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## India-Uzbekistan Joint Statement during State Visit of President of Uzbekistan to India (September 30 - October 01, 2018)

October 01, 2018

At the invitation of the President of the Republic of India H.E. Mr. Ram Nath Kovind, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev paid a State visit to India on 30 September-1 October 2018.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Prime Minister of India held friendly, substantive and constructive discussions on further expanding Uzbekistan-India strategic partnership. They agreed to further deepening mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation, and discussed international and regional issues of mutual interest.

The Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of India reaffirmed their interest in expanding and further strengthening long-term cooperation between India and Uzbekistan, covering diverse sectors such as political ties, defence, security, counter-terrorism, trade and investment, science and technology, space, nuclear energy, Information Technology, as well as cultural and academic linkages. Noting that stronger cooperation between India and Uzbekistan contributed to the mutual benefit of the people of both countries and enhanced regional stability and prosperity, the Sides stated the following:

1. Welcoming the first ever visit by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized that a strong strategic partnership between India and Uzbekistan is vital to India's engagement with Central Asia.
2. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Prime Minister of India recalled their earlier meetings and noted the recent exchanges of visits and forward movement in the bilateral relationship. They stressed that this visit of the President of Uzbekistan to India is an indicator of the new positive dynamics in the relations between India and Uzbekistan, the beginning of which was laid during

the meeting between the two leaders in the Framework of the Summit of the Heads of member-states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Astana on June 9, 2017.

3. The Sides expressed their firm intention to support the process of intensifying ties between the two countries based on the historical and cultural closeness of the people of India and Uzbekistan, their mutual interest in cooperation as well as giving them a multi-faceted and long-term character.
4. The Indian side welcomed the new political atmosphere in Central Asia, characterized by the intensification of a high-level dialogue between states, the strengthening of mutual understanding, trust and good-neighborliness, as well as closer economic and cultural-humanitarian cooperation, which will undoubtedly lead to the transformation of Central Asia into a stable and prosperous region.
5. The Sides agreed to hold regular bilateral consultations and political dialogue through exchange of official visits at the leadership and other levels to promote mutual understanding on bilateral as well as regional and international issues. They also encouraged greater inter-parliamentary ties as well as business, cultural, educational and other linkages between India and Uzbekistan.
6. Noting the importance of a safe and secure regional environment for development and prosperity, the Sides agreed to cooperate in addressing threats and challenges to national as well as regional security. The Sides agreed to strengthen cooperation between the law enforcement agencies and special services of the two countries, including under the framework of the Uzbekistan-India Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism. Both Sides called for early finalization of Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
7. The two sides agreed to work closely together to expand and strengthen defence cooperation as well as defence industry cooperation. In this context, both sides agreed to hold joint military training exercise in the area of counter terrorism, cooperate in the field of military education and military medicine, setting up of Joint Working Group to support and sustain enhanced mutually beneficial defence related activities and setting up of Defence Wing at the Embassy of Uzbekistan in New Delhi.
8. The sides emphasized the need to further enhance efforts to achieve the target of bilateral trade of USD 1 billion by 2020 and welcomed the initiatives that have been taken. The Sides agreed to work towards balancing the trade between the two sides by reducing the existing trade deficit.
9. The sides agreed to promote the establishment of long-term and mutually beneficial cooperation among interested companies and business community and support the activities of existing enterprises of Uzbekistan and India in territories of both countries.
10. The sides agreed to constitute an expert group between India and Uzbekistan to conduct Joint Feasibility Study and commence negotiations for India-Uzbekistan Preferential Trade Agreement by the end of 2018.
11. The Sides agreed to work closely together to expand and diversify bilateral trade. In this context, the Sides agreed to have comprehensive discussions between the relevant Ministries and agencies of the two countries, and to encourage their business

communities, companies and enterprises to participate in exhibitions, trade fairs, business forums and other joint business activities in Uzbekistan and India and Uzbekistan.

12. The Sides called for further promotion of investment between the two countries. They noted the favorable conditions for investment by Indian companies in Uzbekistan, including in the framework of the Special Economic Zones and Free Pharmaceutical zones.
13. The Sides agreed to develop mutually beneficial cooperation in transport and communications. They noted the introduction of direct flights between Tashkent and Mumbai. The Sides also agreed to explore various options to enhance surface connectivity between them. The Indian side thanked the Uzbek side for their support in India's membership of the Ashgabat Agreement, and expressed hope that Uzbekistan would also join the International North South Transport Corridor.
14. Recalling the recent meeting of the Uzbekistan-India Intergovernmental Commission on Trade-Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation on 16-18 August, 2018 held in Tashkent and the sectoral Joint Working Groups in the areas of Pharmaceuticals, Tourism and Information Technology, the Sides agreed to hold their regular meetings for implementation of various economic agreements, identification of promising areas and promotion of joint projects in various sectors of economy.

The Parties agreed to establish, under the leadership of the above mentioned Intergovernmental Commission, a Joint working group on the development of the service sector.

15. In order to create favorable conditions for implementation of these tasks, the Sides agreed to encourage the development of direct contacts between the regions of Uzbekistan and States of India and business circles, organization of joint regional business forums and cooperation exchanges, exhibitions of export-oriented products, opening of trading houses, conclusion of trade, economic and investment contracts, exchange of statistics and information on ongoing tenders. The Sides noted the prospects for wider use of opportunities in the free economic zones of the two countries, including in the newly created Uzbek-Indian free pharmaceutical zone in the Andijan region.

