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2007 – 2008**

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Government of India**

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Introduction and Synopsis

The foreign policy of India seeks to promote an environment of peace and stability in our region and in the world to enable India's accelerated socio-economic development and safeguard our national security. To attain these objectives, India has made vigorous efforts to develop friendly and cooperative relations with all its neighbours and to strengthen engagement with the major powers of the world. India's economic diplomacy has attached due importance to energy security that is vital for an assured high rate of growth for our economy.

While pursuing the country's supreme national interests, India's foreign policy continues to be characterised by autonomy of decision-making, commitment to Panchsheel or the five principles of peaceful coexistence, and equity in the conduct of international relations.

With the objective of a peaceful, stable and prosperous neighbourhood, India continues to attach the highest priority to close and good neighbourly political, economic and cultural relations with its neighbours. As Chairman of SAARC, India worked with the other members to impart dynamism to SAARC processes. The Fourteenth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi in April 2007 decided to emphasise concrete regional initiatives, moving from a declaratory phase to implementation. The Summit recognised the need to have better intra-regional connectivity, particularly physical, economic and people-to-people connectivity. The SAARC Council of Ministers meeting agreed to implement several social sector and physical connectivity projects identified by SAARC Transport Ministers and SAARC Finance Ministers. They also agreed to operationalise the SAARC Development Fund immediately. Other important regional initiatives relate to the setting up of a South Asian University and a SAARC Food Bank.

India remains committed to developing close, friendly and mutually beneficial political relations with its South Asian

neighbours on the basis of sovereign equality and mutual respect. It extends support to the people of Nepal in their political transition to a new democratic order. As a close and friendly neighbour, India supports the restoration of full democracy in Bangladesh. As Bhutan transitions to a democratic constitutional monarchy, India continues to work for Bhutan's economic development and political stability. With respect to the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka, India believes that there is no military solution and that it is necessary to find a peacefully-negotiated political settlement, acceptable to all communities, within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. India continues to help Afghanistan's reconstruction and the Afghan government and people in building a pluralistic and prosperous society. India is also committed to peace, friendship and good neighbourly relations with Pakistan and has accordingly continued with the institutional dialogue with Pakistan.

India attaches high importance to its bilateral relations with the People's Republic of China with whom we have a strategic and cooperative partnership for peace and prosperity. This partnership has been further enhanced and given a global dimension during the successful visit of our Prime Minister to China in January 2008.

India and Iran share strong historical and cultural ties with deep civilisational and people to people links. These underpin a contemporary relationship with emphasis on trade, investment and regional cooperation. The momentum in India-Iran bilateral relations was maintained in 2007-08 through regular exchanges.

India also continued to increase its political and economic cooperation with countries in East Asia, West Asia, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America. For the effective conduct of our foreign economic relations and taking forward its Look East policy, Prime Minister led the Indian delegation to the 6th India-ASEAN Summit and the East Asia Summit. High-level exchanges of visits have also continued with countries of West Asia and Central Asia.

Such exchanges included a visit to Libya by the External Affairs Minister in May 2007. India's commitment to the Palestinian cause was reiterated by its participation at the International Peace Conference on Palestine at Annapolis in November 2007 and at the donors' conference on Palestine held in Paris the following month. India expressed concern over the events in Gaza and the West Bank and particularly over the use of violence against innocent civilians.

India's increasing engagement with countries of Africa and Latin America received further impetus with the visit of the Prime Minister to Nigeria in October 2007, participation in the second IBSA Summit in Pretoria last year and by visits of the Presidents of Brazil and Mexico to India in June and September 2007 respectively.

India has made rapid improvements in its relationships with the major powers of the world while, at the same time, increasing its economic cooperation with other developed as well as developing countries. India's relations with the USA have been transformed in the past few years. Indo-US cooperation now spans a wide spectrum including high technology, space, agriculture, education, and trade and economic linkages and there is a prospect of civil nuclear cooperation with the USA and other friendly countries. India's relations with Russia are time-tested and the visit of our Prime Minister to Moscow in November 2007 contributed to the further strengthening of India's strategic partnership with Russia. The India-Russia-China trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue continues to be productive. India's relations with member states of the European Union (EU) – collectively as well as individually – have been further enhanced with the Eighth India-EU Summit held in New Delhi and several Summit-level interactions with the individual States of EU including the UK, France, Germany and Italy during the last year.

At the United Nations, India has continued to press for UN reform, particularly to make the Security Council more democratic, representative, and responsive, and for a revitalization of the General Assembly. India also continued to play an active role in the international debate on various global issues, articulating the concerns of the developing world. On the subject of climate change whose impact falls disproportionately on developing countries, India has constructively engaged with the international

community, advocating that critical clean technologies be made available and affordable for developing countries, even as it assured the world that while pursuing economic growth, India's own per capita GHG emissions will not increase beyond those of developed countries.

India's economic diplomacy continued to take measures to attract foreign investments and to provide increased access to international markets so as to promote economic growth in the country. India's foreign policy is also directed towards bolstering energy security for the country, for instance, through supporting the efforts of our corporate entities in acquiring energy assets overseas. Convinced that regional cooperation is beneficial for the country's economic growth, India has also continued its engagement with economic groupings such as ASEAN, East Asia Summit, IBSA, G-15, G-8, etc. We continued to press for closer economic integration with ASEAN countries. Negotiations continued on the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the FTAs with Thailand and the BIMSTEC. The Joint Study on the feasibility of an FTA with Malaysia was completed.

Neighbours

Afghanistan: Afghanistan, under the leadership of President Karzai, has made progress towards internal stability in a democratic and pluralistic framework.

The deterioration in the internal security situation, increasing Taliban influence and attacks on our personnel, establishment and projects in Afghanistan remain a matter of concern. India highlighted, in different international and bilateral fora, the centrality of the security situation to the entire international effort in Afghanistan. India was also at the forefront of the effort to assist the Government and people of Afghanistan in building a stable, democratic, and pluralistic society. Close political consultations with the Government of Afghanistan and regular high level contact with the leadership of that country remained of importance. The momentum in the bilateral India-Afghanistan relationship created since 2001 was maintained. President Karzai led a high level delegation to 14th SAARC Summit from 3-4 April 2007 in New Delhi, where Afghanistan was admitted as full fledged member of the SAARC. The admission of Afghanistan in SAARC opened a new chapter both in the history of Afghanistan and in the South Asian regional

cooperation process. The Foreign Minister of Afghanistan attended the SAARC Council of Ministers meeting in New Delhi in December 2007. From India, Minister for Water Resources, Vice President of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and National Security Advisor visited Afghanistan in July, September and October 2007 respectively.

India's direct bilateral commitment to the rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan is US\$ 750 million. Several thousand Indians are engaged in development work in Afghanistan. Funds have been committed to projects spread over a whole range of sectors ranging from education, health, power, telecommunications & broadcasting, infrastructure to institutional capacity building, strengthening of governance and food assistance. Some important projects completed during this period, included supply of equipment and supervision of execution of power transmission project in Faryab province, digging of 26 tube wells in six provinces, five public toilet-cum-sanitation complexes in Kabul, and solar electrification of 100 villages. The implementation of the scheme of 500 ICCR Scholarships and 500 ITEC training programmes annually for Afghan nationals, announced by Prime Minister of India during his visit to Afghanistan in August 2005, is being implemented satisfactorily and along with other projects plays a significant role in demonstrating, at a popular level, the close and friendly relations between the two countries.

Bilateral Trade has shown robust growth. Total trade turnover in the first six months in 2007-08 (April-October) was Rs. 742.5 crores, compared to Rs. 550 crores during the same period in 2006-07. Total trade turnover in 2006-07 was Rs. 978.3 crores.

Bangladesh: India continued to engage with the caretaker government in Bangladesh, emphasizing the need for full restoration of democracy through peaceful, credible, free and fair elections. The Bangladesh Chief Adviser Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed attended the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi during 2-4th April 2007. The Minister of External Affairs visited Dhaka on 1st December, 2007 to express India's solidarity with the people of Bangladesh in the aftermath of the damage caused by cyclone 'Sidr' and announced adoption of villages for rehabilitation as well as waiver of 5,00,000 tonnes of rice for export. The Bangladesh Foreign Adviser, Dr. Iftekhhar Ahmed

Chowdhury visited New Delhi on 7-8 December 2007 to attend the SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting. Regular meetings at the official-level continued to be held. Issues of concern to India, including use of Bangladeshi territory by Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs), support for terrorist activities and involvement of Bangladeshi nationals in crimes in India, have been raised with the Bangladesh Government. Bilateral trade between both countries has been growing steadily and stood at Rs. 10,200 crores (2006-2007). India signed an MoU with Bangladesh on duty-free exports of eight million pieces of readymade garments from Bangladesh to India on 16th September 2007. Two trial-runs of a passenger train between Kolkata and Dhaka were held in July 2007 in preparation for regular train service between the two cities. As a mark of India's abiding commitment to seeing a stable, prosperous and democratic Bangladesh, India provided Bangladesh with immediate relief and with bilateral aid of around Rs. 100 crores including cash assistance as well as food aid to help it overcome the damage caused by various natural disasters during the year.

Bhutan: During this period, India and Bhutan continued to share uniquely warm and cordial relations. These relations were characterized by close consultations, maturity, complete trust and mutual understanding. In keeping with the tradition of regular visits and exchange of views at the highest levels between the two countries, the King of Bhutan visited India in February 2007. External Affairs Minister visited Bhutan in July 2007. These visits led to further consolidation of our economic and political relations.

India continued to be the largest trade and assistance partner of Bhutan. The implementation of the India assisted projects agreed under Bhutan's 9th Five Year Plan progressed satisfactorily. The 1020 MW Tala hydroelectric project in Bhutan, built with Government of India assistance, started full commercial operations. Taking forward the highly successful and mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of hydroelectric energy, the implementation Agreement for the 1095 MW Punatsangchhu hydroelectric project was signed by the External Affairs Minister and his Bhutanese counterpart.

India remains committed to providing assistance to Bhutan during its transition to a Democratic Constitutional Monarchy. Negotiations for finalizing

India's assistance package for Bhutan's 10th Five year plan are already underway.

China: India – China relations remain a high priority of India's foreign policy. China is India's largest neighbour with whom we have a long history of uninterrupted interactions. The year under review saw continuity in the momentum of development of bilateral relations. Prime Minister visited China in January 2008. Other bilateral visits from India included Minister for Commerce and Industries, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, and Minister for Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs & Sports and DONER leading a 100 member youth delegation. From China, Mme. Liu Yandong, Minister of the United Front Work Department and Hu Chunhua, President, All China Youth Federation leading a 100 member youth delegation visited India. Economic engagement continued to grow in prominence with bilateral trade reaching Rs. 80909.74 crores during April – October 2007. China has emerged as our second largest trade partner. For China, India became an important export market with China's exports to India registering the fastest growth. Both countries realized the importance of placing bilateral trade on a strong, diversified and mutually beneficial foundation. The activities associated with the India-China Friendship Through Tourism Year 2007, regular high-level interactions on the sidelines of regional and international gatherings and sustained exchanges in various fields along with the addition of newer dialogue mechanisms like the meeting of the expert-level mechanism on trans-border rivers, annual defence dialogue, and dialogue mechanism on disarmament and non-proliferation were the highlights of the year. The two countries have also been furthering cooperation in regional and multilateral forums on global issues such as climate change and energy security. India-China relations today are of regional and international significance, which found expression in the form of "A Shared Vision for the 21st Century" signed during Prime Minister's visit to China.

Iran: Regular contacts with the Government of Iran have been maintained through high-level exchanges and regular institutional mechanisms such as the Joint Commission and annual Foreign Office Consultations / Strategic Dialogue. The impetus provided by high-level discussions contributed to further bilateral cooperation in energy, trade and commerce, investment, culture and

transit as well as cooperation in regional and international issues of mutual interest. Bilateral trade increased by around 55% in 2006-07 as compared to the previous year. Mutual commitment to strengthening bonds of friendship for mutual prosperity, peace and stability in the region has been reiterated at the highest levels by both governments.

Maldives: Bilateral relations between India and Maldives continued to be close and friendly. The warmth of this relationship was maintained through high-level exchanges. President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom himself visited India on a State Visit from 6-12 February 2008. Earlier, President Gayoom had visited India in April 2007 to participate in the SAARC Summit in New Delhi in April 2007. The newly appointed Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid visited India in October 2007 and also for the SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting in December 2007. Foreign Secretary visited Maldives from 27-29 January 2008 for bilateral consultations. He called on President Gayoom of Maldives besides meeting the Foreign Minister and Defence Minister of Maldives. Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce, visited Maldives from 29-31 January 2008.

India extended cash assistance equivalent to Rs. 10 crores in the aftermath of damage caused to Maldives by tidal waves in May 2007 and also continued to provide training facilities to Maldivian nationals in various areas under its bilateral aid programme. The construction work on a project relating to the setting up of Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies, a hotel management training institute in Maldives with Indian assistance of over Rs. 50 crores commenced in September 2007 and is expected to be completed by end-2008/early 2009.

India's exports during the years 2005 and 2006 amounted to Rs. 368.72 crores and 384.10 crores respectively while the India's imports amounted to Rs. 4.48 crores and Rs. 5.53 crores respectively.

Myanmar: India-Myanmar relations strengthened during the year through a number of bilateral visits at various levels. The Minister of Culture and Tourism Ambika Soni visited Myanmar on 14 October 2007 to attend the state funeral of late Prime Minister General Soe Win. Earlier, in September 2007, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Murali Deora visited Nay Pyi Taw for the signing of

Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) between ONGC Videsh Limited with Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise for three deep-sea blocks. From Myanmar side there was visit of Lt. General Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Quarter Master General and Member SPDC visited India in April 2007 and Myanmar Foreign Minister U Nyan Win visited India in January 2008. Interaction at the level of Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister also continued on the sidelines of international meetings. Work on cross-border infrastructure projects, including the resurfacing of the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo road and negotiations on the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, which are aimed at both benefiting the North-east region of India as well as improving bilateral trade, continued. India is also considering the development of Rhi-Tidim, Rhi-Falam roads in Myanmar for the development of second border trade point between India and Myanmar at Zokhawthar (Mizoram)- Rhi (Myanmar). On the economic front Myanmar's exports to India during 2006-07 amounted to Rs. 2934 crores and India's exports to Myanmar amounted to Rs. 640 crores. India continued to extend support to the process of national reconciliation and political reform within Myanmar.

Nepal: India continued to support Nepal's transition to a democratic, stable, peaceful and prosperous State. India maintained close consultations with the Government of Nepal and the major political parties with a view to support the early introduction of the new constitutional order through Constituent Assembly elections scheduled on 10 April, 2008.

The bilateral relationship strengthened further and was characterized by extensive interaction and high-level visits. The highlights were the visit of Nepalese Prime Minister G.P. Koirala and Foreign Minister Mrs. Sahana Pradhan to India in April, 2007 to participate in the SAARC Summit. Foreign Minister Mrs. Pradhan also visited India in December, 2007 to participate in the SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting.

The Government contributed to the development efforts of Government of Nepal by undertaking development projects in the areas of infrastructure, education, health, rural and community development. Strengthening of border infrastructure including development of integrated check-posts and construction of cross-border road and

rail links along the India-Nepal border was high on Governments' priority.

Pakistan: The Composite Dialogue and the Joint Commission continued to strengthen and deepen bilateral engagement although the pace of progress in India-Pakistan relations slowed considerably due to the domestic political turbulence in Pakistan. The dialogue process which began in 2004, is premised on the commitment given by the Pakistan President on 6 January 2004 not to permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner. During the year, the dialogue process resulted in the signing of the Agreement on "Reducing the Risk from Accidents Relating to Nuclear Weapons", an agreement to allow either country's trucks to cross at Wagah/Attari Border up to designated points on the other side, and completion of joint survey of Sir Creek and exchange of maps showing respective positions of either country. Transport links established in the previous rounds of the dialogue continued to operate successfully, facilitating the movement of people and boosting bilateral trade. The robust growth in bilateral trade is illustrated by the fact that total trade turnover increased from Rs. 3846.45 crores in 2005-06 to Rs. 7563.49 crores in 2006-07. This high rate of growth is being maintained in 2007-08 also. In the period from April to October 2007 total trade was valued at Rs. 4598.46 crores.

High-level bilateral visits added momentum to the dialogue process. Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee visited Pakistan on 13-14 January 2007. The Prime Minister of Pakistan Shaukat Aziz visited New Delhi to attend the SAARC Summit on 04 April 2007. The former Foreign Minister of Pakistan Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri visited New Delhi on 20-21 February 2007 to co-chair India-Pakistan Joint Commission meeting and Foreign Minister Inamul Haque on 7-8 December 2007 to attend the SAARC Council of Ministers.

Humanitarian issues concerning prisoners and fishermen continued to need high priority and attention. The formation of a Judicial Committee on Prisoners and the visit of relatives of Missing Defence Personnel to Pakistan are the important steps in this regard.

India continues to have serious concerns on the infrastructure of terrorism in Pakistan and its cross-border

and other implications for us. The Joint Anti-Terrorism Mechanism, which was formed after the decision taken to that effect at Summit meeting in Havana in September 2006, held two meetings in 2007-08. This mechanism could be a useful instrument if implemented effectively.

Sri Lanka: India-Sri Lanka relations continued to be close in political, economic and cultural spheres. President Mahinda Rajapaksa visited New Delhi twice: in April 2007 for the SAARC Summit and in October 2007 for the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit. Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama visited India several times, lastly in December 2007 for the SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting in New Delhi. From India, Minister for Food and Agriculture Sharad Pawar visited Sri Lanka in May 2007 and Finance Minister P. Chidambaram in November 2007 to address the annual lecture at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies. In the interaction which took place during these visits, India expressed its conviction that there is no military solution to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka and the only way out is a negotiated, political settlement acceptable to all communities in Sri Lanka. Bilateral trade amounted to Rs. 6,400 crores for the period April-September 2007 as against Rs. 5,200 crores during the same period in 2006 and negotiations progressed on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). India was the 4th largest investor in Sri Lanka in the year 2007. India continued to provide assistance to Sri Lanka in the field of human resource development. Progress was made on setting up of 500 MW coal-based power plant by NTPC in Trincomalee, rehabilitation of Colombo-Matara railway by RITES and IRCON and construction of 150-bed hospital at Dickoya in upcountry Sri Lanka.

South-East Asia and the Pacific

India's relations with South East Asian countries including Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific countries continued to strengthen further in 2007-08. India's Look-East Policy, which seeks to establish convergence with South-east Asian countries, showed continued progress in its implementation. Significant events during 2007-08 included the State Visits of the President of the Philippines and the Prime Ministers of Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. These visits led to the signing of several agreements which strengthened the institutional framework for closer relations with countries of South-east Asia.

During this period we further strengthened our bilateral defence relations with Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam through exchange of visits, training exchanges, ship visits and cooperation between defence industries of India and countries of Southeast Asia. Cooperation in countering terrorism and organized crimes was strengthened through bilateral frameworks established with South-east Asian countries.

In accordance with our commitment to South-South Cooperation, India has also been offering soft credits and grants to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Lines of Credit of US\$ 45 million for Vietnam, US\$ 17 million for Laos and US\$ 35 million for Cambodia were approved during the year.

In the cultural sphere, we made efforts to strengthen the soft linkages between India and countries of South-east Asia. This aspect of our diplomacy was pursued through cultural exchanges, restoration of temples in Cambodia and Laos by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and through the proposal to establish an international university at Nalanda through an intergovernmental agreement. The proposed university will be a centre for classical and contemporary studies and will aspire to bring together scholars and students from the entire South-east Asian and East Asian region.

East Asia

India-Japan relations have undergone a significant and qualitative shift in recent years, propelled by successful regular summit-level exchanges. The Joint India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership established during our Prime Minister's visit to Japan in 2006 provides both the vision for chartering the future course of the relations and also a detailed action plan in that direction. The Strategic and Global Partnership is based on five pillars of cooperation viz., Political, Defence and Security Cooperation; Comprehensive Economic Partnership; Science and Technology Initiative; People to People exchanges and Cooperation in Regional/Multilateral fora. Japanese Prime Minister Abe's official visit to India in August 2007 helped chart out a road map for further strengthening this partnership with the signing of the Road Map for New Dimensions to the Strategic and Global Partnership. One important component of the Road Map is to broaden the strategic dialogue at all levels, to

qualitatively upgrade exchanges in the security and defence fields, and to upgrade economic engagement.

Relations between India and Republic of Korea have become more intense and diversified. At the political level, these relations are excellent and devoid of any irritants. The increase in the high-level visits, strengthening of commercial ties, and contacts in the field of art and culture have provided impetus to India-Korea bilateral ties. Economic engagement has acquired a prominent position in bilateral relations. ROK has emerged as an important country for investments into India. Growing defence and security ties and cooperation in regional and multilateral fora on common issues of interests are important aspects of dynamic bilateral relations.

India's traditionally friendly and cordial relations with Mongolia have steadily improved over the years. India continued to provide technical and economic cooperation to Mongolia in higher education, agriculture, information and Communication Technology and human resource development.

Eurasia

India maintained and further developed its strategic partnership with Russia during the year. The Prime Minister visited Moscow in November 2007 for the annual Summit meeting with the President of the Russian Federation. There was exchange of high-level visits to promote cooperation in respective spheres, including those of the Ministers of External Affairs, Defence, Commerce and Industry and Petroleum and Natural Gas from the Indian side and Head of Federal Space Agency and Acting Secretary of the Russian Security Council from the Russian side. Bilateral agreements were signed in diverse fields, particularly defence, economic cooperation and science and technology. Joint naval and airborne exercises were held in April and September 2007 respectively. The year marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Russian Federation. India participated in India-Russia-China trilateral Foreign Ministers dialogue process.

India engaged with Eurasian countries at various levels to widen and deepen its cooperation with them. In particular, the President of Belarus visited India, the Minister of State for Commerce visited Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan and the Minister of State for Agriculture

visited Armenia apart from several official level visits. Parliamentary visits, trade delegations, cultural festivals, seminars and development cooperation programmes and projects were undertaken to strengthen bilateral relations. The fifteenth anniversaries of the establishment of India's diplomatic relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan were marked through events with respective countries. India, as an Observer state, participated in the Heads of State and Heads of Government meetings of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in August and November 2007 respectively.

The Gulf, West Asia and North Africa

In order to further strengthen its close and friendly relations with the countries of the Gulf region, India maintained the pace of its interactions in all fields. The year was marked by the visits of the Crown Prince of Bahrain in March 2007, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai in March 2007 and of the Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers of the Sultanate of Oman in December 2007. Joint Commission/Committee Meetings were held with Bahrain, UAE and Yemen. India reiterated its desire to enhance cooperation with Iraq during the meeting of the bilateral Joint Commission held in May 2007 and hopes that peace and stability would soon return to it. An Indo-GCC Industrial Conference was held in May 2007 in Mumbai. A number of Agreements and MoUs were signed to strengthen the institutional framework for bilateral cooperation with the countries of the region, who are important economic partners, a major source for oil and gas imports and have a common interest in promoting peace and stability in the region. The region is home to over 4 million Indian expatriates, and several measures were initiated to promote their welfare.

India continued to consolidate its traditionally close and multifaceted relationship with countries of West Asia and North Africa. The momentum generated by the visit of the King and Queen of Jordan to India in 2006 was capitalized upon to give further substance to bilateral relations. Our close ties with Egypt continued to be nurtured with bilateral visits from both sides. India emerged as the third largest trading partner of Egypt in 2007. In Algeria a Parliamentary Friendship Group with

India was formed and a Parliamentary delegation from Algeria visited India in December 2007. On the economic front Indian companies continued to successfully expand their activities in the region, particularly in Algeria, Jordan, Sudan and Libya. Together, Indian companies secured contracts worth over US\$ 1 billion in the region in 2007. Trade with the region also continued to grow at a healthy rate.

India reiterated its support for a negotiated solution to the Palestinian issue resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine within secure and recognised borders living side by side at peace with Israel as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap and UNSC Resolution 1397 and 1515. India joined the efforts of the international community to seek a just solution to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people for a homeland of their own. India reiterated its commitment to the Palestinian cause at the Annapolis peace conference in November 2007 and pledged US\$ 5 million more for Palestine for development projects as well as training of 400 Palestinian officials under the ITEC programme at the subsequent donor's conference in Paris in December 2007.

Africa

India further intensified its traditionally warm and cordial links with the countries of Africa. During the visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Nigeria in October 2007, it was agreed to establish a Strategic Partnership between India and Nigeria that would cover bilateral political, economic, trade, security, cultural, education, science and technology and international dimensions. India also received several high-level visitors from the countries of the region including the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi and the President of the Union of Comoros, Mohamad Sambu. Regular exchange of Ministerial level visits resulted in new agreements in agreed areas of cooperation. Parliamentary exchanges took place particularly in the context of training courses offered by the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training. Relief assistance and capacity building including through small development projects was provided under the assistance programme of the Ministry.

India deepened its ties with the region at not only the bilateral level but also at a regional and institutional level.

A major step forward was the decision to hold the India-Africa Summit/Forum on 8 April 2008. India's engagement with African Union (AU) continued to intensify with the Minister for External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, meeting with AU Chairperson Alpha Oumar Konare during his visit to Ethiopia in July 2007. The India-AU Joint Working Group met for two rounds of discussions including with African Permanent Representatives during the second round. The President of ECOWAS Commission called on Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during his visit to Nigeria in October 2007 and expressed his desire for further intensifying cooperation between India and ECOWAS. India also continued to engage in dialogues with other sub-regional groupings such as COMESA, SADC, EAC, and SACU.

The period saw increased Indian public and private sector investment in the continent and enhanced participation by Indian companies in multilaterally funded infrastructure projects in Africa. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs led the Indian delegation for the regional project partnership conclaves which were held in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Kampala and Maputo. The regional conclave for West Africa was held by CII in Abidjan. The conclaves were successful with businesses from both regions striking significant partnerships and also gave spur to Indian companies seeking to build their brands in Africa. The Ministry is supporting the next Pan-African Conclave scheduled to be held in New Delhi from 19-21 March 2008. Lines of Credit were extended for specific infrastructure development projects.

The TEAM-9 Initiative, a techno-economic cooperation venture between India and 9 countries of West Africa, continues to provide an effective impetus to deepen India's relations with several important countries of West Africa. ECOWAS countries began to avail of a US\$ 250 million line of credit extended by India to the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development and projects worth US\$ 113.5 million, ranging from health and agriculture sectors to rural electrification, were approved. The impact of these initiatives on our relationship with countries of West Africa region was evident in the several Ministerial level visits that India received.

The work for implementation of the Pan-African e-network project continued. The pilot project for tele-education and tele-medicine was inaugurated by External

Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 4 July 2007. The construction of the hub in Dakar (Senegal), which was chosen as the site for establishment, was completed. TCIL has already signed MoUs for participation in the project with 28 countries in Africa. Survey work through TCIL teams in various regions is underway.

Europe

The member States of the EU are important to India individually as well as collectively. The European Union, which has always been an economic powerhouse, has evolved as a political entity growing eastwards and encompassing 27 countries. The EU Reform Treaty was signed by the Heads of State or Government of the 27 Member States in Lisbon on 13 December 2007. Called the Treaty of Lisbon, it aims to provide the EU with modern institutions and optimised working methods. The Schengen area too grew in December 2007 by including 9 of the 12 New Member countries; the rest three of the New Member countries, viz., Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania are likely to join later.

India's relations with Europe have grown exponentially covering all areas of interaction. The EU is India's largest trading partner and bilateral trade crossed Rs. 270,000 crores in 2006. India and EU are also important investment partners with significant two-way flows. Total FDI inflow from the EU to India is US\$ 10.86 billion (24% of the total FDI inflows from August 1991 to February 2007). Indian investment has also been growing steadily in UK, Germany and Italy.

India and Europe have worked for development of common approaches to addressing new and emerging global challenges. The President of India visited Strasbourg, France in April 2007 and addressed the European Parliament. This was the first ever visit and address by an Indian President to the European Parliament. The EU was associated with SAARC as an Observer and attended the 14th SAARC Summit held in New Delhi from 1-4 April 2007. India's External Affairs Minister participated for the first time in the ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting in Germany in May 2007. The 8th India-EU Annual Summit took place in New Delhi on 30 November 2007.

India's engagement with individual countries in Europe

intensified and diversified in fields such as energy, science and technology and culture. Summit-level interactions have taken place with UK, France, Italy, Netherlands, Germany and Portugal. There has been extensive interaction with EU member states at Ministerial and official levels besides growing exchanges of Parliamentarians and civil society dialogues. Efforts have also been made to diversify and deepen our traditionally warm, friendly and close relations with the countries of the Nordic as well as Central and Eastern Europe. Trade with most of these countries is increasing at a fast pace, moving away from traditional commodities to engineering goods and value-added items. Investments from India are also increasing. Nordic countries are also beginning to view the Indian stock market and financial instruments as safe and remunerative investments for their large investible funds, and have commenced investing in India. The relatively high growth rates in the former East Europe, coupled with the new possibilities arising from a dynamic and economically vibrant India is further boosting economic activity between India and these parts of Europe to mutual benefit.

The Americas

The India-US agenda over the last twelve months reflects the transformed nature of the bilateral engagement – with several bilateral dialogues based on government and private sector initiatives reflecting the understandings of July 2005 and March 2006. The wide range of issues under discussion include health, education, agriculture, defence, energy and science and technology and global issues of common concern such as combating terrorism, WMD proliferation, disaster relief and pandemics.

The finalisation of the text of an India-US bilateral cooperation agreement on civil nuclear cooperation to implement the understandings of July 2005 and March 2006 was a significant landmark in India-US cooperation – paving the way for civil nuclear cooperation and trade between India and the West and other members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Government initiated talks in December 2007 with the International Atomic Energy Agency for the conclusion of an India-specific safeguards agreement. These steps, along with an unconditional exemption from the Nuclear Suppliers Group, once completed, would enable the US Government to seek

approval of the US Congress before signature, entry into force and implementation of the bilateral agreement on civil nuclear cooperation by both sides.

The bilateral agenda in 2007 diversified and scaled up India-US cooperation prioritizing high technology commerce, defence, science and technology, space, clean and efficient energy, education – always building on the broad base of bilateral trade and economic linkages that support India's domestic initiatives and perspective plans in several critical sectors.

With Canada, the agenda with the new Conservative Government prioritized the common objectives of increasing bilateral trade and investment, co-operation in science and technology including bio-technology, education, agriculture, counter-terrorism, civil nuclear safety, energy efficiency and environment. Political, official and business-level visits and contacts were frequent as both sides identified and pursued potential areas of enhanced cooperation on the bilateral as well as multilateral plane.

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Relations between India and the countries of Latin America continued to progress. Several high-level incoming and outgoing visits gave impetus to ongoing interaction with these countries. These included the visits of President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil in June 2007 and of President Felipe Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico in September 2007. Foreign Ministers of Cuba, Guatemala, El Salvador and Brazil also visited India. Visits from India to this region included those to Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Colombia and Ecuador. In keeping with our initiatives to reach out to new markets, Indian trade missions and commercial delegations to LAC region were facilitated. Indian business majors established operations in the oil and gas sector in Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and Cuba, and iron ore sector in Bolivia. Similarly companies in the IT and pharmaceutical sectors became active in several Latin American Countries. LAC countries are responding to these developments and new resident missions are being opened in Delhi by Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and El Salvador. India has announced its intention to open a new mission in Guatemala.

United Nations and International Organisations

India has always attached considerable significance to multilateral diplomacy, and plays an important part in international organisations. India has traditionally been an active and constructive participant in the activities of the United Nations and its affiliated international organisations. India's interests and the areas of her focus cover a wide spectrum which includes reform of the UN system, tackling international terrorism, peacekeeping operations, international human rights issues, environmental conservation and a fair and just international economic order. India strives to a principled approach to these global issues firmly based on its vision of a more equitable and peaceful international order that gives due emphasis to the legitimate interests of the developing world.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Kampala (Uganda) from 23-25 November 2007. External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee attended the pre-CHOGM Commonwealth Foreign Ministers meeting on 21-22 November 2007. Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma represented India at a 'Youth Dialogue' and a 'Sports Breakfast' which were chaired by the President of Uganda. India's candidate Kamalesh Sharma was selected as the next Secretary General of the Commonwealth during the Kampala CHOGM.

The External Affairs Minister led the Indian delegation to the General Debate of the 62nd UNGA Session from 23 September to 2 October 2007. His statement at the General Debate covered a number of major issues including India's position on the issue of climate change, need for a comprehensive reform of the international financial architecture to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Doha round of trade negotiations and comprehensive reform of the UN. He also announced a further pledge of US\$10 million as Government of India's further contribution to the UN Democracy Fund. Further, the External Affairs Minister hosted the Ministerial meeting of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and participated in the Ministerial meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Asia Cooperation Dialogue, India-Brazil-South

Africa initiative and Brazil-Russia-India-China (BRIC), besides having a number of other meetings.

On 15 June 2007, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution, introduced by Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, on 'International Day of Non-Violence' with the co-sponsorship of 142 countries to annually observe and celebrate Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, October 2, as the International Day of Non-Violence. The first International Day of Non-Violence was observed at the UN on 2 October 2007 when Sonia Gandhi, Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) addressed an informal plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly, which was attended by a large number of dignitaries from across the world. Other activities organized to mark the occasion included a Round Table at which eminent personalities exchanged views on Mahatma Gandhi's ideals and philosophy, a photographic exhibition, screening of a film on Mahatma Gandhi and a special cancellation issued by the UN Postal Administration (UNPA) for use by the UNPA during October 2007.

India continued its active and constructive engagement in the reform process at the UN. Despite substantive implementation of the UN reform agenda that emerged from the Outcome Document of the World Summit in 2005, such reform will inevitably remain incomplete without comprehensive reform and expansion of the Security Council, and revitalization of the General Assembly. Elements and ideas on the reform of the Security Council have been discussed for well over a decade, through numerous reports and interminable consultations. It is now time for inter-governmental negotiations to commence in order to make the Security Council more democratic, representative and responsive. India, with partners from Africa, Latin America and Asia, tabled a resolution on 11 September 2007, spelling out the principles on which reform ought to be based if it has to be meaningful.

The Minister of State for Industry, Dr. Ashwini Kumar, led the Indian delegation to the 63rd session marking the 60th anniversary of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 17-23 May 2007. The Minister of Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs and Sports and

Development of North Eastern Region, Mani Shankar Aiyar, unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi at the UNESCAP premises in Bangkok at a special ceremony to mark the first International Day of Non-Violence on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2 October 2007.

India signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 1 October 2007.

Climate change issues have come to occupy center stage on the international agenda. India has been interacting closely with key countries around the world and participating in meetings and conferences on climate change for practical, pragmatic solutions for the benefit of the entire humankind. The Ministry has been proactively involved in the international negotiations and discussions on climate change. This has included the UNFCCC, negotiations including the annual conference held in Bali in December 2007, the Major Economies Meeting process, the UN High Level Event in September 2007 and other meetings/debates at the UN and G8-O5 driven processes. India has also hosted the 2nd Ministerial Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Partnership for Clean Development and Climate in October 2007.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh participated in the G8-O5 Meeting in Heiligendamm, Germany in June 2007 where his intervention on climate change was widely acclaimed. He clearly outlined India's position on climate change noting that strategies should include mitigation and adaptation with fair burden sharing and measures to realise sustainable patterns of consumption and production. He emphasised the importance of taking into account where the primary responsibility for the present levels of GHG concentration rests and not perpetuation of poverty among the developing countries. No strategy should foreclose for developing countries the possibilities of accelerated social and economic development. The principle of common and differentiated responsibility and respective capability is very important. The time is not ripe for developing countries to take quantitative targets, as these would be counter-productive on their development processes. He also said that India was determined that its per capita GHG emissions are not going to exceed those of developed countries even while pursuing policies of development and economic growth.

In order to evolve measures to mitigate the risk posed by

disasters, the Delhi Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia 2007 was adopted at the Second Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in New Delhi in November 2007. An Indian delegation also participated in the first meeting of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva in June 2007.

In the UNGA discussions on the coordination of humanitarian assistance, India piloted, on behalf of the Group of 77, a resolution tabled annually on 'International Cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance for Natural Disasters, from Relief to Development'.

With a large diaspora spread all over the world, issues relating to migration were actively pursued by India in international fora. India participated in the First Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) held in Brussels in July 2007.

Multilateral Economic Relations

India hosted the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007 assuming the Chairmanship of SAARC. It was the smoothest, least contentious Summit. For the first time, SAARC expanded its membership to include Afghanistan as the eighth member and China, Japan, Republic of Korea, the United States of America and the European Union as five Observers. Since then Iran has also been welcomed as the Sixth Observer of SAARC. Member states urged SAARC to move from a declaratory to an implementation phase. Two important Agreements on the establishment of the South Asian University and the SAARC Food Bank were signed. The SAARC countries agreed to work together on a roadmap, inter alia, for poverty alleviation, food security, trade and transport, education, culture and counter-terrorism. The SAARC Leaders also agreed to make tangible progress on the four issues of Water (including flood control); Energy; Food and Environment.

Dynamism has set in the various SAARC processes after India assumed the Chairmanship of SAARC, principally due to our conscious effort to discharge our role in a non-reciprocal manner. India hosted Ministerial Meetings in the crucial areas of transport (30-31 August 2007), finance (14-15 September 2007), and security (25-26 October 2007). On social issues, and to implement the Social Charter, India hosted the National Coordination Committee Meeting (6-7 September 2007), first Meeting

of the Regional Task Force to implement the SAARC Convention on Trafficking in Women and Children and a Conference on Micro Financing and Women Economic Empowerment in SAARC (26-27 July 2007). In all the meetings, concrete projects were identified. The draft Agreement on the SAARC Development Fund (SDF) was finalized on 29 November 2007. There has been significant progress in negotiations on the text of the Agreement on Protection and Promotion of Investments that is now ready to be finalized. The two Agreements are likely to be signed during the next Summit to be held in Sri Lanka in 2008.

Work has started on the establishment of the South Asian University as well as on a pilot project connecting one/two hospitals in each of the SAARC countries with 3-4 Super Specialty hospitals in India. With regard to the issues identified during the Retreat (Water; Energy; Food and Environment), India is proposing a project on solar rural electrification for 300 houses in a country; capacity building in rainwater harvesting, preservation of forests and agri-business; and sharing of Indian protocol of optimally utilizing rhizobium bacteria for increased nitrogen fixation for high yielding pulses. People-to-people linkages with other SAARC member states have been strengthened through culture, trade and tourism to ensure that the developmental benefits are enjoyed by all of SAARC's population.

India also continued its active engagement with several other groupings such as ASEAN, EAS, MGC, BIMSTEC, IOR-ARC, IBSA, G-15, G-8, OECD/APEC, WIPO, ACD, ARF, ASEM, BRIC, in order to increase its integration with the global economy and the evolving global political and security architecture. Prime Minister led the Indian delegation to the 6th India-ASEAN Summit, the East Asia Summit and also the second IBSA Summit held in Pretoria in October 2007. Prime Minister participated in a meeting of the outreach countries of the G-8 Summit held in Germany on 8 June 2007.

Making tangible progress on various commitments made by the Prime Minister during the ASEAN Summit, India hosted 125 Buddhist pilgrims including journalists to visit India on Buddhist circuit from CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam) countries. Further, 100 students from 10 ASEAN member countries visited on a week long educational trip in December 2007. The annual special

training course for ASEAN diplomats has been conducted in August 2007.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and Development Partnership (DP)

The Technical Cooperation programme with its emphasis on capacity building, transfer of technology and sharing of the Indian developmental experience formed an important element of India's interaction with countries in the developing world. Over 4,700 participants from 156 ITEC-partner countries took part in the training programmes in the civilian and defence field conducted under ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Programme) and SCAAP (Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme) on a bilateral basis. Multilateral and regional dimensions were reflected in special programmes conducted in cooperation with organisations such as the WTO and the Commonwealth. Indian experts were deputed to advise and assist in diverse areas such as Information Technology, Auditing, Agriculture and Defence. Many projects were undertaken during the year in the fields of Archaeological Conservation, Tourism and Hospitality, Information Technology and Small and Medium Enterprises in different parts of the developing world. The humanitarian programme of offering relief and solidarity to disaster hit areas continued with the delivery of supplies and medicines.

Investment and Technology Promotion (ITP)

Economic diplomacy continued to be a serious area of focus in recognition of its importance as a means of achieving broader foreign policy objectives. The Ministry, through the ITP Division, participated in various policy meetings of Foreign Investment Promotion Board, Reserve Bank of India, Board of Trade as well as other policy meetings concerning reforms and liberalisation of the economy and simplifying of investment procedures. At the same time, the capacity to provide support and advice to Indian Government and private entities seeking to establish business and investment enterprises abroad was enhanced through various means, including promotional activities and concessional Lines of Credit.

A new Energy Security Unit was established in the Ministry in September 2007 and appended to the ITP

Division to support India's international engagement through appropriate and sustained diplomatic interventions. The Unit will also support the efforts of our corporate entities, both in public and private sectors, in acquiring energy assets overseas, in transfer of new and emerging technologies to India and in building strategic partnerships with foreign companies.

Policy Planning and Research

The PPR Division maintained close interaction with institutions and individuals specializing in policy research and analyses on themes having a bearing on India's foreign policy and international relations and provided financial assistance for holding a number of seminars, conferences and research studies with a view to deriving invaluable inputs for the Ministry's foreign policy planning, formulation and implementation. A database of experts and institutions specializing in policy research and analysis has also been developed by the PPR Division and is updated on regular basis. The notable studies financed by the Ministry included a study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation done by a Task Force set up by the Ministry; a two-year study by ICRIER on "The National Interest Project", which includes foreign policy measures required to achieve 8-10% economic growth, and a study on Nepal by Centre for Public Affairs.

The Division continued to issue the Monthly Summary for the Cabinet and publish the Annual Report of the Ministry. It also reviewed the functioning of Business Centres set up in some of the Indian Missions and Posts abroad as also content, scope and frequency of reporting by the Missions. Further, the Division also handled work related to examination of maps depicting India's external boundaries in coordination with the Survey of India. A Boundary Cell has been established to provide technical support to Territorial Divisions in the Ministry on international boundary related matters. It has started building data base for boundary strip maps covering the external boundary of India.

Protocol

India's increasing engagement with the international community has resulted in a large number of visits to India by foreign dignitaries. There were 78 visits at the level of Head of State/Vice President/Head of Government/Foreign Minister during the period April-December 2007.

Foreign Resident Diplomatic Missions in Delhi have increased from 116 in 2003 to 132 in 2007. Foreign Representatives in diplomatic Missions in Delhi are also growing in size with 80 posts added in 2007. During the year 2007, Germany opened a Consulate in Bangalore and China in Kolkata; permission was given to Turkey to open a Consulate in Mumbai, to Lithuania to open one in New Delhi, and to Japan to open one in Bangalore. Besides, 18 countries were granted permission to appoint Honorary Consul Generals in New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai. The Protocol Division handled 28 credentials ceremonies, official entertainment, and numerous other functions during 2007. Streamlining of protocol norms and standards continued to be a focus of attention. The service tax exemption framework was implemented on the basis of reciprocity for entitled foreign missions, diplomats, and consulate officials.

Consular, Passport and Visa Services

The Ministry took a number of measures like decentralization and online applications to make the passport issuance system simpler and speedier for the convenience of the public. Computerization of Passport and Visa issuance system was completed in Missions/Posts at Bahrain, Toronto, Kuala Lumpur, Birmingham, Jeddah, Colombo, Kandy and Vancouver and work is underway in Houston, Chicago, San Francisco, Washington, Moscow and Doha. Thirteen Missions/Posts abroad have already outsourced visa application collection work. The Ministry has also successfully implemented the project for centralized printing of Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) in respect of 111 Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

A pilot project for issue of e-passports in the diplomatic and official category of passports has been initiated and is expected to be completed by the middle of 2008. Based on the experience gained from this pilot project, it is proposed to start issuance of e-passports in the ordinary category.

Visa-waiver Agreements for the holders of Diplomatic and Official passports were signed with Croatia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Japan, Philippines and Serbia. These Agreements will enter into force shortly.

Extradition Treaties were signed with Portugal, Belarus and Mexico in 2007. The Ministry started implementation of Apostille Convention in August 2007 for attestation

of documents. Under the Hague Convention of October 1961, public documents apostilled by the Ministry are acceptable in 92 Member Countries.

Administration

To enhance Indian diplomatic presence abroad, two Posts, namely, Consulate General of India, Juba, Sudan and Consulate General of India, Guangzhou, China were opened in October 2007. At Headquarters, steps were taken to achieve greater decentralization of decision making and streamlining of rules. Despite a severe shortage in human resources on account of reduction of posts, Ministry fully implemented the austerity measures of the Government with regard to abolition of posts.

Gender equality has been a key element of the Ministry's overall policy and equal opportunities are provided to women officers in the Ministry. Ministry has also identified posts suitable for appointment of persons with disability, including in the Indian Foreign Service. In all, the Ministry has 37 persons with disability in various grades and cadres.

Two Branch Secretariats, one each at Hyderabad and Chennai, were set up mainly to liaise with the State Governments, Consulates, Passport Offices etc. located in these cities. The Development Partnership Division of the Ministry was merged with the Technical Cooperation Division.

Among projects in India, construction work for Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan, the future Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs, Chanakyapuri Residential Complex for officers of the Ministry of External Affairs, and a Transit Accommodation project are in progress.

Implementation of Official Language Policy of the Government of India has always been accorded high priority by the Ministry of External Affairs. All important documents meant to be placed before the Parliament are prepared bilingually. Training in Hindi forms an integral part of the training programmes of Foreign Service Institute in the Ministry. Our Missions implement a well-formulated scheme for propagation of Hindi abroad by providing teaching materials, financial assistance and scholarships for foreign students to study Hindi. Regional Hindi Conferences were organized in Budapest from 24-26 October 2007 and Seoul from 9-11 November 2007

The Eighth World Hindi Conference was organized by

the Ministry from 13-15 July 2007 in New York in association with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, New York. Over 850 delegates from different countries attended the Conference.

In recognition of the importance of the Right to Information Act 2005, a separate Right to Information (RTI) Division functions in the Ministry. A Joint Secretary level officer has been designated as the Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) and an Additional Secretary has been designated as the Appellate Authority. In addition, separate Appellate Authorities and CPIOs have been designated in the CPV Division, ICCR and ICWA. It has been the Ministry's endeavour to expeditiously provide information to Indian citizens in accordance with the provisions of the Right to Information Act 2005.

Coordination

The Coordination Division assisted the Inter-State Council Secretariat to organize the 4th International Conference on Federalism at New Delhi from 5-7 November 2007. The conference was attended by a large number of foreign and Indian dignitaries. The Division also assisted the Lok Sabha Secretariat in the organising the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held at New Delhi from 21-30 September 2007, and the Ministry of Home Affairs in organizing the second Asian Ministerial Level Disaster Reduction Conference at New Delhi on 7-8 November 2007.

The Division issued new guidelines on expeditious processing of political clearances for various visits, and expeditious grant of visas for foreign research scholars, and foreign participants of international conferences, seminars and workshops held in India.

External Publicity

The External Publicity Division continued to articulate the position of the Government of India on various foreign policy issues in international and domestic media. This was done through press conferences, regular press briefings and dissemination of statements through effective use of the MEA website and improved electronic communications.

