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Speech by Prime Minister at India-Kenya Business Forum during his visit to Kenya (July 11, 2016)

July 11, 2016

Your Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya;
Cabinet Secretaries;
Chairmen of various Chambers and associations of Commerce & Industry;
Friends from the Business Community of Kenya and India;

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am happy to be with you on my first visit to Kenya as Prime Minister. Indians in general, and Gujaratis in particular, have had their second home in Kenya. So, from that perspective, I am really late in visiting this great country. There has been a long gap of nearly 35 years for the visit of Indian Prime Minister. Though at a personal level, I was able to maintain engagements with Kenya. As Chief Minister of Gujarat, I visited Kenya in 2008. We also received delegations in Gujarat from here.

At the outset, I must compliment the people and leadership of Kenya for overall development and stability since independence. Kenya's economy and its infrastructure make it an influential player in the region. You are the only developing country which hosts the headquarters of UN agencies.

Friends!

India and Kenya have had a very special relationship.

Thousands of Indians were brought here to build railways in 19th and 20th centuries;

Mahatma Gandhi has been a common inspiration for the Struggle against colonialism;

Indian banks have been operating in Kenya since 1953.

The first cuttings of the famous tea plantations of Kericho came from our Assam state.

In addition to being loyal citizens, Indians are also the third largest group of tourists to Kenya.

Your scholars and students consider India as a very comfortable place to live, learn and work;

No wonder, many words in Swahili language have their origin in Indian languages;

Both countries have had very old maritime contacts over the Indian Ocean;

Many Indian companies have made Kenya their base to operate in the entire East Africa.

Mr. President, I am aware that your government has laid great emphasis on the use of solar energy in daily life. We are also working on an ambitious renewable energy programme. India and Kenya are blessed by sufficient solar radiation. Solar energy is a real solution for global warming. It is also a good strategy for providing electricity to remote villages and hamlets. We look forward to work together on this front under the International Solar Alliance.

Similarly, health sector is another area of great interest to both sides. We are happy that thousands of Kenyan patients have returned from India after a successful treatment. I understand that Kenya would like to replicate the Indian experience in Medicare and become a medical hub in the region. We would be happy to support you in this process.

These are just a few indicators of the depth of our relationship and the potentials for co-operation.

Friends!

Our predicament of the past is same;

Our problems of the present are same;

We have had common enemies;

Earlier it was colonialism;

Now it is poverty.

So, as we worked together in the past; we have to work together even now. Like Kenya, India is also a young country. Your workforce is sought after in Africa. Similarly, the Indian work force is sought after in the entire world. We can do a lot together to nurture and train this human capital which can serve the whole world.

Today, India is the fastest growing large economy of the world. We are not only having a high growth rate; we are also going up in various global indicators.

We have jumped 12 ranks in the latest global ranking on Ease of doing business by the World Bank.

India has also jumped 16 places on the World Economic Forum's global competitive index.

Friends!

India has changed a lot in last two years. We are now the most preferred destination for FDI. In the year of 2015, we have received highest ever FDI. And for you the good news is that India is the largest trading partner of Kenya. India is also the second largest investor here. We will be happy to further remove the imbalance in trade between us. We will also be happy to enhance the level of investment in Kenya.

I am here to assure the people and Government of Kenya that India stands by you. Our friendship is only a win-win game. Whether it is Kenyan students in India; or Indian professionals in Kenya- both should shine. Whether it is mines, minerals or machines; all are rewarding areas. We should jointly explore the opportunities. Various initiatives during my visit including this meeting are indicators in that direction.

Friends!

I assure Kenya that India will always work to strengthen your processes and enrich your resources.

You may be knowing that we have launched 'Make in India' campaign to make India a global Manufacturing hub. Similarly, you have launched Make it Kenya to promote business and holiday opportunities. In fact, the two can become complimentary since our commitment is to make the future of the people and since the people are largely the same. Sweat of Indians has cemented the foundation of this nation. Indian blood has colored it's wings of freedom. It doesn't matter whether we Make in Kenya or Make in India.

And Friends!

As a demonstration of our commitment for Make it Kenya, we have printed a guide book on Doing Business in Kenya. This is for guiding the

Indian Investors to invest here. It is my pleasure to present the book to His Excellency the President of Kenya.

Thank You!



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