The Sides welcomed the establishment of partnership relations between the Andijan region and the state of Gujarat, as well as cities of Samarkand and Agra.

16. The Sides welcomed the holding of the business forum held on September 28, 2018 in New Delhi in the framework of the visit and hoped that this will give an impetus to the joint investment and entrepreneurial activity of business circles of India and Uzbekistan.
17. The Sides emphasized the importance of strengthening institutional mechanisms of economic cooperation. In this regard, they positively assessed the establishment of the Uzbek-Indian Business Council between the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Confederation of Indian Industry. This structure is intended to serve for enhancing bilateral relations in

trade, economic, investment and other spheres, establishment of direct contacts between the chambers of commerce and industry of the regions and the States, creation of mechanisms for joint development of innovative technologies, and interaction between business circles of Uzbekistan and India.

18. The Sides confirmed their readiness to promote travel of the citizens of Uzbekistan and India with official, business and tourist purposes. The Indian side welcomed the simplification of the visa regime for the citizens of India by the Uzbek side.
19. The Sides noted with satisfaction the ongoing cooperation in Information and Communication Technologies. The Sides also noted with satisfaction the training of Uzbek specialists and students in information and communication technologies at the Uzbek-Indian Centre of Information Technologies named after Jawaharlal Nehru in Tashkent and agreed to the need for its further upgrading and facilitating joint training programmes on IT.
20. The Sides agreed to expand cooperation in the IT Sector. They expressed their readiness to explore possibilities of cooperation for opening of branches of Indian Universities/Institutions in the IT, Tourism and hotel management sector in Uzbekistan. The Uzbek side expressed their interest for establishment of an IT Park in Uzbekistan in cooperation with Indian IT companies based on their best practices on software industry development, acceleration of startups.
21. The Sides agreed for cooperation in new areas of space and nuclear energy, and to explore further cooperation in science & technology, solar and other forms of renewable energy. They appreciated the ongoing cooperation in the framework of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) and educational scholarships for capacity building.
22. The Sides emphasized the importance of bilateral cooperation in the sphere of health, medical education and pharmaceuticals. Towards this end, they look forward to encourage their respective institutions and private sector companies to cooperate in these fields.
23. Underlining the imperative of food and nutrition security for the people of both India and Uzbekistan, the Sides resolved to enhance cooperation in agriculture and allied activities by way of inter alia exchange of technology in crop production, improved water use efficiency, plant quarantine, animal husbandry, food processing and enhanced agriculture and food trade.
24. The Sides recognized that close historical and cultural links between the two countries over the millennia provide a firm basis for the development of Uzbekistan-India relations. The Sides welcomed participation of creative groups of both countries in international festivals held in Uzbekistan and India. The Sides, recognizing the uniqueness of the common cultural and civilizational heritage, including priceless manuscripts and other historical artifacts stored in the archival collections and museums of Uzbekistan and India, supported the activation of bilateral efforts for their cataloging, comprehensive scientific study and wide popularization through the implementation of joint research programs, projects and other events.
25. The Sides recognized tourism as an important area of bilateral cooperation that promoted people - to -people contacts, and agreed to implement practical measures under the framework of the bilateral Agreement on cooperation in tourism signed during the visit. In this context, they noted the participation of India in the Tashkent International Tourism Festival in October 2018.

26. The Sides discussed the situation in Afghanistan and noted that establishment of peace and stability in that country is of great significance to the security and stability of the entire region. They reiterated support for efforts of the Government and the people for a genuine Afghan-owned, Afghan-led and Afghan controlled peace and reconciliation process that would allow for a peaceful, secure, united, inclusive and prosperous nation. The sides shared the view that countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations without distinction is important for sustainable peace and security in Afghanistan. They expressed continued support for reconstruction and revival of the country. The Sides agreed to have regular dialogue.

In this context, they expressed full readiness to a close partnership for the implementation of the Tashkent Declaration adopted at the end of the International Conference on Afghanistan on the theme "Peace process, cooperation in the field of security and regional cooperation" in Uzbekistan on March 26-27, 2018.

27. The Sides reaffirmed that the United Nations must play a central role in maintaining global peace and security, and in development and advancing international cooperation. They agreed to strengthen their mutual support and cooperation in the United Nations and other international and regional organizations. The Sides called for comprehensive reforms of the UN structures including the Security Council, including expansion in both categories of membership. Uzbekistan reaffirmed its support to India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council, and noted request of India for support to its candidature for a non-permanent seat of UNSC for 2021-2022.
28. The Sides agreed to further strengthen mutual cooperation under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure.
29. The Sides expressed confidence that the understandings and agreements reached during the visit will further deepen the strategic partnership between the two countries for the well-being of their peoples and mutual prosperity.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev expressed gratitude to the President of the Republic of India H.E. Mr. Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister of the Republic of India H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi and the people of India for hospitality and warm welcome to the Uzbek delegation and invited the President and the Prime Minister of the Republic of India to visit Uzbekistan at a time convenient to them.

New Delhi  
October 01, 2018



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