INDIA-ITALY JOINT STATEMENT, 2017

1. The Prime Minister of Italy, H. E. Paolo Gentiloni paid a State Visit to India on 30 October 2017 at the invitation of Prime Minister of India, H. E. Narendra Modi. A high-level business delegation accompanied the Prime Minister.

2. The two Prime Ministers underlined the historical importance of this visit to New Delhi, which not only sets a new momentum in the bilateral ties, but also seeks to revitalize on-going engagements between the two countries. The leaders emphasized the importance of regular high-level contacts to enhance India-Italy co-operation and mutual understanding. Underlining the need for regular high-level contacts, PM Gentiloni announced the upcoming visits to India by several ministerial-level delegations including that of the Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Culture, Minister of Economy and Finance and the Italian Vice Minister for Economic Development.

3. The two leaders agreed on the need for a closer partnership between India and Italy based on shared principles and values of democracy, freedom, rule of law and respect for human rights and territorial integrity of States. The two leaders expressed their shared desire to work together to support a rules-based international system that upholds agreed international norms, global peace and stability, and encourages inclusive growth and sustainable development in all parts of the inter-connected world. They welcomed the growing India-Italy convergence on contemporary global issues and agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in multilateral forums.

4. Recalling the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding on Political Cooperation between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries, the two sides reaffirmed their intention of holding regular Foreign Minister Consultations.

EU and multilateral relations

5. The two leaders expressed their satisfaction with the outcomes of the EU-India Summit held in New Delhi on 6th October 2017. PM Gentiloni mentioned that Italy strongly supports a strengthened strategic partnership between India and the European Union (EU). He emphasized that the EU and India share many common interests and objectives and can work together in addressing global challenges and preserving the rules-based system of international governance. The Leaders expressed their shared commitment to strengthening the Economic Partnership between India and the EU and noted the on-going efforts of both sides to re-engage actively towards an early resumption of negotiations for a comprehensive and mutually beneficial India-EU Broad Based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA).
6. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening global non-proliferation efforts. Italy congratulated India on its admission to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Italy also welcomed India’s subscription to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) and supported India’s intensified engagement with Wassenaar Arrangement, the Australia Group, and the Nuclear Suppliers’ Group (NSG) which strengthens global non-proliferation efforts.

7. The two leaders agreed to work bilaterally and with partners in the framework of the United Nations, the G20 and other multilateral fora to address emerging challenges to international security, global economic stability and sustainable development. Both sides reaffirmed their support to the new United Nations reform agenda on the three reform tracks of peace and security, development and management reform. The two Leaders also called for reforming the bodies and organs of the UN system, including the comprehensive reform of the UN Security Council as well as the revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly, better aligning the work of its committees with the 2030 Agenda.

8. The two leaders reiterated their commitment to improve the transparency and integrity of the public and private sector through practical international cooperation and technical assistance, and agreed to continue to fully implement the G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan of 2017-18. PM Gentiloni called for greater experience sharing between India and Italy in the area of fighting corruption. The President of Italy’s National Anti-Corruption Authority will soon visit India to enhance dialogue and cooperation in this area.

Clean Energy & Climate Change

9. On climate change, the two leaders confirmed their strong commitment to the full implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and being guided by its principles including the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities in the light of different national circumstances. They pledged to work together in the run up to and at CoP23, and beyond, on the next steps towards substantial and balanced progress on all items of the Paris work programme.

10. The two Leaders acknowledged the enhanced technical cooperation in the renewable energy sector and welcomed the MoU between the Ministry for the Environment of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of the Republic of India. They recognized the progress ongoing in both Countries in replacing traditional energy sources with green ones, as a contribution to the global engagement against climate change.

11. Both Leaders noted that Italy and India as part of the Mission Innovation (MI) Initiative, a strategic exercise to double public funds dedicated to
Research and Development in clean technologies are partnering with countries of the MI initiative in the Smart Grid Innovation Challenge-1, that targets innovation and deployment of reliable, efficient & affordable smart grid technologies to achieve the ability to accommodate 100% renewable based energy sources in existing power grid. In this context, the two Leaders noted with appreciation the second MI International Workshop on Smart Grids Innovation Challenge that will be held in India, from 16th to 19th November 2017.

12. Both leaders agreed that the migratory phenomenon is global in nature and requires a global response. In this context they noted the on-going discussions within the UN Framework and their respective positions.