External Publicity Division also continued to run a wide-ranging familiarization programme for international journalists. It continued to facilitate the work of the ever

increasing foreign press corps based in India and made all the media related arrangements for incoming and outgoing visits at the level of Heads of States, Heads of Governments and Foreign Ministers.

Public Diplomacy

The mandate of the Public Diplomacy Division, created in May 2006, includes inter-alia, outreach activities inside and outside India, as also audio visual and print publicity. The Division organised various activities to fulfil these objectives.

The External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee participated in an interactive session on India's Look East Policy in Shillong on 16 June 2007 and followed it with his participation in a national conference in Guwahati from 7-9 October 2007 on challenges of sub-regional cooperation in the context of the Look East Policy. A briefing programme for Indian origin Parliamentarians from Europe, the UK and the US was organized from 24-29 October 2007. The Division commissioned 17 documentary films on India to promote and project India's image abroad. Additionally films were specially commissioned to mark the first International Non-violence Day and the 8th World Hindi Conference and were exhibited internationally. The Division also organized an outreach seminar on Indian Foreign Policy in association with Utkal University, Bhubaneswar in January 2008.

Foreign Service Institute (FSI)

The new building of the Foreign Service Institute was formally inaugurated on 14 November 2007 by the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee who also unveiled a bust of Jawaharlal Nehru at the Foreign Service Institute. The Foreign Service Institute conducted training programmes for IFS Probationers, Diplomatic Correspondents, Cabinet Secretariat Officers and other officers of the Ministry of External Affairs. Two Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats and a Special Course for ASEAN Diplomats were conducted by the Institute during the year. The Institute continued to maintain institutional linkages with its counterparts in other countries.

Cultural Relations

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was formally set up in 1950, with the primary objective of

establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries.

ICCR's objectives have continued to witness significant expansion, both qualitatively and quantitatively, in line with the momentum and dynamism acquired in recent years. The Council set up two new Centres abroad at Kabul and Kathmandu as well as two new offices at Pune and Varanasi to meet the increasing demands on its mandate.

The year long Festival of India in Japan was a major success. It concluded on 10 December 2007. The footprint of this Festival was all of South East Asia and multiple cultural troupes visited almost all the countries in the region. Preparations are underway to hold the year of Russia in India in 2008 and Year of India in Russia in 2009.

The Council organised the first SAARC Cultural Festival in December 2007. This was the first event of its kind and consisted of several components such as fusion music, food, fashion, textile and handicrafts, folklore, exchange of students, etc.

The Council organised cultural events and brought out special publication on the occasion of 8th World Hindi Conference at New York. An Exhibition at the UN Headquarters at New York, on the occasion of the observance of the first International Day of Non-violence on October 2, was also organised by ICCR.

The Council offered over 1800 scholarship slots to students from 90 countries including 500 slots to Afghan students. It sponsored over 60 cultural delegations to

several countries covering all the continents of the world and hosted over twenty-five foreign cultural groups from different countries.

Indian Council of World Affairs

The Indian Council of World Affairs was set up in 1943 and taken over by the Central Government in September 2000. During the period April-November 2007, the Indian Council of World Affairs organized a number of events such as lectures, seminars, bilateral strategic dialogues and background briefings. ICWA also completed two research projects and brought out three issues of ICWA's magazine 'India Quarterly'. During this period, the ICWA signed Memoranda of Understanding with counterpart organizations in China and Nigeria.

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

RIS, as an autonomous policy think-tank, conducted policy research on international economic issues and provided analytical support in preparations for major Summit meetings and other important negotiations, such as negotiations on comprehensive economic partnership between India and Korea and Track-II Study Group of Comprehensive Economic Partnership East Asia (CEPEA). It continued to hold policy dialogue on the relevance and the way forward for an Asian Economic Community in collaboration with leading policy think-tanks in Asia, and has networked with policy think-tanks in other countries to bring policy coherence and capacity building on international economic issues and development cooperation.



Afghanistan

The deterioration in the internal security situation in Afghanistan on account of continuing attacks by the Taliban has been a matter of principal concern for all of Afghanistan's friends and allies. There was a significant increase in suicide and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks, very adversely affecting normal life in many parts of the country. A UN study in September 2007 has documented that there has been a seven fold increase in the number of suicide attacks since 2001. The Taliban's continued attacks, on both military and civilian targets, posed a grave threat to developmental activities and the overall governance process. The rising levels of opium cultivation was another source of concern, particularly given the linkages between illicit narcotics trade and international and cross-border terrorism.

Bilateral Relations

Close consultations between India and Afghanistan on bilateral, regional as also the developmental assistance programme in Afghanistan continued. President Hamid Karzai led a high powered delegation to attend the 14th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit in New Delhi in April 2007. At the 14th SAARC Summit, Afghanistan was formally admitted as the eighth member of SAARC. During his visit, President Karzai also met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to discuss bilateral relations and Afghanistan's role in strengthening the regional cooperation process. On 3 April 2007, a MoU was signed for establishment of the India-Afghanistan Foundation in New Delhi.

Minister for Water Resources, Saifudin Soz and Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha K. Rahman Khan, attended the funeral of His Majesty late King Zahir Shah on 24 July 2007. As a special mark of respect the national flag was half masted at Government buildings in the Capital and in Missions and Posts abroad.

The Vice President of Indian Council for Cultural

Relations (ICCR), Dr Sayed Mahdi, accompanied by Director General of ICCR, visited Afghanistan in September 2007. During this visit, Afghanistan's Minister of Information and Culture and Vice President of ICCR jointly inaugurated the India Cultural Center (ICC). At the invitation of Afghanistan's National Security Advisor, India's National Security Advisor M.K Narayanan visited Kabul from 30 September-1 October 2007.

The Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, attended the SAARC Council of Ministers meeting in New Delhi in December 2007. At the sidelines of the SAARC meeting, he held a bilateral meeting with Minister of External Affairs in which issues on the bilateral agenda were reviewed.

India's Assistance to Afghanistan

India remained at the forefront of the international effort in Afghanistan to aid and assist its government and people in the process of national reconstruction, and establishing a stable, democratic, and pluralistic polity. The External Affairs Minister participated in a high level meeting on Afghanistan in September 2007 in New York convened by the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) and jointly co-chaired by the UNSG and the President of Afghanistan. Shriprakash Jaiswal, Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs led the Indian delegation for participating in a Rule of Law Conference on Afghanistan in Rome in July 2007.

Despite security threats and attacks including IED blasts and grenade attacks on its Consulates in Herat and Jalalabad, attacks on Indian companies and on its personnel in different projects, India maintained its commitment to the reconstruction and rebuilding of Afghanistan. The attacks on our establishments, personnel and projects remained a matter of great concern. In a terrorist attack on Zaranj-Delaram Road Project personnel on 3 January 2008, 2 Indian and 11 Afghan security personnel were killed and several others injured.

Several projects were completed and handed over to the Afghan government including 5 toilet-cum-sanitation complexes in Kabul, the rehabilitated Amir Ghazi and Quargah Reservoir dams, supply of equipment and supervision of execution of power transmission project in Faryab province, solar electrification of 100 villages, expansion of TV coverage in 22 provinces of Afghanistan, digging of 26 tube wells in six provinces (9 in Herat, 1 in Jawzjan, 2 in Badgis, 3 in Faryab, 6 in Balkh and 5 in Baghlan) etc.

The school feeding programme by distribution of protein fortified biscuits to 1.2 million school children daily in 31 provinces in Afghanistan, implemented through the World Food Programme progressed satisfactorily. Designs and plans were finalized for the new Parliament building in Kabul. The project will commence by mid 2008. Tenders have been floated for its construction. Notwithstanding logistical difficulties and numerous terrorist attacks, work on all major infrastructural projects including the 218 Km road from Zaranj to Delaram, the Salma dam in Herat province as well as the 220 KV Transmission Line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul with sub-station in Chimtala continued satisfactorily.

During 2007, India commenced implementation of the Small Development Projects Scheme in vulnerable provinces in South and South East Afghanistan in health, education, agriculture, rural development and vocational training sectors. Under the Small Development Projects (SDP) scheme, the first batch of 16 MoUs were signed on 2 April 2007 for various projects costing US\$ 1.69 million. The identified projects cover, *inter alia*, fields of agriculture (setting up of demonstrative nurseries), public health (setting up of basic health clinics) and rural rehabilitation and development (setting up of water points/bore wells) covering the provinces of Nangarhar, Khost, Nooristan, Kunar, Paktia, Badakhshan, Nimroz, Paktika and Zabul. A Second batch of 11 MoUs was signed on 1 July 2007 for construction of 38 schools in different provinces in Afghanistan for a total expenditure of US\$ 5 million.

In view of the continued demand for their services, the tenures of Indian Medical Missions (IMMs) in Kabul, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Mazar-e-Sharif and Herat were extended. Our assistance to the Indira Gandhi Institute for Child Health continued.

Important capacity development projects with the

involvement of premier Indian institutes from the non-governmental and corporate sector such as setting up of a Women's Vocational Training Centre at Bagh-e-Zanana in Kabul by Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and the Skills Development Project of Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) were finalized.

As part of India's assistance programme, several teams from India visited Afghanistan during the year, including those from Ministry of Human Resource Development and Ministry of Rural Development for operationalisation of the MoUs on Education and Rural Development; from National Council for Educational Research & Training for providing technical support for curriculum development; and from National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, New Delhi for assistance in setting up of a Afghanistan National Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

A Hindi language professor was deputed at the Nangarhar University for setting up of a Hindi department and a Sanskrit scholar was deputed to the Kabul University for establishing a Sanskrit faculty.

As part of the initiative for strengthening cultural ties with Afghanistan, the India Culture Centre (ICC) was opened at the Indian Embassy in September 2007. Several activities including teaching of classical music and yoga by Indian teachers are being undertaken by the Centre and it is already attracting several enthusiastic Afghan students. The implementation of the 500 ICCR scholarships scheme and 500-slot ITEC training programme for Afghan students and public officials proceeded satisfactorily. For the period 2007-08, 453 Afghan students have been sent to study in various Universities throughout India under the ICCR scheme.

Bangladesh

India continued to engage with the Caretaker Government in Bangladesh during the year, while emphasizing the need for full restoration of democracy through peaceful, credible, free and fair elections as per the election roadmap announced by the Caretaker Government, in which the people of Bangladesh and their political representatives and leaders are afforded every lawful opportunity to participate. India also reiterated the need to protect basic individual rights and due process of law under the Emergency rule in Bangladesh.

At the political level, Bangladesh Chief Adviser, Dr



President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai meeting with the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, on the eve of 14th SAARC Summit, in New Delhi on 2 April 2007.



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh taking over the chairmanship of SAARC Summit from the Chief Advisor of Bangladesh, Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed, during the inauguration of the 14th SAARC Summit, in New Delhi on 3 April 2007.

Fakhruddin Ahmed visited India to attend the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi from 2-4 April 2007. There were also several other Ministerial-level visits from Bangladesh to India in connection with SAARC related meetings. From India, Minister of State for Commerce, Jairam Ramesh visited Dhaka on 21-22 July 2007 to discuss various economic and trade issues and to inaugurate the India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee visited Bangladesh on 1 December 2007 in the aftermath of the severe cyclone which struck Bangladesh on 15 November 2007. The objective of the visit was to express India's solidarity with the people and Government of Bangladesh and reiterate our readiness to assist in the relief as well as rehabilitation work in the cyclone affected areas.

Regular meetings at official-level continued to be held under the various institutional bilateral mechanisms. The Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) were held in Dhaka on 25-26 June 2007. On the issues of security and border management, the 8th Home Secretary-level talks were held in New Delhi on 2-3 August 2007. The biannual border coordination conference was held in Dhaka from 24-29 October 2007. Further, pursuant to a decision taken in the 3rd Joint Boundary Working Group meeting in Dhaka on 16-17 July 2006, a first-ever joint visit by delegations from the two countries to a few enclaves and adverse possessions in India and Bangladesh took place on 29-30 May 2007 in order to assess ground realities before further discussions on outstanding issues pertaining to Land Boundary Agreement of 1974. On the issue of water resources, the Secretaries of Water Resources of the two countries held discussions in New Delhi on 7-8 August 2007. A separate technical-level meeting headed by members of India-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission was held in Dhaka from 25-27 September 2007 to discuss modalities relating to sharing of Teesta waters. Also, the 36th Joint Committee meeting on sharing of Ganga Waters was held in Dhaka from 26-29 May 2007.

On the economic and commercial side, Prime Minister announced at the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi, India's decision to allow duty-free access to exports from LDCs in SAARC region, including Bangladesh, from 1 January 2008 and reduce items on India's sensitive list with respect to these countries. As a further gesture, India signed an MoU on 16 September 2007 with Bangladesh

on duty-free exports of eight million pieces of readymade garments from Bangladesh to India. The bilateral Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade was renewed for about two years in a meeting in New Delhi on 30 April – 1 May 2007. A bilateral MoU was signed for cooperation in standards and test certificates between Bureau of Indian Standards and Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution on 26 June 2007 on the margins of FOC in Dhaka. India has removed the prohibition on investment into India by citizens of Bangladesh or entity incorporated in Bangladesh with the prior approval of the FIPB of Government of India. The meeting of the Joint Working Group on Customs was held in New Delhi on 25-26 July 2007 and of the Joint Working Group on Trade in Dhaka on 5-6 November 2007.

In keeping with India's policy of improving connectivity in SAARC region, India continued to highlight the need for revitalizing the transport and trade infrastructure and connectivity between the two countries. Two trial-runs of passenger train between Kolkata and Dhaka were held in July 2007 in preparation for regular train service between the two cities.

India continued to reiterate its serious concern at the activities of Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) in Bangladesh. At the 8th Home Secretary-level talks in New Delhi on 2-3 August 2007, India pointed out incidents of terrorism in India with clear links to Bangladesh-based HUIAI and JMB. India also underscored the need for sustained action by Bangladesh against elements indulging in cross-border terrorism. Both countries agreed to designate nodal points for continuous and regular sharing of real-time and actionable information in areas of mutual security concerns.

In keeping with India's close ties and empathy with the friendly people of Bangladesh, India provided Bangladesh bilateral aid and assistance to help it overcome the damage caused by natural disasters like the mudslide tragedy in June 2007, floods during July-September 2007 and cyclone in November 2007. India's assistance includes cash assistance of US\$ 10 million for the mudslide tragedy in June 2007 and food aid consisting of essential food items including rice, wheat and milk powder to Bangladesh of a total value of nearly Rs 100 crores for the floods and the recent cyclone. In the aftermath of the recent cyclone in November 2007 which had caused heavy loss of lives and

widespread destruction in coastal areas of Bangladesh, India sent an emergency relief package consisting of medicines, tents, blankets, ready-to-eat meals and portable water-purifiers worth US\$ 1.5 million by Indian Air Force aircraft. Further, during the Minister of External Affairs's visit to Bangladesh on 1 December 2007, it was announced that India would waive the ban on export of rice to Bangladesh for an additional 5 lakh tons of rice and that it would adopt 10 severely affected coastal villages for comprehensive rehabilitation (at a cost of US\$ 2.5 million).

Bhutan

India and Bhutan share close and friendly relations based on mutual trust, understanding and goodwill. These relations were further strengthened during the course of the year with continued cooperation in various sectors including hydropower.

A number of high level visits and bilateral exchanges from both sides further strengthened and deepened this relationship. Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs Minister visited Bhutan in July 2007. During the visit bilateral political, economic and other issues of mutual interest were discussed besides signing of the Agreement between the Government of India and the Royal Government of Bhutan on implementation of the largest ever 1095 MW Punatsangchhu-I Hydroelectric Project. It was agreed that the project will be funded by Government of India at a total estimated cost of Rs 3514.81 crore with 40% as grant and 60% as loan.

Other important visits from India were that of Navin Chawla, Election Commissioner (June 2007), Naresh Dayal, Secretary, Health and Family Welfare (August 2007) and Wajahat Habibullah, Chief Information Commissioner who led a 6-member delegation (October 2007) in connection with various events. From Bhutan, Prime Minister Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk (April 2007), Minister for Labour and Human Resources, Lyonpo Ugyen Tshering (April 2007), Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs, Lyonpo Jigmi Y. Thinley (April 2007), Minister for Information and Communication, Lyonpo Leki Dorji (August and September 2007) and Lyonpo Nado Rinchen, Deputy Minister for National Environment Commission (October 2007) visited India for various SAARC and other meetings.

The cooperation extended to further strengthen people-

to-people contact and various exchanges took place in this direction. India-Bhutan Foundation (IBF) met in Paro in May 2007 to discuss various proposals to improve people-to-people interaction. There was a visit by a delegation from Antarashtriya Sahyog Parishad to Bhutan. Kathak and Rajasthani dance troupes visited and performed in Haa, Thimphu, Gedu and Phuentsholing. A 15-member delegation from the Samdrup Jongkhar chapter of Bhutan-India Friendship Association (BIFA) chapter participated in the Bohagi Utsav organized by Bhutan-India Friendship Association. A 23-member delegation of students from Guwahati University visited Bhutan in September 2007 and gave dance performances at the Sherubtse College, Kanglung under the sponsorship of IBF. A 12-member NCC cadet team also visited Bhutan in November 2007.

India continues to be the largest development partner of Bhutan. Various projects agreed under the 9th plan are progressing satisfactorily. Bilateral cooperation in the hydropower sector has been carried forward with successful commissioning of all the six units of 1020 MW Tala Hydroelectric Project and signing of an Agreement on implementation of 1095 MW Punatsangchhu-I Hydroelectric Project. Punatsangchhu-I Project Authority (PHPA) has been constituted and its first meeting was held in Thimphu in October 2007. The work on preparation of DPRs for Punatsangchhu-II and Mangdechhu Hydroelectric projects by WAPCOS and NHPC respectively is on-going and is expected to be completed as per the schedule. The establishment of one million tonne Dungsam Cement Project at Nganglam with the assistance of Government of India has been revived. Government of India will extend an assistance of Rs 300 crore for the project. To facilitate 'Collaboration in the area of Customization/Development and Implementation of e-Governance Applications' an MoU was signed between National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICSI), Government of India and the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Information and Communications, Royal Government of Bhutan.

India was the leading trade partner of Bhutan. In the period 2006-07, India imported goods and services worth Rs 1448 Crores from Bhutan. For the same period our exports to Bhutan amounted to Rs 1305 Crores. A Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) team of

businessmen/industrialists visited Bhutan in July 2007 to explore opportunities for investment and trade. During the period 2006-07 revenues from export of electricity to India comprised about 75% of Bhutan's total revenues.

The Government of India presented over four thousand Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) to the Royal Government of Bhutan. These machines were used successfully in the mock polls. Officials of the Government of India deputed by the Election Commission observed the mock elections in Bhutan in April/May 2007. Bhutanese media personnel were in India to familiarize themselves on election coverage. At the request of the Royal Government of Bhutan, Government of India facilitated holding of a workshop in Thimphu for senior bureaucrats in Bhutan on 'Democratic Constitutional Monarchy' with eminent civil servants from India acting as resource persons.

Cooperation in Security and Border Management continued through the meetings of Group on Border Security and Management at the Central level (November 2007) and border district coordination meetings at State governments level between Assam, West Bengal and Royal Government of Bhutan. (November 2007).

China

The year under review saw continuity in the momentum of development of bilateral relations. The activities associated with the India-China Friendship Through Tourism Year 2007, regular high-level interactions on the sidelines of regional and international gatherings and sustained exchanges in various fields, along with the addition of newer dialogue mechanisms like the meeting of the expert-level mechanism on trans-border rivers, annual defence dialogue and dialogue mechanism on disarmament and non-proliferation were the highlights of the year. The two countries have also been furthering cooperation in regional and multilateral forums on global issues such as climate change and energy security.

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, visited China from 13 -15 January 2008. During the visit, the Prime Minister held official talks with Premier Wen Jiabao and had separate meetings with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Wu Bangguo. Both sides issued 'A Shared Vision for the 21st Century' between India and China and also signed ten other documents covering cooperation in various fields.¹ The Prime Minister addressed the India-China Economic, Trade and Investment Summit as well as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences during the visit.

Both sides reiterated their readiness to take the India-China Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity to a new level. The Prime Minister conveyed that relations with China is a high priority for us. Both sides agreed that India-China relations are of regional and global significance; the two countries have a historic opportunity to work together for the common cause of peace and development in Asia and the world. India-China relations are not targeted at any country, nor will it affect their friendship with other countries. Discussions were constructive and forward looking and were conducted in an atmosphere of sincerity, warmth and friendship.

The document on the 'Shared Vision for the 21st Century' reflects not only the common perceptions of India and China but also their desire to purposefully cooperate in the future and to promote global durable peace and common prosperity on the basis of *Panchsheel*. The two sides favoured an open and inclusive international system. There was considerable similarity of views expressed in discussions on the situation in the region.

The Chinese side invited President Patil to visit China in 2009. We reiterated our invitation for the visit of NPC Chairman to India in 2008. The invitations were accepted. It was also agreed that the two Foreign Ministers would exchange visits in 2008.

¹ The documents include: MoU for Cooperation between the Planning Commission of India and National Development and Reform Commission of China; MoU on Cooperation between the two Ministries of Railways; MoU between Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation of India and Ministry of Construction, PRC; MoU for Cooperation in Land Resource Management, Land Administration and Rehabilitation; MoU on Joint Medical Mission to commemorate the Indian Medical Mission to China between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with foreign Countries (CPAFFC); MoU for cooperation between ICCR and CPAFFC; MoU on Cooperation between Geological Survey of India and China Geological Survey in the area of Geo-sciences; MoU between AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India and State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, SATCM, China covering cooperation in traditional medicine; MoU on mutual cooperation between NABARD and Agricultural Development Bank of China; and Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for the Export of Tobacco Leave from India to China between the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of China and the Ministry of Agriculture of India.



Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk being received by the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh on his arrival to attend the inaugural session of the 14th SAARC Summit, in New Delhi on 3 April 2007.



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting with the Chinese President, Hu Jintao at Great Hall of People, in Beijing, China on 15 January 2008.

Both sides agreed to continue deepening the mutual understanding and trust between the armed forces and welcomed the successful conclusion of the first joint military training exercise and agreed to hold a second exercise in India in 2008.

It was recognized that the Strategic and Cooperative Partnership should be based on strong, diversified and mutually beneficial economic ties. It was decided to increase the bilateral trade target from US\$ 40 billion by 2010 to US\$ 60 billion. It was agreed that a bilateral Regional Trading Arrangement will be mutually beneficial. It was decided that the two Commerce Ministers would decide on the future steps in this regard. It was decided to establish a high level Business Leaders Forum to advise the two Prime Ministers on the future of economic ties.

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the progress made by the Special Representatives in seeking a framework for settlement of the boundary question that is fair, reasonable, mutually acceptable, and based on the Agreement on Guiding Principles and Political Parameters signed in April 2005. While the Special Representatives continue their efforts, both sides reiterated their mutual commitment to maintaining peace and tranquility in the border areas.

Prime Minister conveyed India's appreciation for China's assistance in providing flood season data for some trans-border rivers. Both leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation in this area through the Expert Level Mechanism.

Both sides have identified earthquake engineering, disaster management, climate change, biotechnology and nano sciences as priority areas for cooperation to realize the bilateral Science and Technology Partnership.

The Special Representatives of India and China on the Boundary Question met for the Tenth Round in New Delhi and Coonoor from 20-22 April 2007 and for the Eleventh Round in Beijing from 24-26 September 2007. During these talks the two Special Representatives continued their discussions on a framework for the boundary settlement on the basis of the Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles of April 2005.

Trade and economic relations have emerged as one of the most visible indicators of recent positive developments in India-China relations. According to Chinese statistics, bilateral trade touched US\$ 38.6 billion in 2007.²

Border trade linkages continue to expand. The period of border trade through Nathula was extended from the earlier June to September (in 2006) to the period from May to November this year. Both sides are discussing the possibility of expanding the basket of tradeable goods across Nathula.

The second India-China financial dialogue was held in China on 4 December 2007. Both sides agreed to hold the third dialogue in India in late 2008 or the first half of 2009.

The highlight of the defence exchanges this year has been the successful conclusion of the first meeting of India-China Annual Defence Dialogue held in Beijing in November 2007 and organization of the first ever joint training exercises between the ground forces of the two sides in December 2007. Army Chief General J.J. Singh, also Chairman Chief of Staffs Committee (COSC) visited China in May.

India welcomed China's participation as an Observer at the 14th SAARC Summit held in New Delhi in April. Both countries have interaction at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation where India is an Observer state. India and China are cooperating in the East Asia Summit process. Both countries along with Russia are also cooperating in a trilateral format. The last trilateral meeting was held at Harbin, China on 24 October.

The establishment of the new Indian Consulate General in Guangzhou and the new Chinese Consulate General in Kolkata are important mileposts in strengthening institutional linkages between the two sides. The other major developments in regard to strengthening of institutional linkages include: the establishment of hotline between External Affairs Minister and the Chinese Foreign Minister in February; the convening of the Sixth India-China Eminent Person's Group Meeting in Beijing in September; foreign office consultations etc. There has

² The major India export items are primary and raw materials like iron ore, raw cotton, machinery, copper, soybean residue, organic chemicals and plastic. Indian imports from China were dominated by relatively higher value added products like electrical machinery, machinery, organic chemicals, iron and steel etc. According to Department of Commerce Statistics, bilateral trade was Rs. 43661.72 crores during April-October 2007.

also been an exchange of familiarization visits by groups of diplomats of the two countries.

Cooperation on trans-border rivers is an important part of overall engagement with China. India-China Expert Level Mechanism to discuss interaction and cooperation on the provision of flood season hydrological data, emergency management and other issues regarding trans-border rivers was operationalised with its first meeting being held in September 2007.

The issue of global warming and climate change is an important issue on which India and China have similarities of views. The two sides have maintained regular consultations in this.

Both sides organized the “India-China Year of Friendship Through Tourism” with a joint logo and agreed to open tourism offices in each others countries. Another highlight in promoting people-to-people contacts was the signing of the Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for the years 2007-09 in June. The exchange of 100 member youth delegations took place in June (when the Indian youth delegation led by India’s Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports, Panchayati Raj and Development of the North-East Region, Mani Shankar Aiyar visited China) and November when the Chinese youth delegation led by Hu Chunhua, First Secretary of the Central Committee of Communist Youth League of China and Honorary President of All-China Youth Federation visited India.

Functional exchanges maintained an encouraging momentum. The major visits to China include those by Union Minister for Commerce and Industries (15-16 April 2007); Union Finance Minister (29 - 30 March 2007); Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission (24-29 April 2007); Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers (May 2007); Chairman of the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (15-17 August 2007); Union Minister of State for Urban Development (October 2007); and Chief Justice of India (6- 10 November 2007). The major Chinese delegations include those led by: . Liu Yandong, Vice Chairperson of Tenth National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (6-13 January 2007); Xiao Yang, President of the Supreme People’s Court of China (2-5 April 2007); Fu Zhihuan, Chairman, Economic and Financial Committee of the National People’s

Congress of China (23-26 May 2007); Shao Qiwei, Chairman of China National Tourism Administration (August 2007); Wang Yang, Secretary of the Chongqing Municipal Party Committee and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chongqing Municipal Party Congress (September 2007); Wang Zhongyu, Vice Chairman, Tenth National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (20-24 September 2007); Su Rong, Executive Vice President of the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China (November 2007); and Wang Jiarui, Minister of International Liaison Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (28 November 2007).

Hong Kong

Friendly and cooperative interactions with Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China continued. Hong Kong remained an important trade partner for India. Several delegations in diverse fields exchanged visits. Hong Kong’s position as an important international financial centre was harnessed to attract investment in India.

Financial Secretary of Hong Kong visited India in December 2007 and had meetings with Finance Minister and important industry leaders. The visit helped to further strengthen relations between the financial sectors of the two sides.

The two sides signed a new understanding on further expanding the civil aviation links. A bilateral understanding was reached to augment number of direct flight connections.

Maldives

Bilateral relations between India and Maldives continued to be close and friendly. The warmth of this relationship was maintained through high-level exchanges.

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom visited India to participate in the SAARC Summit in New Delhi from 2-4 April 2007. He held discussions with the President and the Prime Minister. Ahmed Zahir, Speaker of the Maldivian Parliament (People’s Majlis) visited India on 10 May 2007 to witness the celebrations in commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the First War of Independence held in New Delhi. He visited India again from 22 – 30 September 2007, leading the Maldivian

delegation to attend the 53rd annual Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association organized in New Delhi. Hamdun Hameed, Minister of Planning and National Development, visited India from 4–7 September 2007 to participate in the Regional Consultation on Review of Asian Development Bank's long term strategic framework and the role of Asian Development Fund. Abdulla Shahid, Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited India on 29 October 2007 and had discussions with the Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs.

Upon learning of the problems being faced by Maldives due to tidal surges in Maldives in May 2007, Prime Minister expressed concern and assured President Gayoom all possible assistance from India. As a follow up to these assurances, India extended cash assistance to the Government of Maldives equivalent to Rs 10 crores.

India strongly condemned the bomb attack which occurred in Male on 29 September 2007 resulting in injury to 12 foreign tourists and offered all assistance in investigation as well as medical assistance to the Government of Maldives.

On 8 January 2008, a man wielding a knife made an attempt on the life of President Gayoom of Maldives. President Gayoom was unharmed in the incident. Following the attack, both President of India and the Prime Minister have sent messages to President Gayoom condemning the attack.

During 2007-08, India continued to provide training facilities to Maldivian nationals in areas such as defence, police, medical and technical education, etc under its bilateral aid programme.

Abdulla Shahid, Foreign Minister of Maldives visited India in December 2007 to attend the SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting held in New Delhi. During his visit, Shahid met the External Affairs Minister and Raksha Mantri on 6 December 2007.

India-Maldives Joint Coast Guard Exercises Codenamed "DOSTI-IX" were conducted off Malé from 25-28 December 2007. Vice Admiral R.F. Contractor, AVSM, N.M. and Director General, Indian Coast Guard visited Maldives from 25-28 December 2007 to oversee the conduct of above "DOSTI-IX" exercises. During his visit, Director General, Indian Coast Guard met Foreign Minister and Defence Minister of Maldives besides meeting other senior officials.

Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon visited Maldives from 27-29 January 2008 to hold bilateral discussions with Maldivian authorities. He called on President of Maldives. He also met Foreign Minister of Maldives besides meeting other senior Government officials.

Minister of State for Commerce, Jairam Ramesh led an Indian delegation to Maldives from 29-31 January 2008. During his meetings with Maldivian dignitaries, the Minister discussed ways and means to enhance bilateral relations and economic cooperation between India and the Maldives.

President of the Republic of Maldives, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom paid a State Visit to India from 6-12 February 2008. During his visit, President Gayoom met the President, Vice President, Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and Raksha Mantri. An Agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Science & Technology was signed on 11 February 2008. Both the countries also agreed to sign a new MoU on the Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Male and set up an India-Maldives Foundation.

The Maldives President also received the Sustainable Development Leadership Award conferred on him by TERI on 7 February 2008.

Myanmar

India-Myanmar relations strengthened during the year through a number of bilateral visits at various levels. Lt. General Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Quartermaster General (QMG) and Member of State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) of Myanmar visited India from 20-27 April 2007. QMG called on External Affairs Minister and Raksha Mantri, in addition to his meetings with the Quarter Master General and Vice Chief of Army Staff in Delhi. Maj. General Maung Maung Swe, Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement attended the 2nd Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Reduction from 5-9 November 2007. From India, Minister for Culture and Tourism Ambika Soni visited Myanmar on 14 October to attend the state funeral of late Prime Minister, General Soe Win.

On 21 November 2007 Prime Minister met the Prime Minister of Myanmar, General Thein Sein in Singapore on the margins of the East Asia Summit held there. Earlier, on 1 October 2007, External Affairs Minister met Foreign Minister U Nyan Win of Myanmar in New York on the

margins of the UN General Assembly. On the internal developments in Myanmar, both External Affairs Minister and Prime Minister conveyed in their meetings that the national reconciliation and political reform process initiated by the Myanmar authorities should be broad-based and inclusive including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the various ethnic nationalities and should be carried forward expeditiously towards a satisfactory conclusion.

Cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector was consolidated with the signing on 23 September 2007 of Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) by ONGC Videsh Limited with Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise for three deep-sea blocks AD-2, AD-3 and AD-9 in the presence of Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas Murli Deora, in the Myanmar capital Nay Pyi Taw. During the visit, Deora also held bilateral discussion with Myanmar Minister for Energy Brigadier General Lun Thi on energy cooperation between two countries.

A three member delegation led by Lt. General Myat Hein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) of Myanmar visited India from 2-7 April. At the invitation of Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice Admiral Soe Thein, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sureesh Mehta, PVSM, AVSM, ADC visited Myanmar from 8-13 May. He also called on Vice Senior General Maung Aye at Nay Pyi Taw. A three member delegation led by Secretary, Defence (Finance) V. K. Mishra visited Myanmar from 9-11 April 2007. A five member goodwill delegation led by GOC-in-C Lt. General K. S. Jamwal, AVSM, VSM of Eastern Command, Indian Army visited Myanmar on 9-14 July 2007. There were several other exchanges of visits of defence service personnels as well.

India remains committed to providing assistance to developmental projects in Myanmar. A number of projects are under consideration/implementation including the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project. During the period, the Border Roads Organisation took up the task of resurfacing the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo road, which had earlier been upgraded under Indian assistance.

In the trade and commerce sector, important contacts were established during the year. NAFED signed an agreement with Myanmar Economic Cooperation on 14 August, for supply of 2000 MT wheat to Myanmar. This supply was completed in October 2007. The Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (Amul) also

signed an agreement with Myanmar Economic Cooperation, on 10 August for supply of 200 MT skimmed milk powder to Myanmar which was completed in time. Myanmar received the first lot of five 1350HP YDM-4 locomotives from India out of the total 20 expected to reach Yangon by mid-2008. A two-member delegation from EXIM Bank visited Myanmar and signed a US\$ 60 million Line of Credit Agreement with Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB) for Thathay Chaung hydropower project on 29 October 2007.

With the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Government of the Union of Myanmar, several cultural events were organized by the Embassy of India in Yangon including a Bharatanatyam performance by Sreekala Bharat and a music concert by Indian singer Peenaz Masani to commemorate the 60th year of India's Independence.

Myanmar has been allotted 100 slots under the ITEC programme and 42 slots under the Colombo plan for the year 2007-08. While 28 Myanmar personnel have already gone for courses under ITEC programme and 40 have gone under the Colombo Plan till date, the rest of the slots are under various stages of consideration by Indian institutions.

U Kyaw Thu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Union of Myanmar visited India from 11-14 December 2007, at the invitation of the Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon for Foreign Office Consultations between India and Myanmar. Delegation level talks were held on 11 December 2007. During the visit Deputy Minister U Kyaw Thu also called on the Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee. The discussions covered all areas of mutual interest including bilateral, regional and international issues and were marked by the friendship and cordiality that mark relations between India and Myanmar. An MoU for the establishment of the India-Myanmar Center for Enhancement of Information Technology Skills (IMCEITS) at Yangon under Indian assistance was signed on 12 December 2007.

The Foreign Minister of Myanmar U Nyan Win visited India at the invitation of the Minister of External Affairs from 31 December 2007-4 January 2008. During the visit, U Nyan Win called on Prime Minister on 2 January 2008. The Foreign Minister briefed Prime Minister on the recent internal developments in Myanmar. Our Prime Minister

stressed the need for greater urgency in bringing about political reforms and national reconciliation in Myanmar. This process has to be broad based to include all sections of society, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the various ethnic groups in Myanmar. He also met the Minister of External Affairs and Vice President on 2 January 2008.

Nepal

The year witnessed critical developments in Nepal's ongoing peace process. However, the institutionalization of multi-party democracy in Nepal still faces significant challenges.

Following the promulgation of interim Constitution in January 2007, an interim government was formed under the leadership of Prime Minister G.P. Koirala. The ruling Seven Party Alliance (SPA) Interim Government was expanded in April 2007 to include five Ministers from the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). The Maoist Ministers submitted resignations from the Cabinet in September 2007 as the political parties and the CPN (Maoist) failed to break the political impasse on the twin Maoist demands of declaring Nepal a Republic and adoption of a fully proportional representation system for the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections. The process of management of Maoist PLA weapons and combatants, under the supervision of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), made progress. On 5 October 2007, the Interim Government formally asked the Election Commission to suspend the Constituent Assembly elections scheduled on 22 November 2007. The postponement of CA elections caused disappointment among the people of Nepal and the international community, including India.

India's approach has been to continue to extend all possible assistance as requested by the Government of Nepal to support multi-party democracy in Nepal which is essential for peace and fostering development of Nepal's economy. India maintained close consultations with the Government of Nepal and the major political parties with a view to support the early introduction of the new constitutional order through CA elections. India has stressed the need to enable the people of Nepal to choose their own future and the manner in which they should be governed through a free and fair election process.

The year witnessed several high-level exchanges. Prime

Minister G.P.Koirala and Foreign Minister Sahana Pradhan visited India in April 2007 to participate in the 14th SAARC Summit. Bilateral Meetings with the Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs took place on the sidelines of the SAARC Summit. Foreign Minister Pradhan visited India again from 6-9 December 2007 to participate in the SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting. Foreign Secretary, Shivshankar Menon visited Nepal in September 2007. Shyam Saran, Special Envoy of Prime Minister visited Nepal in October 2007.

The India-Nepal Treaty of Trade and Agreement for Cooperation to Control Unauthorized Trade were renewed further for a further period of five years in March 2007. India and Nepal signed an Memorandum of Understanding in September 2007 to operationalise the US\$ 100 million Line of Credit extended by India for execution of infrastructure projects in Nepal.

Bilateral meetings dealing with various aspects of our bilateral cooperation such as border management and security, boundary matters, trade and commerce, transit, water resources and economic cooperation took place.

Bilateral trade continued to increase. However, the growth in bilateral trade appeared to have slowed, in view of the uncertain political situation in Nepal. As per provisional estimates, bilateral trade grew by 7.9% in 2006-07 as compared to 12.4% in 2005-06 of Nepali fiscal year (beginning July 15). By the end of the Nepalese fiscal year 2005-06, bilateral trade with India of US\$ 2.31 billion accounted for 63.2% of Nepal's total external trade. India's share in Nepal's imports stood at 61.7%. India, on the other hand, absorbed about 67.6% of Nepal's exports.

India continued to contribute to the development efforts of Government of Nepal by undertaking development projects in the areas of infrastructure, health, rural and community development, education under the Small Development Project Scheme that already has more than 220 projects implemented or under implementation. Two big projects viz. Bir Hospital Expansion at the cost of Rs 65 crores and Manmohan Adhikari Polytechnic at the cost of Rs 20 crores were under implementation.

India has provided considerable assistance to the Government of Nepal in terms of vehicles, generators, and communication equipment sets etc. in the ongoing peace process.



Vice President of India, Hamid Ansari meeting with U. Nyan Win, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Union of Myanmar, in New Delhi on 2 January 2008.



Foreign Minister of Nepal, Sahana Pradhan meeting External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee on the sidelines of 14th SAARC Summit, 3 April 2007.

Strengthening of border infrastructure along the India-Nepal border was high on Government's priority. Several new projects launched in consultation with the Government of Nepal to improve and upgrade border infrastructure, development of integrated check-posts and road and rail connectivity between the two sides of the border made further progress. Once implemented, these projects would not only facilitate trade and transit but would also contribute to efficient management of the border.

India-Nepal cooperation in the area of human resources development, training and capacity building of Nepali institutions was strengthened further. Besides the doubling of scholarships/seats offered in India as well as in Nepal, training programmes were organized for the Nepali Police personnel, Local Development Officers, Finance Officials and Journalists as per their specific needs. Important Nepalese delegations visiting India include visit of Nepal Supreme Court delegation led by Kedar Giri, Acting Chief Justice of Nepal to study implementation of IT in Indian judiciary, visit of Public Service Commission to study the Indian system of recruitment in public services, visit by Election Commission of Nepal for discussions with its Indian counterpart and to study the use of Electronic Voting Machines. Professionals and officials of the Government employees of Nepal were invited for training programmes in different sectors under the ITEC and the Colombo Plan.

With a view to strengthen and expand cultural relations, an Indian Cultural Centre was opened in Katmandu in August 2007.

Pakistan

The Composite Dialogue Process and the India-Pakistan Joint Commission provide the institutional basis for India-Pakistan dialogue and engagement. There were a number of meetings under these two umbrellas during the period under review as also high level meetings at the level of Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs. Progress in bilateral relations was maintained. However, the domestic political turbulence in Pakistan and the consequential prolongation of the electoral process had led to a slowing down in the pace of the institutional dialogue. India continues to have serious and continuing concerns on the infrastructure of terrorism in Pakistan and its cross border and other implications for us.

The tragic assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on 27 December 2007 was strongly condemned by the Government of India. The assassination was a setback to the forces of moderation in Pakistan. The spread of extremist violence and terrorism and the danger that poses to political stability in Pakistan is a matter of grave concern. The growing strength of extremist forces in Pakistan has serious security implications for India.

Composite Dialogue

The Composite Dialogue covering eight subjects namely Peace and Security including Confidence Building Measures (CBMs); Jammu & Kashmir; Terrorism and Drug trafficking; Friendly Exchanges; Economic and Commercial Cooperation; Tulbul Navigation Project; Sir Creek and Siachen was initiated in 2004 to deepen and expand the bilateral relations. The fourth round of the Composite Dialogue commenced with the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries in March 2007 and Secretary level talks were completed on all the eight subjects during the course of the calendar year 2007. At the commencement of the fourth round, an Agreement on 'Reducing the Risk from Accidents relating to Nuclear Weapons' was signed on 21 February 2007. Both countries also used this opportunity to underscore that incidents like the terrorist attack on the Samjhauta Express would not be allowed to derail the dialogue process. Discussions in the Composite Dialogue were positive and constructive.

In the Sir Creek talks held on 6-7 August 2007 both sides exchanged maps/charts showing their respective positions on the delineation of the boundary in the Sir Creek and delimitation of the maritime boundary. A Joint Survey of Sir Creek and adjoining areas had been conducted in January 2007 to verify the outermost points of the coastline of both countries with regard to the equidistance method. At the Home Secretary level talks on 3-4 July 2007, the text of a Bilateral Consular Access agreement was discussed in detail. Our concerns regarding cross border terrorism and hostile propaganda were also reiterated in this meeting. At the Commerce Secretary talks on 31 July - 1 August 2007 it was agreed to facilitate cement export from Pakistan and export of tea from India by rail. A number of other measures to enhance bilateral trade were also agreed upon. The transport links established in the previous rounds of the dialogue continued to operate successfully, facilitating the movement of people and boosting bilateral trade.



W.J.M. Lokubandara, Speaker, Parliament of Sri Lanka calls on Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker in Vigyan Bhawan on 26 September 2007. The meeting took place in the sidelines of the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference being held in New Delhi.



Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri shaking hands with the Union Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, in New Delhi on 21 February 2007.

Proposals made by India to further enhance people to people contact by establishing transport links between Kargil and Skardu and Jammu and Sialkot await acceptance by Government of Pakistan.

Joint Commission

The Joint Commission was revived after a gap of 16 years in October 2005 when its fourth meeting was held. The fifth meeting of the Joint Commission was held on 21 February 2007 in New Delhi under which Technical Level Working Groups on Agriculture, Health, Science and Technology, Information, Education, I.T. and Telecommunications, Environment and Tourism met. The Joint Commission is chaired by the External Affairs Minister of India and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.

High Level Visits

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz held a meeting in New Delhi at the sidelines of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit on 4 April 2007. A wide range of bilateral issues including trade, energy, banking, air connectivity and other issues were discussed. Prime Minister Aziz assured Dr. Singh that Pakistan would take early action to return fishing boats seized from Indian fishermen to their owners. The two leaders also agreed to review the status of each other's citizens held prisoners in either country.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri visited New Delhi on 20-21 February 2007 to co-chair, with the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, the fifth meeting of the India-Pakistan Joint Commission. The visit took place in the backdrop of terrorist attack on the Samjhauta Express on 18 February 2007. The Joint Commission examined the possibilities of cooperation in the areas of Education, Information, IT and Telecom, Health, Agriculture, Tourism, Science and Technology, and Environment.

Inamul Haque, Caretaker Foreign Minister of Pakistan visited New Delhi on 7-8 December 2007 for the meeting of SAARC Council of Ministers. At the margins of the SAARC meeting Minister of External Affairs held a bilateral meeting with him where issues on the dialogue framework were discussed.

Humanitarian Issues

A significant number of Indian prisoners, fishermen and boats are in Pakistani custody. Pakistan too has concerns

about its nationals in jails in India. During the visit of the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee to Pakistan on 13 -14 January 2007, it was agreed to establish a Committee on Prisoners comprising retired judges of the superior judiciary to visit jails in each country and propose steps to ensure humane treatment and expeditious release of prisoners who have completed their prison terms. The committee has since been formed comprising four judges from each country and is expected to meet shortly. The status of each other's citizens held prisoners in the two countries was discussed in detail at the Home Secretary level talks held on 3-4 July 2007. Both sides had agreed that steps needed to be taken to reconcile the number of prisoners in either country to facilitate their early release on completion of necessary formalities.

The matter of Indian Prisoners of War in Pakistan jails has remained an issue in bilateral relations with Pakistan. The Government of India has been consistently raising this matter with the Government of Pakistan. During the visit of the External Affairs Minister to Pakistan in January 2007, President Pervez Musharraf agreed to accept a delegation comprising relatives of Missing Indian Defence personnel to visit jails in Pakistan. A group comprising 13 members of families of missing Defence personnel visited 10 prisons in Pakistan from 1-14 June 2007. The outcome of the visit was inconclusive in the sense that it has not been possible to shed light on the fate of missing Indian Defence personnel.

Joint Anti-Terrorism Mechanism

At the meeting between Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh and President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf in Havana, Cuba on 16 September 2006, it was agreed to constitute a Joint Anti-Terrorism Mechanism (JATM). The first meeting of JATM was held on 6-7 March 2007 where it was agreed that specific information will be exchanged through the Mechanism for (i) Helping investigations on either side related to terrorist acts and (ii) Prevention of violence and terrorist acts in the two countries. The second meeting of the JATM was held in New Delhi on 22 October 2007. The two sides reviewed the follow up steps taken on the information shared during the first meeting of the JATM and in the intervening period. Both sides shared new information on terrorist incidents including those which have occurred since the last meeting. They agreed to continue to work to identify measures, exchange specific

information and assist in investigations. Government of India attaches importance to this mechanism and believes it could be a useful instrument if implemented effectively.

Commerce and Trade

Promotion of commercial interaction remains an essential component of India's policy of engagement with Pakistan. Total bilateral trade stood at US\$ 1.66 billion in the financial year 2006-07 as compared to US\$ 859.33 million in 2005-06. In 2006-07 India's export to Pakistan was valued at US\$ 1.34 billion and India's import at US\$ 0.32 billion. In 2007-08 (April-July 2007) total bilateral trade stood at US\$ 616.55 million out of which India's export component valued at US\$ 535.91 million and imports from Pakistan valued at US\$ 80.64 million. India's exports to Pakistan continue to be on basis of a positive list as Pakistan has neither granted Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status nor gave mandatory tariff concessions as required under the South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) to India.

