Hon’ble Minister of External Affairs, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, visited Rome from 17-18 June 2018. The visit was the first major political exchange between India and Italy following the swearing in of H.E. Mr. Giuseppe Conte as Italy’s new Prime Minister on 1st June 2018. 2018 also marks the 70th year of establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the two countries.

2. During her visit, Hon’ble Minister called on Prime Minister Conte. She conveyed felicitations of the Government of India to the newly elected Government of Italy and reiterated India’s desire to strengthen bilateral relations with Italy. Minister Swaraj also conveyed the need for India and Italy to continue to work together and coordinate positions in multilateral forums. Both sides agreed to mutually identify new areas of cooperation to boost trade and investment linkages. Hon’ble Minister talked about the important contributions being made by the Indian diaspora to the Italian economy. The leaders also underlined the need to boost people to people cooperation.

3. In her meeting with her Italian counterpart, H.E. Enzo Moavero Milanesi, Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, the two sides reviewed various aspects of the bilateral relationship and exchanged views on international and regional issues of common interest.

4. Recognizing the need to sustain the momentum generated by the visit of Former Italian Prime Minister Gentiloni to India in October 2017, the Ministers emphasized the importance of promoting regular high level contacts and bilateral dialogue mechanisms. They welcomed the celebrations in both countries to mark 70 years of diplomatic relations and agreed to work together to build a robust and wide-ranging partnership covering political consultations, trade and commerce, science & technology, culture and people to people ties.

5. Outlining the reforms undertaken by India to promote ease of doing business and liberalize FDI, Minister Swaraj highlighted the tremendous scope for enhancing bilateral trade and investment in sectors like infrastructure, food processing and renewable energy.

6. To augment collaboration in areas of mutual benefit, the Ministers agreed to hold the next meeting of the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) in India later this year. They also welcomed Italy’s participation as a partner country at the Tech Summit in India in November 2018 which would boost cooperation in technology & innovation.

7. The Ministers shared concerns relating to counter terrorism and cyber security and agreed to continue cooperation in this area. They welcomed the growing India-Italy convergence on contemporary global issues and agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in multilateral forums. The Minister extended an invitation to Minister Moavero Milanesi to Visit India at a mutually convenient time.