

Joint Statement on India-The Netherlands Virtual Summit - Towards a Strategic Partnership on Water

April 09, 2021

1. Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, and H.E. Mr. Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Netherlands, co-chaired a Virtual Summit between India and the Netherlands on April 9, 2021.
2. The two Prime Ministers recalled their previous meetings in 2015, 2017 and 2018 as well as the successful visit of the King and the Queen of the Netherlands to India in 2019 and welcomed the steadfast development of bilateral relations that are underpinned by the shared values of democracy, rule of law, pluralism, equality, freedom of speech and respect for human rights and the historic bonds of friendship between the two countries. They held an in-depth exchange of views on further deepening the bilateral relationship in wide-ranging areas of cooperation including trade and economy, water management and agriculture sector, smart cities and urban mobility, science & technology cooperation, public health & health care and space.
3. In the context of new geopolitical and geoeconomic realities, they also shared views on regional and global issues of mutual interest including post-Covid economic recovery, climate change and the Indo-Pacific. They reiterated their strong commitment to a rules-based multilateral order for ensuring international peace, stability and prosperity.

Fight against COVID-19 Pandemic

4. The two leaders commended the selfless contribution of healthcare workers and other frontline staff across the globe in the fight against the pandemic. Both leaders reiterated their commitment to ensure equitable and affordable access to Covid19 vaccines to all countries and agreed to cooperate in this regard. The Netherlands acknowledged that India's production capacity of Covid19 vaccines is crucial for the success of global efforts in tackling the pandemic and appreciated India's supply of Covid19 vaccines to more than 80 countries through its 'Vaccine Maitri' initiative as well as the COVAX facility. The Netherlands are very grateful for the air-bubble-agreement between our two countries, facilitating the repatriation of many Dutch and EU-citizens back to Europe, and Indian citizens back to India.

Trade, Commerce and Investments

5. The two leaders noted the success of the digital Trade Mission between India and the Netherlands that took place virtually from 8 to 12 February 2021. They welcomed the three specific domains of the trade mission: water management (water safety and security), food chains (solutions in food waste, horticulture, dairy and aqua culture) and sustainable energy (solar energy, hydrogen, biofuels and energy transition).
6. Both Prime Ministers agreed that the ambitious and innovative flagship programs like Clean India, Digital India, Make in India, Sagarmala, 'Ayushman Bharat' (healthcare) or Startup India have provided immense opportunities for Indo-Dutch collaboration in multiple sectors. The Indian side apprised the Dutch side about the recently launched Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes and invited increased investments by the Dutch companies in areas of medical devices, telecom and networking equipment, solar PV cells, food and textile products.
7. Both leaders expressed satisfaction that despite Covid19 related constraints, the investment flows between the two countries continued to rise making the Netherlands the 3rd largest FDI investor in India and India the fourth largest FDI investor in the Netherlands in the year 2019-20. They welcomed the joint announcement on setting up a bilateral Fast Track Mechanism for investment facilitation and issue resolution. The Indian side also highlighted the role of Access India Initiative (AII) in facilitating investments from Dutch Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs)/ family owned enterprises (FoEs) by providing necessary market entry support including investor facilitation and hand-holding services which are critical for successful entry to the Indian market. They also acknowledged the progress made by the StartUpLink initiative (DPIIT, Invest India, Startup India and the Netherlands Embassy) and the intention to continue the successful collaboration including in medtech, agritech and cyber security as priority sectors.

Towards a Strategic Partnership on Water

8. The two leaders noted that Indo-Dutch partnerships in the field of water are strong, diverse, mutually beneficial and cover areas like tackling river water pollution including river Ganga, delta

management, promoting water management, water quality issues and waste water recycling, decision support systems and introduction of new water technologies. Both sides highlighted the strong synergies as far as the water related challenges of India and the expertise and experience of the Netherlands is concerned and agreed to launch 'Strategic Partnership on Water'. The two leaders noted the progress made by the Joint Working Group on Water and agreed to elevate it to the Ministerial level.