As agreed by Prime Minister of India and his Pakistani counterpart during their meeting on 4 April 2007 in the sidelines of SAARC Summit in New Delhi, the export of cement from Pakistan was facilitated. Thirteen cement manufacturers from Pakistan have been granted license to export their cement to India under Foreign Manufacturers Certification Scheme.

In an important development, both countries agreed in August 2007 to allow each other's trucks to cross at Wagha/Attari border up to designated points on either side and the agreement is being implemented with effect from 1 October 2007. Efforts are underway to start the Srinagar–Muzaffarabad truck service across the Line of Control (LoC) for trade in agreed items. Important outstanding issues on the trade and economic cooperation agenda include full and effective implementation by Pakistan of its commitments under SAFTA and provision of transit for purposes of trade through its territory to Afghanistan.

An MoU between the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Securities and Exchange Commission Pakistan (SECP) was signed on 28 January 2008 on the sidelines of the second Annual Meeting of the South Asian Securities Regulators Forum (SASRAF) to facilitate the sharing of information between two agencies.

Other Important Developments

The Neutral Expert (NE) Prof. Raymond Lafitte, appointed by World Bank in May 2005 to consider Pakistan's objections to the Baglihar project gave his verdict on 12 February 2007. The verdict upheld India's overall design of the project.

Compensation has been disbursed to the survivors of a number of relatives of the Samjhauta Express terrorist attack. Following the accident on 18 February 2007 the Government had declared a compensation of Rs 10,00,000 each, to the legal heirs of the Pakistani nationals who were victims of the attack.

Sri Lanka

India-Sri Lanka relations continued to be further strengthened with the expansion of linkages, particularly in the economic and cultural fields. The period saw exchange of several visits at the highest political level between the two countries. President Mahinda Rajapaksa visited New Delhi for the SAAARC Summit held in Delhi on 3 - 4 April 2007. He visited India again on 13-14 October 2007 for attending the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit. During the visit President Rajapaksa met Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi. Prime Minister also met President Rajapaksa on the sidelines of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meet (CHOGM) on 24 November 2007 in Kampala, Uganda.

Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama visited India on 4 July 2007 and met Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee. Minister for Food and Agriculture Sharad Pawar visited Sri Lanka from 23-25 May 2007 on the invitation of President of Sri Lanka. Minister of State for Labour and Employment Oscar Fernandes visited Sri Lanka on 21 August 2007 to attend an International Labour Organisation (ILO) high-level symposium titled 'An International Legal Initiative to Strengthen National Responses to HIV and AIDS at the Workplace'. Finance Minister P. Chidambaram visited Sri Lanka on 11 November 2007 to address the annual lecture at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies. Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama attended the 29th Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers held in New Delhi on 7-8 December 2007. In the interaction which took place during these visits, India expressed its conviction that

there is no military solution to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka and the only way out is a negotiated, political settlement acceptable to all communities in Sri Lanka.

The bilateral economic and commercial ties continued to expand during the year. India is the biggest source of import for Sri Lanka and is the 3rd largest destination for Sri Lankan exports. The momentum generated by the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISLFTA) has continued as reflected in the sustained and rapid rise in bilateral trade turnover over the years. Bilateral trade amounted to US\$ 1.6 billion for the period April-September 2007 as against US\$ 1.3 billion during the same period in 2006. The two sides carried forward their negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). The 11th round of discussions on CEPA was held in Colombo from 2-4 January 2008. According to the latest figures, India is the 4th largest investor in Sri Lanka in the year 2007. The major Indian investors include Indian Oil Corporation, ICICI Bank, SBI, TATA, CEAT, Nicholas Piramal and VSNL.

Cooperation between India and Sri Lanka in Civil Aviation and Tourism is an important aspect of bilateral relationship. The Sri Lankan national carrier, Sri Lankan Airlines now operates 100 flights per week to various destinations in India. Indian carriers also increased their frequencies to Sri Lanka. The cooperation in the civil

aviation has contributed in increasing tourism and people to people contact between the two countries.

India continued to provide development assistance to Sri Lanka . India provided financial assistance to set up 20 Nenasalas (computer centers). India is undertaking a project in the Eastern province of Sri Lanka to provide assistance to the fishermen who were affected by the ethnic conflict in that region. They are being provided with fishing boats, nets, cooling room and trucks with cold storage facility. For the benefit of the people of Indian origin who are living in the tea estates and other plantation areas in Sri Lanka, India undertook many projects to improve the medical facilities and the educational requirements for their children.

India also continued to provide assistance to Sri Lanka in the field of human resource development. A scheme for awarding Mahatma Gandhi Scholarships to 100 students from Sri Lanka, started in 2006, was repeated this year. These scholarships are in addition to various other scholarships provided by India to meritorious Sri Lankan students. Joint Working Committee on Education met in Colombo on 11-13 December 2007.

On the cultural side the regular activities of the Indian Cultural Centre included visits by eminent persons from the world of art and culture and cultural troupes from India.



Australia

India-Australia bilateral relations continued to develop further in all areas. Several Minister-level visits took place during the year.

- Minister for Steel, Chemicals and Fertilizers, Ram Vilas Paswan, led a delegation to Australia from 24-29 June 2007.
- Minister for Textiles, Shankersinh Vaghela visited Australia from 2-5 July 2007.
- Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr. A. Ramdoss visited Australia from 20-27 July 2007 to attend the 3rd Ministerial Meeting on HIV/AIDS in Sydney.
- Minister of State for Agriculture, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Dr. Akhilesh Prasad Singh visited Australia from 6-8 July 2007.
- Minister of State for Finance, Pawan Kumar Bansal visited Australia in September 2007 to inaugurate the Bank of Baroda branch in Sydney.

Other visits during the year included Speaker of Haryana Legislative Assembly Dr. R. S. Kadian, in April 2007; a delegation of Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers in May 2007 to study the Goods and Services Tax (GST) system in Australia; Lt. Governor of Puducherry, Mukut Mithi in May 2007; Commandant of National Defence College, Vice Admiral Sanjeev Bhasin, in October 2007.

From Australia, Defence Minister, Brendan Nelson, visited India from 10-13 July 2007. An Agreement on Protection of Exchanged Classified Information was signed during the visit.

India-Australia trade was A\$ 11.4 billion in 2006-07 (July-June), an increase of 32.4% over the previous year. India and Australia agreed to undertake a feasibility study for a Free Trade Agreement in August 2007.

India-Australia cooperation in the mining and energy

sector continued to expand. The fifth meeting of India-Australia Joint Working Group on Energy and Minerals took place in July 2007 in Canberra. M/s Reliance Industries Ltd. was given an exploration license off Western Australia, and M/s Santos of Australia obtained two exploration blocks in the Bay of Bengal under NELP VI.

Relations in the field of defence continued to grow. Besides the visit of Australian Defence Minister, Chief of Australian Defence Force, ACM Angus Houston, visited India in May 2007, and Australian Naval Chief Vice Admiral Russ Shalders visited India in August 2007.

India emerged as the second largest source of skilled personnel and also the second largest source of overseas students for Australia.

Brunei Darussalam

Bilateral relations between India and Brunei Darussalam continued to be cordial and friendly. Important areas of interactions were political, economic and commercial, information technology and defence.

A delegation from the Brunei Investment Agency visited Delhi and Mumbai on 2-3 August 2007.

Cambodia

A fresh impetus was provided to India's relations with Cambodia by the State Visit of the Cambodian Prime Minister, Hun Sen to India from 8-10 December 2007. During the visit, seven Agreements / MoUs relating to Transfer of Sentenced Persons, Credit Line, Defence Cooperation, Water Resource Management, Agricultural Development, Oil and Gas sector and Foreign Office Consultations were signed. A fresh line of credit of US\$ 35.2 million on concessional terms was offered to Cambodia.

Earlier, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Hor Namhong paid an official visit to India from 17-19 May 2007. An MoU on the establishment of an English

Language Training Centre was signed. The Centre was subsequently operationalized in the prestigious Royal Academy of Cambodia in Phnom Penh.

A four-member team from the Ministry of Home Affairs visited Cambodia in November 2007 for the first meeting of the Coordination Committee under the Agreement to Combat International Terrorism, Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking.

Defence cooperation acquired a new momentum. Visits from India by Director General Military Intelligence and a 17-member Army Higher Command Course Study Team took place. The Indian government gifted parachutes and medicines to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF).

Fiji

India continued its engagement with the interim Government of the Republic of Fiji Islands led by the Interim Prime Minister, Commodore Josia Voreqe Bainimarama. The high level consultations between the two Governments focused upon the need of an early return of democracy for the stability and economic development of Fiji, as well as to promote peace and harmony amongst major communities in Fiji.

Interim Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Ratu Epeli Nailatikau visited New Delhi from 4-6 March 2007. The Interim Minister for Finance, National Planning and Sugar Industry, Mahendra Chaudhry visited New Delhi from 10-20 May 2007. The Acting Chief Justice of Fiji, Anthony Gates, visited India from 21-26 May 2007.

India and Fiji Islands held 2nd round of Foreign Office Consultations in New Delhi on 23 July 2007.

Government of India has donated US\$ 100,000 to the Kidney Foundation of Fiji for procurement of equipment for the setting up of a Dialysis Center in Fiji. India has also donated F\$ 76,000/- to the Government of Fiji to help Fiji's flood victims. Grant-in-aid of US\$ 100,000/- each has also been offered to Fiji in October 2006 and October 2007 for sustainable development.

Indonesia

The year saw further consolidation of bilateral relations with Indonesia. There were several Ministerial and official level visits from both the sides including a visit of the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee for the

Third India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting on 18 June 2007. The Joint Commission which was co-chaired by Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nur Hassan Wirajuda, agreed to cooperate in a number of areas. The two sides also agreed on Points of Action for implementation of the New Strategic Partnership which was announced at Summit Level during President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's State visit to India in 2005.

An MoU for setting up a Vocational Training Centre for the construction sector in Aceh was also signed during the visit.

The newly elected Governor of Aceh, Dr. Irwandi Yusuf led a delegation to Delhi, Goa and Hyderabad from 19-26 August 2007 with a view to learn from India's experience in rebuilding state institutions.

Former President of India, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam visited Jakarta on 19-20 November 2007 to deliver a keynote address at the invitation of the Indonesian Centre of Sciences (LIPI).

From the Indonesian side, the Minister of Social Affairs, Bachtiar Chamsyah, visited Delhi to participate in the 2nd Asian Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction on 6-7 November 2007. Minister of Health, Dr. Siti Fadilah Supari participated in the Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza held in New Delhi on 4-5 December 2007.

On the defence side, the first meeting of the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) was held in Jakarta from 12-14 June 2007. The Inaugural Navy-to-Navy Staff Talks were held on 4-5 April 2007 in New Delhi to discuss ways of strengthening the bilateral Navy-to-Navy relationship. This was followed by the visit of Admiral Slamet Soebijanto to India from 10-13 April 2007. The 10th cycle of the month-long bi-annual India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol off the Andaman Sea was held in September 2007.

Six Defence officers from India are undergoing training in Indonesia. Five Indonesian Armed Forces officers were also sent for training at various Indian institutions such as Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington, Army War College, Mhow and Armed Forces Technical College, Bangalore, during the year.

On economic and commercial front, during the Third India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting, both sides agreed on an action plan for diversification of the trade



President of India, Pratibha Devisingh Patil and the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, at the ceremonial reception of the President of Philippines, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, in New Delhi on 5 October 2007.



Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, Samdech Hun Sen meeting with M. Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India, in New Delhi on 8 December 2007.

basket while facilitating expansion of trade and investment with a view to achieve two-way trade worth US\$ 10 billion by the year 2010. The meeting also identified new fields of bilateral co-operation ranging from special economic zones and alternative energy sources to legal assistance, biotechnology, space related applications, tele-education and tele-health.

A delegation consisting of officials from Ministry of Agriculture and representatives from the meat export industry visited Indonesia on 29-30 October 2007 to discuss lifting of the existing ban on import of Indian meat to Indonesia.

The First meeting of India-Indonesia Joint Study Group to study the feasibility of setting up a Comprehensive Economic Co-operation Agreement with Indonesia was held in Jakarta on 30-31 October 2007.

The Tata Power Company Ltd. (TPCL) signed an agreement for the purchase of 30% stake in leading Indonesian coal mines PT Kaltim Prima Coal (KPC) and PT Arutmin Indonesia for US\$ 1.3 billion. The Bank of India acquired a 76% stake in Indonesia's Bank Swadeshi for US\$ 5.24 Million. The TVS motors launched two-wheeler manufacturing operations (US\$ 80 million investment) in Karawang, Jakarta in July 2007.

Bilateral trade during the period from January-June 2007 rose by 52.4%, (as compared to the same period in 2006) to reach US\$ 3,116 million. Indian imports from Indonesia increased by 77.6% to reach US\$ 2,269 million while our exports registered a growth of 10.4% to reach US\$ 847 million.

Jawaharlal Nehru Indian Cultural Centre, Jakarta and Indian Cultural Centre, Bali continued to play an active role in promotion of cultural exchanges and understanding.

Lao PDR

Several cooperation projects under the overall ambit of development partnership between India and Lao PDR, both through bilateral and ASEAN related fora, witnessed further progress during the year.

India sanctioned a Line of Credit of US\$ 17.34 million for an agricultural and irrigation project in Lao PDR. 30 Lao nationals attended Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University for Master of Computer Applications (MCA)

Programme in July 2007 under the bilateral ICT Cooperation Programme between India and Lao PDR. India also established Lao-India Centre of English Language Training at the National University of Laos under India-ASEAN cooperation framework. The Government of India gave a grant of US\$ 100,000 to the Ministry of Health of Lao PDR to buy medical equipment for dealing with Avian Influenza.

India signed an MoU with Lao PDR for the Archaeological Survey of India to undertake restoration of Wat Phou which is UNESCO World Heritage site and is a Hindu temple pre-dating Angkor Wat.

Malaysia

The year 2007 marked the 50th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between India and Malaysia. Bilateral relations have gathered momentum in various sectors of our interaction with Malaysia as both sides followed up on the decisions taken at the Fourth India-Malaysia Joint Commission Meeting held in New Delhi in February 2007.

Commercial relations continued to build on the strength shown in 2006 as during the first seven months of 2007 bilateral trade reached US\$ 4.1 billion, an increase of nearly 16% over the same period in 2006.

On the economic front, India and Malaysia adopted the Joint Study Group Report on 11 August 2007, signed by Indian Commerce Secretary and his Malaysian counterpart which paves the way for an India-Malaysia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA).

A bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Air Services was signed by Secretary, Civil Aviation and the Secretary General in the Malaysian Ministry of Transport on 13 July 2007, endorsing the "multiple designation" provision, whereby both sides could designate any number of airlines as they wish to operate on India-Malaysia route. The MoU also significantly liberalized the capacity entitlement for both the sides. The operations of Air India Express, the budget subsidiary airlines of Air India, commenced its operations on Chennai-Kuala Lumpur sector with effect from 28 October 2007.

Indian investments into Malaysia have gathered further momentum. Reliance Industries Limited acquired Hualon Corporation in September 2007; Ballarpur Industries Limited (the Thapar Group) acquired the Sabah Forest

Industries in April 2007 and Larsen and Toubro acquired Tamco Corporate Holdings in October 2007. In September 2007, Satyam unveiled its new state-of-the-art 500 seat Global solutions Centre (GSC) in Cyberjaya as part of its ambitious plans to expand its Malaysian operations into developing its largest software hub outside India.

During the year, there have been several ministerial visits from Malaysia to India. The Minister of Higher Education, Dato' Mustapa Mohamed visited Mysore in June 2007 to attend the graduation ceremony of over 100 Malaysian students and lecturers trained by Infosys in applications of Information Technology in the corporate sector. Dato' Seri S. Samy Vellu, Minister of Works visited Kerala on 2-3 July 2007, during which an MoU was signed between the State Government and the Government of Malaysia for the establishment of a new Industrial Promotion Centre in Kinalur, Kozhikode. The Minister of International Trade and industry, Dato' Seri Rafidah Aziz led a high level business delegation to New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai on a Trade and Investment Mission from 25 November-1 December 2007. The Governor of the Central Bank of Malaysia, Bank Negara, Tan Sri Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz visited India in November 2007, during which two separate MoUs were concluded with Indian Railways and the Indian Institute of Banking and Finance (IIBF) respectively.

Our defence relations with Malaysia were further strengthened with India agreeing to train Royal Malaysia Air Force personnel. The Second Annual Navy-to-Navy Staff talks in Kuala Lumpur from 23-27 April 2007.

Some of the important visits to Malaysia in the field of defence included: a group of 10 officers of Higher Air Command Course from College of Air Warfare, Secunderabad visited Malaysia as a part of foreign country tour from 15-18 April 2007. Lt Gen Thomas Mathew, AVSM, AG visited Kuala Lumpur to represent Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) at the Kuala Lumpur International Tattoo (KLIT) Event on 8 September 2007. A group of 16 officers comprising Directing Staff and student officers of 36th Higher Command Course of Army War College Mhow visited Malaysia as a part of foreign country tour on 11-12 September 2007. Commodore Rajeev Sawhney, Executive Director, National Maritime Foundation and Cdr Sandeep Tandon, JDNO, Integrated

HQ of Ministry of Defence (Navy) visited Malaysia in connection with meeting on the "Enhancement of Safety of Navigation and Environmental Protection of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore" from 12 -15 Mar 2007.

From the Malaysian side a group of 53 officers from Malaysian Armed Forces Staff Course (MAFSC) visited India from 24 June- July 2007.

A 50-strong road expedition (Cape Town-Kuala Lumpur) team from Malaysian Ministry of Defence, headed by the Malaysian Deputy Minister of Defence, travelled through India (Wagah Border – Moreh) from 20-26 August 2007. The team was provided full support and assistance by Indian Armed Forces enroute.

The KILO-class submarine, INS Sindhurakshak, the frigate INS Kulish and 10 member Surya Kiran aerobic team will be participating at LIMA in December 2007.

A draft MoU on Security and Welfare of Indian workers was finalized on 28 June 2007.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations, a number of high profile cultural events were organized in various parts of Malaysia.

New Zealand

On 2 October 2007, Mayor of Wellington, Kerry Prendergast and Governor General, Anand Satyanand jointly unveiled the statute of Mahatma in the gardens in front of the main Railway station in Wellington. This was the first statue of a foreigner to be unveiled in New Zealand.

The New Zealand Trade Minister, Phil Goff visited India from 19-23 April 2007. At the end of his visit, he said that agreement in principle to commence a study into the implications of a free trade agreement between India and New Zealand was a useful outcome of discussions with his Indian counterpart, Kamal Nath. During 2007, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Michael Cullen, visited India. The New Zealand Labour Minister, Trevor Mallard and the Youth Affairs and Sports Minister, Nanaia Mahuta also visited India to attend multilateral Conferences and held meetings with their counterparts.

The Minister of Panchayati Raj, Sports and Youth Affairs, Mani Shankar Aiyar visited New Zealand from 25-29 March 2007 to participate in the Commonwealth Conference on Local Government in Auckland.

The Minister of Textiles, Shankersinh Vaghela visited New Zealand from 5-8 July 2007.

Joint Trade Committee and Joint Business Council meetings were held in New Zealand from 24-26 October 2007.

Papua New Guinea

India's relations with Papua New Guinea have been growing steadily. Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have extended support for India's candidature to various international organizations such as UN Board of Auditors (Asian Seat), Non Permanent Seat of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) from Asian Region, World Meteorological Organization and Commonwealth Secretary General.

Under the ITEC Programme, Government of India has approved grant of financial assistance of Rs. 10 lakhs to Papua New Guinea for setting up of an HIV/AIDS resource Centre.

As part of Government of India's Regional Assistance Initiatives for Pacific Island countries, a grant-in-aid of US\$ 100,000 had been approved for Fiji and Nauru for supply of equipment and materials for social and economic programmes and for sustainable development.

India extended an assistance of US\$ 100,000 for relief and rehabilitation of the Tsunami victims.

A major oil company, Oil Search Ltd. and Indian company, Oswal Projects signed an MoU for the supply of natural gas to the world's largest ammonia and urea fertiliser plant in Port Moresby. Another Indian company is in the processing of setting up a coconut oil extraction plant in Port Moresby.

Philippines

Bilateral relations between India and the Philippines have acquired new directions and momentum following the State visit of President Kalam in February 2006, visit of Prime Minister in January 2007 for the ASEAN – India and East Asia Summits and the State visit of Philippines President, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to India from 4-6 October 2007. The following Declarations / Agreement / MoUs were signed during the visit:

- Joint Declaration on a Framework of Bilateral Cooperation

- Agreement on the Establishment of a Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation
- Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism
- Memorandum of Agreement on Exemption of Visa Requirements for Diplomatic Passport holders
- Memorandum of Agreement on Enhanced Cooperation in the Field of Renewable Energy.
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institutes of India and the Philippines.
- MoU between the Exim Bank of India and the Government of Philippines on the extension of a US\$ 15 million Letter of Credit (LoC) to the Philippines.
- MoU between the State Trading Corporation of India Ltd. and the Philippines International Trading Corporation.
- MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Health and Medicine.

Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee led the Indian delegation to the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM)/Post Ministerial Conferences (PMC)/ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meetings in August 2007.

Three naval ships of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy, namely INS Jyoti, INS Rana and INS Kuthar visited Manila from 5-9 May 2007 on a "Goodwill Visit".

The Philippines Bureau of Immigration has removed Indian nationals, along with Chinese nationals, from the Bureau's list of high risk/ restricted category for issuance of visa. This has been done in view of the rising Indian investment in the Philippines, especially in the IT sector as well as to attract the growing Indian outbound travelers for tourism.

In the last two years there has been a sharp increase in Indian students joining the private pilot training schools in the Philippines to obtain commercial pilot license. The number of Indian students in local medical colleges has also increased significantly in the last two years.

Singapore

The year 2007-08 witnessed a number of new initiatives to further strengthen the existing friendly relations



Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee with Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Hsein Loong during his visit, 20 June 2007.



Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed calling on King George Topou V., Kingdom of Tonga during his visit in connection with the Pacific Dialogue Forum meeting, 19 October 2007.

between India and Singapore. The establishment of a Joint Ministerial Committee led by the Foreign Ministers to monitor the progress of bilateral relations was noteworthy. An agreement on this was signed on 19 June 2007 during the visit of the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee to Singapore from 18-20 June 2007. The two countries have also agreed to set up a bilateral Security Round Table which would provide forum for the security agencies of the two countries to discuss issues of mutual interest. Additionally, it has also been agreed to establish a Track II Strategic Dialogue which will provide an opportunity for senior figures with policy making experiences to discuss bilateral and international issues of mutual interest.

The signing of MoU between the two countries which would facilitate conducting of bilateral exercises and joint training for the Air forces of the two countries was also a significant development. Similar MoU for the Armies of the two countries is in the process of finalization.

Economic relations between the two countries also showed steady progress. The first review of CECA was successfully concluded on 1 October 2007. The two countries have also agreed to establish an India-Singapore CEO Forum to advise the two governments and identify priority areas for cooperation. Further, to assist Indian companies in Singapore and encourage them to articulate shared concerns, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)-India Business Forum was launched on 20 June 2007 during the visit of the Minister of External Affairs to Singapore.

A new forum to represent Indian companies in Singapore - akin to a chamber of commerce - was launched on 20 June 2007 by the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee. The new India Business Forum (IBF) affiliated to the CII, aims to represent the rapidly growing number of Indian companies - estimated at around 2,600 - that have established operations in Singapore.

Singapore's proposal to set up the Singapore-India Economic Zone is also progressing. M/s Ascendas led consortium of companies has already received, in principle, approval for their SEZ proposal in Tamil Nadu.

The CII organised an education-focused reverse mission from South India to Singapore on 23-24 April 2007. The delegates were from the higher education institutions in South India. The key objectives of the reverse mission

were to exchange and share best practices used in both the countries as well as to explore collaboration opportunities.

The first East Asia Energy Ministers' Meeting (EMM) was held on 23 August 2007 in Singapore. Secretary (Petroleum and Natural Gas) represented India at the Meeting.

Some of the important visits were:

- Singapore Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, Raymond Lim visited India in April 2007. The Minister was accompanied by a 20-member delegation. During the Minister's visit to Chennai, Air India and Singapore Airport Terminal Services (SATS) signed an MoU in Chennai on 2 May 2007.
- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy along with a high level delegation visited Singapore from 11-13 May 2007. During the visit, he inaugurated a Road Show/Seminar on Investment Opportunities in Andhra Pradesh organized by the Singapore-Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI).
- An Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers accompanied by senior Central/State government officials, from West Bengal, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Orissa visited Singapore from 21-23 May 2007 to study implementation of GST in Singapore.
- The Defence Minister, A.K. Antony visited Singapore from 31 May-2 June 2007 to participate in the annual Shangri-La Dialogue.
- The Minister of State for Education and Manpower in Singapore, Gan Kim Yong visited India from 29-31 August 2007.
- The Singaporean Minister of State for Trade and Industry, S Iswaran visited Chennai, Puducherry and Mumbai from 24-27 September 2007. The Minister was leading an infrastructure mission to India to attend the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Real Estate Summit at Mumbai on 27 September 2007.
- The Singaporean Defence Minister, Teo Chee Hean visited India from 14 -18 October 2007 in connection with the bilateral artillery exercise at Deolali.

- Singapore Minister Mentor, Lee Kuan Yew visited India in October 2007. He again visited India in December 2007 in connection with the Citi Asia-Pacific Business Leaders' Summit Singapore.
- Foreign Minister, George Yeo visited India in November 2007.
- Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission visited Singapore from 15-17 November 2007.
- Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh paid a two-day visit to Singapore on 20-21 November 2007 to attend the 3rd East Asia Summit and the 6th India-ASEAN Summit.

The second annual Defence Working Group (DWG) meeting was held at Singapore on 3-4 May 2007. The visit by our Naval Chief to Singapore for IMDEX in May 2007 was the other important high level interactions during this period. The Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), for the first-ever time, also participated in a multilateral exercise, Malabar 07-02, with the US Navy, Japanese Navy and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) from 4-8 September 2007 in the Bay of Bengal. The Armoured and Artillery trainings were also conducted at Babina and Deolali in February-April 2007 and October-November 2007, respectively. The SINDEXT series of exercises between the two air forces was also conducted in November-December 2007 at Kalaikunda.

The fourth annual Defence Policy Dialogue (DPD), co-chaired by the Defence Secretaries of India and Singapore was held at New Delhi, from 8-10 October 2007. A long-term MoU for Air Force bilateral exercises in India, along with the requisite financial protocol, has also been signed on 9 October 2007, by the two Defence Secretaries, during the fourth Defence Policy Dialogue.

An Indian officer has also been seconded to the newly formed Information Sharing Centre (ISC) of the Regional Cooperation Against Armed Piracy (ReCAAP) from May 2007.

On the cultural front, proposal for setting up Nalanda International University has received support from Singapore government. Nalanda Mentor Group, headed by Prof. Amartya Sen, which had been set up by Government of India, held its first meeting in Singapore in July 2007. A major exhibition "On the Nalanda Trail: Buddhism in India, China and Southeast Asia" was

organized at Asian Civilizations Museum. After the conclusion of 3rd East Asia Summit and ASEAN Summit, Singapore Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong and his wife hosted a Reception and Viewing of the above Exhibition on 21 November 2007. Singapore Prime Minister and Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh addressed the gathering which consisted of all the Heads of States/Governments from the EAS and EU along with their spouses.

Thailand

The 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Thailand was celebrated in 2007. The bilateral relationship progressed well during the year.

The highlight of the year was the State visit of Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont to India from 25-27 June 2007. An MoU on Enhancement of Cooperation in the Field of Renewable Energy and the Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2007-09 were signed during the visit.

Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn visited India twice during the year. Her first visit, which included New Delhi, Anand, Ooty, Mysore and Kolkata was from 5-10 March 2007. She again visited New Delhi on 8-9 August 2007 to inaugurate an exhibition of photographs taken by her during earlier visits to India, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Kirik-krai Jirapaet, Minister of Commerce visited India on 11-12 April 2007 at the head of a business delegation. On a separate visit later in the year, he visited the North Eastern States of India from 22-25 June 2007.

Sawanit Kongsiri, Deputy Foreign Minister led a 22-member delegation of Thai businessmen to India for a Road Show from 28 June-4 July 2007.

Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister and Industry Minister Kosit Panpiemras led a delegation of senior officials and business executives to India from 28 August-4 September 2007.

The Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee visited Thailand from 13-16 September 2007 for the Fifth Meeting of the India-Thailand Joint Commission.

The Minister for Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs and Sports

and Development of the North Eastern Region, Mani Shankar Aiyar visited Thailand from 22-24 March 2007 to promote the Third North East Business Summit that was held in New Delhi on 10-11 April 2007. Later in the year the Minister again visited Thailand from 31 October–5 November 2007.

Bilateral trade increased from US\$ 2286.89 million in 2005-06 to US\$ 3189.96 million in 2006-07, an increase of 39.49%. India's exports increased from US\$ 1075.31 million to US\$ 1444.35 million, an increase of 34.32%. India's imports from Thailand increased from US\$ 1211.58 million to US\$ 1745.61 million, an increase of 44.08%.

A number of meetings of the Trade Negotiating Committee of the India-Thailand FTA were held during the year. Considerable progress was made with regard to the FTA in Goods. Discussions have also been initiated on the FTA in Services and the Agreement on Investments.

The first round of negotiations for the review of the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) between India and Thailand of 1985 took place in Bangkok from 16-20 July 2007.

Defence Cooperation between India and Thailand has been growing steadily over the past few years. The year witnessed a number of visits from either side.

The Indian Army-Royal Thai Army combined Counter Terrorism exercise 'MAITREE 07-1' was held at SRC Ramgarh, Ranchi, India from 7-19 September 2007. Admiral Satirapan Keynon, Commander-in-Chief Royal Thai Navy visited India from 25-28 March 2007. Two rounds of Indo-Thai Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) were held during the year. The Fourth cycle of CORPAT was held from 2-4 April 2007. One ship and one Dornier aircraft from the Indian Navy and HTMS Khamronsin and one Dornier from the Royal Thai Navy participated in the patrol. This was followed by the Fifth cycle of CORPAT, which was held from 31 October-7 November 2007. INS Trinkat and one Dornier aircraft from the Indian Navy and HTMS Phuket and one Dornier from the Royal Thai Navy participated in the patrol.

On the request of Royal Thai Navy the PASSEX exercise was held between Indian Navy and Royal Thai Navy ships on 22 May 2007. INS Rana and INSS Ranjit from the Indian Navy and HTMS Chaophraya and HTMS

Khamronsin from the Royal Thai Navy participated in this exercise.

Fifteen members each from the Indian Air Force and the Royal Thai Air Force visited each other's countries under the IAF-RTAF Mid-Junior level officers exchange visit from 19-25 August 2007. A nine aircraft aerobatic display by the Suryakiran Aerobatic Team was held in Bangkok on 12 December 2007.

There was substantial cooperation between India and Thailand in the field of defence training. A group of 14 cadets from the Chulalongkorn Royal Military Academy (CRMA) visited India from 22-29 October 2007 under the ongoing programme of cooperation with the Indian Military Academy. A National Defence College Delegation led by Maj Gen G D Bakshi SM VSM, Senior Directing Staff (Army) with 14 course members visited Thailand from 20-25 May 2007.

A number of Indian cultural events were organized in Thailand during the course of the year. Sreekala Bharath gave a Bharatha Natyam recital at a reception hosted by the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 3 August 2007 to mark the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Following are some of the programmes organized to commemorate the 60th anniversary of establishment of India-Thailand diplomatic relations:

- An International Conference entitled "Thailand and India Relations: Partnership for Peace and Prosperity" was held on 1 August 2007 at Thammasat University by the India Studies Centre;
- A contemporary art exhibition entitled "Images of India" was held in Bangkok on 14 September 2007;
- A cultural programme "India's Musical Heritage – A Tribute to the Great Poet Saints" was held in Bangkok on 25 August 2007.

Vietnam

The year 2007 was a landmark year in bilateral relations with Vietnam. The high point was the visit of Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung to India from 4-6 July 2007. The two Prime Ministers signed a Joint Declaration elevating the bilateral relationship to a "strategic partnership".

An Indian Parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha Somnath Chatterjee visited Vietnam

from 23-27 March 2007. The Indian parliamentary delegation's visit at this level was after a gap of over two decades.

Prime Minister of Vietnam, Nguyen Tan Dung paid a State Visit to India from 4-6 July 2007. The fifth meeting of the India-Vietnam Joint Business Council was also held in New Delhi during the visit. The two Prime Ministers signed a Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership between India and Vietnam. The following agreements were also signed during the visit viz. : (i) MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Fisheries and Aquaculture (ii) MoU between the Department of Atomic Energy, India and the Ministry of Science and Technology, Vietnam (iii) Work Plan in the Field of Agriculture 2007-09 (iv) Cultural Exchange Programme between India and Vietnam for the years 2007-10 (v) MoU for Establishing a Centre of English Language Training in Danang City, Vietnam (vi) MoU on Exchange of Properties and Land for the Respective Diplomatic Missions of India and Vietnam (vii) Educational Exchange Programme (viii) MoU on Cooperation between Vietnam Steel Corporation and Tata Steel Ltd. A concessional line of credit of US\$ 45 million for Vietnam was also announced by India.

Home Minister, Shivraj V. Patil visited Vietnam from 8-10 October 2007 and held discussions with the Minister of Public Security of Vietnam, Le Hong Anh. The two Ministers signed an agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. A draft MoU on cooperation between the Ministry of Home Affairs of India and the Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam was also initialed. The Minister also unveiled a bust of former Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi in a park named after her in Hanoi.

TATA Steel signed with Vietnam Steel Corporation (VSC) in Hanoi on 29 May 2007 an agreement for setting up an integrated steel mill in Vietnam. The proposed steel complex with an estimated capacity of 4.5 million tons per year and expected investment of US\$ 3.5 billion will be built after completion of a feasibility study. Tata Steel will also have a stake of 30% in the Thach Khe Iron Ore Joint Stock Company which will undertake mining. Subsequently on 31 October 2007, a MoU underscoring the partnership was signed between Tata Steel and VSC in Ha Noi for setting up a cold rolled steel plant in Vung Ang Industrial Zone in Ha Tinh province. Essar Steel had earlier signed on 12 February 2007 a Joint Venture agreement with VSC and Vietnam General Rubber

Corporation (GERUCO) for setting up a hot strip mill in Vietnam with 2 million tons per annum capacity.

Vice Minister of Trade and Industry of Vietnam, Nguyen Thanh Bien accompanied by 22 enterprises visited India from 12-29 November 2007 to participate in the India International Trade Fair in New Delhi.

Defence exchanges continued during the year. Colonel General Nguyen Huy Hieu visited India for the third meeting of India-Vietnam Security Dialogue held in New Delhi on 28-29 November 2007. Two Indian Navy ships, namely INS Mysore and INS Ranjit visited Ho Chi Minh City on a goodwill visit from 7-11 May 2007. A Coast Guard ship ICGS Sagar visited Ho Chi Minh City from 12-14 May 2007. A group of 17 Officers from Higher Command Course of Army War College led by Maj Gen RK Loomba visited Vietnam from 2-6 September 2007. A contingent of 20 members from Vietnam People's Army participated in the World Military Games held in Hyderabad in October 2007. A group of 32 Officers from Higher Defence Management Course of College of Defence Management visited Vietnam from 11-14 November 2007.

A series of activities were held in both countries to mark the 35th anniversary of establishment of full diplomatic relations. Messages of felicitation were exchanged between the two sides at the levels of President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. A commemorative function was organized by the Embassy of India in Hanoi on 5 January 2007. A seminar titled "India's emergence and prospects for Vietnam-India relations" on 19 June 2007 at the Institute for South East Asian Studies of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences was organised.

Pacific Islands Forum

India attended the 5th Post-Forum Dialogue (PFD) Partners' Meeting between India and the Pacific Islands Forum in Tonga on 18-19 October 2007 after the conclusion of the 38th Pacific Island Forum Summit Meeting there. At the Plenary Session held on 18 October 2007, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga as the Forum Chair briefed the leaders of the delegations of PFD Partners about the deliberations of the Pacific Leaders' Summit Meeting and the Forum Communiqué. Separate discussions were also held on climate change, energy, fisheries, tourism and health.

The following assistance package announced by the Minister of State, E. Ahamed at the Plenary was well received:

- Grant-in-aid of US\$ 100,000 each for 14 eligible Pacific Island countries for the supply of equipment and materials for social and economic programmes and for sustainable development.
- A 'Workshop on Sustainable Development' for officials of Pacific Island countries to be organized by the Tata Energy Research Institute in Suva.
- A course for diplomats of the Pacific Island Countries in the Foreign Service Institute in New Delhi.

- An offer of continued training opportunities (67 scholarships for 2007-08) to all Pacific Island countries under India's ITEC program.
- The grant of one scholarship for undergraduate or post graduate studies to each Pacific Island Country.

The Consultative Meeting between India and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat was held on 19 October 2007. The Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed also held bilateral meetings with leaders of delegations from Fiji, Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Vanuatu, UK, PNG, Samoa and Solomon Islands in Tonga and discussed matters of mutual interest.

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Japan

India-Japan relations have undergone a significant and qualitative shift in recent years, propelled by the successful regular summit level exchanges. Prime Minister Koizumi and Prime Minister Abe visited India in April 2005 and August 2007 respectively. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Japan in December 2006. The Joint Statement signed during Prime Minister's visit in 2006 established an India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership that provides both the vision for chartering the future course of the relations and also a detailed action plan in that direction. The India-Japan "Strategic and Global Partnership" is based on five pillars of cooperation viz., Political; Defence and Security Cooperation; Comprehensive Economic Partnership; Science and Technology Initiative; People to People Exchanges and Cooperation in Regional and Multilateral fora.

Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe paid an official visit to India from 21-23 August 2007. The two Prime Ministers agreed that India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership has the largest potential for growth. In recognition of the congruence of interests, both Prime Ministers signed a Joint Statement on the Roadmap for New Dimensions to the Strategic and Global Partnership. They agreed to broaden the strategic dialogue at all levels, to qualitatively upgrade exchanges in the security and defence fields, to set a trade target of US\$ 20 billion by 2010, to conclude a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement as soon as possible and to initiate a working group on possible collaboration in establishing a new Indian Institute of Technology (IIT). A separate joint statement on enhancement of energy security and environmental protection was also signed. In his speech to Parliament, Prime Minister Abe said that Japan will continue offering Official Development Assistance to India. He was accompanied by a large business delegation and several Presidents of leading universities.

The upswing in relations has been accompanied by a number of ministerial, official and business visits in 2007.

The Japanese Foreign Minister, Taro Aso visited India on 3 April 2007 for the SAARC summit; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister, Toshikatsu Matsuoka visited India from 12-16 April 2007 to attend the WTO G-6 meeting; and Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Fuyushiba visited in April-May 2007. The Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Akira Amari visited India in June-July 2007 for the first Ministerial level Policy Dialogue and the 2nd meeting of the Energy Dialogue. The Japanese Defence Minister, Koike visited New Delhi on 23-24 August 2007. Vice President of the Democratic Party of Japan Katsuya Okada led a delegation to India in January 2008. Finance Minister Nukaga visited New Delhi in January 2008.

Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee visited Japan on 22-23 March 2007 for the first Strategic Dialogue with the Japanese Foreign Minister. He also called on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and had meetings with Defence Minister Kyuma, Chief Cabinet Secretary Shiozaki, Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Amari and Minister for Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MLIT), Fuyushiba. Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe and other Japanese interlocutors underscored the importance of India and Japan working together on regional issues and at international forums.

Other high-level delegations from India included visits to Japan by Minister of Textiles (4-6 April 2007), Commerce and Industries Minister (23-25 May 2007), Minister of State for Textiles (22-25 July 2007), Minister of State for Industry (25-28 July 2007), Minister for Water Resources (5-8 August 2007), Minister Tourism and Culture (12-14 September 2007), Minister Urban Development (28-31 October 2007), National Security Adviser (6-7 August 2007), Chief Minister of Gujarat (16-21 April 2007). In addition, there were also visits by the Foreign Secretary, Commerce Secretary, Defence Secretary, Air Chief Marshal and Director General of the Coast Guard. The sharp jump in high-level exchanges has also been accompanied by more broad based exchanges

of business delegations, parliamentary delegations and interactions between provincial and local governments of both countries.

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh met the new Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in Singapore on 21 November 2007.

A High Level Strategic Economic Dialogue has been established in order to develop an overarching dialogue mechanism on all economic issues. The first meeting, co-chaired by Finance Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Kohno, was held in New Delhi on 18 July 2007. It was agreed during Prime Minister Abe's visit to institutionalize this dialogue.

Bilateral economic relations have vast potential for growth. During Prime Minister Abe's visit, it was agreed to work towards a trade target of US\$ 20 billion by the year 2010. After a period of stagnation, recent trade figures indicate healthy growth in bilateral trade. Two-way trade in 2006-07, according to our Ministry of Commerce and Industry statistics, was US\$ 7458 million (exports at US\$ 2863 and imports at US\$ 4595 million), an increase of 14% over previous year.

Japan presently ranks fifth largest in cumulative foreign direct investment flows into India. Japanese companies have made actual investment of US\$ 2.58 billion between 1991 and May 2007, excluding FDI inflows received for acquisition of existing shares, Reserve Bank of India's NRI Schemes, stock swapped and advance pending issue of shares. Most direct Japanese investment in India is in manufacturing industries, focused on the domestic market.

For the last four years, India has been the largest recipient of Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) (India received Rs 6,900 crores equivalent to ¥ 185 billion in 2006-07 which is 23% of Japan's global ODA). It was agreed, during Prime Minister Abe's visit, that ODA would continue to play an increasing role in areas including infrastructure development, environment, energy, poverty reduction and social sector development.

The two sides have also initiated negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) beginning January/February 2007. This dialogue is led by the Commerce Secretary from the Indian side and Deputy Foreign Minister from the Japanese side. Five

rounds of talks have been held so far. Both sides have agreed to complete negotiations in a two-year time frame.

The proposal for the development of Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) was agreed during the visit of Prime Minister to Japan in December 2006. The alignment of the 1483 km DMIC is via Ahmedabad, Palampura, Phulera, Rewari and Dadri. A Joint Task Force (JTF), co-chaired by the Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) and Japanese Vice Minister, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) has submitted an initial Concept Paper. During Prime Minister Abe's visit the two sides confirmed that they would work together closely for the establishment of the Project Development Fund for DMIC in order to commence preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPR). The fourth meeting of JTF was held in New Delhi in November 2007.

Japan has conveyed its readiness to assist in the Dedicated Freight Corridors project through ODA/STEP loan assistance. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) study has been completed in October 2007. The two freight corridors will run on Mumbai-Delhi (Western Corridor) and Delhi-Howrah (Eastern Corridors) routes. Japanese side reaffirmed its willingness to consider financial support for the project during Prime Minister Abe's visit. Details are being discussed between the two sides.

The bilateral Consultative Mechanism for High Technology met twice in the year in May 2007 and November 2007 with the objective to implement the understanding reached during Prime Minister Abe's visit to make further progress in facilitating two-way high technology trade and to address matters relating to their respective export control systems.

India-Japan Energy Dialogue, co-chaired by Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission of India and the Minister of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, met twice in the year, in April 2007 and July 2007. The objective of the Dialogue is to promote cooperation in the energy sector in a comprehensive manner.

Defence and security has emerged as an important area of bilateral relations. A calendar of events for 2007 was finalized for promoting exchanges and cooperation in an institutionalized framework. The annual Defence Policy Dialogue at Secretary-level was held in April 2007. Indian

Naval Ships visited Japan for goodwill exercises (April 2007). India's Chief of Air Staff and the Chief of Army Staff visited Japan in January and April 2007 respectively. A delegation from the Japan National Institute of Defence Studies led by its President visited India in August 2007. Japanese Defence Minister, Y. Koike visited India on 24-25 August 2007. India and Japan have also established a Comprehensive Security Dialogue (CSD) and Military to Military talks.

Science and Technology cooperation is emerging as a key element of the strategic partnership. Under the Science and Technology Initiative, the two sides are working on launching joint Research and Development Programme in areas such as nanotechnology, life science and information and communication technology; and collaboration in the area of scientific deep sea drilling. A Letter of Intent was signed in July 2007 in Tokyo, which would permit us to construct a "beam line" at a Japanese facility, KEK in Tsukuba at our own cost, for experiments in high-energy physics.

The Festival of Japan in India was inaugurated on 13 February 2007 in New Delhi. Year 2007 was designated as the "India-Japan Tourism Exchange Year". The Joint Statement on Tourism Exchange has set a target of 300,000 visitors between the two countries by 2010 and 500,000 by 2015.

The first-ever India-Japan dialogue of Vice-chancellor/President on Academic exchange among higher educational institutions of the two countries was convened during Prime Minister Abe's visit in August 2007. It was decided that the two sides would initiate a Working Group to study and explore possible collaboration in setting up a new IIT.

Republic of Korea (ROK)

Relations between India and Republic of Korea have become more intense and diversified in the recent years. At the political level, these relations are excellent and devoid of any irritants. The increase in the high level visits, strengthening of commercial ties, contacts in the field of art and culture have provided impetus to India-Korea bilateral ties.

At the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Song Min Soon was present as an Observer. He expressed interest

to share experience in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), government innovation, human resource development and other areas in the economic field and the subsequent proposal for holding a special training programme for SAARC countries under Republic of Korea's Cooperative Project to SAARC.

The Minister of National Defence of Republic of Korea, Kim Jang Soo, who visited India from 29-31 May 2007, reiterated willingness to explore joint research, production and marketing of defence equipment.

There are twinning arrangements between the Gyeonggi province and Maharashtra state and between the cities of Incheon Metropolitan city and Kolkata and Seoul and Delhi.

The fifth session of the India-ROK Joint Commission was held in Seoul from 16-18 September 2007. The Minister of External Affairs and his counterpart co-chaired the meeting. The Minister of External Affairs also called on the President of the Republic of Korea, Speaker of the National Assembly, and met with the Minister of National Defence. India and ROK have also initiated mechanism of holding Foreign Policy Security Dialogue, which is a comprehensive dialogue covering the whole gamut of bilateral relations and regional and international security issues.

Bilateral trade between India and ROK has shown impressive growth in recent years. It increased to US\$ 9.17 billion in 2006. During the year 2007 it has reached US\$ 11.22 billion, surpassing the target that was set for the year 2010. In 2007 (upto November 2007) it reached US\$ 10.2 billion, a target that we had set for year 2010. ROK is ranked 9th in the Foreign Direct Investment and is a major investment partner. Bilateral economic engagement is likely to get a major impetus after the two sides conclude a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), negotiations on which have reached an advanced stage. ROK has the distinction of being the first OECD country to commence negotiations on CEPA with India.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

The relations between India and DPRK continued to be cordial with a focus on humanitarian and human resource development assistance. Culture, sports and education exchanges continued to make progress.

The two sides continued their bilateral exchanges with Vice Foreign Minister, Kim Young Il visiting India in May 2007 to hold Foreign Office Consultations with Secretary (East). Discussions involved reviewing bilateral relations and steps for future cooperation.

India continued to provide human resource development and other forms of assistance to DPRK. Another consignment of 2000 metric tonnes of rice was sent to DPRK in January 2008. We had earlier sent 2000 metric-tonnes of rice as humanitarian assistance in February 2006. We have also agreed to assist with revival of agriculture and are in the process of supplying farm equipment and seeds to the Korea-India Friendship Farm.

