunei, a first ever Indian petroleum delegation, led by Chairman, Indian Oil Corporation, visited Brunei in July. In another first, Brunei nominated a senior officer. Commander of the Royal Brunei Air Force to attend the senior officers' course at the National Defence College, Delhi from January 2001. A group of 7 middle-level officials from Brunei underwent a 5-week IT training course in India, availing of the 10 training slots offered by India to Brunei as part of our special ASEAN technical cooperation programme.

Bilateral trade is still low, with Rs. 6.46 crore as our exports to Brunei during 1999-2000. Indian companies, particularly in IT and

pharmaceuticals, showed sustained interest to forge commercial ties with Brunein parties

The high point in bilateral relations from our point of view arrived on April 12 when Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen, during his speech to the First South-South Summit held in Havana, openly supported our case for a seat on the UNSC and emphasized on the need to reorient the world body to meet the aspirations of the third world. This gesture was immediately appreciated by our HRD Minister in Havana itself. Again on November 16 at the 55th UNGA, Cambodian PR made a Statement supporting India's claim to the seat in the Security Council. Another initiative taken by Cambodia during the visit to India of Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen in February was the idea that India should also have the Partnership Programme with the ASEAN on the lines of Asean+China and Asean+3 (China, Japan and South Korea).

India has offered to extend a line of credit to Cambodia for US \$ 10 mn. The credit is to be used by Cambodians for irrigation projects, developing water resources and building HRD capacity of the Royal University of Agriculture of Cambodia. Detailed project proposals on the following four areas have been submitted by them which are under examination by us: (a) Establishing Permanent Forest Estate (b) Phnom Tamao Zoological Park; (c) Certificate Course of Agricultural Extension; and (d) Improve Living Standard of the Rural People for Sustainable Forest Management Through Community Forestry Participation.

Our ITEC programme with Cambodia is going full stream. We have offered as many as 40 slots to Cambodia this year under various schemes plus 4 for military training which have all been fully utilised.

Cambodia sent a 15 member Ramayana Troupe to the International Ramayana Festival being held in December in Khajuraho. Earlier, an Exhibition of Paintings with a theme 'Weaving an Asian Canvas' was put up in Phnom Penh by International Art

Centre of Calcutta in association with the Mission and the local Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts.

Cambodia participated in the recent Ganga-Mekong Programme deliberations held in Vientiane on November 8-10 and it is likely to gain substantially in the areas of education, IT, culture and development on infrastructure in the Mekong region under this Programme.

India responded to the floods that afflicted Cambodia late last year with a relief medical supply of common medicines worth Rs. 35 lakhs. These were handed over To the Cambodian Red Cross on January 12, 2001,

Dr. Chem Widhya, Permanent Secretary at the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation visited Delhi on January 18" 19 to attend the ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting,

A 15-member Cambodian Royal Ballet from the local Ministry of Culture & Fine Arts, performed at the International Ramayana Festival held at Khajuraho in December, 2000, The Indian Council for Cultural Relations met the full cost of international fare and local hospitality.

Hon'ble Dr. Najma Heptulla, Inter-Parliamentary Union President visited Phnom Penh on January 23-24 to deliver her keynote address to the Plenary Session of the Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace Conference. In her address, she dwelt upon the cultural unity of Asia and revival of Asian virtues that lie in intimate interaction among the countries of Asia Pacific.

Shri Dalip Mehta, Dean, Foreign Service Institute (FSI), visited *Phnom* Penh on January 24-25 and discussed issues relating to cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the FSI. He handed over a draft MOU to his interlocutors for consideration, which envisages enhanced cooperation between the two Foreign Offices, He also assured his hosts that India would endeavour to

provide more training slots in Our international training programmes of the FSI to help Cambodia.

Cambodian Defence Minister and his delegation will visit India to see the Third Aerospace Exposition - AERO-INDIA 2001 in February 7-9 in Bangalore.

The relations between the two countries were marred following a civilian coup of May, 2000 when George Speight led a group of armed men and stormed the parliament. They took members of the government, including Prime Minister Chaudhry as hostages. The hostage crisis lasted for 56 days and ended on 13 July.

On hearing of the attempted coup on 19 May, the Government of India issued a statement in which it expressed its 'deep dismay and regret' and conveyed concern about the welfare and safety of Prime Minister Mahendra Pal Chaudhry and his cabinet colleagues. The statement called upon Fiji to uphold the principles of Harare Declaration and the Milbrook Action Programme. Another statement was released to the press after Prime Minister Vajpayee received a group of relatives of Prime Minister Chaudhry on 23 May. After the declaration of martial law in Fiji on 29 May, EAM instructed Shri S.T. Devare, Secretary (ER) to visit Australia and New Zealand for consultations. Shri Devare also visited Suva (June 1 & 2) to study the ground situation of persons of Indian origin. India's High Commissioner to Australia Shri C.P. Ravindranathan accompanied Shri Devare.

After his release from captivity, PM Chaudhry visited India from 16-26 August 2000. Chaudhry had meetings with the President, Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister. Both Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister assured Chaudhry of India's full support for return of democracy to Fiji as per 1997 Constitution.

Subsequently, India has kept up pressure on Fiji in Commonwealth and through the governments of Australia and New Zealand and United Kingdom.

EAM made a statement on Fiji in the UNGA on September 19, 2000 stating that developments in Fiji have caused us a great concern. He hoped that Fiji will return immediately to the constitutional base of 1997 and restore at the earliest, rule of law, by putting an end to racial discrimination.

Secretary (ER) led the Indian delegation to 15th Commonwealth soon and highlighted the fragility of democratic institutions in Fiji and in particular the vulnerability of the Indian community. He further stated that the Commonwealth under whose supervision Fiji's Constitution of 1997 was hammered out is best place to provide the assurances and guarantees they need and which is in Fiji's own long-term interest to secure. The attempts made to revive the Constitution by setting up a Constitutional Review Committee/Commission are causing them further anxiety.

Judge Anthony Gates of the Lautoka High Court on 15 November has issued a landmark ruling that the abrogation of the 1997 constitution in the aftermath of George Speight's May Coup was an illegal act. Justice Anthony Gates has consequently directed that Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara be restored to office as president; that parliament be reconvened; and that the new "Constitution Review Commission" that he has held to be illegal be disbanded immediately.

In a press release issued on 16 November 2000, the Government of India welcomed Fiji's High Court's ruling of 15 November 2000 that the 1997 Constitution remained "supreme and extant" and that the Parliament of Fiji, consisting of the President, the Senate and the house of representatives, was still in being. The High Court has also held that the Constitution Review Commission had no legal basis. The Government of India regards this as a victory for the democratic forces in Fiji and endorses the hope expressed by the High Court that the military will ensure a smooth and amicable hand-over of Government under the Constitutional process.

A delegation comprising Joint Secretary (South) and Joint Secretary (Pers) Shri Ajai Singh visited Fiji from 20 to 23 October on

a 'familiarisation' trip. She had meetings with various dignitaries and a cross-section of the people of Fiji.

Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon on December 1 appointed Justice Pius Langa, Deputy President of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, as his Special Envoy to Fiji to act as facilitator to accelerate the restoration of democracy and promote national unity in that country.

Australia has decided to enter into a successor agreement to the Import Credit Scheme which has expired in September 2000. Under the scheme, garments produced in Fiji can be imported by Australian companies against an import credit.

Justice Antony Gates of the Lautoka High Court on November 15 has issued a landmark ruling that the abrogation of the 1997 constitution in the aftermath of George Speight's May coup was an illegal act. Justice Antony Gates has consequently directed that Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara be restored to office as President; that Parliament be reconvened; and that the new 'Constitution Review Commission' that he has held to be illegal be disbanded immediately. The judgment was on the basis of suit filed by Fiji Indian farmers Mr Chandrika Prasad seeking relief for the losses they suffered.

Australia and New Zealand on December 16 said that they would accept any leader chosen by the properly constituted authority in Fiji.

A total of 1133 land leases expired country-wide on 31st December 2000. As a result, many farmers mostly Indo-Fijians, have been left without a house or source of livelihood, 71 tenant farmers whose land leases expired received they- \$ 28,000 rehabilitation grant from the interim government on December 29, 2000.

The Attorney General in the Interim Administration Mr Qetaki announced the names of five judges who will sit in the Fiji Court of Appeal from 19.2.2001 to hear the appeal against the ruling of Justice Gates. These include the Chief Justice from Tonga; a Deputy Chief Justice from Samoa, two judges from Australia and one from New Zealand.

Mr. Mahendra Pal Chaudhary, Prime Minister, People's Coalition Government of Fiji is expected to visit India on 26 February, 2001 to discuss on the situation of Fiji and interest of Fijians of Indian origin in Fiji

This period saw gradual movement towards democratisation and economic recovery in Indonesia.

Our bilateral relations which received impetus with the President Wahid's state visit to India in February 2000, increased. Shri Pramod Mahajan, Minister for Information and Technology and Parliamentary Affairs visited Indonesia in June (30th June-21 July) to participate in an international seminar on Information Technology as one of the three keynote speakers. During the visit, he met the President of Indonesia, Shri Abdurrahman Wahid.

Shri Ram Naik, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, visited Indonesia in September (18-22) to participate in the Indonesian International Oil, Gas and Energy Conference and Exhibition held in Jakarta. During the visit, Shri Ram Naik called on the President of Indonesia and held discussions with his Indonesian counterpart for cooperation between India and Indonesia in the oil and gas sector. His visit accelerated in achieving concrete results in the ongoing discussion between Indonesian and Indian companies involved in this field.

Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri C.M.C. Balayogi, led a 10 member Parliamentary delegation to the 104th Inter Parliamentary Union Conference held in Jakarta in October (15-21).

Hon'ble Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha, Dr. (Mrs.) Najma Heptulla visited in October (15-21) in her capacity as the President of the Inter Parliamentary Council to attend the IPU Conference.

During the period of this report, cooperation in the field of defence also increased through exchange of visits at high level. A team from NDC visited Indonesia in May (May 27-June 2). The

Indonesian Naval Chief Admiral Achmed Sutjipto visited India in September (September 17-21). Indian naval ships from eastern fleet of Indian Navy, INS Delhi, INS Aditya and INS Kuthar paid a goodwill visit to Jakarta in October (5-8).

Bilateral trade began a smart recovery after a period of decline during the period when Indonesia was hit by economic crisis. Bilateral trade increased from Rs.4267.50 crores during 1998-99 to Rs. 5707.7 crores during 1999-2000. During this year, economic and commercial relations between India and Indonesia diversified and expanded. On the commercial side, products such as tractors, pumps for irrigation and two-wheelers from India made entry into the Indonesian market. On the economic field, a beginning was made for cooperation in the field of oil and gas sector.

As part of promotion of cultural relations between both countries, cultural troupes from India and Indonesia exchanged visits. A Bharatanatyam group, led by Jayalakshmi Eshwar, visited Indonesia in April. A 30-member Ramayana Ballet troupe from Bali participated in the International Ramayana Festival held in Khajuraho in December. The troupe also performed in other cities. Indonesia contributed a large number of exhibits for the Ram Darshan being established in Panchvati, Madhya Pradesh.

India-Indonesia bilateral relations received a big boost following Prime Minister's visit to Indonesia from January 10 to 14, 2001. PM was accompanied by a high-level delegation, including MOS(EA), MOS(C&I), National Security Adviser Shri Brajesh Mishra and Secretaries of Defence, Agriculture and Culture. On arrival, he was received by President Wahid twice and held delegation level talks, which focussed on strengthening bilateral cooperation, In the fields of Agriculture, Defence, Science and Technology, IT etc. following agreements were signed at the end of the plenary talks:

- i) Agreement on Cooperative activities in the field of Defence.
- ii) MOU on the establishment of Joint Commission to be headed by the Foreign Ministers of the two countries.

- iii) MOU in the field of Science & Technology.
- iv) Arrangement on CEP for the years 2001-2003.
- vi) Work Plan on Agricultural cooperation.

During his stay, PM called on Vice President Megawati, Speaker of People's Consultative Assembly (DPR), Akbar Tandjung, FM Aiwi Shihab, Defence Minister Mahfud MD, Agriculture and Forestry Minister Bungaran Saragih and Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Minister Sarwono Kusumatmaja called on PM.

PM was accompanied by a 40-member business delegation from India. Business delegation also held their Joint Business Council Meeting with their Indonesian counterpart. On 11th January, Prime Minister spoke at the luncheon hosted by the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry where the thrust of his speech centered on developing closer bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries. PM and his entourage also visited Bali.

Forecast of important scheduled events from January 17 to March 31.

- i) Visit of one Indonesian. Naval ship along with one senior officer to Mumbai for attending International Fleet Review from 15th to 19th February 2001.
- ii) Visit of Air Chief Marshal A. Y. Tipnis. Chief of Air Staff, accompanied by his wife and three officers to Indonesia from India from 22nd to 29th February 2001.
- iii) Visit of Air Chief Marshal Hanatie Asnan plus five officials from Indonesian Air Force.

Shri Jaswant Singh, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister visited Laos from November 8 to 11, 2000 to lead the Indian delegation to the third India-Lao Joint Commission Meeting and also to participate in the Inaugural Ministerial Meeting of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation - a new initiative launched by India and five Southeast

Asian countries namely Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. During the visit, at which the 3rd India-Laos JCM was also held, India and Laos signed three important agreements namely Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement, Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement and a Work Plan in the field of Agriculture.

The visit of EAM, after a gap of four years, coming as it did on the eve of the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Lao PDR, paved the way for further strengthening of relations with Laos. During the visit, EAM also paid courtesy calls on the President and Prime Minister of Laos.

Two important Agreements - one on Trade and Economic Cooperation and one on Bilateral Investment Promotion & Protection- were signed on 9th November 2000. These Agreements lay down the basic framework for trade and investment from India. As part of the Agricultural Cooperation, India and Laos signed a Work Plan for 2000-01, dovetailing specific areas for intensified interaction.

The Lao Government completely utilised US \$ 2 million soft loan offered by India in 1999. As part of the utilisation of the Indian loan, Jaguar Overseas Ltd supplied tractors and agricultural implements, and Tata International Ltd will soon be setting up a foundry for the manufacture of spare parts for pumps and agricultural implements. The Lao Government has expressed interest in receiving an additional loan from India.

Indian companies received fresh orders for supply of irrigation equipment from the Lao Government. Kirloskar Brothers Ltd. supplied pumps worth US \$ 3.1 million, whereas WPIL of Calcutta will soon be supplying pumps worth US \$ 4.1 million. The Kirloskar Brothers' Ltd. set up a second Service Centre in Laos in October this year, which was jointly inaugurated by the Minister of Agriculture & Forestry and the Governor of the Province. Senior Executives from Kirloskar company visited Laos in this connection.

A three member Indian mining expert team visited Laos to assess

the possibilities of mining potash in the Thangone and Savannakhet areas of Laos. They held extensive discussions with their counterparts.

Indian pharmaceuticals and engineering goods companies showed considerable interest in promoting their products in Laos. Indian companies, particularly KEC International and Kalpataru Power Transmission, are actively pursuing international bids in electrical power transmission projects.

The Mission organised a Photo Exhibition on "Buddhist Historical Sites and Monuments in India" at the National Cultural Hall in Vientiane for a period of one week during July 2000. The exhibition was inaugurated by one of the Politburo members of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and was attended by a large number of senior Lao dignitaries including Ministers and Vice-Ministers.

A 10-member Yakshagana group from Shri Idagunji Mahaganapathi Yakshagana Mandali, Keremane presented *Vaalivadha* from the epic Ramayana in Vientiane on August 18, 2000. The group was sponsored by ICCR. The performance attracted a large gathering including senior dignitaries from the Lao Government.

To mark the Inaugural Ministerial Meeting of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, a 15-member Odissi dance group led by Ms. Madhavi Mudgal gave performances in Vientiane on November 9-10, 2000. The dance performances were specially choreographed, with the theme "Ganges to Mekong: Swamabhoomi" for the occasion. The dance performances were well received. The Mission organised a weeklong Film Festival during October 2000 to mark the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

A 2-member delegation from the India-Lao Friendship Association also visited Laos to witness the Inaugural Ministerial Meeting of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation. The delegation met the Minister of Agriculture & Forestry in his capacity as the President of the Lao-India Friendship Association, and also the Foreign Minister of Lao PDR.

India's assistance to Laos in the field of human resource

development in the form of scholarships for pursuing short-term and medium-term training in various fields, continued during this period. The Mission completely utilised the 15 slots under the Colombo Plan, and 34 out of 35 slots under the ITEC programme. For the second consecutive year, four Lao students went to India to pursue their Bachelor's/Master's degrees under GCSS programme of ICCR. In addition, 13 Lao officials from various Ministries attended Special IT training module conducted by NIIT for ASEAN countries in May 2000.

EAM announced a special assistance package during his visit to Laos, which included flood-relief assistance comprising medicines worth Rs. 3.15 million, 25 jeeps and 10 trucks to the Lao Armed Forces and additional 10 slots under the ITEC programme. This gesture was greatly appreciated by the Lao government.

Lao Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister reiterated to our EAM Laos' support to India's candidature to the Permanent Seat of an expanded UNSC.

Lt. Gen. R. K. Sawhney, Deputy Chief of Army Staff (T&C) would be paying a visit to Lao PDR from 12-17 February 2001 to oversee the ongoing training programmes conducted by two Army officers from the Indian Army at Chinamo Military Academy, Vientiane.

Lt. Gen. Choummaly Saignasone, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Lao PDR has expressed an interest to visit India during the second half of February 2001. The matter is under correspondence.

Flood relief medical assistance worth Rs. 35 lakhs from GOI was handed over by the Ambassador to Mr. Somphanh Phengkhammy, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare on 17th January 2001. The medicines supplied by the GOI would be distributed to the hospitals at the district level in the six southern provinces.

The Mission proposes to organize a Mini India Festival comprising an exclusive Indian Food Festival and a Film Festival on Retrospectives of Raj Kapoor during 3rd/4th week of March 2001.

India-Malaysia relations were further strengthened with high-level political exchanges and initiatives in the fields of defence, commerce, economy and culture. The Second Session of the India-Malaysia Joint Commission was held in New Delhi October 9-11, 2000 after a gap of 8 years. Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Foreign Minister of Malaysia and Shri Jaswant Singh, External Affairs Minister co-chaired the Meeting. The entire gamut of bilateral relations viz. trade, investment, culture, human resource development, defence, science & technology, tourism, health, agriculture, labour and consular matters, was discussed. A Trade Agreement and Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2000-2002 were signed between the two countries.

Malaysia took over as the country coordinator for India's interaction with ASEAN from July 2000 for a period of three years.

Bilateral trade between India and Malaysia has shown consistent increase during the last few years. Today, Malaysia is India's largest trading partner in the ASEAN. Our trade turnover has reached about US dollars 2.7 billion. Though the trade has always been in favour of Malaysia, Malaysia has been a prime supplier of Palm Oil, an essential consumer item for India. India was Malaysia's largest buyer of Palm Oil in 1999 with total imports touching 2.38 million tonnes at a value of US\$ 920 million. In the field of investment also bilateral investments have grown in the recent years. In terms of approvals Malaysia is the 8th largest investor in India while India has emerged as the 11th largest investor in Malaysia. Many Malaysian companies are already working in infrastructure.

A seminar on Nuclear Free Zone was held in Kuala Lumpur on 24.5.2000. This event was organised by Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) in association with the Indian High Commission. Another seminar titled "Malaysian-India Collaboration in IT – A Smart Partnership" was launched in Kuala Lumpur on 3rd August 2000.

INS RANA and INS Khukri made a goodwill visit to Port Klang in Malaysia from April 14-17, 2000.

Important visits exchanged included: Shri Bangaru Laxman, Minister of State for Railways visited Kuala Lumpur from 6-9 April 2000 to sign an agreement valued at US\$ 121 million between IRCON and Malaysian Government. Mr. Harin Pathak, Minister of State for Defence Production visited Malaysia to participate in the Defence Services Asia Exhibition 2000 from 10-15 April 2000. Shri Rajnath Singh, Minister for Surface Transport led a 5-member delegation to Malaysia from 10-12 July 2000 to explore possibilities of cooperation between Malaysia and India in the Road Sector.

First Lady of India Smt. Usha Narayanan visited Kuala Lumpur to attend the 2nd RSC-AP Conference from 25-29 September 2000. MOS for External Affairs, Shri Krishnam Raju, visited Kuala Lumpur from 6-8 November 2000 and exchanged views with his Malaysian counterpart.

From the Malaysian side, Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Lim Keng Yiak visited New Delhi in April 2000 to discuss the differential rate of duty on palm oil. Datuk Seri Samy Vellu, Minister for works visited India from June 24-30, 2000 to pursue various infrastructure projects. A 36-member trade and investment delegation from Malaysia visited India. Malaysian Minister for Culture, Arts and Tourism Datuk Abdul Kadir visited India mainly to promote tourism. Minister for Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Tan

On January 20, 2001 Vice President Gloria Macapagal - Arroyao was sworn in as 14th President of the Philippines after a peaceful uprising that forced President Joseph Estrada to step-down. This followed unsuccessful impeachment process of Estrada which began on September 7 last year where the Senate with a narrow margin of 11 to 10 ruled that the envelope allegedly containing details of Estrada's Secret bank Account need not be opened. The opposition took the matter to the streets and on January 19, 2001 the Defence Secretary and the Chief of Armed Forces announced withdrawal of support to President Estrada,

Bilateral relations with Pacific-Islands have been cordial and friendly though there have been minimal contacts. India had co-sponsored the General Assembly resolution admitting Tuvalu to the membership of the United Nations. Tuvalu became the 189th member of the United Nations.

Like Fiji, Solomon Islands also witnessed a coup on June 5 but settled down after the election of the new Prime Minister on June 30 by the Parliament.

H. E. Mr Alik L. Alik, Ambassador of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) presented his credentials to the President on January 10. He is Micronesian Ambassador to Japan and is concurrently accredited to India.

The close bilateral relations between India and Singapore were further diversified and strengthened as a result of exchange of high-level visits between the two countries. These visits included India's External Affairs Minister's visit to Singapore in June 2000 and President Shri K R Narayanan's visit to Singapore in November 2000. The other important visits being ; Shri Sharad Yadav, Minister of

Civil Aviation's visit in May 2000; Shri. KV Rao, Andhra Pradesh Minister for Major Industries' visit (June 2000), Tamil Nadu Minister of Agriculture, Shri V S Arumugam's visit (June 2000), Visit of Chief Minister of Karnataka with a high level delegation (June 2000), Shri Sampat Singh, Haryana Finance Minister's visit (July 2000) visit of Chief Minister of Haryana with a 22 member industrial delegation (October 2000), Dr. Upinderjit Kaur, Punjab Minister for Housing and Urban Development's visit (November 2000).

From Singapore, Chairman of the Economic Development Board represented Singapore at the Global Investors Conference in Bangalore on June 5, 2000. A delegation led by Mr. Lan Chuan Leong, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and Chairman of the InfoComm Development Authority visited India in October 2000 to attend the first meeting of the Task Force on Information Technology. Singapore's Trade and Industry Minister led a Trade and Investment Promotion Delegation to India on a 8-days visit in November-December, 2000.

The two countries signed two MOUs this year relating to constitution of two Joint Task Forces for cooperation in the Information Technology and in the Economic Field respectively.

India-Singapore bilateral trade during 1998-99 (US\$ 1884.42 million) had gone down by 4.7% over the previous year. This decrease was attributed to economic crisis in the East Asia region. During 1999-2000, however, the total bilateral trade (US \$2197.61) showed a good growth. During this period our exports grew by 33.57 per cent while our imports grew by 8.83 per cent.

Highlights of economic interaction include: Singapore Telecom (Singtel) signed an agreement in August to buy a USD 400 million stake in the telecom arm of India's Bharti Group. The Singapore Stock Exchange (SGX) signed an agreement with the National Stock Exchange (NSE) of India to launch stock index figures, contracts and also cooperate in areas relating to derivatives trading, sharing of market information, staff training and technical assistance. Singtel and Bharti

Group are investing US\$150 million in an undersea cable network-linking Singapore and Chennai. NIIT would help in recruitment of 1000 IT professionals from the region within one year for Singapore's growing IT industry. An agreement for this was signed between the Infocomm Development Authority and the NIIT. The Phase II of the International Technology Park, Bangalore was launched on November 29, 2000 after the Phase I reached full occupancy.

The interaction between the two countries in the field of arts and culture also received a boost with the signing of Executive Programme on Cooperation in the Arts, Heritage, Archives and the Library between India and Singapore for the years 2000-2002 and MOU between India and Singapore on the loan of artifacts to the Asian Civilisations Museum of Singapore during the visit of President of India to Singapore.

India-Singapore Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on January 17, 2001. The India delegation was led by Secretary (ER) and the Singapore Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs led the Singaporean delegation. The delegations had wide ranging discussions on bilateral, regional and international issues.

Singapore offered an assistance of US \$ 50,000 to the earthquake victims of Gujarat.

Relations between India and Thailand are friendly and cordial. Bilateral relations in diverse fields were further strengthened by expanding economic, commercial and cultural links and exchange of high level visits from both sides. Our Full Dialogue Partnership of the ASEAN and participation in the ARF process has provided additional depth to our relations with Thailand. India's membership in the sub-regional grouping, BIMST-EC involving Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand, has provided fresh impetus to enhanced cooperation between the two countries. The launching of Mekong Ganga Cooperation Project at the Ministerial Meeting of

the six countries viz. Cambodia, India, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, held in Vientiane on November 9, 2000 would further deepen cooperation between India and Thailand, particularly in the fields of tourism, culture and education.

Bilateral trade between India and Thailand which had reached US \$ 651 million in 1996-97 had declined to US \$ 577 million in 1997-98. The decline was attributed to the economic problems faced by the South East Asian region. During the year 1998-99 although there was a slight improvement in the overall trade (US\$ 594) between the two countries, yet Indian exports declined and Thai exports increased. With the Thai economy recovering fast, the trend during 1999-2000 (total trade US \$778 million) indicated a handsome growth in bilateral trade (31%), growth in Indian exports (42%) and growth in imports (18%) over the corresponding period of the previous year.

An important bilateral visit was that of Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Foreign Minister of Thailand who visited India from 8-10 July 2000. During his visit it was agreed to prepare an "India-Thailand Agenda: 2000 AD" to expand cooperation between India and Thailand in areas such as education, culture, health, agriculture, security, transport and tourism. India-Thailand cooperation in IT sector and India's assistance in training of Thai nationals in Information Technology as also cooperation in Agriculture and fisheries, were discussed. Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Foreign Minister of Thailand and Shri Jaswant Singh, External Affairs Minister signed two bilateral agreements viz. Bilateral Investment Promotion & Protection Agreement and an Agreement on Cooperation for Utilisation of Atomic Energy for Peaceful Purposes.

Other important visits exchanged between the two countries were as follows:

Dr. Najma Heptulla, Chairperson, Rajya Sabha, visited Bangkok from Feb 9-16, 2000. Mr. Murasoli Maran, Minister of Commerce & Industry, visited Bangkok from February 11 - 17, 2000, as leader of a

high-powered Indian delegation to participate in UNCTAD X. Shri Jaswant Singh, Hon'ble Minister for External Affairs led the Indian delegation to Bangkok for the ARF and PMC Meetings held from July 26-29, 2000. Shri Yaswant Sinha, Minister of Finance, visited Chiangmai to attend 33rd Annual Meeting of Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank from May 5-7, 2000.

Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Deputy Prime Minister and Commerce Minister visited India to attend the BIMST-EC Economic Ministers' meeting held on April 27, 2000 in New Delhi. Dr. Trairong Suwankiri, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of NITC, led a 6-member delegation to visit Information Technology Software Parks in Bangalore and Chennai from June 8-11, 2000. Dr. Sukhumbhand Paribatra, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited India to attend the 3rd Ministerial Meeting of BIMST-EC in New Delhi on July 6, 2000.

The India-Vietnam Joint Commission (JC) for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, established in December 1982, had its 10th Session in Hanoi from 6-8 November 2000. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Minister of Foreign Affairs, from the Vietnamese side and Mr. Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Affairs from the Indian side.

The Joint Commission reviewed the entire range of the India-Vietnam interaction in the economic, commercial, scientific & technological fields. Some concrete steps to intensify bilateral cooperation in these areas were identified.

Functional level exchanges under the India-Vietnam joint protocol on Science & Technology continued, including the work programme of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of India and Vietnamese National Centre for Natural Science and Technology (NCST) of Vietnam. Thirty slots under the ITEC Programme have been separately earmarked for training of Vietnamese scientists in India in advanced fields. The Government

of Vietnam has identified India as a partner in Information Technology, and FPT of Vietnam (Vietnam's leading IT Company) have set up an office in Bangalore.

Shri K.T. Nbarasimhan, Superintending Archaeologist and Shri M.M. Kanade, Archaeological Engineer from the Archaeological Survey of India visited Vietnam from 24 April to 5 May, 2000 to explore the possibilities of ASI's involvement in the work relating to renovation and restoration of Cham monuments in Vietnam.

The Bilateral defence cooperation got a tremendous boost following the visit by Defence Minister Shri George Fernandes to Vietnam in March 2000. A number of areas were identified for functional level cooperation.

A 15-member delegation of the National Defence College, New Delhi visited Vietnam from 28 July on a 5-day official visit.

The Indian Naval Ship INS-Rajput undertook a goodwill visit to Ho Chi Minh City from 28 September to 1 October.

Lt. Gen. A.S. Rao, Director General of National Cadet Corps (DGNCC) paid an official visit to Vietnam from 15 to 21 November on the invitation of Vietnam Youth Federation (VYF).

The Government of Vietnam has signed the counter guarantee agreement on September 1 for the Nam Con Son Gas Project, jointly operated in a product-sharing contract by the Vietnam Oil & Gas Cooperation, ONGC, BP/Amoco of the UK and Statoil of Norway. This is the first time that the Vietnamese Government has furnished a counter guarantee for a foreign-invested project. The project aims to bring gas ashore by October 2002.

A high-level Vietnamese delegation, led by Politburo member and Minister of Public security, Senior Lieutenant General Ie Minh Huong, paid a three-day official visit to India from October 12-14. The delegation held talks with their Indian counterparts on measures to boost cooperation in fighting crime, drug trafficking and money laundering. The delegation also called on President K.R. Narayanan.

Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee paid an official visit to Vietnam from January 7 to January 10, 2001. During his stay in Hanoi, he held informal and delegation level talks with his counterpart Prime Minister Phao Van Khai and call on the President of Vietnam, Mr. Tran Due Luong, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam Mr. Le Kha Phieu. He also met Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap Senior Adviser to the Communist Party of Vietnam. Foreign Minister Mr. Nguyep. Dy Nien and Defence Minister Gen. Pham Van Tra called on the Prime Minister. Prime Minister Vajpayee met Vietnamese scholars and intellectuals in a separate meeting.

Both the Prime Ministers witnessed signing of three documents, viz., Agreement of Tourism. Cooperation, Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Atomic Energy and Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment of Vietnam and a Protocol for Extension of the Cultural Exchange Programme.

Prime Minister's entourage included Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs, Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State (Commerce and Industry) Shri Omar Abdullah and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Shri Brajesh Mishra besides senior officials from Atomic Energy, External Affairs, and Tourism. A

delegation of over 35 leading businessmen participated in the 4th meeting of the India-Vietnam Joint Business Council held in Hanoi concurrently with the Prime minister's visit. Prime Minister Vajpayee addressed the joint Business Council and other Vietnamese invitees at a function organized by the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Memoranda of Understanding were signed between ONGC and Petroleum Investment and Development Company (PIDC) of Vietnam, Tata Consultancy Services and Transinco of Vietnam and FICCI & Indian Business Chamber (Vietnam). Ranbaxy announced proposed investment of US\$ 10 million in a production unit near Ho Chi Minh City.

Exchange between scientists continued as part of the ongoing cooperation between the two countries in accordance with Programme of Cooperation in the field of Science and Technology.

A youth delegation comprising 21 members from the Vietnam Youth Federation, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Defence, etc., left for Indian on January 12, 2001. The visit will last for 20 days. Earlier Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had met the youth delegation on January 9, 2001 at the Presidential Palace in Hanoi.



We seek friendly, cooperative, good-neighbourly and mutually beneficial relations with China on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, jointly enunciated by India and China. We seek a long term, stable relationship in which both sides are responsive to each other's concerns. We remain committed to the process of dialogue to resolve outstanding differences and to build a constructive cooperative relationship oriented towards the 21st century.

India and China jointly commemorated the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations on 1 April, 2000. Heads of State and Government and Foreign Ministers of the two countries exchanged congratulatory messages, Embassies in both countries held commemorative receptions and the two sides issued First Day Covers to mark the occasion.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary, the President of India Shri K.R. Narayanan paid a State visit to China from 28th May to 3 June 2000 at the invitation of President Jiang Zemin. This was the first visit by our President in eight years. He had useful and constructive discussions with President Jiang Zemin and met with Premier Zhu Rongji, Chairman of the National Peoples' Congress Li Peng and Chairman of the Chinese Peoples' Political Consultative

Conference Mr. Li Ruihuan. The two Presidents agreed to enhance bilateral interaction, including at the highest level, and to enhance bilateral cooperation in all areas. An Eminent Persons' Group was agreed to.

Mr. Li Peng, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National Peoples Congress visited India from January 9-17, 2001 at the joint invitation of Chairman, Rajya Sabha and Speaker, Lok Sabha. He was accompanied by his wife Mme. Zhu Lin, Mr. Bu He, Vice Chairman of the NPC, other senior members of NPC and Foreign Office. He visited Mumbai, New Delhi, Agra, Bangalore and Hyderabad. In New Delhi, he met the President, the Prime Minister, the Vice-President, the Speaker, Lok Sabha, Deputy Chairperson, Rajya Sabha and Leader of the Opposition. He also had a meeting with the leaders of Parliamentary Groups.

Mr. Li Peng delivered a speech at the India International Centre (January 13) entitled "Deepening understanding, fostering friendship and strengthening co-operation", wherein he conveyed that China did not consider India as a threat and would like to maintain good neighbourly and friendly relations with India. He also stated that China attached importance to enhancing mutual understanding and trust with India and was ready to strengthen co-operation with India. Li Peng expressed a hope that disputes in South Asia will be resolved peacefully through dialogue.

Li Peng's visit was part of the process of high-level exchanges between the two sides. This was the highest level visit from China after the visit of President Jiang Zemin in 1996. The visit afforded the two sides an opportunity to exchange views on bilateral issues and regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Earlier, Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan had visited India on 21-22 July, 2000 at the invitation of External Affairs Minister. The two Ministers reaffirmed the desire to develop bilateral relations in all areas. There was agreement between the two sides to expedite the process of clarification and confirmation of the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas. Both sides also agreed to raise the level of the bilateral Security Dialogue to Assistant Foreign Minister/Additional Secretary. The Second Round of the Security Dialogue is proposed to be held in the first half of February 2001.

The Twelfth Meeting of the Joint Working Group on the Boundary Question was held in New Delhi on 28 April 2000. Both sides agreed to show and exchange maps of the LAC as perceived by them respectively in the Middle Sector of the India-China boundary. Besides, boundary related issues, the two sides also reviewed bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and international developments of mutual interest. The Eighth Meeting of the India-China Expert Group of Diplomatic and Military Officials, a sub-group of the JWG, was held in Beijing on 13 November 2000. As agreed by the two Foreign Ministers, both sides showed and exchanged maps of an agreed scale of the LAC as perceived by them in the Middle Sector of the India-China boundary. Both sides also reiterated their commitment to the maintenance of peace and tranquility in accordance with bilateral agreements signed in 1993 and 1996.

Exchanges at the governmental, parliamentary, non-governmental and people-to-people levels continued during the year. Functional exchanges in trade and commerce, labour, education, science & technology, information technology and culture took place during the year. Exchanges between the armed forces were resumed. A seven-member PLA delegation led by Lt. General Tian Shugen, Vice

President of the Academy of Military Sciences visited India from 18–23 August 2000. Two Indian naval ships paid a goodwill visit to China from 17–20 September 2000.

High-level exchanges between the two sides in 2000-2001 include:

- ❑ Shri Pramod Mahajan, Minister of Information Technology visited China from 15–21 July 2000. Secretary (IT) accompanied the Minister. An MoU on cooperation in the field of information technology was signed.
- ❑ Dr. Satyanarayan Jatiya, Minister for Labour visited China from 26–30 September 2000. An MoU on cooperation in the field of labour was signed.
- ❑ Shri Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister for Human Resources Development visited China from 4–7 November 2000. Education Secretary accompanied the Minister.

Functional exchanges between the two sides include:

- ❑ Secretary (Culture) visited China from 10–14 April 2000. During the visit, the Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2000-2002 was signed.
- ❑ Secretary, Department of Ocean Development (DOD) visited China from 8–14 May 2000. A document on “Intention of Cooperation in the Field of Ocean Activities” was signed.
- ❑ Secretary, Ministry of Non-Conventional & Renewable Energy Sources visited China from 9–15 July 2000.
- ❑ The Chinese Vice Minister for Labour and Social Security Mr. Li Qiyang visited India from 21–25 October 2000.
- ❑ India and China held the 7th meeting of Working Group on Coal on 1 & 2 December 2000.
- ❑ The Chinese Vice Minister of Education visited India from 5-12 December 2000.

Exchanges between political parties in India and the Communist Party of China continued. At the invitation of the BJP, the Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China, Dai Bingguo, visited India from 29 March to 3 April 2000. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh visited China from 22 –26 October 2000 at the invitation of the Communist Party of China.

India-China trade relations have grown this year. 33An FIEO delegation visited China from September 10-19, 2000. A China Engineering and Commodities Fair was held in India from 6 - 9 December 2000.

The new Ambassador of India to China Shri Shivshankar Menon assumed charge in August 2000.

India and Mongolia have traditionally had close religious and cultural ties. This year marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. In the past 45 years, our relations have diversified and expanded into new areas further cementing the age-old friendship between the two countries. To commemorate the occasion, congratulatory messages were exchanged at the level of PM and EAM.

Mongolian President Natsagiin Bagabandi paid a State Visit to India from January 1-5, 2001. He was accompanied by Foreign Minister and Minister of Commerce & Industry. This visit was the first State Visit to India in the new Millenium. The last Presidential visit to India from Mongolia was in 1994. President Bagabandi had meetings with the President, Vice President, PM, EAM and Deputy Chairperson Rajya Sabha. During the meetings, bilateral issues and regional and international issues of mutual interest were discussed. The two sides agreed to further expand areas of co-operation and to strengthen existing areas of co-operation.

During the visit a Joint Declaration was issued outlining the future direction of bilateral relations. In the Joint Declaration, Mongolia

publicly conveyed their support for India's permanent membership on an expanded UN Security Council. Mongolia also condemned terrorism and states that aid, abet and directly support cross-border and international terrorism. They also supported India's proposal for an international convention against terrorism.

Six Agreements were signed, viz., on Extradition, Defence co-operation, Co-operation in Information Technology, Investment Promotion and Protection, Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and Legal Assistance and Legal Relations concerning Civil and Commercial Matters.

PM announced a grant of Rs. one crore to Mongolia for humanitarian assistance.

High-level visits include:

- ❑ Mr. A. Battur, Minister for Enlightenment visited India from 29 March to 2 April 2000. During the visit the Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2000-2002 was signed.
- ❑ Mr. T.Togoo, Deputy Defence Minister of Mongolia visited India from 6-10 December 2000.

The new Ambassador of India to Mongolia Shri Karma Topden assumed charge in September 2000.

We remain committed to friendly, cooperative and mutually beneficial relations with Japan with whom we have shared cultural links and values of human freedoms, commitment to peace, stability and economic development of the people in Asia and the world.

The Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Yoshio Mori paid a State Visit to India from August 21–25, 2000. This was the first visit at this level since 1990. He also visited Bangalore and Agra. The Japanese Prime Minister Mori called on the President and Vice President, and held official discussions with Prime Minister. EAM called on him. The two Prime Ministers agreed to build a multi-faceted global partnership for the 21st century.

Discussions covered a wide range of issues including bilateral political and economic relations, international terrorism, UN reforms, celebration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between two countries, institutionalisation of high level dialogue, cooperation in Information Technology, a comprehensive security dialogue, cooperation in combating piracy and the launching of the India-Japan Eminent Persons' Group.

It was agreed *inter alia* that (1) The 50th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations in 2002 would be commemorated in a befitting manner, (2) An India-Japan IT Summit will take place in Japan, (3) A security dialogue will be entered into, (4) Both countries will cooperate on the reform of the UN Security Council, (5) An India-Japan Parliamentary Friendship Association will be constituted, and (6) The India-Japan Eminent Persons' Group will meet at an early date.

Prime Minister Mori announced that two high-level economic missions would visit India in October 2000 and January 2001.

Other high level exchanges during the period included:

- ❑ The visit of MOS Textiles, Shri G.N. Ramachandra who visited Osaka and Tokyo from May 22 – 25, 2000 to participate in the Eleventh Home Furnishing Fair.
- ❑ The visit of MOS Railways Shri Digvijay Singh who visited Japan from May 25 – 27, 2000 to participate in a Conference organised by JR East Railways.
- ❑ Raksha Mantri visited Japan from June 7 – 9, 2000 to attend the funeral of the late Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Obuchi and held discussions with Foreign Minister Yohei Kono and Japanese Defence Agency DG, T. Kawara. During the visit, there was a discussion on exchanges of ship visits and a bilateral security dialogue.
- ❑ Environment Minister Shri T.R. Balu visited Fukuoka on September 3–4, 2000 for Eco-Asia 2000 and the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment & Development.

- ❑ Minister for Agriculture Shri Nitish Kumar visited Yokohama to attend the FAO Regional Conference for the Asia Pacific from August 28 – September 1, 2000.
- ❑ Minister of Communications Shri Ram Vilas Paswan visited Tokyo to attend the Asia-Pacific Summit on Information Society from October 29 – November 3, 2000.
- ❑ Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare Shri C.P. Thakur visited Kobe to attend the Global Symposium on Health & Welfare Systems Development in the 21st century from November 1–2, 2000.

Important visits from Japan to India included:

- ❑ The visit of the Minister for International Trade & Industry (MITI), Mr. Takashi Fukaya who visited India from May 4 – 5, 2000 to discuss WTO related issues with the Minister of Commerce & Industry. Mr. Fukaya also called on PM and the IT Minister.
- ❑ The visit of a high level Mission headed by Mr. Takashi Imai, Chairman Keidanren (Japan Federation of Economic Organisations) and Mr. Nobuhiko Kawamoto, Chairman Japan-India Business Cooperation Committee on October 29 – November 5, 2000. The Mission called on President, External Affairs and Finance Ministers and had interactive sessions with our Ministers for IT and Power and with FICCI and CII. The Mission also visited Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai.

Functional Exchanges during the period included:

- ❑ Visit of Mrs. Manju Sharma, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology – Rice Genome Surgery – February 8 – 10, 2000.
- ❑ First India-Japan Energy Dialogue – March 7, 2000. Issues relating to the international and regional energy situation, demand and supply outlook and energy situation and energy policy of the two countries were discussed. The talks contributed to deepening the understanding of each other's energy policy and the situation

surrounding it. The two sides agreed to continue discussion on how to co-operate with each other in the fields of coal, power and environment related issues.

- ❑ MEA-MITI Dialogue in New Delhi on March 28, 2000. The issues discussed included investment and trade-related matters. The two sides reiterated the desire to increase economic and commercial cooperation between the two countries. In specific terms, the two sides discussed ways and means to increase cooperation in IT and food processing sectors and trade & investments in general.
- ❑ Two Indian Navy ships, INS Delhi and INS Kora made a port call at Sasebo naval port in Japan in September 2000. They were warmly received.
- ❑ Visit of Mr. N. Valluri, Secretary and Commissioner Investment to address a seminar on investment in India – September 26–29, 2000
- ❑ Visit of Shri Om Prakash Chautala, Chief Minister of Haryana as the head of a Punjab and Haryana Chamber of Commerce delegation – October 11–14, 2000. The delegation called on Mr. Tatsuya Ito, State Secretary for International Trade, Ministry of International Trade & Industry and had meetings with Japan External Trade Organisation and Japan India Business Cooperation Committee.
- ❑ Visit of Shri Chandra Babu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh as the leader of an IT related delegation – October 18–22, 2000. He called on Prime Minister Mori and also on Chief Cabinet Secretary Nakagawa on October 18.
- ❑ Visit of Minister of Housing & Urban Development of the Government of Punjab on a study tour – November 15–18, 2000.
- ❑ Visit of Shri Vinay Kohli, Secretary (IT) – November 26–28, 2000 to participate in the deliberations of “Dot Force” at Tokyo.
- ❑ India-Japan Investment Dialogue – December 7, 2000. The Indian delegation was led by Shri P. Mankad, Secretary, Department of IPP while the Japanese delegation was led by Mr. H. Arai, Vice

Minister of MITI. During the talks, both sides recognised the need for the further liberalisation of the FDI policy in India and underscored the mutual advantages in further promoting flows. The Indian side expressed its commitment to promoting investors’ confidence. The Dialogue undertook a review of the activities of the three working groups relating to IT, Food Processing and Infrastructure. Chemicals and environment sectors were identified as areas of further cooperation.

- ❑ Sixth meeting of the India-Japan Science Council was held in Kyoto from December 20-22, 2000
- ❑ An India-Japan Eminent Persons Group has been constituted and held its first meeting on January 29-30, 2001 in New Delhi.

During the period April – September 2000, our trade with Japan was approximately US \$ 1987 million (exports: US \$ 900 million approximately and imports US \$ 1087 million approximately). The actual inflow of investment from Japan to India during the period January – April 2000 was around US \$ 71.2 million.

Exchanges of students and research scholars continued.

Relations with the Republic of Korea continued to be marked by cordiality and understanding.

ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Lee Joung-binn visited India from 30 July to 1 August 2000 at the invitation of EAM. The two Foreign Ministers discussed bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. EAM assured the ROK Foreign Minister of India’s support to the process of dialogue and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula.

High level exchanges during the year included:

- ❑ The Third India-ROK Trade Ministers Meeting was held in New Delhi on 9 May 2000. The Indian delegation was led by Commerce & Industry Minister. The ROK delegation was led by Dr. Han Duck Soo, Minister for Trade.

- ❑ Additional Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy visited Seoul from 26-30 June 2000 for signing an agreement with M/s Korea Electric Power Corporation.
- ❑ An FIEO delegation visited ROK from 21-24 September 2000.
- ❑ A trade and investment delegation led by Chief Minister of Haryana visited ROK from 14-17 October 2000.

Two Indian naval ships made a port call at Pusan from 18-21 September 2000. Vice Admiral Vinod Pasricha, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command also visited Korea on this occasion and met the Chief of Naval Staff and other senior naval officers of the ROK navy.

During the period January-September 2000 India's trade with the ROK rose by over 9% to US \$ 1.75 billion.

Exchanges of cultural delegations, students and research scholars continued.

A joint Korean IT delegation comprising representatives of the Government, Korea Institute of Multimedia Content and Software (KOMS) and the private sector visited India from November 23-25, 2000. An MoU between KOMS and NASSCOM was signed and the two sides initiated discussions on identification of joint projects.

India's relations with the DPRK continue to be friendly.

Vice Foreign Minister PK Gil Yon visited India from 24-28 April 2000 for Foreign Office consultations. During the visit, talks were held with Secretary (ER), Ministry of External Affairs.

Under the Cultural Exchange Programme, a ten member Bharatnatyam dance troupe visited DPRK to participate in the April Spring Friendship Art Festival from 10-18 April 2000.

An Indian Film Week was organized in DPRK from 17-21 August 2000. An Indian delegation led by noted film director Shri Hariharan also visited the DPRK on this occasion.

A Korean Film Week was held in New Delhi from 28 September to 1 October 2000. A three-member delegation from the DPRK also participated on this occasion.

Ambassador of DPRK Pak Myong Gu finished his term in November 2000 and returned to DPRK. The new Ambassador is yet to arrive.

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The Central Asian region is an extended neighbourhood for India, with long-standing historical and cultural links providing the foundation for forging close contemporaneous relations. Developments in the region have a direct bearing on India's national interest and security. The Central Asian States' secular political tradition, significant economic resources including energy, existing fund of goodwill for India, and present stage of economic development necessitating a wide variety of goods and technological skills, make these States and India natural partners.

Nearly ten years have passed since the Central Asian States became independent. During this period, the objective of India's foreign policy has been to establish dynamic and multi-faceted bilateral relations with them. Political relations with the CAS have been marked by understanding and convergence of views on a wide range of regional and global issues. Emergence in recent years of a serious problem of religious fundamentalism and cross-border terrorism in many of these States has further underlined the commonality of the threat faced by Central Asia and India from these negative forces, as well as the need for joint action against such forces.

The transitional constraints of the Central Asian economies and the landlocked nature of the region have so far prevented full realization of the available potential of trade and economic

interactions. These problems are being addressed which should enable freer flow of trade and more joint ventures in the coming years. During the year, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan joined the agreement for transportation of goods from India via Bandar Abbas, thereby strengthening the usage of the surface route to the region.

Cultural relations continued to be active. The highlight was the joint celebration of the 500th birth anniversary of Bairam Khan, an illustrious son of Turkmenistan and a leading figure of Indian history, in both India and Turkmenistan. Scholarly exchanges were maintained with all the Central Asian countries. Mission in Tashkent organised an international conference on pre-Islamic linkages between India and Central Asia that generated lively interest in the academic circles.

Setting up of a new resident Mission in Baku in March 1999 has helped India to establish a presence in Azerbaijan. The Mission is fully functional and, apart from providing consular services, has organised cultural programmes and dissemination of tourist and business information. In the political sphere, consultations with the Foreign Ministry of Azerbaijan were held in May 2000 in Baku during the visit of Joint Secretary (Central Asia).

India's relations with Kazakhstan have been traditionally warm and friendly and there is considerable interest in both countries in giving further content to the relations.

Foreign Office consultations were held in Astana in August 2000. Secretary (East) led the Indian delegation. The two sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and shared views on regional issues of common concern.

In December 2000 a Kazakh Parliamentary delegation led by H.E. Zharmakhan Tyukbaev, Chairman of the Lower House of Parliament, Majlis, visited India. The visit was useful in strengthening inter-parliamentary relations between the two countries.

India is a participant at the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which is a Kazakh initiative. India is supportive of the process and last year EAM had signed the Declaration of CICA Principles. In November-December, 2000 a meeting of the Special Working Group was held in Almaty and India was represented at the meeting at the level of officials.

