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India-Tajikistan Joint Statement during the State visit of President of Tajikistan to India

December 17, 2016

His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan paid a State visit to India from 14-18 December 2016 when his official program included ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan, meetings with President Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Vice President Shri M. Hamid Ansari and Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Banquet hosted by President Shri Pranab Mukherjee.

President of Tajikistan and Prime Minister of India held wide-ranging talks on bilateral, regional and international issues. The discussions were warm and cordial reflecting the mutual trust that exists between the two strategic partners with deep connections in history, language, traditions, arts and culture. The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the close cooperation between the two secular, peace loving, neighbouring countries. Noting that 2017 will mark the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Tajikistan they reaffirmed their commitment to take bilateral relations to greater heights.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recalled his highly successful visit to Tajikistan in July 2015 and said that he cherished the warm hospitality that he received during that visit and valued the fruitful discussions that he had with President Rahmon in July 2015 in Dushanbe and in June 2016 on the sidelines of SCO Summit in Tashkent.

The two leaders reviewed the bilateral defence and security cooperation and decided to further extend and expand existing cooperation. They welcomed the successful conclusion of the Foreign Office Consultations on 17th November 2016 and the meeting of the Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation on 2nd November 2016 and agreed that this kind of consultations along with Joint Commission of Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism and regular consultations between National Security Council must continue for mutual benefit.

The two leaders discussed situation in the region and stressed that terrorism and extremism seriously threaten peace, stability and progress for all countries.

The two leaders agreed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations must be eliminated without any distinction between good and bad terrorists and called for an end to sponsorship, support and provision of safe havens and sanctuaries to terrorists. Both leaders reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen bilateral

counter terrorism cooperation, expand security and defence ties and work for early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism by the UN General Assembly.

Reaffirming their shared interest in fostering peace, stability and development in Afghanistan for regional security and stability, the two leaders called for an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process and national reconciliation. As neighbours of Afghanistan, India and Tajikistan will work together to contribute to Afghan peace and prosperity.

The two leaders stressed on the importance of taking joint measures to expand and diversify present bilateral trade, which is below potential. They welcomed the holding of business to business meetings in Dushanbe in March 2016 and participation of Tajik officials and businessmen in major fairs and exhibitions in India. Tajik Side invited Indian investment in Tajikistan including in the four free economic zones that exist in Tajikistan. Recalling Indian contribution in rehabilitation of Varzhob-I Hydel Power Plant, Tajik Side informed that Tajikistan is planning to build a number of small and medium hydroelectric power projects and invited investments from Indian companies.

The two leaders stressed the importance of improving regional connectivity for realizing the full potential of trade and underlined the importance of International North South Transport Corridor in this context. President Rahmon welcomed signing of trilateral agreement among India, Iran and Afghanistan on establishing Chahbahar Transport and Transit Corridors adding that among other avenues it provides connectivity of Tajikistan to warm waters and also to large market of India.

Tajik side appreciated India as a partner in development. Both sides took note of projects under implementation as also those in the pipeline in diverse fields including information technology, agriculture, health care, training and capacity building, education and culture. President Rahmon thanked India for setting up of computer labs in 37 schools of Tajikistan as announced during Prime Minister's visit to Tajikistan in July 2015. The two leaders decided to collaborate for capacity building in Tajikistan in the area of application of space technology for human development. They reiterated their interest in cooperating in the farming sector for self-sufficiency in food. They agreed that sustainable generation and distribution of energy is important for regional development. President Rahmon lauded the initiatives of the International Solar Alliance and noted that solar energy projects could be very useful in remote mountainous areas of Tajikistan.

The two leaders called for exploring the possibility of increasing flight operations between the two countries. They asked respective officials for bilateral consular consultations to explore ways for easier business, medical and tourist and other visas to promote people to people exchanges.

Prime Minister Modi and President Rahmon agreed to celebrate the 25th year of establishment of Diplomatic relations in a befitting manner through festivals, cultural events, conferences and other means of mutual interaction. The two leaders called for greater exchanges of films, TV program and other cultural creations between the peoples of the two countries.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the excellent cooperation between India and Tajikistan on multilateral issues and mutual support for the initiatives of the two countries in the United Nations and other international forums. President Rahmon thanked India for cosponsoring resolution strongly moved by Tajikistan for declaration of years 2018-28 as International Decade of Action: Water for Sustainable

Development.

The two leaders called for comprehensive reforms of the UN structures. President Rahmon reiterated support of Tajikistan to India's candidature for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council. He also welcomed India's imminent full membership of Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

President Rahmon thanked the Indian leadership and people of India for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to him and his delegation during his visit to India. He extended invitations to Prime Minister Modi and President Mukherjee to visit Tajikistan.



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