Indian cultural troupes made a strong presence at the April Spring Friendship Art Festival held in Pyongyang from 10-18 April 2007. DPRK sent a 171-strong contingent to participate in the 4th International Military Sports Council (CISM), Military World Games, held from 14-21 October 2007 at Hyderabad.

Our assistance for development of human resources in DPRK continued to expand. We increased the training slots for technical training under our ITEC programme from 13 to 18.

India and DPRK have continued cooperation at UN bodies and other international organizations.

Mongolia

India's traditionally friendly and cordial relations with Mongolia have steadily improved over the years, following the decision to elevate it to a "new level of partnership" when Mongolian Prime Minister, Engkhbayar visited India in 2004. India continued to provide technical and economic cooperation to Mongolia in higher education, agriculture, information and communication technology and human resource development.

India-Mongolia cooperation in the field of defence progressed well during the year. Minister of National Defence of Mongolia, M. Sonompil led a five-member Mongolian delegation to the 9th Asian Security Conference organized by Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) on 9-10 February 2007. The Mongolian Minister met the Minister of Defence and also visited the Aero India 2007 held in Bangalore from 3-11 February 2007. Chief of the Mongolian Air Force and Air Defence, General Ts. Byambajav attended the International

Aerospace Power Seminar as well as the Aero India 2007 show at Bangalore in February 2007.

The 3rd India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise took place in Mongolia from 26 August-6 September 2007. A group of 46 army officers participated in this Exercise. Deputy Defence Minister and Chief of Armed Forces of Mongolia and DGMO, Lt. Gen. Mohan Pande attended the opening event.

The regular interactions between the National Security Councils (NSCs) of India and Mongolia continued during the year. A five-member delegation from National Security Council of India led by Chairman JIC, Dr S D Pradhan held the second round of dialogue between the two NSCs in Ulaanbaatar in July-August 2007. Executive Secretary Mongolian NSC, P. Sundev visited India from 18-22 November 2007.

In the field of education, the Rajiv Gandhi Vocational Training Centre and the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Centre for Excellence in Information and Communications Technology which were set up with Indian assistance in 1992 and 2002 respectively have been functioning well. The Indian Cultural Centre, located in the Rajiv Gandhi Vocational Training Centre, has also made significant contributions in strengthening cultural relations between India and Mongolia.

The India-Mongolia Joint School was inaugurated in 2003 under an MoU signed in 2002. The MoU has been extended for five more years, up to 2012, through exchange of letters. An Impact Assessment Team led by S.C. Kunthia, Joint Secretary, Department of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, visited Mongolia from 5-12 December 2007 to study the school's performance and consider the question of upgrading the school to a full fledged English medium High School under CBSE curriculum.

India provided 30 scholarships to Mongolian nationals under Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) and the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme (GCSS) for pursuing higher studies in India.

Mongolia utilized 50 Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) training slots during 2006-2007 – a 100% utilization – in 11 disciplines including English language, hotel management, small scale business,

computer hardware and software, management development programme, textile, etc.

A “Special Training course on Semen & Embryo Transfer of Goats” was organized under ITEC in which three scientists from Mongolia were imparted training at the

Central Institute for Research on Goats, Mathura. The three-month course began in November 2007.

India has agreed to provide 5000 metric-tonnes of Rice and 5000 metric-tonnes of sugar as emergency food assistance to Mongolia.

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India continued to maintain friendly and cordial relations with the countries of this region during the year. India strengthened its engagement with individual countries through exchange of visits, meetings, including Inter-Governmental Commissions, Foreign Office Consultations and Working Groups, signing of agreements of cooperation in diverse fields, visits of trade and scientific delegations, participation in exhibitions and cultural exchanges. The year marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Russian Federation and completion of fifteen years of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. A Conference of the Heads of Indian Missions in Eurasia Division countries was held in New Delhi from 3-5 December 2007 to discuss various areas of interest between the Ministry and the Missions. As an Observer state in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, India participated in the meetings of its Councils of Heads of State and Government.

Russia

The strategic partnership between India and Russia was further consolidated during the year through exchange of high-level visits and signing of documents, particularly in the fields of defence, space, science and technology, economic cooperation, counter-narcotics and culture. The Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh paid an official visit to Moscow on 11 - 12 November 2007 and held delegation-level talks with the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin. He also met the Prime Minister of Russia, Viktor Zubkov and attended a business meeting with senior Indian and Russian trade and industry representatives. The following documents were signed during the visit: (i) Agreement on Cooperation in Development and Production of Multi-Role Transport Aircraft; (ii) Letters of Exchange (on utilization of Rupee debt funds for Russian investments in India); (iii) Agreement on Cooperation to Combat Illicit Trafficking

in Narcotics, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors; (iv) Agreement between the Indian Space Research Organization and the Federal Space Agency of the Russian Federation in the Field of Joint Moon Exploration.

The Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Viktor Zubkov, accompanied by a large business delegation, visited India on 12-13 February 2008. He participated in the Second India-Russia Forum on Trade and Investment and inaugurated the 'Year of Russia' in India in 2008 which will witness year long programme of events in diverse fields including culture, trade and economy, and science and technology.

Other high level visits during the year included the following:

- Minister of Textiles, Shankersinh Vaghela visited Moscow in April 2007.
- Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath visited St. Petersburg to participate in the St. Petersburg Economic Forum on 9-10 June 2007.
- Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, Shyam Saran visited Moscow on 13 - 14 August 2007.
- National Security Adviser, M.K. Narayanan visited Moscow on 28-29 August 2007.
- President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Dr. Karan Singh visited Moscow from 7-10 October 2007 to discuss cultural cooperation, particularly preparations for 'Year of Russia in India' in 2008 and 'Year of India in Russia' in 2009.
- The Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee visited Moscow from 11-13 October 2007 to co-chair the 13th session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC).
- Minister of Defence, A.K. Antony visited Moscow



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting with the President of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir V. Putin, at a function, in Moscow on 12 November 2007.



Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee meeting with the President of the Republic of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, in New Delhi on 16 April 2007.

from 17-19 October 2007 to co-chair the 7th session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation.

- Acting Secretary of the Security Council of Russia, Gen. Valentin Sobolev visited India from 28 October-1 November 2007.
- Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora visited Moscow from 25-27 November 2007.

Besides, the following high level meetings also took place on the sidelines of multilateral events:

- Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh briefly met President Putin at the Summit of G-8 and Outreach countries in Heiligendamm, Germany from 6-8 June 2007.
- The Minister of External Affairs met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on 1 August 2007 on the sidelines of the ARF/ASEAN/EAS meeting in Manila.
- The Minister of External Affairs had a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Russia, Sergei Lavrov on 24 October 2007 on the sidelines of the India-Russia-China Trilateral Foreign Ministers meeting held in Harbin, China.

Foreign Office Consultations between the Foreign Secretary and the Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister, Andrei Denisov took place in Delhi on 9 April 2007. The following consultations on specific topics also took place between the Foreign Ministries of India and Russia: Central Asia and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (May 2007, Moscow) and United Nations related issues (May 2007, Moscow). The Joint Coordination Group (JCG) of the Security Councils of the two countries met in Moscow in June 2007 under the chairmanship of S.D. Pradhan, Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee and V. Nazarov, Deputy Secretary of the Russian Security Council. Another meeting of the Joint Consultative Group took place on 30 October 2007 during the visit of the Acting Secretary of the Security Council of Russia, Gen. Valentin Sobolev to India.

During the visit of the Minister of Defence to Russia for the 7th meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation, an agreement on the joint development and production of prospective multi-role fighter aircraft was signed. India and Russia conducted joint naval exercise in the Sea of Japan from 24-27 April

2007 and counter-terrorism exercise with the joint participation of the Indian Army, the Indian Air Force and the Russian Airborne Forces from 11-20 September 2007 in the Pskov region of Russia.

The five Joint Working Groups under the Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation: (i) Trade and Economy (ii) Energy (iii) Metallurgy and Mining (iv) Technology and (v) Tourism and Culture discussed cooperation in their respective fields in Moscow between August and October 2007. The Joint Task Force on Mutual Financial Obligations met in Moscow and the Sub-Group on Banking met in Jaipur in October 2007. The Joint Study Group set up in 2006 to find ways and means to increase bilateral trade and investment and examine the feasibility of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement finalized its Report during its fourth meeting in Moscow in July 2007. The two countries agreed to establish a Joint Task Force to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Study Group.

The Integrated Long-Term Programme for cooperation in the field of science and technology (ILTP) completed 20 years of successful work during the year. Joint Council of the ILTP co-chaired by Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, Prof. C. N. R. Rao met in Moscow from 11-12 October 2007. During the meeting, three Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) on the setting up of joint centres on non-ferrous and rare metals, biomedical technology, and accelerators and lasers in India were signed. In August 2007, Department of Science and Technology of India and the Russian Foundation of Basic Research, Moscow signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in basic sciences.

As part of efforts to enhance bilateral relations, the “Year of Russia in India” was inaugurated in early 2008. The year-long programme covers wide-ranging events in the fields of culture, economy and commerce, science and technology, arts, etc. which will be followed by the “Year of India in Russia in 2009”.

Armenia

The Minister of State for Agriculture, Kantilal Bhuria led a delegation to Armenia from 6-7 July 2007 to attend the First International Armenian Apricot Conference in Yerevan. He held bilateral talks with the Armenian

Minister of Agriculture and discussed establishing a project for growing Armenian apricot orchards in India.

Chief Minister, National Capital Territory of Delhi, Shiela Dikshit visited Armenia from 4-6 September 2007 at the invitation of the Mayor of Yerevan. The Chief Minister discussed various areas of cooperation with the Mayor of Yerevan and called on the Prime Minister of Armenia, the Chairman of the National Assembly and the Minister for Education and Science. A Joint Statement was issued and it was decided to sign Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between Delhi and Yerevan.

Azerbaijan

A four-member Azerbaijan delegation led by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, Khalaf Khalafov visited India from 13-16 March 2007 for Foreign Office Consultations and held talks with N. Ravi, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs.

The Minister of State for Commerce, Jairam Ramesh led a twelve-member delegation to Baku from 10-12 April 2007. An agreement to establish India-Azerbaijan Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was signed. The Minister called on the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev and held meetings with the Minister of Economic Development, Minister of Industry and Energy, and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan.

In collaboration with ICCR, a ten-member traditional dance and music (vocal and instrumental) troupe visited India from 16-21 April 2007 and gave performances in Delhi, Lucknow and Haridwar.

Belarus

The Foreign Minister of Belarus, Sergei Martynov visited India on 22-23 February 2007.

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko paid a State visit to India on 15 - 16 April 2007. Five documents on cooperation in the fields of culture, science and technology, extradition, agriculture and Belarus' accession to WTO were signed and a Joint Statement was adopted.

Chief Minister, National Capital Territory of Delhi, Shiela Dikshit visited Belarus from 7-10 September 2007 at the invitation of the Mayor of Minsk to attend the 940th anniversary celebrations of the city of Minsk.

Belarus participated in the India International Trade Fair 2007 (14-28 November 2007) in New Delhi. National Day of Belarusian Science in India was held on 14-15 November 2007 and an MoU between the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce on cooperation and mutual understanding was signed during the event.

Georgia

A delegation led by Joint Secretary (FT-CIS), Ministry of Commerce and Industry visited Tbilisi from 30-31 October 2007 to discuss establishment of a joint working group on trade and economic cooperation. During the visit, the two sides agreed to cooperate in banking, agricultural, pharmaceutical and tourism sectors.

Kazakhstan

Bilateral relations between India and Kazakhstan progressed steadily. In August 2007, Foreign Office Consultations were held under the co-chairmanship of Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, N. Ravi and the Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister, Nurlan B.Yermekbayev. Union Minister of Textiles, Shankarsinh Vaghela, visited the cities of Almaty, Shymkent and Astana in Kazakhstan in March 2007 and held meetings relating to cooperation in textile sector. The Joint Working Group on Information Technology met in New Delhi in August 2007. The Indian Embassy in Kazakhstan shifted from Almaty to Astana with effect from 1 November 2007.

A Parliamentary delegation led by Serik Abdrakhmanov, Chairman, Committee for International Affairs and Defence visited India from 10-11 May 2007. The delegation called on the Speaker Lok Sabha and held meetings with the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, Laxmi Narayan Pandey to exchange views on matters of mutual interest.

Kyrgyz Republic

During the visit as the Leader of the Indian delegation to the Seventh Summit of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora called on the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Kurmanbek Bakiyev on 15 August 2007. The Minister also inaugurated the India-Kyrgyz Centre for Information Technology in Bishkek which was set up with Indian assistance.

The 4th session of the India-Kyrgyz Inter-Governmental Commission on trade, economic, scientific and technological cooperation was held in Bishkek from 1-3 September 2007 under the co-chairmanship of O.P. Arya, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce and the Kyrgyz Minister of Trade and Economy, Japarov Akylbek Usenbekovich. The Government of India decided to waive outstanding debts of Kyrgyz Republic amounting to US\$ 1.1 million as a special gesture.

The Minister of Interior of Kyrgyz Republic attended the UN Conference on Disaster Risk Management in New Delhi in November 2007 and called on the Minister of Home Affairs, Shivraj Patil.

The Foreign Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, Adnan Karabaev paid an official visit to India from 3-6 February 2008 and met the Minister of External Affairs to review bilateral relations and discuss other issues of mutual interest.

Tajikistan

A delegation led by Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, N. Ravi visited Dushanbe on 6-7 August 2007 for Foreign Office Consultations and discussions on bilateral cooperation.

The 4th Session of India-Tajikistan Inter-Governmental Commission was held in Dushanbe in October 2007. The Indian delegation was led by Commerce Secretary G.K. Pillai and the Tajik delegation by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, Gulomjon Bobozoda. A meeting of the Joint Business Council was also held in conjunction with the Commission meeting in which around 20 representatives from Indian public/private sector participated. During the visit, India and Tajikistan finalized a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement.

The Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed met the Foreign Minister of Tajikistan on the sidelines of Asia Cooperation Dialogue meeting held in Seoul in September 2007.

Turkmenistan

Bilateral relations between India and Turkmenistan remained warm and cordial. The Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora made a two-hour long transit halt in Ashgabat on 25 November 2007 and met the Head of the State Agency on management and use of

hydrocarbon resources, Baimurat Muradov to discuss bilateral cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector. An Indian delegation comprising parliamentarians and prominent scholars, including Member of Parliament, Nirmla Deshpande participated in a seminar entitled Ruhnama in Ashgabat in September 2007.

A high-level delegation led by Rashid Meredov, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan visited India from 20-22 January 2008. During the visit, the Minister of state for External Affairs, E. Ahamed and Foreign Minister Meredov co-chaired the second session of the India-Turkmen Inter Governmental Commission, which reviewed trade, economic, scientific and cultural relations between the two countries.

The delegation met the Minister of External Affairs, the Prime Minister and the Vice President and held discussions in the Ministries of Human Resource Development, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Commerce and Industry, Science and Technology and Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Ukraine

India's relations remained friendly and cordial with Ukraine, which was occupied with its domestic political developments, parliamentary elections and government formation. In October 2007, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology led a delegation to Kyiv. During the visit, an Agreement on cooperation in the field of science and technology was finalized. An official delegation of the Ministry of Transport of Ukraine visited India in April 2007 to discuss cooperation between the two countries in the area of shipping, railways and road transportation with relevant departments of the Government of India. The delegation also traveled to Mumbai to visit the port and meet port authorities.

Uzbekistan

The Minister of State for Commerce, Jairam Ramesh visited Tashkent in April 2007 to co-chair the 7th Session of India-Uzbek Inter Governmental Commission. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Uzbekistan, Abdulla Aripov co-chaired the meeting on behalf of the Uzbek side.

A meeting of India-Uzbekistan Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism was held in May 2007. A delegation

led by the Director of Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Dinesh Awasthi, visited Tashkent in March 2007 to hold discussions on setting up an Entrepreneur Development Centre in Uzbekistan with Government of India assistance as a follow-up to commitment made during the visit of the Prime Minister to Uzbekistan in April 2006.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

The Seventh Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic on 16 August 2007. Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora led the Indian delegation to the meeting. The delegation attended the plenary session of the SCO Heads of State and in his speech, the Minister reiterated India's interest in participating in SCO activities in the areas of energy, economic development, counter-terrorism and countering drug trafficking. The Council of the Heads of Government was held in Tashkent on 2 November 2007 and India was represented by the Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed.

India-Russia-China

India-Russia-China Trilateral Foreign Ministers' meeting was held in Harbin (China) on 24 October 2007. It was the second meeting in 2007 after the previous meeting in Delhi on 14 February 2007 and gave further direction to the trilateral dialogue mechanism. Apart from wide-

ranging exchanges on regional and international issues of mutual interest, the three Ministers decided to strengthen trilateral economic cooperation. In particular, the three countries agreed to hold expert level discussions on agriculture, medicine and public health, and disaster management and a seminar with the participation of officials and scholars on the evolution of geopolitical strategic trends. Subsequently, trilateral business forum with the participation of about two hundred and fifty delegates was held in New Delhi on 15 December 2007. Twenty five to thirty business representative each from China and Russia participated in the Conference. The Conference focused on four potential areas of trilateral cooperation - energy, infrastructure development, pharmaceuticals and biomedical technology and nano-technology. It was agreed that trilateral business Conferences should be held on a biennial basis and that China would host the next Conference in 2009.

INSTC

The Third Meeting of the Coordination Council and the Fourth Meeting of Expert Groups of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) was held in Astana, Kazakhstan in November 2007. The Indian delegation was led by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Shipping. The meeting discussed the progress in the development of this Corridor, which facilitates transportation connectivity between India and Russia and other countries in Central Asia and Caucasus Regions.



5 The Gulf, West Asia and North Africa

The Gulf

The close and friendly ties that characterize the multifaceted relationship between India and the countries of the Gulf region were further strengthened during the year. The presence of the large Indian expatriate community in the region contributed to this. Active steps were taken in cooperation with the countries of the region to promote their welfare especially that of expatriate workers. Bilateral trade and economic cooperation grew satisfactorily. India's interactions in all fields were considerably enhanced. The year was marked by the visits of the Crown Prince of Bahrain, and Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Republic and Ruler of Dubai in March 2007 and that of the Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers of the Sultanate of Oman in December 2007. An India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Industrial Conference was held in May 2007 in Mumbai.

Bahrain

The Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Bahrain Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa visited India from 19-22 March 2007 at the invitation of the Vice President of India. During the visit he called on the President, the Vice President, and the Prime Minister. The Crown Prince inaugurated the newly opened Embassy of Bahrain in New Delhi. A cultural exchange programme and an MoU on cooperation between Prasar Bharati and Bahrain Radio and TV Corporation were signed.

The Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Somnath Chatterjee met local dignitaries during his transit visit to Bahrain on 19 April 2007. A Bahraini Parliamentary delegation led by Khalifa bin Ahamed al Dahrani, Chairman of the Council of Representatives paid a visit to India during November 28-December 2, 2007.

E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Bahrain on 8 September 2007 where he met local dignitaries and participated in an interactive session

between the Indian community and the Bahrain Labour Minister on amnesty related issues. Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs visited Bahrain and met the Bahraini Minister for Labour to discuss the proposed MoU on Manpower and the impact of the amnesty.

Three Indian Naval ships INS Delhi, INS Beas and INS Jyoti paid a goodwill visit to Bahrain from 21-25 August 2007.

The Fourth Meeting of the India-Bahrain Joint Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (JCETC) was held in Bahrain on 14-15 November 2007. The Indian delegation was led by E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs. The Joint Committee reviewed bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest. It was agreed to carry forward the proposals for enhancing economic engagement made in the Mumbai Declaration adopted at the Third Indo-GCC Industrial Forum held in Mumbai in May 2007. The Confederation of Indian Industry and its Bahraini counterparts drew up a programme for private sector cooperation.

Iran

India-Iran relations are based on cooperation in the area of hydrocarbons, trade, commerce and investment, as also a shared interest in regional stability. Iran plays an important role as a transit country for access to Central Asia and Afghanistan. Thus a contemporary relationship between India and Iran overlays multi-faceted historical and civilisational links. Regular contacts with the Government of Iran are maintained through high level exchanges as also regular institutional mechanisms such as the Joint Commission, the Foreign Office Consultations cum Strategic Dialogue and Consultations between the National Security Councils of the two countries.

During the 14th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit held in New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007 under the Chairmanship of India, Iran was granted Observer status with SAARC.

Dr. Mehdi Safari, Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia, Oceania and Commonwealth of Iran visited India from 6-8 September 2007 to brief Government of India on the latest developments on Iran's nuclear issue in the IAEA. India noted Director General-IAEA's report of 15 November 2007 on "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007)".

Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed visited Iran in September 2007 to attend the NAM Conference on 'Human Rights and Cultural Diversity'

Mostafa Pour Mohammadi, Interior Minister of Iran visited India from 6-8 November 2007 to attend the second Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in New Delhi.

Minister for Water Resources, Prof. Saif Ud Din Soz visited Iran to attend 5th General Body Meeting of the Regional Centre for Urban Water Management, held in Tehran on 24 November 2007.

President of the Guardian Council, Ayatollah Ahmed Jannati visited India from 24 November-1 December 2007 under ICCR's Distinguished Visitors' Programme.

India and Iran hold annual Foreign Office Consultations/ Strategic Dialogue at the level of Foreign Secretary from India and Deputy Foreign Minister from Iran. The Foreign Secretary visited Iran on 16-17 December 2007 for the Fifth FOC/ Strategic Dialogue.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, Danesh Jafri visited India from 16-18 January 2008 for 'CII's Partnership Summit 2008'.

The Deputy Head of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft Organisation (CHTHO) of Iran, Dr. Hussain Jafari visited India from 16-17 January 2008. During the visit, an MoU on the holding of cultural weeks of India and Iran in each others' countries was signed between ICCR and CHTHO.

India-Iran commercial relations are dominated by Indian import of Iranian crude oil. India's exports reached US\$ 1490.75 million in 2006-07 as against US\$ 1188.71 million in 2005-06 (an increase of 25%), imports increased to US\$ 7842.36 million in 2006-07 compared to US\$ 4822.65 million in 2005-06, registering a 55.26% growth rate. Total trade turnover registered an increase of 55% during 2006-07.

Important Indian goods being exported to Iran are primary and semi-finished iron and steel, manufacturers of metals, machinery and instruments, drugs and pharmaceuticals, processed minerals, inorganic/agro chemicals, tea, yarn fabric etc. India also exports petroleum products to Iran in sizeable quantities. India's imports from Iran include crude oil, fruits and nuts, pulses, non-ferrous metals, organic and inorganic chemicals, chemicals metal scrap, iron and steel, organic chemicals and leather.

Several Indian companies are active in Iran, either through Joint Ventures with Iranian companies or through investment, in areas of shipping, mining, railways, steel, ICT, automotives, cement etc.

The fourth round of talks on finalization of the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) was held in New Delhi on 1-2 February 2007. The third round of negotiation on Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) was held in Tehran from 11-16 March 2007. There was considerable progress in resolving most of the outstanding issues with regard to these agreements.

LNG Deal : India has signed an agreement with Iran for purchasing five million tons of LNG per annum for 25 years from the second half of 2009. This agreement, however, could not be implemented so far, as the Iranian side continues to insist on revising the contract price earlier agreed upon, after which the agreement would be ratified by the Iranian Parliament. We maintain that the agreement is legally binding and should be implemented. Our interest in early resolution of this issue and early implementation of the contract has been reiterated to the Government of Iran.

Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline project : Four bilateral Joint Working Group meetings with Iran, six bilateral with Pakistan and six trilateral meetings with Iran and Pakistan have been held so far. In the trilateral meeting in January 2007, a pricing formula was negotiated, to which Pakistan agreed and we agreed to consider subject to the transit fee and transportation tariff issue being concluded with Pakistan. However in the next meeting in May 2007, Iran presented a fresh set of proposals on a price revision clause, thus altering the agreed formula. India's position is that the issue of transit fee and transportation tariff is first to be concluded bilaterally with Pakistan on the basis of which a decision on the gas price issue could be taken.

Transit : Iran is essential for the transit of our goods to Central Asia and Afghanistan. Goods required for our assistance projects in Afghanistan, which is currently over US\$ 100 million per annum, also require transit through Iran. India and Iran are cooperating in the development of an alternative access route to the sea for Afghanistan through the Chabahar port of Iran. India, Iran, Russia and other Central Asian countries are also working on the North South Transit Corridor which would provide for the transit of our goods through Iran and the Caspian Sea to Russia and northern Europe.

Iraq

The 16th Session of the India-Iraq Joint Commission Meeting for Economic and Technical Cooperation took place in New Delhi on 22-23 May 2007. The Iraqi delegation was led by Dr. Hussain Al-Shahristani, Minister of Oil. The Joint Commission reviewed bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during his meeting with Minister Shahristani, reiterated India's support for the Iraqi people and for Iraq's reconstruction.

Kuwait

E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Kuwait on 10 March 2007 and met senior officials of the Olympic Committee and the Public Authority for Youth and Sports Affairs. Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs visited Kuwait from 7-10 April 2007. An MoU on Labour, Employment and Manpower Development between the two countries was signed during the visit.

The Minister of Commerce and Industry of Kuwait, Falah Al Hajri, led a delegation to Bangalore in January 2007 to take part in CII's Partnership Summit 2007.

Indian Naval ship, INS Betwa, paid a goodwill visit to Kuwait from 14-18 August 2007. On its way out of Kuwait on 18 August 2007, INS Betwa conducted Passage Exercises (PASSEX) with the Kuwaiti Naval Ship 'Garoh'.

Government of Kuwait declared a two-month period of General Amnesty for residency violators in May-June 2007. As many as 11,689 Indian nationals availed of the amnesty. The Indian Embassy issued 7411 Emergency Certificates to enable Indian nationals to avail of the amnesty.

The Extradition Treaty between India and Kuwait signed in August 2004 came into force on 7 August 2007. The Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters signed in August 2004 came into force on 15 October 2007. The MoU on Labour, Employment and Manpower Development signed in April 2007 entered into force on 16 October 2007 and the Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income entered into force on 17 October 2007 with the provisions of the Agreement coming into effect on 1 April 2008.

Special Kuwait Cell continued its work of identifying the last remaining claimants for disbursement of compensation to Indians who had to flee from Kuwait and Iraq following Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. During the year 2007 the Cell disbursed over US\$ 9 million to over 5000 claimants identified the previous year. The Cell's mandate will be complete after payment is made to the remaining 879 claimants.

Oman

The Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers of the Sultanate of Oman, Sayyid Fahd Bin Mahmoud Al Said paid an official visit to India from 12-15 December 2007. He was accompanied by the Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs, Ministers of Commerce and Industry, Oil and Gas, Agriculture, Information and a team of prominent business persons. During the visit, four MoUs were signed: i) MoU between National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), India and Directorate General of Small and Medium Enterprises (DGDSME), Oman, ii) MoU between Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), Guwahati and Directorate General of Small and Medium Enterprises (DGDSME) iii) MoU on Higher Education Cooperation and iv) MoU between Oman Oil Company S.A.O.C. and Krishak Bharati Cooperative Limited. The high level Omani business delegation interacted with leading businesspersons and business houses of India in meetings organized by CII and FICCI in New Delhi.

N. Ravi, Secretary (East) led the Indian delegation to Muscat for the 5th Meeting of the Strategic Consultative Group Meeting on 5 May 2007.

Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed visited Oman from 2-5 October 2007.



Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee with Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmood Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister of the Sultanate of Oman during his visit, 13 January 2008.



Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed, with Mahmoud Abbas, President of Palestine, 29 March 2007.

Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi visited Oman on 26-27 October 2007.

Reliance Industries won the exploration rights for a deepwater oil and gas block in Oman. Oman's first telemedicine service in the private sector was inaugurated with Muscat-based Apollo Medical Centre (AMC) in league with the Hyderabad-based Apollo Group of Hospitals.

INS Delhi, INS Beas and INS Jyoti under the command of Rear Admiral S. K. Sinha, Flag Officer Commanding of the Western Fleet (FOCWF) visited Port Sultan Qaboos from 1-4 September 2007. Cadet Training Ship INS Krishna visited Salalah port on 12 September 2007.

A seven-member Indian Defence delegation led by the Defence Secretary visited Oman from 1-4 December 2007 to attend the 2nd meeting of the Joint Military Cooperation Council.

Minister for External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee visited Muscat on 13-14 January 2008. He held wide ranging talks with the Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers and the Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs. He also inaugurated the new Chancery-cum-Embassy Residence Complex of the Indian Embassy.

Qatar

Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi visited Doha in April 2007 and discussed issues concerning the welfare of Indian workers with local Ministers. Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed also visited Doha in September 2007. Defence Secretary accompanied by a 6-member delegation visited Doha in June 2007.

Three Indian Naval ships - INS Delhi, INS Beas and INS Jyoti paid a goodwill visit to Qatar from 15-19 August 2007.

An additional protocol to the Agreement on the regulation of employment of Indian manpower in Qatar (1985) was signed on 20 November 2007 during the visit of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Qatar to India. This will provide a framework to address issues concerning Indian workers, especially in the unskilled and domestic sectors.

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora, led a high level delegation for a 2-day visit to Doha in October 2007 to participate in the 6th Doha Conference on Natural

Gas. He also held discussions with Qatari dignitaries on the subject of supply of LNG to India. Petronet Ltd of India on 3 July 2007, signed a sale and purchase agreement in Doha with Rasgas II for the supply of 1.25 mn tonnes of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

Saudi Arabia and Haj

Murli Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, led a high level delegation to Riyadh on 1-2 May 2007 to attend the 2nd Roundtable of Asian Oil Ministers. During his visit he held a bilateral meeting with the Saudi Minister of Petroleum.

Two Indian Naval Ships, INS Rajput and INS Betwa called on port of Al-Jubail on a goodwill visit from 21-25 August 2007.

The Special Envoy for West Asia and the Middle East Peace Process, C.R. Gharekhan, visited Jeddah on 8-9 September 2007 and had discussions with Saudi dignitaries, think tanks, media and prominent Indians.

Economic and Commercial ties were bolstered through visits to the Kingdom by an agricultural delegation led by Chairman, APEDA from 7-9 September 2007, a business delegation organised by Indo-Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industries from 16-22 November 2007 and a delegation from Organisation of Plastic Processors of India (OPPI) from 2-7 September 2007.

A 12-member Indian youth delegation, led by the Minister of Education and Youth Affairs of Government of Puduchery, visited the Kingdom from 24 October-4 November 2007 at the invitation of the General Presidency of Youth Welfare (GPWF).

Haj

Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed visited Saudi Arabia in May 2007 during which he discussed Haj related matters and signed the Annual Haj Agreement for 2007. A delegation from the Haj Committee of India visited the Kingdom in June 2007 and interacted with various Saudi agencies related to Haj affairs. Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of External Affairs, inaugurated the 1st All India Annual Haj Conference in New Delhi on 11 May 2007. The 2nd All India Annual Haj Conference was held at Hyderabad on 8 September 2007. The system of registration of Private Tour Operators, which had commenced from Haj 2003, was continued for Haj 2007

with a view to ensuring better services for the pilgrims by the private tour operators. A total of 157,000 Indian pilgrims performed Haj in December 2007, out of which 110,000 visited Saudi Arabia through the Haj Committee of India. Another 47,000 Indians went through the private tour operators. A.R. Antulay, Union Minister of Minority Affairs led a 28-member Haj Goodwill delegation to Saudi Arabia from 14 December 2007-3 January 2008.

United Arab Emirates

The Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum visited India on 25-26 March 2007 at the invitation of the Prime Minister. He was accompanied by UAE Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Labour, Industry and Economy as well as a high profile business and trade delegation. A preparatory meeting of the Joint Commission was held at the official level just prior to the visit.

During the visit, five MoUs and Protocols were signed, namely, i) MoU for technical co-operation in the field of Standardisation and Metrology; ii) Framework Agreement for developing industrial relations; iii) Protocol amending the Agreement for Avoidance of Double Taxation; iv) MoU for Assistance and Mutual Cooperation between Emirates Securities and Commodities Authority (ESCA) and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI); v) MoU in the field of accreditation activities.

High level bilateral visits during the year from India include those of the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi, in May and October 2007, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Ashwani Kumar in August 2007. Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Civil Aviation, Praful Patel attended the Dubai Air Show and Aerospace exhibition in November 2007 as did Minister of State for Defence, Pallam Raju along with a 5-member delegation. From the UAE, visits included those of Maj. Gen. Saif Abdullah Al Shafar, Under Secretary, Ministry of Interior to India from 28-30 May 2007 for a meeting with the Home Secretary to discuss cooperation in security related matters. Minister of Economy Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi led a UAE delegation for the first India-UAE Trade Policy Forum on 28 May 2007. Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah led the UAE delegation for the Ninth India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting held in New Delhi on 5-6 June 2007. The Minister of External Affairs co-chaired the meeting.

Two Indian Navy ships, INS Rajput and INS Betwa, paid a goodwill visit in August 2007.

In June 2007 the UAE Government announced an amnesty scheme to enable illegally resident persons to either regularize their stay or to return to their country of origin. In all, 70,000 Indian workers availed of this opportunity and returned to India.

Yemen

The Deputy Minister of Planning and International Cooperation led the Yemeni Delegation for the 6th Session of Indo-Yemen Joint Committee Meeting (JCM), in Delhi, in April 2007. The Indian side at the Joint Commission Meeting was led by Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs. ASSOCHAM organized a special India Pavilion with a wide representation from Indian companies at the 3rd Sana'a International Exhibition (SIEX-2007) in June 2007.

Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi, accompanied by a 3-member delegation visited Sana'a on 20-21 October 2007.

A 2-member delegation led by the Yemeni Deputy Minister for Police Service Sector, visited New Delhi on 7-8 November 2007 to attend the 2nd Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

India – Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

The 3rd India GCC Business Conference was held in Mumbai on 29-30 May 2007. The Conference was co-chaired by Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath and Minister of Commerce and Industry of Saudi Arabia, Dr. Hashim Abdullah Yamani and Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Sultanate of Oman, Maqbool bin Ali bin Sultan. It was attended by representatives of GCC States and the Secretariat, representatives of FICCI, CII, and Gulf Organization for Industrial Consulting and the Federation of GCC Chambers.

The theme of the Conference was “India-GCC Investment Opportunities” with specific attention on real estate development, energy, petrochemicals and infrastructure. Among the important decisions taken at the Conference were to develop tie-ups in the field of agricultural production and supply from India to GCC

countries, encourage early conclusion of the India-GCC FTA and to set up a holding company with a capital of around US\$ 50 million initially to promote SME joint ventures.

West Asia and North Africa

Algeria

India-Algeria relations date back to the days of the Algerian liberation struggle (1954-62) when India advocated the cause of Algerian independence at the United Nations and other international fora. Political relations between the two countries have been exemplary and Algeria and India have consistently supported each other on all vital issues of their national concerns.

At the invitation of Algerian Minister of Energy and Mines, Dr Chakib Khelil, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora, led a high-level 12-member energy delegation to Algeria from 20-22 April 2007. The Indian delegation included, Secretary (Petroleum), CMDs of ONGC, Indian Oil, GAIL and EIL and other senior officials. The two Ministers signed Agreed Minutes reflecting various points discussed during delegation level meeting. Murli Deora also called on President and Prime Minister of Algeria. He delivered our Prime Minister's letter to the Algerian President.

External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee met with Algerian Foreign Minister Mourad Medelci on the margins of 62nd UNGA in New York in September 2007. During the meeting the two sides agreed to expand bilateral cooperation, focusing in particular on the economic relationship. There was a similarity of views between the two Ministers on threat posed to the two countries which had suffered from terrorism.

A Parliamentary Friendship Group with India was formed in the Algerian Parliament with 15 members from seven political parties including the parties of the ruling presidential alliance. A parliamentary official delegation visited India in December 2007 to study our system of functioning of Parliament.

A delegation from Algerian national oil company Sonatrach attended the "India-Africa Hydrocarbon Conference and Exhibition" held in New Delhi on 6-7 November 2007.

During the period January-June 2007, India's exports to

Algeria amounted to US\$ 207 million while Algeria's exports to India amounted to US\$ 267 million.

Several Indian companies won important contracts in Algeria. Indian Railway Construction Company (IRCON) won a US\$ 240 million contract for constructing a 108 kms railway line. This was the first major contract won by an Indian company in Algeria in recent times. IRCON had executed two similar projects in Algeria in the 1980s. An Indian construction company M/s Era Construction Group won a US\$ 21 million contract for construction of 3000-bed hostel in Tizi Ouzou in Algeria. Another Indian construction and civil engineering firm Patel Engineering Ltd secured an order worth US\$ 153 million from Algeria's national agency for dams. The project is a joint venture with Aska Insaat Construction Company (a Turkish company) for designing and construction of a dam. M/s Transrail Structures Limited based in Nagpur, Maharashtra won a contract for laying transmission lines with optic fiber in a section of 110 Kms in Algeria. The project is worth US\$ 20 million.

India also participated in the 40th International Trade Fair held in Algiers from 2-7 June 2007. Thirteen Indian companies participated in the fair under the umbrella of ITPO.

Djibouti

Djibouti is keen to improve its bilateral relations with India especially in the education and health sectors. Djibouti is the second country to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Telecommunication Consultants of India Limited for implementation of the Pan African E-Network Project on Tele-Medicine and Tele-Education. The Exim Bank extended another line of credit of US\$ 10 million for the cement plant at Ali Sabieh, thereby raising India's stake in the project to US\$ 20 million.

India's visibility in the Gulf of Aden and in the Red Sea has been highlighted by visits of seven naval ships during the year and the joint exercises undertaken by the Indian navy with US and French flotilla stationed in Djibouti. The high point of the visit was the exercise named 'Varuna' in October 2007 in which three Indian Western Fleet vessels INS Beas, Jyoti and Rajput participated. INS Tarangini, INS Tir and INS Jalashwa also called on Djibouti port during the year.

An exhibition of 50 rare photographs of Mahatma Gandhi

with captions in French language was organized at Djibouti, from 15-18 November 2007. A 12-member Bihu Folk Dance Troupe sponsored by ICCR, New Delhi, performed in Djibouti on 15 November 2007, in commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of Djibouti's independence and 60th Anniversary of India's independence.

Egypt

Egypt has traditionally been one of India's most important trading partners in the African continent. India emerged as Egypt's third largest trading partner behind the US and Italy and as the largest importer of Egyptian products. Bilateral trade in 2006 stood at US\$ 1.747 billion.

Egyptian Minister for Tourism, Mohammed Zoheir Garranah, visited India on 18-19 April 2007 to attend the third meeting of the Joint Working Group on Tourism in New Delhi on 19 April 2007.

Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora headed a high-level delegation including Secretary (Petroleum) and CMDs of ONGC, IOCL, GAIL and EIL to Egypt from 22-25 April 2007. He also handed over a letter from Prime Minister to President Hosni Mubarak, and had discussions with Minister for Petroleum of Egypt, Sameh Fahmy and Minister for Trade and Industry of Egypt, Rashid Mohamed Rashid. Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Meira Kumar visited Egypt from 4-8 June 2007.

The seventh session of the Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) was held in New Delhi on 22 June 2007. The Egyptian delegation was led by Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs, Shawky Ismail, and the Indian delegation by Secretary (East). Ambassador Shawky Ismail called on Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed and C.R. Gharekhan, India's Special Envoy for West Asia and the Middle East Peace Process (WA & MEPP). The text of an Agreement on mutual exemption of visas for diplomatic, official/service passport holders was finalised on the margins of the FOC.

Negotiations were held on the draft Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement and the new Merchant Shipping Agreement during visits to Egypt by delegations from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Shipping in May 2007. The texts of Extradition Treaty, the Mutual Legal

Assistance Treaty, and the Agreement on Exchange of Sentenced Prisoners were finalised during the visit of a composite five-member Indian delegation from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Law and Justice to Cairo from 26-29 May 2007.

T. Nanda Kumar, Secretary (Food and Public Distribution), led a delegation to Cairo from 12-14 August 2007 for discussions with Egyptian officials on coordination on issues concerning the import of wheat. S. Sundareshan, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas visited Cairo on 5-6 September 2007. A two-member delegation led by Secretary (Culture) visited Alexandria from 27-29 October 2007 and held talks with officials of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

Vice Admiral Sunil K. Damle, Flag Officer Commander-in-Chief Southern Naval Command visited Egypt from 9-13 September 2007. Eighteen officers from the Higher Command Course, Army War College visited Cairo from 11-13 September 2007.

Egyptian Minister of Health and Population, Hatem el Gabali paid a private visit to New Delhi from 23-25 October 2007. He called on Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Anbumani Ramadoss on 24 October 2007 and discussed possibilities of bilateral cooperation in the health care and pharmaceutical sectors.

Israel

The year 2007 marked the 15th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Israel. The multifaceted relations between the two countries were consolidated through exchange of visits and delegations in various fields.

Ashwani Kumar, Minister of State for Industry led a delegation to Israel from 4-7 August 2007. During the visit he met with Israeli President Shimon Peres, Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour, Eliyahu Yishai and Minister of Transport and Road Safety, Shaul Mofaz.

Special Envoy of the Government of India for West Asia and Middle East Peace Process, Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, visited Israel in February and September 2007. He met with vice Premier and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and other senior officials.

From Israel, Minister of Transport Shaul Mofaz visited India in March 2007; National Security Adviser of Israel Ilan Mizrahi visited India in October 2007. Minister of Interior of Israel, Meir Sheerit, visited India to attend 2nd Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in New Delhi on 7-8 November 2007.

Other official level exchanges during the year included the sixth round of the talks on Joint Working Group on counter terrorism, and the third round of dialogue on non-proliferation in March 2007 in New Delhi; port calls by the two Indian Naval training ships INS Sujata, and INS Shardul at Haifa, Israel from 23- 27 September 2007.

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics of Israel, the bilateral trade figures amounted to US\$ 2440.3 million during the period January-September 2007, an overall increase of 22.87% as compared to the corresponding period last year. Business delegations from the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram and others visited Israel during 2007.

Other significant commercial developments during the year included the inauguration of a branch of the State Bank of India in Tel Aviv in June 2007 making it the first Indian bank to operate in Israel; investments and acquisitions in the areas of pharmaceuticals, tyres, and irrigation equipment manufacturing by the Indian companies in Israel; and large scale investments by Israeli companies in infrastructure and real estate sectors in India.

To mark the 15th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Israel as well as the 60th anniversary of India's independence, Embassy of India in Tel Aviv, in cooperation with ICCR organized "India Festival" from 16-22 August 2007. In addition, a Film Festival of India was also organized in Tel Aviv from 18-30 August 2007 to mark the occasion.

Four Israeli students availed of scholarships to study in India under the Indo-Israel Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP). Five Indian students joined Israeli institutions under the reciprocal scholarship schemes offered by the Israeli government. Under the Know India Programme (KIP) organized by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) three Israeli youth of Indian origin participated from 29 August–15 September 2007.

Outsourcing of visa application services became operational in Embassy in Tel Aviv with effect from 15

April 2007 through three service providers. Amidst continued increase in demand for visas to visit India, the Embassy in Tel Aviv issued 19,346 visas during the period April-October 2007. During the same period 51 OCI registration certificates and 7 PIO cards were issued to the persons of Indian origin in Israel.

We continued our active involvement with activities of the Indian Diaspora and supported various events, including the 19th Annual Maiboli Sneha Sammelan held in Lod (Israel) organized by the editorial board of "Maiboli", a Marathi quarterly magazine published in Israel by the Indian Jewish community hailing from Maharashtra (1 April 2007); evening of Indian-Cochini folklore held in Nevatim by the Jewish community of Cochini origin (9 August 2007); anniversary celebrations of the Indian Jewish Synagogue in Lod (30 July 2007) and Magen Shalom Synagogue in Ramle (3 September 2007); and inauguration (9 September 2007) of the "Heritage Museum for Indian Jewry" in Dimona.

Jordan

The momentum generated in the bilateral relations with Jordan by the landmark state visit of King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein to India last year was further built upon with significant developments in 2007.

E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Jordan from 26-28 September 2007, and handed over a letter from President of India to the King of Jordan, expressing India's desire to strengthen bilateral relations with Jordan in all areas. King Abdullah conveyed to the President, Jordan's desire to build further on his successful visit to India last year and his meeting with the Indian leadership.

Kumari Selja, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation visited Amman on 27-28 October 2007 as Chairperson of the Bureau of Asia-Pacific Ministers of Housing and Urban Development to preside over the Second Meeting of the Bureau.

A delegation from Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) led by its President participated in the Middle East World Economic Forum at Dead Sea in May 2007.

From Jordan, Dr. Khaled Al Shreideh, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, visited India to participate in the

Second Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Reduction held in New Delhi on 7-8 October 2007.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) sent a cultural troupe to Jordan to participate in the 25th Jerash Festival held from 26-29 July 2007. Sharifah Hind Nasser of Jordanian nobility and a well-known painter exhibited her paintings under ICCR arranged programme in New Delhi from 21-28 November 2007. Several Jordanian students received scholarships for higher education in India under the Cultural Exchange Programme.

India's exports to Jordan maintained the growth curve of the previous year and showed a further increase of 37% during the year. Jordan's exports to India increased by 19% in the same period. The trade balance, however, continues to be in Jordan's favour.

Indian Farmers Fertilizers Cooperative (IFFCO) signed an agreement on 1 November 2007 with Jordan Phosphate Mining Company (JPMC) for setting up a US\$ 570 million phosphoric acid plant at Eshidiya in Jordan. Jordan Investment Board (JIB) identified India as one of the fourteen countries for inviting investment into Jordan in the areas of information technology, financial services and life sciences. A delegation from JIB visited India in November 2007. Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) sent a delegation to India in June 2007 for promoting investments in its Special Economic Zone. Aqaba Development Corporation (ADC) sent a delegation to India from 18-20 November 2007 to participate in Citiscap in Mumbai.

Lebanon

India and Lebanon continued to enjoy cordial and friendly relations based on a number of commonalities such as parliamentary democracy, open and pluralist societies, non-alignment, commitment to regional and global peace, free market economy and respect for individual enterprise. The relationship however, is yet to gather momentum mainly due to lack of bilateral engagement and the prevailing political stalemate in Lebanon.

In response to Lebanese government appeal for international help towards rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Palestinian refugee camp Nahr al-Bared, India has promised assistance to the tune of US\$ 600,000.

A new chancery building was purchased on 31 March 2007 for US\$ 3.8 million.

As part of Satyagraha centenary celebrations, Mission organized an exhibition of Mahatma Gandhi's photographs and screening of the feature film "The Making of the Mahatma" by Shyam Benegal at various important cities in Lebanon.

Libya

India-Libya bilateral relations strengthened during the year with the high level visits from both the side. Murli Deora, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas visited Libya from 30 January-2 February 2007 and called on the Libyan Leader Colonel Muammar Al-Gaddafi. Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs Minister visited Libya on 26-27 May 2007 and called on the Libyan Leader Colonel Muammar Al-Gaddafi. A Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement and a Cultural-Cooperation Agreement was signed during the Minister of External Affairs' visit to Libya in May 2007. Libyan Minister of Asian Affairs Mohamed Burrani visited India from 22-26 March 2007 for Foreign Office Consultations. An MoU on Political Consultations was signed in Delhi during the visit..

