

Title: Statement regarding Prime Minister's visits for the Nuclear Security Summit, as well as IBSA and BRIC summits-laid.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): Sir, I am to inform this august House of Prime Minister's visit to Washington to attend the Nuclear Security Summit and to Brasilia for the 4th India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Summit and the 2nd Brazil, India, Russia and China (BRIC) Summit from 10-16 April 2010.

At the invitation of U.S. President Obama, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh participated in the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington from April 12-13. In all forty-seven countries, the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the European Union were represented at the Summit.

The Summit was a personal initiative of President Obama who in his Prague speech of April 2009 described nuclear terrorism as the most immediate and extreme threat to global security. The focus on combating nuclear terrorism is consistent with our concerns on terrorism and clandestine proliferation. Strengthening nuclear security is also consistent with India's interest in the safe and secure expansion of civil nuclear energy. We had therefore welcomed the initiative last year.

During the Summit discussions, Prime Minister referred to our intention to develop 35,000 MWe of nuclear energy by 2022 in the context of India's three-stage programme as well as newly opened opportunities for civil nuclear cooperation with the international community. He also underlined our concerns on clandestine proliferation and the danger of nuclear material and technical know-how falling into hands of non-state actors. He welcomed the new Russia-US agreement to cut their nuclear arsenals as a step in the right direction and called on all states with substantial nuclear arsenals to further accelerate this process.

The Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan of 1988 remains the most comprehensive and elaborate proposal to move toward a nuclear weapon free world. The Prime Minister reiterated India's call to the world community to work towards the realisation of this vision. The danger of nuclear terrorism makes early elimination of nuclear weapons a matter of even greater urgency.

At the Summit, Prime Minister announced the establishment of a Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership in India. This is a logical step after the opening up of international civil nuclear cooperation. The Centre, wholly owned and managed by the Government of India, will have four schools on Advanced Nuclear Energy System Studies, Nuclear Security, Radiation Safety and Radioisotope Applications. The Centre will assist in safe, secure and proliferation-resistant promotion of nuclear energy, upgrading of standards and sharing of experience. We will develop it in partnership with IAEA and interested countries.

The Summit outcome contained in a Communique and a Work Plan is aimed at fostering political commitment on nuclear security and follow up action in forums such as the IAEA. We participated actively in shaping the outcome which is consistent with India's interests. Our WMD Act of 2005 and our Atomic Energy Act already provide the legal basis to implement nuclear security measures.

The Republic of Korea will host the next Nuclear Security Summit in 2012 and Argentina will host the next preparatory meeting later this year. We hope that the Nuclear Security Summit process would help build pragmatic and purposeful frameworks for addressing nuclear danger.

Prime Minister also met US President Barack Obama on 11 April 2010. The two leaders expressed satisfaction with the progress in India-US relations since Prime Minister's bilateral visit to the USA in November 2009 and reiterated their strong commitment to continue to further strengthen the India-US strategic partnership.

The two leaders had an extensive discussion on the global economy and agreed to work together, in partnership with G 20 members, on further steps to sustain global economic recovery. They recognized that India-US economic partnership could be a catalyst for global economic development, including with respect to food security and clean energy. The two leaders shared their visions for a strong, stable and prosperous South Asia. The two leaders agreed to intensify India-US counter-terrorism cooperation. President Obama conveyed that he is looking forward to his visit to India this year, for which mutually convenient dates are being worked out.

As a next step in pursuing the vision laid out by the two leaders, I look forward to my strategic dialogue with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on 3 June 2010 in Washington DC. It will give us an opportunity to once again review progress on and plan ahead for the full spectrum of our broad-based and multifaceted bilateral ties, and exchange views on the agenda of global and regional issues of mutual interest.

On the margins of the Summit, Prime Minister also met the Prime Minister of Canada, who will host the next G20 Summit in June, the Prime Minister of Morocco, the Presidents of France and Kazakhstan and the German Chancellor.

Prime Minister led the Indian delegation to the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of India, Brazil and South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA) on 15 April. The South African and Brazilian delegations were led by President Jacob Zuma and President Lula da Silva respectively. The last IBSA Summit was hosted by India in 2008.

