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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 Sweden and UK

Following is the text of Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's departure statement prior to his visit to Sweden and the United Kingdom.

"I will be visiting Sweden and the United Kingdom for bilateral meetings and for the India-Nordic Summit and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting during 17-20 April 2018.

On 17th April, I will be in Stockholm on the invitation of Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven. This is my first visit to Sweden. India and Sweden share warm and friendly ties. Our partnership is based on democratic values and commitment to an open, inclusive and rule-based global order. Sweden is a valuable partner in our development initiatives. PM Lofven and I will also have the opportunity to interact with top business leaders of both the countries and chart out a future roadmap of cooperation with focus on trade and investment, innovation, S&T, skill development, smart cities, clean energy, digitization and health. I would also call on His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden.

India and Sweden will jointly organize the India-Nordic Summit in Stockholm on 17th April with the Prime Ministers of Finland, Norway, Denmark and Iceland. The Nordic countries have globally recognized strengths in clean technologies, environmental solutions, ports modernization, cold-chains, skill development and innovation. Nordic competencies fit well with our vision for India's transformation.

On 18th April 2018, I will be in London on the invitation of Prime Minister Theresa May. I had last visited the UK in November 2015. India and the United Kingdom share a modern partnership bound by strong historical ties.

My visit to London presents another opportunity for both countries to infuse fresh momentum to this growing bilateral engagement. I will be focusing on enhancing India-UK partnership in the areas healthcare, innovation, digitization, electric mobility, clean energy, and cyber security. Under the theme of "Living Bridge", I will also have the opportunity to meet people from various walks of life who have enriched the multi-faceted India-UK relationship.

I would also call on Her Majesty The Queen, interact briefly with CEOs of the two nations who are working on a new agenda of economic partnership, launch an Ayurveda Centre of Excellence in London, and welcome the UK into the International Solar Alliance, as its newest member.

On 19th and 20th April I will also participate in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting being hosted by the United Kingdom which will take over as the new Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth from Malta. The Commonwealth is a unique multilateral grouping that not only provides useful assistance to its developing country members, particularly the small states and small-island developing states, but also has a strong international voice for development issues.

I am confident that these visits to Sweden and UK will be useful in enhancing our engagement with these countries."

AKT/KP