The Kazakh Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted the first meeting of the Indo-Kazakh Joint Business Council in May 2000 in Almaty. Indian firms representing pharmaceuticals, communications, consultancy and trading houses participated in the meeting. Tea Board took part in the inter-food exhibition held in Almaty.

ITEC courses are popular in Kazakhstan and slots have been increased from 60 to 70.

The momentum of high-level exchanges between India and Kyrgyzstan was maintained with a working visit to India in May 2000 by the Head of Foreign Policy Department of President's Administration, Mr. Askar Aitmatov.

The Second Meeting of the Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Business Council was held at Bishkek from 10-12 May 2000. The meeting provided an opportunity for business communities of the two countries to directly interact with each other.

A 30-member cultural troupe sponsored by ICCR visited Kyrgyzstan in August 2000 to participate in the festival "Peace and Respect" in Osh.

Under the ITEC programme, the number of slots have been increased from 35 to 50 and the training courses have been seen as beneficial to Kyrgyzstan.

On regional security issues, India and Tajikistan share close understanding. Joint Secretary (Central Asia) held consultations with the Tajik Foreign Ministry in Dushanbe in October, 2000.

In September 2000 the runway at Khojend Airport was completed by an Indian company.

Tajik students are pursuing academic courses in different institutes and universities in India under various scholarship schemes.

Turkmen Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Boris Shikhmuradov visited India in April 2000. The discussions focussed on bilateral and regional issues, including the threats posed by terrorism and drug-trafficking. India and Turkmenistan reiterated their common interest in expanding bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

The two countries jointly celebrated the 500th anniversary of Bairam Khan, an illustrious son of Turkmenistan and a leading figure of Indian history. "Days of Turkmen culture in India" were held in India in August 2000. Minister of Culture of Turkmenistan, H.E. Mr. Oraz Aidogdiev, visited India along with a delegation of artists and scholars. A cultural troupe gave performances in Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Mysore.

In September 2000, during the visit to Ashgabat by Minister of Tourism and Culture, Shri Ananth Kumar, the “Days of Indian Culture” were celebrated. An Exhibition of Indian Manuscripts was also held and an Indian cultural troupe gave performances.

Ministry of External Affairs is setting up a tool room centre in Ashgabat through HMT (International) Limited. The project is nearing completion.

Turkmen candidates are receiving training under the ITEC programme.

During the year, relations with Turkey were active with a series of high level visits that gave greater content to the bilateral ties. The economic strengths of the two countries are seen as complementary and have been highlighted in the bilateral deliberations.

A landmark event in Indo-Turkish relations was the State visit by H.E. Mr. Bulent Ecevit, Prime Minister of Turkey from 30 March to 2 April 2000. Three documents - an MOU on establishment of the mechanism for political consultations between the foreign ministries; MOU on cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied subjects; and Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) - were signed. The Turkish Prime Minister addressed the Indo-Turkish Joint Business Council. He was conferred with an honorary Doctor of Literature degree by Visva Bharati at Shantiniketan.

Ambassador Mithat Balkan, Deputy Under Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited India in October 2000. The discussions covered possibilities of cooperation in the area of infrastructure. Ambassador Balkan, apart from his meeting with Secretary (East), had discussions in the Ministry of Surface Transport, Railway Board, Ministry of Commerce and with the Overseas

Construction Council of India, National Building Construction Corporation, National Highway Authority of India and Tata Projects Limited. It was found that there existed considerable scope for collaboration between Indian and Turkish firms in the infrastructure sector, including in the third countries.

General Cumhur Asparuk, Secretary of the National Security Council of Turkey, visited India from 6-12 November 2000. He called on the Raksha Mantri, and had meetings with the National Security Adviser, Secretary, National Security Council of India, Secretary (East), MEA and the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

India's relations with Uzbekistan received a boost with the visit by the Uzbek President H.E. Islam Karimov in May 2000. The visit provided an opportunity to the two sides to exchange views on bilateral, regional and international issues. India and Uzbekistan share common concerns over threats from religious fundamentalism and cross-border terrorism, and underlined the need to further strengthen secular and democratic ideals in international relations. A Joint Declaration on Principles of Relations and 8 agreements were signed during the visit.

The Uzbek President addressed a gathering of businessmen organised by CII and proposed collaboration in such areas as aviation technology, automobile ancillaries, cotton processing, pharmaceuticals, information and computer technology, solar energy, the use of laser technology in medicine and production of jewellery.

Secretary (East) visited Uzbekistan in July 2000. Consultations were held on bilateral matters and on issues relating to the common threat faced by India and Uzbekistan from religious fundamentalism and terrorism.



5

The Gulf, West Asia & North Africa

India deeply values close traditional cultural relations with all the countries in the Gulf. A trilogy of geographic, economic and social factors has created a unique affinity between countries of the Gulf, and India, reflected in myriad linkages. Recent years have witnessed a sustained effort to develop these affinities into a strong mutually beneficial economic bond.

During the first year of the new millennium, a number of high level visits contributed substantially to extending and consolidating bilateral relations between India and the countries in the Gulf. A number of important agreements were renewed and new agreements and understandings reached to carry forward India-Gulf cooperation in political, economic and cultural fields.

Bahraini Minister of Transportation, Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, paid an official visit to India, 4-5 April 2000. He called on the Vice President and also handed over a letter from the Bahraini Prime Minister addressed to Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The 14th Session of the India-Iraq Joint Commission Meeting, which took place in New Delhi on November 26-27, 2000 was chaired by H.E. Mr. Ram Naik, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas of

the Republic of India and H.E. Dr. Amir Mohammed Rashid, Minister of Oil of the Republic of Iraq. This meeting took place on the eve of a historic visit by the Vice President of Iraq, H.E. Taha Yassin Ramadhan to India from November 27-29, 2000.

H.E. Mr. Ramadhan, Vice President of Iraq called on H.E. Shri K R Narayanan, and met H.E. Shri Krishan Kant, Vice President and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India. He also had meetings with Their Excellencies Shri Ram Naik, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister for External Affairs and Shri Omar Abdullah, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry. He also visited Bangalore. During his visit to Bangalore he met with H.E. Smt. V.S. Rama Devi, Governor and H.E. Shri S.M. Krishna, Chief Minister of Karnataka. He also visited HAL Ltd. and Technology Park while in Bangalore.

The Joint Commission enabled both sides to review ongoing technical, education, scientific and cultural cooperation. India agreed to increase the total number of slots under the ITEC programme to 70 for the year 2001-2002. Both sides agreed to encourage cooperation and interaction between their universities and institutions of higher learning. Specific measures to intensify cooperation in the field of health care, agriculture, irrigation, telecommunication, transport and power were also identified. ONGC Videsh Ltd., Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas of India and Oil Exploration Company,

Ministry of Oil of Iraq signed an agreement for implementation of project for Exploration of Block No. 8. A number of specific O&M projects, revamp and upgradation of refineries were also identified. The two sides also agreed to examine the possibility of procurement of enhanced quantities of crude oil from Iraq to India under the UN Oil for Food Programme.

An Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Republic of Iraq on Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation was signed in presence of H.E. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of Republic of India and H.E. Mr. Taha Yassin Ramadhan, Vice President of the Republic of Iraq at New Delhi on November 29, 2000.

During the year the traditionally cordial Indo-Iraq relations acquired further dimensions. Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, MOS for External Affairs visited Iraq from 22-25 September 2000. During the visit, MOS(EA) called on President Saddam Hussein and handed over a letter from PM, reiterating India's desire to strengthen the bilateral relations in political, economic and cultural areas. An MOU for periodic consultations between the two Foreign offices was signed during the visit. He also called on Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadhan, Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament, Dr. Sadoun Hamadi and Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz. The Indo-Iraq Joint Business Council held its inaugural session during the visit.

During the current year, 60 Iraqi nominees received training in India under the ITEC programme. In addition, 30 Iraqi scholars were admitted in Indian universities in postgraduate courses. India also offered to treat five cardiac cases in Indian hospitals as humanitarian gesture.

A three member Indian agricultural delegation visited Iraq in April 2000. Minister of Agriculture of Punjab, Shri Gurdial Singh Badal, visited Iraq in April and signed an MOU with the Ministry of Agriculture for cooperation in agriculture between the PAU and the Iraqi side.

An eleven-member youth group from Kashi visited Iraq on a peace mission under the caption Kashi to Kerbala. India participated in the Babylon International Festival and Baghdad International Fair.

Iraq awarded a second contract worth US\$100 mn to BHEL during the year for supply of gas turbines. Indian companies have won contracts worth US\$700 mn under the Oil for Food Programme so far.

Two Indian naval ships INS TIR and KRISHNA paid a goodwill visit to Kuwait from April 8-11. The visit was well appreciated and many Indians, local Kuwaitis, diplomats and school children visited the ships.

Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Union Minister for Human Resources Development visited Kuwait on 13 June 2000. Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State for External Affairs paid an official visit to Kuwait from 8-11 July 2000. He was received by the Kuwait Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sulaiman Majed Al-Shaheen. MOS also called on HH Shaikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait and handed over PM's letter to him. MOS also called on the Speaker of the National Assembly, HE Mr. Jassem Al-Khorafi and the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister H E Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. An MOU on Foreign Office Consultations was signed during the visit.

A delegation led by Shri K.V. Rajan, Secretary (East) visited Kuwait for Foreign Office Consultation on February 22-24, 2001. The visit enabled the two side to review the entire gamut of bilateral relations between Kuwait and India.

The third Session of India-Oman Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on April 27-28, 2000. The leader of the Omani delegation, Minister of Commerce & Industry, Mr. Maqbool Ali Sultan was accompanied by a high level business delegation to participate in the

JBC meeting held in New Delhi on the same days. The visiting Minister called on PM and delivered to him a message from Sultan Qaboos. He also met EAM, Finance Minister, Minister of IT, Commerce Minister, Minister for Fertilizer and Chemicals, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Civil Aviation Minister. The Joint Commission reviewed bilateral co-operation in various spheres and decided to enhance it further. IT, tourism and food processing were identified as the thrust areas for co-operation.

Oman's Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yousuf Alawi visited India from July 17-18. Besides calling on PM, he held detailed discussions with EAM on bilateral relations and regional issues. It was decided to set up an Indo-Oman Strategic Consultative group to further enhance bilateral relations. He also delivered the inaugural lecture of the annual series instituted by India on IOR-ARC.

Following the clearance granted by GOI to Indo-Oman Joint Venture Fertilizer Project, Oman's Minister of Commerce & Industry Maqbool Sultan visited India on September 15 to discuss certain pending issues relating to the implementation of the project with our Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers. The Fertilizer Plant, to be set up in Oman would have an installed annual capacity of 1.6 million tonnes of urea and 248,000 metric tones of surplus merchant grade ammonia. The Indian promoting companies IFFCO and Kribhco would each hold 25 percent equity while Oman Oil Company would hold the balance 50 per cent. The entire urea production would be bought by India under a bilateral off-take agreement. A delegation led by Secretary, Fertilizers, GOI, subsequently visited Muscat on October 5-7 to hold further discussions. Both sides are anxious to expedite the progress of the project and achieve financial closure.

India and Qatar have traditionally warm and friendly relations. These relations, which received new dynamism by the landmark State Visit of His Highness the Emir of Qatar to India in April 1999, continued with further close interaction between the two countries.

The Permanent Under Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of State of Qatar, H.E. Mr. Abdel Rahman bin Hamad al Attiya visited India from April 10-12, 2000. He held discussions with Secretary (West) Shri R.S. Kalha. The visit, *inter alia*, was to prepare for the first meeting of High Joint Committee (HJC) between India and Qatar which was set up during the visit of H.H. the Emir to India. The HJC is co-chaired on the two sides by Foreign Ministers. The first meeting was scheduled to take place during the visit of EAM to Qatar on 21-22 October 2000 but was postponed a few days before the scheduled dates at the request of Qatari side since the dates clashed with the emergency Arab Summit held in Cairo.

For the first time, a Qatari diplomat underwent training in Foreign Service Institute of MEA when Mr. Hamad Yousef al Mahmoud attended the 24th PCFD in FSI from 2nd March to 14th April 2000.

Dr S. Narayanan, Secretary (Petroleum & Natural Gas), accompanied by Mr S.C.Mathur, CEO & MD and other officials of Petronet India Ltd visited Qatar on 17 June 2000 and held official talks with H.E. Mr Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Minister of Energy, Industry, Electricity and Water, H.E. Mr Yousef Hussain Kamal, Minister of Finance, Economy & Commerce and Chairman, in which both the sides reviewed the progress of preparations being made to receive the first shipment of LNG from Rasgas. The Minister of Energy, Industry, Electricity and Water of Government of the State of Qatar, H.E. Mr. Abdullah bin Hamad al Attiyah, visited India between 17-19 October 2000 at the invitation of India's Petroleum and Natural Gas minister, Mr. Ram Naik. During the visit, the Qatari Minister held discussions with Indian counterpart and senior officials of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Petronet LNG Ltd. At the end of the visit, the Qatari Minister said that all pending issues between Qatari RasGas and Petronet LNG Ltd., regarding facilities to be set up for receiving LNG at Indian terminal have been sorted out. The two companies signed a sales and purchase agreement for supply of 7.5 mmtpa of LNG to India over a 25-year period.

EAM also called on King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah. An agreement on Annual Foreign Office Consultations was signed during the visit.

This year saw a further cementing of the multi-dimensional and close relations between India and UAE, with a surge in exchange of visits, especially trade and commercial delegations, besides ministerial visits.

H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al Nahyan, Minister of Information and Culture, Government of UAE visited India on the invitation of Shri Arun Jaitley, MOS for Information and Broadcasting from 3.4.2000 to 7.4.2000. He called on the Prime Minister and handed over a letter from the President of UAE, HH Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. He also called on Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister for External Affairs. He had discussions with Shri Arun Jaitley, followed by delegation level talks led by the two Ministers. An agreement providing for cooperation in the field of information was signed at New Delhi on 4.4.2000 during the visit. Another agreement providing for cooperation and exchange of news was concluded between the PTI and WAM (the State owned Emirates News Agency). Later he visited Jaipur and Bangalore. At Bangalore, he visited the International Information Technology Park and the Indian Institute of Information Technology and evinced interest in investment and joint ventures in the field of IT and e-commerce.

Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister for External Affairs, made a transit visit in January 2000. He called on (Gen.) Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Minister for Defence and reviewed the diverse and expanding links that India has with Dubai. EAM also met Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, MOS for Foreign Affairs and reviewed Indo-UAE relations, besides sharing perceptions on regional and international issues.

The Treaties on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Criminal Matters, signed at New Delhi on 25.10.1999, entered

into force on 29.5.2000 with the exchange of the relative Instruments of Ratification at Abu Dhabi.

Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman of Emirates Airlines (owned by the Government of Dubai), led a large business delegation on board the Airlines inaugural flight to Chennai on September 11, 2000. Emirates entered into a code-sharing arrangement with Air India on the Dubai-Chennai sector. Accompanying Sheikh Ahmed on the inaugural flight were Sheikh Ahmed bin Nasser Al Owais, Minister for Water and Electricity, Dr. Obaid Saqr Busit, Director General of Dubai Customs, Ahmad Abdullah Al Musally, Ambassador of UAE to India, Mr. Obaid Al Tayer, Owner of Gulf News and Chairman, DCC (Dubai Chamber of Commerce), leading Indian businessmen in UAE and a large media delegation. The Governor of Tamil Nadu hosted a lunch in honour to Sheikh Ahmed and the delegation. A reception was also hosted by Shri A.C. Muthaiah, President elect of FICCI, which was attended by prominent industrialists, etc.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of India's formation as a Republic an 'India Week' was organised in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation. Sheikh Fahim bin Sultan Al Qasimi, the Minister for Economy and Commerce inaugurated a photo exhibition on September 17, 2000 to kick off the festival.

A high level delegation from the International Petroleum Investment Company visited India from 6.6.2000 to 9.6.2000. The delegation called on the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas in India and met the Chairmen of the Indian Oil Company, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum. UAE side expressed keen interest in increasing Indo-UAE cooperation in the petroleum field.

The two Indian naval cadet training ships INS-Tir and NIS-Krishna visited Port Rashid in Dubai from 3.4.2000 to 6.4.2000. A reception was held on board the vessels, which was attended by a select group of prominent Indians and local dignitaries.

India's export to UAE increased from US\$1868 millions in 1998-1999 to US\$2148 millions in 1999-2000. This is about 6% of India's

exports. The export growth rate for the year 1998-99 increased from 10% to 15% in 1999-2000.

Indian Business Councils were established at Fujairah and Sharjah in November 1999 and May 2000 respectively. IBC, Fujairah brings together the Indian Business Community in the towns of Fujairah, Kalba, Khorffkhan & Dibba and Sharjah. The Business Councils are already interacting with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Free Zones in their respective areas. Ever since their establishment, they have had a number of activities in an effort to bring together UAE nationals as well as Indian entrepreneurs and professionals.

A business mission representing the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) Southern region visited UAE from May 7-11, 2000 and had wide-ranging Business meetings at Dubai and had interaction with local Chambers of Commerce at Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman and Fujairah. The interaction gave the delegation vital insights about the scope of small businesses in UAE and made the mission a success. This was instrumental in further strengthening the Indo-UAE economic relations.

Shri Murasoli Maran, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry reviewed the trade and investment promotion activities of India's Commercial Representatives (CRs) in the GCC countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia & UAE), Iran & Iraq in Dubai on 14 June, 2000. Highlighting the new role of the CRs in a rapidly changing economic environment, the Minister advised them to adopt new and innovative strategies to exploit the full potential of India's trade and investment co-operation with this region.

A two member FICCI delegation visited Dubai on September 26, 2000 and had a useful meeting with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce & Industry and had interaction with NRI businessmen. It was proposed by NRI businessmen that FICCI should also open an office in Dubai. FICCI delegation promised to consider the proposal.

In August 2000, the Chairman of Al Ghurair Group, Mr. Abdulla al Ghurair visited India (Delhi, Bangalore & Mumbai). His main interest was to invest in a gas-based power plant in India. He also had interest in establishing a joint ventures fund between MASHREQ Bank (his banks with branches in Delhi and Mumbai) and an Indian Financial Institution in the area of IT.

In late August, again a 12 member delegation led by Sharjah Economic Development Department and Free Trade Zones Chairman, Shaikh Tariq Al Qassimi were on a fortnight long visit to India for promotion on the free trade zones in 7 cities including Delhi and Hyderabad. The delegation pursued investment proposals in various fields like tourism, health, information technology, IT education, spices & marine processing.

Dr. Obaid Saqr Busit, Chairman, World Customs Organization and Director General of the Dubai Customs visited India (11-20 September 2000). The highlight of his visit was the initialing of an MOU on bilateral cooperation with Indian customs. He called on Shri Pramod Mahajan, Minister of IT and Shri V Dhanajay Kumar, MOS for Finance. He also invited Shri Pramod Mahajan to Dubai in November, 2000 on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary celebrations of Dubai Customs.

During the last year there have been substantive improvements made in extending consular services to the public.

Shri Prakash Singh Badal, Chief Minister of Punjab, visited UAE for three days from November 11-14, 2000 on way back from Canada/USA.

Joint Business Council Agreement, which had expired on 6.12.1998, was renewed on 17th May 2000 in Sana'a.

Smt. Vasundhara Raje, MOS(Independent Charge) for Small Scale Industries, Agro and Rural Industries, Personnel & Pensions, visited Sana'a from 21 May 2000 to represent the Indian Government on

the occasion of the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the unification of the Republic of Yemen. It turned out to be a working visit. The MOS called on many Yemeni dignitaries including Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Kader Ba-Jamal. During these meetings useful discussions were held in respect of Indo-Yemeni cooperation and interaction in industrial, commercial, political and health fields.

The Special Kuwait Cell has been working since 1991 on the task of obtaining compensation for the Indians who were adversely affected by the Gulf War of 1990-91. After a considerable time, funds are being transferred by the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), Geneva. Transfer of significant amounts is now taking place, at regular intervals. Disbursement of the compensation money to successful claimants is being done by four designated nationalized Banks. The four Banks, with the active cooperation and guidance of the Special Kuwait Cell, are carrying out the task of locating the successful claimants (many of whom have shifted residences or gone abroad), and paying their claim amounts.

The total amount of funds received from UNCC up to the year 1999-2000 was \$514358014. Between April-November 2000, an additional \$272787000 has been received, bringing the total up to \$787145014. As for disbursement up to 1999-2000, \$128093560 covering 94993 claims, was disbursed. Between 1.4.2000 - 10.1.2001, a further amount of \$447358000 (approx.) has been disbursed to the individual claimants). This covers 98676 individual claims. It has to be noted that because of funds-constraints, UNCC have been sending funds in parts. So, the claims covered during 1.4.2000 - 10.1.2001 would include significant number of claims which have been earlier covered as well. The Cell is very actively pursuing with the designated Banks regarding disbursement of all claim-amounts that have been approved by UNCC.

The Special Kuwait Cell has also been instrumental in getting

category E (corporate) and F (Govt.) claims resolved and approved by UNCC. The number of E claims approved up to now is almost 20. \$ 16006454 has been received so far against the E claims. The F claim of Ministry of External Affairs was approved in 1998 for \$ 93 million (approx.). UNCC have so far sent \$ 5 mn against the approved F claim.

India endeavored to deepen and broaden its multifaceted interaction with countries of the West Asia and North Africa region through exchange of high level visits. India continues to be keenly interested in the peace, development, stability and economic and social development of the region. The relationship with the countries in the region was further strengthened by economic and commercial linkages. India's trade with this region registered steady growth. Besides joint venture projects in Morocco and Jordan, negotiations are continuing on joint venture in Tunisia and Egypt. Bulk of India's sourcing of phosphate is done from countries of this region. India continues to extend political, material and technical support to the Palestinian people. India repeatedly expressed its deep concern at the outbreak of violence in the region and condemned the excessive use of force and acts of provocation. India voted in favour of all the Palestine related Resolutions adopted by UN, ECOSOC, UNHCR and other UN bodies and organs. India is deeply concerned at the present stalemate in the Middle East Peace Process and has been in touch with all the sides. India maintains that a just, lasting and permanent peace can only be established on the basis of relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and the principle of "land for peace". India feels that all states in the region, including Israel, have a right to exist within secure and internationally recognized boundaries. Keeping in mind all aspects of the evolving situation in the region and discussions currently on between parties concerned, India announced its decision to de-recognize Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) with effect from 26 June 2000.

Relations with Algeria continued to be warm and close. Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant Singh, visited Algeria from 23-25 October 2000. He had extensive discussions with Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Belkhadem and called on President Abdelaziz Boutefflika and Prime Minister Ali Benflis. During his stay in Algeria a Memorandum of Understanding on Foreign Office Consultations was signed. Minister of External Affairs had a meeting with Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Belkhadem on the margins of UNGA in New York.. The Indo-Algerian Joint Commission meeting was held in Algeria from 25-27 June 2000. Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Shri Omar Abdullah led the Indian delegation. Secretary (East), Shri K V Rajan, was received by Foreign Minister Youcef Yousfi on the margins of OAU Summit, Lome. President of Algeria the guest of honour at the Republic Day 2001. The Chief of Algeria's Air Force Maj Gen Benslimane will be visiting India to participate in AERO-INDIA 2001

President of Algeria Abdelaziz Boutefflika visited India from 24 - 29 January, 2001, and was the Guest of Honour at the Republic Day function. Besides having detailed exchange of views with his Indian counterpart, President Boutefflika received the Vice President, Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs, Raksha Mantri and Minister of State for Commerce & Industry. During his stay in India, the following documents were signed:

- ❑ Bilateral Partnership Declaration
- ❑ Agreement on Cooperation in the Fields of Phytosanitary and Vegetation Protection
- ❑ Agreement on Cooperation in the Veterinary Field
- ❑ Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement

Algeria sent relief supplies consisting of tents, blankets, glucose/Syrup, antibiotics and cotton/bandage for the earthquake victims of Gujarat.

Traditional relations with Egypt progressed well. Vice President Shri Krishan Kant represented India at the G-15 Summit held at Cairo in June 2000. During his stay in Cairo, Vice President had discussions with President Hosni Mubarak. Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh met Foreign Minister Amre Mousa on the side-lines of UNGA in New York. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, transited through Cairo on 6-7 April 2000. Secretary (East), Shri K V Rajan visited Cairo on 25 September 2000 and exchanged views with the senior officials in the Egyptian Foreign Office. An exclusive INDIA TECH Exhibition was held at Cairo from 23 - 26 September 2000. It was inaugurated by Minister of State for Commerce and Industry. Shri Omar Abdullah. During his stay in Cairo, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry had discussions with Foreign Minister Amre Mousa. On 18 September 2000 Ambassador of India in Cairo signed a Memorandum on cooperation between Engineering Export Promotion Council of India and Social Fund for Development (SFD) of Egypt. This memorandum seeks to promote business interaction between small and medium enterprises of India and Egypt. Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh visited Cairo in February 2001 to co-chair the meeting of Indo-Egyptian Joint Commission.

Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh visited Egypt from 1 - 4 February, 2001 to co-chair the Joint Commission Meeting. Besides calls on the President and Prime Minister of Egypt, he had detailed discussions with his Egyptian counterpart and Minister of Economy and International Trade and signed a Protocol of Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute and the Institute of Diplomatic Studies of Egypt.

Bilateral ties of friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation with Israel were strengthened. Home Minister Shri L K Advani paid a 4-day visit to Israel from 14-18 June 2000. He was the guest of

Israel's Minister for Regional Cooperation Shimon Peres. Home Minister Shri L K Advani also called on President Ezer Weizman and Prime Minister Ehud Barak. During Home Minister's visit, both the sides decided to set up a Working Group on counter - terrorism. Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh visited Israel from 30 June - 3 July 2000. This was the first visit by the Minister of External Affairs of India since the establishment of Embassies in 1992. Besides exchanging views with Foreign Minister David Levy, Shri Jaswant Singh called on President Ezer Weizman and Prime Minister Ehud Barak. During his stay both sides agreed to set up a Ministerial level Joint Commission with a view to develop a long term framework for cooperation. Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh met Foreign Minister Shimo Ben Ami on the side-lines of UNGA in New York. The first ever India exclusive Trade Exhibition was held in Tel Aviv from 3-7 May 2000. The exhibition was inaugurated by Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Dr Raman Singh. Secretary (East) Shri K V Rajan visited Israel from 1-5 December 2000 for the fifth round of Foreign Office Consultations. Israel's Minister for Regional Cooperation Shimon Peres visited India on 24-25 August to brief the Government of India on the Middle East Peace Process. He called on the President, Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs, Home Minister and Defence Minister. Minister for Regional Cooperation Shimon Peres again visited India from 8-10 January 2001 to attend the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Partnership Summit at Hyderabad. Before proceeding to Hyderabad, he came to Delhi on 8 January and called on the Minister of External Affairs and Home Minister to brief the Indian leaders on the ongoing negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

The Israeli Government sent a fully equipped self-contained 120-bed mobile hospital as assistance to the earthquake victims in Gujarat.

Relations with Jordan progressed on an even keel. Foreign Minister of Jordan, Abdel Elan M Khatib visited India on 18-19

December 2000. He had an extensive exchange of views with External Affairs Minister Shri Jaswant Singh on the Middle East Peace Process and situation in Iraq. He also called on the Vice President and the Prime Minister. During his stay a Memorandum of Understanding on foreign office consultations was signed. An India exclusive Textile Exhibition was held in Amman on 18-19 October 2000. Secretary (East) Shri K V Rajan visited Amman on 4 December 2000 and called on Foreign Minister Abdel Elah M Khatib.

Foreign Minister of Jordan Abdel Elan M. Khatib visited India from 18-19 December 2000. Foreign Minister Khatib called on the Vice President and Prime Minister and had extensive exchange of views with Minister of External Affairs. During his stay, a Memorandum of Understanding on Foreign Office Consultations was signed.

India's relations with Lebanon continued to be warm and friendly. India maintained its support for Lebanon's unity, territorial integrity and control over its entire territory and the immediate and unconditional implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425. Accordingly India welcomed the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Southern Lebanon. India took note of the air-attacks against Lebanese civilian infrastructure targets and called these attacks regrettable. Indian Army contingent contributed to serve in Southern Lebanon as part of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

With Arab League, India continue to maintain close relationship both at Cairo and in New Delhi.

Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh met the Secretary General of the Arab League Esmat Abdel Meguid in Cairo on 1 February 2001.

India's relations with Libya continued to be marked by mutual understanding. Foreign Minister of Libya Abdel Rahman Shalgam visited India on 6-8 July 2000. Besides exchanging views with Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant Singh, Foreign Minister Shalgam called on the Vice President, Prime Minister, Defence Minister and Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. Indian companies continued to take steps to participate in the economic activity in Libya.

Relations with Morocco witnessed qualitative enhancement. Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh met the Foreign Minister of Morocco Mohamed Benaissa on the margins of UNGA in New York. King of Morocco His Majesty King Mohammed VI will be paying a state visit to India from 27 February - 3 March 2001. Moroccan Naval ship will participate in International Fleet Review being organised by the Indian Navy.

The King of Morocco donated US \$ 250,000 to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the benefit of the earthquake victims in Gujarat.

India continued to extend political, material and technical support to Palestine. India repeatedly expressed its deep concern at the outbreak of violence in the region and condemned the excessive use of force and acts of provocation. India conveyed its concern at the stalling of the Middle East Peace Process. India maintained that a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region can only be established on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and on the principle of "land for peace". India reiterated its support to the Palestinian people's inalienable right to a homeland. President Yasir Arafat paid a working visit to New Delhi on 18-19 August 2000 and had extensive exchange of views with Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee. President Yasir Arafat also called on the

President. Home Minister Shri L K Advani and Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh visited Gaza on 17 June 2000 and 30 June 2000 respectively and called on President Yasir Arafat. Senior officials accompanying Home Minister Shri L K Advani held discussions with the Palestinian Security Officials. While in Gaza, the Minister of External Affairs inaugurated the two Indian-aided projects. Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Dr Raman Singh visited Gaza on 6 May 2000 and called on President Arafat. Secretary (East) Shri K V Rajan visited Gaza on 4 December 2000 and called on President Arafat. Earlier Secretary (East) Shri K V Rajan had visited Gaza on 2 December and met Secretary General in the Presidency Tayyab Abdul Rahim and delivered to him Prime Minister's letter to President Arafat. During his visit to Gaza Secretary (East) met PNA's Minister of Health and Minister of Tourism and announced Government of India's decision to create a special fund of Rs.50 lakh to send urgently needed relief supplies to the Palestinian people. Earlier the Government of India had announced despatch of relief supplies worth Rs.25 lakh to PNA territories. JS (WANA) met Head of PLO's Political Department Farouq Quaddoumi on 23 September in Tunis.

A Palestinian Parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council Mr Ahmad Abdul Q'rie (Abu-Ala) visited India at the invitation of Chairman Rajya Sabha and the Speaker of Lok Sabha from 16-20 August 2000. During their stay, the delegation called on President, Vice President and Minister of External Affairs, besides holding discussions with the Speaker of Lok Sabha. The Indian Technical Assistance Programme for human resource development of Palestinian people continued to be implemented. India donated books on wide-ranging subjects to the Palestinian educational institutions.

Keeping in mind all aspects of the evolving situation in the region and discussions currently on between the parties concerned, India announced its decision to de-recognize Sahrawi Arab Democratic

Republic (SADR) with effect from 26 June 2000. India continues to keep in touch with developments in line with its support for UN efforts and the warm and friendly relations traditionally existing with all the parties concerned.

Relations with Sudan were strengthened. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Ajit Kumar Panja visited Sudan from 8 - 9 April 2000 to co-chair the Second Meeting of Indo-Sudan Joint Commission. Besides exchange of views with his counterpart, he called on the President Omer Hassan Ahmed El-Basheer. During Joint Commission meeting Trade Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding on Annual Foreign Office Consultations, Agreement for Cooperation in the field of Small Scale Enterprise Sector, Agreement between Foreign Services Institute, Ministry of External Affairs and National Centre for Diplomatic Studies, Ministry of External Relations, Sudan, Cultural Exchange Programme for 2000 to 2002, Agreement between Press Trust of India and Sudan News Agency, Protocol on Cooperation between Prasar Bharti and Sudanese Radio and Television and Agreement for establishment of Joint Business Council between Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and ASSOCHAM and Sudanese Businessman General Federation were signed. Secretary (East) Shri K V Rajan visited Sudan from 26 - 28 September 2000 for the first round of Foreign Office Consultations. Secretary (East) was received by Minister of State for External Relations Abdel Rahman Ali. A four-member delegation, led by Director of the Sudan National Centre for Research Prof Abdelkarim Mohamed Salih visited India from 22-31 May 2000. During the visit, a working programme of Scientific and Technological Co-operation between Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Sudan's National Centre for Research (SNCR) for June 2000 to May 2002 was signed.

A two-member delegation led by Registrar of Political Parties and Organization, Mohamed Ahmed Salim, visited India from 9-12

January 2001. During its stay in India the delegation called on Chief Election Commissioner, Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha, Secretary General of Lok Sabha, Secretary General of Rajya Sabha and Secretary of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution. Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Shri Omar Abdullah will be visiting Sudan in early February to participate in the Khartoum International Trade Fair. Sudanese Minister of Agriculture and forests visited New Delhi from January 16-18, 2001 to attend Afro-Asian Rural Development Organisation's 48th Session of the Executive Committee.

India's relations with Syria continue to expand on a positive note. The Minister of Human Resource Development and Science & Technology, Dr. Murali Manohar Joshi represented India at the funeral of the Inter President Hafez al Assad on 12-13 June 2000. During his stay in Damascus Dr Joshi called on Dr Bashar-Al-Assad and personally conveyed to him the deep condolences on behalf of the Government and people of India and expressed Govt's resolve to continue and further consolidate the existing friendly ties with Syria. The Joint Trade Committee established under the Trade Agreement between India and Syria held its fourth session on 25-26 July 2000 in New Delhi. Syrian delegation was led by Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs of Syria, Dr Khaled Ra'ad, and, among others, included the Syrian Minister of State for Planning Affairs, Minister of Higher Education and Minister of State for Technology Development, Minister of Industry, Plenipotentiary Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Minister of Planning Affairs and the Deputy Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade. During his stay in New Delhi, Deputy Prime Minister called on the Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh. The meeting of Joint Business Council was also held in parallel with the Joint Trade Committee meeting. During the Joint Trade Committee meeting, a Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in the field of Science and

Technology, a Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in the field of Higher Education and Related Fields and Agreed Minutes of for Cooperation between Planning Commissions were signed. Minister of State for Science and Technology Shri Bachi Singh Rawat visited Syria from 12-16 November 2000 and an Agreement on Programme of Cooperation in Science and Technology for 2000-2002 was signed. Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh visited Syria in the end-January-February 2001.

Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh visited Syria from 30 January to 1 February 2001. During his stay in Damascus, Jaswant Singh called on President Bashar Al-Assad and Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa Mero. He had an extensive exchange of views with Foreign Minister Farouk Al-Shara. In Syria, Minister of External Affairs announced that the ITEC Programme for Syria would be augmented by Rs. 2 million.

Syria sent an aircraft containing relief material for the earthquake victims in Gujarat along with an official delegation led by Syrian State Minister for Red Crescent Makhoud Abou Hamdeh.

Ties of understanding and cooperation with Tunisia were further strengthened. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Ajit Kumar Panja visited Tunis from 4 -6 April 2000 to co-chair the first Meeting of Indo-Tunisian Joint Commission. Besides exchanging views with

his counterpart. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Ajit Kumar Panja called on the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and other Ministers from economic ministries. During the Joint Commission meeting Extradition Treaty, Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in the field of Agriculture, Programme of Cooperation in the field of Science and Technology, Cultural Exchange Programme and a Memorandum of Understanding between CII and UTICA were signed. Foreign Minister of Tunisia Habib Ben Yahia visited India from 7-8 December 2000. This was the first ever visit by a Tunisian Foreign Minister to India. Besides exchanging views with Minister of External Affairs on the Middle East Peace Process and on the need to jointly fight the terrorism, the Foreign Minister also called on the Prime Minister and Home Minister. During his visit to India, an Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Tourism and Memorandum of Understanding on Foreign Office Consultations were signed.

Foreign Minister of Tunisia Habib Ben Yahia visited India from 7-9 December 2000. Besides having detailed discussion with Minister of External Affairs, Foreign Minister Yahia called on the Prime Minister and the Home Minister. During his visit, Memorandum of Understanding on Foreign Office Consultations and Agreement on Tourism Cooperation were signed.

Tunisia sent two aircraft containing relief supplies for the earthquake victims In Gujarat.

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Africa (South of Sahara)

The historically close, cordial and time-tested relations with the countries in Sub-Saharan African region are of considerable importance to India. The presence of a large Indian diaspora in this region adds a special dimension to this relationship. It is significant that India is increasingly interacting with a changing Africa placing a far greater emphasis on democratic development and economic reforms and restructuring. India's credentials as the world's largest democracy and the experience of its economic development has today created new areas of cooperation and interaction for the mutual benefit of both India and Africa. A large number of ministerial and official-level visits were exchanged during this period. Parliamentary delegations from many newly democratic countries in Sub-Saharan Africa also came to India to have a first-hand knowledge of our parliamentary system.

The President of Angola, Jose Eduardo Dos Santos made transit halts in India on 27–28 January and 3-4 February 2001 during his onward and return journeys to Japan and South Korea.

Idji Kolawole Antoine, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Benin, accompanied by a large delegation visited India

from October 24-26, 2000. During this visit India announced a donation of 60 diesel water pumps, 30 rice hullers and 30 groundnut shellers to the Government of Benin. Cooperation in the fields of Human Resource Development, SMEs and Defence was also discussed. Benin is the third largest trading partner of India in Francophone Africa after Cote d' Ivoire and Senegal.

India continued to maintain close and friendly relations with Botswana. Following heavy floods in the early part of the year, and in response to an appeal made by the Government, the Government of India donated 2500 blankets to Botswana. In addition, the Indian community in Botswana donated a substantial amount of relief material through the Indian High Commission. Botswana's impressive economic performance in recent years and its attempts to attract foreign investment led to a further intensification of business contacts between the two countries. The Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA) led a delegation to India in September, visiting a number of cities and holding one-to-one meetings with Indian companies. Two large business delegations from India visited Botswana in August and November and a number of Indian companies have now evinced interest in setting up joint ventures in

Botswana. The Bank of Botswana also approved the application of the Bank of Baroda to establish a subsidiary in Botswana. In the continuing recruitment of Indian experts by the Government of Botswana, a fresh batch of 35 teachers has arrived. Such Government recruitment has been channelised through Educational Consultants India Limited (Ed.Cil) since 1989.

A delegation of Indian businessmen visited Botswana (August 8-14, 2000) at the invitation of the Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority. Mrs. T. Seretse, Botswana Minister of Commerce visited India in January 2001. A Trade Agreement between India and Botswana was signed during the visit. The Ministry of Education of Botswana has decided to recruit 200 teachers from India through Educational Consultants India Ltd.

An 8-member parliamentary delegation led by Cavaye Yeguie Djibril, President of the National Assembly of Cameroon visited India from July 20-26, 2000. The Cameroonian delegation met the Standing Committee of the Parliament on External Affairs. Improvement of bilateral relations and cooperation in international organisations were the focus of discussion between the two sides.

A full-scale war broke out between Ethiopia and Eritrea at a time when a severe drought affected them. However, this backdrop did not impinge on the development of India's relations with this country, most notably on the bilateral commercial relationship. The growing response to business opportunities in Ethiopia by Indian businessmen yielded very encouraging results despite the adverse external and domestic environment. Indian companies through international tendering secured several major contracts. Government of India donated to Ethiopia a consignment of 81 metric tonnes of milk powder as relief assistance for its drought stricken people.

Under a South-South Agricultural Cooperation project, a tripartite agreement amongst India, FAO and Eritrea, 24 Indian agricultural experts have been deputed to Eritrea and 12 more are expected to join shortly. For the famine-affected people of Eritrea, India donated a consignment of 1500 m. tonnes of wheat and sugar.

Relations with Kenya continue to be very co-operative and cordial. Following the successful visit to India by Dr. Bonaya Godana, Kenya's Foreign Minister, in December 1999, the two governments focussed on crafting a package of agreements/MOUs on various sectors of mutual interest. Considerable progress was achieved in this direction. Two Assistant Ministers from the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development led a delegation of Small and Medium Enterprises officers to study Indian SME policies in October, 2000. The Kenyan Sugar Authority organised a visit to India by members of the Agriculture Committee of the Kenyan Parliament in November. They met with the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture in Delhi, apart from visiting sugar mills and meetings with APEDA as part of their study before preparing the Kenya Sugar Act for enactment by the Kenyan Parliament. Two new chapters of the Kenya India Friendship Association (KIFA) were opened in Mombasa and Kisumu, important towns of Kenya. A large number of indigenous Kenyans and Kenyans of Asian origin took active part in the activities of KIFA. In order to promote tourism, High Commission of India and the Government of India Tourist Office, Johannesburg, in collaboration with Air India, Nairobi, held a presentation to mark the "Explore India Millennium Year 1999-2000" at Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa.

A parliamentary delegation of Madagascar visited India in August

2000 at the invitation of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

Relations between India and Malawi continued to be friendly and characterized by mutual cooperation in the international fora. A delegation from Malawi Electoral Commission visited our Election Commission in October 2000. Telecommunications Consultants India limited (TCIL) has just completed a contract for Malawi Post and Telecommunications Corporation worth US\$ 20 million in the telecom sector.

General elections were held in Mauritius in September 2000. A new coalition government headed by Sir Anerood Jugnauth took office. Relations between India and Mauritius continued to be excellent. Interaction between the two sides was vigorous and cooperation in Education, Defence, Commerce and Industry was further intensified. Trade between the two countries grew steadily. India is the third largest supplier of goods to Mauritius. An Indian Parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha also paid a successful visit to Mauritius in June . Air Mauritius introduced a new flight to Chennai, which is expected to expand interaction between Mauritius and the southern Indian states.

Anil Kumarsingh Gayan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation visited India from 4-9 January 2001. During his stay in Delhi, he called on External Affairs Minister, former Prime Minister Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao and Dr. M.S. Gill, Chief Election Commissioner.

Prime Minister of Mauritius, Sir Anerood Jugnauth visited India from 5-24 January 2001. This was the first bilateral visit of Sir Jugnauth after his reelection as the Prime Minister of Mauritius in September,

2000. During his stay in Delhi, he called on the President and met with the Prime Minister, Defence Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. Sir Jugnauth also visited Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai and Mumbai. In Bangalore and Hyderabad, he took the opportunity to acquaint himself with the achievements made by India in the fields of aircraft technology, electronics and information technology when he visited Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), the famous Information Technology centre- Infosys and the Hi-Tech City. He visited the National Institute of Ocean Technology in Chennai and had interactions with the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), the All-India Association of Industries, Indian Oil Corporation and the Confederation of Indian Industry in Chennai and Mumbai. A Joint Declaration was issued at the end of the visit, which was particularly noteworthy for exploring the possibilities of cooperation between India and Mauritius in the area of information technology.

Deelchand Jeeha, Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications of Mauritius, is expected to visit in February 2001.

Flood waters swept through much of the Southern and central regions of the country in February this year. This catastrophe was compounded by a cyclone, which hit Central Mozambique in March. As a gesture of goodwill, Government of India donated 25000 pieces of mosquito nets and 98 boxes of medicines to help the flood victims of Mozambique. Our expression of solidarity with the people and Government of Mozambique was highly appreciated by the Mozambican side.

Dr. Leonardo Santos Simao, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation came to India on a private visit on 15 January 2001. During his stay in Delhi, he called on External Affairs Minister.

India continued to support Namibia in its efforts towards the development of its economic infrastructure. The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources installed ten biogas plants in Namibia in June 2000. The India-Namibia Plastic Technology Centre was completed and commissioned by four engineers deputed from the National Small-Scale Industry Corporation, New Delhi in August 2000. In the same month two villages in Namibia were electrified with solar power panels supplied by the Government of India.

Cordial and friendly relations between India and Nigeria were further strengthened this year. Following the very successful visit of President Obasanjo as the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations in January 2000, interaction between the democratic institutions of the two countries has increased significantly. A number of delegations headed by the Governors of various Nigerian Federal States and from their National Assembly visited India. The high point of this interaction was the Nigerian decision to train 360 members of the Nigerian National Assembly in the Lok Sabha Secretariat. Nigeria continued to be the largest trading partner of India in Africa. Economic relations between the two countries were raised to a higher level with the signing of an agreement between the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and Indian Oil Corporation in August 2000. India agreed to donate US \$ 5 million to Nigeria to revive the Nigerian Machine Tool (NMT) Limited with the help of HMT(I). When fully operational, NMT will provide a boost to the development of Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria. Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Omar Abdullah visited Nigeria from October 2-4, 2000. During his stay, he called on the Nigerian President, and the Ministers of Commerce and of Transport.

The Nigerian Minister of Industry, Stephen I. Akiga accompanied by Dr. Patrick Delecole, Special Adviser to the Nigerian President

on International Affairs, visited India in the third week of December 2000. The visitors called on Shri Manohar Joshi, Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises and Shri Omar Abdullah, Minister of State for Commerce & Industry. The purpose of the visit was to explore the possibilities of further cooperation in the field of heavy industries and negotiate with manufacturers for purchase of tractors from India.

After being in power for 40 years since independence, the Socialist Party lost the presidential election and on 1 April 2000 Abdoulaye Wade of the Democratic Party took over as the first non-socialist President of Senegal. The new Government expressed its desire to further strengthen Indo-Senegalese political and economic relations. India continued to be the second largest importer of Senegalese goods. ITPO participated in the 14th Dakar International Trade Fair held from 23 November to 5 December 2000. An Entrepreneurial Training and Development Centre (ETDC), built with Indian technical and financial assistance under G-15 at an estimated cost of US \$ 4.49 million by HMT(I), was handed over to the Government of Senegal on 16 June 2000.

The year 2000-2001 would rank as one of the most productive in terms of Indo-Seychelles relations. The major highlight was the holding of the 5th Joint Commission meeting in Delhi in October 2000. The two sides agreed to follow a time bound schedule to add impetus to the implementation. New areas of cooperation in the fields of solar energy, small-scale sector, pharmaceuticals were identified. Another highlight of the year was the breakthrough in the education sector, with the visit of an EdCIL team in July followed in August by a week-long visit of the Seychelles Minister of Education to various educational centers in India. The fructification of the US

\$ 2 million loan, the arrival in Seychelles of 24 Tata buses, and the gifting of a 2-km length of metal road barriers by the TATAs, were some of the important events in the first half of the year. In the second half, the arrival of consignments of medicine and cooking oil as gift items, and the high profile visits of Indian naval ships brought India into focus locally.

After a lull of more than a year, internecine fighting resumed in Sierra Leone. India contributed two battalions of soldiers to the UNAMSIL. Maj.Gen.V.K. Jaitley was appointed as the Force Commander of this multi-national force. The rebels took a large number of UNAMSIL personnel, including Indians, as hostage. They were successfully rescued through a brilliant military operation. In September 2000, India informed UN Secretary-General of its decision to withdraw Indian peacekeeping forces from UNAMSIL in a phased manner.

Bilateral relations between the two countries rest on the shared commitment to democracy and secularism in a multi-cultural society and a belief in consensual politics. South Africa is an important founder member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association. As the economically most powerful member of the South African Development Community (SADC), South Africa is also important for us as an economic bridgehead to the region. Bilateral trade has grown rapidly and an annual growth rate of over 10% has been sustained. Presently, Indo-South African bilateral trade is around US\$ 1.8 billion. South Africa's defence exports to India have increased rapidly since the conclusion of an MOU on Defence Equipment in December 1996. Raksha Mantri visited South Africa in September on an invitation from his South African counterpart. A Defence Cooperation Agreement between the two countries was signed during

this visit. It covered the areas of peacekeeping operations, fight against terrorism and other defence-related matters. The news regarding an international racket in cricket match-fixing and betting involving former South African cricket captain, Hansie Cronje captured the headlines in India and South Africa and worldwide. However, both India and South Africa reiterated that this episode would not affect in any way the close and cordial relations between the two countries, who are committed to implementing a Strategic Partnership. The third round of Indo-South African Foreign Office Consultations was held at Secretary-level in Pretoria on 1 August 2000.

A defence delegation led by Defence Secretary of South Africa called on Chief of Army Staff on December 13, 2000 and expressed satisfaction at the present defence cooperation between the two countries.

Our Department of Ocean Development has used Cape Town as a base for launching its annual expedition to Antarctica. The Indian expedition team was flagged off on December 8, 2000 by the South African Minister for Tourism, Valli Mossa from Cape Town.

The fourth session of the Indo-South Africa Joint Committee Meeting is likely to be held in March 2001.

A Trade Agreement between India and Swaziland has been approved by both the Governments and is expected to be signed soon.

India and Tanzania continued to enjoy friendly and cordial relations. Keeping in view the housing problem faced by most of the Sub Saharan African countries and the prevailing high cost of housing construction material, a specialised exhibition was organised in Dar-es-Salaam in July 2000 on low-cost housing technologies developed

in India. Hon'ble Minister of State for Rural Employment and Poverty Alleviation visited Tanzania to participate in this event. This event was jointly sponsored by UNIDO and was undertaken in the spirit of South-South Cooperation in order to promote technology transfer between India and Africa. The exhibition generated wide degree of interest not only in Tanzania but also in Uganda and Zambia. They appreciated the Indian initiative as it was timely and relevant for African needs. President Mkapa and other dignitaries visited the exhibition.

Relations between India and Uganda continue to remain cordial. Ugandan Minister for Local Government led a 4-member delegation to Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka (17-28 July 2000). The delegation called on the Chief Ministers and concerned officials of the two State Governments and discussed matters related to decentralization, poverty alleviation and capacity building at the grass root level. The Ugandan Minister of State for Trade & Industry who is a farmer himself, attended a course on 'Small Enterprise Policy and Promotion' at National Institute of Small Industry Extension Training (NISIET), Hyderabad. Indian businessmen also showed their renewed interest

in Uganda. A 15-member business delegation from Gujarat visited Uganda in August 2000. A number of joint venture proposals for setting up units in Uganda were initiated during the visit.

Relations between India and Zambia continued to grow during this year. BHEL was awarded a contract worth US \$ 15 million, in July 2000 by the Zambian Electricity Supply Company for rehabilitation of 11 sub-stations and construction of a new 330 kv. sub-station. RITES has successfully completed evaluation of assets of Zambian Railway, a project awarded to this company by the Zambian Privatisation Agency. The Indo-Zambia Bank Limited, which is a joint venture company between three Indian banks (Bank of India, Bank of Baroda and Central Bank of India) and the Government of Zambia has performed very well during this year. Zambian Minister for Science and Technology and Vocational Education (August-September 2000), Zambian Minister for Energy and Water Development (October 2000), and the Deputy Minister for Commerce, Trade & Industry (November 2000) visited India.