10th Session of India-Libya Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on 12 July 2007. The Libyan side was led by Minister for Economy, Trade and Investment, Dr. Ali Abdulaziz Al-Essawi while the Indian side was headed by Kamal Nath, Minister for Commerce and Industry. The Minister and his delegation also visited Bangalore for interacting with IT companies.

Bilateral trade between India and Libya has shown substantial increase during the 2006-07 compared to the previous year. Bilateral trade for the year 2006-07 was US\$ 221.09 million as compared to US\$ 115.23 during the previous year.

Minister for Petroleum offered 100 training slots in the oil sector to Libyan personnel. A draft MoU is under discussion.

Indian companies and Oil Public Sector Undertakings remain engaged in developmental activities such as oil and pipelines, housing, construction and infrastructure, power, computerization and IT training etc. in Libya. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited has completed a 600 MV Gas Turbine Power project with General Electricity Company. Oil Videsh Limited has been qualified as an

operator in the 4th round of bidding, while Oil India and Indian Oil Corporation have been qualified as investors. A joint venture for city gas projects and construction of pipeline between Libyan Ministry of Electricity, Water and Gas and Gas Authority of India Limited has been approved and two sides are negotiating to finalize a MoU. DS Construction has won two contracts for building 4000 housing units. Under the auspices of India Trade Promotion Organisation, 22 Indian companies participated in the Tripoli International Fair held in April 2007 and 13 Indian official/business/commercial delegations visited Libya.

Morocco

Relations between India and Morocco continued to grow and strengthen in all areas. Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Minister of State for Industries visited Morocco for participation in the Symposium on 'South-South Cooperation in the fields of energy and industry – challenges and opportunities' as Guest of Honour in May 2007. The Moroccan Industry Minister, during the meeting, expressed his appreciation of the growing presence of Indian companies in Morocco and highlighted the agreement signed by Morocco with Tata Consultancy Services to establish an offshoring delivery centre and a project to impart national training and e-governance.

Dean, FSI visited Morocco from 5-8 November 2007 and held meetings with senior Government functionaries.

The two-way trade between India and Morocco witnessed noticeable growth and it reached over US\$ 711 million during 2006. During the period January-September 2007, trade exchanges between India and Morocco amounted to US\$ 606.6 million. Mahindra and Mahindra commenced its export of utility vehicles to Morocco and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) opened their office in Casablanca. At the 2nd International Agricultural Fair held in Meknes from 19-24 April 2007, M/s Mediauto, distributors of Scorpio vehicles produced by M/s Mahindra and Mahindra, and the local distributors of Kirloskars displayed utility vehicles and agricultural implements respectively.

A 14-member Engineering Export Promotion Council delegation visited Morocco from 20-23 November 2007 for promoting export of engineering products and services.

Vasumathi Badrinathan, Carnatic singer from India

performed at the World Festival of Sacred Music, organised in Fez, Morocco on 8 June 2007 and Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Sarod maestro gave a performance at the 29th Asilah International Cultural Festival on 9 August 2007.

Palestine

India remains committed to its unwavering support to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a homeland of their own and joined all efforts of the international community to re-start comprehensive dialogue in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Quartet Roadmap and the Arab Peace Initiative.

Secretary (East) visited Palestine on 16 May 2007 and met with President Mahmoud Abbas and Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Azzam Ahmad. He also held delegation level meetings with the Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Ahmed Soboh on Indian support to the Palestinian institution building.

Within the framework of India's commitment to extend political, material and technical support to Palestine, Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed visited Palestine on 27 – 28 September 2007 and held talks with the Palestinian Deputy Foreign Minister.

Special Envoy to the Middle East Peace Process, C. R. Gharekhan visited the region twice during February and September 2007.

India was invited to attend the Middle East peace conference in Annapolis held on 27–28 November 2007. Union Minister of Science and Technology Kapil Sibal who led the Indian delegation met with President Mahmoud Abbas on the sidelines of the conference on 27 November 2007.

India attended the International Donors' Conference on Palestine in Paris in December 2007. We have pledged US\$ 5 million in the Paris Donors' for Palestine for development projects and will be training 400 Palestinian officials under our ITEC programme.

India has also announced it will fund the construction of a Boys' Senior Secondary School, a Cardiac Surgery Centre, a Software Technology and Industrial Park, Prime Minister's Secretariat and a Centre for Indian Studies and Chair for Indian Studies in the Palestinian territories.

Processes for construction of Palestinian Embassy in New Delhi and Boys' school in Abudees have been initiated.

Sudan

In April 2007, Indian Railway Construction Company (IRCON) finalized the Technical Agreement for the 170 km Khartoum–Wad Medani standard gauge line funded with a US\$ 150 million Government of India supported concessional loan from Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank).

In May 2007, Agriculture Bank of Sudan invited tenders for tractors under the Indian US\$ 100 million EXIM Bank Line of Credit committed at the April 2005 Oslo Donors Conference. Purchase of 550 tractors in SKD (semi-knock down) condition has reportedly been finalized.

In July 2007 in Khartoum, EXIM Bank and Sudan's Ministry of Finance and National Economy signed a US\$ 52 million Line of Credit, the balance of India's US\$ 100 million Oslo commitment. Also in July 2007, at the request of elders of the Shilluk community, and with the endorsement of the Embassy, ONGC Videsh Ltd donated a powerful generator to Kodok town in Fashdoda County of Upper Nile State.

In August 2007, Sudan's State Minister for Investment, El Simaih El Siddig Al Nour led a business delegation to India to promote Indian investments in Sudan.

In August 2007, Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) and Sudan Master Technology (SMT) Ltd. signed a US\$ 18 million contract for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) support to SMT's operations in Sudan.

Dispatch of relief materials consisting of tents and medicines worth US\$ 100,000 for flood relief in north and south Sudan, announced in August 2007, was completed by year end.

In August 2007, ONGC sponsored performances by the Mumbai-based Rang Puhar song and dance ensemble in Khartoum and Juba on the occasion of Sudan's Oil Day (31 August).

In September 2007, Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd (TCIL) signed an agreement with Sudan's Ministry of Science and Technology to update its 2004 feasibility report for a proposed Technology City in Sudan.

In October 2007, Water and Power Consultancy Services (India) Ltd. (WAPCOS), won a consultancy contract from the World Bank administered Multi Donor Trust Fund for a US\$ 40 million water and electricity supply project to various cities in South Sudan under the Sudan Emergency Transport and Infrastructure Development Project for Ministry of Housing, Land and Public Utilities, Government of Southern Sudan, Juba.

India opened its Consulate General in Juba in October 2007, the first Asian country to do so.

In November 2007, a five-member delegation led by Sudan's Minister of Energy and Mining Dr. Awad Ahmed Al Jaz attended the first India-Africa Hydrocarbon Summit in New Delhi (6-7 November 2007). Minister Al Jaz delivered a message from Sudanese President Omer Al Bashir to Prime Minister.

In November 2007, a high-powered delegation from North and South Sudan attended the 4th International Conference on Federalism in New Delhi (5-7 November 2007) organised by Inter-State Council Secretariat, Ministry of Home Affairs with support from the Forum of Federations in Ottawa.

A delegation from Tata International Ltd. visited Sudan in mid-November 2007 to finalize a locomotives contract with Sudan Railways Corporation under the Indian Oslo Line of Credit.

Syria

India and Syria have always enjoyed warm and friendly relations at all levels, more particularly at political level based on commonalities of old civilizational values, socialist and secular orientations, membership of NAM and similarity of perception on many international and regional issues.

Syrian foreign Minister, Walid Al Muallem visited India from 13-15 August 2007 to prepare for a visit by Syrian President Bashar Assad to India.

Indo-Syrian commercial exchanges have been increasing at a comfortable pace in the past few years. India stood at 6th place with exports valued at US\$ 252.64 million, which increased further by 7.46% to US\$ 271.49 in 2005-06.

The bilateral trade is in favour of India. Indian exports to Syria consists largely of man-made yarns and textiles, machinery and equipment, drugs and fine chemicals,

transport equipment, jute and jute products, metal products, plastic and linoleum products, rubber manufactured products and electronic goods. However, imports from Syria are limited largely to raw cotton, pulses, raw wool and phosphates.

Tunisia

Bilateral relations between India and Tunisia remained friendly and cordial during this period. There has been good cooperation between India and Tunisia in supporting each other's candidates for posts in various international fora.

Minister of State E. Ahamed led a high level delegation to co-chair the 10th session of the India-Tunisia Joint Commission. Both countries signed two Agreements in the fields of Air Services and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. A Cultural Exchange Programme (2007-09) was also signed during the deliberations.

Bilateral trade received a quantum boost during the period. During the year 2006-07 bilateral trade between the two countries was to the tune of US\$ 258.85 million as compared to US\$ 183.72 resulting in an increase of 40.89% as compared to 11.53% during 2004-05.

Last year, a US\$ 200 million India-Tunisia joint venture

company Tunisian-Indian Fertilizer SA (TIFERT S.A.) was launched for supply of phosphate and phosphoric acid to India, biddings for which are going on. It is the first Indian investment in Tunisia. Talks for another India-Tunisia joint venture project under Skhira-III are in progress. Besides the above-mentioned two Tunisian companies, namely GCT and CPG the project involves three Indian companies viz. the Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd (RCF), the Krishak Bharti Cooperative Ltd. (KRIBHCO) and the Minerals and Metals Trading Co. (MMTC). A Joint Working Group has already been set up for the purpose and its first meeting is expected to be held soon.

A four-member Tunisian delegation visited India on 2-3 August 2007 to attend the first meeting of the Joint Working Group in the Oil and Natural Gas sector.

Arab League

The third round of the India-Arab League bilateral dialogue was held in New Delhi on 9-10 May 2007. Chief of the Cabinet of the Arab League Secretary-General, Hesham Yousef led the Arab League delegation and the Indian side was headed by Secretary (East). A Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation with the Arab States was initiated.



Eastern and Southern Africa

India's approach to Eastern and Southern Africa is conditioned and energized by our historical linkages and strong political foundations of the past. Our partnership was consolidated and several new initiatives were taken to further strengthen our ties at the bilateral, regional and multilateral including Pan-African levels.

India hosted several high level visits from the region:

- Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi led a large delegation to attend the Conference on Federalism at New Delhi from 5-7 November 2007.
- President of Union of Comoros, Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi visited India to participate in the 4th International Conference on Federalism from 3-8 November 2007.
- Prime Minister of Mauritius, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam was the Chief Guest at the sixth Pravasi Bhartiya Divas to be held in New Delhi on 8-9 January 2008.

From Indian side, Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh visited South Africa in November 2007 and participated in the 2nd India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Summit.

Other important visits to India during the year included:

- Minister of Agriculture, Eritrea (April).
- Minister of Minerals and Energy South Africa (April).
- Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, South Africa (April).
- Foreign Minister, South Africa (July).
- Minister of Agriculture, Breeding and Fishing, Madagascar (July).
- Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Lesotho (August).
- Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Uganda (September).

- Home Minister, South Africa (September).
- Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs, South Africa (September-October).
- Parliamentarians from Zambia, South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Botswana, Tanzania, Uganda, Mauritius and Kenya, attended the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, held in New Delhi in September 2007.
- The delegations including Ministerial level from Union of Comoros, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Mauritius, Tanzania, South Africa participated in First India-Africa Hydrocarbon Conference and Exhibition in November 2007.
- Minister for Communications, Science and Technology, Botswana (October).
- Minister of Mines and Energy, Ethiopia (November).
- Vice Minister for Mineral Resources, Mozambique (November).

From India:

- Minister of State for Agriculture to Uganda (May).
- Minister for Higher Education to Zanzibar (United Republic of Tanzania) (May).
- Minister of External Affairs to Ethiopia (July).
- Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma to Mozambique (July).
- Chairperson, UPA and Congress President to South Africa (August).
- Minister of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways to Mauritius (October).
- Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment to Mauritius (November).
- Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs to Mozambique (November).

India is continuously engaged in development of human resources in the region. Training, deputation of experts and project assistance under Indian Technical and

Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme continued to be extended to the countries of the region. The Ministry's 'Aid to Africa' programme provides direct assistance to a number of countries in the form of projects to augment the resources and by capacity building of these countries. The Ministry has undertaken "Pan African e-Network", an ambitious project to provide e-services with priority on tele-education and tele-medicine services and connectivity by satellite and fibre optic network amongst the Head of States of all 53 African countries. India was one of the largest contributors to peacekeeping in Africa: 3,500 troops in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), 3000 in Southern Sudan and about 600 in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Trade and investment relationship with individual countries grew by leaps and bounds. Significant progress was made in identifying specific projects in the framework of institutional cooperation with the Regional Economic Communities. The tradition of organizing pan-African project partnership conclaves and regional conclaves in Africa was carried forward. To carry forward our ongoing multi-sectoral cooperation with Africa at all levels, it was decided that India will host the India Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi on 8 April 2008.

Botswana

The decisions taken during the visit of President Festus Mogae to India in December 2006 were followed with vigour. Botswana supported India as a Permanent Member of the reformed United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The Botswana Minister for Communications, Science and Technology, Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi, visited India in October 2007 for discussions regarding establishment of cyber city in Botswana. Minister of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources of Botswana, P.H.K. Kedikilwe, attended the International Diamond Conference – 'Mines to Market 2007' in Mumbai on 26-27 April 2007.

Comoros

The President of Union of Comoros, Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi visited India from 3-8 November 2007 to participate in the 4th International Conference on Federalism. On the sidelines of the conference, President Sambi met the Indian President. During the discussions, President Sambi extended Comoros' unequivocal support for India's candidature as a permanent member of UNSC. The President reiterated India's support for meeting the developmental needs of Comoros. Bilateral projects

including those relating to setting up of Vocational Training Centre, setting up of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in Comoros were further progressed.

Eritrea

The Eritrean Minister of Agriculture, Arefaine Berhe G. Medhin visited India as a Special Envoy from 5-7 April 2007. He held discussions with Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma and the Minister of State (Agriculture), apart from visiting institutions relating to Agriculture and Small Scale Industry. Several vessels of the Indian Navy paid goodwill visits to Eritrea during 2007 including INS Tir and INS Sujata from 13-16 February 2007, INS Shardul, INS Krishna and INS Sujata from 1-5 September 2007 and the Sailing training ship INS Tarangini from 3-5 October. These visits were used to impart training on the maintenance of vessels to personnel of the Eritrean Navy and to hold joint exercises with vessels of Eritrean Navy. Workshop equipment and training handouts were handed over to the Eritrean side.

Ethiopia

Bilateral relations were invigorated with the visit of the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee to Ethiopia from 3-6 July 2007. During the visit, both sides signed five agreements, viz. Establishment of Joint Ministerial Commission, Bilateral Investments Promotion and Protection Agreement, Cooperation in the field of Science and Technology, Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations and Educational Exchange Programme. The Minister of External Affairs, along with Ethiopian Minister for Capacity Building, Tefera Waliwa inaugurated the Tele-Education Project at Addis Ababa University and Tele-Medicine Project at Black Lion Hospital on 6 July 2007 under the Pan-African E-Network Project of the Government of India. The Minister of External Affairs announced a line of credit of US\$ 122 million as first tranche for the development of sugar industry in Ethiopia, increase of ITEC slots from 25 to 50 and donation of a CT scan machine to Black Lion Hospital. The Agreement for the release of first tranche of loan of US\$ 122 million was signed between EXIM Bank of India and Ministry of Finance of Ethiopia at New Delhi on 4 October 2007.

The Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi led a large delegation to attend the Conference on Federalism at New Delhi on 5-7 November 2007. He met our Prime Minister who conveyed his agreement to Ethiopian Prime



Prime Minister of Mauritius, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, calling on the President of India, Pratibha Devisingh Patil at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 9 January 2008.



Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee signing agreements with Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Seyoum Mesfin during his visit to Ethiopia, 5 July 2007.

Minister's request for support to develop Centres of Excellence in higher learning in Ethiopia. Ethiopian Prime Minister reiterated Ethiopia's whole hearted support for India's claim to permanent membership of UNSC.

India's investments reached US\$ 464 million with 43 companies starting their operations out of 265 companies registered for investment. M/s Cadila Pharmaceuticals inaugurated a state-of-the-art pharmaceutical plant near Addis Ababa at a cost of US\$ 100 million for manufacturing 100 types of formulations.

The total trade between India and Ethiopia for the Financial year 2006-07 was US\$ 125.7 million. The exports from India to Ethiopia reached US\$ 114.4 million while imports from Ethiopia to India were US\$ 11.3 million.

Kenya

Several bilateral visits were exchanged between India and Kenya during 2007. Visits from India included that of a delegation led by Babbanrao Pachpute, Minister for Forests, Government of Maharashtra from 25-28 April 2007 to explore the possibility of cooperation in eco-tourism. Minister of State for Human Resource Development, D. Purandeshwari visited Kenya from 27 May-1 June 2007 to attend the 2nd E-learning Africa Conference held in Nairobi. From Kenya, a six-member delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture visited India from 1-5 July 2007 on a study tour of the cotton textiles industry. A four-member delegation from the police training academies of Kenya came on a study tour of police training institutions at New Delhi and Hyderabad from 26-29 November 2007. A 12-member delegation from Kaimbu Unity Finance Co-operative Union Ltd. visited Maharashtra to study the cooperative movement and dairy processing. A four-member delegation of Kenyan Police visited India from 27 November-1 December 2007.

A MoU between Kenya Industrial Research Development Institute (KIRDI) and Kamtech Associates Pvt. Ltd of India was signed on 15 October 2007 for implementation of transfer of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to Kenya via KIRDI. The project will develop 300 ICT entrepreneurs and will cost Kamtech an estimated US\$ 252,000. An Indian company BHARAT was given a US\$ 30 million contract from Kenya Pipeline Company to establish a Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) Plant in Mombasa.

Lesotho

The presence of the Indian Army Training Team (IATT) in Maseru continued to be a symbol of the deep trust and friendship between India and Lesotho. At the request of the Government of Lesotho, the IATT's term was extended till 2009. National Minerals Development Corporation (NMDC) commenced work for setting up a wholly-owned subsidiary in Lesotho. C-DAC completed a feasibility report on setting up an IT Centre at Lerotholi Polytechnic to be funded by the Government of India. A MoU on agricultural cooperation between India and Lesotho is under discussion. The India-Lesotho Joint Commission is also being reactivated. Minister of Agriculture and Food Security of Lesotho, Lesole Mokoma visited India from 27-30 August 2007. Lesotho Minister of Local Government, Dr. Pontso M. Sekatle visited India on 11-12 October 2007. Speaker of the National Assembly, Ntlhoi alice Motsamai and Chief Justice, Mahapela Lebohang Lehohla, visited India in December 2007 for the 8th International Conference of Chief Justices of the World in Lucknow.

Madagascar

Minister of Agriculture, Breeding and Fishing of Madagascar, Marius Ratolojanahary visited India from 22-26 July 2007. Discussions focused on bilateral cooperation including modernisation and diversification of agriculture, agro-engineering, seeds technology; agro-processing, value addition, capacity building and exchange of experts. India has agreed to install intranet project for the Malagasy Presidency linking the President's Office with other government ministers in Antananarivo.

Malawi

Malawi opened its diplomatic Mission in New Delhi and named its first High Commissioner to India. Under the ITEC assistance progress with civilian training slots were increased from 10 in 2006 to 15 in 2007. Malawi further reiterated its request for a US\$ 30 million Line of Credit for rural development project. An ICCR sponsored cultural troupe – the Manipuri Martial Arts troupe – performed in Malawi in July 2007.

Mauritius

Minister of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways, T. R. Baalu, visited Mauritius on 15-16 October 2007. During the visit, he inaugurated the Mauritius Maritime



Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh with the President of Nigeria, Umaru Yar'Adua, at a Ceremonial Reception, at Abuja, Nigeria on 15 October 2007.



Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma meeting with the Foreign Minister of Benin, Mariam-Aladji Boni Diallo, in New Delhi on 10 May 2007.

Training Academy. A Joint Working Group was also established to explore areas of cooperation between the two countries in the shipping sector.

The Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Meira Kumar visited Mauritius from 2-5 November 2007. During the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the field of social defence was signed. The MoU aims at promoting cooperation between the two countries in the areas of social welfare, social security and overall development of the weaker sections of society. Raksha Rajya Mantri, M.M. Pallam Raju visited Mauritius from 31 October-3 November 2007. Chief Minister of Bihar, Nitish Kumar, visited Mauritius from 26 July-1 August 2007 as Chief Guest for the "Diaspora Week" organised by the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO). The Mauritian Prime Minister, Navinchandra Ramgoolam laid the foundation stone of the JSS Academy of Technical Education College on 26 May 2007. The Academy is an affiliate of the JSS Mahavidyapeetha, Mysore.

The first meeting of the Executive Board of the World Hindi Secretariat was held in Mauritius on 24-25 May 2007. The Fourth Consortium Agreement between the University Grants Commission of India and the Tertiary Education Commission of Mauritius was signed on 18 April 2007. The Agreement caters for the emerging needs and challenges of the tertiary education sector in Mauritius.

In June 2007, a two-member Indian Army team undertook field visits to advise the Mauritian side on the location and construction of a small arms and Close Quarter Battlefield Range. The Indian Naval hydrographic ship Sarveshak undertook hydrographic surveys off Mauritius at three sites for the Land Based Oceanic Industry and of Port Mathurin harbour, Rodrigues during the period 10 March-12 April 2007. The hydrographic charts and data for the Land Based Oceanic Industry were handed over to the Mauritian Government in September 2007. The Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Samar' visited Mauritius from 26-29 August 2007 on a goodwill visit. During the visit, a day-long Joint Training Programme with the National Coast Guard of Mauritius in marine pollution response was held on 27 August 2007 off the coast of Mauritius.

The Mangalore Refineries and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) and the State Trading Corporation of Mauritius signed a US\$ 2 billion contract, for supply of all petroleum

requirements of Mauritius over the next three years, in New Delhi on 6 July 2007.

The total bilateral trade between India and Mauritius during the financial year 2006-07 was US\$ 751.04 million. The exports from India to Mauritius were US\$ 736.53 million (Rs. 333275.78 lakhs) and imports from Mauritius to India were US\$ 14.51 million (Rs. 6565.80 lakhs).

Mozambique

The momentum gained last year in promotion of bilateral relations continued in the current year. A 3-member delegation for the meeting of joint working group led by Additional Secretary (Coal) visited Mozambique from 2-7 April 2007 and a 'Plan of Action' was signed. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Mozambique leading a delegation of Indian business captains to the Regional Conclave of India-Africa Project Partnership organized by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on 2 July 2007. Mozambican Vice-Minister for Mineral Resources visited India to attend the India-Africa Hydrocarbon Conference, held in New Delhi on 6-7 November 2007. An "Internet Kiosk - Learning Station" was established in Macuba in the Zambezi Province and another one in Chibuto in the Gaza Province under the Hole-in-the-Wall project of the Government of India. Under the US\$ 20 million Line of Credit, signed on 10 September 2004 an amount of US\$ 14 million has already been disbursed for Rural Water drilling, Electrification, Drip Irrigation and Food processing projects. Out of the US\$ 20 million Line of Credit, signed on 17 August 2006, US\$ 3.8 million has been disbursed for rural electrification project in the Gaza Province. The Indian Foreign Direct Investment in Mozambique stood at US\$10.68 million. The Government of Mozambique has identified the site for the installation of the cashew processing plant manufactured by HMT(I), and gifted by Government of India. The first ever festival of Indian Films was held in Nampula city, the Provincial capital of Nampula.

The total bilateral trade between India and Mozambique during the financial year 2006-07 was US\$ 220.03 million. The exports from India to Mozambique were US\$ 191.72 million and imports from Mozambique to India were US\$ 28.31 million.

Namibia

Bilateral relations between India and Namibia continue to be warm and friendly. Namibia consistently supported

India in the UN, Commonwealth and other regional and international fora; and significantly continues to support India's candidature for permanent membership to an expanded UNSC. Several high-level visits were exchanged between the two countries. Speaker of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly and Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Executive Committee member, K.R. Suresh Reddy, visited Namibia on 2-3 February 2007. A Joint Parliamentary delegation of both Houses of the Namibian Parliament led by Asser Kapere, Chairman of the National Council and member of the Executive Committee of the CPA, visited New Delhi for the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, 21-30 September 2007. The Namibian Minister of Trade and Industry, Immanuel Ngatjizeko led the Namibian delegation for CII Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership (IAPP) 2007 at Maputo from 1-4 July 2007. The Minister invited Indian investors in the following sectors: infrastructure development, mining, food-processing, "Green Scheme", agricultural projects, sugar and joint ventures in small and medium enterprises, gas and energy, power generation and distribution.

Rwanda

There was further consolidation of our relations with Rwanda with the signing of EXIM Bank Agreement for Government to Government loan of US\$ 20 million as first tranche for a power project to be executed by BHEL. Union Minister of State for Agriculture, Kanti Lal Bhuria visited Rwanda from 30 May-1 June 2007. During the visit an MoU was signed on 31 May 2007 with the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources of Rwanda for cooperation in the field of agriculture and animal husbandry.

Seychelles

Seychelles significantly supported all our candidatures for elections to various international bodies, including that of Commonwealth Secretary-General. Foreign Office consultations were held on 25 September 2007. Coast Guard Ship 'Samar' called at Port Victoria in September 2007 for joint exercises with the Seychelles Coast Guard. In May 2007, 2-member delegation from Seychelles' Small Business Enterprises (SENPA) participated in the 6th Annual Commonwealth-India Small Business Competitiveness Programme in Cochin.

South Africa

There was further consolidation and diversification of India's relations with South Africa which is a strategic partner. The strong friendship forged at the political level manifested itself in a series of high level visits culminating in the 2nd IBSA Summit held in Pretoria on 17 October 2007 attended by Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. There was fruitful cooperation between the two countries on multilateral issues, in particular the reform of the UN system and the WTO Doha Round. The two countries also discussed finalization of several new Agreements in the fields of visa, police cooperation, training of diplomats and agricultural cooperation.

Chairperson, UPA and Congress President, Sonia Gandhi, visited South Africa from 21-23 August 2007. During her visit, she met former President Nelson Mandela, President Thabo Mbeki, among others and delivered the inaugural Lecture in the Gandhi Lecture Series at the University of Cape Town and also addressed the ANC Caucus in Parliament.

There were several visits at the Ministerial level – by Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, in May 2007 to inaugurate the CII Conclaves on India-South Africa Project Partnerships in Johannesburg and Cape Town; Minister of State for Women and Child Development, Renuka Chowdhury, to represent India at the 4th World Congress for Women in Durban in April 2007; Minister of Science and Technology, Kapil Sibal for the World Economic Forum meeting at Cape Town. Minister of State for Industry, Dr. Ashwani Kumar visited South Africa twice in August and October 2007 for the 'India Calling' Conference organized by the Indian Merchants' Chamber and the Indian Engineering Exhibition (INDEE 2007) organized by the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) in Johannesburg.

From the South African side, Brigitte Sylvia Mabandla, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development visited India from 1-4 April 2007. Minister of Minerals and Energy, B.P. Sonjica visited Mumbai to attend the International Diamond Conference – 'Mines to Market 2007' on 26-27 April 2007. Foreign Minister Dr. N. Dlamini Zuma visited New Delhi on 16-17 July 2007 to attend the Fourth Meeting of the Trilateral Commission of the IBSA Dialogue Forum. Minister in the Presidency, Dr. Essop Pahad visited India in August 2007 to participate

in the 4th meeting of the India-South Africa CEO's Forum in Mumbai and also led a trade delegation to India from 8-11 October 2007. Home Minister, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula visited India from 5-7 September 2007. L. Xingwana, Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs visited India from 29 September–5 October 2007. The Premier of Free State, Frances Beatrice Marshoff, visited India from 8-12 September 2007 on an investment and trade promotion mission.

Chief of the South African Army, Lt General Solly Zacharia Shoke visited India on a bilateral visit from 10-14 September 2007. An Indian Naval delegation visited South Africa in September 2007 to attend the India-RSA Naval Staff Talks. South Africa was well represented in the World Military Games hosted by India in October 2007. The National Defence College, New Delhi, delegation toured South Africa in May 2007 and the South African National Defence College toured India in November 2007.

Elizabeth Thabethe, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, led a 20-member delegation to India from 13-17 November 2007. She participated in the SME Exposition, Techmart, and met our Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

The period 2007-08 saw a significant increase in commercial interaction between India and South Africa. Total bilateral trade crossed US\$ 4 billion. India's exports to South Africa grew from just US\$ 1.52 billion in 2005-06 to US\$ 2.24 billion in 2006-07 registering an increase of 47%. For the first time ever, India was the 'Partner Country' at the Futurex-ICT Exhibition in Johannesburg in May 2007 which is the premier ICT event in South Africa. Also in May 2007, CII organized two Conclaves in Johannesburg and Cape Town focusing on the ICT and the infrastructure sectors. During the Conclaves, CII also signed 3 MoUs with UYF, eThekweni Municipality and the South African Municipal Local Development Agency (SAMLEDA). India was also the 'Partner Country' at the Africa Big Seven trade fair in July 2007 that focused on food processing industry. In August 2007, the Mumbai based Indian Merchants' Chamber (IMC) organized the 'India Calling' Conference in Johannesburg. Thereafter, Johannesburg hosted 'INDEE 2007' organised by the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) of India which saw the participation by a record 175 Indian companies.

Indian investment in South Africa continued to rise. Indian companies are reported to be executing projects worth US\$ 2 billion in South Africa. Concomitant with the increasing Indian business footprint in South Africa, the need for an umbrella body was felt. Accordingly, an Indian Business Forum (IBF) was launched during the visit of Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, to Johannesburg in March 2007. It has already enrolled 47 Indian companies as members and CII is providing the secretariat for the Forum. An important milestone in the increasing commercial and economic interaction between the two countries was the holding of the first round of negotiations for the India-Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) PTA in October 2007 in Pretoria.

Academic links between the two countries were strengthened with the visits to India of the Vice Chancellors of the universities of KZN, UNISA and The Witwatersrand. The decision of the Wits University to set up a Centre of Indian Studies in Africa, and the establishment of the Gandhi-Luthuli Chair in the University of KZN would lend further impetus to academic interaction. On the cultural side, for the first time, India became a partner country at the Arts Alive Festival of the city of Johannesburg leading to a major exposition of Indian literature, performing arts, cuisine, cinema, textiles and crafts in August-September 2007. The South African Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr. Pallo Jordan, visited India from 7-10 December 2007. During the visit, he also inaugurated a major exposition of South African arts titled 'Scratches on the Face'.

The total bilateral trade between India and South Africa in the financial year 2006-07 was US\$ 4718.15 million. The exports from India to South Africa were US\$ 2246.49 million while the imports reached US\$ 2471.66 million

Swaziland

The Swazi Enterprise and Employment Minister led a business delegation to India from 12-19 August 2007 to explore possibilities of increase in trade and investment between the two countries. Swaziland has expressed keen interest in establishment of Internet Kiosk –Learning Stations under the Hole-in-the-wall programme of the Government of India.

Tanzania

The bilateral relations between India and Tanzania remained cordial and friendly during 2007-08. A number

of high level delegations from Tanzania visited India. Basil Mramba, the Minister for Industry, Trade and Marketing led the Tanzanian delegation for the second meeting of India-Tanzania Joint Trade Committee held in New Delhi from 16-18 May 2007. The two sides agreed to further strengthen trade and economic relations between India and Tanzania. In addition, there were also visits to India by Tanzanian parliamentary delegations for interaction with the relevant Indian parliamentary institutions and committees.

There were significant developments in strengthening of India-Tanzania economic cooperation. A small industry information centre was established at the Small Industry Development Organization (SIDO), Dar-es-Salaam. The project funded by the Ministry of External Affairs was implemented by the National Small Industry Corporation of India. Progress was made in implementation of two other major Government of India funded projects in Tanzania viz. establishment of a Centre of Excellence in ICT in Dar-es-Salaam Institute of Technology; and setting up of tele-education and tele-medicine centres under the pan-African e-Network project in Dar-es-Salaam.

There was growing interest in Tanzania on the part of Indian corporates and business companies. The most significant development in strengthening India's corporate presence in Tanzania was the handing over of the operation of Tanzania railways on 1 October 2007 to Tanzania Railway Limited (TRL) in which Indian company RITES holds 51% shares with the remaining 49% by the Government of Tanzania.

On the private investment front, Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) acquired a majority stake and management control of Gulf Africa Petroleum Corporation (GAPCO) through a wholly owned subsidiary, Reliance Industries Middle East (RIME), a company registered in United Arab Emirates. In Tanzania, Tata Chemicals was also working in a joint venture with the National Development Corporation of Tanzania to construct a soda ash extraction plant in Lake Natron area in the Arusha region.

The total bilateral trade between India and Tanzania for the financial year 2006-07 was US\$ 386.94 million.

Uganda

Bilateral relations continued to be warm with the exchange of several high level visits. Minister of State for

Agriculture, Kanti Lal Bhuria visited Uganda from 28-30 May 2007. During his visit an MoU on cooperation in the fields of agriculture and allied sectors was signed with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries of Uganda. Minister of State for Women and Child Development, Renuka Chowdhury was in Kampala from 6-15 June 2007 in connection with addressing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Forum on Women and Child development and to attend the 8th meeting of Commonwealth Women Affairs Ministers. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Uganda from 28-30 June 2007 to attend a Regional Conclave on "India-Africa Project Partnership 2007" organised by the CII.

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh attended CHOGM 2007 held in Kampala from 23-25 November 2007. First Deputy Prime Minister of Uganda, Eriya Kategaya visited India from 19-24 February 2007 to attend the India-EAC Ministerial Meeting. Internal Affairs Minister of Uganda, Ruhukana Rugunda led a delegation to India in May 2007. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Uganda Isaac Musumba visited New Delhi from 5-17 September 2007, as a special representative of the President of Uganda, Yoweri K. Museveni.

An MoU to set up two 'Hole-in-the-Wall' stations in Uganda as a gift was signed in Kampala on 14 May 2007. The Government of Uganda had requested a grant/concessional credit of US\$ 350 million for a 200-300 MW hydro-electric project on the Ayago River, for which the BHEL signed an MoU with the Government of Uganda on 1 July 2006 in Kampala. The Department of Economic Affairs has sanctioned US\$ 50 million as the first tranche of a US\$ 350 million Letter of Credit (LoC). As part of assistance to Uganda to organise the Kampala CHOGM, Government of India gifted 2 executive buses and 12 garbage disposal trucks. India provided an amount of Rupees one crore as relief assistance to the flood victims of Uganda.

A Regional Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership 2007 'Strengthening Partnerships' organised by the CII was held in Kampala on 29 June 2007.

Zambia

Bilateral relations maintained their positive atmosphere. Zambia continues to provide support to India in the international arena, especially support for Indian

candidates to various elections. In the economic field, Zambia has utilized the US\$ 10 million credit line fully. In the mining sector, the Indian group, Vedanta is implementing a US\$ 1 billion investment on projects at its copper mines in Konkola. Indian plant and machinery is also used in PTA Bank financed projects in cement and sugar industries, and also in a Zambian Indian US\$ 125 million steel project. The Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement draft has been finalized during the year. Assistance under ITEC is continuing both in the defence and the civilian sectors (60 slots), in the form of deputations and training scholarships.

Zimbabwe

The implementation of the US\$ 5 million Indo-Zim SMEs Project under the MoU signed in June 2006, progressed well. Installation of machines in the Tool and Die Workshop at India-Zim Technology Centre located at Harare Institute of Technology and the common facility at Small Enterprises Development Corp (SEDCO) in Harare is nearing completion. In the cultural field, India continued to participate in the annual Harare International Festival for Arts (HIFA) held in Harare from 1-6 May 2007. India also participated in the annual Zimbabwe International Film Festival (ZIFF) held in Harare from 24 August–2 September 2007. In the pharmaceutical sector, Indian companies maintained their strong presence with Ranbaxy and Torrent representatives based in Harare. The Cotton and Ginning Plant of 'Grafax Cotton' at Mt. Darwin was inaugurated by Vice President Joyce Mujuru on 12 July 2007. She also laid down the foundation stone for another edible oil plant of Grafax Cotton at Mt. Darwin. Edible oil plants set up by Grafax Cotton at Sanyati and Surface Investments in Harare (Zimbabwe) continued their operations.

Regional/Sub Regional Organisations

India-Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)

India continued to interact and attend the meetings of Harare-based Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). ACBF is a premier institution for sustainable development and poverty alleviation in Africa. India is the first Asian country to have become a full member of the ACBF.

India-COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa)

The India-COMESA Joint Communiqué, which was

signed in October, last year is being systematically implemented. Various areas of cooperation like, economic cooperation in various sectors, deputation of experts in IT, pharmaceuticals, energy and industrial sectors are under various stages of implementation. COMESA Secretariat has responded favourably to India's proposal to devise a comprehensive Energy Master Plan to COMESA region. An Agreement of cooperation in Science and Technology is in final stages of negotiation. CII and CBC (COMESA Business Council) are negotiating an MoU for a substantive cooperation. Proposal of fertilizer production under buy back arrangement, development of small scale industry, development of agriculture and irrigation facilities, technology transfer and capacity building for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in COMESA countries are under consideration of COMESA Secretariat. A Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement with COMESA is under active consideration of Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

India-EAC (East African Community)

Following the visit of the EAC Ministerial delegation to India in February 2007, the Joint Communiqué issued by the two sides also included projects for cooperation between India and EAC pertaining to Railways, Telecommunications, Energy, Capital Market Development and Tourism. EAC has approved the draft agreement of cooperation in Science and Technology and modalities of its signing are being worked out. The two sides have been meeting in Dar-es-Salaam to monitor the implementation of these projects.

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

At the regional level, India stepped up its dialogue with NEPAD aimed at the establishment of a high level strategic engagement and assisting NEPAD in priority sectors such as private sector promotion, environment, science and technology and infrastructure.

Pan African Parliament

An effort was also made to enhance engagement with the Pan African Parliament (PAP) based in Midrand, South Africa. The PAP has expressed interest in Parliamentary exchanges with India and in deepening cooperation with India.

India-Southern African Development Community (SADC) – India Forum

India- SADC Forum was launched in April 2006. A 4-member technical team visited SADC Secretariat and after discussions with Secretariat officials have identified 11 projects out of which 7 are on priority viz., development of dry-land agriculture with regional irrigation and water management; value addition to agricultural products; study on Science and Technology Entrepreneurs Park; feasibility study on transfer of water from Congo basin to water scarce countries of SADC region; technical assistance to develop projects in regional strategic water infrastructure development programme to bankability and technical assistance to SADC Secretariat-secondment of network engineer and ICT experts to the SADC Secretariat. SADC Secretariat has requested India for joint implementation of projects in 2008.

West Africa

India continued to intensify its traditionally warm and cordial links with the countries of West Africa. The year witnessed the landmark visit of Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh to Nigeria which catapulted the relationship between the countries to a new level. India further deepened its ties with the region at not only the bilateral level but also at a regional and institutional level. The Minister for External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, during his visit to Ethiopia in July 2007, met with AU Chairperson Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare and had wide ranging discussions on the greater cooperation between India and Africa and the proposal to hold an India-Africa Summit in India in April 2008. During the visit of Prime Minister to Nigeria, the President of ECOWAS Commission called on him and expressed desire for further intensifying cooperation between India and ECOWAS.

Ministry of External Affairs continued its active participation in the India- African Project Partnership Conclaves organized by the CII as an important part of our economic diplomacy. During 2007, CII organized four Regional Conclaves in South Africa, Mozambique, Uganda and Ivory Coast. The Conclaves were successful with businesses from both regions striking significant partnerships and considering joint initiatives in a variety of business sectors and contributed to the promotion of Brand India in a major way.

The TEAM-9 Initiative, a techno-economic cooperation

venture between India and 9 countries of West Africa, continues to provide an effective impetus to deepen India's relations with several important countries of West Africa. This was evident in the Ministerial level visits that India received from countries like Angola, Benin, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, ROC, Gabon and Ghana.

Angola

Bilateral relations between Angola and India continued to be warm and friendly. Interactions between the two countries have steadily increased with the cessation of the long civil war in Angola in 2002. Aguinaldo Jaime, Deputy Prime Minister of Angola visited India to attend a "Mines to Market Conference" on Diamonds in Mumbai from 25-28 April 2007. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, visited Angola on 8-9 June 2007. The State Bank of India which opened its Representative Office in Luanda on 18 April 2005 extended a commercial line of credit of US\$ 5 million this year for supply of tractors from India.

Benin

Relations with Benin continued to strengthen. Foreign Minister of Benin, Madam Mariam Aladji Boni Diallo visited India on 9 May 2007. Government of India gifted medicines worth 50 lakhs to Benin which were highly appreciated.

Cameroon

Relations with Cameroon continued to prosper with the Government attaching special significance to harnessing potential of cooperation with India. A delegation from Cameroon Chamber of Commerce visited India from 22-30 November and signed a MoU for cooperation with CII. Cameroonian businessmen also participated in CII Conclaves. Official level delegation from the Foreign Ministry of Cameroon visited India in the first week of July 2007 to explore the possibilities of cooperation in various fields. They held discussions with officials in the ministries of Finance, Commerce and External Affairs as well as with several public and private sector undertakings.

Central African Republic

India's relations with Central African Republic gathered some momentum when the senior officials from the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Hydrocarbons of the Central African visited India from 5-11 November 2007,

to participate in the India-Africa Conference and Exhibition on Hydrocarbons.

Chad

India's relations with Chad received an impetus when a delegation led by Youssouf Abbassalah, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Aircraft including Djiddah Moussa Outman, Deputy Minister of External Relations, Republic of Chad, visited India from 26-30 November 2007. The delegation met Minister of State for External Affairs, Minister of State for Industry and Commerce and also held meeting with the EXIM Bank and CII.

Cote d' Ivoire

On 15 March 2007, Ivorian President Gbagbo laid the foundation stone of Mahatma Gandhi Technology Park for IT and Biotechnology in Grand Bassam. The project is being set up with assistance of Software Technology Parks of India (STPI). Government of India has allocated US\$ 20 million Line of Credit for the project. CII organized the regional conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership 2007 on 2-3 August 2007 in Abidjan. During the Conclave, it was formally announced that India would shortly inaugurate the Demonstration Centre of food processing and other micro machines in Abidjan, being set up by NRDC. As a gesture of friendship and solidarity, India gifted medicines worth Rs. 2.00 crores in April 2007 to the Government of Cote d'Ivoire for treatment of toxic waste victims.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The relations between India and the DRC continued to be very cordial and gathered momentum with three Ministerial level visits from DRC. Remi Henri Kuseyo Gatange, DRC minister of Transport and Means of Communication visited India from 13-17 August 2007. During the visit, the DRC minister had a meeting with our Railway Minister, held discussions with officials from RITES and Railway Board. Salomon Banamuhere, Baliene, DRC Minister of Energy was on a working visit to India from 20-24 August 2007. The minister held meetings with the Indian ministers of water resources, new and renewable energy and power and requested India's assistance for the development of these sectors in DRC. Simon Mboso Kiamputu, Minister of Industry of DRC visited India from 3-7 September 2007.

Andre-Philippe Futa, Minister of National Economy and

Commerce of DRC visited India from 13-18 January 2008 to attend the CII Partnership Summit in New Delhi. During the visit he had a meeting with Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath.

Republic of Congo (ROC)

Emile Ouosso, Minister of Transport and Civil aviation of the ROC visited India on 20 July 2007. During the visit the ROC minister had a meeting with our Railway Minister. The ROC Minister, who is the Chairman of a group of transport ministers of 53 African Countries, mooted a proposal for holding a summit of transport ministers of Africa in India.

Gabon

India's friendly relations with Gabon continued to gather momentum during the year. Ali Bongo Ondimba, Senior Minister for National Defence of Gabon visited India from 4-10 November 2007 along with 11 member delegation. He held bilateral discussions with the Minister of Defence and visited defence training centres and production facilities.

Gambia

Gambia was extended a US\$ 20 million LoC for rural electrification by India out of the consolidated LoC worth US\$ 250 million extended by India to the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) in May 2006. The Indian NGO, Barefoot College from Tilonia, Rajasthan in partnership with Riders for Health, a UK-based NGO installed solar electricity panels in two villages in Gambia. The project was officially inaugurated by the Gambian Vice-President, Dr. Aja Isatou Njie-Saidy on 3 September 2007.

A delegation led by Dr. Amadou Sowe, Permanent Secretary, Department of State for Agriculture of Gambia attended the Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza held in New Delhi from 4-6 December 2007 and had interaction with concerned authorities in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Govt. of India and discussed mutual concerns in the field of health.

Ghana

India and Ghana maintained friendly bilateral relations during the year. Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, visited Ghana from 4-7 March 2007 as representative of Prime Minister for Golden Jubilee

Celebrations of Ghana's Independence. Shirley Botchwey, Deputy Foreign Minister of Ghana visited India from 15-17 May 2007. Government of India donated medicines worth US\$ 1,53,000 for victims of severe flooding in Northern Ghana. Ghana was also extended a US\$ 30 million Line of Credit (LoC), out of the consolidated LoC worth US\$ 250 million extended by India to EBID, for establishing a plant for production of bio-diesel, glycerine and organic fertilizer.

Guinea

Relations between India and Guinea continued to be cordial and friendly. India gifted 50 electric transformers to Guinea worth Rs.1.76 Crores on 24 April 2007 to improve electricity services in Conakry. Under the US\$ 250 million Line of Credit announced for ECOWAS, Guinea was allocated funds for two projects (a) rehabilitation and expansion of electricity network of US\$ 20 million and (b) urban transportation system improvement of US\$ 8.5 million.

Mali

India's relationship with Mali received a boost when Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, led the Indian delegation at the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Community of Democracies held in Bamako, Mali from 14-17 November 2007. A 9-member delegation led by Abu Baker Traore, Mali's Minister of Economy and Finance and Hamed Diane Semega, Minister of Mines, Energy and Water, visited India in the first week of April 2007 to sign a credit line agreement between Government of India and the Government of Mali. A concessionary line of credit worth US\$ 75 million has been extended for electricity transmission and distribution project in Mali and Cote d'Ivoire.

Mauritania

Relations between India and Mauritania continued to be warm and friendly. Mauritanian Minister for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Corra Issagha visited India in October 2007 and met with senior officials in Ministry of External Affairs as well as several representatives of the business community.

Issagha Corra, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry of Mauritania attended the Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza held in New Delhi from 4-6 December 2007.

Nigeria

Relations with Nigeria were elevated to a new level with the visit of Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh from 14-16 October 2007, which was a landmark bilateral visit after a gap of 45 years. During his visit, the two countries agreed to establish a Strategic Partnership between India and Nigeria that would cover bilateral political, economic, trade, security, cultural, education, science and technology and international dimensions. A comprehensive Abuja Declaration on Strategic Partnership was issued. Prime Minister addressed a joint session of the Nigerian National Assembly on 15 October 2007 and spoke on India-Nigeria and India's Partnership with Africa in the 21st century. During the visit the following agreements were signed:

- MoU between Foreign Service Institute and the Nigerian Foreign Service Academy.
- MoU between Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) and Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.
- Protocol for Foreign Office Consultations.
- MoU on Defence Cooperation.