9. The Prime Ministers reviewed the on-going projects in the water sector including the 'Dutch India Water Alliance for Leadership Initiative (DIWALI)' platform for designing solutions to water challenges supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), the 'Local Treatment of Urban Sewage Streams for Healthy Reuse (LOTUS-HR)' joint collaboration funded by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and NWO, and the Indo-Dutch R&D projects under Namami-Gange Programme. Both leaders also noted about the upcoming joint Indo-Dutch interventions as R&D projects on 'Water as Leverage' in selected towns in Ganga Basin and another pilot project on 'Pollution and effective waste management of textile industrial cluster in Panipat, Haryana' under collaborative approval. They also noted about the joint DST-NWO support to the consortium 'Water4Change' for designing integrated urban water systems formed during the 2019 Technology Summit in which the Netherlands was a partner country.
10. Innovation, technology and governance are key aspects of Indo-Dutch water cooperation. The two leaders agreed to further intensify and broaden the cooperation in new areas including water budgeting, cost effective decentralised treatment technologies, converting waste water to energy, application of AI in decision making, non-point pollution source assessment and abatement, mapping of ecosystem services, reclaiming river space, basin protection against disasters, river hazard management, introduction of new water technologies and capacity building through training programmes in cooperation with TU-Delft & IHE-Delft.

Agriculture

11. India is embarking on an ambitious agenda to develop its agricultural sector as engine of growth in the rural area, and to double the farmers income. The two leaders noted with satisfaction the ongoing Indo-

Dutch collaboration in the field of agriculture, and recognized the opportunities for public/private cooperation in diverse sectors as horticulture, dairy, aquaculture and poultry. The Netherlands underlined the importance of access to the market of various technologies that increase the efficiency, and the adherence to international standards. The two leaders reiterated commitment to successfully complete the establishment of all Centres of Excellence (CoEs) sanctioned under the Indo-Dutch Joint Action Plan on Agriculture. They also agreed to demonstrate ambition and explore setting up 25 CoEs by 2025 in Agri related sectors.

12. Both leaders welcomed the upcoming Joint Agricultural Working Group in which both countries would discuss further deepening of the cooperation in agriculture in their joint effort to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, with specific attention on improving opportunities for joint production and processing of nutritious and healthy food, on supporting biodiversity, on raising farmers income and inclusiveness. An extension of the Joint Action Plan under the MoU on cooperation in the field of agriculture is foreseen. They expressed appreciation for several initiatives taken recently like the production of tempeh in Bangalore as an alternative source of protein and the development of the Biomass Initiative for the conversion from paddy straw to energy and fertilizers, supporting both climate mitigation and adaptation and adding value to waste for the benefit of farmers. The two leaders look forward to India's participation at the International Horticultural Expo Floriade in Almere in 2022.

Smart cities and Urban mobility

13. The two leaders welcomed the extension of MoU to promote technical cooperation in the fields of Spatial Planning, Water Management and Mobility Management. Under the MOU, India seeks to explore cooperation with the Netherlands in urban development, utilising its strength in integrated urban planning, including provision of adequate public spaces, pedestrianisation, cycling infrastructure and preservation of water bodies etc.
14. The Netherlands is uniquely placed as a preferred partner in India's development in key sectors such as smart cities, mobility and sustainable urban development. It was agreed to explore to exchange knowledge in the field of cycling within this context and support the development of cycling infrastructure in smart cities in India. India also invited the Netherlands to consider adoption of smart cities in

India as well as to explore financial support for green projects in smart cities.

Science and Technology

15. The two leaders welcomed the ongoing cooperation in the field of science, technology and innovation, focusing on coherence in strategic priorities, launching public-private partnerships and connecting entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems. They reflected on the growing impact of the upcoming Key Enabling Technologies like artificial intelligence, cyber and quantum towards solving societal challenges and contributing to the economy.
16. Both leaders noted that India and the Netherlands have agreed to launch two new calls on the WAH! Agenda under which both countries have committed to boost their investments in science technology and innovation under the shared knowledge and Innovation agenda, identifying synergies. The WAH! Agenda focuses on societal challenges in the areas of Water, Agriculture, and Health. Both the countries are working towards new modalities for cooperation such as innovation and technology demonstration field labs and expanding the existing bilateral projects through vocational training and doctoral & post-doctoral exchange. With an ambition to leverage advances in Big Data, IoT and AI, the two countries are also working on a new partnership initiative focused on Digital Health, Diagnostics and Devices.
17. Both sides appreciated the fact that the DST-CII Technology Summit organised by Department of Science & Technology in October 2019 in New Delhi and Global Bio India 2021 Virtual Summit organized by the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India in which the Netherlands was a partner country have contributed significantly towards bringing together the various stakeholders from the two sides to further strengthen collaboration in the field of science and technology.