Europe

India's relations with countries of East and Central Europe have been historically close and traditionally warm and friendly. Our cooperation with these countries are multi-dimensional in character and comprehensive in content. Political relations with each of the countries have been problem-free. Trade and economic cooperation however, has not been commensurate with its true potential. There have been significant exchanges with all the countries in the field of science and technology and cultural exchanges have afforded close people-to-people contacts. Despite the move by a majority of the countries of the region to seek greater integration into Euro-Atlantic structures, they have continued to place emphasis on traditional ties with India.

Our ties with the countries of East and Central Europe were further strengthened through exchange of visits. Besides high level visits, interaction at Ministerial, Parliamentary and official levels continued on a regular basis with these countries. The high point of these exchanges was the State Visit to India by the President of the Russian Federation, Mr Vladimir Putin, in October 2000.

Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held in many of the countries of East and Central Europe during the year 2000. Presidential elections took place in the Russian Federation on 26 March 2000. Mr Vladimir Putin was elected in the first round of

voting, securing 52.52% of the votes. Mr Putin formally assumed office as the President of the Russian Federation on 7 May 2000. Following this, a new Government, headed by Mr Mikhail Kasyanov as Prime Minister, assumed office on 17 May 2000. Presidential elections were held in Georgia on 9 April 2000 with incumbent President Mr Eduard Shevardnadze emerging victorious in the first round of elections with 79.82% of the votes. In the Hungarian Presidential elections, Mr Ferenc Madl was elected President of the Republic of Hungary in the third round of voting in the Hungarian Parliament on .xReJunRCthe(xUR)PC2000xDSŁoÇPCPresidentialUSŁoÇlections xUF

By the year end, accession negotiations between the European Union and Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia had progressed considerably.

The State Visit to India by the President of the **Russian Federation** Mr Vladimir Putin from 2 – 5 October 2000 was a significant landmark in Indo-Russian bilateral relations, giving it a major impetus. The Russian President paid homage to the Father of the Nation at Rajghat on 3 October 2000. He had meetings with the President of India and the Prime Minister. The Vice President of India, External Affairs Minister and the Leader of the Opposition called on the Russian President. Mr Putin addressed the Members of the two Houses of Parliament. The Jawaharlal Nehru University conferred an Honorary Doctorate of Laws on him. 17 bilateral Agreements/documents were signed during the visit in the fields of science and technology, culture, postal communications, co-operation between regions, legal assistance in civil and commercial matters, agriculture, defence, processing and trade of diamonds, cooperation between Ministries of Justice, cooperation in the banking sector, atomic energy and exploration and development of oil and gas fields. President Putin visited Agra and Mumbai. At Mumbai, he interacted with CEO's of leading industrial and business houses and also visited BARC. A Joint Statement was issued at the end of the visit.

A Declaration on Strategic Partnership between India and the Russian Federation was signed during President Putin's visit. This document identifies the broad contours of bilateral relations between India and the Russian Federation in the 21st century, elevating it to a qualitatively new level.

During President Putin's visit, the Russian side appreciated the measures taken by the Government of India in combating terrorism and in ushering in normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir. President Putin shared India's concern on violence in Jammu and Kashmir. He called for the issue to be resolved on a bilateral basis, through compromise and unconditional respect for the Line of Control. He also called for foreign interference to cease. President Putin extended Russia's

unqualified support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Russia welcomed India's voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing and appreciated the Indian Government's efforts to develop a broad national consensus on the issue of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Support was also extended to India's draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

The Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Mr Sergei Ivanov, paid an official visit to India from 26 – 28 April 2000. Mr Ivanov called on the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and Raksha Mantri. He held wide-ranging discussions on bilateral matters, and on regional and international issues of mutual interest with the Principal Secretary to Prime Minister and National Security Adviser. A Protocol on Cooperation between the National Security Council of India and the Security Council of the Russian Federation was signed during the visit.

The Chief Justice of India paid an official visit to the Russian Federation from 21–26 May 2000.

External Affairs Minister paid an official visit to the Russian Federation from 22- 24 June 2000. EAM held detailed discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr Igor Ivanov, on bilateral matters and on regional and international issues of mutual interest. EAM also met the President of the Russian Federation, Mr Vladimir Putin; the Secretary of the Security Council, Mr Sergei Ivanov; and the Deputy Prime Minister and Co-Chairman of the Indo-Russian Inter Governmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC), Dr Viktor Khristenko. EAM also visited St. Petersburg where he met the Governor of St Petersburg, Mr Vladimir Yakovlev. He also addressed the Faculty of International Relations, University of St Petersburg on "The Dimensions of India's Foreign Policy in the New Millennium".

Raksha Mantri visited the Russian Federation from 26 – 30 June 2000. RM had wide-ranging discussions on Indo-Russian defence matters and military-technical cooperation with the Minister of

Defence of the Russian Federation, Marshal Igor Sergeyev. RM also met the President of the Russian Federation, Mr Vladimir Putin; the Secretary of the Security Council, Mr Sergei Ivanov; and Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Ilya Klebanov.

The Minister for Human Resources Development, Science and Technology and Ocean Development paid an official visit to the Russian Federation from 2 – 8 July 2000. He had meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Dr Viktor Khristenko; the Minister for Science and Technology, Mr Alexander Dondukov; and the Minister for Education and Human Resources Development, Mr Vladimir Filippov. On 3 July 2000, HRM inaugurated the Russian-Indian Centre for Advanced Computing Research at the Institute for Computer Aided Design (ICAD) of the Russian Academy of Sciences, with the installation of the PARAM 10000 Super Computer. A Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Science and Technology between the Department of Science and Technology and the Khurchatov Centre for Nuclear Physics was also signed.

The Chief of Naval Staff paid an official visit to the Russian Federation from 17 – 21 July 2000.

The Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation and Co-Chairman of the IRIGC, Mr Ilya Klebanov, paid an official visit to India from 19 – 22 September 2000. He had discussions on Indo-Russian defence cooperation with Raksha Mantri. As Co-Chairman of the IRIGC, he met the Finance Minister. Mr Klebanov also had separate meetings with the Minister for Human Resources Development, Science and Technology and Ocean Development; Minister for Civil Aviation; and the Minister for Information Technology.

The Minister for Surface Transport visited the Russian Federation to participate in the Euro-Asian Transport Conference at St Petersburg on 12 & 13 September 2000. During his visit, an Inter-Governmental Agreement on the establishment of the International “North-South” Corridor was signed between India, Iran and the

Russian Federation. This Agreement is expected to facilitate easier movement of goods along the corridor connecting India through the sea route to Iran and then via the Caspian Sea to the Russian Federation and beyond. This initiative is also likely to reduce transit time and cost of transportation of goods from India to the Russian Federation and European countries.

EAM met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr Igor Ivanov, in New York on 19 September 2000 in the margins of the UNGA Session.

The Chief of Air Staff paid a goodwill visit to the Russian Federation from 19 – 23 September 2000.

The 1st Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Afghanistan between India and the Russian Federation took place in New Delhi on 20 & 21 November 2000. The Foreign Secretary and the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr Vyacheslav Trubnikov, led the Indian and the Russian delegations respectively at these talks. A Joint Statement was issued at the conclusion of the meeting.

The centenary of the opening of the Russian Consulate in Mumbai was commemorated on 22 November 2000. The First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr Vyacheslav Trubnikov, took part in the commemoration event. Messages of felicitations were exchanged between the Prime Minister and the President of the Russian Federation as well as between the External Affairs Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

An Agreement between the RIA Novosti and the Press Information Bureau of India was signed on 3 November 2000 during the visit of the Principal Information Officer to the Russian Federation from 2-8 November 2000.

A delegation from the Committee for International Relations of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly (Upper House of Parliament) of the Russian Federation, led by the Deputy Chairman of the Committee Mr Sholban Kara-ool visited India from 17-20

December 2000. The delegation called on the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and the Chairman of the Standing Committee on External Affairs of the Parliament of India.

Taking into consideration the strength of India's relations with the Russian Federation and the humanitarian dimensions of the problem, after careful consideration and in pursuance of the powers conferred under Article 72 of the Constitution, the President remitted on 21 July 2000 the unexpired sentence of imprisonment of the five Russian pilots involved in the Purulia Arms Drop Case. During his visit to India in October 2000, President Putin personally thanked the President of India for the release of the pilots. He had earlier called Prime Minister over the hotline on 31 July 2000 and thanked him for the humane gesture leading to the release of the five Russian pilots. During his visit to India, President Putin also personally thanked EAM on the release of the pilots, while, earlier, on 22 July 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov spoke to EAM from Okinawa and similarly thanked him.

President Putin called Prime Minister over the hotline on 27 November 2000, and during the conversation welcomed Prime Minister's peace process offer of a ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir. This was the 4th conversation over the hotline between Prime Minister and President Putin in the year 2000.

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement on 15 August 2000 condemning the terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also issued statements on 22 November 2000 and 21 December 2000 welcoming Prime Minister's peace process offer in Jammu and Kashmir and on its extension respectively.

Under agenda item 59 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the UNSC and related matters in the plenary session of the 55th UNGA on 17 November 2000, the Russian delegate said "the Russian Federation considers India a strong and worthy candidate for a permanent membership in the UNSC,

should it be decided to enlarge the Council in both categories". India was the only country thus mentioned.

The Minister of State for Coal, Shri N. T. Shanmugham visited the Russian Federation from December 23-26, 2000. He held intensive discussions with the Russian Minister of Fuel and Energy and the Federal Coal authorities. The discussions centred on cooperation in the coal sector between India and the Russian Federation.

The Finance Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha visited the Russian Federation on 15 January 2001 in connection with the 7th Session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC). During the visit, he met the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr Mikhail Kasyanov. Finance Minister co-Chaired the 7th Session of the IRIGC with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr. Ilya Klebanov. The IRIGC Session discussed ways and means of expansion and diversification of Indo-Russian trade and economic cooperation. A Protocol of the 7th Session of the IRIGC was signed at its conclusion.

The Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, Mr. Alexander Veshnyakov, paid an official visit to India from 17-21 January 2001 in connection with the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Election Commission of India.

The Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Ram Naik, is expected to visit the Russian Federation on February 10-11, 2001. During the visit, the Agreement relating to the ONGC-VL's investment in the Sakhalin-I project is expected to be signed between ONGC-VL and M/s Rosneft.

The Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr. Ilya Klebanov is expected to visit India on February 14-15, 2001.

Member, Planning Commission, Prof Dina Nath Tewari, visited Armenia from 26 May – 2 June 2000 at the invitation of the Armenian Minister of Agriculture.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of **Armenia**, Mr Vartan Oskanian, was on an official visit to India on 4 & 5 December

2000. During his visit, the Armenian Minister was received by Prime Minister. He held detailed discussions on bilateral matters and on regional and international issues of mutual concern with EAM. The Armenian Minister also met the Minister for Information Technology and the Minister for Health and interacted with the members of the CII. The Armenian Minister expressed his country's full support for India's position on Jammu and Kashmir. He also extended Armenia's unqualified support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Armenia supported India's draft on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Secretary (West) visited Minsk for the second round of Indo-Belarus Foreign Office Consultations on 4 & 5 April 2000. He held detailed discussions with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Valery Sadokho on bilateral issues, and regional and international subjects of mutual concern. Secretary (West) called on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, Mr Ural Latypov.

The Secretary of the Security Council of the Republic of **Belarus** Mr Viktor Sheiman visited India on 28 & 29 April 2000. He met Principal Secretary to Prime Minister and National Security Adviser and called on Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India.

During Secretary, Department of Biotechnology's visit to Minsk from 14 – 17 June 2000, a Protocol on Cooperation in Biotechnology between the Department of Biotechnology and the Belarus National Academy of Sciences was signed.

At the invitation of the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Ms. Uma Bharti, the Chairman of the State Committee (Ministry) of Youth Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, Mr Aleksandr Pozdnyak, led a three-member delegation to India from 19-21 January 2001. He held detailed discussions with the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports. During the visit, a Protocol on Cooperation in Matters of Youth Affairs and Sports was signed between India and Belarus.

The 2nd Session of the Indo-Belarus Joint Commission is expected to be held in New Delhi from 20 - 22 February 2001. It will be co-

Chaired by the Minister of Commerce and Industry from the Indian side and by the Minister of Industry of Belarus, Mr. Anatoly Kharlap.

The Vice President of India paid an official visit to **Bulgaria** from 8 – 11 June 2000. The Vice President had meetings with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr Petar Stoyanov; the Chairman of the National Assembly of Bulgaria, Mr Yordan Sokolov; the Prime Minister of Bulgaria, Mr Ivan Kostov; and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy of Bulgaria, Mr Petar Zhotov. Bilateral, regional and international issues were discussed during these meetings. During the visit, Bulgaria publicly expressed support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Bulgaria also supported India's draft on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Raksha Utpadan Rajya Mantri paid an official visit to Bulgaria from 20 – 22 July 2000 at the invitation of the Bulgarian Defence Minister. He had detailed discussions with the Bulgarian Defence Minister on various issues relating to Indo-Bulgarian defence cooperation. RURM called on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy of Bulgaria, Dr Petar Zhotov and visited some defence related industries.

The Defence Minister of Bulgaria, Mr Boyko Noev paid an official visit to India on 30 & 31 October 2000. He held detailed discussions with Raksha Mantri on Indo-Bulgarian defence cooperation. Mr Noev called on the President of India and handed over a letter from Bulgarian President, Mr Petar Stoyanov. He also called on the External Affairs Minister. A Joint Statement was issued at the end of the visit in which Bulgaria expressed support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

The Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Bulgaria, Mr Ventislav Varbanov visited India from 6 – 12 November 2000 to Co-Chair the 13th session of the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Commission with Minister of Agriculture. During his visit, Mr Varbanov called on the Vice President of India and met the Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, the Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and the Minister of State for Commerce and

Industries. An Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology between India and Bulgaria was signed during the visit.

Dr Petar Jotev, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy of the Republic of Bulgaria, is expected to pay an official visit to India in mid-March 2001.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of **Croatia**, Mr

invitation of the Minister of Commerce and Industry. Mr Steinhoff held detailed discussions with the Minister of Commerce and Industry and also met Raksha Mantri, the Minister of Mines and Minerals, Raksha Utpadan Rajya Mantri and the Minister of State of Power. He visited Gujarat where he called on the Chief Minister of the State.

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India paid an official visit to Poland from 10 – 13 May 2000. An MOU on Cooperation aimed at Improvement of Work Methodologies and Exchange of Information in the field of Audit of Public Finances was signed between the Office of the CAG and its Polish counterpart organisation, the Supreme Chamber of Control of the Republic of Poland.

External Affairs Minister visited Warsaw from 25-27 June 2000 to participate in the Ministerial Conference “Towards a Community of Democracies”. India was one of the co-Convenors of the Conference alongwith Poland, Chile, the Czech Republic, South Korea, Mali and the USA. During the visit, EAM interacted with the President of the Republic of Poland, Mr Aleksander Kwasniewski; Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, Mr Jerzy Buzek; the Speakers of the two Houses of the Parliament and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Mr Bronislaw Geremek. While in Warsaw, EAM also met with the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the UN Secretary General Mr Kofi Annan.

Minister of Environment and Forests visited Poland from 28 – 30 June 2000 in connection with the informal high level consultations for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Secretary, Department of Space and Chairman Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) visited Poland from 18 – 20 July 2000 to participate in the 33rd meeting of the Committee of Space Research (COSPAR 2000) in Warsaw.

The Minister of National Defence of **Romania**, Mr Sorin Frunzaverde, paid an official visit to India from 9 –15 May 2000. He had detailed discussions on Indo-Romanian defence cooperation with Raksha Mantri. He also visited Mumbai, Goa and Agra.

Raksha Utpadan Rajya Mantri paid an official visit to Romania from 17 – 19 July 2000 at the invitation of the Romanian Defence Minister. Besides having detailed discussions on defence cooperation with the Romanian Defence Minister, RURM called on Deputy Prime Minister of Romania, Mr Mircea Ciumara and visited some defence related industries.

The Vice President of India paid an official visit to the **Slovak Republic** from 13 – 16 June 2000. The Vice President had meetings with the President of the Slovak Republic, Mr Rudolf Schuster; the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, Mr Mikulas Dzurinda; and the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Mr Josef Migas. During the meetings, the Slovak leadership expressed support for India’s candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

The 2nd round of Indo-Ukrainian Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi on 17 April 2000. The Indian and Ukrainian delegations were led by Secretary (West) and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of **Ukraine**, Mr O I Maidannyk. During the consultations, bilateral issues, regional and international matters of mutual interest were covered in details. Mr Maidannyk called on the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Ajit Kumar Panja.

Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology, paid an official visit to Ukraine from 22 – 27 May 2000 for the meeting of the Indo-Ukrainian Joint Science and Technology Committee. A Programme on Cooperation in Science and Technology between India and Ukraine for the period 2000-2003 was signed during the visit.

A Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of **Yugoslavia** Ms Milena Vlahovic visited India from 16-19 August 2000. She held talks with Additional Secretary (UN) and called on Foreign Secretary. She handed over a letter addressed to EAM by the Yugoslav Foreign Minister.

The Government of India issued a statement on 6 October 2000 following the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The statement pointed out that “it is the Government’s view that with a successful conclusion of the electoral

process, peace and stability in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia must now return. It is also hoped that the hardship faced by its people over the past years now will end immediately. India stands for democratic order and peaceful succession in democracy. Recalling India's traditional and historical ties with Yugoslavia, we wish the new leadership and the people of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia well, and expect that they will take their rightful place in the community of nations. The Government on this occasion offers to President-elect Vojislav Kostunica its warm congratulations and reaffirms its friendship for the people of Yugoslavia".

Messages of condolences/sympathies were received from the leadership of Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Relief assistance was received from Armenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The year 2000 could well be regarded as the year of achievements in our relations with Western Europe. Several developments reinforced the fact that the traditionally close and friendly ties with our major partners in Europe were on the upswing. While there was an effort on our part, through a process of dialogue and consultations to reinvigorate our relationship, both politically and economically, there was at the same time a discernible desire, both at the level of the European Union and the individual countries to engage India - a stable pluralistic democracy and a potential economic power in the 21st Century.

This convergence in perceptions was highlighted in the first-ever India-EU Summit held in Lisbon on 28 June under the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union. The Prime Minister led the Indian delegation along with four of his Cabinet colleagues. The Summit marks beginning of a process of building a "strategic partnership" between India and the EU. The two sides agreed on an "Agenda for

Action" to intensify relations in the political, economic and commercial fields.

With respect to the Commonwealth, Commonwealth Secretary General's visit to India and EAM's participation in the Commonwealth High Level Group Meeting in New York signified the importance that we continue to attach to the Commonwealth.

At the bilateral level the visits of our President to France, Prime Minister to Italy and Portugal and EAM's visits to the UK, Switzerland & Portugal during the year played a very significant role in the consolidation of our ties with these countries. Similarly incoming Ministerial visits notably those of UK's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Robin Cook and Mr. Peter Hain, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the French Foreign Minister, two visits of the German Foreign Minister, the visit of the Italian Foreign Minister, the Norwegian State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and the first-ever visit at the Head of State/Head of Government level of the President of Iceland gave a new thrust to our relations. Official level dialogue, a greater effort to reach out to a larger audience including academicians, journalists etc., led to a better appreciation and understanding of our view points while Parliamentary exchanges with France, Germany, UK and EU were useful in sensitising them of our priorities and concerns.

The greater closeness in our relationship achieved through high level visits was manifested in the support expressed by the EU for India's proposal for a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. More and more countries came around to accepting India's credentials for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. France stated that India is naturally destined to become a member of the UNSC and it supports India's candidature. UK said that India is a natural contender for permanent membership. Portugal said that it has sympathy for India's candidature and that it will receive their support. Iceland also expressed support for India's candidature and said that it would work towards obtaining the endorsement of the Nordic Council.

Europe has continued to move forward on the path of expansion

and further integration. Negotiations have been conducted with 13 officially accepted candidates on the political and economic criteria for membership. A debate has taken place, at the same time, on whether these countries should be admitted in a phased manner by 2003 or whether they should all join together between 2008 and 2010. The expansion process, once completed, will extend the borders of the EU to Belarus, the Black Sea and Iraq. It will lead to an increase of 50% in the population but of only 6.7% in the GDP. However, earlier rounds of EU expansion had seen an increase in our trade with the countries which had joined.

There is a realisation in the EU that expansion makes it necessary for it to re-model its structures and decision making processes in order to continue to function effectively. The Inter-Governmental Conference, which was launched in early 2000 to address this issue, has been tasked to finish its task by December 2000. An important issue to be considered is whether the EC should have at least one Commissioner from each country or whether there should be a ceiling on the total number of Commissioners with equal terms for all member states. The other important issue to be resolved is if the present procedure of decision making should be replaced by one which gives greater importance to weighted voting. These ongoing discussions on reform of EU structures have also provoked a debate on larger macro-level issues. Various proposals, ranging between a federal Europe and one with a “pioneer” or “core” group of states have been mooted.

The EU has also progressed towards its goal of evolving a Common Foreign and Security Policy. The most important decision in this regard is the creation of a Rapid Reaction Force, by 2003, of upto 50,000-60,000 persons capable of humanitarian rescue tasks, peace making and tasks of combat forces in crises management, including peace making. This would provide the EU with an autonomous capacity to take decisions and, when NATO as a whole is not engaged, to launch and conduct EU led military operations in response to international crises.

The highlight of the relationship with the **European Union** was

the first ever India-EU Summit in Lisbon on 28 June, under the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union. Prime Minister led the Indian delegation, which also included the Ministers of External Affairs, Finance, Commerce and Industry, and Information Technology. The EU delegation was led by the Prime Minister of Portugal and included the EC President and the Portuguese Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Science and Technology, the Deputy Minister of Economy, European Council Secretary General and the EC Commissioners for External Relations, Trade and Research.

The Lisbon Joint Declaration, adopted at the conclusion of the Summit, provides a blueprint for upgrading our relationship with the EU. The Declaration recognises our commonality of views on many issues, both political and economic, including the need to build a strategic partnership in the new century. An “Agenda for Action” encompassing joint initiatives in the political, commercial and economic fields is part of the Declaration. The Declaration reflects the joint concern on the threat posed by terrorism to regional and international peace and security.

On the economic side, the Declaration expresses a determination to work jointly to promote further economic cooperation. It also expresses a shared commitment to progressively liberalise trade, oppose protectionist tendencies and work for an open, equitable and non-discriminatory rule-based multilateral trading system.

Institutional interaction between India and the EU has also been substantial. The fourth and fifth Senior Officials’ Meetings were held in May and November 2000 respectively. The third round of the India-EC Policy Planners’ Dialogue was held in New Delhi on November 27-28, 2000. The India-EU Sub-Commissions on Trade, Economic Co-operation and Development Co-operation met in Brussels in November 16-17, 2000. The joint working groups on agriculture and marine products, textiles, telecommunications, environment and consular issues set up on the recommendation of the 10th India-EU Joint Commission held their inaugural meetings in November 2000. The first meeting of the India-EU Joint Working Group on Consular Issues was held in New Delhi on November 29, 2000.

The South Asia Delegation of the European Parliament, led by Mr. Gerard Collins, Chairman of the Delegation, visited India on April 17-20, 2000. The delegation interacted with the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Standing Committees on External Affairs, Commerce, Human Resource Development, Science & Technology and Environment & Forests.

Economic co-operation between India and the EU has also progressed during this period. A major step towards easing the protectionist tendencies in the EC was its decision to release the full exceptional flexibility of 8000 tonnes in textiles. Discussions are continuing on the differences between the two sides in other product categories such as rice, steel etc. A project for technical cooperation in the civil aviation sector was signed during the Lisbon Summit.

The 2nd Meeting of the India-EU JWG on Consular Issues will be held in New Delhi on 24 January 2001. This meeting will discuss in greater detail the issues taken up at the inaugural meeting.

EC External Relations Commissioner, Chris Patten will be paying an official visit to India on January 25-29, 2001. During his visit, the India-EU Round Table, a forum of eminent personalities drawn from the fields of business & industry, academia and non-governmental organisations will be inaugurated. The Round Table is co-chaired by Shri N.N. Vohra, Director, India International Centre and Mr. Goke Frerichs, President of the European Economic & Social Committee. The India-EU Joint Commission will be held in New Delhi on February 6-7, 2001.

It has been decided to set up an India-EU Joint Working Group on Terrorism. This Working Group is intended to facilitate extensive interaction at expert level on the linked issues of international terrorism, drug trafficking and trade in arms. The first meeting of this Group will be held in the first half of 2001, during the Swedish Presidency of the EU.

The EU made considerable progress towards reform and enlargement during the EU Nice Summit which was held on December 8-11, 2000. The significant decisions at the Summit related

to qualified majority voting procedures and representation in the European Parliament. These have paved the way for the admission of new members from the end of 2002. It was also agreed that an inter-government conference would be held in 2004 to discuss the legal aspects of EU reforms. Furthermore, the Summit endorsed the decision on the creation of a Rapid Reaction Force, a major step towards giving the EU autonomous decision-making capacity in peace-keeping and peace-making. A Franco-German Summit will be held in Strasbourg on 31 January 2001 to discuss further co-operation after the EU Nice Summit. Sweden, which took over the EU Presidency on 1 January 2001, has indicated that Enlargement, Employment and Environment will be its top priorities during its Presidency.

India's commitment to the Commonwealth was reiterated with our active participation in the deliberations of the Commonwealth High Level Group, the Senior Officials Meeting and in hosting the Conference of Commonwealth's Ministers' Responsible for Women's Affairs.

External Affairs Minister led the Indian delegation to the Summit meeting of the Commonwealth High Level Group (HLG) on 5 September 2000 in New York. The HLG reviewed the role of the Commonwealth in the changing economic and global scenario and reiterated the Commonwealth's commitment to upholding the principles enshrined in the Harare Declaration and the Millbrook Action Programme. It agreed that the Commonwealth's core areas of competence include democracy, human dignity, opposition to racial prejudice and discrimination, good governance and sustainable development.

India hosted the 6th Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers responsible for Women and Youth Affairs (WAMM) from 17-19 April 2000, in New Delhi which considered the theme "Advancing Commonwealth Agenda into the New Millennium" (2000-2005). The Minister for Human Resource Development was the host for the meeting. Prime Minister inaugurated the meeting on 17 April, in which a total of 46 delegations, including 28 at ministerial level,

participated. Mr. Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary General (CSG) visited India (16-18 April) on this occasion. This was his first visit to a Commonwealth member-country, on assuming charge as CSG.

Foreign Secretary led the Indian delegation to the first meeting of Senior Officials of Members of Commonwealth High Level Group from 25-26 July in Pretoria. He also presented a paper on the "Political Role of Commonwealth". The SOM was characterised by candour and a constructive approach to both the Commonwealth's immediate problems as also for determining the vision for the organization in the years ahead. There was a clear consensus that the Commonwealth should continue to focus on its primary strengths, which lay in the area of democracy, good governance, human rights and sustainable economic development.

Secretary (ER) led the Indian delegation to the 15th Commonwealth Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) (18-20 October, Apia). The SOM provided a very useful opportunity for a renewed Commonwealth focus on recent developments in Fiji and Pakistan, as also the preparations for the next Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Brisbane, Australia in October 2001. The Commonwealth Secretary General was urged by the SOM to proceed with the appointment of a Special Envoy to Fiji.

The State Visit of the President to **France** from 17-21 April 2000 was the highlight of the bilateral relationship during the year. President Chirac emphasised the importance which they attach to the "Strategic Partnership" between the two countries and publicly voiced support for India's candidature for UNSC permanent membership. Letters confirming the completion of formalities for the entry-into-force of the Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement were exchanged during the visit.

Commerce & Industry Minister led a high-level delegation to France for the 10th session of the Indo-French Joint Committee on Economic Co-operation as well as to participate in 'Destination India', an investment promotion event organised with the help of FICCI.

The most important decision taken during this session was to set up Joint Working Groups focussing on sectors with potential for strategic economic interaction and for the identification of specific projects for co-operation.

The first meeting of the Indo-French Joint Working Group on Information Technology was held in Paris on September 28-29, 2000. Minister of Information Technology led an official and business delegation to France for this meeting. An MoU on Co-operation in Information Technology was signed on this occasion.

During Home Minister's visit to France from 19-20 June, both sides discussed the possibility of establishing a Joint Working Group on Terrorism. The French side have indicated their openness to the proposal. The French Minister for the Interior has been invited to visit India.

French Defence Minister Alain Richard paid a visit to India from 18-19 May 2000. He was accompanied by Ambassador J.B. Ouvrieu, co-Chairman of the Indo-French Joint High Committee on Defence Co-operation and Mme Kocher, Adviser to the French Prime Minister. This carried forward the discussions which had been held on bilateral defence cooperation during the visit of French Chief of Defence Staff General Jean-Pierre Kelche on April 23-26, 2000.

Parliamentary exchanges also continued with the visit to France from 26-30 March by the Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha, who led a multi-party Parliamentary delegation drawn from both Houses.

Institutional interaction continued during this period. Two rounds of talks under the bilateral strategic dialogue have been held. This Dialogue was instituted following a decision taken during Prime Minister's visit to Paris in September 1998. The Indo-French Joint High Committee on Defence Co-operation, set up to examine in detail the possibilities of defence co-operation, held its third meeting in July 2000 in Paris. The Indo-French Forum, a high-level non-governmental group of eminent personalities set up to advise on ways of diversifying and enriching the bilateral relationship, met in Paris on October 30-31, 2000.

Bilateral trade between India and France has shown a significant increase. Visits of a number of business delegations have been exchanged. MOUs have been signed for cooperation in the road sector as also in Information Technology.

The sixth round of the Indo-French strategic dialogue will be held in Paris on January 31 & February 1, 2001 at the level of principal to p.m.

The sixth meeting of the Indo-French Forum will be held in New Delhi on February 19 & 20, 2001.

The relationship between India and the **UK** has been consolidated into an equal partnership characterised by openness and warmth. The UK has stated that they see India as a natural contender for permanent membership of the Security Council. A number of new joint initiatives have been undertaken. These include the establishment of the India-UK Round Table, the setting up of the “Liberal Democratic Friends of India” and the creation of a Professorship of Indian History and Culture at the University of Oxford.

The economic content of our relationship has been sharpened with concerted efforts from both sides to increase the volume of trade to £5 billion in the next couple of years. As a result of this renewed commitment, bilateral trade has registered a 33% during January-July 2000, as compared to the same period last year.

The visit to India by The Rt Hon. Robin Cook, UK's Foreign Secretary, from 16-18 April 2000 allowed both sides to reiterate the importance that they attach to the relationship. Foreign Secretary Cook expressed support for President Clinton's statement that, in the modern world boundaries cannot be redrawn in blood. Mr. Cook and the Minister of External Affairs jointly inaugurated the proceedings of the India-UK Round Table on 18 April in New Delhi.

EAM visited the UK from 24-27 May 2000 and from 15-16 November 2000 at the invitation of his British counterpart. EAM's discussions with the British leadership allowed for an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations, developments in Europe and Asia, as also multilateral issues such as international terrorism, UN peacekeeping operations etc.

Visits to the UK by Principal Secretary to Prime Minister (26 July) Minister of Commerce & Industry (18-21 May), Minister of Urban Employment, Poverty Alleviation, Youth Affairs & Sports (27-30 May), Minister of Chemicals & Fertilizers (29-30 May), Minister for Environment and Forests (1-4 October), Minister of State for External Affairs (21-23 May and 5 September) and to India by Ms. Patricia Hewitt, Minister for Small business and E-commerce (30 October – 4 November), Mr. Peter Hain, MOS for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (18-21 November) provided a good opportunity to review and consolidate ongoing bilateral cooperation in various areas.

Keeping pace with the Ministerial dialogue, Foreign Secretary and Sir John Kerr, British Permanent Under Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs held Foreign Office Consultations (17 October, New Delhi). The discussions enabled both sides to review the status of the bilateral relationship and to exchange perceptions on regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

Nearly 80 leading members of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) joined the Liberal Democratic Friends of India (LDFI) Group, launched on 19 September in the UK to promote stronger India-U.K relations. Parliamentary exchanges continued with the visit to India by a six member Labour Friends of India (LFIN) delegation, led by Mr. Gareth Thomas (30 September – 8 October). This was the second visit to India by LFIN MPs since the Group was launched in September 1999.

Complementing governmental efforts, the India-UK Round Table, a non-governmental forum, was constituted to review India-UK relations and to identify ways of enriching it. Shri K.C. Pant and Lord Swraj Paul, have co-chaired two meetings of the Round Table so far. At its first meeting (18-19 April, in New Delhi) the Round Table submitted fresh ideas and recommendations to enrich interaction in areas such as science and technology, education, media, etc. During the second meeting (8-10 October, U.K), the Round Table held focussed discussions with special attention to cooperation in the area of information technology.

The exchange of visits of our Home Minister to the UK (20-24 June) and of Mr. Jack Straw, Home Secretary to India (4-9 September) enabled a discussion on consular issues and on bilateral cooperation in combating terrorism. In pursuance of decisions taken during these visits, India and the UK would be setting up a Joint Working Group (JWG) to combat terrorism and drug trafficking. The JWG's first meeting will be held in New Delhi in January 2001.

During his visit to the U.K, Raksha Mantri (14-17 June) held discussions with Mr. Hoon and Mr. Stephen Byers, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on all aspects of our bilateral defence cooperation. He also invited Mr. Hoon to visit India to continue these discussions. During the fifth meeting of the India-UK Defence Consultative Group (28 July – 1 August, London) both sides reviewed the institutional level interaction, supply of defence equipment, etc. as also the ways of strengthening it.

The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon, British Secretary of State for Defence visited India from 11-13 December 2000, as a follow up to Raksha Mantri's visit to the U.K in June 2000. During Mr. Hoon's discussions with Raksha Mantri, EAM and other Ministers, both sides reviewed bilateral-defence cooperation and UN Peacekeeping Operations, especially in Sierra Leone.

The first meeting of the India-U.K Joint Working Group (JWG) on Terrorism and Drug Trafficking will be held in New Delhi on 22 January 2001, The JWG has been set up in pursuance of a decision taken by the Home Ministers of the two countries, to cooperate closely against the shared concerns of international terrorism and drug trafficking. Officials from the Ministries of External Affairs and Home Affairs and from the British Foreign Office will participate in these discussions. Mr. William Ehrman, Director, International Security, British Foreign Office and Joint Secretary (D&ISA), from MEA will lead the second round of India-U.K official level discussions on issues related to non-proliferation and disarmament in New Delhi on 23 January 2001.

The Rt. Hon. Stephen Byers MP, British Secretary of State for

Trade & Industry visited India from 6-12 January 2001 accompanied by a business delegation. Byers's second visit to India within a span of twelve months testifies the importance attached by the UK to strengthening its relationship with India, especially in the area of trade and commerce. He held extensive discussions with the Commerce & Industry Minister and the Union Ministers of Finance, Power, Communication, Disinvestment. He also inaugurated the British Trade Office in Hyderabad.

Ms. Clare Short, U.K.'s Secretary of State for International Development is visiting India from 15-19 January 2001, to review British Development Assistance Programmes in India.

Mr. Baroness Blackstone, Minister of State, Department for Education & Employment is visiting India on January 2-7, 2001. Baroness Symons, British Secretary of State for Defence Procurement will visit India from 6-8 February 2001, on an invitation from the Ministry of Defence.

Relations between India and **Germany** have been consolidated and strengthened over the year. Key developments in the relationship during this period were the creation of a new mechanism for institutionalised interaction, i.e., the Indo-German Strategic Dialogue, the resumption of development co-operation between the two countries and the inauguration of the Festival of Germany in India.

Mr. Joschka Fischer, Deputy Chancellor and Foreign Minister of Germany visited India twice in the course of the year, from 17-18 May 2000 and from September 29 - 1 October 2000. He held wide-ranging discussions with the Indian leadership on both these occasions. The highlight of Foreign Minister Fischer's first visit was the adoption of the "Agenda for Indo-German Partnership in the 21st Century" – A Vision Statement which outlines steps to upgrade the relationship through enhanced political exchanges, a security dialogue, the augmentation of bilateral trade and investment, enhanced cultural exchanges and bilateral co-operation to combat international terrorism, drug trafficking and organised crime. The highlight of the second visit was the inauguration of the Festival of Germany in India on September 30, 2000.

Prime Minister called on H.H. Pope John Paul-II at the Vatican on 26 June 2000. Wide ranging discussions were held during this meeting.

Foreign Office Consultations with Italy took place on 14 January in New Delhi. These Consultations provided an opportunity to take stock of bilateral relations and consider new initiatives for upgrading and augmenting mutually beneficial linkages. The last round of such Consultations were held in Rome in March 1999.

EAM visited **Switzerland** on 4 September 2000. This was the first visit by an Indian Foreign Minister to Switzerland since 1981. EAM exchanged views with Mr. Joseph Deiss, Foreign Minister and Mr. Pascal Couchepin, Economy Minister, and discussed matters of bilateral interest, regional and multilateral developments of common interest and possibilities of strengthening bilateral trade and commerce.

Bilateral commercial cooperation was reviewed during the 8th Indo-Swiss Joint Commission meeting on 7 November in Berne. Mr. Pascal Couchepin, Switzerland's Federal Councillor of Economy visited India from 15-21 February with a large business delegation. A Protocol to modify the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement was signed and Instruments of Ratification of the Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement were exchanged during this visit. The first Foreign Office Consultations between the two countries were held in Berne on 14 & 15 February 2000.

Ms. Mary Harney, Deputy Prime Minister of **Ireland** visited India from 5-15 April 2000 leading a business delegation with a focus on the IT sector. The highlights of the visit were, the signing of an agreement to establish a Joint Working Group on Information Technology on 8 April 2000 and an MoU between the Irish Software Association (ISA) and the National Association of Software Service Companies (NASSCOM) on 6 April 2000.

India and Ireland signed a Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) on 4 November, in New Delhi. Foreign Office Consultations were held in Dublin on 16&17 February 2000.

Ms. Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, me Belgian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs visited India on 8-12 January 2001 in connection with the 10th India-BLEU Joint Commission meeting. She held discussions with Foreign Secretary and Secretary [West] on various bilateral, EU-related and regional issues during this visit. The Instruments of Ratification of the Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement between India and **Belgium & Luxembourg** were exchanged during his visit.

Foreign Office Consultations with **Denmark** took place on 14 December 2000 at New Delhi. The Indian delegation was led by Shri R.S. Kalha, Secretary (West) and the Danish side was led by Ms. Margrethe Loj, Secretary of State in the Danish Foreign Office. Ms. Loj also met EAM, FS and Finance Secretary.

Foreign Office Consultations with the **Netherlands** were held in The Hague on 25 April 2000. The discussions allowed both sides to take stock of bilateral relationship and to exchange perceptions on issues of mutual interest.

Norway's lifting of restrictions on development aid to India (19 September) marked the normalisation of our bilateral interaction. Mr. Raymond Johansen, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Mr. Erik Solheim visited India (22 November), and called on EAM and Foreign Secretary.

The visit to India of Mr. Kimmo Sasi, Finnish Minister for Foreign Trade, from 20-26 September, was the first Ministerial visit from **Finland**, in nearly three years. The business delegation which accompanied Mr. Sasi included representatives from the sectors of information technology, communications, biotechnology, energy and environment. Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 6 September 2000.

Mr. Jukka Valtsaari, Secretary of State in the Finnish Foreign Office, during his visit to India, met Secretary (West) on 16 January 2001 and discussed various issues of mutual interest.

The 7th Session of the Indo-Austrian JEC was held in New Delhi on 18-19 December 2000 to review bilateral commercial relations.

The Session was co-chaired by Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce.

Foreign Office Consultations with **Greece** were held in Athens on 28 & 29 September 2000. The Greek side utilised the opportunity to reiterate support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

The Greek Foreign Minister, George Papandreou paid a two-day official visit to India, on 21-22 December, 2000. He called on Rashtrapatiji, Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. He held extensive talks with EAM on bilateral and international issues of common interest.

The visit of the Greek Prime Minister, Constantine Simitis, to India is scheduled to take place from 4-8 February, 2001. This is the first Prime Ministerial visit after more than a decade (last visit was in 1986, when the Greek PM was the Chief Guest for the Republic Day Celebrations). He is to be accompanied by an important business delegation.

The relationship between India and **Iceland** was further strengthened with the State visit to India by Mr. Olafur Grimsson, the President of Iceland, from 28 October–3 November 2000. This was the first ever Head of State/Government level visit from either side. Mr. Grimsson conveyed support for India's candidature for a permanent seat in the UNSC. During the visit, the Icelandic President inaugurated the Icelandic Film Festival in Delhi.

Ms. Lydie Polfer, Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister (DPM) of **Luxembourg**, paid a visit to India on 8-12 January 2001 in connection with the 10th meeting of the India-BLEU Joint Commission. She held discussions with EAM as well as with the Chief Minister of Delhi. The Air Services Agreement between India and Luxembourg was signed during this visit.

The India-**Cyprus** Joint Economic Commission met in New Delhi on 20-21 November 2000. A Bilateral Investment Promotion Agreement was also initiated on this occasion.

EAM visited **Portugal** from 31 March-1 April. An Agreement for Economic and Industrial Cooperation was signed during this visit. Under the provisions of the new agreement, a Joint Economic Commission would be set up by both countries to promote bilateral trade and commerce.

Prime Minister's bilateral visit to Portugal on 28-29 June 2000 at the conclusion of the India-EU Summit, was the first-ever to Portugal by an Indian Prime Minister. Bilateral discussions were held in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and appreciation of positions on various issues in bilateral, regional and multilateral spheres. Portugal's recognition of India's growing international profile, was most evident with Prime Minister Guterres stating at a joint press conference that Portugal has sympathy for India's candidature for UNSC permanent membership and that India would receive their support. An agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investments was signed during the visit.

The first-ever Foreign Office Consultations with **Austria** were held from 2-3 October in Vienna. The Austrian side reiterated that India is a prime candidate, along with Japan and Germany for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

Mr. Lars Danielsson, State Secretary in the Swedish Prime Minister's Office visited India from 3-6 July 2000. A Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement was signed during the visit.

Mr. Kjell Larson, Swedish Environment Minister visited India on 30 October 2000. He held discussions with our Minister for Environment and also met environmentalists at a Round Table organised in Delhi.



8

The Americas

The process of deepening ties and broadening engagement with the United States gathered new momentum and strength during the year. The two sides laid the foundation of building a closer and qualitatively new relationship, based on equality and mutual respect, and established a comprehensive architecture of wide-ranging institutional dialogue to pursue the new relationship. The vision of a new relationship has resulted from growing dialogue between the two sides in recent years. It is predicated on the recognition of the many shared values, interests and opportunities for mutually beneficial co-operation, and of the important and positive role that closer Indo-US relations can play in the global affairs in the 21st century.

For the first time in the history of their bilateral relations, the two countries exchanged State visits in the same year. The US President, H.E. William J. Clinton, visited India from 21-25 March 2000 and Prime Minister paid an official visit to USA from 13-17 September 2000. Prime Minister and President Clinton outlined on 21st March in New Delhi the vision of a new relationship in the 21st Century between India and United States. They also agreed on an architecture of wide-ranging institutional dialogue as a means to pursue the new relationship. Prime Minister's visit contributed to accelerating the momentum of building the new relationship. Besides, the State

visits, the two sides intensified their dialogue and expanded cooperation across a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues.

President Clinton visited India from 21-25 March. A US presidential visit to India took place after a gap of 22 years. The five-day tour covering five cities was one of the most extensive visits undertaken by him to any country. President Clinton visited Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

The two sides agreed to cast aside the doubts of past and chart a new purposeful direction in bilateral relations in order to build a closer and qualitatively new relationship between the two largest democracies in the world. President Clinton described the objective of his visit as “strengthening a friendship that indeed is critical to the future of the entire planet”.

The Vision Statement outlines the contours, and defines the agenda of the partnership between India and the United States in the 21st century. The Statement emphasises the commonality, the shared values and common interests between the two countries. It recognises that commitment to the principles and practice of democracy constitutes the bedrock of our bilateral relations and for our co-operative efforts internationally on issues of common concerns. It expresses the shared belief that the relationship between the two countries could be a vital factor in shaping international peace,

prosperity and democratic freedom and for ensuring strategic stability in Asia and beyond. It articulates the desire of the two countries to strengthen and broad base bilateral cooperation.

The Dialogue Architecture envisages regular ‘summits’ between the Prime Minister of India and the US President. In addition, it includes ministerial level Foreign Policy Dialogue between EAM and US Secretary of State; a ministerial level Security Dialogue; Foreign Office Consultations and Asian Security Dialogue between Foreign Secretary and US Under Secretary of State; High Level Coordinating Group on Bilateral Economic Dialogue and ministerial level Indo-US Financial and Economic Forum, Indo-US Commercial Dialogue and Indo-US Working Group on Trade; Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism; Joint Working Group on Clean Energy and Environment; and, Indo-US Science & Technology Forum. During the subsequent visit of Prime Minister to the United States in September, the two sides agreed to establish an institutional dialogue on UN Peacekeeping Operations and set up a framework of bilateral dialogue on Afghanistan.

In addition, during President Clinton’s visit, India and the US signed an agreement for setting up of a Science and Technology Forum and issued a Joint Statement on Co-operation in Energy and Environment. Several private sector joint initiatives were also launched.

Prime Minister paid an official visit to Washington from 13-17 September at the invitation of the US President. Prime Minister was given the honour of being the only foreign leader to address the Joint Sitting of the 106th Congress of the US, and being welcomed through a resolution adopted by the House of Representatives and the Senate, which also called for building stronger Indo-US relations. Prime Minister had a restricted and a delegation-level meeting with President Clinton and attended a banquet hosted in his honour by President Clinton and Mrs. Hillary Clinton. He held talks with Vice President Albert Gore, who also hosted a lunch at the State Department in honour of the Prime Minister.

Besides addressing a Joint Sitting of the US Congress, he also had separate meetings with the Speaker, the House Democratic leadership, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House International Relations Committee, the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian-Americans as also other leading Senators and Congressmen. His other engagement included meetings with the US business community and the Indian community as well as interactions with leading foreign policy think tanks and academics. Prime Minister and President Clinton together dedicated the Gandhi Memorial Statue at a public park in front of the India Embassy in Washington.

The visit helped in consolidating the new phase of friendship and cooperation with the United States and deepening understanding between the two sides. Both sides recognise that the visit helped in accelerating the upward path in bilateral relations, thus contributing to the process of building the new relationship, envisaged in the Vision Statement of March 2000. While emphasising the bilateral opportunities, both sides also placed the relationship in the larger international context, based on shared values, complementary strengths and growing convergence of interests and opportunities. President Clinton reiterated that Indo-US relations would become one of the important factors in international affairs in the near future. Prime Minister’s interactions with the two presidential candidates, the US Congress, the business community, think tanks and academicians, and the Indian-American community is expected to further strengthen the broad-based and bipartisan support that exists for stronger relations with India, and contribute to maintaining continuity and momentum in Indo-US relations with the new Administration. Both presidential candidates - Vice President Gore and Governor George Bush – in their respective conversations with PM, assured continuity in US policy towards India.

A Joint Statement was issued after the meeting between Prime Minister and President Clinton. It reaffirms the vision outlined by the Prime Minister and President Clinton in March and expresses satisfaction on the progress made in implementing the Dialogue Architecture. It also reiterates the desire of the two countries to

intensify dialogue and co-operation in political and security matters, trade and commerce, finance and investment, health, energy and environment, science and technology and counter-terrorism. In addition, the two sides agreed to add UN Peacekeeping and Afghanistan to the existing architecture of institutional dialogue.

Following the visit of President Clinton, the two sides quickly implemented all the elements of the Dialogue Architecture. Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant Singh, met the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright for the Ministerial-level Foreign Policy Dialogue on 26 June 2000 in Warsaw, where both were participating in the first ministerial meeting of the Community of Democracies, at the ARF Meet in Bangkok in July and again in New York in September. EAM and US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot met in July 2000 on the margins of the ARF Meeting in the context of the ongoing Dialogue on Security and Non-proliferation. Foreign Secretary and US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Tom Pickering met in New Delhi on 24-25 May 2000 and in Washington on 31 August – 1 September 2000 for the Foreign Office Consultations and the Asian Security Dialogue.

The Ministerial-level Foreign Policy Dialogue and Foreign Office Consultations provide the two sides the opportunity to review bilateral ties and progress in cooperation in diverse fields, and to exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual concern. The Asian Security Dialogue, a new element of institutional dialogue between the two countries, reflects the growing dialogue, and desire for cooperation, between the two countries on international security issues, especially in the Asian context. During Prime Minister's visit, the two sides agreed to establish a framework of bilateral dialogue on issues of mutual concern in Afghanistan. The two sides have assessed positively their ongoing dialogue on Security, Non-proliferation and Disarmament and have agreed to continue the dialogue to further narrow the differences in this area.

The two sides reaffirmed their belief that tensions in South Asia can only be resolved by the nations of South Asia, and by peaceful

means. Both sides stressed the unacceptability of continued violence and bloodshed as a basis for solution of the problems of the region. In this context, the two sides also agreed that there is incompatibility between continued violence in Jammu & Kashmir and dialogue.

The High Level Coordinating Group on bilateral economic dialogue held its first meeting in Delhi on 21-22 August 2000. The India-US Financial and Economic Forum was constituted during the visit of Finance Minister to Washington in April 2000 and met in Washington in September 2000 during the visit of Prime Minister. The India-US Commercial Dialogue was constituted by Minister of Commerce and Industry and US Commerce Secretary during the visit of President Clinton in March and met again in Washington in September 2000.

India and the United States have institutionalised their cooperation to combat international terrorism through a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter-terrorism. The first meeting of the JWG was held on 7-8 February 2000. The second meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism was held on 25-26 September 2000 in New Delhi. The two sides agreed on a range of measures to enhance cooperation between the two countries to combat international terrorism, including through sharing experiences, exchanging relevant information, anti-terrorism training and coordinating approaches and action. The Joint Working Group also expressed support for India's proposal for a UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, and agreed to work towards this end. The Group also welcomed the addition of narco-terrorism and drug trafficking to its mandate. As part of the efforts to intensify law enforcement cooperation in combating terrorism and international crime, the two sides are negotiating a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. There is now increased recognition by the United States of the problem of terrorism in South Asia and the nature and origin of cross-border terrorism in India.