Prime Minister offered a US\$ 100 million LoC to Nigeria with a view to encourage further Indian investment in Nigeria. Prime Minister also announced that the number of scholarships for Nigeria under our ITEC and other programmes would be increased from fifty to seventy five. Defence Cooperation remained a major plank of cooperation with exchanges of instructors, cadets in National Defence Academy (NDA) and National Defence College (NDC), sports teams, training of Nigerian armed forces personnel in specialized operations and adventure activities, donation of defence communication equipment worth US\$ 1 million and a trophy, "India Cup" to NDA, and approval of establishment of 2 IT Labs in Nigerian defence institutes. MoU on Defence Cooperation signed during Prime Minister's visit to Nigeria institutionalized the longstanding relationship. Several major Indian companies in the private and public sectors are making forays into diversified sectors of Nigerian economy. Nigeria is India's largest trading partner and has also emerged as the fourth largest destination for Nigerian non-oil exports.

Senegal

India's relations with Senegal continued to witness significant improvement during the year. On 10 May 2007,

three hundred double cabin pickups, fifty single cabin pickups and fifty TATA Safaris valued at US\$ 5.3 million were handed over to the President of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade as part of US\$ 11 million line of credit offered by the Government of India under the rubric of TEAM-9. On 25 October 2007, President Abdoulaye Wade presided at the ceremony for handing over food processing equipment worth US\$ 5.7 million to be distributed to rural women and young people. A new Line of Credit of US\$ 15 million for acquisition of three bi-directional units of train, out of the consolidated LoC worth US\$ 250 million extended by India to EBID, was allocated to Senegal.

M.A.A. Fatmi, Minister of State for Human Resource Development led a 6-member delegation from 10-13 December 2007 to attend the 7th Meeting of High Level Group on Education for All in Dakar and held discussions with his Senegalese counterpart in the framework of the development of bilateral relations. Madicke Niang, Minister of Mines and Industry of Senegal visited India from 24-26 January 2008 and held discussions with Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Ram Vilas Paswan.

Sierra Leone

India and Sierra Leone share close and friendly relations. India gifted packages of indelible ink in May 2007 for conducting their presidential and parliamentary elections held in September 2007.

Togo

During his visit to Accra from 4-7 March 2007, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, met

with the Togolese President and discussed matters relating to bilateral issues, UNSC expansion and the Pan-African Satellite network.

African Union

India's interaction with the African Union (AU) showed signs of increase during the year and two Working Group meetings took place to work on the areas of cooperation to be discussed at the proposed India-Africa Summit to be held in India in 2008. The Working Groups met alternatively in New Delhi in March 2007 and in Addis Ababa in May 2007. Minister for External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, during his visit to Ethiopia in July 2007, also met with AU Chairperson Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare and had wide ranging discussions on the greater cooperation between India and Africa and the proposal to hold an India-Africa Summit in India in 2008.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Relations with ECOWAS received a boost when the President of ECOWAS Commission called on our Prime Minister during his visit to Nigeria, and expressed desire for further intensifying cooperation between India and ECOWAS with greater participation by India in the ECOWAS projects. ECOWAS countries have begun to avail of US\$ 250 million line of credit for infrastructure projects in member countries. Projects worth US\$ 113.5 million, have already been approved India.



The member States of the European Union (EU) are important to India individually as well as collectively. The European Union, which has always been an economic powerhouse, has evolved as a political entity spreading eastwards and encompassing 27 countries. The EU Reform Treaty was signed by the Heads of State or Government of the 27 Member States in Lisbon on 13 December 2007. Called the Treaty of Lisbon, it aims to provide the EU with modern institutions and optimised working methods. The Schengen area too grew in December 2007 by including 9 of the 12 New Member countries; the rest three of the New Member countries, viz., Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania are likely to join later. The EU is India's largest trading partner and bilateral trade crossed € 46 billion in 2006. India and EU are also important investment partners with significant two-way flows. India and EU are also important investment partners with significant two-way flows. Total FDI inflow from the EU to India is US\$ 10.86 billion (24% of total FDI inflows - Aug 1991-Feb 2007). Indian investment has also been growing steadily particularly in UK, Germany and Italy. India's relations with Europe have grown exponentially from what was a trade and economic driven relationship to one covering all areas of interaction. India's engagement with individual countries in Europe intensified and diversified in fields such as energy, science and technology and culture. India and Europe have worked for development of common approaches to addressing new and emerging global challenges.

India's bilateral interactions with the countries of Europe have gathered considerable momentum during 2007. Summit-level interactions have taken place with Italy, Netherlands, Germany Portugal, the U.K. and France. There has also been extensive interaction at Ministerial and official levels besides growing exchanges of Parliamentarians and civil society dialogues.

India's relations with the majority of the new entrants to the EU and the countries of the Western Balkans has had to be redefined in the context of the new realities

confronted by these countries as well as by India - their moving away from communist-era socialist planned economies to market economies and India undergoing liberalization. However, the relatively high rates of economic growth in India as opposed to Europe, the availability of skilled technologists and technicians at very competitive costs, the huge Indian middle class market, and niche areas of excellence including IT and Pharmaceuticals, and the capacity of Indian companies to invest in different sectors of the economy in their respective countries, taken together with the prospect of aging populations and shrinking academic and labour force, all led to renewed interest of central and eastern European countries in India. Trade with most of these countries is increasing at a fast pace, moving away from traditional commodities to engineering goods and value-added items. Investments from India are also increasing. The potential for high technology manufacturing in India, cooperation in petroleum, non-conventional energy, biotechnology and nano-technology and engineering, together with more areas like deep-sea fishing and food processing are raising new possibilities for collaboration in trade and investment. Scandinavian countries are also beginning to view the Indian stock market and financial instruments as safe and remunerative investments for their large investable funds, and have commenced investing in India. The relatively high growth rates in the former East Europe, coupled with the new possibilities arising from a dynamic and economically vibrant India is boosting activity between India and Europe to mutual benefit.

Austria

Dr. Ursula Plassnik, Federal Minister for EU and International Affairs of the Republic of Austria, paid an official visit to India from 15-18 March 2007. Austrian Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Johannes Hahn visited India from 28-30 November 2007. The Agreement on Science and Technology cooperation was signed during the visit.

The Austrian Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Johannes Hahn visited India from 29 November-1 December 2007. The Austrian Minister met Minister of Science and Technology, Kapil Sibal and the two Ministers signed an Agreement on Science and Technology on 29 November 2007. The Austrian Minister also visited Bangalore and Agra.

The Austrian Federal Minister for Economy and Labour, Martin Bartenstein visited India from 9-14 December 2007 to attend the Joint Economic Commission Meeting. The Austrian Minister also held talks with Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath. During the visit, he met Minister of Railways, Lalu Prasad Yadav; Minister of New and Renewable Energy, Vilas Muttemwar; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Labor and Employment, Oscar Fernandes; and the Chief Minister of Delhi, Sheila Dikshit.

Belgium

Relations between India and Belgium are warm and cordial and continued to flourish during the year.

India's economic linkage with Belgium is growing – bilateral trade has increased from around US\$ 5.78 billion during 2003-04 to US\$ 7.6 billion during 2005-06. There is a gradually growing trend of setting up of joint ventures between companies of both sides. India received FDI to the tune of US\$152 million during the period August 1991-June 2006. In the recent past, Indian investment in Belgium has exceeded investment by Belgian firms in India. Several Indian companies particularly in the IT and software sector have established base in Belgium to cater to Belgian as well as other north European markets. Several takeovers of Belgian firms by Indian companies have also occurred.

Civil Aviation Minister, Praful Patel visited Belgium in May 2007 during which the agreement for Jet Airways scheduled services to New York and Toronto via Brussels Airport connecting New Delhi and Mumbai was signed.

Finance Minister, P. Chidambaram visited Belgium on 17 September 2007.

Bulgaria

Prime Minister of Bulgaria, Sergey Stanishev paid an official visit to India from 10-15 September 2007. During the visit, Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons,

Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Protocol for amending the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPA), Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters, Agreement on Economic Cooperation, Protocol of Intent on promoting Cooperation in the areas of Labour Relations, Employment and Social Security, Memorandum of Understanding between the National Small Industries Corporation Limited of India, and the Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency were signed.

The third meeting of the India-Bulgaria Forum on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT Forum) was held on 15 October 2007 in New Delhi. It was agreed to further strengthen ICT cooperation between the two countries in the priority areas of e-Governance, Technology Park, ICT Education, Research and Development and Info-Security. It was also decided to set up specific groups in these areas for close interaction and speedy implementation of future collaborative projects.

The Fifth Session of India-Bulgarian Joint Science and Technology Committee meeting was held in New Delhi on 12 November 2007.

Prof. Radoslav Gaidarski, Minister of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria visited India from 2-7 December 2007 to attend the Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza held in New Delhi.

Croatia

Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, visited Croatia, from 18-20 September 2007. An Agreement on Visa Exemption for Diplomatic and Official Passport Holders was signed during the visit.

Cyprus

Speaker of Lok Sabha, Somnath Chatterjee led a Parliamentary delegation to Limassol, Cyprus from 16-21 April 2007, to attend the mid-year meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). The Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee visited Cyprus from 24-26 May 2007. During the visit, agreements on Combating International Terrorism, Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking; Agreement on Abolition of Visa Requirement for Diplomatic and Official/Service Passports, and the Cultural Exchange Programme for 2007-2010 were signed.



President, Pratibha Devisingh Patil, the Chief Guest President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy and the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, at the 'At Home' function, organised by the President, in New Delhi, on 26 January 2008.



Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma meeting President of the Republic of Croatia, Stjepan Mesic during his visit, 20 September 2007.

Czech Republic

The Vice Chief of Army Staff (VCOAS) paid a visit to the Czech Republic from 10-13 July 2007. The visit was to explore the new areas of cooperation in defence relationship.

Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic, Karel Schwarzenberg visited India from 18-21 November 2007. During the visit, a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute and the Czech Diplomatic Academy was signed during the visit.

Czech Republic Senate President, Premysl Sobotka paid an official visit to India from 2-6 December 2007. During the visit, he met Vice President of India, Lok Sabha Speaker, and Minister of Commerce and Industry. He also visited Hyderabad where he met Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. He was accompanied by a large business delegation and, parliamentarians. The visit focused on economic, trade and investment issues.

Denmark

Dr. Per Stig Moller, Minister for Foreign Affairs paid an official visit to India from 22-24 October 2007.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark paid a State visit to India from 4-8 February 2008. During his visit, he called on the President, and met the Prime Minister, and the UPA Chairperson. During the visit, agreement for establishment of bilateral Joint Commission, Arrangement on Gainful Employment for spouses of members of diplomatic missions in each other's countries, and MoU for cooperation in new and renewable energy were signed.

Finland

The 15th Session of the India-Finland Joint Commission meeting was held in New Delhi on 19 April 2007. Both sides reviewed the economic situations in their respective countries, bilateral trade relations including trade promotion measures and bilateral cooperation in several areas.

The fourth meeting of the Joint working Group (JWG) on Environment with Finland was held in Helsinki from 4-5 October 2007.

A 9-member delegation of the Commerce Committee of the Finnish Parliament led by Jouko Skinnari, visited India from 27-30 September 2007.

Finnish Minister for Foreign Trade and Development, Paavo Vayrynen visited India from 21-26 October 2007. He was accompanied by a delegation comprising officials and business delegation.

France

India and France have enjoyed cordial and substantive ties, with regular interaction between the leadership of both countries. India and France have a strategic partnership since 1998. This is a logical culmination of our traditionally warm and friendly relations, marked by regular high level exchanges at the Head of State/Head of Government levels, and growing commercial exchanges including in strategic areas such as defence, nuclear energy and space.

The President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy held a meeting with Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the G-8 Summit in Germany from 7-8 June 2007. Earlier, the Minister of External Affairs had a meeting with the French Foreign Minister, Bernard Kouchner in Hamburg in May 2007.

The French Minister for Research and Higher Education visited India in November 2007 and met Minister for Human Resource Development, Arjun Singh and Minister for Science and Technology, Kapil Sibal.

The French Foreign Minister, Bernard Kouchner visited India from 19-23 December 2007. India-France Strategic Dialogue was held on 4 January 2008 for which Jean David Levitte, Adviser to the President of France, visited India.

Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France accompanied by a high level Ministerial and business delegation paid a state visit to India from 25 to 26, January 2008. This was his first visit to India after assuming office in May 2007. He was the Guest of Honour at the Republic Day Parade. A Joint Statement providing a strategic roadmap not only for our future cooperation but also for our strategic partnership was issued after the delegation level talks. A Joint Declaration between India and France on the fight against global warming was also issued during the visit. Several agreements/MoUs in the fields of defence, consular matters, development cooperation and neurosciences were signed during the visit.

France is ranked 5th in the list of India's trading partners among EU countries. Indo-French bilateral trade has been growing over the years, however, Indo-French trade, at

€ 5.6 billion in 2006, is still below the potential. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) approved from France from 1991 to March 2007 is of the order of US\$ 1.76 billion out of which the actual inflow is of the order of US\$ 900 million. The number of technical and financial collaborations approved with France is 915. France is the 8th largest foreign investor in the period August 1991 to March 2007.

The first Indo-French Legal Forum was held in Paris from 16-19 October 2007 at Paris. The Indian delegation was led by the Chief Justice of India, K. G. Balakrishnan.

France has been an important partner in the space field for 4 decades. The last meeting of the JWG headed by Chairman ISRO and President of the French space agency CNES (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales) for cooperation in space was held in Hyderabad in September 2007. INSAT 4B was launched from Kourou in French Guyana on 11 March 2007. The Megha-Tropiques mission is an Indo-French joint satellite programme for study of the tropical atmosphere between ISRO and CNES. ISRO will build the Megha-Tropiques spacecraft, which will be similar to the Indian Remote Sensing (IRS) satellites.

The High Level Committee on Defence (HLCD) meeting took place from 17-18 December 2007 at Delhi. Joint exercises, staff talks at the level of the Armed Forces and other professional exchanges at the mid-career level have been proceeding well. The last Garuda series of air exercises took place in India in February 2007 and the Varuna exercises were conducted in September 2007.

The Gupta Art Exhibition was held at prestigious Grand Palais, Paris from 2 April-9 July 2007.

Germany

The traditionally warm and friendly relations between India and Germany have been deepened further by the visit of the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Angela Merkel to India from 29 October-1 November 2007.

Prime Minister and the Chancellor flagged off the Science Express on 30 October 2007 which, with its 13 carriages, would be visiting 56 cities in India. A Joint Statement on the further development of the strategic and global partnership between India and Germany was issued by Prime Minister and Chancellor Merkel. This document provides a strategic roadmap not only for our future cooperation but also for our strategic partnership in the

promotion of shared and cherished values in the global arena. Besides, several agreements/MoUs in the fields of science, defence and intellectual property rights were signed.

An announcement on setting up of a CEO's Round Table was also made during the visit and its first meeting was held in Mumbai.

Germany is India's largest trade partner in the EU, our second most important source of technological collaborations globally and an important investor. Bilateral trade has been growing and crossed the figure of € 10 billion in 2006 showing an increase of 39.18%, exports from India were € 4.19 billion (+23.1%) and imports were € 6.36 billion (+52.5%). During the first six months of 2007, total trade increased by 15.29%; Indian exports by 12.21% to € 2.39 billion and imports by 17.61% to € 3.34 billion. In terms of FDI inflows, Germany is the seventh largest investor in India with total inflows of US\$ 1.9 billion between 1991 - June 2007. There is also a rising trend of Indian companies acquiring companies or opening their subsidiaries in Germany.

Both the leaders have now set the target of reaching the bilateral trade to € 20 billion by 2012.

The 16th session of the bilateral Joint Economic Commission was held on 8-19 September 2007 in Berlin. India was also the partner country for the International Tourism Bourse in Berlin in March 2007. An India day was held at the Frankfurt International Motor Show in September 2007.

In 2007, there were a series of high-level visits including by four leading Parliamentary delegations to India: the Finance and Foreign Affairs Committees of the Bundestag led by their Chairmen, the CDU Parliamentary Party Leader and the President of the German Bundestag visited India.

Dr. Anette Schavan, Federal Minister of Education and Research visited India from 5-9 February 2007 to co-chair the EU Science Minister's Conference held on 7-8 February 2007.

Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi, Minister for Information and Broadcasting visited Germany on 16-17 February 2007 to sign the "Audio-Visual Co-Production Agreement" along with German Foreign Minister Steinmeier during the "Berlinale" film festival 2007. Ambika Soni, Minister for

Tourism and Culture, visited Berlin from 6-10 March 2007 to co-inaugurate the International Tourism Bourse 2007 along with Michael Glos, German Minister of Economics and Technology.

Scientific and Technological Cooperation is one of the most important elements in the Indo-German interaction. The establishment of the Indo-German Science and Technology Research Centre during the visit of Chancellor Merkel would facilitate cooperation in industrial and basic research and ensure that important scientific breakthroughs are turned into practical applications.

Educational links are also increasing with India having created five Rotating Chairs in prestigious German Universities.

The first meeting of the Defence Secretaries took place on 20 April 2007 in New Delhi. This was preceded by the meeting of the three subgroups on Strategic Defence Cooperation; Defence Technical Cooperation; and Military to Military Cooperation.

The 16th meeting of the Indo-German Consultative Group was held at Hyderabad from 2-4 November 2007.

Greece

President of India, APJ Abdul Kalam paid a State visit to Greece from 25-28 April 2007. The State visit came after a gap of 21 years and helped consolidate the recent development of India's relations with Greece in a cross-sectoral manner. Both countries sought to add greater content to this age old and traditional relationship. During the visit, two important agreements on Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection, and Science and Technology were signed. The Indian President met with his counterpart Dr. Karolos Papoulias. He also met with the Prime Minister of Greece and the President of the Parliament. The latter awarded him a Gold Medal of the Hellenic Parliament. The Mayor of the city of Athens, Nikitas Kaklamanlis honoured him with the Gold Medal of Merit of the city of Athens.

An official tourism delegation from Greece visited India to participate in the Joint Working Group on Tourism in New Delhi on 16 April 2007. The discussions provided impetus to our cooperation in tourism sector including exchanges between the tour operators, hospitality organizations and travel media personnel, visit of 5

students of Schools of Tourism professions to Greece, and proposed Greek investment in our tourism industry.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Greece, Petros Doukas visited India from 11-15 November 2007 to attend the 5th Joint Economic Commission meeting held in New Delhi on 12-13 November 2007.

Kostas Karamanlis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic paid a State visit to India from 10-13 January 2008. During his visit, he had meetings with President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs, UPA Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha.

Holy See

Pope Benedict XVI announced that Oswald Garcias, Archbishop of Mumbai would be created Cardinal. The Consistory was celebrated on 2 November 2007 at St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City.

Hungary

The first meeting of the India-Hungary Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation took place in Hungary from 25-28 April 2007.

Foreign Office Consultations with Hungary were held on 29 August 2007 in Budapest.

Dr. Istvan Hiller, Minister Culture and Education, Republic of Hungary visited India from 3-5 October 2007.

Ferenc Gyurcsany, Prime Minister of Hungary paid a State visit to India from 16-19 January 2008. During his visit, he had meetings with President, Prime Minister, UPA Chairperson, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Minister of External Affairs, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and Commerce and Industry Minister. The agreements signed during the visit include an MoU on cooperation in the Health Sector, an MoU on cooperation in prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Agreement for cooperation in Agriculture, Plant Quarantine and Protection and Animal Husbandry, an MoU on the Establishment of an India-Hungary Science and Technology Fund, and an MoU on cooperation between ONGC and MOL Hungarian Oil and Gas Plc.

Iceland

P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance, visited Iceland from 28-30 June 2007. An agreement on the Bilateral



British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown calling on the President, Pratibha Devisingh Patil on 21 January 2008.



Vice President of India, M. Hamid Ansari meeting with Dr. Angela Merkel, Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany in New Delhi on 30 October 2007.

Investment Protection and Promotion (BIPA) between India and Iceland was signed during the visit.

An MoU on Sustainable Fisheries Development with Iceland was signed in New Delhi on 30 July 2007.

An MoU for cooperation in the field of Energy with Iceland was signed in New Delhi on 9 October 2007.

Icelandic Minister of Finance, Arni Mathiesen visited India from 22-28 November 2007. During the visit, an Agreement and the Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Iceland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income was signed.

Ireland

In February 2007 Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi visited Ireland to meet NRIs/PIO community in Dublin. The long and close historical relationship between Ireland and India was celebrated by naming a road in New Delhi after one of Ireland's greatest patriots and political leaders, Eamon de Valera on 17 March the National Day of Ireland. Irish Minister of State for Justice, Frank Fahey to India visited India for the naming ceremony.

The Instrument of Ratification for the Cultural agreement was signed between India and Ireland on 11 December 2007 by the Irish Ambassador and Secretary (Culture), Government of India.

Italy

Italian Prime Minister, Dr. Romano Prodi visited India in February 2007. He led a large business delegation and visited Chennai, Bangalore, Calcutta, Mumbai and Delhi. He was accompanied by three Ministers and a 400-strong business delegation.

Two MoUs on setting up a Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism and Transnational Crime and on Renewable Energy Cooperation were signed.

The Cultural Exchange Programme 2007-09 was also signed. A large number of commercial contracts between Indian and Italian companies were also signed during the visit. The Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit affirms the commitment of both sides to work towards the establishment of a strategic partnership. A Joint Working Group on counter-terrorism was also set up.

The 6th meeting of the India-Italy Joint Defence Committee was held in New Delhi on 1-2 February 2007.

The Chief of Army Staff visited Italy in March 2007 and the Italian Defence Minister, Arturo Parisi visited India from 7-10 May 2007.

The Italian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Massimo D'Alema visited India from 10-12 October 2007.

Other visits from India to Italy include those of Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Minister of State for New and Renewable Energy, Minister of State for Industry, Minister of State for Home Affairs.

Latvia

Minister of State for Ministry of External Affairs, Anand Sharma paid an official visit to Latvia from 27-29 March 2007. Special Assignments Minister for Electronic Government Affairs of Latvia, Ina Gudele visited India from 8-12 October 2007.

Lithuania

Minister of State for Ministry of External Affairs, Anand Sharma paid an official visit to Lithuania on 25-26 March 2007. Lithuanian Government conveyed their intention to open a Consulate General in New Delhi headed by a Consul General, Algirdas Albertas Dambrauskas with jurisdiction over the entire territory of India. At present, Lithuania does not have resident mission in India. The proposal has been approved and the concurrence of the Government of India has also been conveyed to Lithuanian government on 10 September 2007.

Luxembourg

India's relations with Luxembourg, a major European financial centre, continued to develop and diversify during the year.

Luxembourg ranks 3rd in terms of portfolio investments in India (US\$ 6 billion; 15% of total portfolio investments). It holds the top position in terms of GDRs (Global Depository Receipts) - over 100 GDRs have been set up by Indian companies and listed on Luxembourg Stock Exchange.

M/s Paul Wurth, a well known Luxembourgish iron and steel company won Steel Authority of India's €100 million (Rs 580 Crores) contract for upgrading the blast furnace of SAIL's steel plant at Bokaro.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, Asselborn visited India in February 2007. The Treasury and Justice Minister, Luc Frieden visited India in the third week of January 2007. Minister for Economy and Foreign Trade, Jeannot Krecké visited India in April 2007.

Macedonia

The first round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Macedonia was held in Skopje on 17 July 2007.

Netherlands

The bilateral relations have strengthened and intensified over the year. The high-level visits from the Netherlands have imparted further momentum to the relationship.

Bilateral trade between India and the Netherlands is on the increase in the past few years. Total trade which stood at US\$1.8 billion during 2003-04 rose to € 3.04 billion in 2006. The balance of trade has been in India's favour for the past several years, in 2006 to the tune of € 769 million. Cumulative Dutch investment into India is of the order of US\$ 2.6 billion (August 1991-March 2007) making Netherlands the fourth largest investor in India.

Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, accompanied by the Crown Prince Willem-Alexander and Princess Maxima, Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen and Minister of Economic Affairs, M. J. A. van der Hoeven as well as a business delegation comprising CEOs of eight top Dutch multinationals visited India in October 2007. It was of special significance as the second State visit to a single country by Queen Beatrix. Economic relations were the focus of the visit. Two MoUs – one on cultural cooperation and the other between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Stichting Amsterdam India Festival (AIF) – were signed during the visit.

Mechanism of Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) is working to the satisfaction of both sides. The last round of FOC was held at New Delhi in September 2007.

Regular consular consultations on improving the visa and consular issues between the two countries are working well. Discussions on a bilateral Social Security Agreement are at an advanced stage.

Chairperson of UPA, Sonia Gandhi visited the Netherlands from 8-10 June 2007 where she delivered a lecture at the Nexus Institute.

A Dutch trade mission headed by the Minister for Foreign Trade Frank Heemskerk visited India from 25-30 November 2007. It was the largest ever foreign trade mission by the Netherlands to any country and more than 75 Small and Medium Enterprises and Vice-Mayors of five major cities were part of the trade mission.

Norway

A 16-member Norwegian Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Research and Church Affairs headed by Eriksen Søreide, Ine Marie, Chairperson visited India from 23 February- 3 March 2007. A 12-member Norwegian Parliamentary Standing Committee on Family and Cultural Affairs headed by May-Helen Molvaer Grimstad, Chairperson visited India from 2-8 March 2007. Storting (Norwegian Parliament) President T. Jagland paid an official visit to India from 11-17 March 2007 at the invitation of the Speaker of Lok Sabha. Norwegian Finance Minister, Kristin Halvorsen paid an official visit to India from 29-31 March 2007, and Norwegian Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Magnhild Meltveit Kleppa visited India from 29-31 October 2007.

The first meeting of the India-Norway Joint Working Group (JWG) on Science and Technology was held in New Delhi on 14 June 2007. The first session of the Indo-Norwegian Joint Working Group (JWG) on Environment was held in Oslo from 1-2 October 2007. The main issues which were discussed include Climate Change including CDM and adaptation strategies, International Environmental issues in relation to Sustainable Development and UNEP, Biological Diversity, and Sustainable Consumption and production.

Minister of Finance, P. Chidambaram visited Norway from 23-25 October 2007.

Poland

Polish Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Anna Kalata paid a three-day visit to India from 13-15 June 2007 at the invitation of Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs. The discussion focused on availability of Indian workers to Poland in sectors such as construction and agriculture as there is a shortage of skilled workers in these sectors in Poland. Cabinet has approved in a meeting held on 11 October 2007 an MoU for bilateral cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine between the Republic of India and Republic of Poland.

Foreign Office Consultations with Poland were held on 31 August 2007 in Warsaw.

Minister of State for Environment and Forests, S. Raghupathy accompanied by two official delegates attended the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe-'Forests for Quality of Life' held from 5-7 November 2007 in Warsaw.

Indo-Polish Joint Working Group (JWG) for Defence cooperation was held in Warsaw on 10-12 December 2007. K.P. Singh, Secretary (Defence Production) headed the Indian delegation. From Polish side, Piotr Czerwinski, Secretary of State for Armament and Modernization, Ministry of Defence. The issues discussed included upgradation of technology in defence productions, offer of Ph. D programmes in Defence Studies, and defence-related training programmes.

Portugal

Portuguese President Anibal Cavaco Silva visited India from 10-17 January 2007 on a week-long official visit to boost political and economic cooperation. He headed a delegation comprising of Foreign Minister Luis Amado, Economy Minister Manuel Pinho and the Culture Minister Isabel Pires de Lima as well as 60-member business delegation. An Extradition Treaty as well as a Cultural Exchange Programme and an Educational Exchange Programme were signed during the visit.

Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi, visited Portugal from 1-3 February 2007.

The Second meeting of the Indo-Portugal Joint Commission on Science and Technology was held in New Delhi from 19-25 March 2007 when the Programme of Cooperation for 2007-09 was approved.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma visited Lisbon on an official visit from 10-12 June 2007. During his visit he called on President Cavaco Silva and held meetings with Luis Amado, the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Dr. Joao Cravinho, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour and Employment, Oscar Fernandes led a 6-member delegation to Portugal to attend the 2nd EU-India Seminar on Employment and Social Policy from 15-18 September 2007.

Portuguese Prime Minister Jose Socrates visited India from

30 November-1 December 2007 in connection with the 8th India-EU Summit being held in India under the Portuguese Presidency of the EU and held bilateral talks with the Prime Minister. A MoU on cooperation in the field of Football and on Chamber of Commerce level cooperation between FICCI and AICEP (Portugal Global-Business Development Agency) was signed.

Republic of Serbia

Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma paid an official visit to Serbia from 16-18 September 2007. During the visit, the Minister met with Serbian President, Boris Tadic, Serbian Prime Minister, Vojislav Kostunica, Foreign Minister, Vuk Jeremic, Parliament Speaker and other senior dignitaries. During the visit, agreements on visa exemption for Diplomatic and Official passport and MoU for cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of India and its counterpart in Serbia were signed.

On the issue of Kosovo, our Minister conveyed India's position that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of international borders should be fully respected and that the issue should be resolved by peaceful means through consultation and dialogue with the concerned parties, without resorting to confrontation or military action, unilateral or otherwise, as well as without any artificial deadlines.

Slovakia

Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic from 22-24 March 2007 where he met Jan Kubis, the Slovak Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lubomir Jahnatek, Minister of Economy, Frantisek Kasicky, Minister of Defence and Diana Strofova, State Secretary of Foreign Affairs. During these discussions, Slovakia reiterated its support for the Indian candidature for the permanent membership of the UNSC and agreed to strengthen bilateral relations in trade and investment, defence, culture and other areas. It was also agreed to setup a joint working group for cooperation in defence.

Slovenia

Foreign Office Consultations with Slovenia were held on 28 August 2007 in Ljubljana.

Spain

Spanish Minister for Industry, Tourism and Commerce, Joan Clos visited India from 12-14 December 2007 and

met Industries Minister of Maharashtra in Bombay and also visited Mazagon Dock Ltd., where Spanish company Navantia is building, along with French MDL, six Scorpene submarines for Indian army.

An 8-member Spanish Parliamentary delegation led by Javier Rojo, President of the Senate visited India from 23 January-4 March 2007.

The treaty on “Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal matters” between India and Spain has entered into effect from 31 March 2007. This treaty was first initialled in 2002 and was finalized during Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero’s visit to India in July 2006.

Minister for Science and Technology, Kapil Sibal visited Spain on 12 June 2007 and signed a MoU of cooperation between India and Spain in the field of Science and Technology with his Spanish counterparts.

Sweden

Carl Bildt, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden visited India from 1-7 May 2007. During the visit, he held discussions with the Prime Minister, the Minister of External Affairs, the Defence Minister, the Minister for IT and Communications, and the National Security Advisor.

Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Namo Narayan Meena visited Sweden from 11-14 June 2007 to take part in the Informal Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Change.

Swedish Foreign Trade Minister, Sten Tolgfors paid an official visit to India from 1-5 September 2007. Delegation level talks were held on 3 September 2007.

Two 12-member Standing Committees on Labour and Finance from the Swedish Parliament visited India from 2-9 January 2008. They met the Chairman and members of the Committees on Commerce and Trade and members of the Committee on Labour of the Lok Sabha during the visit. The Swedish Parliamentarians also visited Pune and Mumbai.

Switzerland

Doris Leuthard, Swiss Federal Councillor for Economic Affairs visited India from 6-8 August 2007. Delegation level talks were held on 6 August 2007. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister of Commerce and

Industry, Kamal Nath. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India and the Federal Department of Economic Affairs of Switzerland on intellectual Property was signed on the occasion.

President of the Swiss Confederation, Micheline Calmy-Rey paid a State visit to India from 5-8 November 2007. During the visit, she held discussions with the President, Pratibha Devisingh Patil, the Vice President, Mohammad Hamid Ansari, the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee. She also met with the Chairperson of UPA, Sonia Gandhi and the Leader of Opposition, L.K. Advani. The visit which took place during the 60th anniversary of the signing of the India-Swiss Treaty of Friendship, will help enhance our bilateral political, economic, science and technology and cultural ties.

Foreign Office Consultations with Switzerland were held on 31 January 2008.

Turkey

Turkish Foreign Minister, Ali Babcan paid an official visit to India from 5-10 February 2008. During the visit, an Agreement between India and Turkey concerning the mutual abolition of visas for holders of Diplomatic Passport was signed.

United Kingdom

India and the UK share a strategic relationship. Fourth India-UK Annual Summit was held in Delhi on January 21, 2008 for which Prime Minister Gordon Brown visited India. He was accompanied by a high powered business delegation. A Joint Statement was issued at the end of the visit and an agreement in the field of education was signed. Focal areas of cooperation identified were Education, Science & Technology, Environment and approaches to multilateral problems. Delhi University conferred an Honorary Doctorate on Prime Minister Gordon Brown during the visit.

There are increasing economic linkages and close political ties. The large Indian diaspora in the UK (around 1.5 million) is another important link. The UK is our 4th largest global trading partner and the second largest in the EU, with annual two-way trade in 2006 at around €8.5 billion. With a figure of £ 3.4 billion, the UK continues to be the largest cumulative investor in India and the 3rd largest

post-1991, with US\$ 3.6 billion (8.5 % of total FDI inflows) (August 1991-January 2007). Since 2004, Indian investment in the UK has exceeded British investment into India.

India-UK Foreign Office Consultations were held in London in May 2007 and in New Delhi in September 2007.

The JETCO (Joint Economic and Trade Committee), set up in 2005, held its 3rd meeting in January 2007 has set up 8 working groups in specific areas for special attention. These include working groups on: Hi-tech, IPR, Accountancy, Legal Services, Infrastructure, Agribusiness and Healthcare. The last JETCO meeting was held in London in December 2007.

The Indo-British Partnership Network (IBPN) has been formed with official British financial backing.

The Indo-British Economic and Financial Dialogue was launched during the visit of Chancellor Gordon Brown to India in January 2007.

The 10th meeting of the India-UK Round Table was held in Ditchley, UK, from 11-13 April 2007. It was co-chaired by Nitin Desai and Chris Patten. The Round Table made recommendations in such areas as healthcare, education, research, financial services, bilateral business and investment, a rethink on global issues as well as studies on the wider horizons of the relationship.

The MoU on Return of Illegal Immigrants, signed in January 2004, was renewed for another period of one year in 2007.

European Union (EU)

The member states of the EU are important to India individually as well as collectively. The European Union, a strong economic player, is an evolving political entity, expanding eastwards geographically and in the process of evolving a common foreign and security policy. The EU is an important trade, technology and investment partner for India and is also home to a large Indian diaspora. The EU is India's largest trading partner (1/5th of India's total external trade). Bilateral trade has steadily grown between 2001 and 2006 at over 10% on average and crossed € 46 billion in 2006 (Indian exports € 22.3 billion; Indian imports € 24 billion). India and the EU are also important investment partners. Total FDI inflow from the EU to

India is US\$ 10.86 billion (24% of total FDI inflows - August 1991-February 2007). India has also begun to invest in the EU in recent years. Indian investment has also been growing steadily in UK, Germany and Italy.

The Eighth India-EU annual Summit took place on 30 November 2007 in New Delhi. The EU side was represented by José Sócrates, Prime Minister of Portugal, in his capacity as President of the European Council and Jose Manuel Barosso, President of the European Commission. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian side. The two sides discussed the various issues of mutual interest, thereby, further strengthening the strategic relationship launched at the fifth India-EU Summit at The Hague in 2004. The 6th Summit at New Delhi in 2005 saw the adoption of an ambitious and comprehensive India-EU Joint Action Plan (JAP). A Joint Statement and Joint Action Plan Implementation Report were issued at the Summit. The summit was preceded by an India-EU Business Summit and a CEO Round Table on 29 November 2007. An Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation was renewed and a MoU on Multi-Annual Indicative Programme 2007-2010 in development cooperation was signed between the two sides during the summit.

Parliamentary exchanges are growing. On the invitation of the European Parliament's President, the President of India, APJ Abdul Kalam visited Strasbourg, France on 24-25 April 2007 and addressed the European Parliament. This was the first ever visit and address by an Indian President to the European Parliament. The President spoke on the 'Dynamics of Unity of Nations'. During the visit he also addressed the International Space University at Strasbourg on 'Creative Leadership for Future Challenges of Space'.

The European Parliament created a new Delegation for Relations with India in March 2007. Ms Neena Gill, Chairperson of the Delegation, visited India in August 2007.

The EU was associated with SAARC as an Observer State and attended the 14th SAARC Summit held in New Delhi from 1-4 April 2007.

Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, participated for the first time in the ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Hamburg, Germany in May 2007.

The EU-India ministerial Troika meeting on 31 May 2007 in Berlin was an opportunity to take stock of recent progress in the implementation of the Strategic Partnership and to discuss how to further intensify it.

The eleventh meeting of India-EU Civil Society Round Table was held in September 2007 in New Delhi. It was co-Chaired by N.N.Vohra and Dimitris Dimitriadis. The members discussed issues of social development, trade and investment, and renewable energy. The India-EU Civil Society Internet Forum was launched on 1 May 2007, by Anand Sharma, India's Minister of State for External Affairs (www.india-eu.org).

There is a regular mechanism of Senior Officials Meetings between India and the EU. The 14th meeting was held in New Delhi on 15 October 2007. The 13th meeting was held in Berlin on 2 May 2007.

Negotiations for an India-EU broad based Trade and Investment Agreement were opened in Brussels on 28-29 June 2007. A second round of negotiations took place in New Delhi during the first week of October 2007. The third round of negotiations took place in Brussels from 6-12 December 2007. During the India EU Summit held on 30 November 2007, the two sides agreed to work towards early conclusion of the negotiations during 2008.

The first EU-India Ministerial Science Conference took place in New Delhi in February 2007. The meeting had a strong representation from EU Member States, from

Science and Technology (S&T) Departments, and from leading scientists from both India and the EU. It allowed for an active discussion on key co-operation priorities, and on the potential benefits of a Coordinated Joint Call for proposals with co-investment of resources, including funds for sponsoring India-EU research projects and means to deepen EU-India S&T collaboration under the India-EU S&T Co-operation Agreement and the seventh Framework Programme. The outcome was the 'New Delhi Communiqué', which outlined the future of India-EU co-operation in Research and Development.

Energy is an important area of ongoing and future policy dialogue and practical co-operation between India and the EU. India-EU Energy Panel and its working groups, had its third meeting on 20 June 2007 in Brussels. All four working groups met in the first half of 2007 before the meeting of Energy Panel. It was agreed to expand the scope of work of the working group on Coal with alternate meetings adopting different emphasis on mining oriented and conversion technologies respectively. The two sides stand ready to identify a new flagship project on R&D in solar energy. India is also a participant in the International Biofuels Forum, which met twice so far: in July 2007 in Brussels and in October 2007 in New Delhi.

Various meetings of Joint Working Groups envisaged under the Joint Action Plan were held during the course of year.



United States of America

The India-US bilateral engagement has broadened with a number of initiatives announced during the visits of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Washington DC in July 2005 and President Bush to New Delhi in March 2006. As a result, India and US interaction today encompasses strategic and security issues, defence, counter-terrorism, science and technology, health, trade, space, energy, maritime cooperation, and environment. Frequent contacts at political as well as at official levels and the regular bilateral dialogue on a wide range of issues have contributed to the qualitative transformation in bilateral cooperation in areas of common interest.

Civil Nuclear Energy

On 20 July 2007 after five rounds of negotiations, India and the US agreed on the text of a bilateral cooperation Agreement to implement the understandings of July 2005 and March 2006. The 123 Agreement meets the basic objectives of safeguarding autonomy of our strategic nuclear programme and indigenous three-stage nuclear power programme and indigenous nuclear research and development. It meets all the assurances to Parliament given by Prime Minister on 17 August 2006. It provides for full civilian nuclear co-operation between India and the US covering nuclear reactors and aspects of the associated nuclear fuel cycle including enrichment and reprocessing.

The Agreement explicitly provides that it will not affect the un-safeguarded facilities of either Party and that it shall be implemented in a manner so as not to hinder or otherwise interfere with any military nuclear facilities or nuclear material produced, acquired or developed by us independent of this agreement. It accords consent to reprocess spent fuel deriving from processed US fuel. The agreement provides for the negotiation of arrangements and procedures for this within one year.

The Agreement provides for the development of a strategic reserve of nuclear fuel to guard against any

disruption of supply over the lifetime of India's reactors. It contains a full reflection of the 2 March 2006 supply assurances, its linkage to safeguards in perpetuity and the provision for corrective measures that India may take to ensure uninterrupted operation of its civilian nuclear reactors in the event of disruption of foreign fuel supplies.

India is engaged in negotiation of an India specific International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards agreement. The United States will work with Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) for an adjustment of NSG guidelines to enable its members to enter into civil nuclear cooperation and trade with India.

Counter-Terrorism

The 9th meeting of India-US Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism was held in Washington from 29-30 November 2007 to discuss bilateral cooperation in combating terrorism.

Defence

Under the India-US Defence Policy Group, which is the apex institutional dialogue mechanism for defence cooperation the Joint Technology Group (JTG) held its 9th meeting on 10 April 2007 in Washington, the Defence Procurement and Production Group (DPPG) held its 4th meeting on 30-31 May 2007 in Hawaii, the Senior Technology Security Group held its 4th meeting in New Delhi on 26 November 2007 and the 8th meeting of Military Cooperation Group (MCG) met in Hawaii on 11-13 December 2007. India-U.S. Defence Joint Working Group (DJWG) held two meetings- first in April 2007 in New Delhi and second in November 2007 in Washington. In the first ship acquisition by India from the US, USS Trenton was handed over to Indian Navy on 17 January 2007. It has been commissioned as INS *Jalashwa*. The defence forces of the two countries engaged in bilateral exercises and participated in multilateral exercises. US companies participated at the Aero India show held in Bangalore from 9-13 February 2007. India-US joint military exercises were held in Alaska from 8-26 September 2007.

Space

The second meeting of India-U.S. Joint Working Group (JWG) on civil space cooperation was held in February 2007 in Washington D.C. In-depth discussions were held covering broad topics like Space Science, Earth Observations and Earth Science, Data Policy, Landsat Data Continuity Mission, Export Control etc. The JWG adopted the Joint Statement on U.S.-India Cooperation in the Use of GPS and Space-based Positioning, Navigation and Timing Systems and Applications.

Trade and Economy

USA continues to be India's largest trading partner and a leading foreign investor. During 2006, the total bilateral trade in merchandise and commodities stood at US\$ 31.91 billion as compared to US\$ 26.76 billion in 2005, an increase of 17%. The total bilateral trade in merchandise and commodities during the first nine months of 2007 stood at US\$ 29.64 billion. The U.S. continues to be one of the largest foreign direct investors in India. The cumulative FDI flows from USA from August 1991 to July 2007 stood at US\$ 6215 million. FDI inflows from the U.S. constitute about 12% of total actual FDI inflows into India. The U.S. is the leading portfolio investor in India. During 2006-07, portfolio investments by USA were US\$ 2240 million. The U.S. is also the most important destination of Indian investment abroad. Between 1996 and March 2007, Indian companies invested US\$ 2727 million in the U.S. largely in manufacturing and non-financial services.

On her first visit to India as US Trade Representative (USTR), Susan Schwab co-chaired the India-US Trade Policy Forum Meeting with Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath in April 2007. It was decided to set up a Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG) to provide strategic recommendations and insights for enhancing bilateral trade and fostering investment. The forum had its inaugural meeting in September 2007 in New York. India and USA signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) in January 2007 to promote reciprocal trade and opportunities for strategic linkages between small business of the US and small and medium enterprises of India. Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath visited Washington DC in June 2007 to participate in the "Global India Summit". The US Treasury Secretary, Henry Paulson Jr. visited India on 27-31 October 2007. Secretary Paulson and Finance Minister, P. Chidambaram co-chaired India-US Financial

and Economic Forum meeting in New Delhi. The objective of Secretary Paulson's visit was to explore opportunities for US companies to invest in roads, ports, airports and other infrastructure projects in India.

A meeting of the India-US CEO Forum was held in New York on 24 September 2007 co-chaired by Ratan Tata and William Harrison; it was preceded by a government-to-government Economic Dialogue meeting.

The 5th Meeting of High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG), co-chaired by the Foreign Secretary was held in Washington DC in February 2007. A Working Group on Nanotechnology and a sub-group to discuss Medical Devices and Pharmaceutical issues were established.

India and the US signed in June 2007 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish the India-US Aviation Cooperation Programme (ACP), a public-private partnership between Ministry of Civil Aviation of India and US Trade Development Agency (USTDA) and Federal Aviation Agency (FAA). A Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) was signed between Ministry of Urban Development of India and US Department of Transportation in September 2007 to expand cooperation in the fields of public transportation.

The third meeting of US-India Joint working Group (JWG) on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was held in July 2007 in Washington DC.

Under the bilateral Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture (AKI), a work plan to focus on four areas of cooperation - university capacity building, food processing and marketing, biotechnology and water management - has been finalized and is being implemented. The 5th meeting of the Board constituted under the AKI met Washington DC in June 2007 to review the implementation of the February 2006 Work Plan.

Energy and Environment

The US Energy Secretary Bodman visited India in March 2007. The Coal Working Group under the India-U.S. Energy Dialogue met in June 2007 at Washington DC. External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee led the delegation to the Major Economies Meeting on Energy Security and Climate Change convened by the US President George W. Bush which was held on 27 September 2007.

Science and Technology and Health

India-US Science and Technology cooperation has been further strengthened during the year. Agreements for Science and Technology Cooperation have been concluded with the State of Iowa, Purdue University and the Ohio State University. The cooperation on Nuclear Safety, Reactor Design, Licensing and other regulatory aspects was further augmented with manpower training. For the first time, two Indian young scientists received one year training at US Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The Indo-U.S. Vaccine Action Program has been extended for another 5 years. India-US Cooperation for capacity building is developed with US Universities in order to acquire international clinical trial standards. India and the US are collaborating to set up 2 Schools of Public Health in India. The teaching of basic courses on Ayurveda was offered in several Medical Schools for the third consecutive year by two experts nominated by the Department of AYUSH. India-US S&T Forum and American Physical Society initiated a new program for supporting visits of 12 faculty and 20 students during next two years.

Canada

Canada has reiterated its commitment to strengthen its political and economic relationship with India. Important visitors from Canada to India included Monte Solberg, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (9 January), Ted Menzies, Parliamentary Secretary to International Trade Minister as Head of Infrastructure Delegation (12-16 March), Dr. David Emerson, Minister of International Trade (18-19 April), James Judd, Director of Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) (5-8 June), Diane Finley, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (2 November), and Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification (5-7 November).

Visitors from India to Canada included Subodh Kant Sahai, MOS (Independent Charge), Ministry of Food Processing Industries (16-19 February), Kamal Nath, Commerce and Industry Minister (16-17 June), Kanti Lal Bhuria, MOS for Agriculture (18-23 June), Dr. R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Adviser (26-29 June), Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs (25-28 September) and G.K. Pillai, Commerce Secretary (19-21

September). B.S. Hooda, Chief Minister of Haryana, visited Canada from 16-18 October 2007.

Strategic Dialogue

Assistant Deputy Minister, International Security Branch and Political Director of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada Colleen Swords visited India from 11-15 November 2007 to hold the third round of the India-Canada Dialogue on Strategic Issues.

Defence

A delegation of the Indian National Defence College visited Canada from 20 -26 May 2007.

Counter-Terrorism

The 8th meeting of the India-Canada Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and the India-Canada Security Dialogue took place in Ottawa from 20- 22 March 2007. The Joint Working Group discussed the threat of terrorism that two countries faced in the regional and global contexts and agreed on a number of measures to strengthen bilateral cooperation.

