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**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Prime Minister's Office**

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PM's statement prior to his departure to Germany, Spain, Russia and France

Following is the text of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's departure statement prior to his visit to Germany, Spain, Russia and France

"I will visit Germany on 29-30 May 2017 on the invitation of German Chancellor Angela Merkel for the Fourth India-Germany Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC).

India and Germany are large democracies, major economies and important players in regional and global affairs. Our strategic partnership is based on democratic values and commitment to an open, inclusive and rules-based global order. Germany is a valuable partner in our development initiatives and German competencies fit well with my vision for India's transformation.

I would begin my visit from Meseberg near Berlin in Germany, where Chancellor Merkel has very graciously invited me to hold discussions on issues of regional and global importance.

On 30 May, Chancellor Merkel and I will hold the 4th IGC to review the state of our bilateral relationship. We will also chart out a future roadmap of cooperation with focus on trade and investment, security and counter-terrorism, innovation and science & technology, skill development, urban infrastructure, railways and civil aviation, clean energy, development cooperation, health and alternative medicine.

I would also call on H.E. Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Germany is our leading partner in trade, technology and investment. In Berlin, Chancellor Merkel and I will interact with top business leaders of both the countries to further strengthen our trade and investment ties.

I am confident that this visit will open a new chapter in our bilateral cooperation with Germany and further deepen our Strategic Partnership.

I will pay an official visit to Spain from 30 – 31 May 2017. This will be the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Spain in almost three decades.

I will have the honour of calling on His Majesty King Felipe VI during this visit.

I look forward to my meeting with President Mariano Rajoy on 31 May. We will discuss ways to enhance bilateral engagement, especially in the economic sphere, and cooperation on international issues of common concern, particularly in combating terrorism.

There is significant potential for deepening bilateral trade and investment ties. We seek active participation of Spanish industry in various Indian projects including infrastructure, smart cities, digital economy, renewable energy, defence and tourism.

I will also meet top CEOs of Spanish industry and encourage them to partner with us in our 'Make in India' Initiative.

The first meeting of the India-Spain CEOs Forum will be held on the sidelines of my visit. I look forward to their valuable recommendations for strengthening India-Spain economic partnership.

I will be visiting St. Petersburg, Russia from 31st May to 2nd June for the 18th India-Russia Annual Summit.

On 1st June, I will be conducting detailed discussions with President Putin to take forward our dialogue from the last Summit in Goa in October 2016. With a spotlight on economic ties, both President Putin and I will also be interacting with CEOs from both countries.

On the next day, I will be addressing the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) together with President Putin. I appreciate the invitation to be the Guest of Honour at this year's Forum. India is the Guest Country at the SPIEF this year.

In a first meeting of its kind, I will also have the opportunity to engage with Governors from various Russian regions to further broad base bilateral cooperation and more actively involve States/Regions and other diversified stakeholders.

At the beginning of my visit, I will go to Piskarovskoye Cemetery to pay homage to those who perished during the siege of Leningrad. I will also have occasion to visit the world famous State Hermitage Museum and the Institute of Oriental manuscripts.

I greatly look forward to my visit to St. Petersburg in this special year for the bilateral relationship as both countries celebrate the 70th Anniversary of our diplomatic relations.

I will be visiting France from 2-3 June, 2017. During the visit, I will have an official meeting with the newly elected French President H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron on 3 June.

France is one of our most important Strategic Partners.

I look forward to meeting President Macron and have discussions on issues of mutual interest. I would be exchanging views with the French President on important global issues including UN Security Council reforms and India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council, India's membership of the various multilateral export control regimes, counter-terrorism cooperation, collaboration on climate change and International Solar Alliance.

France is our 9th largest investment partner and a key partner in our development initiatives in the area of defence, space, nuclear and renewable energy, urban development and railways. I am committed to substantially strengthening and advancing our multi-faceted partnership with France.”

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