The Joint Consultative Group on Energy and Environment held its first meeting on 26-28 July 2000 in Washington. The Group decided

to revive the Bilateral Energy Consultation in order to promote Indo-US commercial and government-government cooperation in the development of the energy sector in India. The Group also decided to promote specific technology development projects in the Indian energy industry.

The Science & Technology Forum, which is expected to facilitate contacts and collaborative projects between the scientific communities of the two countries, was registered in July. The two sides also issued two Joint Statements in Washington on 13 June 2000 on cooperation in the Health Sector, focusing on cooperative research on maternal and child health and on HIV/AIDS.

After the announcement of the decision to institutionalise cooperation and dialogue on UN Peacekeeping Operations, made during the visit of Prime Minister to the US in Washington, the two sides met in New Delhi on 1-2 November 2000 for the first meeting of the Indo-US Joint Working Group on UN Peacekeeping Operations. India is a major contributor to the UN peacekeeping efforts. The Joint Working Group aims to increase mutual understanding on UN peacekeeping issues and contribute to making UN peacekeeping more effective, including on policy, functional and operational aspects. Admiral Dennis Blair, Commander-in-Chief of the US Pacific Command, came to India in September on his second visit to the country in 2000. The Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defence for Policy James Bodner visited India in November 2000, which was the first high level civilian Defence contact between the two sides since imposition of US restrictions on India in 1998.

The United States has progressively eased some of the restrictions, especially those relating to economic measures, that it had imposed under its domestic law following the nuclear tests of May 1998. Restrictions continue to be maintained on US support for lending by International Financial Institutions to India, certain credit and credit guarantees by US Governmental agencies to India, export of items on the US Munitions List and export of “dual use” items and technologies. The United States also maintains an Entity List of Indian

organisations, which are subject to tighter export controls. The US has removed 53 Indian organisations from the Entity List from the original list of over 200 organisations.

Government maintains that all unilateral restrictions against India are unjustified and counter-productive and should be completely lifted. Several leading members of the US Congress have individually and collectively written to the US President to waive the remaining restrictions on India.

Republican Party candidate, Texas Governor George W. Bush became the 43rd President of the United States following the U.S. Presidential Elections held in November 2000. President George W. Bush and his key foreign policy advisors have indicated a desire to continue broadening engagement and strengthening relations with India. The Bush Administration is engaged in reviewing the sanctions currently in place, including the remaining sanctions against India. Secretary of State Colin Powell stated this publicly during the confirmation hearing before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. The U.S. Administration welcomed on 24th January the announcement of further extension of unilateral cessation of combat operations in Jammu & Kashmir and called for an end to violence by militant groups.

A US Congressional delegation led by Congressman Jim McDermott, co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian-Americans of the US Congress visited India from 8th -14th January 2001. Mr. Arlen Specter, a senior US Senator from the Republic Party, visited India from 3rd - 6th January 2001.

President Bush issued a statement on 26th January, extending condolence to the families of the victims of the earthquake and offering assistance for rescue and relief measures. Prime Minister and President Bush also spoke on phone on 30th January. The U.S. also provided assistance for rescue, relief and rehabilitation efforts. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and the U.S. Department of Defence together provided assistance valued at U.S. \$ 3.5 million

in the immediate period after the earthquake. A ten-member U.S. team of experts operated in New Delhi and affected areas to assist in the relief and rehabilitation efforts.

Political relations between India and Canada remained somewhat cool during the year, following Canada's excessive reaction to our nuclear tests in May 1998. Nevertheless, there were some useful interactions between the two countries.

The third meeting of the India-Canada Joint Working Group on Terrorism was held in New Delhi on February 15-16, 2000. During the meeting, the two sides exchanged information and views on the activities of various terrorist groups. Multilateral aspects of counter terrorism including the Indian Draft Convention against Terrorism and G-8 deliberations were discussed. Both sides viewed the Working Group as a useful mechanism that will strengthen other existing mechanisms to combat terrorism such as the Extradition Treaty and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

A Canadian delegation led by Paul Myer, Director General, International Security Bureau of the Canadian Foreign office visited India for a security dialogue on March 15-16, 2000. On the core nuclear issue, the Canadian delegation reiterated its position that Canada attached a great deal of importance to the NPT and CTBT. The Indian delegation on its part reiterated that India has always been in favour of complete nuclear disarmament and it will be guided solely by its national security considerations on the question of the CTBT. It was also conveyed that India regards the NPT as arbitrary and discriminatory, used by the P-5 to enhance their nuclear arsenal while keeping others out and expressed reservations about its extension in the present form.

An 11-member delegation led by Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Ram Naik visited Canada to participate in the 16th World Petroleum Congress held at Calgary from June 11 -15, 2000. Apart from conference activities, the Minister had a meeting with the Secretary General of OPEC Dr. Lukman. He also met with the

Premier of Alberta, Mr. Ralph Klein, who he invited to visit the Petro-Tech Conference and Exhibition to be held in India from January 9- 11, 2001.

After fifteen long years of dogged investigations into the Kanishka crash, on October 27, 2000 the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) arrested Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Singh Bagri from the Vancouver area in connection with the case. A third person, Hardial Singh Johal, ex-President of Surrey Gurudwara, was arrested but released on October 31 without being charged. RCMP said that more suspects were likely to be arrested.

Mr. Ujjal Dosanjh, Premier of British Columbia, Canada paid a seventeen-day visit to India from December 18, 2000 to January 4, 2001. Mr. Dosanjh is the first "First Generation" Indian to have attained such prominence in political life in Canada. The visit was undertaken at the invitation of External Affairs Minister.

During the visit, Premier Dosanjh called on the Prime Minister and Ministers of External Affairs, Human Resource Development, Information Technology and Health, besides Leader of the Opposition. He also had interaction with various business and cultural bodies.

Apart from Delhi, the Premier visited Punjab, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Mumbai where he was warmly received by dignitaries of the respective States. In Punjab where he spent seven days, he signed along with Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal, a general agreement on cooperation between the Governments of Punjab and British Columbia. The visit attracted considerable media attention and interest and added an additional dimension to the bilateral relations between India and Canada.

India has traditionally enjoyed problem-free and friendly relations with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean region. Our main policy objective towards the region has been to strengthen and deepen the existing relationship and to impart to it a greater economic

content. Our interactions and cooperation, at the bilateral as well as at the multilateral levels, have been of mutual benefit. India currently maintains 13 resident diplomatic missions and one post in the region. Through concurrent accreditation most of the other twenty countries are covered. Twelve countries from the region have their resident missions in New Delhi.

An important component of our bilateral relations has been the mechanism of Foreign Office level bilateral consultations. Over the years we have signed MoUs on the subject with thirteen countries from the region and a few more are under active consideration. The regular review of bilateral relations has helped us to focus better on the potentials and concerns of our dialogue partners and has led to improved coordination on multilateral issues of common interest. Other official and technical level visits have reinforced the gains of the Foreign Office level consultations. In the economic and trade arenas there has been growing interaction at the private sector level giving depth to our relationships.

As a follow-up of the “FOCUS LAC Programme” of the Government of India, participation by Indian Export Promotion Councils and business houses in international exhibitions in the Latin American and Caribbean region as well as visits by trade delegations to the region have helped in the dissemination of valuable information on Indian commodities and technological advancement. Concerted efforts have been made to overcome the barriers of distance and language. In this context another important element has been the globalization process as a result of which many economies in the region have been opening up for enhanced cooperation. We have signed trade and economic agreements with seven countries of the region and set up business councils with some others. As a result of the growing understanding between the private sectors a number of accords have also been signed between the apex trade and industrial bodies. However, because of the economic difficulties that the region as a whole continued to experience during the year, the actual increase in overall trade with India was marginal and currently stands at US\$ 1.50 billion only.

Culturally India enjoys considerable goodwill in the LAC region. Indian philosophy, yoga and Mahatma Gandhi and his teachings have been a source of inspiration for many in the region. Between them the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have named more than five hundred institutions, schools, libraries, streets and squares after India and its leaders. As a mark of respect to our Father of Nation, his busts and statues have been installed at important places in a number of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. At the institutional level we have cultural agreements and cultural exchange programmes with fourteen countries in the LAC area. Indian artists and academics have been visiting the region with the help of the ICCR. ICCR administered scholarships have brought interested students to Indian academic institutions. Indian Cultural Centres have been flourishing in countries with substantial populations of persons of Indian origin such as Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana. Technical assistance under the ITEC Programme for officials, experts and technical personnel for training and study tours in India is another important mechanism by which we forge mutually beneficial relations with LAC countries.

The region has witnessed steady progress towards democratisation and economic liberalisation. Presidential elections were held during the reporting period in Mexico, Suriname, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Peru, though in the case of the last mentioned country electoral malpractice resulted in the ouster of the Fujimori government and its replacement by an interim government which will oversee fresh elections next year. Parliamentary elections also took place during the year in Trinidad & Tobago (December) and in Guyana (March). There has also been a tendency towards the deepening of a pan-American approach to national and international issues. Keeping the above in mind we have established institutional relations with regional organisations. India has observer status with the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and the Andean Community. Our High Commissioner in Georgetown (Guyana) is concurrently accredited as India’s Ambassador to CARICOM. We have been participating

regularly in the meetings of these organisations. Mechanism for dialogue with the Rio Group is being established and we are in the process of setting up an institutional relationship with MERCOSUR as well.

The year was marked by exchanges of a large number of high level visits and the conclusion of agreements in a number of areas of mutual interest.

Shri Omar Abdullah, the Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, visited Argentina from May 10-11, 2000. During his visit, he held talks with the Argentine Minister of Health, Dr. Hector Lombardo, Economy Minister, Mr. Jose Luis Machinea, and Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Mines, Ms. Debora Giorgi. MOS's discussions covered facilitating of market access for Indian products, particularly pharmaceuticals, to Argentina. He also spoke of India's interest in institutionalising co-operation with MERCOSUR by signing a framework agreement.

Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Argentina from August 28-30, 2000. In his meetings with the Argentine Foreign Minister and the Health Minister, MOS (EA) discussed a wide range of bilateral and international issues including the possibility of the entry of Indian pharmaceutical products into the Argentine market. Official level talks were also held during the visit. The Indian side was led by Shri R.S. Kalha, Secretary(West). A cooperation agreement between the Foreign Service Institutes of the two countries was signed during the visit.

Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister of Human Resource Development has extended an invitation to Ms. Mia Mottley, Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture of Barbados to visit India. Ms. Mottley has accepted the invitation. The visit is likely to take place in February 2001.

A delegation led by Mr. Anthony Wood, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Barbados is expected to visit India in January/February 2001 for a study tour under ITEC programme.

Shri Omar Abdullah, MOS(C&I), led a CII trade delegation to

Brazil from 7-10 May 2000, to participate in the Sixth MERCOSUR Economic Summit organized by the World Economic Forum in Rio de Janeiro. He had a series of bilateral meetings with leaders from Brazil and other South American countries on the margins of this Summit.

The Brazilian Health Minister, Mr. Jose Serra, accompanied by senior officials and representatives from pharmaceutical industry, visited India from 24-28 July 2000, to deepen cooperation in the area of health and pharmaceuticals. Following this visit market access for Indian pharmaceutical products into Brazil is expected to improve dramatically.

The Minister of Information Technology, Shri Pramod Mahajan, visited Brazil from 6- 11 November 2000, to promote cooperation in the area of information technology between India and Brazil. During the visit MIT called on President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and held talks with his host, the Brazilian Minister of Science & Technology, Mr. Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, in Brasilia on 8 and 9 November 2000. A Memorandum of Understanding for setting up an India-Brazil Task Force for Cooperation in IT was signed during the visit.

The fifth round of India-Brazil Annual Foreign Office level consultations took place in New Delhi on 23 October 2000. The meeting was co-chaired by Shri R.S. Kalha, Secretary (West), Ambassador Ivan Cannabrava, Under Secretary General for Political Affairs in the Brazilian Foreign Office. Discussions were held on the entire gamut of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. India and Brazil have long cooperated extensively in multilateral fora and have similar positions on UNSC reforms as well as on a number of WTO issues.

Secretary, Department of Space, Dr. K. Kasturirangan, accompanied by a technical team, visited Brazil from 11-16 March 2000, to firm up cooperation in the area of space research. Subsequently, a 7-member delegation of the Brazilian Space Agency led by its Director General visited India from 20-28 August 2000. An

MOU for mutual cooperation in the area of space has been finalized by the two sides and is expected to be signed soon.

The Governor of the State of Santa Catarina, Mr. Esperidiao Amin Helou Filho, accompanied by a business and official delegation, visited India from 6 -10 November 2000 to strengthen cooperation in the areas of pharmaceuticals, information technology and agro-industries.

A delegation of Confederation of Indian Industry visited Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Brasília in November 2000.

Shri Omar Abdullah, MOS (C&I), led a CII delegation to Chile from 11-13 May 2000. He had meetings in the Ministries of Economy and External Relations. The idea of a Free Trade Agreement between India and Chile was discussed in some detail. MOS(C&I) also had meetings with SOFOFA (Industrial Development Association), the Santiago Chamber of Commerce and the National Chamber of Commerce of Chile.

Shri R.S. Kalha, Secretary (West) and Shri Amitava Tripathi, Joint Secretary (LAC) visited Santiago from 11-12 August 2000, for annual Foreign Office consultations. The discussions covered bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

The first round of discussions on a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement between India and Chile was held in New Delhi from 14-16 November 2000.

EAM led the Indian delegation to the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference of NAM Foreign Ministers in Cartagena from 6-9 April 2000. During the visit, he met the Colombian President Andres Pastrana and held bilateral talks with the Colombian Foreign Minister Guillermo Fernandez de Soto.

A CII business delegation visited Colombia from 8-11 November 2000. "India Seminars" and business interactions were organised for the delegation in Bogota and Medellin. An MOU on Cooperation between CII and its Colombian counterpart ANDI was signed on 9 November 2000.

Dates for the state visit of the Colombian President to India are scheduled for 4-7 March 2001. This visit is expected to re-inforce and add substantive content to our bilateral relations with Colombia.

EAM has extended an invitation to H.E. Mr. Roberto Rojas Lopez, Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, to pay an official visit to India in April-May, 2001.

The President of India has extended an invitation to the President of the Dominican Republic to visit India.

The Indian delegation to the first G-77 South Summit held in Havana from 10-14 April 2000, was led by Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister for Human Resource Development, Science and Technology and Ocean Development. During the visit, the HRD Minister met President Fidel Castro and held discussions with other Cuban dignitaries. He also met the President of Indonesia, Prime Ministers of Belize and Cambodia and the Foreign Ministers of Bhutan, Guyana, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam on the margins of the Summit.

An Indian Parliamentary delegation led by former Minister of External Affairs, Shri N.D. Tiwari, participated in a Parliamentarians' workshop held in Havana on 9-10 March 2000, prior to the South Summit.

The visit of Jamaican Prime Minister to India was scheduled for November, 2000 which was postponed at the request of the Indian side. The VVIP visit is being rescheduled for 25 - 29 May 2001.

A Cuban delegation consisting of representatives of the Ministry of External Trade, the Central Bank and the Ministry of Investment and Economic Cooperation visited India from 4-7 July 2000, to discuss the question of Cuban debt to India.

The Cuban Minister for Agriculture Gen. Ulises Rosales Del Toro visited India from 17-21 July 2000. During his visit, he met the concerned officials in the Department of Sugar and in the Ministry of External Affairs.

A delegation from the Cuban Foreign Office led by Mr. Alberto Velasco San Jose, Director of the Asian Affairs Bureau, visited India from 21-22 August 2000, for consultations.

A Memorandum of Understanding on Foreign Office Consultations between India and Ecuador was signed in Quito on 20 June 2000.

The third session of the India-Guyana Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on November 27-28, 2000. The Guyanese delegation to the JCM was led by Mr. Clement James Rohee, Foreign Minister of Guyana. The Indian delegation was led by EAM. On November 28, 2000, India and Guyana signed two MOUs on Foreign Office Level Consultations and Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institutes of India and Guyana.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, led the Indian delegation to the ministerial level meeting of the G-15 countries in Mexico from October 29-31, 2000. During the meeting, the MOS met President Ernesto Zedillo and President-elect Vicente Fox.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri U. V. Krishnam Raju, represented India at the inauguration of President Vicente Fox of Mexico on December 1, 2000. During his visit, the Minister also called on the new President of Mexico and reiterated the invitation from our President for him to visit India.

Governor Alberto Cardenas of the State of Jalisco visited Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka from September 5-10, 2000. He was accompanied by a 15-member delegation. The delegation visited information technology companies as well as rural development programmes. The Governor called on the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Dr. C. Rangarajan, and had extensive discussions with Chief Minister Shri Chandrababu Naidu. Several MOUs on cooperation in the field of information technology were signed during the visit.

A delegation from the State of Aguascalientes led by the Economic Development Minister visited Delhi, Hyderabad and Chennai from November 11-20, 2000 for exploring avenues of cooperation in the field of software technology training.

A high-level business delegation from the CII visited Mexico from October 28-November 2, 2000. The Telecom sub-commission

of the Joint Commission met in Mexico City from June 25-30, 2000, for a review of the MoU on the subject. The Head of the Mexican Immigration Services visited India in April for a review of visa procedures which has led to simplification of visa arrangements for Indian visitors, both tourists and businessmen to Mexico.

At the invitation of the Government of Panama, Ambassador Shri Tara Singh attended a ceremony on 26 April 2000, at Colon for the donation of industrial equipment to a vocational school "*Centro de Educacion Basica General de Salamanca de Colon*". The equipment was donated by the Government of India under the ITEC programme.

MoUs on Foreign Office level consultations with Panama and the countries of concurrent accreditation, El Salvador and Nicaragua are in the final stages. Agreement on Cultural and Educational Cooperation between India and Panama is also in the final stage. A draft MoU between India and Panama for Cooperation in the field of Agricultural Research and Education is under process.

The first ever Foreign Office level consultations were held between India and Peru from August 7-8, 2000, in Lima. The Indian delegation comprised Secretary (West), Shri R. S. Kalha and Shri Amitava Tripathi, JS (LAC). Both sides had a useful exchange of views on important bilateral and international issues, notably the containment of terrorism and reforms of the United Nations.

Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Trinidad & Tobago from 31 August-3 September 2000, at the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Trinidad & Tobago to hold Foreign Office level consultations. During the visit, MOS (EA) called on President N.R. Robinson, Prime Minister Basdeo Panday and Foreign Minister Ralph Maraj. MOS (EA)'s meeting with T&T dignitaries provided an opportunity to review our overall bilateral relationship as well as to identify new areas of cooperation, specially in the energy, small scale industries and information technology sectors. The two sides also discussed the proposal for the establishment of a Joint Commission between them.

A two-member delegation from Indian Oil Corporation visited Trinidad & Tobago from 1-3 November 2000. The main purpose of

the visit was to revive the Technical Service Agreement between IOC and Petroleum Company of Trinidad & Tobago Ltd. (Petrotrin) and Trinidad & Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd. (NPMC). Apart from renewing the TSA, the IOC delegation proposed the establishment of a joint venture for running the Lube Oil Plant in Trinidad & Tobago and training of Petrotrin personnel in India, particularly in software development and customize training in T&T.

The first ever Foreign Office level consultations were held between India and Uruguay in Montevideo from August 14-16, 2000. The Indian side was led by Shri R.S. Kalha, Secretary (West). The two sides discussed cooperation in sectors like trade, information technology, culture, long term business visa facilities and entry of Indian pharmaceutical products into Uruguay. Possibilities of cooperation in tourism and phytosanitation were also discussed. Secretary (West) and Ambassador also called on Foreign Minister Didier Opertti Badan on August 16, 2000. The Foreign Minister conveyed a Mercosur decision to open talks with India during next year on institutional linkages between India and Mercosur.

Prime Minister Shri A.B. Vajpayee sent a message of felicitation to President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela following latter's re-election in July. President Hugo Chavez effected technical halts at Mumbai (August 11-12, 2000). On August 12, 2000, representatives of ONGC, Reliance Petroleum, Nagarjuna Fertilisers, Diamond & Gem Development Corporation etc. met him. The meetings were useful in providing a fresh momentum to the growing economic-commercial ties between the two countries.

The second meeting of the India-Venezuela Working Group on Hydrocarbon met in April 2000, in India. Venezuela started crude oil supplies to India for the first time in the last 20 years, by shipping 3 million barrels of heavy crude oil to Reliance Petroleum.

An Oil India Limited delegation visited Venezuela to hold talks on exploring possibility of utilizing Venezuelan technology for extraction of heavy crude in Rajasthan. A delegation of Reliance Petroleum visited Venezuela and held discussions with PDVSA, the

state oil company for long-term crude purchase.

In December 2000, Venezuela's largest oil company PDVSA offered to ONGC six blocks for exploration and production of oil. ONGC's investment in the project will be in the range of US \$50 million. This is for the first time that Venezuela has offered oil field concessions to a foreign company outside the international tendering procedure.

In the wake of natural calamity that struck Venezuela, medicines worth \$20,000/- gifted by India were handed over to the Venezuelan side. A 14-member Venezuelan Software delegation visited India in October 2000, and signed a MoU with the Electronics and Software Export Promotion Council.

High Commissioner Professor Parimal Kumar Das presented his credentials to the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda on 26 June 2000; Governor of Anguilla on 17 April 2000; Governor General of St. Kitts & Nevis on July 25, 2000 and Governor of Montserrat on 21 November 2000.

Shri Rengaraj Viswanathan, Ambassador to Venezuela presented credentials to President Hugo Chavez on November 8, 2000.

On 27 October 2000, Shri O.P. Gupta presented his credentials to the Dominican Republic President as the first Indian Ambassador to the Dominican Republic.

Shri Tara Singh presented his credentials to the President of Nicaragua on May 29, 2000.

Mr. Alejandro A. Garrido A, Ambassador of Panama presented his credentials to the President on May 12, 2000.

Mr. Chas Nelson Mijns, Suriname's first resident Ambassador to India presented his credentials to President on 15 May 2000.

Mr. Luis R. Hernandez, Ambassador of Peru presented his credentials to the President on August 3, 2000.

Mr. Manuel Cardenas Aguirre, Ambassador of Chile presented his credentials to the President on August 3, 2000.



United Nations and International Organisations

The Millennium Summit was held in New York between September 6-8, 2000. The event was the largest ever gathering of Heads of State or Government, with over 150 Heads of State and/or Government participating in the summit. The Summit was jointly presided over by the Presidents of Namibia and Finland. Most developing countries used the opportunity to centre stage issues of concern to them, including the need for reform and restructuring of the UN Security Council. Over 155 countries made a specific reference to the need for reform and restructuring of the Security Council in their statement at the Millennium Summit or Assembly. Over 70 countries indicated their support for expansion of both permanent and non-permanent categories of Security Council membership, and many expressed support for representation of both developed and developing countries in an enlarged permanent category.

From India's point of view, the Declaration adopted by the Millennium Summit by and large reflects India's interests, referring as it does to the principles of sovereignty, non-interference and the value of tolerance. It recognises the need for a comprehensive reform of Security Council. It also calls for an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers and calls on the

international community to strive and to seek to eliminate the dangers of weapons of mass destruction. The Declaration, further articulates the resolve of the International community to take concerted action against international terrorism, and to accede, as soon as possible, to all the relevant international conventions.

The high level Indian delegation to the Millennium Summit was led by Prime Minister, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, who addressed it on 8th September 2000. In his statement, PM inter alia called for concerted global action against international terrorism, and for early conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention against Terrorism. PM also reiterated India's natural claim to permanent membership of an expanded Security Council based on any objective criteria.

During the Millennium Summit, a number of International Conventions were made available for signatures and ratification. On behalf of India, Prime Minister, signed the International Convention for Suppression of Terrorist Financing.

EAM, Shri Jaswant Singh, accompanied PM to New York from 5-13 September, 2000 to participate in the Millennium Summit. EAM represented India at the Round Table Meetings on 8 & 9 September, that had been organised as interactive sessions of the Millennium Summit, where he inter alia stressed the need for the international community to realise a nuclear free world, and to decisively confront the challenges arising from terrorism, drugs and illicit arms trafficking.

EAM, Shri Jaswant Singh, also led the high level Indian delegation to the 55th regular session of the UN General Assembly (ie., the Millennium Assembly) from 18-20 September 2000. EAM addressed the UN General Assembly in the general debate, on 19 September 2000, urging a nuclear free world and calling on the international community to decisively confront the challenges arising from terrorism, drugs and illicit arms trafficking, particularly when combined with “religious fanaticism and military adventurism”. EAM also pointed out that although the UN has expanded manifold in the last century, with its membership standing at 189, yet the Security Council continued to have the same basic structure as in the colonised world of 1945. The impact of the actions of the Security Council however, were felt with near total exclusivity by the developing countries, yet they had little influence on its decision making. EAM further pointed to the emerging global consensus that the form taken by the Security Council in the aftermath of the second world war was outmoded and that it must reflect the logic of an enlarged membership. In this context, he reaffirmed India’s willingness to take on the responsibilities of permanent membership.

India participated actively and constructively in the preparatory process for the UN Millennium Summit and Assembly and ensured that its interests were accommodated in the relevant outcomes. A separate process for follow up to the Declaration has been instituted and India continues to an active participant there.

India was also closely associated with and consulted extensively on the annual General Assembly resolution on the “Situation in Afghanistan and its implications for peace and security”, which it also co- sponsored. The resolution inter alia reiterated the central role that the UN should play in finding a solution to the Afghan problem, called on the Taliban to cease all armed hostilities, referred to the large number of non-Afghan personnel, mainly on the side of the Taliban forces, who are drawn from religious schools etc and strongly condemned foreign military support to Afghan parties. It also reiterated the view that the continuing conflict in Afghanistan

posed a growing risk to peace and stability in the region. The resolution further demanded that the Taliban refrain from providing safe haven to international terrorists and their organisations, cease the recruitment of terrorists, close terrorist training camps and take effective measures to ensure that their territory is not used to sponsor international terrorist operations. It also called on the Taliban to halt all illegal drug related activities and to support the international efforts to ban illegal drug production and trafficking. The resolution was cosponsored by 80 countries (higher than ever before) showing the extent of isolation of the Taliban regime.

At the request of the League of Arab States, the Tenth Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly was convened on 18 and 19 October 2000. Apart from Israel, Palestine, several P-5 members and South Africa, which spoke on behalf of NAM, 54 countries spoke at the Meeting. The Indian statement was delivered by Shri M.L.Khurana, who was in New York as part of the Indian non-official delegation. The statement called for exercise of restraint, avoidance of provocation, need to shun the use of force or encouragement to violence and stressed the need for dialogue and peaceful negotiations to find a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of all issues between the two sides. At the same time, in keeping with our tradition of solidarity and support for the Palestinian cause, we associated ourselves with the NAM Statement. The 10th Emergency Special Session of the GA adopted a resolution on “Illegal Israeli actions in occupied Jerusalem and rest of the occupied Palestinian territory” by a vote of 92 for, 6 against and 46 abstentions. The Resolution, inter alia, condemned the violence that took place on 28 September 2000, expressed support for the understandings reached at the Sharm-El-Sheikh Summit in Egypt, demanded immediate cessation of violence, and that Israel, the occupying power, abide scrupulously by its legal obligations under the fourth Geneva Convention and reiterated that Israeli settlements in the occupied

Palestinian territory were illegal. It also strongly supported the understanding reached at Sharm-El-Sheikh on a Committee of Fact Finding and called for its establishment without delay.

India participated, and its contribution was noted, in open meetings of the Security Council on a number of issues, including Sierra Leone, Children and Armed Conflict, Women and Peace and Security and the Situation in the Middle East. Our statement on Women and Peace and Security, on 24 October 2000, was delivered by Smt. Krishna Bose, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs.

In view of our deep and abiding concern over developments in Afghanistan, India worked closely with countries such as Russia, EU, US etc, and co sponsored the resolution in Security Council to further extend sanctions against the Taliban. The resolution which was tabled by Russia and USA was cosponsored by Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and India. The Resolution called on the Taliban to stop all support to terrorism and to close all terrorist training camps. It also imposed further sanctions on the Taliban, including an arms embargo, and restrictions on travel of all senior Taliban officials of the rank of Deputy Minister or higher, the equivalent rank of armed personnel under the control of the Taliban, and other senior advisers and dignitaries of the Taliban. The resolution also extends the freeze on funds and other financial assets of Usama bin Laden and individuals and entities associated with him.

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Francesc Vendrell, Personal Representative of the UNSG on Afghanistan and Head of UN Special Mission on Afghanistan visited India from May 2-5, 2000 and had meetings with External Affairs Minister and Foreign Secretary. While consulting India, he also provided a detailed briefing on his visits to Islamabad, Kabul, Dushanbe, Ashgabat, Tashkent and Moscow. The visit assumed significance since it took place soon after he assumed the assignment and reflected recognition of India’s role and interests in Afghanistan.

Francesc Vendrell, visited Delhi again, for consultations, from 29th November – 3rd December. He met Additional Secretary (UN) and called on EAM, FS and the Secretary of National Security Council. He gave a briefing on his recent visit to Afghanistan, particularly on the agreement committing all parties to a UN sponsored dialogue process.

On 10th October, 2000, the UN General Assembly elected five new non-permanent members of the Security Council. - Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore for the term 2001-2002.

These countries would replace the outgoing, Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia and the Netherlands, whose term expires on 31st December, 2000.

The vacancy from the Western European and other States (WEOG), was only filled in the fourth round of voting after Norway obtained the required majority of 115 votes, versus Italy's 57. The African seat was also filled during the fourth ballot when Mauritius received 113 votes, one more than the required majority.

The five other non-permanent Security Council members, who will serve for another year, until 31 December 2001, are Bangladesh, Jamaica, Mali, Tunisia and Ukraine.

The nexus between illegally traded diamonds and its funding of rebel movements in Africa moved to centre stage of the international agenda. On July 5, 2000, the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, adopted Resolution 1306(2000) banning trade in conflict diamonds for a period of 18 months, and calling on all states to take necessary measures to prohibit the direct or indirect import of such conflict diamonds. India welcomed this development and has supported the ban on 'conflict' diamonds.

Subsequently on 1st December, the UN General Assembly adopted a comprehensive resolution on "The Role of Diamonds in Fuelling Conflict". The Resolution was adopted without a vote and was co-sponsored by over 50 countries including Russia, Israel and India. Our concerns, as a country where the diamond industry makes an important contribution to the economy were to ensure that such measures did not affect legitimate trade in diamonds which provides employment to over 1 million people nor divert attention from genuine development concerns. Moreover, the Resolution provides that any international certification should be based primarily on national certification schemes.

In a unanimous decision, the Security Council on 31st October

recommended to the General Assembly that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia be admitted to membership in the United Nations. The Security Council acted in response to an application for membership submitted by Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica, who cited "fundamental democratic changes" in his country as the impetus behind the request. Fulfilling the requirement for all States seeking to join the UN, President Kostunica pledged to accept the obligations contained in the UN Charter and undertook to fulfil them. Subsequently, on 1st November 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted a unanimous resolution endorsing the Security Council's decision and admitted the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a UN member. India had co-sponsored this GA resolution.

The debate on Security Council restructuring and reform received some fillip in April 2000, when the USA indicated its readiness to consider an expanded Security Council of more than 21 members, thereby removing what had earlier been a major road block. Further dynamism to the debate on the issue was imparted by the statements at the Millennium Summit and Assembly by a large number of countries calling for reform and restructuring of the Security Council, expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories of Security Council membership, and for representation of both developed and developing countries in an enlarged permanent category.

The "Question of Equitable Representation on and increase in the Membership of the Security Council and related matters" was further debated in the UNGA plenary on 16th & 17th November 2000. 108 countries spoke in the debate this year, the largest number in recent years.

There was enhanced momentum in support of India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Among the P-5 (permanent 5 members of the Security Council), several made positive indications and/or supported Indian candidature for a

permanent seat in the Security Council. During the visit of President Shri K.R.Narayanan to France in April 2000, the French President Jacques Chirac stated in his banquet speech on 17 April, 2000 that “India is naturally destined to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. France supports and will support your candidature.” During the debate in the UNGA plenary on 16 November 2000, the Russian representative stated, “The Russian Federation considers India a strong and worthy candidate for a permanent membership seat in the Security Council should it be decided to enlarge the Council in both categories.” The UK and the US have given positive indications, acknowledging India as a natural contender. On 7th October 2000, a senior official of the US Administration stated “there is no question that India is a very strong contender for permanent membership of the Security Council. Its size, role in the world, its economy, its contribution to UN peacekeeping, all these make it a very serious and strong contender”. Robin Cook, British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, on his visit to India from 15-18 April 2000, indicated that UK sees “India as a natural contender for permanent membership of the UN Security Council”.

During the Millennium Summit and Millennium Assembly, Cambodia, Vietnam and Bhutan, reiterated their support for India’s candidature. There were also, indications of support from several other countries during bilateral discussions.

During the year, India emerged as the largest troop contributor to UN peacekeeping operation. The bulk of Indian troops (over 3000) were deployed in the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), whose Force Commander was Major General V.K.Jetley of India. Other Indian contributions were a battalion in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), military observers in the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), UNGCI

(Iraq), the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) and police officers in the UN missions in Bosnia & Herzegovina (UNMIBH), Kosovo (UNMIK), Western Sahara (MINURSO) and Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). Two companies of the Rapid Action Force (RAF) of CRPF were deployed in Kosovo in April.

In pursuance of UN Security Council Resolution 1270 of October 22, 1999, India had contributed two Infantry battalions, Aviation Units and support elements to the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). In the beginning of May 2000, the main rebel group, Revolutionary United Front (RUF), reneged on its commitments under the Rome Peace Agreement of July 1999, and started hostilities against the UN peacekeeping forces. For nearly two and a half months, 221 Indian peacekeepers and 11 military observers were surrounded by the RUF. The role of the Indian troops, under the command of Major General V.K. Jetley, in lifting the siege, was highly commended by the UN and the world media. During the operation, there was, unfortunately, a loss of life of an Indian soldier.

Following the decision to withdraw Indian troops from UNAMSIL in a phased manner, de-induction of troops within the Mission area commenced on November 6, 2000. During the month of November, 506 personnel were de-inducted from Daru and Kenema for onward movement to Hastings. Under Phase I, 1409 troops are scheduled to return to India between December 6 and 24. The first passenger flight with 300 troops reached New Delhi on December 8. The remaining 186 troops will be returning to India, under phase II, commencing in the first week of January. It is expected that the entire deinduction of Indian troops from Sierra Leone will be completed by mid-February 2001.

Following India’s decision to withdraw its contingent from UNAMSIL, de-induction under Phase I, has been completed on December 26, 2000. 1442 Indian troops returned to India during this

phase. The remaining 1621 personnel are scheduled to be de-inducted, under Phase II, during the period January 26 to February 11, 2001.

UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was established in 1978 after Israel's occupation of Southern Lebanon. India has provided an infantry battalion comprising 619 ranks since November 1998. During the year, India contributed additional 172 troops to strengthen the Indian battalion. India also provided the services of Brig. G. Athmanathan for the post of Deputy Force Commander to UNIFIL.

Lt. General R.K. Sawhney, Deputy Chief of Army Staff, visited Lebanon from August 28 to 30, 2000 to meet the Indian contingent and to assess the situation on ground after the withdrawal of Israeli Defence Forces from former Israeli Controllor Area of South Lebanon. Although there have been sporadic incidents of violence between the Israeli Defence Forces and the Hizbollah group, the Indian soldiers are safe and doing well.

Since November 1998, India has contributed an Infantry Battalion to the UN Mission in Lebanon and the rotation of troops takes place every six months. During the month of December, rotation of 615 Indian troops was completed. At present 791 Indian troops are deployed in UNIFIL.

India has contributed 300 civilian police officers and has deployed two companies, comprising 240 personnel, of Rapid Action Force (CRPF) to the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). In addition, about 30 Indian civil servants have also joined the Interim Civil Administration on deputation to UNMIK.

A three-member composite delegation from MHA, MEA and CRPF, led by Dr. T. N. Mishra, DG, CRPF, visited Kosovo from November 6 to 10, 2000 to meet the RAF personnel and Civilian Police Officers. The delegation interacted with senior officials of the UNMIK Administration to assess the local situation following the municipal elections in Kosovo and Presidential elections in Serbia.

India has contributed 300 Civilian Police Officers and has deployed two companies of Rapid Action Force (CRPF), comprising 240 personnel, to the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). During the month, 85 CIVPOL Officers returned to India after completion of one year tenure on December 8, and, in replacement, 60 CIVPOL officers left for Kosovo. From the RAF, 160 personnel were rotated on December 23/24, as per guidelines of the UN. Earlier in November, a three-member delegation from MHA, CRPF and MEA had visited Kosovo, and interacted with the senior officials of UNMIK Administration, apart from meetings with the RAF and CIVPOL officers. The Indian contingent has a high reputation of discipline and professionalism in Kosovo.

The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1312 on July 31, 2000 authorizing establishment of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The Government has conveyed its decision to the UN to participate in this peacekeeping Mission and would be providing an Infantry Battalion, a Force Reserve Company and a Construction Engineering Company, in addition to some Military Observers.

The UNMEE deployment is continuing in accordance with a three-phase concept of operations. The establishment of Military Liaison Offices in each capital (Asmara and Addis Ababa) under Phase I has been completed. The establishment of UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea with military observers and civilian support staff in anticipation of a peacekeeping operation is continuing. So far India has contributed five Military Observers and two Staff Officers to UNMEE. Deployment of a peacekeeping force within UNMEE up to 4,200 troops (including 220 Military Observers) is likely to commence in the month of December, with the arrival of Dutch and Danish contingents.

A 6-member Indian recce team led by Major General G.S. Negi, Addl. DG, SD Directorate, Army Headquarters visited Eritrea and Ethiopia from December 2 to 9 to survey the area, before deployment of Indian troops.

Following India's commitment to participate in the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), a 6-member Indian recce team led by Major General G.S. Negi, Addl. DG, SD Directorate, Army Headquarters visited Eritrea and Ethiopia from December 2 to 9 to survey the area, before deployment of Indian troops. The team has submitted its recommendations for the deployment of a Force Reserve Company and an Engineer Construction Company by February 2001 and an Indian Infantry Battalion in the month of June 2001, to replace the Netherlands contingent. India has already deployed 5 Military Observers and 2 Logistic Staff Officers to UNMEE.

The establishment of Centre for UN Peacekeeping was formally inaugurated during a Peacekeeping Seminar organised by the United Service Institution of India (USI) from September 13-15, 2000. It is initially envisaged to organise one seminar and two training capsules a year, under the aegis of USI. The aim of the Centre is to meet part of the UN related training requirements of India and friendly foreign countries; promote comprehensive research and intellectual exchange.

In March 2000, UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, had commissioned a panel under the chairmanship of Lakhdar Brahimi, former Foreign Minister of Algeria, to undertake a thorough review of the UN peace and security activities and to present a clear set of specific, concrete and practical recommendations to assist the UN in conducting peace keeping operations. The report of the panel - the Brahimi Report was submitted to the Millennium Summit and formed the basis of discussions both in the Security Council and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. The Brahimi panel had, inter alia, recommended that the UN should engage more actively in conflict prevention, undertake multidimensional peace building as a part of peace keeping operations, that the information gathering and

strategic analysis capacity of the UN should be strengthened, as also its capacity to assist in transitional civil administration. It had also suggested that the headquarters staff in the Department of Peace Keeping Operations be strengthened.

After 5 weeks of intensified and protracted discussions, on 5 December the Special Committee on Peace Keeping Operations adopted a comprehensive report on the whole question of Peace Keeping Operations, drawing on recommendations of the Brahimi Report.

The Indian delegation played an active role both within the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and in the C-34 to ensure that our concerns as a developing country, and more importantly, as a troop contributing country (TCC) were fully reflected. A notable success from our point of view, was that our concerns on consultations with TCCs and on participation in briefings to the Council when changes to a mission's mandate and other issues which have implications for the mission's use of force were contemplated, were all fully reflected in the final outcome.

On 13 November, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1327 outlining measures to give UN Peace Keeping Operations clear, credible and achievable mandates. The resolution draws on the recommendations of the Brahimi Report, and inter alia included calls for regular military briefings on key aspects of peace keeping operations including chain of command, force structure and risk assessment, humanitarian situation as also strengthening consultations with TCCs. The resolution also underscored the Security Council's commitment to ensuring that the tasks endorsed to peace keeping operations are "appropriate to the situation on the ground, including such factors as prospects for success, potential need

to protect civilians or the possibility that some parties may seek to undermine peace through violence”. The resolution further states that the rules of engagement must clearly set out the circumstances in which force can be used. UN Secretary General has been entrusted with the task of preparing a comprehensive operational doctrine for the military component of peace keeping operations. On the issue of improving the UN’s capacity to deploy personnel rapidly, the Security Council has entrusted the Secretary General with the task of consulting potential and current TCCs on how to achieve this.

On 15th November, the Security Council debated the issue of when and how to terminate UN Peace Keeping Operations. This debate was organised at the initiative of Netherlands, which held the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. The objective of the debate was to ensure that Peace Keeping Operations are terminated only when there is a clear and effective strategy to ensure sustained peace and development after the exit of peacekeepers. Over 34 countries participated in the debate, including all the 15 members of the Council. The debate covered a wide range of critical issues related to Security Council decision making on mission closure and mission transition, as also on importance of conflict prevention, need to understand underlying causes and the value of ensuring smooth transition from peace keeping to peace building. In our intervention in the debate, we called for greater clarity and definition of the mandate of Peace Keeping Operations, adherence to universally agreed norms such as neutrality, impartiality etc., in determining troop contributing countries, the need for peace keeping force levels to be commensurate with their mandate and responsibilities, need to distinguish between peace keeping operations and humanitarian relief operations, need to consult the TCCs, etc.

As a founding member of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to the Colonial countries and Peoples (C-24), India

continued to play a useful and constructive role within the Committee. The 40th anniversary of the Declaration was commemorated by the UNGA in December. The relationship between the Administering Powers and the Committee continued to improve considerably over the year and as a result a concrete programme of work was developed in consultation with the Administering Powers with respect of each non-self-governing territory. The General Assembly further mandated 2001-2010 as a second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. India participated in the regional Seminar on Decolonisation held in Marshall Islands in May as a member of the official delegation of the Special Committee.

At the 55th UNGA, the Working Group of the Sixth Committee in pursuance of a decision taken at the 54th UNGA, held its first round of detailed discussions on the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the UN from September 25 to October 6, 2000.

The progress so far in the first round of discussions on the Draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism in the Working Group of the Sixth Committee from September 25 – October 6, 2000 reflected the seriousness with which the international community approached the issue. The considerable support received from a wide range of countries, including G-8, European Union, as also Asian, African and Latin American countries, on several of the issues of concern to India was a matter of satisfaction. These included the need for the convention to address the question of state responsibility to refrain from acts of terrorism and to ensure that their respective territories are not used for terrorist installations and training camps, along with a responsibility of states to either prosecute or extradite.

Among the issues on which more work needed to be done in bridging differences included the questions of asylum, extradition

exclusion of security forces from the purview of the Convention, political exception clause, and a definition of terrorism.

Discussions on the Draft Convention will resume early next year. India will continue to work actively for the early adoption of this comprehensive convention on terrorism.

On December 7, 2000, the UN Security Council discussed the issue of international terrorism and international cooperation under agenda item “Role of the Security Council in Maintenance of International Security”. This discussion was a follow up to resolution 1269 adopted by the Council on 19 October 1999, when the Security Council, for the first time, addressed the general issue of international terrorism as a threat to international peace and security.

Following the debate, the Security Council adopted a Presidential Statement, which, *inter alia*, expressed deep concern at the increase in acts of terrorism in many regions of the world, reiterated its condemnation of these acts, irrespective of their motive, called for universal accession to existing anti-terrorism conventions and reiterated the Security Council’s readiness to take necessary steps in accordance with its responsibility under the UN Charter to counter terrorist threats to international peace and security.

India’s commitment to non-discriminatory and universal nuclear disarmament continued to be reflected in its policy pronouncements and diplomatic initiatives. The country’s stand on issues related to disarmament and international security in various multilateral and regional forums was premised on India’s national security interests and the nation’s tradition of close engagement with the international community.

The series of bilateral dialogues commenced after May 1998 continued to be pursued this year. New security dialogues were also initiated with China, Germany and UK. All these have resulted in

greater appreciation of India’s security concerns and its responsible conduct and policies. Harmonisation of India’s national imperatives and security obligations with international concerns on non-proliferation and disarmament also progressed steadily.

On the regional level, India’s participation in the confidence and security building process and structures under the ASEAN Regional Forum acquired greater momentum. India was also actively involved in similar processes underway in the Conference on Interaction and Security Building Measures in Asia.

Regular contact was maintained with key international and non-governmental organisations active in the field of disarmament with a view to keeping them appropriately informed about the Indian perspectives on disarmament issues. Parliament was kept regularly informed of all developments.

A new Permanent Mission of India to the Conference on Disarmament was established in Geneva on 16 September 2000 with Shri Rakesh Sood assuming charge as the first Ambassador/PR for Disarmament. He presented his credentials on 19 September to Mr. V. Petrovsky, Secretary General of the Conference on Disarmament.

India continued to play an active role on disarmament issues in the First Committee of the 55th UN ‘Millennium’ General Assembly. India is the only nuclear weapon State that believes that its security would be enhanced in a nuclear-weapons-free-world. With this commitment to global nuclear disarmament, it continued to press for negotiations on a Nuclear Weapons Convention that will prohibit forever the development, production, stockpiling, use or threat of use nuclear weapons, and provide for the elimination of all existing weapons under international verification.

India has clearly and categorically stated its policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons. However, the doctrines of first use of nuclear weapons have persisted, and, in fact, are being re-validated and

reaffirmed. There is need for the international community to take decisive steps to de-legitimize nuclear weapons. India's resolution on 'Convention on the Prohibition of the use of Nuclear Weapons' called for a multilateral agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons, which will also contribute to a positive climate for negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons. It was adopted with the support of 109 countries.

In 1998, India had introduced its resolution 'Reducing Nuclear Danger', which calls for the review of nuclear doctrines and immediate and urgent steps to reduce the risk of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons. This resolution, for which the co-sponsorship and the support is growing, was adopted this year with 110 countries voting in favour.

India's resolution on 'Role of Science and Technology in the Context of International Security and Disarmament', highlighting the qualitative aspects of the arms race, and the need for a genuinely multilateral and non-discriminatory response, was adopted with the support of 97 countries.

India was actively involved in the deliberations on a number of other important resolutions in the First Committee. It co-sponsored a Malaysian resolution reaffirming the validity of the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice that called on all nuclear weapon states to work towards nuclear disarmament. It also voted in favour of a Russian resolution seeking to preserve the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty currently threatened by US plans to build a national missile defence system.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) could not undertake any substantive negotiations during its 2000 annual session in the absence of adoption of its Programme of Work due to lack of consensus on two issues. These were Nuclear Disarmament and Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. The areas on which consensus existed included re-establishment of the Ad-hoc Committees on Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), Negative Security Assurances

(NSAs), re-appointment of Special Coordinators dealing with a ban on transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines (APLs), Transparency in Armaments (TIAs) and procedural reform issues relating to the CD. India, along with a number of other countries including in the Group of 21, remained actively engaged in the work of the CD and efforts to reach a consensus on its Programme of Work.

The 2000 Substantive Session of the UNDC took place in New York from 26 June - 27 July 2000. It addressed two new issues - 'Ways and Means to Achieve Nuclear Disarmament' and 'Practical Confidence-building Measures in the Field of Conventional Arms'. These were discussed in their respective Working Groups in the first year of a three-year cycle of deliberations. These substantive topics were discussed in-depth, including in the NAM Working Group on Disarmament. India made a positive and constructive contribution to the discussions.

The 44th General Conference (GC) of the IAEA was held from 18th - 22nd September 2000, in Vienna. The Indian delegation was led by Dr. R. Chidambaram, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission. The Indian delegation worked with like-minded delegations within and outside the Group of 77 to ensure that the recommendations of the GC supported the IAEA activities in the field of nuclear energy. India also endeavoured to maintain a balanced approach in the GC resolution on 'safeguards' for all the Member States of the Agency without discrimination.

On the issue of financing of technical cooperation, the major donors sought a freeze on contributions to IAEA's voluntary Technical Cooperation Fund at the present levels, whereas the developing countries of G-77 sought a significant increase. Financing of safeguards was tagged with the concept of 'shielding', as the developing countries sought economic relief from increased costs due to the comprehensive safeguards measures under the NPT. The

eventual phasing out of 'shielding' over some 28 years, with member states placed under four slabs, was accepted.

India, along with the G-77, succeeded in getting the Nuclear Technology Review placed as an agenda item for the 44th GC in September 2000.

On 29 April 2000, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) completed the third year of its existence. As an original State Party to the CWC, India has been discharging the various obligations assumed by it. It has taken effective measures to meet all the targets and timelines envisaged in the Convention. Since the entry into force of this Convention, the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW has conducted more than 700 inspections at chemical weapons storage facilities, former production facilities and industrial plant sites in States Parties to the Convention. More than 40 such inspections have been smoothly conducted in India. As a member of the Executive Council since its inception, India has been playing an active role in the deliberations of the Council to oversee the non-discriminatory implementation by States Parties of all obligations assumed under the CWC. As required by the CWC, India completed procedures for national implementation measures with the notification of the Chemical Weapons Convention Act on 28th August 2000, thereby providing statutory powers for the National Authority in implementing the Convention.

The absence of progress in implementing key provisions of the Convention relating to international co-operation continues to be addressed by India, along with other member states, as a matter of concern.

India actively participated in the work of the Ad-hoc Group of States Parties to the BTWC in Geneva during 2000 to negotiate a Protocol on the basis of the agreed mandate. The Indian delegation continued to support strengthening of BTWC through an effective

Protocol containing a balance of security and developmental obligations, including the unimpeded exchange and transfer of biotechnology for peaceful purposes, creating a non-discriminatory and transparent compliance regime.

The 37th Session of the Scientific & Technical Sub-Committee, the 39th Session of the Legal Sub-Committee and the 43rd Session of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) took place during the year. At the Scientific & Technical Sub-Committee meeting, India proposed a phased task plan for implementing space-based integrated natural disaster management system. The Legal Sub-Committee deliberated upon the status of the International Treaties governing use of Outer Space, definition and delimitation of Outer Space, use of nuclear power sources in Outer Space, and the concept of the Launching State. The main recommendation adopted at the 43rd Session of the UNCOPUOS was for a three-year plan on space-based disaster management system.

