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Media Statement by Prime Minister during the State visit of President of Israel to India (November 15, 2016)

November 15, 2016

Your Excellency President Reuven Rivlin
And Friends from the Media,

I am honoured to welcome President Reuven Rivlin, and distinguished members of his delegation to India. President Rivlin is on his first ever visit to India. We are delighted to receive him on this special occasion. Excellency, your visit will provide crucial push to our efforts to build new pillars in our partnership. It will also carry forward the momentum generated by the first ever visit of President of India to Israel last year. Next year, both countries will be celebrating 25 years of the establishment of full diplomatic relations. As we approach this big milestone, we are both committed to advance our engagement on several fronts. And, build on convergences and commonalities in our interests and concerns on regional and global issues.

Friends,

Our engagement is multi-dimensional and wide-ranging. We are partnering in:

enhancing agricultural productivity and efficiency;

boosting research and innovation linkages;

employing applications of science and technology for the benefit of our societies;

Forging strong trade links and investment ties;

Building defence ties to secure our people; and

Enhancing people to people ties through greater cultural and tourism linkages.

Promoting educational exchanges. The growing number of Indian students, going to study in Israel and vice versa can be an important bridge in our bilateral partnership.

Friends,

Earlier today, in our discussions. President Rivlin and I agreed that there are several strong areas of

ongoing cooperation between our countries. We are familiar with Israel's advances in agriculture, and its expertise in micro-irrigation in drought-prone areas and water management. We have identified water management and conservation, and collaboration in scientific research and development as two areas of priority engagement. We both agreed that the current trajectory of the Indian economy opens up many promising opportunities for Israeli companies. Our economic initiatives and programmes, and emphasis on innovation, research and technological development match well with Israel's strengths and capacities. Israeli companies can scale up their tie-ups with our flagship schemes of Make in India, Digital India, Skill India, and Smart Cities. I would encourage the private sector stakeholders on both sides to take lead in utilizing this perfect opportunity to build business ties of commerce and investment between our two countries in these areas. Indian and Israeli companies can also work together in high-technology manufacturing, and services sectors. Make in India and as President Rivlin told me in our discussion, Make with India can generate jobs and benefit both geographies. Our partnership can generate jobs and benefit both geographies. IT services is an area where our partnership can make a difference for both our economies.

Friends,

President Rivlin and I deeply value our strong and growing partnership to secure our societies. Our people are constantly threatened by forces of terrorism and extremism. We recognize that terrorism is a global challenge, knows no boundaries and has extensive links with other forms of organized crime. Regrettably, one of the countries of its origin and spread is in India's neighbourhood. We agreed that the international community must act with resolve and determination against terror networks and States that harbour them. Failure to act and silence of speech only encourages the terrorists. We agreed to intensify our cooperation to combat the forces of extremism and radicalization that threaten all peace-loving nations. We also prioritized practical and specific engagement such as in the cyber domain. We noted the strength of our growing defence partnership. And, agreed on the need to make it more broad-based through production and manufacturing partnerships. India is also grateful to Israel for its clear support to India's permanent candidature in a reformed UN Security Council.

Friends,

As fellow democracies, our people are our biggest strength and the biggest beneficiaries of a strong India-Israel partnership. The 2000-year old Jewish community in India represents a thriving link to this past. Today, it is a vital part of our composite cultural mosaic that continues to thrive in their traditions. We are proud of the Jewish community in India. President and I agreed that promoting people-to-people contacts, which has a long shared history, is our shared priority.

Excellency,

Two and a half decades of our friendship has brought rich dividends for both our nations. It has also strengthened voices of peace, stability and democracy globally. Your visit provides an opportunity to break new ground and shape new contours of our partnership. With these words, I once again welcome President Rivlin on his first State visit to India, and wish him a productive and enjoyable stay in India.

Thank you.



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