

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3338
ANSWERED ON:14.12.2011
GUIDELINES ON SAARC
Devappa Anna Shri Shetti Raju Alias

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India wants guidelines for defining the roles of observers in the affairs of the eight nation group of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC);
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether this issue has been raised by India during the SAARC Conference in Maldives; and
- (d) if so, the outcome thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) Yes.

(b) India noted that although the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Member States (SAARC) defined guidelines for Observers at SAARC at the XV SAARC Summit in August 2008 (in Colombo, Sri Lanka), the existing guidelines are brief and do not provide enough information to guide Observers in their interaction with the Member States of SAARC.

(c) Yes. India took the position at the XVII SAARC Summit, that a comprehensive review is required on all matters relating to Observers.

(d) The Addu Declaration issued at the end of the XVII SAARC Summit on November 11, 2011 states that SAARC would "undertake a comprehensive review of all matters relating to SAARC's engagement with Observers, including the question of dialogue partnership, before the next Session of the Council of Ministers in 2012".