The Ad-hoc Committee on the elaboration of the Convention against Transnational Organised Crime held its 11th Session in Vienna from 2 - 28 October 2000. The Firearms Protocol, being negotiated under this, contained contentious provisions on 'self-determination', 'definition', 'scope', 'criminalisation' and 'marking of firearms'. The Chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee established working groups for the conclusion of the Protocol and suggested a compromise package deal. The Indian delegation made a constructive contribution to the negotiations on the Firearms Protocol with a view to engender suitable transparency and accountability in international and national practices in the field of firearms. However, no conclusion could be reached. As the Firearms Protocol is linked to the topic of small arms and light weapons, its failure could affect the International Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, scheduled to take place in July 2001. India has been actively involved in the preparatory process for this Conference.

After the nuclear tests in May 1998, India had declared that, as a responsible nuclear weapons State, it had a stake in preventing proliferation and would make its system of export controls more stringent where necessary, including by expanding control lists of equipment and technology to make them more effective and contemporary. This was duly done through an inter-ministerial review, and the recommendations were given effect through the EXIM Policy announced on 1st April 2000. A new Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technology (SCOMET) List replaced the earlier SMET List.

A six-member delegation from the US Department of State visited India from 7 -10 August 2000 to prepare a joint programme in the areas of export licensing and enforcement. An enforcement workshop was organized in Mumbai from 18-22 September 2000 with focus on investigation, case development and prosecution with involvement of customs officials, instructors from the National Academy of Customs, Excise & Narcotics (NACEN), and working level officers. After the visit, the US side was able to better appreciate the strengths of India's export control system. An Indian delegation similarly visited the US in October 2000. A 'Train the Trainers' programme was also held at NACEN in December 2000. The objective of the programme was to create awareness about the dangers of unauthorised trade in dual purpose chemicals/items, and techniques to stem the same.

An MTCR delegation led by Ambassador PekJka Ojanen from Finland, and comprising representatives from France and Canada visited New Delhi in December 2000 to present the MTCR proposal for a Draft International Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation. The Indian delegation explained the problems posed by the underlying basis of MTCR, which amalgamated peaceful space technology with ballistic missile proliferation. An "expose" was provided to the visiting delegation on India's endeavour to indigenously develop all aspects of its space technology programme

as a categorical imperative for socio-economic development. The Indian delegation expressed its clear preference for an open, multilateral and non-discriminatory approach to address the issue of ballistic missile proliferation.

The CCW - Second Annual Conference of Amended Protocol - 11 was held in Geneva in December 2000. The Indian delegation made a statement emphasising India's consistent stand on maintaining a moratorium on exports of landmines and reaffirming that India views the current humanitarian crisis as a consequence of irresponsible transfers and indiscriminate use. India no longer produces non-detectable landmines and has extensively participated in UN-sponsored mine clearance and rehabilitation programme.

The 2nd Prepcom for the UN Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons began in New York from 8 January, 2001. India has a strong interest in this issue in view of the disastrous impact of illicit trafficking in small arms on society at large and the absence of international norms to identify and apportion responsibility as part of overall transparency for such trafficking on the State or non-State actors concerned.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Inter-sessional Support Group meeting on Confidence Building Measures (ISG on CBMs) was held in Singapore from 3 -7 April 2000. Officials from Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Defence participated. The meeting

The 7th ARF was held in Bangkok from 26 -27 July 2000. EAM led India's delegation. The meeting discussed broad issues affecting the security of the Asia Pacific region. DPRK was admitted as a member to the Forum. There was a consensus at this meeting that the Forum should now enter a phase of consolidation rather than expansion. EAM met several of his counterparts on the margins of the ARF. He also participated in a meeting to discuss the Mekong–Ganga Suvanna Phum (Suvarnabhoomi) Cooperation Programme. The initiative was enthusiastically endorsed by the participants (Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and India).

An ARF Workshop on Anti-Piracy was organised by the Indian Coast Guard in collaboration with MEA and MoD on 18-20 October 2000 at Mumbai. Delegations from most ARF countries participated in this Workshop, which was highly commended by all.

The Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement met in Cartagena, Colombia, from 8-9 April 2000. The meeting assumed special significance since it preceded the Millennium Summit and Millennium Assembly of the UN General Assembly.

EAM, Shri Jaswant Singh, led the high level Indian delegation. In his statement at the meeting, EAM reiterated the relevance and importance of NAM and, stressing the need for NAM to avoid any issues that would divide or distract the Movement, also exhorted the NAM members to commit themselves to democratic norms.

The developments at the meeting of significance from the Indian point of view included a strong condemnation of the Taliban. On Terrorism, the Communiqué reiterated support for the Indian proposal for adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. NAM also maintained its position, first expressed during the NAM Foreign Ministers meeting in New York, September 1999, categorically rejecting the concept of the right of Humanitarian Intervention. The Communiqué also included a call for restoration of constitutional legality in States whose governments

had come to power through unconstitutional means and further recommended that this issue be considered by the Movement at its next Summit.

India participated constructively in the meetings of the UN Commission on Human Rights, its Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and discussions on human rights and related questions in the Economic and Social Council as also the UN General Assembly. India's participation in these forums was guided by its stature as the largest democracy, its developing country status and its commitment to the rule of law, promotion and protection of human rights, and an open and transparent society. India reaffirmed the principles of universality and indivisibility of human rights and sought to promote greater understanding among peoples and a culture of tolerance and pluralism. India also called for de-politicisation of the human rights debate; and for strengthening of cooperation, dialogue and national capacity building as the most effective means of promoting human rights. Developments related to standard settings in the field of human rights were closely monitored.

India participated actively in the 56th annual session of the Commission on Human Rights held in Geneva from March 20 to April 28, 2000. The Indian delegation contributed significantly to the deliberations in the Commission by engaging pro-actively on substantive issues as also by building consensus, cutting across entrenched positions. The delegation was guided by India's commitment to the universality of human rights and their promotion and protection without politicisation, as also India's stature as a democratic and pluralistic society. India continued with its policy of calling for an end to politicisation and confrontation.

India co-sponsored 26 resolutions during the 56th Session of the Commission. India moved its biennial resolution on "Tolerance and Pluralism as Indivisible Elements in the Promotion and Protection

of Human Rights' which was adopted without a vote with 60 co-sponsors from both developed and developing countries. India jointly sponsored with Germany a resolution on 'Advisory Services and Technical Co-operation of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' which attracted 50 co-sponsors from both developed and developing countries and was adopted without a vote. India also worked closely with the sponsors of the resolutions on 'Promoting and Consolidating Democracy', 'the Role of Good Governance in the Promotion of Human Rights', 'Human Rights and Terrorism' and the resolution on 'the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan'. In accordance with the long-standing policy of being against selectivity and politicisation, India voted against country-specific resolutions on situation of human rights in Cuba, Iran and Chechnya (Russian Federation) and abstained on those on the Sudan, Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Resolutions on the situation of human rights in Cambodia, Myanmar, Haiti and Afghanistan were adopted without a vote in the Third Committee of the General Assembly. The resolutions on Iran, Iraq, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo were voted upon. India voted against the resolutions on Iran and Sudan. India abstained on the resolutions on Iraq and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This was in keeping with India's principled policy of not supporting country-specific resolutions.

The Fifth Special Session of the Commission on Human Rights was convened on October 17-19, 2000 in Geneva at the request of the League of Arab States to discuss the grave and massive violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people by the Israeli-occupying power. The Special Session adopted a resolution on the subject by a vote of 19 in favour, 16 against and 17 abstentions. India voted in favour of the resolution. The resumed session of the Economic and Social Council held in New York on November 22 adopted a decision incorporating the text of the resolution transmitted by the Special Session of the Commission by a vote of 21 in favour, 19 against and 11 abstentions. India voted in favour of the decision of the Council.

India participated actively in the First Preparatory Committee meeting for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia & Related Intolerance, held in Geneva from May 1-5. India called for a categorical rejection of all theories justifying discrimination on grounds of race and highlighted its own prominent role in the struggle against racism since its independence. India also emphasised the need to pay particular attention to the economic underpinnings of racism and advocated a forward-looking approach for the Conference with focus on strengthening of laws, where necessary, and the role of education and information in changing social attitudes.

Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women visited India from 4-13 November 2000 at the invitation of the GOI to discuss matters within her mandate with Indian interlocutors, specially on trafficking in women. This was part of a 3-nation tour which included Nepal and Bangladesh. During the course of her visit which took her to Delhi, Mumbai and Calcutta, Coomaraswamy met with functionaries of the Government, the National Commission on Women, the National Human Rights Commission, non-governmental organisations and representatives of women's organisations. She also visited prisons and rescue shelters for women. Ms. Coomaraswamy expressed satisfaction that India had the enabling framework to tackle the problem but felt that more needed to be done on implementation.

India was re-elected to the UN Commission on Human Rights at the May session of the Economic and Social Council. A number of eminent Indians continued to serve with distinction as members of important Human Rights Mechanisms and Treaty Bodies. These included Shri Soli J. Sorabjee (Expert Member of the Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights), Shri Kapil Sibal (Chairman-Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights Working Group on Arbitrary Detention), Shri P.N. Bhagwati (Vice-Chairman of the Human Rights Committee and Regional Adviser for the Asia-Pacific Region for Promoting Technical Co-operation

in the field of Human Rights), Shri Abid Hussain, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression) and Shri Arjun Sengupta (Independent Expert on the Right to Development). During the year, Shri R.V. Pillai was elected as a Member of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and Shri Miloon Kothari was appointed as Special Rapporteur for the newly created mandate on the Right to Adequate Housing.

The 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly on “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century” took place in New York in June 2000. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister for Human Resource Development, Dr. M.M. Joshi, and included Members of Parliament, members of civil society, and senior officials. India was one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee for the Session, and chaired the crucial Working Group on “Further Actions and Initiatives on the Beijing Platform for Action”. India’s role in facilitating an agreed outcome from a most contentious debate was widely appreciated.

The Special Session of the UN General Assembly entitled “World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalising World” was held in Geneva on June 26-30 to review the implementation of the Declaration and the Programme of Action agreed at the World Social Summit in Copenhagen in 1995. The Indian delegation was led by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Shri K.C. Pant and included three Members of Parliament. The Special Session adopted a declaration and a final document containing further actions and initiatives to implement the commitments made at the 1995 Summit; the Indian delegation participated actively in the negotiations on these documents, both of which were satisfactory from India’s point of view.

The first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit on children + 10 was held in New York from 30 May to 2 June 2000. India stressed the need to adopt a short, precise and forward looking document which helps in mobilisation of resources, human, financial and technological, for children, as the

outcome of the special session of the General Assembly to be held in 2001. India stressed the problems of terrorism and its nefarious linkages and adverse impacts on children.

External Affairs Minister Shri Jaswant Singh led the Indian delegation to the Ministerial Conference entitled “Towards a Community of Democracies” held in Warsaw on June 25-27, 2000. India played a leading role in the deliberations of the meeting and in finalising the Declaration and the final Communiqué, being one of the eight members of the Convening Group. India’s primary concerns are reflected in both the documents. The Declaration stresses the need for co-operation and for avoiding extraneous bilateral issues between the members. It rejects ethnic and religious hatred, violence and other forms of extremism; lists amongst transnational challenges to democracy-state-sponsored, cross-border and other forms of terrorism. Shri Singh also chaired the Ministerial Panel –II on Sharing Best Practices.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Ms. Sadako Ogata paid a two-day goodwill visit to India on May 4-5 in the framework of visit to South Asian countries including Nepal and Bhutan. She met with representatives of the Government, donor countries, UN Agencies in India and refugee representatives. The main topics of discussions with her Indian interlocutors included inter-alia India’s record on refugee treatment and the status of the local office of UN High Commissioner for Refugees in India. Ms. Ogata expressed satisfaction at India’s historical role in welcoming refugees from other countries.

India participated in the 51st Session of the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in October 2000 and highlighted issues of concern to developing countries. India’s statement on the Annual Theme of the Executive Committee –‘UNCHR at 50 – from Response to Solutions’ identified issues such as tackling of widespread abject poverty and deprivation around the globe, enhancement of the capacities of developing

countries, the link between humanitarian assistance and long term development; and combating forces of bigotry; and hatred as crucial inputs to any preventive strategy.

The eighth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development was held in New York from April 24 to May 5, 2000 and addressed issues relating to agriculture, land resources, trade and financial resources in the context of sustainable development. The Indian delegation, led by Shri T.R. Baalu, Minister of Environment & Forests, emphasised the crucial need for food security in developing countries as well as the role of sustained growth in agriculture, including through the application of suitable technologies, to reduce poverty. India referred to the need for an open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system as well as reform of the international financial architecture so as to ensure broader participation by developing countries in decision-making processes. Shri Baalu also drew attention to the lack of fulfilment by developed countries of commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 to transfer technology and to provide new and additional financial resources to the developing countries for achieving sustainable development.

At the 55th General Assembly, India continued to play an active role in the Second Committee of the 54th GA which examined a range of macro-economic, environmental and development issues. The most important resolution under the environment cluster was the “10-year review of programmes in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment & Development”. It was decided that the 10-year review meeting would be a Summit level meeting, called the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It would be hosted by South Africa in 2002 and would be preceded by a final substantive preparatory session to be held at Ministerial level in May 2002 in Indonesia.

The VI Session of the Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was held in The Hague from November 13 to 25. As Parties could not reach agreement on the modalities of implementing Mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol and other related matters, the Conference was suspended by its President, Mr. Jan Pronk, Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning of the Netherlands and is to resume in May 2001. The main disagreement centred around inclusion of activities related to land-use change and forestry in domestic action by developed countries and in the Clean Development Mechanism. India continued to be the coordinator and spokesman of the Group of 77 and China on the Mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol.

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) considered the establishment of a United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) within the UN System. It was agreed that UNFF would have a universal membership and would be a subsidiary body of ECOSOC operating under the rules and procedures of functional commissions. It would thus work within the framework of the inter-governmental process to which India subscribes.

Shri Babu Lal Marandi, MOS for Environment & Forests participated in the Ministerial Round Table of the Fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Nairobi on 23rd May, 2000 and in the special signing ceremony on 24th May, 2000 which was organised to enable Parties to sign the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety. 31 decisions covering a broad spectrum of themes were adopted at the meeting. 68 countries signed the Protocol, which will regulate the trans-boundary movement of Living Modified Organisms. Shri Marandi made a statement in which he outlined India's commitment to the cause of environment and announced that Government of India would be signing the Bio-safety Protocol in the near future.

India made noteworthy contributions to the Working Group on Agricultural Bio-diversity, by ensuring that the recommendations

of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice on Genetic Use Restriction Technologies were incorporated in the final decisions. Indian concerns for formulating legal measures in user and recipient countries, in respect of Access and Benefit Sharing, to ensure equitable sharing of benefits, were widely recognised. India also succeeded in making recommendations for mandatory disclosure in the patent application of the country of origin of biological resources and associated traditional knowledge use in the development of an invention.

India participated in the 11th Conference of Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Nairobi, 10-20 April 2000. Apart from the official delegation, an NGO contingent from India also attended the conference. India co-sponsored the resolution on 'Elephants' with Kenya and successfully managed to get the ban imposed on the ivory trade extended for another 2 years till the next Conference of Parties. A resolution to uplift the 'Bears' to Appendix-I moved by the Indian delegation was passed with a significant majority. India was elected as the new alternate member in place of Pakistan to the Standing Committee from the Asian Region. India was also elected to the Plant Committee.

The Indian delegation to the First Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly for an Overall Review and the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda, in Nairobi, 8-12 May, 2000 was headed by Shri S.S. Chattopadhyay, Secretary, Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation. He was the Keynote Speaker for the substantive session on "Security of Tenure" on 10th May 2000. He effectively persuaded the UNCHS to contribute annually towards projects in India in as much as India annually contributes US \$ 100,000 to the UNCHS. UNCHS was keenly interested in India's Low Cost Housing Technology and its growing popularity in African countries.

The Global Ministerial Environment Forum, a newly constituted organ of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), held its first

meeting in the form of the 6th Special Session of the Governing Council of UNEP in Malmo, Sweden from May 29-31, 2000. This meeting was held in pursuance of UN General Assembly Resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999 to enable the Ministers of Environment to review important and emerging environmental issues and to chart the course for the future. The Indian delegation to the meeting was led by Shri T.R. Baalu, Minister of Environment and Forests.

The Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2000 was held at Kitakyushu, Japan from 31 August–5 September 2000. The Indian delegation was led by Mr. T.R. Baalu, Minister for Environment and Forests. The conference adopted a Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound Development, 2001-2005 and the Kitakyushu Initiative for a clean Environment.

Parliamentarians from 18 countries participated at the 8th Asia Pacific Parliamentarians Conference on Environment and Development held in Hyderabad from 13-16 December 2000. The conference focussed on the issues of ethics awareness and public education in relation to the subject of Environment and Development. The Indian delegation succeeded in ensuring that developing country perspectives were given primacy and incorporated in the Hyderabad Declaration.

The UN Millennium Declaration adopted at the conclusion of the Millennium Summit of the Heads of State and Government held in New York from September 6 to 8 recognised that the central challenge is to ensure that globalisation becomes a positive force for all the world's people. The Declaration states that while globalisation offers great opportunities, its benefits are very unevenly shared at present, while its costs are unevenly distributed. It also recognises that developing countries and countries with economies in transition face special difficulties in responding to the central challenge of globalisation. Only through broad and sustained efforts to create a

shared future, based upon common humanity in all its diversity, can globalisation be made fully inclusive and equitable. These efforts must include policies and measures at the global level, which correspond to the needs of developing countries and economies in transition, and are formulated and implemented with their effective participation.

The first ever Summit of the Group of 77 (the “South Summit”) was held from April 10-14, 2000 in Havana. Apart from the intensively negotiated Declaration and the Programme of Action, the Summit also adopted “Other Decisions” as the output of the interactive session between Heads of State and Government. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister for Human Resource Development, Dr. Murali Manohar Joshi. India participated actively in the preparatory process for the finalisation of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the South Summit. Both the Declaration and the Programme of Action refer to democracy, the former stressing a commitment to promote democracy and to strengthen the rule of law.

Under the macroeconomic agenda items, the Second Committee of the General Assembly, by endorsing the resolution of the Preparatory Committee of Financing for Development on “Preparations for the substantive preparatory process and the high-level international inter-governmental event on Financing for Development”, decided to postpone the proposed event till the first quarter of 2002. India had been co-chairman of the Working Group in 1999 and continued to underscore the need for making the process viable and meaningful.

The first substantive session of the preparatory committee of the High Level Inter-Governmental Event on Financing for Development was held in New York from 30 May-2 June 2000. It adopted a comprehensive resolution, which included a tentative preliminary agenda. India was able to include in the agenda a clear reference to the problems of developing countries. The 55th General Assembly decided that this event would be held in the first quarter of 2002.

The resolution adopted by the 55th session of the UN General Assembly on the “Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalisation and interdependence”

called on the international community to promote international development co-operation aimed at enhancing growth, stability, equity and the participation of developing countries in the globalising world economy through appropriate measures, including support for structural and macroeconomic reform, foreign direct investment, enhanced official development assistance, capacity building and dissemination of knowledge and technology. Similarly, the General Assembly resolution on “The implementation of the First United Nations Decade for Eradication of Poverty” called on all countries to formulate and implement time-bound programmes for achieving the target set out in the Millennium Summit Declaration of halving by 2015 the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and in this context emphasised the need for strengthening of international assistance to developing countries in their efforts to alleviate poverty by creating an enabling international environment. Both resolutions were actively supported by India.

The substantive session of the UN Economic and Social Council was held in New York from July 5 to August 1, 2000. A Ministerial Declaration was issued at the conclusion of the discussions on the theme for the High-Level Segment “Development and International Co-operation in the 21st Century: The Role of Information Technology in the knowledge based economy”. India’s experience in the utilisation of Information and Communications Technology was praised by several speakers. India also hosted an Asian Regional Meeting to prepare for these discussions.

The 56th Annual Session of Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was held in Bangkok from 1-7 June 2000. 19 countries were led by Ministers. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister of State for Commerce & Industry. The theme topic for this year’s Session was “Development through globalisation and partnership in the twenty first century: an Asia Pacific perspective for integrating developing countries and economies in transition into the international trading system on a fair and equitable basis”. The

Commission adopted the Resolution on Space Technology Applications moved by India and co-sponsored by 8 countries.

In collaboration with the ESCAP secretariat, India organised a Regional Round Table Conference on Information Technology in New Delhi on 21-22 June 2000. The conference was inaugurated by the Minister for Information Technology of India, Shri Pramod Mahajan and attended by the President of the UN Economic and Social Council. In all, 27 member countries of ESCAP participated in the meeting. At the Conference, the problems and issues faced by countries in the region in terms of readiness for the digital era were addressed and awareness about these issues was promoted and enhanced. The declaration adopted at the conclusion of the meeting served as a valuable input for the discussions in the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council.

The 10th UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders was held in Vienna from April 10-17, 2000. The South African Minister of Justice Mr. Manuel Panels was elected President of the Congress. The Colombian Vice President, Mr. Gustavo Bell Lemus was elected as the President of the High Level Segment of the Congress. The Director of India's Central Bureau of Investigation, Dr. Raghavan, was elected Chairman of Committee-I. The main outcome of this Congress was the document adopted by the High Level segment: "Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century". At India's initiative, a reference to terrorism was included in the document along with the commitment of Member States to do their utmost to foster universal adherence to the international instruments concerned with the fight against terrorism.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of the Comprehensive Convention against Transnational organised crime continued to work in Vienna during the year on the draft Convention and its three associated Protocols. The Ad Hoc Committee held its 11th Session from October 2-28. The texts of the Convention and the

Protocols on trafficking in persons and on trafficking in migrants were finalised by the Committee and recommended for adoption. The Committee was unable to agree on the text of the Protocol on Firearms. The diplomatic Conference held in Palermo from December 12-15 provided an opportunity for Member States to sign the Convention and the two agreed Protocols. Negotiations on the text of the Protocol on Firearms were resumed in February 2001.

The Preparatory Commission (prepcom) of the International Criminal Court met from 27 November to 3rd December 2000. 139 countries have now signed the Statute of the ICC, while 27 have ratified it. 60 ratifications are needed for the formal establishment of the Court. The prepcom considered a range of essentially house keeping and administrative matters including financial regulations, budget, a relationship agreement between the Court and the UN Security Council, as also principles governing the headquarters agreements between the Court and Netherlands, where the Court will be located. In addition, there was some debate on the item "Crime of aggression", whose definition is still under negotiation. The next session of the prepcom is scheduled to begin in February. The Court, which is to be a permanent judicial body, will have the authority to investigate and bring to justice individuals who commit most serious crimes of concern to the international community such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

India participated in informal negotiations to convene a Special Session of the United Nations in 2001 devoted to the issue of HIV/AIDS, in all its aspects. India was able to ensure that concerns like access to drugs and treatment, co-infections, poverty, the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS, and the stigma attached to the disease, were adequately reflected in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly.

India continued under the umbrella of the Group of 77, to pilot the resolution on International Co-operation in Humanitarian

Assistance on Natural Disasters from relief to development. This resolution reaffirms the Guiding Principles of humanitarian assistance, recognises the importance of the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality of humanitarian assistance; stresses that humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters should be provided in accordance with and with due respect for the Guiding Principles and calls for innovative mechanisms to ensure timely and adequate natural disaster response. India continued to voice its opposition to the concept of 'humanitarian intervention' and reiterated the necessity for full respect to the Guiding Principles of Humanitarian Assistance. In the spirit of solidarity, India also co-sponsored several resolutions under this agenda item.

The focus of discussions in the Fifth Committee of the 55th session of the UN General Assembly was on the methodology for the scale of assessments for the regular budget, where the US wanted a reduction of the ceiling from 25% to 22% as a precondition for the settlement of its arrears. This proved to be the most complex and the hardest item of the agenda at the 55th session. Negotiations continued till the very end of the regular session and an agreement on the methodology for both the regular scale and the peace-keeping scale was finally concluded only on December 24. With the agreed revision of the methodology, India would be assessed at 0.343, 0.344 and 0.341 per cent for the regular budget for the years 2001, 2002 and 2003 respectively. India was active in the discussions on both scales and India's constructive role in the negotiations was highly acclaimed by the President of the 55th General Assembly, the Chairman of the Fifth Committee and other key delegations from both the developing and the developed countries. As a major troop contributing country, vitally interested in timely reimbursements to member States who participate in peacekeeping operations, India continued to pursue the matter of reimbursements with the UN. During the year, India received payments of \$ 12.07 million from the UN for participation

in peacekeeping operations. As of end October 2000, the United Nations owed India US \$ 84 million.

The Second Committee of the 55th session of the United Nations General Assembly discussed Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations, Science & Technology for Development and Globalisation and Inter-dependence with special reference to information and communication technologies. India highlighted its commitment to Operational Activities for Development of the UN System and stressed the developmental mandate of the United Nations. On the issue of Science & Technology, India stressed the need for review of Trade Related Intellectual Property Services and for promoting transfer of technologies to developing countries. On the issue of globalisation and inter-dependence, India highlighted the need to ensure that globalisation benefits all. India also stressed the need to consider all elements of globalisation, and not simply view it as a process of greater integration of financial flows.

India continued to play a significant and constructive role in the work of the UN Funds and Programmes. As a member of the Executive Boards of the UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF, India ensured that these organisations continued to focus on their primary mandate to assist developing countries in their efforts, pursuant to their national development plans and priorities, for sustainable human development, in particular, through projects directed at eradication of poverty; upliftment of women and ensuring better reproductive health services; and, the needs of children. India saw to it that the Results Oriented Annual Reports did not become an element of introducing conditionalities in the programmes of UN Funds and did not detract from the basic principle of nationally-driven programming.

The India-UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) was presented at a joint meeting of all Executive Boards by India's Planning Commission and won high praise for its conceptual

orientation and identification of two priority areas, namely, gender empowerment and decentralisation. India participated actively at the first Ministerial Level Meeting of UNDP to consider its future role and funding, organised by UNDP in September 2000 in New York.

Prominent visitors from the operational agencies to India included Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA who visited India in September 2000. India maintained its voluntary contributions to the UN Funds and Programmes, emerging as the largest contributor from within the developing nations to UNDP and amongst the five largest of UNFPA, UNICEF Annual Food Programme. New resident representatives to India were nominated by UNICEF (Ms. Maria Rosaria Calivis) and UNFPA (Mr. Francois Farah) during the year.

The annual session of the UNICEF Executive Board was held in New York from 22-26 May 2000. The session had a particular importance, as its inputs were to feed into the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Children. India stressed the need for continued and prompt supply of polio vaccines; continued focus on immunisation against other communicable diseases; the need to focus on adolescence; and the need to concentrate on international action to combat malnutrition and provide adequate safe drinking water and proper sanitation.

The Indian delegation at the 88th session of the International Labour Conference of the ILO held in Geneva was led by Union Labour Minister Dr. Satyanarayan Jatiya. India was nominated to Chair the Conference Committee on Human Resources, Training and Development. Dr. L. Mishra, Secretary (Labour) presided over this Committee. Important social and labour questions including the discussion on the first global report under the follow up to the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work were addressed at this conference.

A Committee of ILO's Governing Board discussed measures

under Article 33 of the ILO Constitution to secure Myanmar's compliance with the recommendations of the Inquiry Commission. The resolution proposed by the Committee was adopted with 257 votes in favour, 41 against and 31 abstentions. The amendments by ASEAN countries to the Committee's proposed resolution were defeated. India's interventions, both during the Selection Committee and the Plenary were supportive of Myanmar. The ILO's Governing Board endorsed the resolution in its November meeting thus setting these measures in force after 30th November 2000.

India was a member of the important Co-ordination Committee of WIPO by virtue of its membership of the Paris Union Executive Committee. Indian experts participated in the WIPO Standing Committees on Information Technology, Law of Patents, Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications, as well as Copyright and Related Rights and contributed effectively in the discussions for creation of international obligations and norms for intellectual property protection in these areas.

India actively participated in the 159th and 160th sessions of the Executive Board of UNESCO held in May and October 2000. The Indian delegation to these sessions was led by Mr. Muchkund Dubey, Member of the Executive Board. The Indian delegation played a very active role in defining the programme priorities of UNESCO both for the next Medium Term Strategy 2001-07 and the next Biennium Programme 2001-02. India actively participated in all UNESCO meetings held during the year and was elected to the Executive Council of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. One Indian site-Darjeeling Himalayan Railway – was inscribed on the World Heritage List taking the total number of Indian sites on the list to 22. For the first time, an Indian proposal for the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was inscribed in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of UNESCO during the 16th session of the Man and Biosphere International Co-ordinating Council. An agreement on

setting up of a UNESCO Chair in Biotechnology at the Indian institute of Science, Bangalore was also signed.

During the year, the following UNIDO meetings were held: Industrial Development Board (22nd Session – 29 May – 22 June, 2000), Programme and Budget Committee (16th Session – 4-8 September, 2000) and Industrial Development Board (23rd Session – 13-17 November, 2000). The main focus in the UNIDO meetings remained the continuing financial difficulties of UNIDO and on how to sustain and make more effective implementation of technical co-operation activities. The donors continued their support at the existing level did not provide any additionality of resources despite the UNIDO Director General's initiatives to carry out administrative and financial reforms. India's contribution to UNIDO was recognised by its DG Mr. Carlos Magarinos who visited India in November. The local Delhi office of UNIDO was upgraded to the status of a Regional Centre.

The Indian delegation played an active role in the deliberations of the World Health Assembly (May 2000) which discussed important issues such as the launching of an Inter-governmental Negotiating Body to negotiate a Framework Convention on Tobacco Control; the roll back Malaria Programme; Revised Drug Strategy; HIV/AIDS and Food Safety. Expressing concern on the increase in communicable diseases, the Indian delegation asked for a reasonable commitment of resources and improvement in delivery systems for facilitating a more focussed implementation of health programmes. During the Ministerial Round Table on the theme "Addressing the Major Health System Challenges", the Indian delegation stated that a single model could not be applied to all countries and a judicious mix of private and government initiatives was required. The first session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control was held in Geneva in October 2000. India was elected as one of the Vice Chairs of the Negotiating Body.

Dr. Jaques Diouf, the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation visited India on 11-12 September, 2000 for discussions with the Indian Government and to review FAO's activities in the country.

India was re-elected to the Commission on Human Rights for a three-year term (2001-2003) at the elections to UN Economic and Social Council Subsidiary bodies held during the resumed Organisational Session of the Council on 3rd May in New York. India was also elected unopposed to the Commission on Sustainable Development, Statistical Commission, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Executive Board of World Food Programme during the same election. India was elected Chairman of the International Sugar Organisation Council at the 18th Session of the Council held in London on 23-24 November, 2000.

At a meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Indian candidate, Shri R.V. Pillai was elected to the Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. At the General Assembly, Shri C.R. Gharekhan was elected to the Committee on Contributions.

India, the largest member of the Commonwealth, is represented in all its important controlling bodies of the Secretariat and Organisations. It is the fourth largest contributor, a major source of expert assistance provided to other Commonwealth countries and a major destination for Commonwealth trainees. India has always demonstrated solidarity with fellow developing nations and their aspirations at the UN. Giving concrete meaning to this solidarity, India augmented its contribution to the Joint Office of

Commonwealth Small States to the UN from US \$ 15,000 to US \$ 75,000 per annum. The gesture was appreciated by the beneficiaries.

In an important development this year, the Legal and Treaties Division of the Ministry conducted a case concerning Aerial Incident of August 10, 1999 against Pakistan in the International Court of Justice and won on preliminary objection to its jurisdiction. Pakistan filed a complaint before the ICJ on September 21, 1999 seeking compensation from India for downing of their naval aircraft on August 10, 1999. India submitted preliminary objections on November 2, 1999 to the jurisdiction of the Court in accordance with the Declaration of India of September 15, 1974 filed under Article 36(2) of the Statute of the Court indicating that disputes between India and Pakistan, which is or has been a Member of the Commonwealth of Nations and disputes covered by multilateral treaties like the UN Charter are excluded.

The International Court of Justice held oral hearings from April 3 – 6, 2000 at The Hague following submission of Memorial by Pakistan and a Counter-Memorial by India on the Preliminary Objections raised by India. The judgment of the Court on jurisdiction was delivered on June 21, 2000, wherein the Court rejected Pakistani Application, by fourteen votes to two and found that it has no jurisdiction to adjudicate upon the claim of Pakistan against India. The Court upheld the validity of the “Commonwealth reservation” invoked by India against Pakistan.

In this connection, the Attorney General of India led a team of experts and advocates from India. JS (L&T) acted as co-agent and counsel/advocate in this case.

In connection with the General Assembly session for the year 2000, the Sixth Committee considered several agenda items including the Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property; United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law;

Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) on the work of its thirty-third session; Establishment of International Criminal Court; Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of Organisation; Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism and Review of the Statute of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal.

A comprehensive convention on Terrorism proposed by India was the highlight of this session. A Working Group of the Sixth Committee considered this draft (Document A/C.6/55/1). According to the draft, an offence is committed if a person lawfully and intentionally carries out an act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to any person, or serious damage to a State or government facility, a public transportation system, or infrastructure facility with the purpose of compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from carrying out any act. An accomplice of that person also commits an offence, as also any person who organizes, directs or instigates others to do so, according to the draft convention. The Convention would require States to make such acts punishable as serious offences under their laws and to either extradite or prosecute the accused persons. The draft Convention also makes provision for mutual legal assistance in investigation and prosecution. States would also be required to ensure that their territories are not used for terrorist installations and training camps, and to take necessary measures to prevent and suppress in their territory, the preparation and financing of any acts of terrorism.

France, on behalf of EU and other like-minded States (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia and Turkey) supported the Indian initiative, in general terms. Malaysia on behalf of the OIC also expressed support for the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, although it submitted its own proposals on the definition of terrorism. Progress made so far is good but several proposals on specific articles remain for consideration in the meeting of the Working Group in February and October 2001

along with the pending issues concerning draft Convention on Suppression of nuclear terrorism.

The UN Preparatory Commission on the establishment of the International Criminal Court is continuing its work with a view to facilitate the early establishment of the Court. It is presently considering the question of the definition of the crime of aggression, financial rules and regulations of the Court, the relationship agreement between the Court and the United Nations, and the question of privileges and immunities. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court which was adopted on 17 July 1998 with 120 votes in favour, 20 abstaining and 7 against, did not come into force so far. Only 14 States (Belgium, Belize, Canada, Fiji, France, Ghana, Iceland, Italy, Norway, San Marino, Senegal, Tajikistan, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela) have ratified the Statute. Entry into force of the Rome Statute requires 60 ratifications.

The work of the International Law Commission (ILC) at its fifty-second session was centered on finalisation of the second and final reading of the topic of State Responsibility and the sub-topic of Prevention under State Liability subject. Dr.P.S.Rao the Legal Adviser of MEA is the Special Rapporteur for the topic on Prevention. Other topics also making progress are: Reservations to Multilateral Treaties; Nationality in Relation to the Succession of States and Unilateral Acts of States. Indian delegation made statements on all these topics in connection with the consideration of the ILC Report by the Sixth Committee.

The Indian delegation made statements on the relevant items in the Sixth Committee in respect of the subjects of international terrorism, Charter Committee, International Law Commission, United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, and on review of the Statute of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal. Our delegation also made statements in the General Assembly on the items relating to the Law of the Sea, cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC) and on the Report of the International Court of Justice.

UNCITRAL also made significant progress on the draft texts regarding receivables financing and electronic signatures and is expected to finalize its work on the draft Convention on the Assignment of Receivables in International Trade in 2001. The Commission also discussed issues relating to the preparation of 'legislative guide on privately financed infrastructure project'. After consideration of consolidated list of legislative recommendation, it was decided that the question of desirability and feasibility of preparing a model law or model legislative provisions covered by legislative guide should be considered by the Commission at its thirty-fourth session in 2001.

Several amendments to the Statute of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal have been adopted to the following effect: a requirement that the Tribunal's members have the requisite qualifications and experience, including legal qualifications and experience as appropriate; to increase the term of office of the members of the Tribunal from three years to four years with the possibility to be re-appointed once; to make provision in the Statute for cases raising a significant question of law to be referred for consideration by the whole Tribunal comprised of seven members, instead of a panel of three members. The amendments will come into effect from 1 January 2001.

The Ministry participated in the law making activities of the UN in various fora: the 39th Session of the UN Sub-committee (Legal) on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space held in Vienna, Austria, from 27 - 31, March 2000; and participated in the 3rd Meeting of Governmental Experts to discuss the draft Convention for the Protection of Under Water Cultural Heritage held in Paris, France, from 2 - 7 July 2000; and also in the international negotiation on Draft Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea, Supplementing the UN Convention Against Trans-national Organised Crime, held in Vienna, Austria, from 9 - 13 October 2000, and the Commission on International Trade Law and its working groups.

The Annual conference of the Asian African Legal Consultative

Committee (AALCC) for the year 2000 was held at Cairo from 19-23 February 2000. It elected Ambassador Dr. Wafik Z. Kamil of Egypt as the new Secretary-General for a term of three years upon the conclusion of the second and final term in office by Mr. Tang Chengyuan of China. Items considered covered several subjects of international law: Report on the Work of the International Law Commission at its Fifty-first Session; Status and Treatment of Refugees; Legal Protection of Migrant Workers; Extraterritorial Application of National Legislation; Sanctions Imposed Against Third Parties; Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property; United Nations Decade of International Law; Follow up of the UN Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an

International Criminal Court; Work of the Preparatory Commission for ICC; United National Conference on Environment and Development; Follow-up; Trade Law Matters.

India has signed/ratified many multilateral/bilateral treaties/agreements in various fields during the year. A list of treaties/agreements entered into by India with foreign countries during the year is given at Appendix IX. A list of instruments of Full Powers issued during the year 2000 for signing treaties/agreements on behalf of India is at Appendix X and a list of instruments of ratification is at appendix XI.

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Foreign Economic Relations

The world economy, which had recorded a robust growth in the year 1999, continued to register a steady growth in the first half of the year 2000. The growth rate of world production in 2000 exceeded 4%, while world trade grew at a rate of 12.5%, the highest growth recorded since 1965. Among the factors that contributed to the improvement in the global economic and financial conditions were the economic recovery of the East Asian region, the steady growth of knowledge-based industries and an improvement in the trends of world trade. Towards the end of the year, however it was seen that there was some decline in the growth registered by the major economies.

While immediate prospects for the world economy improved, the consolidation of global growth and ensuring a more equitable and balanced distribution of the benefits of globalisation remain challenges. Sustained global growth is imperative for development and poverty reduction.

The underlying causes leading to the recessionary trends noticed in some areas of the world in 1998 and 1999 were not mitigated. The risks for developing countries were heightened by the emergence of new fault lines. Oil importing countries were particularly affected by the continued rise of oil prices. The rise in the price of oil was also a reminder of the uncertainties surrounding world economic performance and the volatility of global markets.

The enormous potential and promise of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), across the world also could not obscure the aspect of uncertainties linked to globalisation and its impact especially on the markets of developing countries which remained vulnerable to external shocks. The growing interdependence of the global financial and trading system underscored the need for increased international cooperation and dialogue to bridge the technological and economic divide between developed and developing nations.

Macroeconomic imbalances among the three major world economies were evident, this being seen in the intervention by European monetary authorities in the value of the Euro. The sharp plunge in technology stocks also reflected persisting apprehensions about stock market fluctuations. The impact of falling commodity prices coupled with the growing oil imports bill of developing countries was further compounded by diminishing ODA flows and the shrinking of long-term capital flows to the least developed countries. Crucial investment needs in economic and social infrastructure were adversely affected by these trends.

Asymmetries in the multilateral trading system especially in terms of market access for the developing countries in the developed economy markets were further weakening factors. The “post Seattle” scenario especially revealed the need for restoring confidence in the

W.T.O. process. It was also evident that attempts to employ labour and environmental standards in trade discussions were really disguised forms of “creeping” protectionism. The number of anti-dumping actions by the developed countries against the developing countries has been on the increase. Agricultural production in the developed countries also remains heavily protected and subsidized, thus shutting out a majority of the poor, who live in the rural areas of developing countries, from the fruits of international trade. Special and differential treatment for developing countries guaranteed under WTO provisions must be translated into operational reality. Developed countries should not seek to restrict market access to goods and services and free movement of natural persons, especially at a time when developing countries are being asked to open up their economies and compete in the international economic domain. Macro-fundamentals in the Indian economy continued to be strong. Inflation was modest, despite the increase in oil prices. India’s external reserves reached an all-time high. Exports exceeded targets and the current account deficit was within manageable limits while the fiscal deficit was lower than in the preceding two years. Sectoral reforms continued in many areas. The economy registered a GDP growth rate of 6.4% in the first seven months of the fiscal year. Containing of the fiscal deficit levels, sustaining the growth momentum in exports and acceleration of the economic reform process are all expected to help improve economic growth. The General Index of Industrial Production in fact rose by 5.7% in the first seven months of the fiscal year, while Direct Tax collection also registered an impressive increase of 57.08 % in November over the preceding year’s figures, Indian exports grew by 20.51% in the first seven months of the fiscal year at \$25.01 billion, as against \$20.76 billion in the previous year. India’s trade deficit was estimated at \$5.26 billion, which was lower than the \$5.80 billion in the same period of the last year. Oil imports during April-October were estimated at \$9.73 billion, which was 85% higher than the figure of \$5.27 billion during April-October 1999.

India’s trade and economic relations with other countries continued to register a steady growth during the year. The Ministry

of External Affairs, and the Indian Missions abroad interacted with and assisted the business and industrial houses in promoting foreign trade and Indian investment abroad. The European Union continued to be India’s principal trading partner. The other major trading partners were the USA, Japan, China, UAE and Russia. Major commodities of India’s exports included agricultural and allied products, marine products, iron ore, leather goods, gems & jewellery, drugs & pharmaceuticals, chemicals and related products, engineering goods, electronic goods and textiles.

A happy development for Indian food grain exporters was the withdrawal in September 2000 by Rice Tec Inc., a Texas based US company, of some of its claims in the US patent which it had obtained to market a new variety of rice grown in the U.S.A as basmati rice. The Government of India had contested the patent in the US Patent and Trade marks office, and Rice Tec’s withdrawal of four of its claims to uniqueness in support of naming the new variety of rice as basmati rice has reduced the possibility of Rice Tec’s patent being used to interfere in the export of Indian basmati rice.

The single largest item in India’s export basket is diamond and India is the largest exporter of cut and polished diamonds in the world. Diamond exports from India have multiplied 1200 times in a span of thirty years, reaching \$ 6.2 billion in 1999. India processes nearly 70% of the rough diamonds mined in the world and contributes to 50% of the world diamond market in value terms.

India has made great strides in the pharmaceutical industry and is now one of the leading exporters of pharmaceuticals. Indian medicines and formulations have penetrated markets in all the developed and developing countries of the world. The growth in the export of Indian pharmaceuticals in the recent years has been quite impressive. During the last three financial years the annual exports exceeded Rs. 5000 crores and there is a great potential for further growth. Nevertheless, Indian pharmaceutical exporters encounter certain problems in many countries, such as difficulties in registration of Indian drugs and non-tariff barriers. In August 2000 a meeting

chaired by the Secretary (Economic Relations) was held in the Ministry to discuss such problems and remedial measures. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Ministries of Health, Commerce & Industry and Chemicals & Fertilizers and business organisations. Suggestions and observations of the participants of the meeting were circulated to Indian Missions abroad for follow-up action.

India continued to face trade defence instruments like anti-dumping duties and countervailing duties, particularly in the EU countries, in its exports in such sectors as textiles, pharmaceuticals and iron and steel, where Indian exports are competitive. India remains one of the most targeted countries for anti-dumping action by the European Union. Lately there have been problems in India's steel exports to the United States of America as well. Under pressure of the US steel manufacturing companies the U.S Government initiated in November 2000, anti-dumping and countervailing duty investigations against certain steel products from India. Efforts to avert imposition of duties are being made by the Indian side. India has been encountering difficulties in its textile exports to EU countries because of the European Union's refusal to release exceptional flexibilities (using the quota of one category in some other category) since 1997. Following the Government of India's sustained efforts in this regard the European Union decided in September 2000 to release 3500 tonnes of exceptional flexibilities making it possible for Indian textile exports to EU countries to go up by Rs. 300 crores.

Export promotion activities included the holding of a number of trade fairs, exhibitions and seminars both at home and abroad. The India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) organised the annual India International Trade Fair in New Delhi in November 2000, (IITF-2000). The exhibition was a showcase of India in diverse fields such as industry, infrastructure, technology, telecommunications, services, human resources, agriculture and agrotechnology, consumer durables, food and food products, health care, textiles, giftware and kitchenware. Over 5000 companies including 300 from abroad

participated in the event. An Asia Pacific Millenium Fair (ASPAT 2000) was also concurrently held with the IITF - 2000. It was jointly organised by the United Nations, ESCAP, Ministry of Commerce and Industry and ITPO. Among the other trade fairs organised by the ITPO were an international leather fair in Chennai in January/February 2000 and in Calcutta in March 2000, a Food Expo in New Delhi in March 2000 and a textiles fair in New Delhi in October 2000. The other trade promotional events in India included the World Book Fair 2000 in New Delhi organised by the National Book Trust of India in Feb 2000, Plastindia 2000 in New Delhi by the Plastindia Foundation in Feb 2000, Jute India by Jute Manufactures Development Council in Calcutta in Feb 2000, Metals & Metallurgy 2000 by Telcon Projects India Pvt. Ltd. in New Delhi in Sep 2000, Asia Pacific Expo 2000 by the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry in New Delhi in September 2000, Delhi International Jewellery & Watch Exhibition by ITE India Pvt. Ltd in New Delhi in Oct. 2000 and an Indian Railway Equipment Exhibition by the Confederation of Indian Industry in New Delhi in Oct. 2000.

Indian companies and enterprises participated in several trade promotional events abroad such as the EXPOCOMER-2000 in Panama in March 2000, the Harrods Indian Food Millennium Promotion-2000 in London in August 2000, the Bucharest International Consumer Goods Fair TIBCO-2000 in Bucharest, the Vietnam International Trade Fair in Hanoi in Oct. 2000 and the Expo-2000 World Exhibition held in Hanover, Germany from June-October 2000. The Indian Missions abroad made all possible efforts to ensure wide participation of foreign enterprises in trade promotional events in India, and Indian enterprises in events abroad. The Missions themselves organised a number of trade fairs/exhibitions with a view to promoting India's exports.

The landmark visits of the President of the United States of America to India in March 2000 and the Prime Minister to USA in September 2000 greatly helped in strengthening and expanding the

economic and commercial relations between India and the U.S.A. The year under report also witnessed a number of exchanges of economic and trade delegations, both official and non-official, between India and other countries. Among the notable official trade delegations to India was the delegation from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) of the Government of Japan that visited New Delhi in March 2000 to participate in the fourth round of MEA-MITI Dialogue. This round of talks highlighted the importance and mutual advantages of increased India - Japan cooperation in the field of information technology, India's growing strength in which has been widely recognised.

In a significant development in India's commercial relations with other countries, the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement which had been signed on 28 December 1998 came into force from 1 March 2000. The Agreement is expected to help consolidate and expand the economic and commercial relations between India and Sri Lanka through increased bilateral trade and investment.

The Ministry continued its policy of supporting and promoting Indian investment abroad. The Government of India has been progressively simplifying the procedures for granting approval to proposals of overseas investment. Notable among the investment destinations were the U.S.A, U.K., U.A.E, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Mauritius in such areas as engineering and construction, software, telecommunciations, chemicals & pharmaceuticals, iron & steel and consultancy. The Ministry worked with other governmental bodies, business houses and Indian Missions abroad to explore the possibilities of widening and expanding India's overseas investment.

The Ministry actively supported the proposals of ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) for petroleum exploration activities in other countries. The OVL has been expanding its activities in recent years. It already has a presence in Vietnam and is considering collaborations in some other countries for exploration activities.

An important development in India's cooperation with other

countries in the area of energy was the setting up of a dialogue forum with the Government of Japan to exchange views on India-Japan energy cooperation. The first round of India-Japan Energy talks was held in New Delhi in March 2000. The Indian side was represented by the Ministries of Power, Petroleum & Natural Gas, Mines & Minerals, Non-Conventional Energy Sources, Environment & Forests & External Affairs and The Planning Commission and the Japanese side by the Ministry of International Trade & Industry, Govt. of Japan, and the Embassy of Japan, New Delhi. The Talks focussed on exchanging information and promoting mutual understanding of each other's energy policy and the direction of future cooperation.

India's efforts to develop energy from non-conventional sources have showed positive results and foreign collaborations in this area have also been developing. Recently, the Ministry of Non Conventional Energy Sources introduced a scheme to demonstrate in neighbouring and other developing countries, the wind energy turbines produced in India, with a view to promoting their exports. The Ministry of External Affairs circulated the scheme to certain countries, several of which have responded positively to the offer.

Exchanges of trainees between India and other developing countries under the Colombo Plan and Technical Cooperation Programmes continued. Under these programmes, Government of India nominees participated in training programmes in countries like Thailand and Indonesia in such areas as health & medicine, engineering, telecommunication, finance management, irrigation, fisheries, housing and export promotion.

The Ministry continued to interact closely with various governmental and other bodies in the matter of promoting exports and overseas investments. It is represented in the governing bodies of OCCI, ITPO, IRCON Ltd., WAPCOS and ONGC Videsh Ltd. It encouraged and supported efforts of non-governmental organisations to promote India's economic and commercial relations with other countries. The Ministry extended its support to the Asia-

Pacific Region Micro-Credit Summit in New Delhi being organised in February 2001 by the All India Women's Conference (AIWC), New Delhi, which is a national level NGO for the social and economic uplift of women and children.

Some of the countries that had imposed certain restrictive economic measures against India following India's nuclear tests in May 1998 have progressively removed them. The Government of India has always maintained that unilateral restrictive measures against India are unjustified and counter productive and that they impede the free flow of trade, technology and capital and have an adverse impact on mutually beneficial economic interaction.

The United States of America has lifted several of the restrictive measures. As of now 52 entities stand removed from the list of over 200 Indian entities identified in 1998 for US export control. Sweden, Germany, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands have resumed development cooperation with India.