Space Cooperation

18. The two sides acknowledged the ongoing cooperation in space between the two countries and reflected on the contribution that cooperation in this area can make to shared goals on water, agriculture and health through remote sensing applications focussed topics such as air quality and climate smart & precision agriculture.

Noting opportunities for cooperation in areas like nanosatellites, innovative payloads, equipment and scientific experiments they welcomed the finalization of the MoU between Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST) and Delft University of Technology (TU-Delft) and looked forward for its early signing. Both countries agreed to further the understanding and identify specific programmes which could be jointly taken up for mutual benefit.

Public health and Healthcare

19. The Prime Ministers expressed their appreciation for the ongoing cooperation in health sector under the MoU for Cooperation in the Field of Healthcare and Public Health encompassing Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR), as well as regulatory matters relating to food products, medicines and medical products. They welcomed the extension of the existing MoU, reviewed the actual projects and those in the pipeline concerning cross border health threats like antimicrobial resistance, on digital health and on pharmaceuticals, including vaccines.
20. In a joint ambition to mitigate antimicrobial resistance, India and the Netherlands will intensify cooperation in designing policies and implementing improvements in laboratory surveillance at pharmaceutical production sites and hospitals and scale up related activities. A MoU was signed between C-CAMP from India and AMR Global from the Netherlands with an aim to work together towards building and enabling innovations.
21. The Netherlands side welcomed the Indian leadership of the Executive Board of the WHO and of the Global Digital Health Partnership. In the latter, both sides noted that good progress was made defining principles for increased interoperability and secure health data exchange, and accelerating research in digital health issues. Both sides agreed that interoperability proved absolute essential during present health crisis, saving time and adding safety.
22. The Prime Ministers acknowledged the special role vaccines have in public health. Like India, the Netherlands has important vaccine development capabilities. India and the Netherlands join hands to develop and produce even better vaccines for present and future generations taking advantage of each other strengths in biotechnology R&D and manufacturing ecosystems including the Poonawalla Science Park in Bilthoven. India & Netherlands have also partnered

under the EU India Joint Call "Towards a Next Generation Influenza Vaccine to Protect Citizens Worldwide" in which three projects with Dutch stakeholders will support the development of a next generation of influenza vaccines aiming at higher effectivity, lower costs and better accessibility.

23. The two sides favour a well-balanced trade system in pharmaceutical products. Patients and industry have an interest in securing transparent, open and predictable supply chains, and avoiding critical dependencies in active pharmaceuticals and in formulations. A strong industry requires a strong regulatory and supervisory authority as well. The Prime Ministers welcomed the intention of regulatory and supervisory authorities on both sides to start a cooperation program.

24. The Indian side welcomed the investment by the Dutch companies including by Royal Philips in manufacturing of medical equipment as well as in research and development. The Indian side conveyed that the Netherlands can play an important part in India's Digital Health Mission with Dutch companies working with Indian partners in digitalization of health systems. India and the Netherlands are working on several joint projects in the area of Big Data, Digital health & AI like:

- The participation of Philips India Research with consortium partners Maastricht University, Tata Memorial Hospital and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) in BIONICS (Big Imaging data approach for Oncology in Netherlands India Collaboration) and TRAIN (Personal Health Train for Radiation oncology in India and the Netherlands) projects to promote research in oncology area.

- The MoU between Microsoft India, Apollo Hospitals and Maastricht University, to help expand AI Network for research on cardiovascular diseases in the Netherlands & develop an India-specific heart risk score for better prediction of cardiac diseases for the general population.