13. The two leaders expressed their commitment to support peace and sustainable development in Africa by exploring areas of convergence through consultations with a view to optimising possible synergies between their respective initiatives as well as in the multilateral fora. They acknowledged the valuable contribution of both Countries to peace and development in Africa, including through their participation in UN Peacekeeping Missions. Italy also looked forward to India's participation as an observer at the forthcoming EU-African Union Summit.

Combating Terrorism and Cyber Security Cooperation

14. The two leaders resolved to fight terrorism and violent extremism in all their forms and manifestations. They condemned in the strongest possible terms recent terror attacks in India, in Europe and elsewhere and emphasised the need for strengthening international partnership and concerted action by the international community in addressing the menace of terrorism. The leaders expressed satisfaction on the first India-Italy Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism held in Rome on 10 November, 2016 and agreed to further strengthen the consultation mechanism through regular exchange of assessments and information, training and capacity building programme etc., in the sphere of counter terrorism. The leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation to take decisive and concerted actions against Al Qaeda, ISIS (Da'esh) and their affiliates and all other UN designated globally proscribed terrorists and terror entities, including those mentioned in Para 8 of the 6th Oct 2017 India-EU Joint Statement on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism. The leaders emphasised the need for effective implementation of existing international commitments on countering terrorism including UN Global Countering Terrorism Strategy, UNSC resolutions and targeted sanctions relating to terrorism. In this context, the leaders also called upon all UN member countries to designate terrorist entities in line with the relevant UNSC Resolutions. Both leaders also called for an early conclusion of negotiations and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism in the UN, as an instrument that would reinforce the message that no cause or grievance justifies terrorism. They also called upon all countries to work towards rooting out terrorist safe havens and their infrastructure and networks and halting cross-border movement
of terrorists. Emphasising that the liberal and pluralistic values of both countries are rooted in our secular democracy, the leaders affirmed that terrorism should not be associated with any particular religion, nationality, civilisation, creed or ethnic group. They also expressed concerns at the growing misuse of internet towards radicalisation of youth and agreed to strengthen cooperation in combating radicalisation and violent extremism.

15. The two Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to an open, free, secure, stable, peaceful and accessible cyberspace, enabling economic growth and innovation. In particular, they reaffirmed that international law is applicable in cyberspace and that there was a need to continue and deepen deliberations on the applicability of international law to cyberspace and set norms of responsible behaviour of States. They also agreed to explore the establishment of a bilateral dialogue on cyber issues. The leaders welcomed the holding of the 5th Global Conference on Cyberspace in New Delhi on 23-24 November.

Strengthening Economic Partnership

16. The two leaders appreciated the strong India-Italy economic linkages and committed to work in a result-oriented and mutually beneficial manner by injecting a renewed momentum into the broad-based economic engagement between the two countries. PM Modi called upon the Italian industry to explore India’s untapped business opportunities in the infrastructure, food processing, renewable energy, and high-tech manufacturing sectors. PM Gentiloni also called upon Indian industry to identify business opportunities, including in Italy’s textile, automotive, leather, machinery and chemical sectors. The two leaders took note of the progress made by the 19th session of the Indo-Italian ‘Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation’ (JCEC) held at the ministerial-level. They agreed to convene the next session of the JCEC in India in 2018.

17. PM Gentiloni appreciated India’s bold economic reforms and flagship initiatives such as the Make-in-India program, the National Solar Mission and the Smart Cities Mission. PM Gentiloni highlighted Italy’s commitment to the ‘Make-in-India’ initiative through the activities of the 628 Italian companies which have invested over $2.4 billion and provide employment to over 23,000 people in India. Both Leaders pledged to further encourage the development of a network of industrial co-operation between the two Countries. The two leaders welcomed the signing of a MoU between the Italian Trade Agency (ICE) and Invest India to assist bilateral efforts aimed at enhancing mutual investment activities.

18. The two Leaders announced the organization of an ‘Indo-Italian High-Level Forum on Design, with a focus inter alia, on industrial design, auto design, architecture, interior design, and fashion. The High-level forum will endeavour to bring together prominent experts from the areas mutually identified, with the task of defining a program of activity for the Forum (exhibitions, workshops, contacts between young designers etc.). The Foreign Ministries of the two countries will further discuss the objectives,
structure, and host organizations for this High-level forum. The meeting of the High-level Forum is proposed to be held in March 2018.