Air India Inquiry

The Justice John Major Inquiry Commission into the Air India bombing continued its hearing during 2007. The report is expected early 2008.

Environment

Minister of State for Environment and Forests, N.N. Meena led Indian delegation to the 19th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in Montreal in September 2007. On the margins of the Conference, a bilateral agreement was signed for setting up an India-Canada Forum for Environmental Cooperation. Canadian Deputy Minister of Environment, Michael Horgan, visited India to participate in the Second Ministerial Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate on 15 October 2007 in New Delhi. Canada was admitted, with India's support, as the 7th member of the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate.

Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPA)

Negotiations to finalise a text for India-Canada BIPA were concluded in 2007.

Acquisitions of Canadian Companies

Novelis Inc., originally a Canadian company (now registered in the US), was acquired by Aditya Birla Group

company Hindalco Industries Ltd. for approx. US\$ 6 billion. In April 2007, Essar Global Ltd., through its wholly owned subsidiary Essar Steel Holdings Limited "Essar", acquired Algoma Steel for approx. C\$ 1.85 billion (US\$ 1.7 billion approximately).

Science and Technology

Dr. R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Adviser, visited Canada from 26-29 June 2007. As a follow up of his visit, a 3-member delegation led by Dr. S.K. Sikka, Scientific Secretary, Office of Principal Scientific Adviser, visited Canada from 24-29 September 2007 and signed a Letter of Intent for India-Canada Bilateral Scientific Cooperation in the field of Synchrotron Sciences between the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, and the Canadian Light Source Inc., University of Saskatchewan, Canada.

Biotechnology

A delegation consisting of five officials and 9 biotechnology companies visited Canada in September 2007. During the visit, an agreement was signed between Department of Biotechnology and National Research Council-Plant Biotechnology Institute, Saskatoon, Canada, for setting up a joint fund for research in identified areas of plant biotechnology.

Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC)

Relations between India and the countries of Latin America continued to progress. Several high-level incoming and outgoing visits gave impetus to ongoing interaction with these countries. These included the visits of President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil in June 2007 and of President Felipe Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico in September 2007. Foreign Ministers of Cuba, Guatemala, El Salvador, Brazil also visited India. Visits from India to this region included those to Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Colombia and Ecuador. In keeping with our initiatives to reach out to new markets, Indian trade missions and commercial delegations to LAC region were facilitated. Indian business majors established operations in the oil and gas sector in Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and Cuba, and iron ore sector in Bolivia. Similarly companies in the IT and pharma sectors became active in several Latin American Countries. LAC countries are responding to these developments and new resident missions are being opened in Delhi by Guatemala,

Costa Rica, Nicaragua and El Salvador. India has announced its intention to open a new mission in Guatemala.

26 countries from the LAC region co-sponsored India's draft resolution tabled at the UN General Assembly proposing that Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on October 2 be observed and celebrated as the International Day of Non-Violence.

Highlights of bilateral interaction which took place during this time include the following:

Antigua & Barbuda

An Indian Naval Ship INS Tarangini visited Antigua from 19-24 April 2007 on a sail training expedition in the Atlantic Ocean. Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer attended a reception hosted on the ship.

Bolivia

Bilateral relations with Bolivia remained cordial. Jindal Steel and Power Ltd won a US\$ 2.1 billion contract for the El Mutan iron ore project in Bolivia. The project involves exploitation of 20 billion tons of iron-ore over a period of forty years. The annual revenue of 400 million dollars is to be shared 50:50 between Jindal and the Bolivian Government. This is the largest-ever project contract secured by an Indian company in Latin America.

Brazil

The strategic partnership launched in September 2006 was further strengthened during 2007. President Lula paid an official visit to India from 3-5 June 2007. During the visit, seven agreements were signed. The Red Fort Declaration of 4 June 2007 in New Delhi, reaffirmed the bilateral resolve to deepen ties in diverse fields, including defence, space and oil sectors and to continue cooperation in multilateral fora such as the UN and WTO. During the visit, a CEOs Forum was launched in New Delhi. President Lula was conferred the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding on 5 June 2007.

The third India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting was held in New Delhi from 12-14 April 2007. It was co-Chaired by Celso Amorim, Foreign Minister of Brazil and External Affairs Minister from Indian side. The JCM fixed the bilateral trade target as US\$ 10 billion by 2010.

Chile

Foreign Office consultations were held in New Delhi on 5 April 2007. The Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between India and Chile, which was signed on March 2006, came into force after it was ratified by the Chilean President on 16 August 2007. Under this Agreement, India will give preferential duties to 178 Chilean items and Chile will give preferential duties to 296 Indian items. The average duty concession is 20%. Chile is the first country in Latin America with which India has signed a PTA. An Air Services Agreement was signed between India and Chile in New Delhi on 29-30 August 2007.

Colombia

Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma visited Colombia from 19-21 June 2007. Minister of Tourism and Culture, Ambika Soni visited Cartagena in Colombia from 25-29 November 2007 to participate in the 17th General Assembly of the UNWTO. India was elected to the Executive Council of the UNWTO from Asia along with Iran and was thereafter unanimously elected President of the Council for the period 2008-09. Minister of Urban Development, Jaipal Reddy, visited Colombia from 27-31 May 2007 to study the metro-bus system in the country. During the visit, a MoU for Cooperation in Transportation systems was signed. Colombian Defence Minister visited India from 25-28 November 2007 and met with Indian Ministers of Defence, External Affairs and Home. An 8-member business delegation from the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) led by Sanjay Kirloskar visited Colombia from 21-23 August 2007 to participate in Joint Business Forums between Indian and Colombian businessmen in Bogota on 22 August 2007 and in Medellin on 24 August 2007.

Costa Rica

On 14 June 2007 the Government of Costa Rica issued a Gazette notification declaring India to be included in the Group 3 list of countries on consular issues, according to which Indian nationals are now not required to apply for Costa Rican visas for up to 30 days stay in Costa Rica if they have valid visas for or were residents of the US or the European Union.

Cuba

India's relations with Cuba gained a new momentum in 2007 with a series of activities and exchange of high level

visits from both sides. The 6th Joint Commission Meeting was held in Havana in February 2007. Cuban Foreign Minister, Felipe Perez Roque visited India on 11-12 April 2007. Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, Vilas Muttemwar visited Cuba from 22- 25 May 2007. During the visit, a MoU for pursuing cooperation in the New and Renewable Energy sector was signed. The Second Indian Film Festival was organized from 25-30 October 2007 in Havana.

Dominican Republic

Relations between India and Dominican Republic strengthened with the visit of the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma to the Dominican Republic in February 2007.

Ecuador

India-Ecuador relations received a boost with the visit to Ecuador from 21-23 June 2007 of the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma. The Minister announced India's donation of generic medicines to Ecuador.

Guyana

India provided credit line assistance to Guyana during this period. Government of India- financed US\$ 2.1 million state-of-the-art traffic lights system at 50 junctions in and around Georgetown was formally commissioned on 21 July 2007 by Prime Minister Samuel Hinds. A 2-member Indian delegation led by Dr. D. Subbarao, Finance Secretary attended the Commonwealth Finance Ministers meeting held in Georgetown from 15-17 October 2007. A 10-member Bhojpuri Songs and Dance troupe visited Guyana from 9-18 May 2007 to participate in the month-long 169th anniversary celebrations of the Indian Arrival Day.

Mexico

The highlight of India-Mexico relations during 2007 was the state visit of the Mexican President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa, to India on 10-11 September 2007. The visit took place after 22 years. It was Calderon's first visit to Asia as the new President of Mexico and India was chosen as the first destination in this region. India-Mexico relations were elevated to 'Privileged Partnership'. Three agreements on Avoidance of Double Taxation, Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition Treaty were



Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh meeting with the President of Brazil, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, in New Delhi on 4 June 2007.



President of Mexico, Felipe Calderon Hinojosa with the President, Pratibha Patil and the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh at a ceremonial reception, in New Delhi on 10 September 2007.

signed. The two sides, while noting that their economic cooperation is not commensurate with the strength of their relations, agreed to expand bilateral trade to US\$ 5 billion by 2010.

Peru

Bilateral relations continued to grow. Peru welcomed initiatives by Indian companies to invest in the hydrocarbons sector. Government of India made a cash donation of US\$ 500,000 as humanitarian assistance in the wake of the havoc wrought by the 15th August earthquake which affected the southern part of Peru. CII and CHEMEXCIL business delegations visited Peru during this period

Suriname

The Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi visited Suriname from 2-5 June 2007 to participate in the celebrations of the 134th Anniversary of Indian Arrival Day. From Suriname, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Home Affairs, visited India during the year.

Trinidad & Tobago

The Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi visited Trinidad & Tobago from 29 May-1 June 2007 to participate in the celebrations of the 162nd anniversary of the Indian Arrival Day. Bank of Baroda opened its branch in Port of Spain on 17 October 2007.

India-Central America

Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, met the foreign Ministers of the Central American Integration System (SICA) in New York on the sidelines of UNGA. The SICA Foreign Ministers accepted an invitation from the Minister of External Affairs to visit India in 2008 for the next India-SICA meeting. While El Salvador and Costa Rica, Nicaragua announced plans to open embassies, Honduras declared its plan to open an Honorary Consulate in New Delhi in 2008. It has been agreed to set up three IT Centres in Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador under Indian assistance. Following bilateral consultations, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua relaxed their visa regimes for Indian nationals.



United Nations and International Organizations

9

India continued to play an important and effective role within the United Nations (UN) system. An important area of interest for India in 2007 remained the implementation of the reform of the Organization. This includes reform of the Security Council, revitalization of the General Assembly, reform of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the recovery of the central role of the UN with regard to international development issues, efforts to conclude and adopt a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, implementation of a global counter terrorism strategy, better management of the post-conflict peace building processes, the provision of effective emergency relief for natural disasters, and for an equitable management of international human rights issues. Within the Organization, reform includes efforts to bring to the UN improved management and budgetary practices.

A major development was the adoption on 15 June 2007 by the 61st Session of the UN General Assembly of a resolution piloted by India that designated Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday, 2 October as the International Day of Non-Violence. This resolution was co-sponsored by 142 countries, and was the basis upon which the International Day of Non-Violence was commemorated for the first time at an informal plenary of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) held on 2 October 2007 during the 62nd Session.

The 62nd Session of the General Assembly

External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, who led the Indian delegation to the General Debate of the 62nd General Assembly from 23 September - 2 October 2007, addressed the following issues in his address at the General Debate: India's position on the issue of Climate Change, and the need for it to be dealt within the UN context and in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities; poverty and underdevelopment, which remain the central challenges of the current times; the problem of inadequate flows of official development assistance and comprehensive reform of the international financial

architecture as a key ingredient to achievement of the internationally agreed development goals; the overarching principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries as a categorical imperative for an early and substantive progress at the Doha round of trade negotiations. He also announced a further pledge of US \$10 million by India to the UN Democracy Fund. On reform of the United Nations, External Affairs Minister observed that such reform will inevitably remain incomplete without comprehensive reform and expansion of the Security Council, and revitalization of the General Assembly. He, inter alia, reiterated the need for UN Security Council reform in both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership.

During his visit, External Affairs Minister hosted the Ministerial meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and participated in the Ministerial meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement, Asian Cooperation Dialogue, India-Brazil-South Africa initiative, the Outreach 5, Brazil-Russia-India-China (BRIC) and the Central American Integration Initiative. Apart from these meetings, the Minister called on President of Sri Lanka, President of the Palestine National Authority and the Prime Minister of Mauritius. He also held bilateral meetings with several Foreign Ministers or equivalents and also with the President of the 62nd General Assembly, the Secretary-General of the UN, EU High Representative for the Common Security and Foreign Policy and the NATO Secretary-General.

Nineteen Members of Parliament participated in the 62nd UNGA as non-official Members of India's Delegation and articulated India's perspectives on a number of important issues.

Political, Economic and Social issues in the General Assembly:

India made statements in the UNGA plenary on agenda items relating to the Report of the Secretary General on the Work of the Organization, revitalization of the General Assembly, peacekeeping, migration and development

issues, reviewing the mandate of several United Nations missions, peace-building and social and humanitarian issues. India also intervened on issues relating to the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) annual report, and on political issues such as the Middle East, the situation in Afghanistan, Oceans and the Law of the Sea and the reform and expansion of the Security Council.

Middle East: India has remained engaged in the UN's consideration of the Middle East issue in the UN General Assembly, and where feasible, at the Security Council. India's views on the need for a return to the process of dialogue, and for an early end to the cycle of violence and counter-violence has been underlined repeatedly at various fora. Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed made a statement on agenda item: 17 and 18 'The Situation in the Middle East' and 'Question of Palestine' at the 62nd Session of UNGA on 30 November 2007. Statements were also made by the Indian delegation during consideration of issues relating to the Middle East in the Fourth Committee.

Afghanistan: India has been closely involved in consideration of this issue in both the General Assembly and the Security Council. India participated in negotiating the annual General Assembly resolution on Afghanistan on 5 November 2007 and in regular discussions in the Security Council. External Affairs Minister participated in a high-level event co-hosted by the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan, on the margins of the General Debate of the 62nd UN General Assembly, on 23 September 2007.

Terrorism: Countering terrorism remains a priority issue for India in the United Nations. Two processes are ongoing:

- the finalization of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT), piloted by India as far back as in 1996, and
- the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2006.

India remains in the forefront of the efforts to secure agreement on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. An informal meeting of the plenary of the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was held in December 2007, to take stock of achievements thus far, and the action that may be required in the ten months prior to the review of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy in September 2008.

India is among the longest serving and the largest troop contributors to UN's peacekeeping activities. More than 100,000 Indian troops, Military Observers and Civilian Police Officers have participated in 43 out of the 63 peacekeeping operations established since the inception of the UN. India remains the third largest contributor of troops to UN peacekeeping missions, with deployment of 9357 personnel (including 493 police officials) to 11 out of the 17 ongoing UN peacekeeping missions as of end December 2007, in areas as diverse as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, the Ethiopia-Eritrea border, Lebanon Golan Heights and Liberia where India has contributed the UN's first fully Female Formed Police Unit.

The Security Council

India intervened in discussions in the UN Security Council only on specific issues of concern, such as on the situation in Afghanistan, and during thematic debates of the Security Council on Climate Change and Security, and on Natural Resources and Security.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform : In the second half of the 61st General Assembly (GA) session, informal consultations commenced in the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and other Matters. A series of meetings conducted by five facilitators appointed by the President of the GA were held in February-March 2007 on five elements: size; categories; regional representation; veto and working methods; and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. Reports were submitted by the facilitators in April and June 2007.

In September 2007, at the end of the 61st UNGA session, as many as 27 countries including India, Brazil and South Africa and several African, Caribbean and Pacific Island states, tabled a Procedural Resolution on Security Council Reform. While the resolution was not called to vote, it played an important role in the OEWG report, adopted at the end of the 61st Session, having a reference to intergovernmental negotiations as well as a commitment to achieving "concrete results". This process was taken forward, including during November and December 2007, when UNGA Plenary discussion on Security Council reform and meeting of the OEWG on this issue, respectively, were held. At the UNGA Plenary on Security Council Reform that took place from 12-14 November 2007, nearly 90 countries made statements with an

overwhelming majority calling for initiation of element based, result-oriented, intergovernmental negotiations.

Besides participating in the UN discussions and debates on the issue of UNSC reform, India continued consultations on this issue within the G-4 (Brazil, India, Germany and Japan) as well as with the larger UN membership.

Observance of the First International Day of Non-Violence at the UN

The First International Day of Non-Violence was observed at the UN on 2 October 2007. Sonia Gandhi, Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) addressed an informal plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly and spoke on the enduring validity of the message of the Mahatma, recalling the Mahatma's belief that strength flowed from righteousness, not force, and that ends and means were inseparable.

A round-table discussion chaired by External Affairs Minister was convened at the UN premises on 2 October 2007, at which several eminent participants took part, including Prof. Amartya Sen, Dr. John Nash, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Dr. Gene Sharp and Ela Gandhi. Sonia Gandhi inaugurated a photographic exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi at the UN and a film on Gandhiji was also screened to mark the occasion. The UN Postal Administration (UNPA) issued a special cancellation for use during October 2007.

Economic issues

India continued to play an active role in the Second Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in order to ensure that development remains a core concern of the United Nations (UN). The focus of the Second Committee was on implementation of the commitments undertaken at the major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, particularly the 2005 World Summit. In concert with other developing countries in the Group of 77, India pushed for greater role for the United Nations, particularly through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in the oversight of the international economic and financial system, and in trying to have a greater emphasis of the development dimension in international regimes.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for 2007 was held in July 2007 in

Geneva. It was the first session since the adoption in 2006 of a General Assembly resolution strengthening ECOSOC, and mandating two new components in the high level segment i.e. the Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMR) and a biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF).

The Annual Ministerial Review provides for voluntary national presentations by countries on the implementation of the outcomes of major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. Six countries, Ghana, Barbados, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Ethiopia and Bangladesh volunteered for the review.

The session launched the biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), which will focus on the enhancement of the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The first biennial Forum will take place in New York in 2008. ECOSOC also adopted a resolution approving the graduation of Samoa out of the list of Least Developed Countries.

The Spring High-level Meeting of the ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United Nations Conferences on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was held in New York on 16 April 2007. India was represented by the Finance Secretary.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

The 63rd annual session of UNESCAP was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 17-23 May 2007. The session marked the 60th anniversary of ESCAP. The Indian delegation to the session was led by the Minister of State for Industry Dr. Ashwini Kumar.

In a special ceremony to mark the 1st International Day of Non-Violence on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2 October 2007, a bust of Mahatma Gandhi presented by the Embassy of India, Bangkok, was unveiled at the UNESCAP premises by the Minister of Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs and Sports and Development of North Eastern Region, Mani Shankar Aiyar.

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)

India actively participated at the 16th session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), held in Vienna from 23-27 April 2007. The

leader of the delegation made a statement at the plenary on the “*Use and Application of UN Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*”, apprising the session of the amendments made by the Government of India in the last two years to the Code of Criminal Procedure with the objective of improving the criminal justice system.

Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)

The 50th Session of the CND was held in Vienna from 12-16 March 2007 with the thematic debate: “*New challenges for controlling precursor chemicals*”. The resolutions moved by India on the “*Need for balance between demand for and supply of opiates used to meet medical and scientific needs*” and on “*Identifying sources of precursors used in illicit drug manufacture*” enjoyed widespread support and were adopted by consensus.

Environment and Sustainable Development Issues

India participated in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the high-level commission within the UN system for sustainable development with the role of reviewing and promoting the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The 15th session of the Commission was held in New York from 30 April-11 May 2007, while its intergovernmental preparatory meeting was held from 27 February-2 March 2007. The session focused on the thematic cluster of energy for sustainable development, climate change, air pollution/atmosphere and industrial development. Dr. Prodipto Ghosh, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, led the Indian delegation. No negotiated outcome could be reached.

India also participated in the 7th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, which was held in New York from 16-27 April 2007. G. K. Prasad, Director General of Forests and Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, led the Indian delegation. The meeting adopted the non-legally binding Instrument on all types of forests, which aims to promote sustainable forest management through global actions.

India participated in an informal high-level event on climate change called “The Future in our Hands: Addressing the Leadership Challenge of Climate Change”, which was convened by the UN Secretary-General on the margins of the General Debate of the 62nd United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) session, on 24

September 2007. Finance Minister, P. Chidambaram participated in the event as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister.

India participated in the 9th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in New York from 21-30 August 2007. The Deputy Director of the Survey of India led the Indian delegation.

India participated in two thematic preparatory meetings of the forthcoming five-year review of implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action on the special needs of landlocked developing countries. The meetings, in Upper Volta (June 2007) and Mongolia (August 2007), highlighted transit transport infrastructure, and international trade and trade facilitation respectively. India underlined the need for greater financial and technical resources to implement the programme.

India participated in the biennial High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development in October 2007 in New York, stressing the need for greater implementation by developed countries of the commitments undertaken under the Monterrey Consensus.

India participated in the Vienna Climate Change Conference (4th session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on further commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol and the 4th workshop under the Dialogue on long-term cooperative action to address climate change by enhancing implementation of the Convention). The Indian delegation was led by R.H. Khwaja, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests.

India hosted the 2nd Ministerial Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Partnership for Clean Development and Climate on 15 October 2007 which included Ministers and high level representatives from Australia, Canada, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea and the United States. The Partnership officially warmly welcomed Canada as a new Partner. The Meeting released the New Delhi communiqué which summarizes the accomplishments of the Partnership over the last two years. A Flagship portfolio of 18 projects and activities was approved apart from the eight Task Force Action Plans and their accompanying 110 projects. The Asia-Pacific Energy Technology Cooperation Centre was also endorsed.

Kapil Sibal, Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences led the Indian delegation to the Thirteenth Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

and the Third Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP) held in Bali, Indonesia from 3-14 December 2007. The Delegation included officers of the Ministry. The conference agreed on a Bali Action Plan to launch a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the UNFCCC through long-term cooperative action. An Ad Hoc Working Group was established with a tight time-table of meetings to complete its work by the COP-15 of the UNFCCC to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009. The Bali Action Plan also covers enhanced action on adaptation, which is a critical imperative for developing countries, technology development and transfer and provision of financial resources.

A meeting of the world's largest economies was held in Washington D.C on 27-28 September 2007 under the rubric of the Major Economies Meeting (MEM). Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of External Affairs represented India at the inaugural session while Dr. R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government led the delegation of officials, which included officers of this Ministry. Acknowledging that the UNFCCC was the forum for international negotiations on climate change, it was agreed that MEM would work to strongly backstop the multilateral negotiations.

Dr. R. Chidambaram led the Indian delegation to the second MEM which was held in Honolulu on 30-31 January 2008. The discussions focused on issues in the context of the Bali Action Plan that could potentially be addressed by the leaders of the major economies.

Humanitarian Issues

India participated in the UNGA discussions on the coordination of humanitarian assistance provided by the UN. India piloted, on behalf of the Group of 77, a resolution tabled annually on '*International Cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance for Natural Disasters, from Relief to Development*'. The resolution emphasises the need to focus on and pay continued attention to the situations of transition from relief to development following natural disasters. Apart from the member countries of the Group of 77, a number of other countries also supported the resolution by joining as its co-sponsors.

Disaster Risk Reduction

A high-level delegation led by Member, National Disaster Management Authority, participated in the first meeting of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held

in Geneva from 5-7 June 2007. The Global Platform has been established by the General Assembly as a successor mechanism to the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction.

United Nations Operational Activities for Development

India takes an active interest in the operational activities for development by the UN. As in the past, India emphasised the role of the programme countries and the importance of the principle of country-driven programming in accordance with national development plans and priorities. India also supported the efforts of other developing countries to resist the introduction of conditionalities in the development assistance programme of the UN. The 62nd UN General Assembly focused its attention on the triennial guidance provided by Member States to the UN development system through the General Assembly resolution on "*Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review*". India played an active role in the discussions and negotiations of this resolution.

Social and Human Rights Issues

The evolution of the new Human Rights Council established by a UNGA resolution in March 2006 replacing the Commission on Human Rights remained a focus of activity and interest. The Council concluded the first year of its work in June with the adoption of landmark decisions relating to its architecture and methods of work, which were subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly. The Council also convened a Special Session in October to discuss the emergent human rights situation in Myanmar. In keeping with its traditional commitment to the human rights and values, India actively participated in the process to reform and strengthen the UN human rights system.

India ratified the UN **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** on 1 October 2007.

The Resumed Session of the UN Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations took place in May 2007. During 2007, the NGO Committee recommended 13 Indian NGO applications for ECOSOC status.

Migration

India participated in the first Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), held in Brussels from 9-11 July 2007. This marked the start of a new global process designed to enhance the positive impact of migration on development (and vice versa).

Elections

In May 2007, India was re-elected to the Human Rights Council by the UN General Assembly securing the highest tally of votes for a 3-year term, for the period 2007-2010.

India was elected to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in November 2007.

In the elections for the 16 subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC in April 2007, India was elected to (i) Commission on the Status of Women for a 4-year term; (ii) Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for a 3-year term; and (iii) Governing Council of the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) for a 4-year term.

Dr. S. Rajan was elected to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf at the elections held during the 17th Meeting of the States Parties to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in June 2007.

Dr. Arjun Sengupta was elected the Chairman of the Inter-Governmental Working Group of the Human Rights Council on the Rights to Development on 17 September 2007.

V.N. Kaul, Comptroller and Auditor General of India, was elected to the UN Independent Audit Advisory Committee in November 2007.

Nagesh Singh, First Secretary in the Permanent Mission of India to the UN, was elected to the UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in November 2007.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

India participated in the 23rd Session of the Programme and Budget Committee, held from 2-4 May 2007, and the 33rd Session of the Industrial Development Board of UNIDO from 25-27 June 2007 in Vienna.

Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath was a keynote speaker in the Industrial Development Forum at the 12th Session of the UNIDO General Conference from 3-7 December 2007. The Commerce and Industry Minister also addressed the UNIDO General Conference.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

Kumari Selja, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, led a delegation

to attend the 21st Governing Council Meeting of UN-HABITAT in Nairobi from 16-20 April 2007. She was unanimously elected the chairperson of the 21st Governing Council of UN-HABITAT and Comm. UN-HABITAT.

Shivrajsingh Chauhan, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, visited Nairobi from 17-18 April 2007 along with a delegation to attend a parallel event organized during the UN-HABITAT Governing Council meeting on 'Pro-Poor Governance in Water Supply and Sanitation'.

Disarmament and International Security Affairs

India's commitment to global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of all Weapons of Mass Destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, continued to be reflected in its policy pronouncements and diplomatic initiatives. India's stand on issues related to disarmament and international security in various multilateral and regional forums was premised on India's national security interests and its tradition of close engagement with the international community to promote cooperative efforts at addressing these challenges.

At the regional level, India participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA).

Regular contacts were maintained with key international and non-governmental organizations active in the field of disarmament with a view to disseminating the Indian perspectives on disarmament issues.

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

The External Affairs Minister and leader of the Indian delegation, Pranab Mukherjee, in his address to the 2007 UNGA reiterated India's long commitment to universal, non-discriminatory and comprehensive nuclear disarmament, and also called on the international community to intensify the effort to address the very real threat posed by the link between terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

India continued to play an active role at the 62nd Session of the UN General Assembly's First Committee that deals with disarmament and international security issues. During the general debate the Indian delegate reiterated India's commitment to the nuclear weapon free world emphasizing that those possessing the most important arsenals have a special responsibility for taking the lead on nuclear disarmament.

In recognition of growing international concerns about

the serious global threats posed by the possibility of non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction and using it, India's resolution on 'Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction' was adopted by consensus, as during previous five Sessions.

India re-introduced its Resolution "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons" which has been adopted annually since 1982. This Resolution calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, as a first step towards reducing the salience of nuclear weapons. India's Resolution on "Reducing Nuclear Danger", first introduced in 1998, which calls for the review of nuclear doctrines and immediate and urgent steps to reduce the risk of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons, was also re-tabled. Both the resolutions were adopted by a good majority as in previous years.

The Conference on Disarmament

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) met at Geneva from 22 January-30 March 2007, 14 May-29 June 2007 and 30 July-14 September 2007. The six Presidents of the 2007 session (P-6) presented to the conference a proposal to conduct negotiations, without preconditions, on a non-discriminatory multilateral treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and to conduct substantive discussion on three other core issues on the agenda of the CD, i.e. Nuclear Disarmament, Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space and Negative Security Assurances for non nuclear weapon States. During consultations, India adopted a constructive approach in order to contribute to establishing a Programme of Work for the CD that reflects the concerns and priorities of all its Member States.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

India took active part in the deliberations of the IAEA through the regular and special meetings of the Board of Governors and also through its participation at the 51st Annual General Conference (AGC) of the IAEA in September 2007. During the prolonged negotiations on the Agency's Budget for 2007 and 2008, India supported the concept that Agency's resources should be augmented. India contributed to the formulation of key resolutions on nuclear power, nuclear safety, safeguards, technical cooperation, etc., adopted at the 51st AGC of the IAEA. India also supported activities related to development of

nuclear power and its applications for peaceful purposes as well as safety and security. In the context of future technologies, India encouraged International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), Small and Medium Reactors and their application in nuclear desalination and hydrogen production, fusion related research and thorium cycle. India continued to organize training programmes in various areas of relevance to IAEA for its Member States.

India ratified the following agreements and handed over the Instruments of Ratification to Director General, IAEA in March 2007: (i) Agreement on the Establishment of International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) International Fusion Energy Organization for the Joint Implementation of the ITER Project, and (ii) Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization for the Joint Implementation of the ITER Project. India also ratified the Amendment to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear material; the Instrument of Ratification was deposited with the Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency on 19 September 2007.

The Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission and the Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy led the Indian delegation to the 51st General Conference (GC) of IAEA, from 17-21 September 2007. At India's initiative a resolution on Small and Medium Reactors was adopted by the GC for the first ever time. A tripartite MoU among India, IAEA and Vietnam was finalized on the sidelines of the GC which provides for the donation by India of Bhabatron-II (the indigenous Cobalt-60 Teletherapy Unit for the treatment of Cancer) to Vietnam.

Director General IAEA Dr. Mohammad El-Baradei visited India from 8-12 October 2007 and was apprised, inter-alia, of the growing demands for energy in India for its economic development and India's plans in that context for raising the share of nuclear power in its energy mix.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

India continued to play an active role at the Organization for the Prohibition of the Chemical Weapons (OPCW) at The Hague during the year. India continued to fulfill all its obligations under the Convention in line with its commitments. India's destruction of its chemical weapons is proceeding in accordance with the timelines under the Convention. India played a key role at the Twelfth Conference of States Parties to the CWC at The Hague from 5-9 November 2007, as well as at the Sessions of the

Executive Council. India also participated actively in the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) set up for the 2nd Review Conference of the CWC which is to take place in 2008.

The Convention marked its tenth anniversary in 2007. To commemorate this important milestone, India organized a National Seminar of CWC Inspection and verification in Vadodara, Gujarat, in December 2007. In several events held in different parts of the world, India was commended for fulfilling its commitments under CWC.

Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)

Pursuant to the decision of the 6th Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) held at Geneva from 20 November to 8 December 2006, the annual Meeting of Experts was held in Geneva from 20-24 August 2007.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

India is a party to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and has ratified all its protocols. India has also ratified the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention.

The annual meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on CCW was held in Geneva from 7-13 November 2007. The issue of regulations on use of cluster munitions dominated the meeting. The meeting decided that a Group of Governmental Experts, which would meet in 2008 to negotiate a proposal to address urgently the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions.

The first annual meeting on Protocol V of CCW on Explosive Remnants of war, was held on 5 November 2007 in Geneva. The Annual Meeting of the States Parties to the Amended Protocol II to the Convention on CCW on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby traps and other devices was also held at Geneva on 6 November 2007. India informed the Meeting about the steps taken by it to implement the provisions of Amended Protocol II and its commitment to the vision of a world free of landmines.

India attended, as an observer, the 8th Annual Meeting of the State Parties to the Ottawa Convention in Jordan to underline its commitment to the objective of a non-

discriminatory, universal and global ban on anti-personnel landmines.

Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)

India continued to participate actively in the search for effective solutions, including the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) adopted at the UN Conference on Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July 2001. In 2007, India participated in an informal meeting on 'Transfer Control Principles for Small Arms and Light Weapons' held in Geneva from 27-31 August 2007.

Outer Space Affairs

India actively participated at the 50th Session of the United Nations Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) held from 5-16 June 2007 in Vienna. The Session adopted the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines. During the meeting of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS held at Vienna from 12-23 February 2007, India reiterated that it should become the responsibility of every nation to maintain outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes without trying new ventures violating the very concept of peaceful uses of outer space.

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

The Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Alignment Movement was held on 28 September 2007 during the General Debate of the 62nd UN General Assembly. The meeting discussed, in an interactive format, "Concrete measures to reinforce the capacity for action of the Non-Alignment Movement". External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee participated in this Ministerial Meeting. He reaffirmed India's commitment to the NAM and highlighted the need for more effective coordination between the Non-Alignment Movement and the Group of 77 to bring fresh energy to both organizations. The External Affairs Minister also participated in the NAM Ministerial Committee on Palestine, held on 25 September 2007 on the margins of the UN General Assembly session.

Commonwealth

India is the largest member of the Commonwealth and is its fifth largest financial contributor. India has increased its annual contribution to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation from British Pound (GBP) 800,000 in 2005-06 to GBP 900,000 in 2007-08. India is the largest contributor (with commitment of Euro 1 million) to the

Commonwealth Connects Special Voluntary Fund, created by the Heads of Government at the Malta Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in November 2005 to bridge the digital divide in the Commonwealth countries and is a member of the Steering Committee established to carry forward its action programme. To further enhance India's technical assistance to the Commonwealth developing countries, India has offered 50-75 slots in select courses under ITEC and SCAAP and up to five ICT experts for periods upto six months under the Commonwealth Connects Programme. India has also conducted training programmes for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Managers from Africa and South Asia. India continues to be one of the principal supporters and contributors of the Commonwealth Joint Office in New York, which facilitates participation by Commonwealth small states in UN activities. India has increased its contribution to the Commonwealth of Learning from Rs.24 million to Rs.40 million from 2007. India has proposed to undertake the responsibility for upgrading the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) Asia Centre in Chandigarh as a Centre of Excellence in association with the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Sriperumbudur.

India hosted the Commonwealth Connects International e-Partnership Summit as part of Commonwealth Connects programme from 23-24 March 2007. The Sixth Commonwealth-India Small Business Competitiveness Development Programme was held in Kochi and the Commonwealth Study Conference organised by CII from 25-30 March 2007.

India hosted the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Conference in New Delhi from 21-30 September 2007 attended by 800 delegates from 53 Commonwealth countries. The Conference was formally inaugurated by President, Pratibha Devisingh Patil on 25 September 2007.

Minister of Finance attended the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting in Guyana from 15-17 October 2007. Commonwealth Secretary General visited India in March 2007 and again in September 2007. Minister of State for Women and Child Development (Independent Charge) participated at the Eighth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting in Kampala, Uganda from 11-14 June 2007. Minister of Law and Justice participated at the Commonwealth Meeting of Law Ministers on 4-5 October 2007 in London.

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Kampala (Uganda) from 23-25 November 2007. External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee attended the pre-CHOGM Commonwealth Foreign Ministers (CFMs) meeting on 21-22 November 2007. Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma represented India at the 'Youth Dialogue' and a 'Sports Breakfast' which were chaired by the President of Uganda. Ashwani Kumar, Minister of State for Industries, led a joint delegation of CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM to the Commonwealth Business Forum Meeting held in Kampala from 20-22 November 2007. Kamallesh Sharma, India's High Commissioner to UK was selected as the next Secretary General of the Commonwealth during the Kampala CHOGM.

Community of Democracies (COD)

Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma led the Indian delegation to the fourth Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies (CoD) held in Bamako, Mali from 14-17 November 2007. Participants from more than 100 countries deliberated on proposals to advance democracy and strengthen democratic institutions and adopted the Bamako Declaration on the special theme of 'Democracy, Development and Poverty Reduction'.

ASEAN Regional Forum

India continued to actively participate in regular ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meetings and Confidence Building Mechanism (CBM) activities organized by the Member States. External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, led the Indian delegation to the 14th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting in Manila.

An International Seminar on "UN Peacekeeping: Challenges and Prospects" was organized in New Delhi in April 2007, a CBM activity approved by the 13th ARF Ministerial Meeting.

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

India is a founding member of Conference on International Confidence Building Measures (CICA) and continued to actively participate in meetings of CICA. India seconded a senior diplomat to the CICA Secretariat. Executive Director of the CICA Secretariat paid an official visit to CICA in December 2007. On the occasion of 15th Anniversary of inception of CICA Indian Prime sent a

congratulatory message to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

International Law and Developments

India continued to actively participate in the discussions in the Sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly which focuses on matters relating to International law. Other discussions in international law in which India participated were:

Administration of Justice at the United Nations

In discussions on this subject in the United Nations, it was recognized that an independent, transparent, professionalized system consisting of both an informal and a formal system is required.

Oceans and the Law of the Sea

The sixth round of Informal Consultations of States Parties to the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks was convened to review national, regional, sub-regional and global implementation of the Agreement.

Working Group on Aggression

The Special Working Group on Crime of Aggression under the Rome Statute held three meetings in the year 2007. The main questions before it were: how to define an act of aggression and how to trigger the Court's jurisdiction.

Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism

The substantive provisions of the Draft Convention have been largely agreed. However, further progress on the Convention has been stalled by the insistence of some countries that wish to exclude from the scope of the Convention acts carried out in the course of "people's struggles against foreign occupation".

Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the role of the Organization

The Special Committee continued its consideration of all proposals concerning the question of the maintenance of international peace and security in all its aspects in order to strengthen the role of the United Nations.

Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in all their aspects: Ad Hoc Committee on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission

The first session of the Ad Hoc Committee on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission was held in April 2007. All delegations supported the "zero tolerance policy" in all cases of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by peacekeeping personnel. On the issue of negotiating an international convention on the criminal accountability of the United Nations officials and experts on missions, our delegation was of the view that it was premature to discuss such a possibility and the Ad Hoc Committee should focus on substantive matters leaving questions of form to a subsequent stage. A Working Group was established with a view to continuing the consideration of the Report of the Group of Legal Experts during the 62nd Session.

IMO Legal Committee

The Diplomatic Conference of the IMO held in Kenya, Nairobi adopted the Final Text of the Convention on Wreck Removal (2007).

Legal sub Committee of the UN-Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Outer Space

The Legal Sub-committee of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Outer Space has been engaged in the development of Space Law and it also works as a forum for debates on emerging issues in Space Law. The Legal and Treaties (L&T) Division participated in the 46th Session of the Committee which was held in Vienna from 26 March-5 April 2007. Besides considering traditional agenda items, emphasis was placed this year on the national legislation relating to the private participation in space activities. It was decided that a new agenda item: 'General exchange of information on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space' will be taken up during the 47th session.

UNESCO Legal Committee

The UNESCO Legal Committee meeting on the occasion of UNESCO's 34th General Conference was held in Paris during October 2007. Legal and Treaties Division participated in this Meeting.

FAO Legal Experts Group

The Division also participated in the meeting of Informal Group of Legal Experts on the process for a Change in

the Nature of a Statutory Body under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution into a Body of outside the Framework of the FAO convened by FAO at its Headquarters in Rome in October 2007.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

During the 40th Session of the UNCITRAL, the Commission through a working group continued finalization of the commentaries on the draft legislative guide on secured transactions, which will be adopted later in a resumed Session. A Congress celebrating the 40th annual session of the Commission was held on the last four days of the session.

Maritime Transport Law

The Legal and Treaties (L&T) Division participated in the nineteenth and twentieth sessions of Working Group III (Maritime Transport Law) of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), held respectively at New York, USA from 16-27 April 2007 and at Vienna, Austria from 15-25 October 2007. The Working Group is negotiating a new convention, with a view to review the existing laws relating to the international carriage of goods by sea, to cope with the practical changes in this field emerged due to technological developments.

International Humanitarian Law

The 30th International Conference on International Red Cross and Red Crescent held in Geneva from 26-30 November 2007 adopted *The Guidelines for the Domestic facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster relief and Initial Recovery Assistance*, which was pending consideration by the ICRC for a number of years. Another important development on international Humanitarian Law is that a decision to negotiate a legally binding instrument on Cluster munitions was reached this year. Legal and Treaties Division has been participating in the development of International Humanitarian Law within the ICRC and also in the meetings concerning Convention on Conventional Weapons

International Environment Law

The Legal and Treaties Division was represented at the Third Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working on Liability and Redress in the context of Article 27 of the Cartagena Protocol, held in Montreal, Canada, from 19-23 February 2007; and the Fourth Meeting of the same

subject held in Montreal, Canada, from 22-26 October 2007. The Meeting discussed the various elements of a future legal regime on liability and redress for damage suffered by a trans-boundary movement of a living modified organism.

The Legal and Treaties Division participated at the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change from 3-14 December 2007, Bali, Indonesia. The Meeting among others discussed a long term action plan for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the commitment period 2008-2012 and beyond and the need for negotiating a new treaty in this regard.

Antarctica

The Legal and Treaties Division was represented at the XXX Antarctic Treaty Consultative Committee Meeting (ATCM) held in New Delhi, India from 30 April-11 May 2007.

Private International Law

During the year under report, India acceded to the Hague Conventions on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters (1970), and on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extra Judicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters, on 8 April 2007 and on 1 August 2007 respectively. The Hague Conventions on International Access to Justice (1980), on Choice of Court Agreements (2005) and on the Recognition and Enforcement of Judgments in Civil or Commercial Matters (1971) and the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (1980) are under examination for India becoming a party to them.

Extradition and other International Judicial Assistance

The L&T Division participated in a number of bilateral negotiations for concluding extradition treaties, agreements on mutual legal assistance in criminal and in civil matters with foreign countries. A Draft SAARC Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters was prepared and the Division also participated in the meeting of Legal Advisers of SAARC member States convened for discussion on the Draft Convention at Colombo, Sri Lanka from 10-12 September 2007. The Division examined a number of extradition requests and other requests for international cooperation received from the domestic as well as foreign jurisdictions and rendered legal advice therein.

Agreement on Transfer of Prisoners/Sentenced Persons

India is drawing up bilateral agreements with Egypt, France, Sri Lanka, Honk Kong, Israel and Korea, which are under various stages of negotiation.

Agreements on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking

India is in the process of drawing up bilateral agreements on the above subject with Cyprus, Italy, Sri Lanka, UAE, Maldives and Vietnam, which are under various stages of negotiation.

SAARC

Under the SAARC forum, the Legal and Treaties the Division has participated in negotiations leading to the signing of the Agreement for Establishment of SAARC Development Fund during the SAARC Summit held in New Delhi in April 2007. The Division was also involved in the formulation of the SAARC Agreements for the Establishment of SAARC Food Bank and SAARC University which were signed during the year. The Division also participated in the meetings of the Sub Group on Investment held at SAARC Secretariat on 29 November 2007 and in negotiations for a SAARC Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

BIMSTEC

The Legal and Treaties Division organized the third Meeting of the BIMSTEC JWG-CTTC Sub-Group on Legal and Law Enforcement Issues in New Delhi, from 19-20 April 2007. The discussions during the Meeting finalized the text of an Agreement on Combating Terrorism, Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking. The meeting also considered the question of an Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between BIMSTEC Members States.

The Division also participated at 14th and 15th Meetings of the BIMSTEC Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC)

held in Paro, Bhutan, from 18-23 June 2007 and in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 24-26 September 2007 respectively. The issues undertaken by the TNC among others were related to legal vetting of the Agreement on Trade in Goods on the Framework Agreement on the BIMSTEC Free Trade Area, the working group on Rules of Origin, Customs Procedure and Cooperation, and Safeguards.

Participation in Bilateral Negotiations

During the year, negotiations on Bilateral Investment Promotion Agreements (BIPA) with Trinidad and Tobago, Hellenic Republic, Libya, Ethiopia, Iceland, Mexico and Canada were completed and signed. Negotiations were also completed with Canada, Senegal and Bulgaria and the agreements are ready to be signed. The Division also participated in the negotiations on Free Trade Agreements with Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, European Union and ASEAN. The Protocol amending the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement with Singapore was finalised and is ready for signature.

The Legal and Treaties Division examined a number of defence co-operation agreements, agreements on international co-operation of peaceful uses of nuclear energy; science and technology agreements during the year.

India has signed/ratified many multilateral/bilateral treaties/agreements with foreign countries during the year. These *inter alia* include: The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Agreement for the Establishment of SAARC University; SAARC Agreement on Establishing the SAARC Food Bank; Intergovernmental Agreement on Trans Asia Railway Network; the International Convention against Doping in Sports and India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty. A comprehensive list is placed at Appendix XI. A list of Instruments of Full Powers issued during the year 2007 is at Appendix XII and a list of Instruments of Ratification is at Appendix XIII.



SAARC

The South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was created in 1985, as an expression of the region's collective decision to evolve a regional cooperative framework. Presently, there are eight member countries in SAARC, namely, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

India hosted the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007 thereby assuming the Chairmanship of SAARC. For the first time in its history, SAARC expanded its membership at the 14th Summit to include Afghanistan as the eighth member. Also, it was the first Summit where five Observers, from outside the region - China, Japan, Republic of Korea, the United States of America and the European Union - were invited to attend the Summit. Iran has also been welcomed as an Observer in SAARC. The 29th Council of Ministers Meeting (7-8 December 2007) approved the request of Mauritius to be associated as Observer to SAARC.

The Heads of State/Government during the Summit agreed to improve intra-regional connectivity through physical, economic and people to people connectivity. In case of physical connectivity, an important decision was to extend the SAARC Regional Multimodal Transport Study to Afghanistan. For economic connectivity, SAARC countries committed themselves to early operationalization of the SAARC Development Fund (SDF) and implementation of trade facilitation measures. The Heads of Government agreed to strengthen the security network by sharing of information, increased frequency of meetings between security chiefs and consider India's proposal to work towards finalizing an Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

During the Summit, two important Agreements on the establishment of a South Asian University and a SAARC Food Bank were signed. The Leaders also agreed to progress on the four key issues of development, namely,

Water (including flood control); Energy; Food and Environment.

The 29th Council of Ministers Meeting took stock of the implementation of decisions taken during the 14th SAARC Summit. The Council gave direction for the urgent operationalization of the SDF through an interim cell; adopted a Declaration on Climate Change; granted Observer status to Mauritius; appointed Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma of India as the next Secretary General of SAARC; and directed the immigration authorities to re-examine the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES).

The momentum in maintaining the dynamism generated by the 14th SAARC Summit was ensured through (a) our conscious effort to discharge our role in a non-reciprocal manner; (b) choice of subjects for engagement, viz, transport, finance and security; (c) increasing people-to-people interaction; (d) accelerating the establishment of South Asian University and the SAARC Development Fund; and (e) expediting the institutionalization of food security through the Food Bank.

India hosted the first Meeting of the SAARC Transport Ministers (29-31 August 2007) where the Report of the SAARC Regional Multimodal Transport Study, prepared and funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB), was deliberated upon. A few pilot sub-regional and regional projects were identified, namely Birgunj-Kaatihar-Singhabad-Rohanpur-Chittagong with links to Jogbani, Biratnagar and Agartala; Kathmandu-Birgunj-Kolkata/Haldia; Agartala-Akhaura-Chittagong; road link from Phuntsholing to Hashimara; Rail Corridors between Colombo and Chennai; Ferry Service between Colombo and Cochin and Colombo and Tuticorin; Air-connectivities between Malé-New Delhi and Islamabad-New Delhi; and establishment of modern border crossing facility at Phuntsholing.

India hosted the Finance Ministers' Meeting preceded by the Finance Secretaries Meeting from 14-15 September 2007. The Meeting discussed crucial issues like

development of Capital Markets in South Asia; establishment of SAARC Development Fund; Promotion and Protection of Investments; and co-operation in the field of customs. The Ministers identified the three areas in the social sector for implementation under SDF namely Maternal and Child Health including Immunization; Empowerment of women and Capacity building aimed at enhancing the quality of education.

The Home Ministers' Meeting (India, 23-25 October 2007) discussed issues relating to transnational crimes, particularly terrorism, narcotics and psychotropic substances and on trafficking in women and children. To focus on social issues, India hosted the First Meeting of the Regional Task Force to implement the SAARC Convention on Trafficking in Women and Children (July 2007); Conference on Micro Financing and Women Economic Empowerment in the SAARC Region (July 2007) and National Coordination Committee Meeting to implement the SAARC Social Charter (September 2007).