India-EU Cooperation

25. The two leaders noted that India and the European Union (EU) are valued partners for each other. They are determined to execute the actions as mentioned in the EU-India Roadmap 2025. They welcomed the upcoming India-EU Leaders' Meeting in Portugal in

May 2021 which will set a new milestone for India-EU Strategic Partnership. The two sides also welcomed the proposal for a comprehensive Connectivity Partnership between India and the EU with the aim to promote connectivity initiatives that respect the key principles of international law, good governance, rule of law, openness, transparency, social, fiscal, economic and environmental sustainability.

Indo-Pacific

26. India welcomed the Netherlands' guidelines on the Indo-Pacific which recognises the importance of the region for global peace, security and prosperity and identifies India as a key partner to engage with. Both leaders emphasised the close convergence between each others vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific. They committed to promoting a free, open, inclusive, rules based order anchored in international law to advance Security and Growth for All in the Region and agreed to work together and with regional bodies like the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) to support maritime security, rule of law, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded lawful commerce, peaceful resolution of disputes, democratic values.

Multilateral Cooperation

27. The two Prime Ministers reiterated their strong commitment to multilateralism and for fostering multilateral solutions to global challenges like climate change, sustainable development, terrorism, non-proliferation and disarmament. They reaffirmed the importance of the urgent reform of the UN and other multilateral institutions and global governance structures so as to make them more inclusive, transparent, accountability, fit for purpose, and better reflective of contemporary geopolitical realities. Prime Minister Modi thanked Prime Minister Rutte for the continued Dutch support to India's permanent membership of a reformed and expanded UN Security Council.
28. Both leaders reaffirmed their strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and that terrorism cannot be justified on any grounds. They acknowledged that terrorism and violent extremism continue to pose grave threat to international peace and security as well as for development and called upon all nations to intensify efforts to combat terrorism and prevent violent extremism.

Climate Action

29. The two leaders stressed that Climate Action is a key priority area for both countries and agreed to cooperate closely in fulfilling their ambitious commitments under the Paris Agreement. In the run up to the 2021 UNFCCC COP26, they emphasised the need to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement by all countries and look forward to having positive outcomes at the COP26. In this context, the two leaders emphasised the importance of deepening cooperation on green investments in food (foodwaste, logistics), water (safety and security) and in particular renewable energy, to help us move closer to meeting our international climate and environmental goals and making our economies more resilient to future shocks. The two leaders acknowledged the Statement of Intent signed between the Netherlands and NITI Aayog in September 2020, where both countries agreed to work on important aspects of the energy transition.
30. Both leaders welcomed the universalisation of membership of the International Solar Alliance and acknowledged that as one of the fastest growing multilateral organisations, the International Solar Alliance has become an important platform for channelling our collective efforts in promoting rapid uptake of solar energy and technologies.
31. Prime Minister Modi congratulated Prime Minister Rutte on successfully hosting the Climate Adaptation Summit in January 2021. He also appreciated the Netherlands for joining the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) initiative and agreed to work closely with the Global Commission on Climate Adaptation to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change. India invited the Netherlands to support CDRI's Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) for Small Island Developing States. Both sides noted the successful organisation of the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure held during 17-19 March 2021.

People-to-People contacts and Cultural Cooperation

32. The two Prime Ministers acknowledged that the richness of the relationship between India and the Netherlands is a result of the long standing people-to-people contacts and agreed to further promote greater awareness and mutual understanding between the two peoples

through enhanced cultural cooperation. They expressed satisfaction at the successful 'air bubble' arrangement between the two countries that allowed essential travel during the Covid19 times. They noted the importance of promoting legal channels for facilitating greater mobility of students and professionals between the two countries and look forward to the early conclusion of the comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement.

Conclusion

33. The two leaders reaffirmed their conviction to further strengthen the multifaceted cooperation between India and the Netherlands for mutual benefit and looked forward to their next interaction at the India-EU Leaders' Meeting in May 2021. Prime Minister Rutte reiterated his invitation to Prime Minister Modi to visit the Netherlands.

New Delhi
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