19. The two Prime Ministers noted the potential for enhancing bilateral defence cooperation and encouraged structured dialogue through the Joint Defence Committee (to be convened in Rome or New Delhi in the first half of 2018) as well as interactions between Indian and Italian companies. PM Gentiloni underlined Italy’s industrial expertise in this sector, and the renewed interest of Italian industry in participating in defence manufacturing under the “Make in India” initiative. The two sides will also discuss in the appropriate Working Group the draft Technical Agreement on Sharing of White Shipping Information between the Navies.

20. Both Leaders noted the on-going work on an Additional Protocol amending the bilateral agreement to Avoid Double Taxation and encouraged the respective agencies / competent authorities to continue negotiations with the objective of early finalization of the text. The adoption of the new protocol, together with the entry into force of the Protocol signed on 13 January 2006, will update the bilateral Agreement of 1993, with tangible benefits for Indian and Italian companies. The protocol will enable better administrative cooperation, and enhance the ability to counter tax evasion and tax avoidance. Work will also continue on Customs Cooperation to improve the mutual administrative assistance under the EU legal framework.

21. The two Prime Ministers discussed the possibility of an operating mechanism to be established between the Italian investment bank - Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP) that operates under Italy’s Ministry of Economy and Finance and relevant Indian counterpart entities to explore opportunities for enhancing investment cooperation in India’s infrastructure sector.

22. In the area of Smart Cities, both sides expressed their intent to identify specific areas for cooperation. The Indian side welcomed the Italian initiative to share their experience in the area of urban rehabilitation, advanced technology solutions in the area of energy management (from smart grids to electric mobility networks), affordable housing and waste management.

23. Both Leaders welcomed the “Declaration of Intent on Cooperation in the area of Rail Safety” as a follow up to the two MoUs signed in January 2017 between the Italian Railways (Ferrovie dello Stato SpA) and the Indian Railways, and between Italferr, the engineering company of the Italian Railways, and its Indian counterpart RITES. They noted that there is great potential for bilateral cooperation in the areas of safety, diagnostics, technology certification and capacity building of rail professionals.

24. The Leaders recognized the immense possibilities for collaboration in the food processing sector in India. They noted with satisfaction the imminent mission of the Italian Deputy Minister for Economic Development, who will
be leading a high-level business delegation to ‘World Food India’, from 3-5 November 2017, where Italy will be ‘Focus Country’. Italy’s Minister for Agriculture will also be leading a delegation to the FICCI and FEDERUNACOMA (Italian Agricultural Machinery Manufacturers Federation) organized ‘EIMA Agrimach’, from 7-9 December 2017, where Italy will be ‘Partner country’. Both events will offer the opportunity to showcase the excellence of Italian agro-food industry and its potential for contributing to the development of the India’s food processing sector. The two Leaders also noted with appreciation work ongoing on the drafting of a MoU between respective Ministries of Agriculture on co-operation in agriculture and phytosanitary issues.

25. The two Leaders welcomed the MoU between the Italian company MERMEC, a leading player in railway diagnostics, and its Indian counterpart, Titagarh. The MoU will see MERMEC and Titagarh jointly invest in R&D and manufacturing to develop cost effective solutions for signalling and safety of Indian Railways.

Science & Technology and Education collaboration

26. The Leaders noted the increasing number of student exchange programmes at the university level and the growing presence of Indian students in Italian universities. They expressed appreciation at the forthcoming launch of the first Roadshow of the Italian Universities in India which will take place in New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru in November 2017.

27. Both sides agreed to initiate collaboration on apprenticeship and on the relationship between industrial clusters and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system. The two leaders also agreed to explore the prospects establishing state-of-the-art skill academies in India for providing training to trainers and trainees on trans-national standards.

28. The two Leaders underlined the importance of the Executive Programme of Cooperation (EPOC) for the years 2017-2019 signed on 18 April 2017 under the framework of the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Department of Science & Technology on the Indian side and Italy’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation. The EPOC will provide joint financing for 23 projects of cooperation in the areas of ICT, energy, environment, sustainable Agriculture, health, biotechnology, medicine, physical and chemical sciences and technologies applied to cultural and natural heritage between Indian and Italian universities and research centres. The implementation of the EPOC is expected to further consolidate the on-going collaboration between Italian and Indian universities, with around 200 partnership agreements already in operation.