India continued to play an active role in various international organisations and multilateral and regional groupings. At various multilateral fora, including the WTO, India continued to flag attention to important economic issues, especially in the context of developing countries. The need for sustained interaction between developed and developing countries on matters concerning trade, investment, technology flows and aid was stressed. India emphasised that the developing countries should evolve common strategies to protect their fundamental and common economic concerns.

The year under review saw an intense multilateral dialogue that helped to highlight the problems of development, and the resolve of the developing countries to bring their economic concerns to the forefront of the global governance agenda. It was recognised that technology and trade competitiveness would be key determinants of economic development, and that the economics of the future would be strong in knowledge-based industries and entrepreneurship. Full

participation of the developing countries in the global information society is an immediate necessity if the populations of developing countries are to benefit from globalisation. India therefore stressed that all aspects of technology flows from North to the South would be fundamental to the dialogue between the developed and developing countries. Furthermore, a common understanding would have to be achieved between the North and the South of the elements of sustainable social and economic development, as well as participatory ways to achieve these objectives. A global convergence on development would have to be reached.

At the South Summit held in Havana, Cuba, in April 2000, for the first time, developing countries met at the Summit level, to seek solutions to the array of urgent development problems, and for initiating a dynamic coordination process among the G77. The Summit discussed four broad themes: globalisation of the world economy, North-South relations, South-South cooperation, and knowledge and technology. Under each of these themes, the validity of the joint G77 endeavour was reaffirmed and there was clarity in spelling out objectives. India played an active and leading role in the discussions in Havana and helped the Summit to highlight the main concerns of the developing countries, and to identify action needed to be taken within the South-South and the North-South context to bring development issues in focus in all multilateral institutions and policy-making processes.

It was seen that there is little consensus between the North and the South about how globalisation affects people or how it should be steered. India recognised that potentially, the energy inherent in globalisation could lead to prosperity for the developing countries if international trade, financial and economic arrangements were also designed to promote human welfare, and preserve cultural diversity, instead of just helping the affluent to accumulate greater wealth. The crucial factor in poverty reduction would be the international enabling environment - the extent to which market access is provided to developing country exports, the scope of debt reduction and increased

development assistance, the access to technology, and the structure of the world trading regime and international financial institutions.

While it was acknowledged that a vibrant market economy can be the engine of long-term sustainable development, market forces must be guided to maximise welfare and avoid social distress. Economic growth must go with the needs of development, respect for the environment, and investment in education and health for all. India expressed itself in favour of moves that would channel as much as possible of the gains of globalisation into time-bound poverty eradication initiatives. Poverty eradication was defined as the central challenge for the 21st century. Human development would be essential for realising human rights, and such human development would have to be realised universally through stronger international action. The right of development and the right to poverty eradication could not be lost sight of, and trade, investment, technology and aid would have to serve the primacy of these rights.

As a founder member of the 'Group of Fifteen' (G-15) since its formation at the time of the NAM Summit in Belgrade in 1989, India continued to play an active role in the deliberations, projects and activities of G-15.

The Tenth G-15 Summit was held in Cairo from 13-20 June 2000. Shri Krishan Kant, Hon'ble Vice President, led the high-level Indian delegation, which included the Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Murasoli Maran. The Summit meetings focussed on a variety of issues and themes of critical importance to countries of the South: global developments in the 21st century and prospects of the South; impact of globalisation; alleviation of poverty and external debt; strengthening of the multilateral trading system to make it more equitable; North-South Dialogue; revamping of the international financial architecture; transfer of technology; South-South Cooperation; and Peace, Disarmament and Development. The Summit recommended early action on issues of importance to countries of the South as proposed under the UNCTAD-X Declaration and Plan of Action (February 2000, Bangkok) and the

G-77 South Summit Declaration and Plan of Action (April 2000, Havana). At the meetings, the Vice President and Commerce Minister articulated India's concerns on major issues - e.g., principled negation of any endorsement of a new WTO round, ensuring attention to the special and differential needs of developing countries under the WTO, renewed focus on tangible and effective G-15 projects, revamping of the international financial architecture, etc. These were endorsed by several member countries and incorporated in the Joint Communiqué issued at the conclusion of the Summit.

The G-15 Foreign Ministers met in Mexico City from 30-31 October 2000 to review the implementation of the decisions taken at the Xth G-15 Summit, and to prepare for the XIth Summit to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia in May 2001. The high-level Indian delegation was led by Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs. The Meeting considered a wide range of issues including poverty alleviation, trade and investment, environmental issues, information and communications technologies, incentives for small and medium enterprises, reform of the international financial architecture and human resources development. The Indian delegation played an active role in shaping discussions on crucial issues on the agenda, particularly poverty alleviation and cooperation in human resources development, for which Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, was the lead Speaker. The Meeting adopted a consensus Statement on key issues on the agenda. India's concerns on trade, external debt, poverty alleviation, environmental issues, human resource cooperation, etc., were fully reflected in the Statement, issued at the end of the Meeting.

A meeting of G-15 Solar Energy Technology Experts was held in New Delhi in December 2000.

Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee wrote to the Egyptian President, Egypt being the Chairman of G-15, that joint action by G-8 and G-15 emanates from a "community of interests" between the developing and developed countries, and would contribute

significantly to the international consultative process on the priority issues of the global economic agenda.

India continues to be in favour of regular consultations between the developed and developing countries. Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Murasoli Maran, said in his address at the G-15 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, at the Xth G-15 Summit in Cairo in June 2000, that an intensive dialogue between G-15 and G-8 is advisable before we negotiate with international bodies. In order to upgrade the level and content of such dialogue, it would be useful to have meetings between the Trade as well as the Foreign Ministers of G-15 and G-8. This suggestion received wide support from the G-15 member countries.

India welcomes the decision of the G-8 Okinawa Summit held in July 2000 to reach out to developing countries to help them face the challenges posed by globalisation. The benefits of globalisation and information technology have bypassed large sections of society in developing countries. The resolve expressed at the Okinawa Summit to make efforts to bridge the 'Digital Divide' was therefore encouraging. Joint initiatives in a true spirit of partnership would require to be undertaken by the developed and developing countries to face these challenges and address the multitude of problems before us: poverty alleviation, debt reduction, public health, and to thereby ensure sustainable development. Given the importance of trade in promoting growth and reducing poverty in developing countries, the recognition by the Okinawa Summit of the need to strengthen the multilateral trading system to address the legitimate concerns of developing countries was a positive sign.

India's relations with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have intensified considerably over the previous years. The OECD has been involving emerging economies, such as India, in a dialogue on important economic and trade issues. India participates in the OECD Special Dialogue with non-member countries and in several OECD events pertaining to small & medium enterprises, taxation, global biodiversity, agriculture, etc.

India takes active part in all G-77 initiatives and endeavours aimed at promoting greater South-South Economic Cooperation as contained in the Caracas Plan of Action (1981) and the San Jose Plan of Action (1997). India believes that recent developments pertaining to globalisation of the world economy and the ongoing financial crisis in many developing countries only strengthen the rationale for intensifying G-77 economic cooperation activities. India supports G-77 measures addressing issues of common concern to developing countries whether in the context of globalisation of the world economy, reforms in the international financial architecture, or with regard to interacting closely for monitoring the interests of developing countries in international organisations like the WTO and international financial institutions which impact on the international climate for trade and investment.

Dr. Murali Manohar Joshi, Hon'ble Union Minister for Human Resource Development and Science & Technology, led the Indian delegation to the 'Group of 77' (G-77) South Summit held in Havana from 11-14 April 2000. The Summit deliberated on four broad themes: Globalisation; Knowledge and Technology; South-South Cooperation; and North-South relations. The Summit stressed the need for further strengthening the rule-based multilateral trading system to make it more fair and equitable, taking into account the needs of developing countries, and called upon industrialised nations to fully address the implementation issues of the Uruguay Round Agreements of concern to developing countries. Inter alia, it called for improved market access for goods and services of developing countries to the industrialised nations, and opposed all protectionist measures under the guise of labour standards and environment. While the Summit stressed the importance of the developing countries obtaining preferential access to technology and resources of the industrialised countries, it also stressed that developing countries should cooperatively harness the potential of their own knowledge and technology, as well as human resources. The Summit further underlined the importance of the developing countries forging common positions in international fora on issues of concern to them.

It was agreed that the North-South dialogue should be revitalised in order to ensure that development issues become central to this dialogue. In this context, the Summit deliberations referred to the importance of enhancement of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries, rescheduling of debt, the need for a new international financial architecture, and of a multilateral trade regime that takes development requirements into account.

India played an active and leading role in the discussions in Havana. It was also instrumental in helping the Summit to highlight the main concerns of the developing countries, and to identify action needed to be taken within the South-South and North-South context to bring development issues in focus in all multilateral institutions and policy making processes. Participating delegations endorsed this approach to South-South Cooperation. The documents finalised at the Summit, i.e. Havana Programme of Action and the Havana Declaration, reflect these priorities.

The 24th G-77 Annual Ministerial Meeting was held in New York on 15th September 2000 at the time of the United Nations General Assembly Meeting. EAM led the Indian delegation. The meeting reaffirmed the decisions of the South Summit held in Havana in April 2000 and committed the G-77 to the speedy and effective implementation of the Havana Programme of Action and other decisions of the South Summit. At the meeting, India stressed the need for unity and determination on part of G-77 to implement the decisions of the South Summit, and the need to ensure that the global agenda did not ignore the right to development and the right to poverty eradication. In this context, India raised economic, social and trade issues in the light of the Okinawa G-8 Summit, the UN Special Session in Geneva in June 2000, and the ongoing WTO debate.

ECDC (Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries) & TCDC (Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries) were actively pursued as a cost-effective modality for South-South Technical Cooperation and as a means of realising collective self-reliance.

India continued to emphasise the need that the South Centre (Geneva based academic body consisting of 46 members from G-77 / NAM) should re-examine its work methods with a view to optimise use of existing resources.

India is an active participant in IOR-ARC (Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation). It is participating in four projects under the IOR-ARC including "IOR-ARC Business Centre", "IOR-ARC Chair," "Trade Promotion Programme" and "Investment Facilitation and Promotion". India is also participating actively in projects being coordinated by other member countries.

The meetings of IOR-AG (Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group) and IOR-BF (Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum) were held in July 2000 in Maputo. Representatives from India and other IOR countries participated in the meetings. The meetings reviewed the progress of IOR projects and had fruitful discussions that provided useful inputs in the consideration, formulation and implementation of the projects in the Work Programmes of IOR-ARC.

The Ministry of External Affairs actively pursued the ongoing inter-ministerial consultation on the finalisation of Government's proposals on the mandated negotiations relating to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (AOA). It worked closely with the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that India's proposals reflects national-level concerns to protect the interests of our farmers, and to vigorously safeguard our food security.

At various multilateral meetings, India stressed that the iniquities, imbalances and anomalies in existing WTO agreements should be removed and that these imbalances had come to light more dramatically during their implementation in the last five years. Onerous obligations had been imposed on the developing countries and market access for their products still remained a mirage. New methods had been found for keeping out the goods of developing countries from developed markets, replacing tariff barriers with non-tariff barriers like health and safety standards. It was therefore imperative that the issues of implementation of Uruguay Round

Agreements are addressed upfront and key imbalances removed. Pressures to observe strict core labour standards and widening of the environment window to restrict and deny market access of the products of developing countries also do not bode well for the multilateral trading system. Moves to strengthen “coherence” between WTO and Bretton Woods institutions were a similar cause for concern. India emphasised that groupings like the G-15 have a major responsibility in pressing the concern of developing countries to the top of the WTO agenda.

India’s dialogue partnership with ASEAN was further consolidated by the robust structure of India-ASEAN interaction in various fields such as trade & investment, science & technology, tourism, human resource development, and transport & infrastructure. Such linkages are expected to intensify in the coming years.

India, in its capacity as a Full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, participated in the 33rd ASEAN Post Ministerial Conferences (PMC) in Bangkok on 28 & 29 July 2000. The Indian delegation was led by the External Affairs Minister. In his interventions at the PMC meetings, EAM emphasised the need for early action in regulating money flows, whose volumes are several times that of trade in goods and services. Commenting on the ‘Digital Divide’, EAM said that the approach of governments should be to use information technology (IT) as a tool for economic development, and the Internet for public good. EAM conveyed India’s commitment to participate in infrastructure and other development projects in the Mekong River Basin. EAM also stressed the importance of actual delivery on proposal and agreed projects. In addition, EAM had productive bilateral meetings with a number of his counterparts.

As part of ASEAN-India cooperation in the field of advanced materials, a Joint ASEAN-India Workshop on high-energy rare earth magnets was held in Kuala Lumpur on 23-25 August 2000, representing the successful culmination of the ASEAN-India cooperative project on such magnets. In addition to scientists from

India and ASEAN, a number of entrepreneurs and industrialists from India and ASEAN attended the workshop. Besides promoting closer contacts between the scientists of India and ASEAN, the project has resulted in a better understanding of the technology involved in the fabrication and applications of such composite material magnets and is expected to lead to commercial spin-offs for the Indian magnet industry.

A Joint ASEAN-India Workshop on Human Resource Development was held in New Delhi on 16 & 17 October 2000. The objective of the Workshop was to find practical ways and means for implementing those recommendations of the Joint Study on Indian and ASEAN capabilities and complementarities in the HRD sector which had been accepted by the ASEAN-India Joint Cooperation Committee at its meeting in March 2000. A number of thrust areas were identified at the Workshop, such as accreditation and quality management, IT and management.

The Hon’ble Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, H.E. Dato Seri Syed Hamid Albar, delivered a lecture in New Delhi on 9th October 2000 on ‘India-ASEAN Partnership: Challenges and Opportunities’ under the ASEAN-India Eminent Persons’ Lecture Series Programme, which has been launched with the objective of promoting awareness about the reality and potential of the India-ASEAN partnership.

ASEAN’s Sub-Committee on Space Technology and Application (SCOSA) has favourably considered the prospect of ASEAN-India collaboration on space technology in two areas:

- a) Capacity building, including training, formal education, on-job attachment and exchange of scientists; and
- b) Use of IRS data for environmental management such as forest fire monitoring, and marine and coastal management.

At the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conferences in Manila in July 1998, India had offered to provide training in Information Technology to 100 candidates from ASEAN countries. Accordingly 94 candidates

were nominated for a six week training programme by the following ASEAN countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Wholly financed by the Government of India, the training programme was conducted on behalf of the MEA by NUT, a reputed private sector company in the field of IT training.

EAM led the Indian delegation to the First Ministerial Meeting of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) initiative held in Vientiane (Lao PDR) from 9-13 November 2000. The MGC is an initiative by India and five ASEAN countries - Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Lao PDR and Myanmar for cooperation in tourism, culture, education, as well as transport and communication. The ministers also formally launched the MGC, which had been announced earlier in a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of India, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar and Lao PDR at the time of the ASEAN PMC in July 2000. The meeting adopted the 'Vientiane Declaration', which covers cooperation in the above areas. The MGC will meet annually at the ministerial level in order to review the implementation of the agreed projects.

Cooperation in tourism envisaged by the Vientiane Declaration includes strategic studies for joint marketing, establishment of networks among tourism training institutions, and expansion of multi-modal communication and transportation linkages among MGC countries to encourage travel and tourism, besides promotion of package tours to famous cultural, religious and eco-tourism sites in MGC countries. Under culture, the Declaration covers promotion of joint research in the dance, music and theatrical forms of the MGC countries, organisation of round tables for journalists, writers and literary experts, performing arts, etc., as well as the conservation of heritage sites, monuments and old manuscripts in MGC countries. Besides, the Declaration commits the MGC countries to make common efforts for expanding the export market for their handicrafts and traditional textiles. In education, the cooperative activities under the Declaration include promotion of exchange of students and faculty

between recognised technology and management institutions, and MGC scholarships for outstanding students in specific subjects, as well as establishment of networking and twinning arrangements among MGC universities, particularly in social sciences, humanities, engineering and area studies. In the area of transport & communication, the cooperative activities mentioned in the Declaration include making efforts to develop transport networks in the region, in particular the East-West Corridor project and the Trans-Asian Highway, promotion in cooperation in air services and linkages in the region, and cooperation in the development of IT infrastructures and networks.

India considers BIMST-EC, a sub-regional economic grouping of the countries along the Bay of Bengal, as an important initiative for regional cooperation. Formed in 1997, BIMST-EC is an important component of India's 'Look East' policy. BIMST-EC is also a forum where member countries can work together to revive the traditional civilisational linkages which have been neglected during the colonial phase of history. India participates actively in BIMST-EC to give the grouping substantive content and make it beneficial for the peoples of these countries. Thus, India continued to play an important role in various BIMST-EC meetings in working out the modalities for working together in the sectors identified for cooperation under BIMST-EC, e.g., trade and investment, energy, transport and communication, tourism, technology, etc.

The Trade Ministers of BIMST-EC countries met in New Delhi on 27th April 2000. Recognising the importance of well-developed transport and communication facilities for enhanced economic cooperation in the BIMST-EC region, the Ministers called for a cohesive and well-coordinated approach to ensure early implementation of the agreed projects. India was chosen to function as the lead country for the transport & communication sector. The Meeting further recognised that Intellectual Property Rights are a major area of concern for developing countries. Also, with electronic commerce (e-commerce) playing an increasingly important role in

international business, the Meeting recognised the need for member countries to keep abreast of developments in this field. It was agreed that India would be the focal point for possible initiatives in e-commerce, including the launch of e-BIMST-EC. The Ministers stressed the importance of a clear work programme to implement their shared vision of a Free Trade Area in the BIMST-EC region.

The Third BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting was held in New Delhi on 6th July 2000. At the Meeting, India took over the Chairmanship of BIMST-EC from Bangladesh. The Ministers noted that with the global economy on a recovery path after the financial crisis, this was the right time to impart momentum to BIMST-EC by enhancing economic, commercial and technical cooperation among the member countries, both at the government and at the private sector levels. It was felt that in addition to tangible co-operation initiatives, BIMST-EC should focus on the software aspects of such co-operation: as a first step, member countries should expeditiously initiate efforts to compile rules and regulations, particularly in the areas of transport & communication and tourism; India's offer to undertake this compilation was welcomed. The Ministers stressed the need for monitoring of the Action Plans under each sector and sub-sector for early and effective implementation. In view of the importance of the tourism sector, the Meeting urged the member countries to redouble their efforts. India reiterated its offer to set up a BIMST-EC Internet portal to facilitate trade and investment exchanges and promote e-commerce. In the Energy sector, it was decided to enhance co-operation in areas such as sharing of energy-related information and data, sharing of technology and expertise, and co-operation in energy-development programmes. They also recognised the threat posed by * terrorism to peace, stability and economic development.

The BIMST-EC "Expert Group on Technology" had its first meeting in New Delhi on 18-19 December 2000. Experts from the BIMST-EC countries, namely Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand attended the meeting. The meeting was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Shri Bachi Singh Rawat, Minister of State for Science and Technology.

The meeting adopted an 'Agreed Statement' on Cooperation in the Technology Sector and agreed upon an Action Plan for cooperation in this sector for the period 2001-2005. The member countries recognised the need to enhance the technological capabilities of the BIMST-EC region in order to develop interaction between R&D and industry for commercial benefit through quality production. The meeting recognised the need to facilitate the growth of technology-intensive ventures and encourage innovation for the development of new and appropriate technologies, as well as the importance of making concerted efforts to overcome the 'Digital Divide' within the BIMST-EC region. The meeting identified a number of priority areas for mounting regional projects and cooperative programmes: e.g., agro-food science & technology, including storage and preservation, soil and water management, agricultural technology & agro-instrumentation, biotechnology, food technology, soil & water management, medical science & instrumentation, herbal drugs, electronics & information technology, oceanography, disaster mitigation & management, environment-friendly technologies, etc.

Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) was entrusted to coordinate Indian Industry participation in the G-15 Trade Exhibition, which was held in Cairo, in June 2000.

ASSOCHAM has functioned as a nodal agency for commercial activities of Bangladesh India Myanmar Sri Lanka Thailand - Economic Cooperation (BIMST-EC). A special meeting of the BIMST-EC Business Forum was held in June 2000 and of its Economic Forum in July 2000.

The Technical Cooperation Division offers technical assistance under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP) to 144 developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Gulf and the Pacific Island countries.

For the purposes of this report, reference to ITEC will also include SCAAP (under which only civil training is imparted). The various fields covered under the programme are Animal Husbandry, Audit and Accounts, Banking & Finance, Diplomacy, Drugs and Pharmaceuticals, Educational Planning and Administration, English Language, Entrepreneurship, Food Processing, Human Resource Planning, Information Technology Journalism & Mass Communication, Labour Administration and Employment relations in a global economy, Manpower Planning, Meteorology, Management, Oceanography, Packaging, Remote Sensing, Parliamentary studies, Rural Development, Small Scale Industries, Sugarcane Production Technology, Standardisation, Statistics, Small Business Development, Telecommunications, Textile Technology and Wild Life Management.

The programme has earned goodwill for India and has boosted its image of having indigenous technological skills and capabilities. The demand for assistance under ITEC from the developing countries has increased during the years. The budget allocation for the year 2000-2001 has been enhanced to Rs.42.5 crores as compared to Rs. 36 crores last year.

The ITEC assistance is granted under the following four categories:

- i) Training (both Civil and Military)
- ii) Projects and project-related assistance such as supply of equipment, consultancy services and feasibility studies
- iii) Deputation of experts
- iv) Study visits of senior officials/decision makers to India

Under the Civil training, expenses on tuition fees, living allowances, study tours, emergency medical assistance as well as return international air fares are borne by the Ministry of External Affairs.

During 2000-2001 (April-November), 788 slots have been availed of by various countries as against 2178 earmarked for the current

year. Training institutes imparting different courses are at Annexure XIII. Countrywise position about the ITEC slots earmarked is at Annexure XIV.

During the period under report 308 slots have been utilized under Special Commonwealth and African Assistance Plan (SCAAP). Country wise position about the SCAAP slots earmarked is at Annexure XV.

Under Military training nominees from friendly countries were given courses in all the three wings of Defence services including National Defence College, New Delhi and Defence Services Staff College, Wellington. The training covered fields such as Security and Strategic Studies, Defence Management, Artillery, Electronics, Mechanical, Marine and Aeronautical Engineering, Anti-marine Warfare, Hydrography; Logistics and Management and Qualitative Assurance Services.

Expenses on Military Training including international airfare for ITEC I Category candidates are met by the Ministry of External Affairs. For ITEC-II category candidates, expenditure is partially covered under ITEC and partially (international travel) shared with the partner country. During 2000-2001, 247 slots for long and short term military training courses were offered under ITEC. So far, 192 slots have been utilized. Under Self-Financing Scheme 206 slots were allocated and 51 slots have been utilized. On reciprocal basis some slots were offered to USA, UK, France and Bangladesh. List of beneficiary countries of ITEC Military Training Programme are at Annexures XVI to XIX.

Under the Projects, an Entrepreneurship and Technical Development Centre (ETDC) in Senegal was completed and handed over to the Government of Senegal by our Ambassador in a ceremony in June, 2000. Joint Secretary (TC) travelled to Dakar for this occasion. The cost of the project was Rs.13 crores.

In Namibia, a Plastic Technology Demonstration and Common Facility centre, about 800 kms from Windhoek was established at a

total cost of Rs.3.40 crores. The implementing agency was National Small Industries Corporation.

Under the Study visits Programme, senior decision makers from various countries are invited to India for exchange of views and guided exposure to Indian capacities in the fields of interest to them such as small scale industries, agriculture, health, education, foreign trade etc. A four member delegation from Vietnam National Gems Corporation led by Mr. N.T.Long visited India from 15-25 April, 2000 and held meetings with Hindustan Zinc Limited, Udaipur, Diamond & Gems Development Corporation, Mumbai and Department of Mines. The delegation also visited MECL Workshop and Gemstone & Jewellery Production Centre, Jaipur. In July, a five member delegation from Institute of Management, Kenya paid a study visit to the Indian Institutes of Management, Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Lucknow. Meetings for the delegates were also organized with All India Management Association, Delhi, Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad and Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. In the month of August, a three- member delegation from Ethiopian Foreign Office led by Mr. F.H. Michael (Ambassador) visited India to study restructuring of their policy planning, training and other systems. They had detailed discussions with DEAN (FSI), Secretary (ER), JS (ED&MER), JS (PP&R), JS (Africa), JS (AD) and also with Chairman, UPSC and various other government departments. The delegation was fully satisfied with various fruitful meetings they had during their visit. In the month of October, a three member Regional Commissioner's delegation from Guyana visited India. During their study visit, the delegation visited Hyderabad to see small- scale industries/Agro based unit/integrated Rural Development Programme. They had discussions with Dr. B. Sudhakar Rao, NIRD and Dr. B.P. Acharya, Managing Director, APDDC, Lalapet. They also visited Calcutta and Faridabad to see fishery unit, machinery manufacturing and rice mills.

In April, an expert in the field of Integrated Pest Management was deputed to the Government of Seychelles for six months .

In May, Squardon Leader D.C. Sikroria of Air Head Quarters was deputed to Lusaka for seven days to assess the need and requirements of the Government of Zambia for deputation of Paratrooper Training Team.

In November, Smt Amrita Shah, Deputy Director, National Bal Bhavan, New Delhi was deputed to Mauritius as Director, Bal Bhavan, Port Louis for one year and Lt. Cdr H. Subramaniam of Naval Headquarters was deputed to Seychelles as Marine Engineering expert for three years.

Under the Aid for Disaster Relief (ADR) Scheme, humanitarian assistance for victims of natural disasters in various countries is provided in the form of medicines, food items, tents, blankets etc. Under this programme, medicines were supplied to Lebanon worth Rs. 5 lakhs and to Madagascar worth Rs. 16.5 lakhs for the victims of cholera epidemic. Eighty one metric tons of milk powder was supplied to Ethiopia worth Rs. one crore. Cash assistance of US \$ 5000 was sent to the Government of Belize for the victims of hurricane. 30 tons of milk powder worth Rs. 36.5 lakhs as humanitarian assistance was sent to Indonesia as disaster relief.

The Technical Cooperation Division commissioned a forty four minute documentary film on ITEC. The CFTV crew visited Vietnam, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Senegal to gather information related to the projects undertaken in those countries. The film was screened on August 16,2000 at the Convention Hall of Ashok Hotel. Shri S.T. Devare, Secretary (ER) hosted a reception on this occasion. The invitees included the members of the diplomatic missions receiving ITEC assistance, media personnel, Members of Parliament, senior officers from the Ministry and Heads of Training Institutes based in Delhi. This film was also screened on ITEC Day by our Embassy in Ghana.



Trade and Investment Promotion

The Central Government and the State Governments took several initiatives and measures during the year aimed at encouraging foreign investment inflows, particularly the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India. Major thrust areas included infrastructure development, particularly energy, power, telecom and information technology. It was the task of the Investment Technology Promotion Division to actively undertake effective investment promotion and publicity efforts, particularly through the Indian Missions and Posts abroad for attracting foreign investment into the country. Quite often, Commercial Wings in the Missions are the first point of contact for the foreign investor. It is, therefore, essential that the Missions are given full back-up support in their efforts in the form of providing up-to-date information about the economy, the liberalised policies and the procedures, the project and opportunities available in different sectors, the incentives offered by the Central Government and various State Governments etc. Missions are also approached by investors seeking their intervention in case of delays in respect of clearances for their proposals or in respect of other hurdles faced in the implementation of projects. For all these and related matters, the Investment Technology Promotion (ITP) Division in the Ministry has acted as a nodal point of contact and coordination to serve as an effective channel of communication between the Missions and the relevant Ministries/State Governments or other agencies, as the case may be.

The Ministry provides inputs for policy formulations, whenever required, based on investment trends world-wide and based on the need to maintain harmony between foreign policy objectives and our economic policies. Regular feedback was received from the Missions on foreign investor perceptions about India's investment policies or about successful models/policies followed elsewhere for serving as inputs to the evolution of any new policies or to the review of an existing one, if the same was considered necessary in the national interest.

The Ministry also actively participated in the meetings of Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) and Foreign Investment Implementation Authority (FIIA) in collaboration with the Ministries and State Governments. In FIPB, the Ministry was represented by Secretary (ER) and investments from NRIs were given particular attention. In FIIA, specific policy measures to speed up the investment were taken up with concerned Ministries and State Governments.

The Ministry undertook several initiatives towards suitably projecting the various investment policies and announcements of the Government by coordinating with the Missions on the one hand and various economic Ministries of the Central Government and State

Governments on the other. Weekly Economic News Bulletin highlighting major policy decisions and new opportunities were sent to all Missions to keep them abreast of developments. Despatch of Weekly Economic News Bulletin by e-mail ensured fast and cost effective transmission. Missions were also encouraged to hold investment promotion seminars and workshops besides extending investment support services, for which suitable publicity material, speaking points etc. were regularly despatched. Such seminars were held by several of our Missions in identified target countries. Ministry also undertook special efforts to highlight the policies, procedures and opportunities available in the Information Technology sector.

The Missions also provided support to visiting Indian delegations including those sponsored by the State Governments by arranging suitable meetings with potential investors, local Government officials and the local Chamber of Commerce or Products Associations.

The Ministry also assisted, based on information provided by the Missions, visiting foreign investor delegations/groups in having appropriate meetings with concerned Government Departments. The ITP Division was in the process of publishing the brochure in French, German and Spanish languages.

JS (ITP) was a member of the IT Task Force of Ministry of External Affairs which dealt with the issues related to IT implementation in MEA such as provision of computers to all sections, development of data bases of information in section, network within the section, networking at Division level, application software for networking and data bases, Internet and e-mail facilities, computers and internet facilities at the residence of joint secretaries and above, computerization of Missions, delivery of public services/websites, training etc. IT Task Force also dealt with implementation of minimum agenda for e-governance approved by High Powered Committee, an Inter-ministerial body coordinated by the Deptt. of

Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. ITP Division further dealt with various technology related issues with potential international ramification such as cyber crime. ITP Division provided inputs to other Divisions on negotiations with other countries involving application of high-technology such as establishment of energy transfer through international pipeline. ITP Division was the nodal Division in the Ministry of External Affairs for promotion of tourism and acted as an interface between Indian Missions abroad and Department of Tourism and other agencies in India engaged in tourism promotion. Many Indian Missions organised India Food Festivals and other tourism promotion events. They maintained close contact with Government of India Tourism offices abroad.

The Ministry participated in the negotiations for drawing up of Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements (BIPPAs) and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs) that were held in respect of a number of countries. During the year, BIPPA was signed with Portugal, Sweden and Thailand. Negotiations for signing BIPPA with Bahrain, UAE and Lao Republic were completed. In respect of DTAA, an agreement was signed with Ireland and negotiations for signing were completed with Mexico. Entry into force of DTAA with Portugal took place during the year.

The Ministry also participated in the negotiations relating to Bilateral Civil Aviation matters with other countries. The Ministry provided legal inputs, as required, and also tendered advice based on the need for increased civil aviation links, particularly with neighbouring regions, to evolve in consonance with the initiatives being taken on the foreign policy front. Air Services Agreements (ASA) were signed with Bahrain and Algeria. Negotiations for signing ASA were completed with Cyprus and Madagascar. Memorandums of Understanding were signed with Syria, Kuwait, Malaysia, Gulf countries (UAE, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain) and Russia.

After successful launching of INDIACHEM-2000, it was planned to organise INDIACHEM-2002 in September 2002. INDIACHEM is an Indian trade fair organised in New Delhi to promote and showcase the potential of Indian chemical industry. ITP Division functioned as the nodal point from the Ministry of External Affairs for promotion of INDIACHEM in foreign countries.

Air Services Agreement was signed with Cyprus and Luxembourg. Memorandum of Understanding on Civil Aviation matters was signed with Russian Federation and Hong Kong. Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement was signed with Ireland.

ITP Division function as the nodal point in the Ministry of External Affairs for assisting Ministry of Consumer Affairs for sale of excess wheat available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) to foreign countries.

ITP Division is planning to create a website specifically for investment promotion. The website is intended to highlight economic policy changes in key sectors for investment, specific investment opportunities, projects and incentives available to foreign investors.



Policy Planning and Research

The Policy Planning & Research Division serves as a nodal point for interaction with the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) formerly known as the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), the University Grants Commission (UGC) and its affiliates and the Area Study Centres (ASC) located in various universities and 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 and support for Track-II programmes on issues related to India's external relations and security. A list of seminars/conferences/meetings organized by institutions/NGOs partly funded by the Policy Planning Division is given at Annexure-

The subject of these seminars, conferences and research projects covered Indian Foreign and Security Policies in the new decade, India's bilateral relations with countries like Israel, Iran, Japan & Russia, United Nations in the New Millennium, Abolition of Nuclear Weapons, Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, Human Security and curb on small arms, Marketing Cooperation with South & East Asian Countries, the impact of economic reforms in select developing countries, Indian Ocean, and Global Organization of People of Indian

Origin. Support was also provided to Indian scholars experts attending seminars, workshops and conferences, Austria, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Indonesia.

To further strengthen Ministry's capabilities in research and analyses, the Division had last year prepared a detailed proposal for revival of the Research Cadre as recommended by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs. However, because of the existing policy of right sizing the bureaucracy, scaling down of non-plan expenditure and continued ban on creation of new posts, the proposal was not pursued further. Nevertheless, in view of the continuing relevance of the role of the Historical Division, it was recommended that the Division would be revived and headed by a Director under the overall supervision of Joint Secretary (PP&R).

The Hon'ble President of India promulgated the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) Ordinance, 2000 (No.3 of 2000) on the 1st of September 2000. As a nodal Division of the Ministry of External Affairs dealing with academic/research institutions, this Division was actively associated with the course of action leading to the promulgation of the ICWA Ordinance 2000 (No.3 of 2000). The newly incorporated Council, set up under the Ordinance, took control of the ICWA premises (Sapru House) on the 2 September 2000, and immediately drew up an emergency plan for the repair/

renovation of the premises, revamping of the Library, restoration of the Auditorium and resumption of the normal activities of the ICWA. With the help of the Central Public Works Department (CPWD), the outer façade of the premises, the Administrative Block and the Library have since been repaired and repainted. The Committee Room has been fully renovated and made functional. Work on the Auditorium is continuing. Garden and pathways in front have been restored, boundary walls at places have been raised and grills installed. It is expected that the ICWA will be fully operational by the end of March 2001.

The Indian Council of World Affairs Bill 2000, which was introduced on 27.11.2000 in the Lok Sabha, was considered and passed by the Lok Sabha on the 18th of December 2000. The ICWA Bill, 2000 was listed for consideration by the Rajya Sabha on the 21st of December, 2000. However, before the Bill could be so considered, the Rajya Sabha was adjourned. As a result, the ICWA Ordinance 2000 (No.3 of 2000) in terms of Article 123 (2) (a) of the Constitution, lapsed on January 1, 2001, upon the expiry of six weeks from the date(20.11.2000) of re-assembly of Parliament. In order to maintain continuity in Government action, it was necessary to sustain the status of the Indian Council of World Affairs as an institution of national importance. Therefore, the ICWA Ordinance 2001 (No.1 of 2001) was promulgated on the 5 January 2001 with retrospective effect from the 1 September 2000.

The Research Section of the Division continued to edit and publish the Annual Report of the Ministry. The Report served 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 rendered all possible assistance to territorial divisions as well as Indian Missions abroad whenever any specific information or document on international relations was required. The Research Section examined the depiction of India's international boundaries

in foreign publications. Cases of incorrect depiction were taken up with the concerned government or the publisher through Indian Missions abroad for necessary corrective measures. The Division also scrutinized foreign publications containing maps depicting India's external boundaries before these were imported in to the country and offered its views to the Ministries dealing with such matters. It coordinated the supply of map-sheets to various Government and semi-Government agencies for use in their official work with the Survey of India and the Ministry of Defence. The Research Section dealt with requests from research scholars for access to the records of the Ministry.

The Division also deals with matters related to the National Archives of India. JS(PP&R) attends all meetings of the Archival Advisory Board of the National Archives of India as a member.

The Ministry's Library which functions under the overall control of this Division has modern information technology equipment and rich resources materials, with over one hundred thousand books and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents. The Library receives and maintains 600 periodical titles. It has in-house computer systems with fifteen terminals/computers, half of which support data entry and retrieval in Hindi. Library has CD-ROM workstation and CD-ROM Data Bases on foreign affairs and current affairs. The library is also equipped with CD-Writer, a colour scanner (with OCR capability as well as facility for storage and retrieval of images), a micro film/fiche reader printer, a plain paper photocopier, as well as a VTR and colour monitor and a laser printer with Desk Top publishing (DTP) software. This has enabled better presentation of publication and documents of the Division. The Library has INTERNET and E-Mail facilities. These are being gradually made available to visiting users who include research scholars and former foreign service officers. Documentation/Bibliographic services as well as other Library operations and services have been computerized, using an integrated library software package. Information on all

books, maps, documents and selected periodical articles received in the library since 1986 (pre-1986 publications in active use) are available on-line through each terminal/computer in Patiala House, in the Ministry's headquarters in South Block and in Akbar Bhawan through network in operation in these buildings. Library's information databases can also be accessed on Internet in MEA library's website by eligible users including our officials in our Missions abroad. All new documents received in the library-books, maps, micro films, selected articles from periodicals are being fed in to the in-house computer system to create a data base on foreign affairs.

Using these database and CD-ROM Data Bases, the library provides current awareness service and bibliographical and reference services. In addition, the library regularly issues "Foreign Affairs Documentation Bulletin"- monthly list of selected periodical articles mostly with abstracts, "Recent Additions" and annotated monthly list of publications added to the Library, and fortnightly "Chronicle of Events". Library users include research scholars are welcome to

access the on-line computer based information in the library in different data bases, including CD-ROM data bases, and the Foreign Affairs Information Retrieval System (FAIRS). Photocopy and computer printout facilities are also available to all library users including research scholars.

After completing generation of Full Text Database of Ministry's Annual Report from 1948-49 to 1998-99 and Foreign Affairs Record from 1955-June, 1999 on a CD-ROM, the library has also begun full text conversion of some more important publications in the library on CD-ROMs.

There are about six lakh files, both classified and unclassified, lying in the Records Management Section of the Ministry. The Section has been sending old files for reviewing regularly to the concerned officers for taking a decision regarding retention or otherwise of these files. One thousand seven hundred and fifty five files, which were no longer required, have been destroyed by burning.

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External Publicity

In tandem with India's active engagement with all the major powers, traditional partners and other interlocutors and in response to challenges posed by developments in Fiji and UN peace keeping operations in Sierra Leone, the External Publicity Division was an active instrument of foreign policy management, of projecting and explaining India's perspective on foreign policy and international security issues. Simultaneously, the External Publicity Division also undertook the commissioning of a number of documentary films consonant with our foreign policy priorities, the maintenance of an updated website, supply of books for Indian libraries abroad, publication of the monthly *India Perspectives* and occasional volumes on important events and issues such as peace keeping, monitoring the international and domestic media and managing media related activities for the visits of the President, the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, the External Affairs Minister and other dignitaries.

Daily briefings conducted for the Indian and international media in XP Division were supplemented by the issue of more than 166 press statements apart from organising special backgrounders for the media. Understandably, there was an abiding and active interest in timely dissemination of information particularly on high profile incoming and outgoing visits. President Shri K.R. Narayanan's visit

to China, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visits to the USA, Vietnam and Indonesia as well as the first India-EU Summit caught the imagination of the world press. Visits to India by the Presidents of USA and Russia, Prime Ministers of Japan, Greece, Mauritius and of neighbours like Nepal and Sri Lanka and the Chairman of the National Peoples Congress of China were some of the large number of visits that testified to a period of hectic diplomatic engagement. The commitment of India to bring about peace and normalcy in the State of Jammu and Kashmir in the face of continuous support of and abetment to cross-border terrorism was widely recognised and applauded.

The Ministry's website served as a vital tool for dissemination of information by the office of the Spokesman. The website was kept updated on a daily basis to cover all developments relating to foreign policy, disarmament & international security issues, international terrorism, speeches and interviews of dignitaries, official spokesman's statements, press releases, record of briefings, bilateral treaties and agreements signed by India, other political and economic developments, Parliament questions and answers etc. Separate subsections were created on major visits by Heads of State and Government, on the Foreign Service Institute and on PM's initiative of November 2000 in Jammu and Kashmir. The website was widely

appraised and appreciated by the users, both Indian and foreign (clocking nearly 2 million hits a month) and won recognition from prestigious international agencies. The website was also hyper-linked by some of the important organisations like *CNN*, *BBC*, *The Economist*, etc. for information relating to India. The *BBC Web Guide*, the BBC's guide to the best sites across the Web, highlighted the site as a *Top Site*. MEA web site was also awarded a rank among the Top 50 Indian Sites by India's Site Appraisal Solutions Provider *www.BestIndianSites.com*. An e-mail-based media reporting system for feedback and for retrievable storage was followed with most missions abroad. Extensive archival material on India's foreign policy was loaded on the website for reference and easy retrieval.

The Ministry of External Affairs is one of the largest producers of documentary films in India. These films are commissioned with the two-fold objective of long-term image building as well as focussing the attention of the international community on current and topical subjects relating to India. The end objective of the exercise is the projection of India as a strong, progressive democratic nation with a rich civilizational heritage.

During the year, a variety of documentary films were made on subjects that dovetail into India's foreign policy objectives. Themes of these films were carefully selected to ensure the positive projection of the country among target audiences abroad. These included Indian democracy; India's growing relations with Mauritius, Nepal, South Africa, Central Asia and South East Asia; the spread of the Indian Diaspora and India's emerging might as a naval power.

A festival of short films produced by the Ministry of External Affairs titled 'Reflections' was organized in New Delhi in August 2000. While special screenings and telecast of MEA documentaries on foreign television network were organised within India as well as by missions abroad. Indian feature film festivals were organized in 15 different countries in association with the concerned Indian

missions abroad, including in Abu Dhabi, Algiers, Berlin, Brussels, Budapest, Hong Kong, Madrid, Moscow, Port Louis, Rabat, Addis Ababa, Rajshahi, Tel Aviv, Vientiane and Zanzibar. Raj Kapoor retrospectives were organized in Chicago and Minsk. Retrospectives of Adoor Gopalakrishnan were also held in Madrid and Brussels. Special screening of Hrishikesh Mukherjee's films was held in Dhaka.

The Ministry's existing collection of feature films was supplemented through purchase of additional titles including old classics as well as recent films that have won acclaim. An exhibition on Indian cinema through film posters and film stills was held at the Berlin Film Festival. A special screening of M.F. Hussain's film 'Gaja Gamini' was organised for a select audience of foreign diplomats and foreign media persons based in Delhi.

Audio-visual material, including CD ROMs on a variety of subjects on India and audio/video CDs of Indian music and films were disseminated among Indian missions and posts abroad both for their audio-visual libraries and for presentation purposes. Photo exhibitions on India were organized in China in association with the Indian mission.

The Ministry endeavoured to strengthen the information infrastructure in missions abroad through acquisition of publicity-related equipment such as DVD players, film and slide projectors, dish antenna, CD players, TV and video cassette players, public address systems, computers etc.

The Ministry is a nodal point for clearance of documentary proposals by foreign TV networks. 322 such proposals were received during the year and 90% of these were promptly approved.

As part of the ongoing programme of familiarisation visits, 95 senior journalists were invited to India from different countries including Indonesia, Brunei, Hong Kong, Egypt, Iran, Russia, United Kingdom, Mauritius, Morocco, Turkey, Argentina, China, Nepal, Spain, Portugal, Kenya, Vietnam, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Mongolia,

Hungary, Nigeria, Singapore, France, USA, Maldives, Germany, Uzbekistan, Thailand, Japan, Namibia, Iceland and Saudi Arabia. The visits led to a balanced coverage of India in foreign media as well as an enhanced image of the country abroad. Facilitation was also provided to other foreign media who traveled to India during the year. Media delegations travelling with visiting Heads of States and Governments were provided with complete logistical support and other assistance. These included teams from Norway, Russia, Singapore, Nigeria, Indonesia, Cambodia, Morocco, USA, Maldives, Australia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Nepal, Georgia, Japan and Iceland. VIP visits from France, Germany, UK, China, Thailand, Oman, South Korea and Namibia. All media arrangements relating to visits of President, Vice-President and Prime Minister abroad were handled successfully.

Over 300 foreign resident correspondents were provided accreditation facilities and other services.

Several publications were brought out by the Ministry during the year including the “Foreign Affairs Record” and compilation of all press releases, agreements, speeches and significant diplomatic developments. “India Perspectives”, the monthly magazine of the Ministry was published in ten different languages for distribution through Indian missions and posts abroad. A compendium of foreign policy statements made by Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister (May 1998-2000), a book on US President’s visit to India in March 2000 and a compilation of presentations made at the New Delhi Seminar on UN Peace Keeping were some of the other publications brought out during the year. Several other publications were in various stages of production including a book on India-EU Summit, PM’s visit to USA and Russian President’s visit to India.



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Protocol

Mr. Goh Chok Tong, PM Singapore	Jan 7-21, 2000
Mr. O. Obasanjo, President of Nigeria	Jan 24-28, 2000
Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, President of Indonesia	Feb 8-9, 2000
Mr. Samdesh Hun Sen, PM of Cambodia	Feb 17-19, 2000
Mr. Abderrahmane Youssoufi, PM, Morocco	Feb 21-25, 2000
Mr. William J Clinton, President of USA	March 19-25, 2000
Mr. Bulent Ecevit, PM of Turkey	March 30-April 2, 2000
Mr. Islam A. Karimov, President of Uzbekistan	May 1-3, 2000
Mr. GP Koirala, Prime Minister of Nepal	July 31-August 6, 2000
Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives	Aug 21-25, 2000
Mr. Yoshiro Mori, PM of Japan	August 22-26, 2000
Mr. Vladimir V. Putin, President of the Russian Federation	October 2-5, 2000
Mr. Olafur Ragnar CRagn1CCRCnCRagnar qS)£OVPVPWS2-5, q(xxCCandS2-WWPxxUR)xUnq(xUDVU)1CUOxRq28-N q(xUU)1CUOxRq3,U)1CU	

Mr. John Howard, PM of Australia	July 10-11, 2000
Mr. Taha Yassin Ramadhan, Vice President of Iraq	November 27- December 1, 2000
Queen Beatrix of Netherlands	Jan 15 to 2 Feb, 2000
Mr. AV Chettiar, Vice President of Mauritius	Jan 12-26, 2000
Mr. Mahinder Chaudhry, PM of Fiji	16-28 August 2000
Mme Sara Nazarbayeva, wife of President of Kazakhstan	25-28 August 2000
Lady Jugnauth, Wife of the Prime Minister of Mauritius	November 15-December 1, 2000
Mr. Tariq Aziz, Dy PM of Iraq	Jan 5-6, 2000
Mme Sheikh Hasina, PM of Bangladesh	Feb 1, 2000
Queen of Spain	9 Feb, 2000
Mr. Yasir Arafat, President of Palestine	Aug 18-19, 2000
MrAbdus Samad Azad, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh	August 30, 2000
Mme Sheikh Hasina, PM of Bangladesh	September 3, 2000
Mme. Sheikh Hasina, PM of Bangladesh	October 20, 2000
HRH Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, UK	November 20-21, 2000
H.E. Mr. M. Muraliev, Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan	November 15, 2000 and November 22, 2000
Mr. Knut Vollbaek, FM of Norway	7-11 Jan, 2000
Dr. Viktor Khristenko, Dy. PM of Russia	Jan 14-17, 2000
Mr. ML Kadirgamar, FM of Sri Lanka	Jan 29- Feb 2, 2000
Mr. Hubert Vedrine, FM of France	Feb 17-19, 2000
Mr. Fathulla Jameel, FM of Maldives	Mar 3-8, 2000
Ms. Madeline Albright, US Secy of State	19-22, 24-25 March 2000
Mr. Alexander Downer, FM of Australia	Mar 21-24, 2000
Mr. Boris O. Shihmuradov, FM of Turkemenistan	April 2-6, 2000

Rt Hon Mr. Robin Cook, Secretary of State, UK	April 15-18, 2000
Mr. Lyonpo Jigme Y. Thinley, FM of Bhutan	April 17-27, 2000
Mr. Chakra Prasad Bastola, FM of Nepal	May 7-10, 2000
Mr. I. Menagarishvili, FM of Georgia	May 9-13, 2000
Mr. Joschka Fischer, Dy. Chancellor and FM of Germany	May 17-18, 2000
Mr. Abdul Rahman Mohd. Shalgam, FM of Libya	July 6-8, 2000
Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, FM of Thailand	July 8-10, 2000
Mr. Tang Jiaxuan, FM of China	July 21-22, 2000
Mr Lee Joung Binn, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Korea	July 30-31, 2000
Mr. Yusuf Bin Alawi Bin Abdullah, FM of Oman	July 16-19, 2000
Dr. Theo Ben Gurirab, FM of Namibia and President of UNGA.	August 17-19, 2000
Dr. Joschka Fischer, Dy. Chancellor and Foreign Minister of Germany	September 28-October 1, 2000
Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Foreign Minister of Malaysia	October 8-11, 2000
Mr. Idji Kolawole Antoine, Foreign Minister of Benin	October 24-26, 2000

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| 1. | BIMST-EC Third Ministerial Meeting | 3– 6 July 2000 |
| 2. | ASEAN-India Joint HRD Workshop | 16 – 17 October 2000 |
| | | |
| 1. | Indo-UK Round Table | 18 - 19 April 2000 |
| 2. | All India Annual Conference for Haj-1421(H) | 22 August 2000 |
| 3. | Convocation ceremony to confer the Doctorate degree on Russian President H.E. Mr. V. V. Putin during his State Visit to India | 3 October 2000 |
| 4. | 8 th Asia Pacific Parliamentarians Conference on Environment & Development (APPCED) at Hyderabad | 13 - 16 November 2000 |
| 5. | World Energy Council Indian Member Committee | 22- 23 November 2000 |

President of India

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | State Visit to France | April 16 to 21, 2000 |
| 2. | State Visit to China | May 28 to June 3, 2000 |
| 3. | State Visit to Singapore | November 9-13, 2000 |
| Smt. Usha Naryanan, Official visit to Malaysia | | September 24 to 29, 2000 |

Vice President of India

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------------|
| 1. | Visit to Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Slovakia and Egypt) | June 8 to 21, 2000 |
| 2. | Visit to Sri Lanka | October 15, 2000 |

Prime Minister of India

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | Visit to Mauritius | March 10 to 13, 2000 |
| 2. | Visit to Italy and Portugal | June 25 to 30, 2000 |
| 3. | Visit to USA and Germany | September 7 to 19, 2000 |



Passport, Visas and Consular Services

The interface of the Ministry of External Affairs with the public is through passports for Indian nationals, visas for foreign nationals and consular services to Indian nationals abroad. In the present age of increased foreign travel and frequent movement across borders for employment, pleasure, studies, etc., the issue of a passport is a pre-requisite for the individual to become a global citizen. Through its activities the Consular, Passport and Visa (CPV) Division directly assists the export of Indian manpower, expertise and technology abroad.

