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Joint Press Statement on Visit to Mozambique by Minister of State for External Affairs, Gen(Dr.) V.K. Singh (Retd.) (February 12-13, 2018)

February 14, 2018

The Minister of State for External Affairs in the Government of India, His Excellency Gen(Retd) Vijay Kumar Singh, visited Mozambique for an official visit on 12-13 February 2018. This year, this was the first incoming visit in Mozambique by a Minister from a foreign country.

During his visit, Gen. Singh called on His Excellency President Filipe Nyusi, and had meetings with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, His Excellency Jose Pacheco; Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources, His Excellency Dr. Ernesto Max Tonela; Minister of Industry and Trade, His Excellency Dr. Ragendra de Sousa; and Minister of Defense, His Excellency Atanásio Mtumuke. All the meetings were held in a warm and cordial atmosphere. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation hosted a dinner in honour of Gen. Singh.

On behalf of Government of India, Gen. Singh congratulated His Excellency President Filipe Nyusi for his recent success in opening the way for political reconciliation in Mozambique.

The Framework Agreement for Mozambique's accession to the International Solar Alliance was signed by His Excellency Dr. Ernesto Max Tonela, in the presence of Gen. Singh. The Ambassador of France to Mozambique, His Excellency Bruno Clerc, was also present at the occasion. Gen. Singh looked forward to welcoming President Nyusi for the first founding summit of the ISA, which will take place in New Delhi on 11 March 2018. Gen. Singh also reiterated an invitation to Dr. Tonela to participate in the 16th Ministerial Meeting of the International Energy Forum, being hosted in India on 10-12 April 2018.

Gen. Singh stressed the immense potential of solar energy in a solar-rich country like Mozambique, and explained India's own experience of rapid fall in prices of solar energy through scaling up of generation capacity. The Government of Mozambique expressed its interest in expanding development of all forms of renewable energy, including solar, and in this context requested Indian support for further

expanding the solar-cell assembly plant that had been built earlier through Indian financial assistance.

Both countries recorded their satisfaction at the large Indian investments in coal and natural gas sectors in Mozambique, and agreed to work together to facilitate faster development of these investments. Gen. Singh appreciated the recent decision by the Mozambique Cabinet to approve the Development Plan for Area-1 of Rovuma gas basin, and conveyed confidence that the natural gas sector would have a transformative effect on the Mozambican economy.

Gen. Singh thanked the Mozambique Government for the cooperation extended to Indian parastatal and private companies in the coal-mining sector, and promised to encourage more Indian investment for strengthening the evacuation Infrastructure of coal. The Mozambique side promised cooperation to remove any impediments to establishment of thermal power plants for using the thermal coal being mined by Indian companies. Government of Mozambique reiterated its desire for establishment of two capacity-building institutes for the coal industry, and Gen. Singh promised to expedite their construction.

Government of Mozambique expressed its appreciation for India agreeing to the request to defer repayments of India's past concessional lines of credit, in view of the present budgetary difficulties of Mozambique. Both sides discussed ways of expediting utilization of previous concessional lines of credit extended by Government of India, particularly the USD 250 million credit offered for improving electricity Infrastructure in Maputo and Matola. The two sides also discussed ways in which Mozambique could make greater use of new funds available with Government of India for concessional financing of developmental activities in Africa.

The Government of Mozambique expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by India in recent years, such as the grant of 10 million US Dollars to Ministry of Trade & Industry for purchase of wheat, the donation of essential medicines and medical equipment to Ministry of Health, the donation of transport and armoured vehicles to the Ministry of Interior, and donation of bicycles and motorcycles to the National Institute of Statistics for use during the 2017 population Census.

The Mozambican Minister of Trade & Industry expressed the desire to see greater involvement of the Indian private sector in projects supported by India, through 'smart partnerships'. In this context, the Mozambique side requested participation of Indian entities in the annual Mozambican private sector conference being organized in March 2018. Indian investment was especially requested in the four priority sectors of agriculture, energy, infrastructure and tourism.

Gen. Singh suggested establishment of direct business links between Mozambique and India in the gems and jewellery sector, given Mozambique's increasing production of precious stones and India's proven expertise in cutting and polishing of stones. The Mozambican side requested Indian investment and support for reviving the cotton textile industry in Mozambique. The two sides discussed possible cooperation for supporting Small and Medium Industries, and in this context, the Government of Mozambique requested for an expansion of the scope of the Vocational Training Centre being set up by India in Chimoio.

Both sides also reviewed the working of the Memorandum of Understanding for promotion of pulse-exports, which was signed in July 2016 during the State Visit of the Prime Minister of India. Gen. Singh was briefed about the Mozambique Government's attempts to re-create a rural value chain that would provide agricultural inputs to farmers and assure offtake of their produce. Gen. Singh promised Indian support for this project, and also suggested that Mozambique could try to market itself as a hub for cultivating 'organic' agricultural products which command an excellent price in many markets.

Both countries reviewed the state of defence cooperation, and agreed to accelerate the initiatives discussed earlier, with special emphasis on maritime security. On behalf of the Indian Government, Gen. Singh assured increase in training of Mozambican Armed Forces Personnel in India as well as assistance for upgrading equipment and Infrastructure of the FADM, including for upgrading the military medical facilities, for English training of FADM personnel, and for hydrographic surveying of Mozambique waters.

The visit allowed both countries to review the state of bilateral cooperation and to reiterate the warm and friendly ties between the Mozambican and Indian Governments and people.



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