29. The two Leaders expressed their appreciation on the long standing collaboration in science and technology involving some of the best scientific and academic institutions from the two countries. In this context,
the Leaders noted the successful inauguration of the joint experimental beam-lines for advanced materials research at the Synchrotron facility at ELETTRA in Trieste, Italy, last year. The Leaders noted with satisfaction the recently launched joint Industrial R&D Program which will open a new chapter in India-Italy S&T relationship by promoting technological innovation aimed at joint development of innovative products or processes in areas covering Advanced Materials, Smart Manufacturing, Clean Water Technologies and Cultural Heritage Preservation. Prime Minister Gentiloni gladly accepted Prime Minister Modi’s invitation to Italy to be the “Partner Country” for the 2018 edition of the ‘Technology Summit’. Participation in the ‘Tech Summit 2018’ will provide further impetus to common endeavours in the field of science, technology and innovation for economic growth.

30. The two leaders appreciated the innovative research undertaken by the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) through its chapters in Trieste, Italy and New Delhi, India for promoting the latest techniques in the fields of biomedicine, crop improvement, environmental protection / remediation, vaccine and biopharmaceuticals development and bio-pesticide production for the benefit of developing countries.

31. The two leaders agreed to encourage cooperation between Italy’s Civil Protection Department and India’s National Disaster Management Authority in the field of disaster risk reduction and management, giving priority to strengthening the exchange of methodologies and technologies for the management of emergencies affecting population, territory, properties and cultural heritage.

People-to-People contacts, Cultural Cooperation, and 70 years of Diplomatic Ties

32. On growing people to people contacts, PM Gentiloni mentioned the presence of the 170,000 strong Indian diaspora who have made Italy their second home and acknowledged their contribution to the Italian economy. PM Modi appreciated the measures taken by the Italian government to enable the Indian diaspora to integrate with the Italian society. They also acknowledged the positive role played by the Italian business community in India over the years, contributing to India’s economic development. They agreed to work together on migration and mobility between the two countries.

33. Both Leaders underlined the importance of valuing the archaeological and cultural heritage and welcomed the exchange of best practices and scientific techniques for the conservation of the architectural and archaeological heritage; and sharing of information on developing, marketing or managing cultural heritage tourism attractions.

34. Both Leaders desired to enhance cooperation between the Italian Space Agency (ASI) and Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) for
peaceful use of outer space and with particular reference to earth observation and space exploration.

35. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the possibility of exploring “twinning” arrangements between UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the two countries for exchanging information on conservation efforts and techniques, and for enhancing their touristic potential.

36. The Italian side welcomed India’s interest to participate in the 2019 Biennale di Venezia, the world’s most prestigious contemporary art exhibition and agreed to extend necessary support in this regard.

37. PM Gentiloni congratulated PM Modi for his initiative of the International Day of Yoga, which is celebrated worldwide on 21st June every year. PM Gentiloni conveyed that the Italian side will explore possibilities of introducing yoga practice in the physical education curriculum of Italian schools and to obtain certification for imparting yoga education by qualified yoga institutions in India.

38. The two Leaders welcomed the signature of the New Executive Program of Cultural Cooperation (EPCC), in the framework of the bilateral Cultural Agreement. The new EPCC will strengthen the on-going cooperation between the two countries in the areas of theatre, music, dance, festivals, publishing, cinema, youth exchanges, and through grant of scholarship programs.

39. To commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Italy and India, in March 2018, the two leaders welcomed the conclusion of a MoU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, which will facilitate year-long performances by cultural troupes, and holding of exhibitions, seminars etc., in each other’s country. The leaders also unveiled a common logo to commemorate the 70 years of diplomatic relations.

Connectivity

40. The two leaders acknowledged the importance of connectivity in today’s globalised world. They underlined that connectivity initiatives must be based on universally recognised international norms, good governance, rule of law, openness, transparency and equality and must follow principles of financial responsibility, accountable debt financing practices, balanced ecological and environmental protection, preservation standards and social sustainability.

41. Both Leaders welcomed the resumption of Alitalia direct flights between the two countries. The improved transport connectivity between the two countries is a result of a fruitful cooperation between respective Aeronautical Authorities. The Indian and Italian Aeronautical Authorities are committed to strengthen the understandings in force relating to
operation of air services between the two countries. The Leaders also welcomed the operationalization of the EU-India Horizontal Agreement which will enhance air connectivity between India and Europe and help foster greater people-to-people contacts, business travel and increase in tourism.

42. Both sides welcomed the entry into force of the bilateral agreement on exemption of visa requirements for holders of diplomatic passport.

43. Prime Minister Gentiloni thanked the Government and the people of India for their warm hospitality and extended an invitation to the Prime Minister Modi to visit Italy at a mutually convenient date.