IBSA has become a significant vehicle for comprehensive trilateral cooperation between three large democratic countries that share common values and are engaged in the development process to improve the lives of their peoples. It is significant that IBSA cooperation is not limited to governments, but engages the civil societies of the three countries. Indeed civil society involvement is a significant aspect of IBSA. IBSA also undertakes development projects in third countries.

The three leaders reviewed the activities of the 16 IBSA Working Groups including those on Science and Technology and Energy, which are undertaking promising projects. The leaders also decided that IBSA should develop micro satellites for space weather studies. Two MOUs on cooperation in Science & Technology and Innovation as well as Solar Energy were signed during the Summit.

As part of civil society engagement, meetings of separate people-to-people fora involving academics, editors, parliamentarians, women, small business and local governance were held on the sidelines of the Summit. Our Commerce and Industry Minister led the Indian delegation for a combined IBSA and BRIC Business Forum Meeting.

IBSA countries also take up projects in other developing countries under the IBSA Trust Fund. This is a novel initiative of IBSA for South - South cooperation. Currently such projects have been going on in seven countries. IBSA has committed more projects in Haiti in the wake of the recent earthquake there, and is considering more projects in Palestine.

During their discussions, the three leaders focused on UN reform, the impact of global economic and financial crisis and scourge of terrorism. They reiterated the need for urgent reform of the United Nations, including the Security Council, to make it more representative and democratic. Recognising the negative impact of the global economic and financial crisis on developing countries, the three leaders emphasized the importance of promoting sustainable development and called for a development-oriented, balanced and successful conclusion of the Doha Round of trade talks. The Leaders considered the scourge of terrorism as one of the, most serious threats to international peace and security. President Lula and President Zuma condemned the terrorist attacks in India and offered condolences to our people. The Leaders emphasized the need for early finalisation of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

On the occasion of the Summit, Commerce and Industry Minister along with Ministers of Brazil and South Africa met with the Foreign Minister of Palestine. Following the meeting, India, Brazil and South Africa issued a statement calling for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Prime Minister also attended the Second BRIC Summit on 15 April together with President Medvedev of Russia, President Hu Jintao of China and President Lula da Silva of Brazil. The first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia in June last year. Since then, BRIC Foreign Ministers, Finance Ministers, Agriculture Ministers, National Security Advisers and Governors of Central Banks have met.

The BRIC Summit in Brazil focussed on a range of issues including the international financial and economic crisis, reform of international financial institutions including its management structures, cooperation in G20, UN reforms, climate change and other issues. While welcoming signs of economic recovery, the BRIC Leaders recognized that there were continuing uncertainties. While calling for strong, sustainable and balanced growth, they reiterated the role of emerging economies in contributing to economic recovery. BRIC Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors would continue to meet and discuss modalities of cooperation in this context. A Joint Statement along with a Follow-up document was issued following the 2nd BRIC Summit. China has offered to host the 3rd BRIC Summit in 2011.

BRIC countries support a multi-polar, equitable, democratic and just world order, based on rule of law and with the United Nations having a central role in tackling global challenges.

With BRIC countries together commanding 25.9% of total geographic area, 40% of global population and 22% of global GDP [PPP], abundant natural resources, growing middle classes, and given their internal economic strengths, BRIC countries - as engines of economic growth - can contribute constructively towards sustainable global economic growth.

During his visit to Brasilia, Prime Minister also held a bilateral Summit meeting with President Lula. We attach high importance to our relations with Brazil. Prime Minister and President Lula discussed the growing importance of the multifaceted India-Brazil Strategic Partnership. Our engagement with Brazil is important for our energy security, food security, trade and commerce as well as cooperation in the area of high technologies.

The Prime Minister also held separate bilateral meetings with President Hu Jintao of China and President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia. These meetings were part of our tradition of regular high level meetings with these two important countries.

The visit by the Prime Minister to USA and Brazil reflects India's growing role in world affairs, and served to advance our national interests on issues which have a direct bearing on our security and development

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