During the year, the Central Passport Organisation worked with the twin objective of meeting the expectations of the passport applicants and modernizing the working of the Passport Offices. Efforts continued to fulfill the Government's commitments under the Citizen's Charter through various innovative measures for providing efficient, prompt and transparent service at the 28 passport offices. Five new Passport Collection Centres were opened at Tirupati, Vijaywada, Siliguri, Pondicherry and at MEA Branch Office at Calcutta during the year. More outlets were opened for printing, distribution and sale at a nominal price of passport application forms for convenience of the passport applicants.

Passport offices at Bangalore, Chandigarh, Bhopal, Lucknow and Chennai launched their websites, which carry all the rules, regulations etc. for passport, visa and PIO cards and carry information about the status of application submitted at that particular Passport Office.

Annual Passport Officers Conference was held on 1-3 July 2000 in Bangalore at which emphasis was placed on reforming and revamping the procedures to make the system more productive and efficient. There was special emphasis on the redressal of public grievances and the practice of periodical 'Passport Adalats' was continued at most Passport Offices.

Several measures were initiated to simplify and streamline various procedures for issuing passports and rendering other miscellaneous services promptly and efficiently in keeping with the commitment under the Citizen's Charter. The 'Tatkaal' Scheme for out-of-turn issue of passports launched has been very successful. It has enabled the system to speedily respond to public demand and has also generated substantial additional revenue for the Government.

The genuine need of an illiterate passport applicant for assistance in filling up a passport application form has been recognised. Associations of ex-servicemen have been approached to open facilitation counters at some Passport Offices where they would assist the applicants on the payment of a small fee. Such counters have

already started functioning at the Passport offices in Jalandhar, Trichirapallai, Bangalore and New Delhi.

The Passport Manual (1983) has been thoroughly revised and updated and has been given for printing.

The rules for issue of passports to minors, single or unwed mothers, officials with criminal cases for actions taken in the line of duty, asylum seekers in foreign countries etc. were revised to facilitate and streamline issue of passports in such cases.

At most Passport Offices, concrete measures were taken to increase amenities for the applicants/visitors by increasing the number of public counters, augmenting air-conditioning, installation of water coolers, provision of chairs etc.

At present 20 of the 28 passport offices have been computerised. These are Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bareilly, Bhopal, Calcutta, Chandigarh, Chennai, Cochin, Delhi, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jalandhar, Kozhikode, Lucknow, Mumbai, Panaji, Pune, Trichirapalli, Thiruvananthapuram and Vishakhapatnam. The remaining 8 Passport Offices would be computerised by the end of 2001.

E-mail facility is available at all computerised passport offices. Tele enquiry system is in operation at all the computerised passport offices except Pune and Bhopal for which a software upgradation is underway. Websites have also been established at Bangalore, Chennai, Chandigarh, Bhopal and Lucknow. A proposal for a comprehensive computerised network and connectivity as well as creation of a Central Processing Cell is now under implementation.

It has been the endeavour of the Government of India to house the Passport Office in Government owned properties. At present Passport Offices buildings at five places (Mumbai, Cochin, Kozhikode, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad) are owned by MEA, at five places are owned by Central Government/State Government and are rented in 18 places. The Passport Office at Ahmedabad was shifted to a new building owned by MEA during the year. MEA has acquired plots of land/built-up properties in various cities in India and

construction work is in progress at six places viz. Bangalore, Calcutta, Cochin (residential complex), Patna (Office complex), Panaji and Kozhikode (residential complex). The process for purchase of land or construction of buildings for Passport Offices has been continuing at six other places i.e. Lucknow, Jaipur, Thiruvananthapuram, Chandigarh, Trichirapallai, and Jammu. In Chennai space in an office complex has been purchased and possession would be taken over in a few months. At Mumbai additional office space has been hired to relieve overcrowding and increase amenities for the public.

The number of applications received during the year for grant of passports and other miscellaneous services like renewal, change of name, additional booklets, fresh passports for minors etc. were high given the overall climate of economic liberalization and increased travel of Indians overseas. A total number of 22,43,033 passports were issued and 2,57,654 miscellaneous services were rendered (up to 31 December 2000). During the year 2000, detailed figures of receipts of passports issued/services rendered including the revenue and expenditure of Passport Offices are at Annexure-IV.

In an innovative breakthrough, the completed passport applications will now be received through the network of 'Speed Post' Centres under the Department of Posts. It is proposed to further expand this network through nationalized banks.

Action is being taken to introduce modern management practices in the passport issue system. Services of a management expert have been obtained as a Consultant for a management and process study of a few Passport Offices to come out with a model training-cum-motivational programme for the CPO personnel.

The six million Indian Citizens and an estimated 14 million People of Indian Origin (PIO) resident abroad have been playing an increasingly important role for the furtherance of India's foreign policy. Recognising their significant role in projecting Indian nationals interests abroad, the Government had, in March 1999, launched the

PIO Card Scheme for Persons of Indian Origin settled in countries specified by the Government. This has, besides introducing a visa free regime, also conferred some special economic, educational, financial and cultural benefits. Because of various reasons including a perception of high fee, the number of PIO cards issued so far has not been large. This is being looked into by the Government.

All Missions and Posts abroad are sensitive to the consular needs of Overseas Indians. All Missions and Posts are geared to provide efficient and timely assistance on all days and at all hours. Problems encountered by Non-Resident Indians/workers, especially in the Gulf countries, including disputes with their employers/sponsors are being redressed through the labour wings in their offices. Government maintained contacts with the Governments of the Gulf countries, including through the institutional mechanism of the Joint Commissions, with the objective of resolving consular problems and ameliorating the conditions of Indian workers in those countries. In cases of deaths of Indians abroad, assistance continued to be arranged by our Missions and Posts for completing the formalities for early despatch of the mortal remains, liaison with the local and Indian authorities and keeping the relatives of the deceased informed.

During the year, 9,243 Indians were arrested abroad and 3,143 deaths of Indians abroad were reported to the Ministry. A summary of the consular data for the year 2000 is at Annexure-V.

Over the years, the procedure for grant of visa by our Missions and Posts has been streamlined. Many Missions and Posts give visas either across the counter or the same day and most others grant visas within 48 hours.

A project for computerisation of the Consular Wings of the Missions and Posts in the Gulf, West Europe and North America has been initiated and a contract has been awarded to a private

company. First those Missions and Posts would be computerised where the volume of services rendered is high. Separately, NIC has been working on the computerisation of the consular wings of HCI, Dhaka and Colombo.

India's 152 Missions and Posts abroad provided visa services to 7,34,256 foreigners during the period from 1 January 2000 to 30 June 2000.

Visa fees for all categories of visa have been increased by 30 per cent with effect from 1 October, 2000 as (i) there has been a 30% rise in cost of living in dollar terms since 1991; (ii) expenditure on consular wings abroad has gone up; and (iii) MEA is embarking on a major computerisation drive at Consular Wings of all important Missions/Posts abroad.

To build an institutional framework to combat organized crime, international terrorism and drug trafficking, and acknowledging the growing international dimensions of financial and other crimes, bilateral agreements are being negotiated with several countries to provide legal under-pinning to international endeavour. These consular agreements include Extradition Treaties, Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Agreements on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil Matters and Consular Conventions.

During the visit of the President of Uzbekistan to India in May 2000, two agreements - Extradition Treaty and an Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal matters were signed. Extradition Treaty with Tunisia was signed in the month of April 2000 in Tunisia. During the visit of the President of Mongolia in January 2001, Extradition Treaty, Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal matters and Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil & Commercial matters were signed. Extradition Treaties with U.A.E. and Russia were notified in the Gazette of India and are in force w.e.f. 29.5.2000 and 30.5.2000 respectively. Extradition Treaties were initialled at official level with Phillipines and Turkey in November

2000 and December 2000 respectively. The Extradition Treaties initialled with Oman and Poland are being finalized for signatures with respective countries. Work on Extradition Treaties with Australia, Bahrain, Japan, South Africa and Sudan was initiated.

During the year, official delegations visited USA, Kazakhstan and Phillipines to negotiate Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal matters. Progress has been made in ongoing negotiations on similar agreements with Hong Kong, Tajikistan and Poland.

An Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil matters was initialled with Russia; and negotiations were initiated with Kazakhstan and Singapore in this area.

An agreement with Uruguay on visa exemption for the holders of diplomatic and official passport holders signed in December,1999 has been ratified and brought into effect with effect from 31 August,2000. Moreover, bilateral agreements on visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders were negotiated with several countries, which include Schengen countries, Turkey and Morocco.

The Ministry actively follows requests for extradition and other legal assistance from foreign Governments both for criminal and civil and commercial charges. The requests for extradition emanate from our obligations under the Extradition Treaties or Extradition Arrangements entered into with various countries. During the year 20 requests for extradition and 61 requests for legal assistance were received in addition to the ongoing cases.

During the year, 2,96,735 documents were accorded consular attestation in CPV Division of which 1,70,400 were commercial documents. This service is rendered on the same day, is without any charge and is prompt and efficient.

The personnel of the Central Passport Organisation (CPO) are running the 28 Passport Offices and 20 existing Passport Collection Centres. The current strength of CPO Cadre is 1543 with 176 Officers and 1,367 non-gazetted staff. One of the major demands of the employees has been for a comprehensive Cadre Review as there is stagnation at various levels. A proposal for Cadre Review-cum-creation of posts is under the consideration of the Government. The Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance has conducted a study to assess the workload of the Passport Offices.

The Consular, Passport and Visa work is the public face of the Ministry of External Affairs. The public expects prompt and courteous service with minimal delays. The mission of the Ministry is to expand the network of contact points from where services can be delivered, go in for massive computerisation – both for processing and storage of data and to achieving a level of satisfaction of which it can be proud.



Non Resident Indians and People of Indian Origin Overseas

The NRI/PIOs Division was established in April 2000. This was in response to a long-standing demand of the Overseas Indian community for a separate Ministry or Department to serve as a focal point and single contact point on NRI/PIOs matters.

An Indian Overseas Cell had earlier been established in 1977 as a part of the Policy Planning Division, to study the problems of people of Indian origin settled abroad. This experiment was repeated in 1984. The OI Cell, were however discontinued and merged with the Consular Division. The Commissioner for NRI functioned with the Ministry of Finance and India Investment Centre.

The Government felt that the approach to NRI/PIOs could not be merely investment centred. A wider multi-faceted approach was needed, including political, cultural, economic, consular and other matters.

The Government took a major initiative to create a new Division in MEA in April 2000 and decided to transfer the office of Commissioner (NRI), Ministry of Finance under MEA's jurisdiction. (In practice, this arrangement has not become operational and the Commissioner's office functions independently of the MEA.)

The Indian Diaspora comprises of approximately 18 million

people of Indian origin/Indian citizens residing abroad in over 100 countries. Indian Diaspora is the only Diaspora with the history of peaceful migrations. In ancient times they conquered on the strength of the cultural and civilizational heritage and values and the healing powers of Ayurveda.

The descendents of those who set out for distinct lands as cultural and spiritual messengers in the distant past, have merged with the indigenous people in South-East and East Asia and cannot any more be identified as Indians.

There are different categories of Indian migrants. The first category in modern times, were the indentured labour sent by the British to countries like Surinam, Guyana, Trinidad & Tabago, Fiji and Mauritius etc. A second category were the migrations of professionals to North America, Canada and some countries of Europe where they have adapted themselves to the social and economic structures while maintaining their culture, heritage and links with the mother countries.

A third category of overseas Indians are legally branded stateless persons of Indian origin. These include children entered in migrant parents' passports which were later destroyed or lost; and many other cases where no documentary proofs exist to substantiate their Indian origin. This category is fast disappearing.

Another categorization could be of the Indian citizens staying abroad for indefinite period (employment, business, governmental assignment or working in international organizations). They have been identified as the Non Resident Indian (NRI) in the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act 1973. This is a recent category relatively, and a 20 century phenomenon, reflecting a voluntary response to the demand for labour to fuel faster development, initially in post world war-II Europe and then in the newly oil rich countries in West Asia. IN later years it become an exodus of technically and professionally qualified personnel to the advanced developed countries. Many of them ceased to be NRIs on acquiring citizenship in the host countries. The second category are chiefly descendents of the migrants of indentured labour taken by the British in the early 19 century to various parts of the empire to develop the lands or enrich the metropolis . They are found in over 100 countries spread over in all continents. The largest concentration of PIO (persons of India origin) are to be found in Fiji, Malaysia, Burma, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, East and Central Africa and West Indies. They are also several million PIOs in Nepal owing to the open border that Nepal has with India.

These communities gradually gained comparative affluence through hard work but earned the animosity of native population. As the victims of racism/animosity they were compelled to stay together and preserve their Indian culture, religion and ways. In South Africa they were victimized by the British and were suspect in the eyes of black Africans. They held fast and are now an important element in South Africa and its government.

NRI/PIOs have had a deep impact on India's political and economic development through history. Mahatma Gandhi was an NRI for several years. They are an important factor in our foreign policy and have a bearing on bilateral relations with India where there is a sizeable Indian community.

NRI/PIOs have gained political and economic clout in several countries such as USA, UK and Canada where they have projected our political and other concerns to opinion-builders and decision-makers. They have a combined income equal to India's GDP (approximately US\$ 300 billion); technical skills at advanced levels and expertise in frontier technologies such as information technology and bio-technology where they have secured global recognition; They have expertise in key services such as education, health, banking, management and consultancy and vast wealth and business entrepreneurial skills where they can contribute in key areas to India's development and India's socio-economic transformation to an advance and modern economy and society.

They contribute generously in times of national crisis, e.g. the Resurgent India Bond which exceeded its target by 100%, following the economic sanctions on India, the recent equally successful India Millennium Bonds, national disasters such as the Orissa cyclone and the recent Gujarat earthquake.

The vast Indian labour force in the Gulf has been a major source of remittance which are crucial to our foreign exchange reserves and our economy.

There are PIO Prime Ministers/Presidents (Mauritius, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago and Singapore) and several hundred Ministers and Parliamentarians.

NRI/PIOs face many problems in their countries of adoption as well as in India. Mainly these pertain to harassment in immigration/emigration procedures, excessive checks and control in their travel/stay, inadequate legal and Constitutional protection in host countries, problems regarding education of their children in India; problems regarding cultural facilities for maintaining their Indian cultural identity and problems of assimilation with the host societies; racial and other discrimination in several host countries; They have expressed difficulties in freely investing their resources in India owing to infrastructural and bureaucratic bottlenecks. Absence of dual nationality is a widely expressed grievance. (Govt. has not granted this so far on security considerations, although a review is being done);

NRI/PIOs complain of inadequate recognition through honours and awards for contributions by them to the motherland.

NRI/PIOs look to India for protection and help for their problems and in time of crises.

MEA in June 2000 announced that Government had all along attached considerable importance to the Indian Diaspora and their relations with the motherland. The concerns, needs and problems of the overseas Indian communities and their potential for contributing to India's socio-economic and technological transformation to an advanced and modern economy and society are matters of priority concern. Encouragement of cultural and emotional bonds and strengthening of the same is a shared objective of the overseas Indian community and the Indian Government. Government would also encourage them to contribute to strengthening of bilateral relations with countries in which they reside.

Another major initiative taken by Government was the establishment of a High Level Committee, approved by PM, on the Indian Diaspora, under the Chairmanship of Dr.L.M.Singhvi (Cabinet rank), M.P and former High Commissioner to the UK. The Committee will look into the entire range of issues concerning overseas Indian community with a view to suggesting policy and organizational frameworks. It will also recommend country-specific plans of action. The Committee commenced its work on September 1, 2000 and will submit its report in six months. Terms of Reference of the Committee are as follows:

- (a) Review the status of Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in the context of constitutional provisions, Laws and rules applicable to them both in India and the countries of their residence;
- (b) Study the characteristics, aspirations, attitudes, requirements, strengths and weaknesses of Indian Diaspora and their expectations from India;

- (c) Study the role that the PIOs and NRIs may play in the economic and social and technological development of India;
- (d) Examine the current regime that governs the travel and stay of PIOs in India and investments by PIOs in India, and recommend measures to resolve the problems faced by NRIs in these areas;
- (e) Recommend a broad but flexible policy framework and country specific plans for forging a mutually beneficial relationship with the region or PIOs and NRIs, and for facilitating their interaction with India and their participation in Indian's economic development.

The Committee is establishing Expert Groups on all important issues which include: education, culture, tourism, consular problems, especially of Indian workers abroad, dual nationality; citizenship and nationality issues, constitutional and legal provisions relating to NRI and PIO, science and technology; trade; investment flows; banking, etc.

On behalf of the Committee NRI/PIO Division prepared an elaborate and extensive questionnaire which was circulated to over a 100 missions and a vast amount of data and information on the Overseas Indian communities was obtained. This has enabled the development of a broad profile of the Indian communities all over the world.

For the first time a numerical assessment was officially made of strength of these communities in various countries. This may be seen at Annex-XX.

Other information includes: the historical background of these communities in each individual countries of residence; their strength and weaknesses; social, economic, educational and cultural profile; the nature and extent of existing cultural activities for maintenance of the Indian identity; contribution of these communities to host countries and to India as well as to promotion of bilateral relations; extent of integration with the mainstream host societies; the principal associations of Overseas communities; rosters of prominent members of the Overseas communities/ experts in important areas; list of

important economic entities owned by NRIs/PIOs and areas of possible contribution in trade and industry in India; NRI/PIO publication and media and contribution to India's interests; level of awareness and information about India; their links with India and expectations from India; their future plans, needs and grievances; problems due to racism and ethnicity; grievances in the host countries or in India; nature of academic exchanges between NRIs/PIOs and India and rosters of prominent academicians; association with India Studies/programmes; student exchange programmes; bilateral assistance programmes in countries to which PIOs/NRIs residing; Indian educational facilities available to NRI/PIOs; political organizations of NRIs/PIOs; political leadership, roles in adopted countries; political lobby in support to India's concerns and those of the Indian communities; organizations which may be actively engaged in anti-India activities.

The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs & Information Technology, Shri Pramod Mahajan inaugurated the website on Indian Diaspora on 19th December, 2000. Minister of State, Shri U.V. Krishnam Raju, Dr. L.M. Singhvi, M.P and Chairman, High Level Committee were also present in the inauguration. The website has been created in order to invite comments, suggestions from general public and NRIs/PIOs on different aspects for consideration by the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora.

Dr. L.M. Singhvi, Chairman, High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora has addressed letters to various Members of Parliament, leaders of political parties, civil servants, Chief Ministers of States seeking their views and suggestions on Indian Diaspora for consideration by the High Level Committee.

The High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora led by Dr. L.M. Singhvi, M.P and Chairman visited Oman, UAE, Kenya and South Africa from January 12-18, 2001, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Portugal, Netherlands, U.K from February 5-14, 2001. The Committee is also expected to visit some other countries (USA, Canada, Surinam, Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana, Mauritius & Reunion Island) with high concentration of the Indian Diaspora for first hand assessment and interactions, before March 31, 2001.

On receipt of the Committee's report, the Government will prepare and implement a concrete programme of work in regard to NRI/PIOs. The Committee is serviced by NRI/PIO Division.

The Division will establish, on receipt of budgetary allocation an extensive databank on NRI/PIOs which will contain information on eminent people, entrepreneurs experts in every field of activities among NRI/PIOs, top companies run by NRI/PIOs, important NGOs and institutions, associations of overseas Indians their media, etc. It will provide relevant information on India for NRI/PIOs, including special facilities available to them.

The 6th Global Organization of People of Indian Origin a non-governmental forum of NRIs and PIOs was formally inaugurated by the Prime Minister on 6th January, 2001 in New Delhi. Prime Minister hosted tea for all the participants of GOPIO Convention after the inauguration ceremony. The External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh also addressed the Valedictory Session of the GOPIO Convention on January 7, 2001.



Administration and Organisation

Following the last General Elections when Shri Jaswant Singh had taken over as Minister of External Affairs and Shri Ajit Kumar Panja as the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri U.V. Krishnam Raju assumed charge as the Minister of State for External Affairs on October 1, 2000.

At present, the Government of India has 157 Resident Diplomatic Missions/Posts and other offices abroad.

The total strength of the IFS(A), IFS(B), Interpreter and L&T Cadres of the Ministry is 3489(Appendix I).

A table indicating the appointments to various posts in the Ministry made in 2000-2001, including vacancies filled against reservations is at Appendix II.

The extent of language proficiency in the Ministry can be judged from the list of officers proficient in various foreign languages at Appendix III.

Administrative procedures were further streamlined during the period under review, including, among other things, publication of updated, simplified and user-friendly edition of the IFS(PLCA) Rules and a compilation entitled “Organisation and Distribution of Work in Ministry of External Affairs, 2000”. Two Award Schemes were introduced for presentation to the best-organized sections in the

Ministry and another for outstanding performance by Ministry’s employees and for outstanding suggestions from Ministry’s employees leading to financial savings to the Government. Following the Pay Commission recommendations refixing the pay and allowances of officials and pensioners, the Pension Section was revamped and computerized. All pension cases were dealt with in a time bound manner.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Parliament Standing Committee for External Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs had drawn up a Comprehensive Plan for purchase/construction / development of properties of abroad – to be implemented over a 10 year period starting from 1995-96. A Five-Year Plan for phased expenditure under Capital Outlay for the purchase of built up properties, renovation and construction of required premises for our Missions abroad was drawn up for implementation during the period 2000-2001 to 2004-2005. Funds have been allocated each year under the budgetary Heads for Capital Outlay on Public Works and Housing (Major Heads 4059 and 4216), for the purchase of built up properties, repairs and renovation of GOI properties abroad and construction projects - on plots of land acquired on commercial basis or through reciprocal arrangements - after duly prioritising Missions/

Offices of the Ministry of External Affairs in India and abroad where the circumstances (such as high rental outgo or opportune market conditions etc.) justify the proposed Project / purchase.

In the year 2000-2001, the Establishment Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, within the allocated budget, monitored the routine repair, maintenance, renovations - and beautification and modernisation of Embassy buildings abroad and Ministry of External Offices in India.

Under the Major Heads 4059 and 4216 i.e. Capital Outlay for Public Works and Housing respectively, the Establishment Division's allocation was Rs. 90 Crores. Within the above allocation, projects already in the initial stages of execution were prioritised for allocation of funds - chiefly, the projects in Mauritius, Abu Dhabi and Berlin: while the civil works for the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture (IGCIC) complex in Mauritius and the Chancery-cum-residential complex in Abu Dhabi were completed, interior works in these two buildings was taken up which are expected to be completed later this financial year. The construction of the Chancery-cum Residential Complex in Berlin was completed in January 2001.

In Dhaka, where it is proposed to construct a Chancery and residences on a plot of land measuring 12 Bighas acquired from the local Government in 1993 under the reciprocal exchange, the processing for acquisition of an additional 2.5 Bighas was completed this year. This, as well as the proposed construction projects in Kathmandu, Doha, Moscow, Trinidad and Tobago, Tashkent and Warsaw and the renovation/ reconstruction projects in Gaborone and Singapore are similarly, in various stages of preliminary processing respectively. In the case of the proposed construction projects in Muscat and Beijing, preliminary drawings have been prepared and are under process.

The renovation of the High Commissioner's residence in London is at an advanced stage of completion and is expected to be completed by end February 2001. The renovation works of Embassy of India properties in Moscow is expected to be completed by March 2001.

Once completed, these two Government of India properties will not only be functionally more efficient, but will also join the list of the most prestigious properties of Government of India abroad.

In the case of construction projects in India, progress was achieved. In order to cater to the growing stature and functions of the Foreign Service Institute, substantial progress was made in the time-consuming preliminary stages of project implementation - especially the detailed plans- and now the project is close to the construction stage. The CPWD to whom the work is entrusted expects to award the work to the Contractor by end January and complete the project by December 2002.

The most high profile Project of the Ministry of External Affairs, the Videsh Bhavan Project, was launched with the commencement of the design competition for the selection of the Architect for the building. The architect who will design the Videsh Bhavan is expected to be selected by February 2001. The proposed Chanakyapuri Housing Complex reached the stage of preparation of cost estimates (required for obtaining financial sanction) and in the case of the construction project (residential quarters for MEA staff) in Pappankalan, the Type IV and Type V residential quarters are nearing completion.

Simultaneously, priority was accorded to the execution of the proposed construction of the building for the Headquarters of the Afro-Asian Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC), the only such international Organisation to have its Headquarters in New Delhi. The required financial approval was obtained and in co-ordination with the Legal and Treaties Division, the grant was made over to the AALCC for supervision of the proposed construction of the Headquarters building. The ICCR building in Calcutta reached the pile foundation stage; the Videsh Bhavan, Calcutta, and several Passport Offices have, similarly, reached the preliminary stages of implementation and momentum is expected to pick up in the forthcoming financial year as the construction itself progresses.

Construction of staff quarters for the Passport Offices in Cochin

and Kozhikode are nearing completion. The building for the Passport Office, Ahmedabad was completed. In Panaji, the Office-cum-residential complex for the passport office, Goa reached an advanced stage of completion and the interior works costing Rs. 55 lakhs in the semi-built structure purchased at Maurya Lok Complex , Patna , for the Passport Office was completed. Besides the above, the planning work on the passport offices at Bhubaneshwar, Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Lucknow is in progress.

The Third Annual Review of Indexation on Foreign Allowance was carried out and steps were taken to further consolidate the system of rationalizing Foreign Allowance.

In the supply of Art Objects to the Missions abroad, after their selection by the concerned Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs, it was ensured that good quality representative art and handicrafts were forwarded to our Missions for display. A valuable collection of woven textiles, prepared by master craftsmen, was acquired from the Ministry of Textiles for the purpose of display in MEA, and Missions abroad.

A high-level IT Task Force, under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary (AD), was constituted to monitor the implementation of Minimum Agenda for e-Governance” of the Government. The IT Task Force also reviewed and suggested measures to improving administrative efficiency by using Information

Technology (IT). In order to upgrade and modernize facilities, computer hardware in several divisions of the Ministry was updated. Computer and e-mail connectivity was provided at the Section level in most of the Divisions of the Ministry. With a view to improving speed and reliability of Internet/e-mail connectivity, servers of the Ministry were upgraded and leased lines were installed between NIC and South Block, Akbar Bhawan and Patiala House respectively. Priority was given and progress achieved towards developing application software for achieving greater efficiency and for reduction of paper work. Local area network in IPA Division was introduced and considerable progress was made in computerizing all areas of work of CPV Division.

Several works for maintenance, renovation and beautification of Ministry buildings have been carried out and through systematic monitoring by maintenance Committees for the various buildings owned by MEA an overall improvement in office environment was ensured.

Procedures for monitoring the purchase and distribution of office equipment were reviewed, and a software for the same was developed and introduced, further streamlining the office and equipment management systems during the year.

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Foreign Service Institute

The Foreign Service Institute's activities during the year 2000, were:

- (1) Professional Course in Diplomacy and International Relations for Indian Foreign Service Probationers (1999 batch);
- (2) Familiarisation Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats;
- (3) Orientation Course for Non-MEA Officers;
- (4) Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats.

The Professional Course on Diplomacy and International Relations for the Probationers of the Indian Foreign Service – the most important part of FSI's work – was conducted for the 1999 batch of Indian Foreign Service Probationers, from January, 2000 to December, 2000. The 2000 batch of Probationers commenced their training in January 2001 after completing the Foundation Course at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration.

The basic objective of the Course was to provide comprehensive training to the young Indian Foreign Service Officer – trainees in the traditional areas of diplomacy, international relations, political reporting and protocol and in several related fields that are growing in importance such as national security, management challenges in the changing global scenario and investment promotion.

The training programme for the 1999 batch of Indian Foreign Service Probationers comprised of 26 modules, which dealt with important areas of work related to foreign policy and diplomacy. The most comprehensive module related to India's foreign policy, covering almost every aspect of our external relations.

In keeping with the special emphasis in recent years on economic diplomacy, the module on "International Economic Relations and Commercial Diplomacy" was strengthened. The focus was on India's economic reforms, the international economic missions abroad, role of Commercial Counsellors in investment promotion, commercial negotiations, management challenges in the changing global scenario and international finance and capital markets. A comprehensive programme was arranged in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industry and eminent speakers from Confederation of Indian Industry briefed the probationers on above matters. This was the 2nd year of CII's active participation.

The module entitled "New Areas of International Relations" highlighted some non-traditional areas of diplomacy, such as Environment, Energy, Refugees, Narcotics, Terrorism and Human Rights.

The module on "Defence & Security" apart from focusing on vital security issues like nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and

arms control, also covered India's defence policy, the state of our armed forces, developments in defence technology and the security of our border areas.

An additional module on "Special Diplomatic Skills" emphasised negotiating skills, communications skills, use of Information Technology, development of leadership skills and "esprit de corps". Mock sessions on negotiation skills were held.

Apart from these modules, there was a good deal of emphasis on field visits to acquaint the probationers with the ground situation in sensitive areas of the country such as the North-east, Jammu & Kashmir. The Probationers were also attached with the various wings of armed forces for training.

Continuing with the programme of visiting neighbouring countries Indian Foreign Service Probationers visited Myanmar & Bhutan, for a period of around one-week each.

The Institute also organised brief Orientation Programmes for officers from other Ministries of Government of India proceeding on posting to our Missions abroad.

The 11th Familiarisation Programme entitled "Introduction to India" for resident foreign diplomats was arranged from November 27th to 1st December. The Programme was designed to impart basic information about India to the newly arrived diplomats & covered topics such as the Constitution of India; organisation of MEA & Government of India; India's economic policy; historical legacy of India; Indian art, music & culture, etc. 23 resident diplomats participated in the programme.

In the period 2000-2001 FSI entered into an agreement for co-operation with the Diplomatic Academy of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia on 5th January, 2000. H.E. Dr. Zoran Andric Amb. Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Croatia signed on behalf of Croatia while Dean(FSI) Shri Dalip Mehta signed on behalf of India. FSI also signed two Memoranda of Understanding for co-operation : one with the

Academia Diplomatica Andre Bello of Chile on 10 August 2000 where Mr. Mario Hernan Artaza Rouxel acting sub-secretary of the Ministry of External Relation Govt of Chile signed on behalf of Chile while Mr. Ranjit Singh Kalha Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India signed on behalf of India and the other with Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, where Mr. Clement James Rohee Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana signed on behalf of his country and Mr. Jaswant Singh Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India signed on behalf of India.

The Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) is one of the most prestigious courses organised by the FSI. 25 PCFDs have been held so far and 552 diplomats from over 110 countries (in Central Europe, Africa, Central Asia, South East Asia, South and West Asia and South and Central America) have participated in them. The 25th PCFD was held from September 28 to November 9, 2000 in which 22 foreign diplomats participated. The 26th PCFD is scheduled to begin on 4 January 2000 and will conclude on 15 February 2000. The objective of the Course is to provide a professional orientation in the main categories of activities which diplomats deal with in their professional life. Some of the basic areas covered relate to diplomacy, international relations, international law and international organisations, security, focus on specific regions, diplomatic practice and protocol, representational and media skills. The diplomats are also exposed to presentations on Indian polity, India's foreign and security policies and on the Indian economy, science and technology and culture. During the course, PCFD participants are taken on study tours to various centres of economic, industrial and cultural importance to expose them to the diversity in the country and to enable a first hand feel of India's achievements, capabilities and constraints in different fields of national development.

The Foreign Service Institute has a modern, well equipped Computer Laboratory with 23 Pentium II PCs inter-connected via a

LAN network for Internet access. Following courses have been offered by the FSI.

- 1) Basic Beginners Course in Computer Training.
- 2) Advanced Level Training Course in MS-WORD.
- 3) Hindi Word Processing Training on Akshar for Windows Release II

In addition, the FSI will also shortly commence intermediate course in word processing and internet that is aimed at enabling officials of all levels/ages to overcome their hesitance in using computers and developing facility in word processing, internet exploring and working on e-mail. Next level course on Excel and MS Access are ready and will commence shortly.

The Basic Professional Course is a mandatory Refresher Course for officials in the Ministry of External Affairs upto the level of Section Officers prior to their departure on posting to Indian Missions abroad.

Emphasis is given in this Course on preparing officials to function effectively as a team in the diplomatic environment abroad, besides an exposure to administrative rules and procedures, finance and accounts work relevant to Indian Missions and passport, visas and consular work. The effort is to correlate closely with the expected job profile of each participant while in our Missions abroad. The Course is currently undergoing a comprehensive revision to broaden its scope by including new modules and reference materials provided by the Institute. In its revised format, the Course will include modules on cultural, commercial information and education work in the Mission. The Institute is acutely aware of the fact that our Missions provide the first impression of the country and it has, therefore, endeavoured to instil a high level of polite, positive and courteous behaviour among the members of the Mission.



Implementation of Official Language Policy and Propagation of Hindi Abroad

Ministry of External Affairs is making all efforts for the promotion and propagation of Hindi in its offices as well as in Missions/Posts abroad. Besides implementing the Official Language Policy of the Government of India, it plays an important role in the promotion and propagation of Hindi abroad. Documents like bilateral treaties, Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding, Credentials, Speeches of President, PAC paras, Annual Report of the Ministry and Parliament Questions submitted to both Houses are issued bilingually.

In the Golden Jubilee year of the Declaration of Hindi as the Official Language, the Ministry, in addition to regular programmes, organised special ones in the Missions. Special financial assistance was provided to the Missions for organising these programmes.

Hindi fortnight was organised in the Ministry, Regional Passport Offices and Missions/Posts abroad. Various cultural and competitive programmes like Hindi Noting /Drafting, Hindi Essay, Hindi Stenography and Hindi Typing Competitions were organised, in which a large number of officials participated. The message of the Hon'ble Home Minister was also read out during Hindi fortnight. Winners of the various competitions would be awarded suitable prizes at a function to be organised by the Ministry shortly.

Ministry has a well-formulated scheme of propagation of Hindi abroad. Ministry deputes Hindi Teachers to countries where there is a significant number of people of Indian origin to conduct classes. Hindi Professors are also deputed to various foreign Universities. Indian Missions abroad promote and assist in the learning of Hindi through correspondence courses conducted by Central Hindi Directorate. In 2000-2001, 50 slots were allotted to the students of different countries to learn Hindi at the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. Seven Hindi teachers were appointed in Indian Missions abroad under a special scheme to teach Hindi to the children of Embassy and other officials.

Standard Hindi literature worth Rs.15 Lakh on various subjects such as Indian culture, Art, Literature, Language, History and Philosophy were sent to Indian Missions for their libraries and also for donating to Educational Institutions and Voluntary Organisations engaged in promotion of Hindi. Teaching material including textbooks, dictionaries, audio-visual cassettes, Computer software, CD-ROMs etc. are also being sent. The Missions on their part maintain close contacts with local organisations and Indian community and fulfil their Hindi language related requirements. Some of our Missions organised Hindi Conferences, literary events, Hindi

Essay Competitions etc. to promote Hindi in the countries of their accreditation. Liberal financial assistance is given to the organisations engaged in teaching and promotion of Hindi as well as Indian Culture abroad.

Hindi forms an integral part of the FSI training programme. Intensive training about the Government's Official Language Policy and its implementation is given to the trainees. All IFS probationers are required to pass an Examination in Hindi before completing the training at the Foreign Service Institute. Officers are encouraged and motivated to do more work in Hindi. Foreign Service Institute in association with ET&T organised two training programmes for use of Hindi software. Leap Office Hindi Software has been provided to 67 Missions abroad.

Ministry has started its Hindi Website also wherein information about the important activities of the Ministry has been provided in Hindi. Efforts are being made to up-date information of the various activities of the Ministry on this Website.

Before the VI World Hindi Conference in 1999 an MOU was signed between the Government of India and the Government of

Mauritius for the establishment of the World Hindi Secretariat in Mauritius. The two governments had talks in order to expedite the establishment of the Secretariat

The first sub-committee of the Committee of Parliament on Official Language inspected the Ministry and the Regional Passport Office, Bangalore. Hindi Advisory Committee of the Ministry which monitors the progress of Hindi and gives necessary guidelines has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Minister of External Affairs. The Committee would meet soon.

Translation facilities are provided by the Ministry to the leader and members of the Indian Delegation who wish to address the UNGA in Hindi during the United Nations General Assembly Sessions. With a view to making Hindi as one of the Official Languages of the United Nations, Ministry has directed the Mission in New York to take up the matter with member countries with large Hindi Speaking populations to assess their general reaction to the proposal.



The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (hereinafter referred to as the Council or ICCR) 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. This year the ICCR celebrates its 50th Anniversary. The major activities of the Council are:

- (i) administration of scholarship schemes for overseas students on behalf of the Government of India;
- (ii) exchange of exhibitions;
- (iii) organisation of and participation in seminars and symposia;
- (iv) exchange of performing arts and groups;
- (v) establishing and maintaining Chairs and Professorships for Indian Studies abroad;
- (vi) presentation of books and musical instruments;
- (vii) annual organisation of the Maulana Azad Memorial Lectures and Maulana Azad Essay Competition and other programmes on behalf of MEA;
- (viii) providing the secretariat for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding;
- (ix) publications;
- (x) maintaining Indian Cultural Centres abroad and supporting special bilateral programmes.

The Council offers about 2000 scholarships every year under its various schemes. International students from over 80 countries study in different universities and educational institutions in India and pursue a variety of courses from undergraduate studies to doctoral degrees in various subjects. Scholarships are also given for the study of Indian art forms such as Indian classical music, dance, paintings sculpture etc. A total of 1015 new scholarships were offered from April to November 2000 to students from 70 countries.

The general welfare of all international students, scholarship holders as well as self-financing students is also a part of ICCR's responsibilities. The Council organizes various welfare activities throughout the year to familiarise the international students with the political, economic, social & cultural milieu of India. Activities during the year include interaction with International Students Advisors, and the holding of the VII International Students Festival in New Delhi as well as at the ICCR's eight regional offices to coincide with the birth anniversary of the founding father of the ICCR, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The Council has also organised summer and winter camps during which foreign students are given the opportunity to visit places of historical

and cultural interest in different parts of India. The International Students Festival in New Delhi, with the theme “Friendship Through Culture” was inaugurated by Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Hon’ble Minister of State for External Affairs on November 16, 2000.

The Council continues to publish a Newsletter for overseas students “At Home in India” which provides a platform for the overseas scholars to express their opinion on numerous subjects of interest related to their stay in India.

In order to promote greater awareness and appreciation of India’s composite cultural heritage abroad, the Council has set up Cultural Centres in Cairo (Egypt), Berlin (Germany), Port Louis (Mauritius), Paramaribo (Suriname), Georgetown (Guyana), Jakarta (Indonesia), Moscow (Russia), London (UK), Almaty (Kazakhstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Durban (South Africa), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago), Johannesburg (South Africa) and Colombo (Sri Lanka). All these Cultural Centres function under the administrative control of the respective Indian Missions abroad.

The activities of the Cultural Centres reflect the needs of the local population. In countries with a sizeable population of Indian origin such as Mauritius, Guyana, Surinam, Trinidad & Tobago, the Centres activities cater to the desire of the local populations to keep in touch with their Indian roots through activities such as the holding of classes in Indian music, dance and yoga. In Centres like those in London, Berlin & Moscow, the focus is on intellectual activities such as the organisation of lectures, talks, panel discussion seminars on subjects of contemporary and Cultural interest with the objective of promoting understanding of India through mutual interaction. The Centres also organise talks, lectures, exhibitions of visual arts, essay competitions, performances of dance and music, staging of plays, screening of Indian films, publication of news bulletins, seminars on Indian topics etc. The Hindi language is also taught in Moscow and Paramaribo. The Centres are also maintaining Libraries, Reading

Rooms and Audio-Video Libraries for the visitors. Apart from organising their own activities, these Cultural Centres also provide a supportive role to the respective Indian Missions for coordinating various cultural activities. The Centres develop and maintain contacts with the local citizens particularly students, teachers, academicians, opinion makers and cultural personalities to project holistic picture of India’s rich and diverse cultural heritage.

The Council deputed visiting professors abroad to teach Indian languages and other related subjects. The deputation of Professors abroad is done under the Bilateral Cultural exchange Programmes, and Scheme of Propagation of Hindi abroad. ICCR presently has on deputation 17 Professors teaching Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Hindi-cum-Malayalam and Modern Indian History in Paramaribo (Suriname), Budapest (Hungary), Port Louis (Mauritius), Moscow (Russia), Seoul (South Korea), Warsaw (Poland) (two posts – Hindi and Tamil), Brussels (Belgium), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago) (2 posts – Hindi and Modern Indian History), Sofia (Bulgaria), Ankara (Turkey), Bucharest (Romania), Bangkok (Thailand), Paris (France) and Osh (Kyrgyzstan).

The Council has a major publication programme which has been growing over the years. The Council brings out seven quarterly journals in different languages – “Indian Horizons” and “Africa Quarterly” (both in English); “Gagananchal” (Hindi); “Papeles de la India” (Spanish); “Recontre AVEC L’Inde” (French); “Thaqafat-ul-Hind” (Arabic) and “Indien in der Gegenwart” (German).

Special publications during the current year have been as follows:-

- (i) A special millennium issue of “Papeles de la India”
- (ii) A commemorative volume on Dr. Zakir Husain- “ Dr. Zakir Hussain : Teacher who became President” in three languages

Hindi, Urdu and English, which was released on 21 July 2000 by the Hon'ble Vice President of India/President, ICCR, Shri Krishan Kant with the presentation of first copies of the book to the Hon'ble President of India, Shri K.R. Narayanan at a special ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Besides this the ICCR provided financial assistance to the Delhi Symphony Society to publish a "National Directory on Promotion, Training and Development of European Classical Music in India".

The Council also participated in the 7th International Book Festival, Budapest from 21-23 April 2000 through the NBT.

The personal collection of books and manuscripts bequeathed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Founder-President of the Council, forms the core of the ICCR Library.

In the current year the library has augmented its collection with purchases of around 157 titles in English, 176 in Hindi and 38 in Urdu approved by the library committee. Approximately 3,800 visitors have visited the library during the period under report.

The Library has joined Delhi Library Network (DELNET) with the prime objective to optimise resource sharing.

ICCR's grant for the year 2000-2001 for the general activities is Rs. 39.00 Crores. Expected receipts of the Council are Rs. 0.35 Crores. The expenditure booked upto October, 2000 is Rs. 18.68 Crores. An additional grant of Rs. 1.00 Crore has been approved for special activities to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the ICCR.

ICCR conducted the following activities during the period under report :

1. The Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Essay Competition Award Presentation Ceremony was held on 20 May, 2000 at the house of Shri Krishan Kant, Hon'ble Vice President of India/President of ICCR.
2. The IOR-ARC lecture by Mr Yousuf Bin Alwai Abdullah, Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs, Govt. of the Sultanate of Oman was organised on 18 July 2000 at Teen Murti auditorium.
3. The ICCR co-sponsored the seminar held in New Delhi on 16-17 August 2000, to celebrate the birth centenary of the renowned Bengali poet, Qazi Nazrul Islam.
4. The Council co-sponsored a 3 day international conference "Journey to the East" organised by Smt. Shanta Sarbjeet Singh, vice chairperson of the Asia Pacific Performing Arts Network (APPAN) from 28-31 Oct., 2000 held in New Delhi.
5. The 55th Anniversary of the United Nations was celebrated on 30th Oct., 2000 at Tagore Hall, Azad Bhavan, New Delhi. Shri Ajit Panja, Minister of state for External Affairs was the Chief Guest at the occasion.
6. "Civilizations, Dialogue & National Identity": An Indo-Iran Conference on Dialogue Among Civilizations, was held at Neemarana 17-19 Nov., 2000 and at New Delhi 20 Nov., 2000.
7. The Council provided assistance for the holding of an international Seminar entitled "Saundarya", which was held from November 24-26, 2000 at IIC, New Delhi.
8. To mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (PLO Day). A function was organised on Wednesday, 29 November 2000 at Tagore Hall, Azad Bhavan, New Delhi. Shri Ajit Panja, Minister of State for External Affairs was the chief guest at the event, which was attended by a number of Ambassadors. Dr. Khalid El-Sheikh, Ambassador of the State of Palestine also addressed the audience on the occasion.

During the period April 2000- November 2000 the Council organised visits of artistes/troupes to India from several countries viz. China, Germany, Hungary, Iran, Italy, Myanmar, Poland, Russia, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, USA, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

These groups were hosted under the ambit of existing Cultural Exchange Programmes as well as in response to requests received from Indian diplomatic Missions and organisations abroad and foreign diplomatic Missions in India.

The major events organised in India included the “Days of Turkmen Culture” (August 2000), presentation in 26 cities by eight performing arts groups under the “Festival of Germany in India” (Oct 2000 – March 2000) and an International Puppet Festival (November 2000). An International Festival of Ramayana is scheduled to be held in Khajuraho, Varanasi, Chitrakoot and New Delhi in December, 2000. Under its two popular series of presentations of Indian art forms, “Horizon” and “Retropectives”, the Council continued to arrange performances by artistes on the ICCR’s Reference Panel of artistes in New Delhi and other cities. The fact that the year 2000 marked the completion of 50 year of the ICCR’s existence was thus well publicised in all sections of the audio-visual media in India.

The Council arranged presentations by eminent artistes and groups abroad (46 groups to 41 countries during the period April – November 2000). Some of the important events/festivals in which cultural groups participated were : 12th International Theatre Festival in Venezuela, “Spring Arts Festival” in the DPR Korea, “May 2000 Festival” in the USA, “Singapore Arts Festival”, “Expo – 2000” Hannover in Germany, “14th International Organ and Chamber Music Festival Kolodzko – 2000” and “Krakow Festival” in Poland, “National Festival of Popular Arts” in Morocco, “Budapest Farewell Festival 2000” in Hungary, “Grahamstown Festival” in South Africa, “Islamailia International Folklore Festival” in Egypt, “3000th

Anniversary of Osh City” in Kyrgyzstan, “Bosra Festival” in Syria, “Babylon Festival” in Iraq, “Music and Dance Festival” in Bangladesh, “Cervantino Festival” in Mexico, “Music Festival” in Bahrain and the “5th International Puppet Festival” in Pakistan.

The Council also arranged a special presentation in the People’s Republic of China to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with China during the visit to that country of the President of India. Special performances were also arranged in Laos and Vietnam on the occasion of the inaugural Meeting of the Ganga-Mekong Suvannaphum Cooperation in Vientiane and coinciding with the External Affairs Minister’s visits to Laos and Vietnam. A series of performances of eminent artistes were also arranged during the “Days of Indian Culture” in Turkmenistan.

The eminent artistes/groups who were sent abroad on performance tours included the “Kathakali Group of International Centre for Kathakali”, Ms. Jayalakshmi Eshwar (Bharatnatyam), Dr. Balamurali Krishnan (Vocal), Ms. Ashwani Bhide (Vocal), Pung Dhol Cholan group of Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy for Performing Arts, Ms. Pragati Sood (Kathak), Ms. Sharan Rani Backliwal (Sarod), Ms. Kaushalya Reddy (Kuchipudi), Ms. Priyadarshini Govind (Bharatnatyam), Ms. Priti Patel (Manipuri), Prime Time Theatre Group of Lillette Dubey, Ms. Sutapa Talukdar (Odissi), Rajasthani Folk Dance group of Rajki Purn Nath Sapera, Ms. Meera Das (Odissi), Ms. Kiran Segal (Odissi), Ms. Padma Talwalkar (Vocal), Ms. Lakshmi Vishwanathan (Bharatnatyam), Rajasthani Folk Dance Group of Shri Kohinoor Langa, Guru Jaya Rama Rao and Vanasree Rao (Kuchipudi), Ms. Aloka Kanungo (Odissi), Sachin Shanker Ballet Group, Lalgudi GJR Krishnan (Violin), Sharma Bandhu (Bhajan), Karagam/Dummy Horse Folk Group and Ms. Penaz Masani (Popular and Ghazal Singer).

As part of its efforts to foster and strengthen cultural relations

and mutual understanding between India and other countries, the ICCR facilitates exchanges of scholars, intellectuals, academicians and artistes under its Distinguished Visitors Programme.

Visitors to India under this programme included eminent painters, scholars, writers museum experts and other personalities involved with cultural activities in their own countries and abroad.

During the period, the Council also sponsored the visits abroad of distinguished personalities from India to meet/interact with their counterparts, to participate in seminars, conferences and workshops and to deliver lectures on different subjects. These distinguished visitors included Shri Bahauddin Dagar, Musician to participate in the School of Sound Seminar held at Royal Institute of British Architects (London), a 6-member delegation to participate in a seminar organised by the National Centre for Middle East Studies (Cairo), Justice A.M. Ahmadi, Former Chief Justice of India to Colombo to deliver the Keynote address at the All Ceylon Young Men's Muslim Association on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee Convention and Shri T.N. Ninan (Business Standard) & Prof. Ravinder Kumar (Nehru Memorial Fund) to Germany to participate in the Seminar on "India : Perspectives for the Millennium."

Under its Presentations programme, the Council gifted books on Indian culture, art, architecture, cuisine, dance and music to various foreign dignitaries, libraries, institutions and schools all over the world. The ICCR also sent musical instruments, art objects, video/ audio cassettes/CDs on Indian dance and music for presentation through Indian Missions abroad.

The Council commissioned and sent busts of national leaders including Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore for installation in Mauritius, Panama, Yemen, Bangladesh and China. A life size bronze statue of Rabindranath Tagore was sent to Mexico. A statue of Mahatma Gandhi was ceremonially installed in Washington by the Prime Minister of India and the President of the U.S.A. in September, 2000.

The Council organized two exhibitions received from Hungary (April) and China (November) at its Ajanta Art Gallery. The Council also sent exhibitions on Contemporary Graphic Prints (to Southern America), Indian Dolls and Dresses (to Europe & Southern Africa), Photo exhibition "My Land My People" (to the Gulf & Middle East), Madhubani Paintings (to the Americas) and Mahatma Gandhi (Bangladesh).

The website of the Council's Programmes Newsletter, launched in December 1997, with a wide spectrum of links to information on Indian Culture, was acknowledged as a pioneering culture portal to India. It can be accessed at the following 3 URLs :

<http://education.vsnl.com/iccr>

<http://iccr.tripod.com>

<http://iccr.culture.webjump.com>



Appendices

Appendix I

**Cadre strength at headquarters and Missions/Posts abroad during 2000-2001
(including posts budgeted by Ministry of Commerce and held in abeyance/ex-cadred)**

S. No.	Cadre/Post	Posts at Hqrs.	Posts at Missions	Total
IFS (A)				
1.	Grade I	5	21	26
2.	Grade II	1	33	34
3.	Grade III	36	108	144
4.	Grade IV	35	98	133
5.	Jr. Adm. Grade	44	137	181
6.	(i) Jr. Scale	1	32	33
	(ii) Probationers Reserve	27	-	27
	(iii) Leave Reserve	15	-	15
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	19	-	19
	(v) Training Reserve	7	-	7
IFS (B)				
7.	(i) Grade I	43	98	141
	(ii) Deputation Reserve	6	-	6
8.	(i) Grade II/III	99	175	274
	(ii) Leave Reserve	30	-	30
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	16	-	16
	(iv) Training Reserve	25	-	25

S. No.	Cadre/Post	Posts at Hqrs.	Posts at Missions	Total
9.	(i) Grade IV	252	410	662
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	-	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	55	-	55
10.	(i) Grade V/VI	339	196	535
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	-	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	55	-	55
11.	(i) Gr.II of Cypher Cadre (Cypher Asstts.)	57	141	198
	(ii) Leave Reserve	23	-	23
12.	(i) Private Secretary	35	198	233
	(ii) Leave Reserve	14	-	14
13.	(i) Personal Assistant	141	194	335
	(ii) Leave Reserve	33	-	33
	(iii) Training Reserve (Hindi)	10	-	10
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	12	-	12
14.	Stenographer (Gr.III)	17	77	94
15.	Interpreters' Cadre	8	27	35
16.	L&T Cadre	16	-	16
	Total	1543	1946	3489

Appendix II**Data on recruitment made in various groups in the MEA and reserved vacancies filled by scheduled castes / scheduled tribes / OBCs during the year 2000-2001 (provisional)**

Group	Total No. of vacancies	Number of vacancies			
		Reserved			Unreserved
		SC	ST	OBC	
Group 'A'	8	nil	1	3	4
Group 'B'	59	2	18	1	38
Group 'C'	30	1	1	1	27
Group 'D'	22	8	-	-	14

Appendix III

List of officers qualified in various foreign languages as on 31.12.2000

S. No.	Compulsory Foreign Language	No. of Officers	S. No.	Compulsory Foreign Language	No. of Officers
1.	Arabic	84	16.	Mandarin	1
2.	Bhasa Indonesia	13	17.	Nepalese	3
3.	Burmese	1	18.	Persian	20
4.	Chinese	51	19.	Portuguese	16
5.	Dutch	1	20.	Russian	75
6.	French	74	21.	Serbo-Croatian	3
7.	German	32	22.	Sinhalese	2
8.	Gorkhali	1	23.	Spanish	61
9.	Hebrew	2	24.	Swedish	1
10.	Hungarian	1	25.	Thai	2
11.	Italian	5	26.	Tibetan	2
12.	Japanese	25	27.	Turkish	6
13.	Kazakh	1	28.	Ukrainian	1
14.	Kishwahili	10	29.	Vietnamese	1
15.	Malay-Bhasa	1			

Note : The numbers exclude Language Trainees

Appendix IV

Statement showing the number of applications received and Passports issued and Miscellaneous services rendered as well as Revenue and Expenditure figures of the offices from 1 January to 31 December 2000

S.NO.	Passport office	Total No. of applications received	No. of passports issued	No. of Misc. applications received	Misc. services rendered	Passports issued under Tatkal Scheme	Revenue earned under Tatkal Scheme (in Rupees)	Revenue earned (in Rupees)	Expenditure incurred (in Rupees)
1.	AHMEDABAD	189327	146977	13590	13119	3562	3897500	61095300	18089104
2.	BANGALORE	125838	123542	28432	27062	6349	8585000	53711785	15515672
3.	BAREILLY	34230	33150	1738	1930	687	842800	12149863	6428805
4.	BHOPAL	39934	38301	3140	3105	1193	1603100	14295961	4723348
5.	BHUBANESHWAR	15188	14636	1184	1154	443	558000	5721900	2145670
6.	CALCUTTA	112440	96435	10370	9554	3866	5254300	39485514	9425785
7.	CHANDIGARH	140019	117431	11841	11261	2050	2811000	49595299	13622894
8.	CHENNAI	168087	150143	21761	21408	10633	15650500	71942971	18380830
9.	COCHIN	106714	100874	16749	15855	3286	4405000	40665720	15581132
10.	DELHI	189105	167394	26535	22656	12429	16490500	85612381	28147841
11.	GHAZIABAD	39059	32575	2571	2478	1760	2276500	15017926	3749504

12.	GUWAHATI	18783	14960	1384	1105	3666	2972000	8698928	2813991
13.	HYDERABAD	231809	208156	23971	23627	8964	12874300	88760313	24178667
14.	JAIPUR	73468	65613	4618	4142	1787	2370500	25769147	9959594
15.	JALANDHAR	145654	120545	10583	8789	1669	1541100	46866488	13381219
16.	JAMMU	9672	7984	526	515	164	208000	3644835	2812018
17.	KOZHIKODE	146424	130854	16424	15929	3070	4281100	53770492	17587927
18.	LUCKNOW	113743	89801	5932	5562	1154	1468054	37078367	24650265
19.	MUMBAI	181342	149974	26022	24105	11188	13815300	74398128	49603532
20.	NAGPUR	20921	19275	1573	1566	904	1175000	7946381	2140449
21.	PANAJI	19599	18730	7102	6980	1389	1827000	10322015	2249609
22.	PATNA	57359	43603	3845	3562	1109	1417700	19838300	6727746
23.	PUNE	44813	35947	4199	3494	1983	2324000	14723850	4419809
24.	SRINAGAR	9372	5651	597	476	92	101900	3247070	3470669
25.	THANE	53629	42416	497	487	2533	3107000	13999310	* *
26.	TRICHY	170512	147305	11435	10921	2757	3744500	55739555	16007407
27.	TRIVANDRUM	81016	75488	13508	13214	2439	3288500	34250184	12486292
28.	VISAKHAPATNAM	50463	45273	3781	3598	1098	1506500	18219039	4514299
TOTAL		2588520	2243033	273908	257654	92224	120396654	966567022	332814078

* Included in R.P.O.Mumbai's figures.

Appendix V**Consular Data for 2000**

1.	Number of Indians repatriated at Government cost	79
2.	Number of Indians arrested abroad	9243
3.	Number of deaths of Indians abroad reported to the Ministry	3143

Appendix VI

Finances of the Ministry of External Affairs in 1999-2000

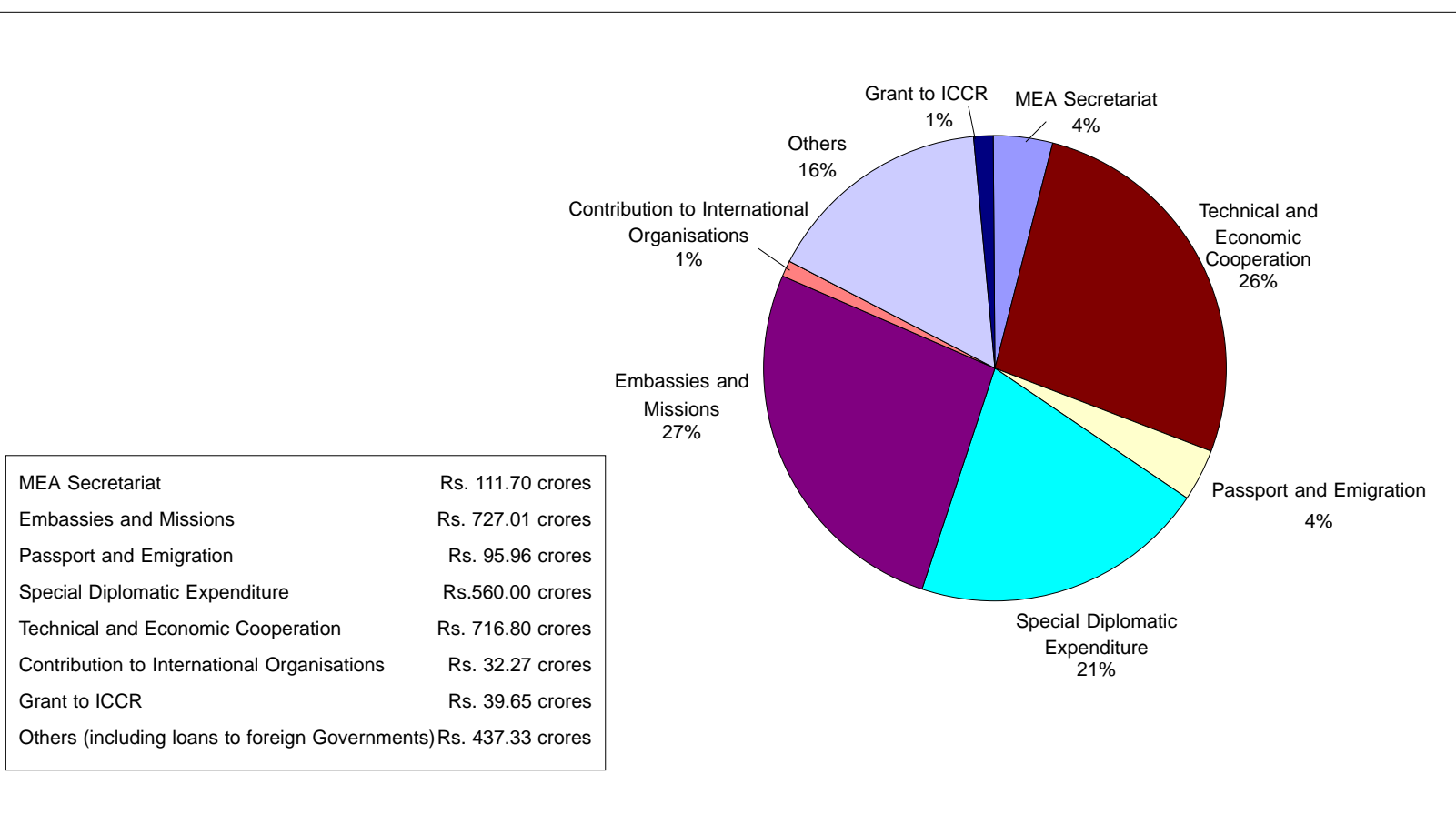
The Ministry of External Affairs Budget Allocation for BE 2000-2001 is Rs. 2625.72 crores which is an enhancement over BE 1999-2000 by Rs. 416.25 crores i.e. by 18.84% and an increase over RE 1999-2000 by Rs. 376.25 crores i.e. by 16.73%. The RE for 2000-2001 is Rs. 2720.72 crores i.e. an increase of 3.62% over BE 2000-2001 and 20.95% over RE 1999-2000.

Comparative figures of MEA Expenditure and Budget for the past three years are as follows:

Years	Actuals (in crores)	% age variation
1997-98	1509.03	—
1998-99	2073.75	37.42
1999-2000	2133.16	2.86
2000-2001 (BE)	2625.72	23.09
2000-2001 (RE)	2720.72	3.62

Appendix VII

Principal Allocations in 2000-2001 Budget



India's Aid Programme

Aid to Bhutan accounts for 77% of India's total aid budget. Other important destinations for Indian aid programs include Nepal - 9% Myanmar - 3% and other countries - 11%

In addition, the Government of India has extended loans to the Governments of Bangladesh and Bhutan to assist in the implementation of developmental projects. During 2000-2001, the loans extended to Government of Bangladesh amount to Rs. 75 crores and to Government of Bhutan Rs. 200.80 crores.

The Budget of the Ministry of External Affairs is essentially a Non-Plan Budget. From 1996-97, however, a Plan head has been established with the approval of the Cabinet. This is primarily to cater to certain large developmental projects, which have been undertaken in Bhutan, as part of project assistance requested by Government of Bhutan in the Government of India's "Aid to Bhutan" Program. The Tala Hydroelectric Project currently under implementation in Bhutan is an extremely prestigious and important project. Two other projects funds from the Plan head are the Kurichu Hydroelectric Project and the Dungsum Cement Plan project, both in Bhutan.

The estimated expenditure on the Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs during the current financial year is estimated to be of the order of Rs. 112 crores which forms about 5% of the total estimated revenue expenditure of the Ministry. Estimated expenditure on Indian Missions and Posts abroad is expected to be of the order of Rs. 727 crores which is about 31% of the total revenue expenditure of the Ministry.

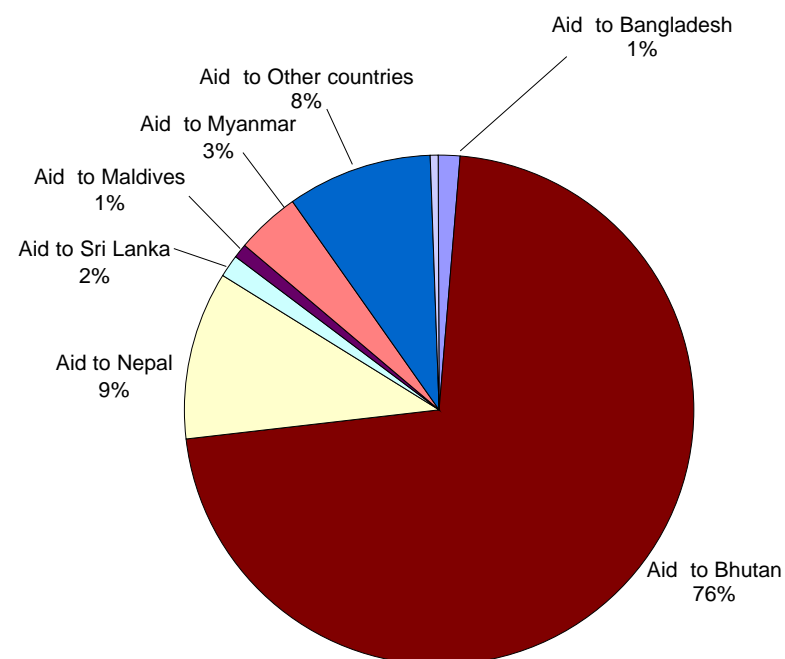
The Ministry of External Affairs' revenue from Passport and Visa fees and other receipts is likely to be of the order of Rs. 479 crores. It is estimated that Passport fees would account for about Rs. 167 crores and Visa fees for Rs. 285 crores.

Appendix VIII

India's Aid Programmes

In absolute terms the principal destinations of our Aid Programmes are as follows:

Aid to countries	Rs. in crores
Bhutan	549.20
Bangladesh	8.75
Nepal	62.00
Sri Lanka	11.00
Myanmar	19.15
Other developing countries	51.59
Add to Maldives	8.00
African countries	5.00



Appendix IX

Treaties/Conventions/Agreements Concluded or Renewed by India with other countries in 2000

Title of Conventions/ Treaties/Agreements, etc.	Date of Signature/ Adoption	Date of Ratification/ Accession or Acceptance	Date of Entry into Force
MULTILATERAL			
1. Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in cases of Oil Pollution Casualties.		29.11.1969	30.5.2000 6.5.1975
2. Protocol of 1992 to Amend the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage.		7.11.1992	8.6.2000 30.5.1996
3. Protocol of 1988 Relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966.		11.11.1988	26.7.2000
4. Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974.		11.11.1988	28.7.2000
5. Agreement Establishing the Advisory Centre on WTO Law		30.11.1999	8.12.2000
6. Inter-Governmental Agreement on International "North-South" Transport Corridor between India, Iran, Oman and Russian Federation.		12.09.2000	
REGIONAL			
1. Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and Pacific.		6.12.1983	14.6.2000

BILATERAL**ARMENIA**

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| 1. Air Services Agreement between India and Armenia. | 05.12.2000 | |
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AUSTRALIA

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| 2. MOU between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Australia concerning cooperation in the Information Industries. | 18.10.2000 | 18.10.2000 |
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BRAZIL

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| 3. MOU between the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Ministry of Information Technology of the Republic of India on the Collaboration on Information Technology services for setting up of a Brazil-India Task Force on Information Technology. | 9.11.2000 | 9.11.2000 |
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BULGARIA

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| 4. Agreement on Scientific and Technical Co-operation between India and the Republic of Bulgaria. | 10.11.2000 | |
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CHINA

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| 5. MOU for Cooperation of Information Technology between the Ministry of Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Information Industry of the People's Republic of China. | 17.6.2000 | 17.6.2000 |
| 6. MOU on Cooperation in Information Technology and Services between the Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of India. | 24.02.2000 | 24.02.2000 |

CROATIA

- | | | |
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| 7. Agreement on Air Services between India and Croatia | 12.09.2000 | |
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GEORGIA

8. Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations between India and Georgia. 00.05.2000

FRANCE

9. MOU on Mutual Cooperation on Information Technologies and Services between the Ministry of Economy, Finance, Industry, Government of the Republic of France and the Ministry of Information Technology, the Government of the Republic of India. 28.9.2000 28.9.2000

IAEA

10. Memorandum of Understanding between India and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for Co-operation in connection with the Agency's Regional and Inter-regional Training Events, Individuals and Group Fellowship Training Programmes under Technical Co-operation activities of IAEA. 11.05.2000 11.05.2000

IRELAND

11. Proposal for India-Ireland Working Group on Information Technology. 00.4.2000 00.4.2000

JORDAN

12. Memorandum of Understanding on Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. 18.12.2000 18.12.2000

MAURITIUS

13. Agreement on Cooperation in Information Technology between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Government of the Republic of India. 10.03.200 10.03.200

PHILIPPINES

14. Memorandum of Understanding for Policy Consultation Talks between the Ministry External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines. 28.11.2000 28.11.2000

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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| 15. Declaration on Strategic Partnership between the Republic of India and Russian Federation | 03.10.2000 |
| 16. Integrated Long Term Programme of Cooperation in Science and Technology between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation (ILTP) upto the year 2010. | 03.10.2000 |
| 17. Programme of Cultural, Scientific and Educational Exchange between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation for the years 2000-2002 (CEP). | 03.10.2000 |
| 18. Agreement between the Ministry of Communication and Information of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the field of Postal Communications. | 03.10.2000 |
| 19. Inter-Governmental Agreement on Mutual Protection of Confidential Materials. | 03.10.2000 |
| 20. Inter-Governmental Agreement on the Principles of Cooperation between the Governments of the States and Union Territories of the Republic of India and the Executive Bodies of the Subjects of the Russian Federation. | 03.10.2000 |
| 21. Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters. | 03.10.2000 |
| 22. Inter-Governmental Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture. | 03.10.2000 |
| 23. Protocol of Intentions between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of the Government of India and the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the field of Processing and Trade of rough natural diamonds and precious metals. | 03.10.2000 |
| 24. Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs of the Government of India and the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. | 03.10.2000 |
| 25. Memorandum of Understanding between Export-Import Bank of India and Vnesheconombank. | 03.10.2000 |

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| 26. Production Sharing Contract between Gas Authority of India Limited and Gazprom of the Russian Federation for Joint Expolaration and Development of one block on the East Coast of India under the New Expoloration Licencing Policy (NELP). | 03.10.2000 |
| 27. Inter-governmental Agreement on the Establishment of an Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation. | 03.10.2000 |
| 28. Inter-Governmental Agreement on Supply from Russia to India of the Aircraft Carrier Admiral Gorshkov. | 03.10.2000 |
| 29. Inter-Governmental Agreement between India and the Russian Federation for the Transfer of Technology and Licensed Production of 140 SU-30 MKI fighter aircraft, the engines and airborne equipment by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. | 03.10.2000 |
| 30. Agreement between the Ministry of Defence of India and the State Corportion ROSVOOROUZHENIE of the Russian Federation on the purchase of T-90 Tanks by India. | 03.10.2000 |
| 31. Memorandum of Understanding in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. | 03.10.2000 |
| 32. Agreement between the RIA Novosti and PIB (the Press Information Bureau of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Government of India) on Cooperation in Information Exchange. | 03.11.2000 |

SINGAPORE

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| 33. MOU between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Singapore on the Setting up of a Task Force in Information and Communications Technology and Services. | 30.03.2000 | 30.03.2000 |
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SUDAN

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| 34. Protocol for Co-operation in the field of Radio and TV between Prasar Bharathi (Broadcasting Corporation of India) and Sudanese Radio and Television. | 09.04.2000 |
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THAILAND

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| 35. Bilateral Agreement on Co-operation for Utilization of Atomic Energy for Peaceful Purposes between India and Thailand. | 10.06.2000 | 10.06.2000 |
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TUNISIA

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| 36. Extradition Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia. | 4.4.2000 | 14.6.2000 |
| 37. MOU on Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia. | 8.12.2000 | 8.12.2000 |
| 38. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia. | 8.12.2000 | 8.12.2000 |

TURKEY

- | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| 39. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Turkey concerning the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments. | 17.9.2000 | 28.7.2000 |
|---|-----------|-----------|

UNITED KINGDOM

- | | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| 40. MOU between Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (National Sample Survey Organisation), Government of India and London School of Economics. | 06.06.2000 | 06.06.2000 |
| 41. Treaty between Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Uzbekistan on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. | 2.5.2000 | 2.5.2000 |
| 42. Credit Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan | 2.5.2000 | 2.5.2000 |
| 43. Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Uzbekistan. | 2.5.2000 | 2.5.2000 |

44. Protocol on Cooperation in the field of Information and Mass Media between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Uzbekistan.	2.5.2000	2.5.2000
45. Protocol on Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Uzbekistan.	2.5.2000	2.5.2000
46. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan regarding Mutual Assistance between their Customs Administrations.	2.5.2000	2.5.2000
47. Agreement on Mutual Professional Cooperation between the National Information Agency of Uzbekistan (UZA) and Press Trust of India (PTI).	2.5.2000	
48. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Cooperation in the field of Agricultural Research and Education.	2.5.2000	

Appendix X

Full Powers Issued during 2000

S.No	Conventions/Treaties	Date of Full Powers
1.	Full Powers in favour of Shri L.K.Advani, Minister for Home Affairs to sign the Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Uzbekistan on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matter.	27.4.2000
2.	Full Powers in favour of Shri Yashwant Sinha, Finance Minister to sign the Agreement on Tourism Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of the Italian Republic.	23.6.2000
3.	Full Powers in favour of Dr.E.A.S.Sarma, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Kingdom of Sweden for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	29.6.2000
4.	Full Powers in favour of Shri Kamalesh Sharma, Permanent Representative and Ambassador of India to the United Nations for signing the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism 1999.	7.8.2000
5.	Full Powers in favour of Shri Rajnath Singh, Minister or Surface Transport for signing the Inter-Governmental Agreement on International "North-South" Transport Corridor between India, Russia and Iran.	8.9.2000
6.	Full Powers in favour of Shri A.Balasubraminian, Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes to sign between the Government of the Republic of India and the government of Ireland for the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on Income and Capital Gains.	4.11.2000

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| 7. | Full Powers in favour of Shri Shyamal B. Cowsik, High Commissioner for India to Cyprus Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus relating to Air Services. | 20 11.2000 |
| 8. | Full Powers in favour of Shri Ram Naik, Hon'ble Minister for Petroleum and natural Gas Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Iraq and the Government of Republic of India on Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation and the Statute of the Iraqi-Indian Joint Commission for Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation. | 20.11.2000 |
| 9. | Full Powers in favour of Shri S.T.Devare, Secretary (ER), Ministry of External Affairs to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for Policy Consultations Talks between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines. | 21.11.2000 |
| 10. | Full Powers in favour of Shri Kamalesh Sharma, Permanent Representative and Ambassador of India to the United Nations for signing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity. | 02.12.2000 |
| 11. | Full Powers in favour of Shri Prabhakar Menon, India's Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands to sign on behalf of the Government of India the Agreement Establishing the Advisory Centre on WTO Law | 8.12.2000 |
| 12. | Full Powers in favour of Shri L.K.Advani, Minister of Home Affairs to sign on behalf of India the Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and Mongolia on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. | 02.01.2001 |
| 13. | Full Powers in favour of Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Law Justice, and Company Affairs to sign on behalf of India the Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and Mongolia on Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters. | 02.01.2001 |
| 14. | Full Powers in favour of Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Finance to sign on behalf of India the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia for the Promotion and Protection of Investments. | 02.01.2001 |
| 15. | Full Powers in favour of Shri Sharad Yadav, Minister of Civil Aviation to sign on behalf of India the Agreement between the Government of India and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg relating to Air Services. | 04.01.2001 |

Appendix XI**Instruments of Ratification / Accession issued during 2000**

S.No Conventions/Treaties	Date of Instrument
1. Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in cases of Oil Pollution Casualties	30.5.2000
2. Protocol of 1992 to Amend the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage.	8.6.2000
3. Protocol of 1988 Relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966.	26.7.2000
4. Protocol of 1988 Relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974.	28.7.2000
5. Agreement Establishing the Advisory Centre on WTO Law.	8.12.2000
6. Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and Pacific.	14.6.2000
7. Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia.	14.6.2000
8. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Turkey concerning the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.	28.7.2000
9. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	15.12.2000
10. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Austria for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	15.12.2000
11. Agreement on Cooperation for Combating Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Other Crimes between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China.	05.01.2001
12. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	05.01.2001
13. Agreement between the Republic of India and the Portuguese Republic on the Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments.	05.01.2001

Appendix XII

Major International Conferences/Meetings organised by since April 2000

S. No.	Institute/NGO	Seminar/Conference	Venue/Date
1.	IDS A,* N.Delhi	II IPIS-IDS A Dialogue	Tehran/May 2000
2.	IDS A, N.Delhi	CSCAP 13 th Steering	Kualalumpur/ June 2000
3.	IDS A, N.Delhi	Int'l Workshop under	Almaty/CICA June 2000
4.	IDS A, N.Delhi	CSCAP Workshop on N.E.Asia	Ulan Bator/ June 2000
5.	IDS A, N.Delhi	Indo-Israel bilateral seminar	Nov.2000
6.	IDS A, N.Delhi	CSCAPMaritimeco-operation Working Group Meeting	Manila/July 2000
7.	IDS A, N.Delhi	Contribution to CSCAP Fund for the II Half of 2000	
8.	JNU,** N.Delhi	Indo-Japanese relations: the emerging trends	New Delhi/ August 2000
9.	JNU, N.Delhi	Indo-Russian Relations: Strategic partnership; Problems & Prospects.	New Delhi/ Nov.2000
10.	JNU, N.Delhi	Participation in VII International ESCAS Conf.on C.Asia	Vienna/Sep 2000
11.	Indo-Latin American File, N.Delhi	Four seminars on Latin American countries	New Delhi/Jan, Feb, March & May 2000
12.	Mimesha Productions New Delhi	To Undertake a project to study migration from Bangladesh and its impact On North-Eastern region in India.	
13.	W. Bengal Federation of UN Association, Calcutta	36 th plenary of the World Fed.of UN Association on the theme of "UN in the New Millennium.	Calcutta/ April 2000
14.	Network for Child Dev., New Delhi	Human Security and curb on small arms	N.Delhi April, 2000

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| 15. | Society for Indian Ocean Studies, N.Delhi. | Indonesia: A New Beginning | New Delhi/
May 2000 |
| 16. | Indian Pugwash Society, N.Delhi. | Abolition of Nuclear Weapons | New Delhi/ Nov.2000 |
| 17. | United Schools Int'l, N.Delhi. | Peaceful uses of atomic energy. | N.Delhi/ Oct 2000 |
| 18. | Pondicherry University | India's foreign and security Policies in the new decade: Challenges & opportunities In South Asia. | Pondicherry/
Dec 2000 |
| 19. | I.C.C.R., N.Delhi | Civilizations, Dialogue & National identity. | New Delhi/ |
| 20. | South Asia Studies Centre Jaipur | Visit to Bhutan for presenting a paper on Bhutan | Thimpu/ Aug 2000 |
| 21. | Instt.of Marketing & Management, N.Delhi | Marketing cooperation with South & East African Countries | New Delhi/
Jan 2001 |
| 22. | Int'l Instt. For Asia-Pacific Studies, N.Delhi | Indo-Russian Relations: Prospects& Problems and Russia Today. | N.Delhi/
Sep 2000 |
| 23. | Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Instt.of Asian Studies, Calcutta. | To participate in VII ESCAS Conf. On C.Asia | Vienna/
Sep 2000 |
| 24. | Indian Instt.of Industrial economics, N.Delhi | To conduct a study on the impact of economic reforms in select developing countries. | |
| 25. | Asia Centre, Bangalore | Conf.on Indian Ocean | Bangalore/ Oct.2000 |
| 26. | Foreign Policy Research Institute, N.Delhi. | Indo-Russian togetherness in new millennium. | N.Delhi/
Sep 2000. |
| 27. | ARSP***, New Delhi. | Int'l Conf.of global people of Indian origin | New Delhi/ Jan 2001 |
| 28. | ARSP, N.Delhi | To bring out a news bulletin on Fiji | |
| 29. | Shri K.K.S.Rana | Visit to Malta for attending a conference | Malta/ March 2000. |
| 30. | CASI,**** U.S.A. | Annual recurring grant | |
| 31. | Centre for Policy Research New Delhi. | To host a delegation from Myanmar for bilateral dialogue | New Delhi/
March 2001. |

* IDSA : The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.

** JNU : Jawaharlal Nehru University.

*** ARSP : Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad.

**** CASI : Centre for advanced Studies of India at the University of Pennsylvania, USA.

Appendix XIII

List of Institutes conducting training under ITEC/SCAAP Programme

1. Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad	13. Central Sericultural Research and Training Institute, Mysore
2. Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi	14. Centre for Space Science & Technology Education in Asia & Pacific, Dehradun
3. Bureau of Parliamentary Studies & Training, New Delhi	15. Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad
4. Comptroller & Auditor General of India, New Delhi	16. Electronics Trade & Technology Development Corpn. Ltd New Delhi 110021.
5. Centre for Electronics Design & Technology of India, Mohali Punjab	17. Fluid Control Research Institute, Palghat, Kerala
6. Central Fertilizer Quality Control & Training Institute, Faridabad	18. Hindustan Machine Tools(International) Ltd, Bangalore
7. Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore	19. Human Settlement Management Institute, New Delhi
8. Central Institute of English & Foreign Languages, Hyderabad	20. Institute of Applied Manpower Research, New Delhi
9. Central Institute of Tool Design, Hyderabad	21. Institute of Government Accounts & Finance, New Delhi
10. Computer Maintenance Corporation Limited, New Delhi	22. Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi
11. Central Poultry Training Institute, Bangalore	23. Indian Institute of Legal Meteorology , Ranchi, (Bihar)
12. Central Scientific Instruments Organisation, New Delhi	24. Indian Institute of Mass Communiation, New Delhi

25. Indian Institute of Packaging, Mumbai	38. National Institute of Oceanography ,Goa
26. Indian Institute of Production Management, Kanasbahal, Orissa	39. National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education & Research, Mohali
27. Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, Dehradun	40. National Institute of small Industry Extension Training Hyderabad
28. Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research, Lucknow	41. Northern Region Farm Machinery Training & Testing Institute, Hisar (Haryana)
29. International Management Institute, New Delhi	42. Petroleum India International, Mumbai
30. International Statistical Education Centre, Kolkata	43. Postal Training Centre, Mysore
31. Institute of Secretariat Training & Management, New Delhi	44. Research and Information System for the Non-Aligned and other Developing countries, New Delhi
32. National Crime Records Bureau, New Delhi	45. South India Textile Research Association, Coimbatore
33. National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal (Haryana)	46. TATA Infotech Ltd, New Delhi
34. National Institute of Bank Management, Pune	47. Technical Teachers' Training Institute, Chennai
35. National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi 110016	48. V V Giri National Labour Institute,, NOIDA (U.P.)
36. National Institute for Entrepreneur & Small Business Development, New Delhi	49. Wildlife Instiute of India, Dehradun
37. NIIT Limited, New Delhi	50. Water Resources Development Training Centre, Roorkee

Appendix XIV**List of countries covered under ITEC Programme (As on 30.11.2000)**

S.No.	Name of Country	Mission	Slots
1.	Afghanistan	EoI, Kabul	Mission closed
2.	Albania	EoI, Bucharest	4
3.	Algeria	EoI Algiers	6+3*
4.	Angola	EoI Luanda	Pool
5.	Anguilla	HCI, Port of Spai	Pool
6.	Antigua & Barbuda	HCI, Port of Spain	Pool+10#
7.	Argentina	EoI, Buenos Aires	*
8.	Armenia	EoI, Yerevan	10
9.	Azerbaijan	EoI, Baku	10
10.	Bahamas	EoI, Washington	10#
11.	Baharain	EoI Baharain	5
12.	Bangladesh	HCI, Dhaka	41
13.	Barbados	EoI, Paramaribo	5+10#
14.	Belarus	EoI, Minsk	0
15.	Belize	EoI, Mexico	5+10#
16.	Benin	HCI, Lagos	5
17.	Bhutan	EoI, Thimpu	20
18.	Bolivia	EoI, Lima	2
19.	Bosnia Herzegovina	EoI, Budapest	Pool
20.	Brazil	EoI, Brasilia	3*

21.	Brunei Darussalam	HCI, Brunei Darussalam	10**
22.	Bulgaria	EoI, Sofia	5
23.	Burkina Faso	EoI, Ouagadougou	10
24.	Burundi	HCI, Kampala	Pool
25.	Cambodia	EoI, Phnom Penh	22+10**
26.	Cape Verde Islands	EoI, Dakar	Pool
27.	Cayman Island	HCI, Kingston	Pool
28.	Central African Republic	HCI, Accra	Pool
29.	Chad	HCI, Lagos	Pool
30.	Chile	EoI, Santiago	3*
31.	Colombia	EoI, Bogota	Pool
32.	Comoros	EoI, Antananarivo	5
33.	Congo	EoI, Luanda	Pool
34.	Costa Rica	EoI, Bogota	Pool+ 10#
35.	Croatia	EoI, Zagreb	Pool
36.	Cuba	EoI, Havana	20
37.	Czech Republic	EoI, Prague	5
38.	Djibouti	EoI, Addis Ababa	2
39.	Dominica, CW of	HCI, Georgetown	Pool+ 10#
40.	Dominican Republic	HCI, Kingston	Pool+ 10#
41.	Egypt	EoI, Cairo	10 + 3*
42.	El-Salvador	EoI, Panama	Pool+ 10#
43.	Eritrea	EoI, Addis Ababa	Pool
44.	Estonia	EoI, Helsinki	Pool
45.	Ethiopia	EoI, Addis Ababa	20
46.	Fiji	HCI, Suva	10+ 10#
47.	Georgia	EoI, Kyiv	10
48.	Grenada	HCI, Port of Spain	Pool+ 10#
49.	Guatemala	EoI, Mexico	Pool

50.	Guinea	EoI, Abidjan	5
51.	Guinea Bissau	EoI, Dakar	Pool
52.	Guyana	HCI, Georgetown	15+10#
53.	Haiti	HCI, Kingston	5
54.	Honduras	EoI, Mexico	Pool+ 10#
55.	Hungary	EoI, Budapest	2
56.	Indonesia	EoI, Jakarta	20+3*+10**
57.	Iraq	EoI, Baghdad	70
58.	Ivory Coast	EoI, Abidjan	10
59.	Jamaica	HCI, Kingston	10+3*+10#
60.	Jordan	EoI, Amman	5
61.	Kazakhstan	EoI, Almaty	80
62.	Kyrgyzstan	EoI, Bishkek	50
63.	Lao PDR	EoI, Vientiane	31+10**
64.	Latvia	EoI, Stockholm	4
65.	Lebanon	EoI, Beriut	2
66.	Liberia	HCI, Accra	5
67.	Libya	Tripoli	10
68.	Lithuania	EoI, Minsk	10
69.	Macedonia	EoI, Sofia	5
70.	Madagascar	EoI, Antananarivo	15
71.	Malaysia	HCI, Kuala Lumpur	10+3*+10**
72.	Maldives	HCI, Male	10
73.	Mali	EoI, Dakar	Pool
74.	Marshall Islands	EoI, Manila	Pool+ 10#
75.	Mauritania	EoI, Dakar	Pool
76.	Mexico	EoI, Mexico	4+3*+10#
77.	Micronesia	EoI, Tokyo	5+10#
78.	Moldova	EoI, Bucharest	2

79.	Mongolia	EoI, Ulaan Bataar	35
80.	Montiserrat	HCI, Port of Spain	Pool
81.	Morocco	EoI, Rabat	10
82.	Myanmar	EoI, Yangon	40+10**
83.	Nepal	EoI, Kathmandu	30
84.	Nicaragua	EoI, Panama	Pool+ 10
85.	Niger	EoI, Abidjan	5
86.	Oman	EoI, Muscat	10
87.	Palau	EoI, Manila	Pool
88.	Palestine	RPI, Gaza City	8
89.	Panama	EoI, Panama	15+10#
90.	Papua New Guinea	HCI, Port Morseby	12+10#
91.	Peru	EoI, Lima	Pool + 3*
92.	Phillippines	EoI, Manila	15+10**
93.	Poland	EoI, Warsaw	Pool
94.	Qatar	EoI, Doha	Pool
95.	Romania	EoI, Bucharest	10
96.	Russian Federation	EoI, Moscow	70
97.	Rwanda	EoI, Kampala	10
98.	Samoa	HCI, Wellington	10#
99.	Senegal	EoI, Dakar	10+3*
100.	Singapore	HCI, Singapore	10**
101.	Slovak Republic	EoI, Bratislava	5
102.	Solomon Island	HCI, Canberra	pool+10#
103.	Sri Lanka	HCI, Colombo	50
104.	St. Kitts & Nevis	HCI, Port of Spain	Pool+10#
105.	St. Lucia	HCI, Georgetown	Pool
106.	St. Vincent & Grenadines	HCI, Georgetown	Pool+10
107.	Sudan	EoI, Khartoum	35

108	Suriname	EoI, Paramaribo	15
109	Syria	EoI, Damascus	25
110	Tajikistan	EoI, Dushanbe	1
111.	.Thailand	EoI, Bangkok	14+10**
112.	Togo	HCI, Accra	Pool
113.	Tonga	HCI, Suva	Pool
114.	Trinidad & Togago	HCI, Port of Spain	10
115.	Tunisia	EoI, Tunis	2
116.	Turkmenistan	EoI, Ashgabat	20
117.	Turks& Caicos Island	HCI, Kingston	Pool
118.	Ukraine	EoI Kyiv	10
119.	Uzbekistan	EoI, Tashkent	80
120.	Vanuat	HCI, Canberra	10#
121.	Venezuela	EoI, Caracas	Pool + 3*
122.	Vietnam	EoI, Hanoi	100 + 10**
123.	Yemen	EoI Sana	25
124.	Zaire	EoI Kinshassa	Mission closed

Abbreviations

ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
HCI	High Commission of India
EoI	Embassy of India
ROI	Representative of India
*	3 slots allocated as G-15 member country
**	10 slots allocated as ASEAN
#	10 slots allocated under Special Fund For Technical Cooperation
Pool	No fixed number of slots have been allocated but training can be arranged if required

Appendix XV**List of countries covered under SCAAP Programme (As on 30.11.2000)**

S. No.	Name of Country	Mission	Slots	
1.	Botswana	HCI, Gaborone	15	
2.	Cameroon	HCI, Lagos	Pool	
3.	Gambia	EOI, Dakar	5	
4.	Ghana	HCI, Accra	50	
5.	Kenya	HCI, Nairobi	40+3*	
6.	Lesotho	HCI, Pretoria	10	
7.	Malawi	HCI, Harare	15	
8.	Mauritius	HCI, Port Louis	50	
9.	Mozambique	HCI, Maputo	5	
10.	Namibia	HCI, Windhoek	15	
11.	Nigeria	HCI, Lagos	40+3	
12.	Seychelles	HCI, Mahe	5	Abbreviations
13.	Sierra Leone	EoI, Abidjan	Pool	SCAAP – Special
14.	South Africa	HCI, Pretoria	60	Commonwealth African
15.	Swaziland	HCI, Maputo	Pool	Assistance Plan
16.	Tanzania	HCI, Dar-es-Salaam	45	HCI – High Commission of
17.	Uganda	HCI, Kampala	55	India
18.	Zambia	HCI, Lusaka	50	EoI – Embassy of India
19.	Zimbabwe	HCI, Harare	30+3*	* – 3 slots allocated as G-15
				member country

Appendix XVI

Foreign participation at the 41st National Defence College (NDC) Course, New Delhi commencing on 8.1.2001

S. No.	Country	Slots	Category	S. No.	Country	Slots	Category
1.	Nepal	01(01)	SAP	13.	Nigeria	01(01)	SFS
2.	Sri Lanka	02(02)	SAP	14.	USA	01(01)	SFS
3.	Bangladesh	02(02)	ITEC-I	15.	ROK	01(01)	SFS
4.	Myanmar	01(01)	ITEC-I	16.	Iran	01(00)	SFS
5.	Indonesia	01(01)	ITEC-I	17.	Oman	02(02)	SFS
6.	Vietnam	01(01)	ITEC-II	18.	Germany	01(01)	SFS
7.	Malaysia	01(01)	ITEC-II	19.	Australia	01(00)	SFS
8.	Philippines	01(00)	ITEC-II	20.	UAE	01(01)	SFS
9.	Russia	01(01)	ITEC-I	21.	Romania	01(00)	SFS
10.	Tanzania	01(Awaited)	ITEC-I	22.	Botswana	01(00)	SFS
11.	UK	01(01)	Reciprocal	23.	France	01(00)	SFS
12.	Brenui	01(01)	SFS		Total	21 slots	
					(As on 18.12.2000)		

Appendix XVII**Foreign participation at the 56th Defence Service Staff College course (DSSC), Wellington (June 2000)**

S. No.	Country	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total	Category
1.	Bangladesh	01	01	01	03(03)	Reciprocal
2.	Sri Lanka	02	01	01	04(04)	SAP
3.	Nepal	02	—	—	02(02)	SAP
4.	Bhutan	01	—	—	01(01)	SAP
5.	Myanmar	01	—	—	01(00)	ITEC-I
6.	Uzbekistan	02	—	—	02(02)	ITEC-I
7.	Kyrgyzstan	01	—	—	01(01)	ITEC-I
8.	Czech Republic	01	—	—	01(01)	ITEC-II
9.	Indonesia	—	01	—	01(01)	ITEC-I
10.	Vietnam	01	—	—	01(00)	ITEC-II
11.	Lao PDR	01	—	—	01(01)	ITEC-II
12.	Malaysia	—	—	01	01(01)	ITEC-II
13.	Singapore	01	—	—	01(01)	SFS

14.	ROK	—	01	—	01(01)	SFS
15.	Oman	01	—	—	01(01)	SFS
16.	Qatar	01	—	—	01(01)	SFS
17.	Kuwait	01	—	—	01(00)	SFS
18.	Syria	—	—	01	01(01)	ITEC-II
19.	Palestine	01	—	—	01(01)	SAP
20.	France	—	—	01	01(01)	Reciprocal
21.	UK	01	01	01	03(03)	Reciprocal
22.	Botswana	01	—	—	01(01)	ITEC-II
23.	Nigeria	01	—	—	01(01)	ITEC-II
24.	Seychelles	—	01		—	01(01) ITEC-I
25.	Tanzania	—	—	01	01(01)	ITEC-I
26.	South Africa	01	—	—	01(00)	ITEC-II
27.	Kenya	01	—	—	01(00)	SFS
28.	USA	01	—	01	02(02)	SFS/Reci
Total						33 slots

Appendix XVIII

**Allocation and utilisation/acceptance of general training slots
(Army/Navy/Air Force) under ITEC programme during 2000-2001 (excluding NDC & DSSC slots)**

S. No.	Country	Nos. Alloted	utilisation/ acceptance	S. No.	Country	Nos. Alloted	utilisation/ acceptance
1.	Bangladesh	36 slots	36 slot	14.	Kenya	04 slots	03 slots
2.	Myanmar	20 slots	19 slots	15.	Namibia	03 slots	02 slots
3.	Mauritius	37 slots	37 slots	16.	Uganda	06 slots	06 slots
4.	Indonesia	11 slots	11 slots	17.	Zambia	05 slots	04 slots
5.	Vietnam	17 slots	10 slots	18.	Burkina Faso	02 slots	02 slots
6.	Cambodia	04 slots	04 slots	19.	Kazakhstan	04 slots	04 slots
7.	Lao PDR	03 slots	03 slots	20.	Kyrgystan	07 slots	Awaited
8.	Malaysia	09 slots	06 slots	21.	Trinidad & Tobago	02 slots	02 slots
9.	Seychelles	12 slots	12 slots	22.	Jamaica	02 slots	02 slots
10.	Botswana	05 slots	Awaited	23.	Senegal	02 slots	01 slot
11.	Ghana	15 slots	Awaited	24.	Mongolia	07 slots	04 slots
12.	Tanzania	03 slots	02 slots				
13.	Nigeria	06 slots	01 slots				
					Total	222 slots	171 slots
					(As on 18.12.2000)		

Appendix XIX

Allocation and utilisation/acceptance of general training slots (Army/Navy/Air Force) under Self Financing Scheme during 2000-2001 (excluding NDC & DSSC slots)

S. No.	Country	Nos. Alloted	utilisation/ acceptance	S. No.	Country	Nos. Alloted	utilisation/ acceptance
1.	Bangladesh	03 slots	Nil	9.	Oman	23 slots	04 slots
2.	Indonesia	03 slots	Nil	10.	Kenya	08 slots	01 slot
3.	Botswana	22 slots	03 slots	11.	Uganda	20 slots	08 slots
4.	Ghana	50 slots	Nil	12.	UAE	03 slots	03 slots
5.	Tanzania	09 slots	01 slot	13.	Thailand	05 slots	Nil
6.	Mauritius	07 slots	02 slots		Total	187 slots	37 slots
7.	Nigeria	32 slots	14 slots		(As on 18.12.2000)		
8.	USA	02 slots	01 slot				

Appendix XX**Size of overseas Indian community – country-wise**

Country	Total Size of Indian Community	PIOs	Indian citizens	Stateless	Country	Total Size of Indian Community	PIOs	Indian citizens	Stateless
Algeria	26	5	21		Cameroon	300			
Angola	295	45	250		Canada	700000		150000	
Argentina	1000	700	300		Cape Verde	1			
Armenia	200		200		Chad	30			
Australia	91105	61807	29298		Chile	650	39		
Azerbaijan	300				China (H. Kong)	28500	6500	22000	
Austria	12342	3504	8838		China		5	300	
Bahrain	130000		130000		Colombia	20	1	19	
Bangladesh	1000				Comores	50			
Belarus	100				Costa Rica	16	1	15	
Benin	500				Cote d'Ivoire	250			
Belgium	7000				Croatia	10	10		
Bhutan	1500		1500		Cuba	NIL			
Botswana	9000	3000	6000		Cyprus	300			
Brazil	1600				Czech Republic	420	20	400	
Brunei	7600	500	7000	100	Denmark	2252	1000	1252	
Bulgaria	220				Ecuador	5		5	
Burkina Faso					Egypt	1390	40	1350	
Burundi	300				Ethiopia	125			
Cambodia	155								

Country	Total Size of Indian Community	PIOs	Indian citizens	Stateless	Country	Total Size of Indian Community	PIOs	Indian citizens	Stateless
Fiji	336830	336579	250		Madagascar	29000	25000	3000	1000
Finland	1170	410	750	10	Malaysia	1665000	1600000	15000	50000
France	40000				Maldives	9000			
Gambia	80				Mauritius	715756	704640	11116	
Germany	40000				Mexico	150			
Greece	7000				Morocco	375	25	350	
Guyana	400000				Mongolia	35		35	
Hungary					Morocco	375	25	350	
Indonesia	55000	50000	5000		Mozambique	20000		870	
Iran	800		800		Myanmar	2920000	250000	2000	400000
Iraq	80				Namibia	150			
Ireland	100				Nepal				
Israel	45500				Netherlands	18500#	1500	15000	2000
Italy	38000				New Zealand	55000	50000	5000	
Jamaica	61500	60000	1500		Nigeria	30000			
Japan	2500				Norway	5630			
Jordan	930	30	900		Oman	312205	1000	311205	
Kazakhstan	1127		1127		Panama	10164	211	1953	8000
Kenya	102500	85000	15000	2500	Papua New Guinea	800			
Korea(DPRK)	5		5		Peru	155	5	150	
Korea(ROK)	1881	950	931		Philippines	38500	24000	2000	12500
Kuwait	288589	1000	287589		Poland	600			
Krygyzhistan	122	100			Portugal	70000		4500	
Lao PDR					Qatar	125000		125000	
Lebanon	11025	25	11000		Romania	491	2	489	
Libya	12000				Rwanda	500			
Lithuania	5				Russia	16000		16000	

Country	Total Size of Indian Community	PIOs	Indian citizens	Stateless	Country	Total Size of Indian Community	PIOs	Indian citizens	Stateless
Reunion Islands	220055	220000	55		Thailand	60000	40000	10000	10000
Saudi Arabia	1500000		1500000		Trinidad & Tobago	520000			
Senegal	50	13			Tunisia	24		24	
Seychelles	7500	5000	2500		Turkey	300			
Singapore	217000		90000		Uganda	15000			
Slovakia	100		100		Ukraine	4000			
South Africa	1092300	2000			UAE	1200000		1200000	
Spain	30000 @	16000	14000		UK	1000000			
Sri Lanka	338051	337620	431		USA	1500000			
Sudan	1560	1200	360		Uzbekistan	650			
Surinam	160208	160000	208		Venezuela	3400			
Sweden	10842	9244	1598		Vietnam	330		320	10
Switzerland	13500	8400	4800	300	Yemen	109000	100000	9000	
Syria	500				Zambia	15000	8900		
Tajikistan	450		450		Zimbabwe	16700	15500	1200	
Tanzania	95000	90000	5000						

ESTIMATED TOTAL NO. OF NRIs & PIOs : 17800428

200000 Indo-Surinamese who have migrated from India to Surinam and are now in the Netherlands.

@Andorra – about 150 NRIs are there in this Principality

In addition to the figures included in this statement, an estimated one million people of Indian origin holding foreign nationality have reportedly migrated to third countries e.g. Indo-Surinamese to Netherlands, Indo-Fijians, Indo Caribbean, persons from various African countries, Malaysia to UK, USA, Canada, France, Portugal, Australia etc.

*These are approximate figures based on information obtained from territorial divisions and Missions/Posts abroad