SAARC Development Fund (SDF), the funding framework to be used by SAARC member states for development of the region, held its third intergovernmental meeting on its establishment on 29 November 2007 where the draft Agreement was finalized. The 29th SAARC Council of Ministers decided that a temporary Cell would be set up at the SAARC Secretariat to implement identified projects from available funds. India has already committed US\$ 100 million to the SDF. The Council decided that the SDF should start funding projects before the next Session of the Council.

We have taken the initiative in SAARC, to set up the location of the prestigious South Asian University in New Delhi. Work has started on establishing a Project Office in New Delhi for a period of two years to acquire land for the University, oversee its construction, and draw up its Charter, Byelaws, Business Plan, Governance Structure, Course Curricula etc.

A pilot project connecting one/two hospitals in each of the SAARC countries with 3-4 Super Specialty hospitals in India by the end of this year has started between Bhutan and India. The Telemedicine Project has received overwhelming support from other SAARC countries and will be implemented phase-wise.

The initiative taken by India in involving people in the

SAARC process through culture witnessed tremendous appreciation at the recently held First SAARC Cultural Festival in New Delhi in December 2007. A series of cultural events including SAARC Fusion Band Festival, Folk Lore Festival, SAARC Car Rally photo exhibition and Food festival was organized in the first week of December 2007. A pilot project on the student and faculty exchange was organized for both school and University students. A SAARC Fashion Show was organized wherein two designers from each of the SAARC countries displayed their collection.

With the objective of preserving the rich South Asian tradition of textiles weaving and handicrafts, the Museum of Textiles and Handicrafts began its activities on 7 December 2007 from Crafts Museum, with an exhibition on 'Textiles Traditions of South Asia.' A handloom and handicrafts sales outlet was organized for two weeks where 5 participants from each of the SAARC country sold their regional handicrafts.

To ensure progress in areas that have so far been politically sensitive such as Water, Energy, Food and Environment, India has identified small regional, sub-regional projects that have a small gestation period and immediate dividends. These include projects on solar rural electrification for 300 houses per SAARC member state, capacity-building in rainwater harvesting, preservation of forests and agri-business; and sharing of a protocol of optimally utilizing rhizobium bacteria for increased nitrogen-fixation for high yielding pulses.

Concerned about the adverse impact that drastic climate change can effect on South Asia, the 29th SAARC Council of Ministers adopted the SAARC Declaration on Climate Change that was read out by President Gayoom in Bali. Experiences on uplifting the rural hinterlands in each member state were also shared through the exchange of information on SAARC model villages.

The new SAARC Secretary General Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma from India will be heading the SAARC Secretariat from 1 March 2008. As we hand over the Chair to Sri Lanka in 2008, India remains committed to move SAARC from confabulation to implementation.

ASEAN – India Relations

India's focus on strengthening and deepening its multi-faceted relations with ASEAN is a central pillar to its



The leaders of the SAARC countries at the 14th SAARC Summit, in New Delhi.



External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee with Celso Amorim, Foreign Minister of Brazil and N. Dlamini Zuma, Foreign Minister of South Africa at meeting of IBSA initiative in New York on 26 September 2007.

“Look East” policy. India also shares a convergence of security perspectives with ASEAN countries, that is, common interest in maintenance of peace and stability in the region. Various projects are in the process of implementation to further India-ASEAN cooperation.

The Centres for English Language Training (CELTs) were set up by India in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam.

Under the India-ASEAN Media Exchange Programme, 15 ASEAN journalists visited India in June-July 2007.

A special training course for ASEAN diplomats was conducted by FSI in August 2007 which was attended by 23 young diplomats.

One hundred students from ASEAN countries – 10 students each from all the ten ASEAN countries – visited India in December 2007 on a trip of the sights and sounds of modern and ancient India.

The India-ASEAN Science and Technology Development Fund will be soon operationalized with an initial contribution of US\$ 1 million. This Fund will support the development of strategic alliances between Indian and ASEAN researchers and lead to further collaborative Research and Development.

The 6th India-ASEAN Summit was held in Singapore on 21 November 2007. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, proposed several measures to augment cooperation between India and the ASEAN countries. Among these are efforts to realize India-ASEAN trade target of US\$ 50 billion by 2010, simplification of visa regime for businesspersons traveling between India and ASEAN, launching of an India-ASEAN Health Care Initiative with a focus to provide basic drugs at low cost, setting up of an India – ASEAN Green Fund for undertaking pilot projects and tackling issues associated with climate change, an expanded open skies policy with ASEAN, a target of 1 million tourists to India from ASEAN region by the year 2010 and launching of a special programme for exchanges amongst parliamentarians.

India - ASEAN FTA

Three meetings of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) were held during the year 2007. Efforts are continuing to reach consensus on all issues encompassing the proposed India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement. India's endeavour has been to safeguard the interests of

its large number of subsistence farmers. At the 6th India-ASEAN Summit held in Singapore on 21 November 2007, all sides agreed to work towards concluding the negotiations on the FTA by March 2008.

East Asia Summit (EAS)

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh attended the third East Asia Summit held back to back with the 6th India-ASEAN Summit, in Singapore on 21 November 2007. The third EAS focused on the issues of energy, environment, climate change and sustainable development. The 16 leaders (10 ASEAN countries, India, China, Japan, ROK, Australia and New Zealand) participating in the Summit signed the Singapore Declaration on Climate Change, Energy and Environment.

The first meeting of the Nalanda Mentor Group chaired by Nobel Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen, was held in Singapore in July 2007. The Nalanda Mentor Group has provided a roadmap to re-establishing this University which will focus on becoming a centre for excellence for research and teaching with an emphasis on postgraduate studies. It will have departments for philosophy and Buddhist studies, regional history, business and management studies, international relations and peace studies and study of languages. It will be established as an international university through an international treaty.

Efforts continued for a study towards a Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (CEPEA). It was also decided that the Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) would be temporarily accommodated at the ASEAN Secretariat.

At the EAS Energy Ministers' meeting held in Singapore in August 2007, it was decided to cooperate in formulating, on a voluntary basis, energy efficiency goals and action plans, and enhancing cooperation on biofuels in the region.

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)

India hosted a meeting on 22-23 May 2007 in New Delhi which finalised the Memorandum of Association of the BIMSTEC Centre on Weather and Climate which is proposed to be set up in NOIDA, India.

India hosted a special training workshop for BIMSTEC countries on “Geoinformatics Applications in Disaster Management” at Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS), Dehradun from 12-16 November 2007.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has conducted a “BIMSTEC Transport Infrastructure and Logistics Study”. The agreed priority areas for detailed study are: road and rail connectivity between Bangladesh and India to Thailand passing through Myanmar, including connectivity to those corridors from Bhutan and Nepal; modal assessment of transport infrastructure and services; air transport hubs for intra-BIMSTEC passenger travel; and major BIMSTEC ports along the Bay of Bengal coast. ADB has submitted the final report to the BIMSTEC Working Group in January 2008.

Two Expert Group meetings were held in Kathmandu on 1-2 February 2007 and in Dhaka on 27 November 2007 to discuss the proposed BIMSTEC Business Visa Scheme.

The negotiations for a BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement (BIMSTEC FTA) continued during the year. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth meetings of the Trade Negotiating Committee (BIMSTEC TNC) were held from 18-23 June 2007 in Paro, Bhutan and from 24-26 September 2007 in Dhaka, Bangladesh respectively.

India is a lead country in the BIMSTEC sector on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC). The third meeting of BIMSTEC Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter-Terrorism and Trans-National Crime was held in Myanmar on 16-17 January 2007. The third meeting of the BIMSTEC JWG-CTTC Sub Group on Legal and Law Enforcement Issues was held in New Delhi on 19-20 April 2007. In the meeting, agreement was reached on the text of the provisions of the draft “BIMSTEC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking”.

The First Expert Group Meeting of BIMSTEC on Agricultural Cooperation was held in Myanmar from 14-16 March 2007. India will host the next Expert Group Meeting of BIMSTEC on Agricultural Cooperation in 2008.

The 2nd BIMSTEC Summit, which was to be held in early 2007 in India, was re-scheduled as the proposed dates were not found convenient to some members. India will

host the 2nd BIMSTEC Summit after consulting all BIMSTEC member countries.

Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA)

The Second Ministerial Council Meeting of Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) was held on 26 October 2007 at Goa. An announcement to launch the 4th Round of Negotiations was made. The Standing Committee was directed to conclude the negotiations by the Third Ministerial Council Meeting (scheduled to be held in October 2009). The Standing Committee is to adopt modalities for extension of negotiations in other areas such as non-tariff measures, trade facilitation, services, and investment. To this effect the prospects of APTA have been widened by the Ministers. A common set of Operational Procedures for the Certificate and Verification of the Origin of Goods for APTA was approved and it was decided that the same would be implemented with effect from 1 January 2008. The Standing Committee and the Secretariat would undertake necessary actions to expand the membership of this Agreement and Member Countries to give positive consideration to support the Secretariat’s activities relating to APTA.

Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC)

India hosted a delegation of about one hundred Buddhist pilgrims from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam from 5-12 September 2007 to promote cultural exchanges within the framework of MGC. During their stay in India, the pilgrims visited Patna, Pawapuri, Rajgir, Nalanda, Bodh Gaya, Varanasi and Sarnath. A special Air India plane was chartered for the purpose of travel of pilgrims to India and back. All expenses on international travel as well as boarding and lodging were borne by Government of India.

Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

The 6th Foreign Ministers’ meeting of Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea in June 2007. E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs represented India at this meeting. The Seoul IT Declaration aimed at promoting IT development among member countries was adopted at this meeting. It was also decided to form a High Level Study Group of the ACD to set its future directions and to consolidate cooperation among member countries.

The Minister of External Affairs participated in a Ministerial meeting of the ACD in September 2007 on the margins of UNGA held in New York. The Ministers discussed the regional situation in the Asian continent, and reviewed ongoing cooperative endeavours with the group. The Ministers discussed substantive ideas to begin a cultural dialogue within the ACD. The group noted the offer of the government of Kazakhstan to host the next Ministerial meeting of the ACD in Astana, Kazakhstan in October 2008.

Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)

At the Seventh Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting held in Tehran in March 2007, India announced organising of an IOR-ARC Trade Fair, as part of the India International Trade Fair, at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi from 14-27 November 2007, an IOR-ARC Film Festival, two special training courses on (i) IT and E-Government, and (ii) Small and Medium Enterprises, under the ITEC programme and to facilitate and strengthen education exchanges among the IOR-ARC countries. Seven IOR-ARC Member Countries, viz. Indonesia, Iran, South Africa, Thailand, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Tanzania participated in the India International Trade Fair, at Pragati Maidan. A Buyer-Seller Meet was also organized on 14 November 2007. India also organised a Special Training Course on Small and Medium Enterprises. The IOR-ARC Film Festival has been scheduled to be held from 22 February–1 March 2008.

Group of Eight (G8)

Prime Minister visited Germany to attend the Summit Meeting of the G8 and the five Outreach Countries (Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa) at Heiligendamm at the invitation of the German G8 Presidency on 8 June 2007. This was for the third consecutive year that India was invited to participate in the G8-Outreach Summit.

An important outcome of the meeting was the launching of a high-level dialogue between the G8 and the Outreach Countries, beginning in the second half of 2007 and to be completed by the 2009 G8 Summit in Italy, on four issues, viz., innovation, investment, energy efficiency and development, particularly in Africa. During the Summit Meeting of the G8 and the Outreach countries Prime Minister spoke on the issue of climate change and other

issues. The five Outreach Countries (O5) brought out a joint position paper covering issues such as economic development, global governance, international trade, international migration, climate change and South-South cooperation for disseminating the common positions of the O5 countries among the G8 countries.

The O5 Leaders met on 7 June 2007 in Berlin for a wide-ranging discussion, preceding the meeting of G8 leaders with O5 Leaders on the following day at Heiligendamm. The leaders reaffirmed their shared conviction that developing countries must participate more actively in the consolidation of strategies and initiatives that effectively address the challenges of a globalising and increasingly interdependent world. They also agreed to have consultations on a regular basis on issues of common interest and to coordinate their positions. During his visit to Germany, our Prime Minister emphasized the need for more active participation by Outreach countries in future G8 Summits.

Asia – Europe Meeting (ASEM)

The Minister of External Affairs participated in the 8th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Hamburg, Germany, on 28-29 May 2007. This was our first Ministerial participation in ASEM. The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation bringing together EU member states and the European Commission, with countries in Asia and ASEAN Secretariat. The ASEM dialogue addresses political, economic and cultural issues, with the objective of strengthening the relationship between the two regions. The decision to admit India as a new member of the ASEM process was taken at the ASEM Summit meeting held in Helsinki in September 2006.

India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA)

The 4th meeting of the Trilateral Commission was held in New Delhi, India, on 16-17 July 2007. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister of External Affairs and Foreign Ministers of Brazil and South Africa participated in the Trilateral Meeting.

The initial discussions commenced on 6 October 2007 to conclude an India-SACU-MERCOSUR FTA. The commitment to enhancing trade and economic relations between the three sides was affirmed. The first IBSA Conference of Editors was held in New Delhi on 3-4

September 2007 with participation from a high profile and distinguished panel of editors from all the three countries.

Prime Minister participated in the Second Summit of IBSA Forum, held on 17 October 2007 in Pretoria. A Business Forum, an Academic Seminar, and meetings of the newly constituted Parliamentary and Women's Forum preceded the Summit. The Summit adopted the Tshwane Declaration. Seven MoUs were signed in areas such as public administration and governance, culture, social issues, health and medicines, public administration, higher education and on customs and tax administration cooperation. It was agreed to achieve an intra-IBSA trade target of US\$ 15 billion by the year 2010. The Third Summit will be held in India in 2008.

OECD

Secretary General, Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) visited India in October 2007

to release the first-ever survey of the Indian Economy by this organisation. Since 2001, India is a member of the OECD Development Centre, a semi-independent body within the OECD. India participates as an "observer" in several committees, including Steel Committee (since 2000), Fiscal Affairs (since 2006) and Consumer Policy (since 2007).

APEC

With a 10-year moratorium on the APEC membership coming to an end, the APEC Summit meeting held in Sydney in September 2007 considered the membership issue and decided to continue with the moratorium on APEC membership till the year 2010. India's position on the APEC membership since 1991 has been that we would consider joining APEC if our membership is endorsed by consensus amongst APEC members.



11 Technical & Economic Cooperation and Development Partnership

The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and its sister programme, the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme (SCAAP), centered on the sharing of experiences, transfer of technology and capacity building; formed an important component of India's interaction with the developing world. The usefulness and relevance of the ITEC Programme in their countries was reflected in the increasing number of participants in the programme and as conveyed by Ministers and officials from developing countries in Africa, Asia, Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean at bilateral meetings with their Indian counterparts and at various other fora.

ITEC and SCAAP continued to draw large numbers of participants to the training programmes conducted by institutes in India, both in the Government and private sector, under the civilian and defence training programmes. Some 4,700 professionals, in Government and other sectors from 156 developing countries, attended the courses in areas of importance and usefulness to them. To facilitate matters a website was created exclusively for ITEC and SCAAP applicants and operationalised during the year and a Brochure of the training programmes was brought out in 5 languages in addition to English, namely, Arabic, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian. (List of 156 ITEC partner countries is at Appendix XV.

Civilian Training Programme

The Programme is fully sponsored by the Government of India with 43 institutions on the panel which conducted 220 courses, primarily short-term, for working professionals on a wide and diverse range of skills and disciplines.

The ITEC Programme while essentially bilateral, in recent years has increased the scope of its activities and associated with regional and multilateral organisations. These organisations and groupings include the Association of South East Asia Nations (ASEAN) member countries, the G-15, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral

Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC), the African Union (AU), the Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO), the Pan African Parliament, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Commonwealth and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

In response to requests, the following special courses were conducted during the year:- (i) Special Course on 'Cotton Cultivation, Quality Aspects and Value Addition' for Francophone Africa, i.e. C4 and other West African Countries from 16-30 June 2007 by the South India Textile Research Association (SITRA), Coimbatore; (ii) 3 Special Courses on 'Capacity Building for Equity Fund and General Managers in the SME Sector in Africa & South Asia' from 4-15 February 2007, 2-13 July 2007 and 5-16 November 2007, jointly by Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) and National Institute of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (NIMSME), Hyderabad for the Commonwealth; (iii) 2 Special Courses on English and IT for 24 Ecuadorians from August 6 - October 26, 2007 by NIIT, New Delhi followed by the second Special Course for 36 Ecuadorians commencing in January 2008 for 3 months; (iv) Special Course for participants from the Indian Ocean Rim – Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR – ARC) Member countries from 27 August–5 October 2007 by the National Institute of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (NIMSME), Hyderabad; (v) A Special Training Programme was organized for Mongolian Scientists at the Central Institute for Research on Goats, Makhdoom, Mathura, on "Semen and Embryo Transfer on Goats" from 26 November 2007-25 January 2008.

Defence Training

Growing interest in defence training was evident with the three wings of the Defence Services i.e. Army, Navy and Air Force accepting 572 officers/trainees from 61 countries, up from 388 participants the previous year from 36 countries to various defence training institutions. The courses were general and specialized in nature and

included Security and Strategic Studies, Defence Management, Artillery, Electronics, Mechanical Engineering, Marine Hydrography, Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare as also foundation courses for young officers in the three services. Applications to the premiere Defence courses at the National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi and the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington, were oversubscribed in the ratio of 3:1 and saw officers from developed countries also attending them on a self-financing basis.

Deputation of Experts

At the request of Governments and international organisations, 49 experts in the Civilian and Defence field were deputed and remained in position in 17 countries to advise and provide expertise in areas including Information Technology, Auditing, Legal Expertise, diverse Agricultural fields, Pharmacology, Statistics and Demography, Public Administration and Textiles. The services of Defence teams were also availed of by the Lao PDR, Lesotho, Seychelles and Zambia in training and advisory capacities.

Other Assistance

At the request of the Government of Ecuador, delivery of medicines worth US\$ 1 million, donated by India, commenced during the year.

Development Partnership & Projects Cooperation

A number of bilateral projects were undertaken in 2007-08 notably in the fields of Archaeological Conservation, Tourism and Hospitality, Information Technology (IT) and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The focus of the projects under the bilateral cooperation program was on setting up the requisite physical infrastructure and capacity building to ensure long-term sustainability of the projects under way.

The main projects under implementation included the following:-

Maldives: Civil construction work on the India Maldives Friendship Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies” commenced and is expected to be completed by middle of 2009-10.

Cambodia: Conservation and restoration work by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at the World

Heritage Site of Ta Prohm temple proceeded apace following the approvals from the UNESCO and local government authorities.

Indonesia: A bilateral agreement was signed with Government of Indonesia to set up a Vocational Training Centre in the Construction Sector in Aceh in June 2007.

Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR): (a) A bilateral agreement with the Government of the Lao PDR was signed to execute conservation and restoration at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Wat Phu to be executed by the ASI; (b) An Information Technology project to strengthen IT infrastructure in the Lao PDR continued to operate smoothly; (c) 30 students from the Lao PDR continued to undergo a 3 year Master of Computer Application (MCA) programme at Indraprastha University, Delhi; (d) Feasibility study to set up pilot rural tele-centres was conducted.

Vietnam: Further discussions were held on ways to implement the project for setting up an Advanced Resource Centre in Hanoi committed by the Government of India.

Zimbabwe: A Bilateral Agreement with the Government of Zimbabwe reached in 2006 to establish a Centre in the field of Small and Medium Enterprises neared completion.

Latin American & Caribbean (LAC) Region: In the information Technology field, agreements were reached with 4 countries in the LAC region to set up 4 IT Training Centers in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Jamaica.

Grenada: An IT Training Centre in Grenada is also being set up.

In addition to the projects referred to above several other projects were at various stages of implementation in areas such as Healthcare Services and providing Consultancy Services for setting up infrastructure including feasibility study for setting up a Software Technology Park and a Sewerage Treatment Plant in Antigua and Barbuda; establishing an Administrative Staff College in Aceh, Indonesia and a project for a neuro-speciality hospital in Lao PDR.

Aid for Disaster Relief

Under disaster relief assistance, India rendered immediate relief assistance to countries affected by natural calamities: (i) A consignment of 2000 MT of rice was shipped to

North Korea as a measure of humanitarian assistance; (ii) Supply of 5000 MT of rice and 5000 MT of sugar to Mongolia; (iii) Providing medicines or financial assistance to a number of countries affected with natural calamities

including cyclones and floods in Bolivia and Solomon Islands, and (iv) Action was also initiated to provide medical and financial assistance to Belize, Mexico, Haiti and Dominican Republic.



The Investment and Technology Promotion (ITP) Division's annual publication "India-Dynamic Business Partner: Investor Friendly Destination" was published in June 2007 and circulated to all Missions/ Posts abroad, other agencies of the Government of India, apex chambers of commerce and Industry etc. The publication has been developed with the intent of providing the reader a comprehensive picture of India's economic growth, sectoral developments, social and legal background and potential business and investment opportunities. With the intention of a wider reach and making it user friendly, the publication is accompanied by a CD version, and is available in Japanese, Chinese, Russian, German, French, Italian, Spanish and Arabic languages.

The ITP Division continues to provide to entrepreneurs and policy makers global perspectives on the trends in trade and opportunities for exports and advise on market strategy through the medium of its detailed Investment and Business Brief. The Brief serves as a handy and useful document for all our Missions abroad equipping them with the latest developments in the Indian economy along with facts and figures relating to our trade and investments and helps them in their own promotional activities.

The Division's website www.indiainbusiness.nic.in which is devoted exclusively for the economic and commercial aspects of India's diplomacy was revamped with new features and hyperlinks with the aim of providing comprehensive and latest information for global investors and businessmen about the opportunities in India. The website serves as a useful and reliable source of information which is evident from the number of business and investments related queries received by the Division. This has also helped project the image of India as an established economic power with attractive potential for investment and business.

The Division participated and contributed actively in the meetings of Foreign Investment Promotion Board, Reserve

Bank of India, Board of Trade and other policy meetings concerning reforms and liberalisation of the economy and simplifying of investment procedures and expeditiously processed proposals relating to opening of Liaison/Branch offices by foreign companies in India.

The Division interacted with Export Promotion Councils, Trade and Industry bodies, such as Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM), etc., Department of Commerce and Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) for promotion of India's exports and investment initiatives. Periodicals, Journals and other relevant information brought out by these organizations and concerned Government agencies were regularly circulated to Indian Missions abroad to keep them abreast of various developments in knowledge based industries such as information technology, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals.

As part of its efforts to enhance greater air-connectivity between India and different regions of the world with a view to making India as an attractive business and investment destination, ITP Division actively participated and made positive contributions in the bilateral civil aviation talks held with several countries, including, inter alia, Malaysia, Turkey, Jordan, Greece, UAE, Singapore, and Russia.

A new Energy Security Unit has been established in the Ministry of External Affairs in September 2007 and appended to the ITP Division. This Unit would, inter alia, maintain close coordination with the concerned Ministries and support their international engagement through appropriate and sustained diplomatic interventions. It has also been charged with the responsibility of supporting the efforts of our corporate entities, both in public and private sectors, in acquiring energy assets overseas, in transfer of new and emerging

technologies to India and in building strategic partnerships with foreign companies.

The Division took active part in Governmental/non-Governmental meetings on Energy issues and through its network of Missions facilitated the work of Indian companies. As part of its efforts to bolster energy security for the country, the Division was instrumental in mobilizing Ministerial level participation from several African countries during the Indo-African Hydrocarbon Exhibition and Conference jointly organized by the Ministry of Petroleum and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi on 6-7 November 2007.

The ITP Division extended part financial assistance for a seminar on US-India Agricultural Knowledge Initiative,

which was successfully organized by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) at New Delhi on 30 April 2007.

The Division actively pursued the policy of using Lines of Credit on concessional terms for promotion of India's political, economic and commercial interests. During the period from April 2007-November 2007, agreements on Lines of Credit amounting to about US\$ 365 million have been approved for disbursal. The Lines of Credit have helped Indian companies to obtain project contracts and orders for supply of goods and services in number of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.



The Policy Planning and Research Division serves as a nodal point for interaction with the University Grants Commission (UGC) and its affiliates and the Area Study Centres (ASC) located in various universities, specializing in research on various regions of the world.

The Division extended financial assistance to various academic institutions/think-tanks located in different parts of the country for holding conferences, seminars, preparation of research papers, exchange of scholars and support for Track-II programmes on issues related to India's external relations and security. A list of seminars/conferences/meetings/study projects organized/undertaken by institutions/NGOs partly funded by the Policy Planning and Research Division is given at Appendix XIV. A computerized database of experts and institutions specializing in policy research and analysis has also been developed by the Division and is updated on regular basis.

The Policy Planning and Research Division continued issuing Monthly Summary for the Cabinet. This covers the broad spectrum of India's relations with different countries of the world during the month.

The Division continued to edit and publish the Annual Report of the Ministry. The Report serves as a compendium of India's interaction with the rest of the world in the political, economic, and cultural fields, including the views of the government on various facets of international relations.

The Division reviewed the functioning of Business Centres set up in some of the Indian Missions and Posts abroad as also content, scope and frequency of reporting by the missions.

The Division was also responsible for scrutinizing the depiction of India's external boundaries in the foreign publications imported into the country, and offered its advice to the Ministries dealing with this matter. It coordinated the supply of map-sheets to various Government and semi-Government offices and research scholars for use in their official work with the Survey of India. The Division also dealt with the requests from research scholars for access to the old records of the Ministry.

Boundary Cell

A Boundary Cell has been established in the Ministry. It provides technical support to all Territorial Divisions on international boundary related matters. It has started building database for boundary strip maps covering the external boundary of India. During 2007-08 it undertook archiving and digitisation of boundary strip maps and archiving of Topographical Maps, in digital and hard copy form, published by Survey of India covering international boundary of India. The Boundary cell has participated in various bilateral international meetings with neighbouring countries for negotiations, delineation and demarcation of external boundaries of India.



India's increasing engagement with the international community has resulted in a large number of visits to India by foreign dignitaries. There were 78 visits at the level of Head of State/Vice President/Head of Government/Foreign Minister during the year 2007. Foreign Resident Diplomatic Missions in Delhi have increased from 116 in 2003 to 132 in 2007. Foreign Representatives in Diplomatic Missions in Delhi are also growing in size with 80 posts added in 2007. During the year 2007, three countries opened Resident Missions in New Delhi: Bahrain (February 2007), Malawi (26 March 2007) and Malta (19 March 2007). Germany opened a Consulate in Bangalore and China opened one in Kolkata. Permission was given to Turkey to open a Consulate in Mumbai, to Lithuania to open a Consulate in New Delhi and to Japan to open its Consulate in Bangalore. In addition, 18 countries were granted permission to appoint Honorary Consul Generals in New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai. Protocol handled 28

credentials ceremonies, official entertainment, and numerous other functions during 2007. Streamlining of protocol norms and standards continued to be a focus of attention. The Service Tax Exemption Framework was implemented on the basis of reciprocity for entitled foreign missions, diplomats and consulate officials.

The Conference Cell assisted in the organisation of the following conferences:

- Fourteenth SAARC Summit, New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007;
- Third Meeting of the BIMSTEC JWG – CTTC Sub-Group on Legal and Law Enforcement issues, New Delhi on 19-20 April 2007;
- Fourth IBSA Trilateral Joint Commission Meeting, New Delhi, 13 and 16-17 July 2007;
- Twenty Ninth SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting, New Delhi on 7-8 December 2007.

Visits during 2007

State Visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and Equivalent Level

S.No.	Dignitary	Dates
1	H.E. Prof. Anibal Cavaco Silva, President of Portugal	January 10-17
2	H.E. Mr. Romano Prodi, Prime Minister of Italy	February 10-15
3	H.H. Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE, Ruler of Dubai	March 25-26
4	H.E. Mr. Aleksandr Lukashenko, President of Belarus	April 15-17
5	H.E. Mr. Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva, President of Brazil	June 3-5
6	H.E. Gen. Surayud Chulanout, Prime Minister of Thailand	June 25-27
7	H.E. Mr. Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister of Vietnam	July 4-6
8	H.E. Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia	July 8-11
9	H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan	August 21-23
10	H.E. Mr. Felipe Calderon Hinojosa, President of Mexico	September 10-11

11	H.E. Mr. Sergei Stanishev, Prime Minister of Bulgaria	September 10-15
12	H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, President of Philippines	October 3-6
13	H.M. Queen Beatrix of Netherlands	October 22-27
14	H.E. Dr. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany	October 29-November 1
15	H.E. Mrs. Micheline Calmy Rey, President of Swiss Confederation	November 4-8
16	H.E. Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia	December 7-10

Official/Working Visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and Equivalent Level

1	H.E. Mr. Vladimir V Putin, President of Russian Federation	January 25-26
2	H.E. Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives	January 27- February 1
3	H.E. Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius	January 28- February 1
4	H.M. Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan	February 7-12
5	H.H. Shaikh Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince of Bahrain	March 19-22
6	H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand	March 5-10
7	H.E. Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan	July 26-31
8	H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand	August 8-9
9	H.E. Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka	October 12-14
10	H.E. Mr. Jose Socrates, Prime Minister of Portugal	November 29 - December 2
11	H.E. Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso, President, European Commission	November 29 - December 1
12	H.H. Sayyid Fahad Bin Mahmood Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister of Sultanate of Oman	December 12-15

Official Visits by Foreign Minister and Equivalent Level

1	H.E. Mr. Dai Bingguo, Special Representative of China	January 16-20
2	H.E. Mr. George Yeo, Foreign Minister of Singapore	January 21-24
3	H.E. Mr. Rohitha Bogollagama, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka	January 30- February 1
4	Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Laureate South Africa	January 29- February 1
5	H.E. Mr. LiZhaoxing, Foreign Minister of China	February 11-14
6	Fifth Trilateral meeting of Foreign Ministers of India, China and Russian Federation	February 14
7	H.E. Dato Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Foreign Minister of Malaysia	February 14-16
8	H.E. Ms. Benita Ferrero Waldner, EU Commissioner for External Relations	February 15-20
9	H.E. Mr. Jean Asselborn, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Luxembourg	February 19-23
10	H.E. Mr. Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri, Foreign Minister of Pakistan	February 20-23
11	H.E. Mr. Sergei Martynov, Foreign Minister of Belarus	February 21-24
12	H.E. Mr. Pham Gia Khiem, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Vietnam	February 25 – March 1
13	H.E. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, Foreign Minister of Fiji Islands	March 3-6
14	H.E. Mr. Francisco E Lainez, Foreign Minister of El Salvador	March 4-9

15	H.E. Dr. Ursula Plassnik, Foreign Minister of Austria	March 15-19
16	Rt. Hon. Don Mckinnon, Commonwealth Secretary General	March 21-23
17	H.E. Dato Seri Panglima Syed Hamid Albar, Foreign Minister of Malaysia	April 9-10
18	H.E. Mr. Celso Amorim, Foreign Minister of Brazil	April 10-14
19	H.E. Mr. Felipe Perez Roque, Foreign Minister of Cuba	April 11-12
20	H.E. Mr. Dai Bingguo, Special Representative of China	April 19-24
21	H.E. Mr. Carl Bildt, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden	May 1-7
22	H.E. Mr. Hor Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Cambodia	May 17-19
23	H.H. Sheikh Abdulla Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Foreign Minister of UAE	June 5-6
24	IBSA Trilateral Meeting [India, Brazil and South Africa Foreign Ministers]	July 14-18
25	H.E. Mr. Walid Al Moualem, Foreign Minister of Syrian Arab Republic	August 13-15
26	H.E. Mr. Gert Rosenthal, Foreign Minister of Guatemala	August 25-31
27	H.E. Mr. Massimo D Alema, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Italy	October 9-12
28	H.E. Dr. Per Stig Moller, Foreign Minister of Denmark	October 22-24
29	H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, Foreign Minister of Maldives	October 27-29
30	H.E. Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, Minister Mentor of Singapore	October 28 - November 2
31	H.E. Mr. George Yeo, Foreign Minister of Singapore	November 11-12
32	H.E. Mr. Karel Schwarzenberg, Foreign Minister of Czech Republic	November 18-21
33	H.E. Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, Minister Mentor of Singapore	December 5-7
34	SAARC Ministerial Meeting	December 3-8
35	H.E. Mr. Bernard Kouchmer, Foreign Minister of France	December 20-28

Private/Transit Visit of Heads of State/Government/Vice President and First Ladies and Equivalent Level

1	Visit of Vice President of Indonesia	January 28-February 1
2	H.H. Shaikha Moodhi Bent Faisal Al Merri, Wife of King of Bahrain	March 30 and April 6
3	H.E. Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of Uganda	April 1
4	H.E. Mr. Angel Marin, Vice President of Bulgaria	April 27
5	H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda	May 18-19
6	Deputy Prime Minister of Kuwait	June 3
7	Mrs. Sarojni Jugnath, First Lady of Mauritius	June 8-13
8	H.R.H. Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn of Thailand	July 26
9	H.R.H. Grand Duke Henri, Head of State of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	August 25
10	H.R.H. Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn of Thailand	September 8
11	H.R.H. Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn of Thailand	October 21

12	H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine	October 24
13	H.E. Mr. Nelson Oduber, Prime Minister of Aruba	December 9-14
14	H.E. Mr. S R Nathan, President of Singapore	December 10-25
15	H.E. Mr. Aneerudh Jugnauth, President of Mauritius	December 13-23

Visits Abroad of President/Vice President/Prime Minister of India

1	Prime Minister's visit to Cebu, Philippines [East Asia Summit]	January 13-15
2	President's visit to Strasbourg [France] and Greece	April 24-28
3	Prime Minister's visit to Germany [G-8 Summit]	June 6-9
4	Prime Minister's visit to Nigeria and South Africa	October 14-18
5	Prime Minister's visit to Russia	November 11-13
6	Prime Minister's visit to Singapore [East Asia Summit]	November 20-21
7	Prime Minister's visit to Uganda [CHOGM]	November 22-25

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners who Presented their Credentials During the Period 01.04.2007 to 18.12.2007

Sr. No.	Name / Country	Date credentials presented
1.	H.E. Mr. Paek Young Sun, Ambassador of Republic of Korea (ROK)	22.05.2007
2.	H.E. Mr. Ihor Polikha, Ambassador of Ukraine	22.05.2007
3.	H.E. Mrs. Teresita V. Berner, Ambassador of the Philippines	22.05.2007
4.	H.E. Mr. Mohammed Ghassan Shaikho, Ambassador of Bahrain	22.05.2007
5.	H.E. Dr. Geza Palmai, Ambassador of Hungary	22.05.2007
6.	H.E. Mr. Lawal Mohammed Dustin MA, High Commissioner of Nigeria	19.07.2007
7.	H.E. Mr. John W.H. Kijazi, High Commissioner of Tanzania	19.07.2007
8.	H.E. Mr. Ion de La Riva de Guzman Frutos, Ambassador of Spain	19.07.2007
9.	H.E. Mr. Wilfred Kenley, Ambassador of Malta	19.07.2007
10.	H.E. Mr. Alem Tsehaye, Ambassador of Eritrea	19.07.2007
11.	H.E. Mr. Sayed Mehdi Nabizadeh, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran	19.07.2007
12.	H.E. Mr. Marc Courte, Ambassador of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	26.09.2007
13.	H.E. Ms. Ann Ollestad, Ambassador of Norway	26.09.2007
14.	H.E. Mr. Jerome Bonnafont, Ambassador of France	26.09.2007
15.	H.E. Mr. Miguel Angel Ramirez Ramos, Ambassador of Cuba	26.09.2007
16.	H.E. Mr. Charles Richard Vernon Stagg, High Commissioner of UK	26.09.2007
17.	H.E. Mr. Jean Marie Deboutte, Ambassador of Belgium	26.09.2007
18.	H.E. Mrs. Daniele Smadja, Ambassador of EU	26.09.2007
19.	H.E. Mr. Hardijs Baumanis, Ambassador of Latvia (Non-res)	26.09.2007

20.	H.E. Mr. Mark Sofer, Ambassador of Israel	12.12.2007
21.	H.E. Mr. Juan Alfredo Pinto Saavedra, Ambassador of Colombia	12.12.2007
22.	H.E. Mr. Bob H. Hiensch, Ambassador of Netherlands	12.12.2007
23.	H.E. Mr. Hideaki Domichi, Ambassador of Japan	12.12.2007
24.	H.E. Mr. Parahat Hommadovich Durdyev, Ambassador of Turkmenistan	18.12.2007
25.	H.E. Prof. Festus Kaberia, High Commissioner of Kenya	18.12.2007
26.	H.E. Mr. Ferdinand Maultaschl, Ambassador of Austria	18.12.2007
27.	H.E. Ms. Ebyan Mahamed Salah, Ambassador of Somalia	18.12.2007
28.	H.E. Mr. Zhang Yan, Ambassador of China	18.12.2007

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners who Left India during the period 01.04.2007 to 18.12.2007 on Completion of Assignment

Sr. No.	Name / Country	Date of Departure
1.	H.E. Mrs. Laura Q Del Rosario, Ambassador of Philippines	01.04.2007
2.	H.E. Mr. T.G. Nizazzov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan	07.04.2007
3.	H.E. Mrs. Eva L. Nazro, High Commissioner of Tanzania	16.05.2007
4.	H.E. Mr. Abdul Gapar Ismail, High Commissioner of Brunei	16.05.2007
5.	H.E. Mr. Siyavash Zargar Yaghoubi, Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran	27.04.2007
6.	H.E. Dr. Jutta Stefan Bastl, Ambassador of Austria	27.05.2007
7.	H.E. Mr. Pedro Pablo De Bedout Gori, Ambassador of Colombia	30.06.2007
8.	H.E. Mr. Don Rafael Conde de Saro, Ambassador of Spain	29.06.2007
9.	H.E. Mr. Gabriel Fassil, Ambassador of Eritrea	04.07.2007
10.	H.E. Mr. Juan Carretero Ibanez, Ambassador of Cuba	19.07.2007
11.	H.E. Mr. Franis S.K. Bayah, High Commissioner of Kenya	21.07.2007
12.	H.E. Mr. Jorge Heine, Ambassador of Chile	01.08.2007
13.	H.E. Mr. Paul Stenimetz, Ambassador of Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	15.08.2007
14.	H.E. Mr. David Danieli, Ambassador of Israel	16.08.2007
15.	H.E. Mr. William Ehlers, Ambassador of Uruguay	01.09.2007
16.	H.E. Mr. Jon Westborg, Ambassador of Norway	01.09.2007
17.	H.E. Mr. Dominique Girad, Ambassador of France	27.08.2007
18.	H.E. Mr. Francisco da Camara Gomes, Ambassador of EU	31.08.2007
19.	H.E. Mr. Michael Arthur, High Commissioner of UK	07.09.2007
20.	H.E. Mr. Yasukuni Enoki, Ambassador of Japan	30.09.2007
21.	H.E. Mr. Don Rafael Conde de Saro, Ambassador of Spain	29.06.2007
22.	H.E. Mr. Luke Rokovada, Ambassador of Fiji	31.10.2007

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| 23. | H.E. Mr. Eric F. Ch. Niche, Ambassador of Netherlands | 11.11.2007 |
| 24. | H.E. Mr. Gilbert Bleu Laine, Ambassador of Cote d' Ivoire | 18.11.2007 |
| 25. | H.E. Mr. Sun Yuxi, Ambassador of China | 11.12.2007 |



15 Consular, Passport and Visa Services

Passport Offices

There are presently 34 Passport Offices and 15 Passport Collection Centres in India. It is proposed to open new Passport Offices at Amritsar, Dehradun and Coimbatore in 2007-2008. All Passport Offices are computerized and they issue machine-printed and machine readable passports as per the guidelines laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organisation. Passport applications are being scanned and stored electronically.

Passport Services

There has been a significant increase in the number of passports issued over the years. A total of 49.4 lakh passports were issued in 2007, an increase of 13.1% over the corresponding figure in 2006. A total of 49 lakh applications were received in 2007, an increase of 10.7% over the corresponding figure in 2006. The total revenue generated from all Passport Offices also increased to about Rs 567 crore, an increase of 13.8% compared to the total revenue in 2006. The Ministry has been taking a number of measures to make the passport issuance system simpler and speedier for the comfort and convenience of the public. Some of these important steps are delineated as under:

(a) Decentralization through District Passport Cells and Speed Post Centres

With a view to taking the passport issuance and related services nearer to the doorsteps of the applicants, District Passport Cells (DPCs) have been opened at the district level where the office of the District Magistrate/Superintendent of Police receives passport applications and after scrutiny and police verification, forwards them to the concerned Passport Office for issuance of passports. Currently, there are 463 DPCs. The passport applications are also received through the network of 1095 Speed Post Centres.

(b) Online Applications

Online submission of passport applications has been introduced in all Passport Offices.

(c) Infrastructure

Suitable plots have been acquired for construction of Passport Offices in Mumbai, Visakhapatnam, Guwahati, Srinagar, Thane and Jalandhar and purchase of land at Amritsar and Surat is under process. Bangalore Passport Office has started functioning from the new premises. Construction of Lucknow and Jaipur Passport Offices is nearing completion. Construction of Passport Office at Bhubaneswar has already commenced.

Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism

Steps have been taken to strengthen the public grievance redressal mechanism in all Passport Offices. Facilitation Counters and Help Desks have also been set up to assist applicants and also to attend to grievances/complaints expeditiously. A public grievance redressal mechanism also exists in the CPV Division under the close supervision of the Joint Secretary (CPV) and Chief Passport Officer.

Passport Adalats

Passport Offices have been holding Passport Adalats periodically to redress the grievances of passport applicants. These Adalats have been very useful in disposing of old passport-related cases and also in the issuance of passports to applicants.

Right to Information Act (RTI)

A Central Public Information Officer and Assistant Public Information Officers have been appointed to provide information to applicants under the RTI.

Website

The website of CPV Division www.passport.nic.in, which was established in 1999 is being updated from time to time to make it more user-friendly. It has detailed information on passports, visas, consular matters and PIO cards. It also has downloadable forms. The main website provides status enquiry check of passport applications submitted at Delhi. It is also linked to the status check on the websites of all the Passport Offices.

Tatkal Scheme

The “Tatkal Scheme”, which was implemented in 2000 in recognition of the genuine needs of some passport applicants for urgent issue of passports, has been further liberalized. Passports are issued out-of-turn to eligible applicants on post police verification based on submission of prescribed documents. The number of passports issued under the Tatkal Scheme in 2007 was about 4.6 lakh, 70% increase over the corresponding figure for 2006.

Consular Attestation

This year 5,00,085 documents were attested in the CPV Division, out of which 2,81,041 were commercial documents. This service is rendered on the same day without any charges.

Issuance of Visas

Over the years, the procedure for grant of visas by our Missions and Posts has been simplified. Most Missions and Posts grant visas either across the counter on the same day or at the most within 48 hours.

Visa-Waiver Agreements

During 2007, Visa-Waiver Agreements for the holders of Diplomatic and Official passports were signed with Croatia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Japan, Philippines and Serbia.

Issuance of Diplomatic/Official Passports

The CPV Division issued 1950 diplomatic and 24,867 official passports in 2007, as compared to 2444 and 25,265 passports issued in 2006 respectively. The CPV Division issued 6200 visas to foreign diplomatic and official passports holders in the year 2007.

Computerization of Missions/Posts Abroad

Computerisation of Passport and Visa issuance system was completed in Missions/Posts at Bahrain, Toronto, Kuala Lumpur, Birmingham, Jeddah, Colombo, Kandy and Vancouver. Computerisation of Passport and Visa issuance system of Houston, Chicago, San Francisco, Washington, Moscow and Doha is underway.

New Projects

The Ministry has embarked on several projects with a view to modernizing and upgrading the passport/visa issuance system. These are as follows:

i Centralized Printing of Passports

The Ministry has successfully implemented the project for centralised printing of Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) in respect of 111 Indian Missions/Posts abroad. The remaining Missions/Posts will be covered in the beginning of 2008.

ii Issuance of E-Passports

The Government has decided to introduce e-passports, also known as bio-metric passports, initially for diplomats and officials as a pilot project by the middle of 2008. Based on the experience gained from this pilot project, it is proposed to start issuance of e-passports in the ordinary category.

iii Passport Seva Project

The Government had entrusted the National Institute of Smart Government (NISG), Hyderabad, with the task of undertaking a time-bound study on the passport issuance system, including its IT aspects with the objective to deliver passport-related services to the citizens in a timely, transparent, more accessible, reliable manner. NISG has submitted its report which has been accepted by the Government and “Passport Seva Project”, is under implementation.

The project, which is expected to be completed in a time frame of 19 months, will result in the issue of passports within 3 days, and in cases which require police verification, within 3 days after the completion of the verification process. Tatkal passports are expected to be issued the same day. The proposal is to have 68 Passport Facilitation Centres all over the country where the non-sovereign functions, involved in the passport issuance process, such as initial scrutiny of the application forms, acceptance of fee, scanning of the documents, taking photos, etc. will be done by the service provider to be selected through an open bidding process. The Government staff at the Passport Facilitation Centres will verify the documents and decide on granting of passport. The other activities such as printing and dispatch will also be done by the Government staff. Police verification will be expedited through electronic linkage of the Passport Facilitation Centres with the police authorities in State Capitals.

iv Outsourcing of Visa Work

Forty Indian Missions/Posts abroad have been authorized to outsource visa application collection work out of which

24 Indian Missions/Posts, namely at Seoul, Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, Washington, New York, Chicago, Houston, San Francisco, Tel Aviv, Bangkok, Paris, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Frankfurt, Colombo, Singapore, The Hague, Beijing, Shanghai, Islamabad, Dhaka, Chittagong, and Milan have already awarded the contracts.

v Launch of Apostille Convention Project

The Attestation Cell has launched Apostille Convention Project from 29 August 2007 and 13,633 documents had been apostilled till the end of November 2007.

Extradition Cases and Legal Assistance

In order to provide a legal and institutional framework to combat organized crime, international terrorism and drug trafficking, and to respond to the growing international dimensions of financial and other crime, bilateral agreements are being negotiated with several countries to provide legal under-pinning to this international efforts. These consular agreements include Treaties on Extradition, Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters.

During the visit of the Mexican President, an Extradition Treaty between the two countries was signed at New Delhi on 10 September 2007. Similarly, during the visit of Portuguese President, an Extradition Treaty was signed at New Delhi on 11 January 2007. Also during the visit of the President of Belarus, an Extradition Treaty was signed on 16 April 2007.

The Instruments of Ratification of Extradition Treaty between India and Kuwait were exchanged at Kuwait in the month of August 2007 and the Treaty is in force from 7 August 2007. Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria came into force from 1 February 2007. During the year, Indian official delegations visited Australia, Egypt and Germany to negotiate Treaties on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

The Ministry actively pursues requests for extradition and legal assistance from foreign Governments both for criminal and civil/commercial offences, which also include the financial matters. The requests for extradition emanate from our obligations under the Extradition Treaties or Extradition Arrangements entered into with various countries. During the year, 20 requests for extradition were received from various countries. Similarly, 18 requests were made by the Government of India to foreign countries like Belgium, Canada, Singapore, UAE, UK and USA for their consideration. During the same period four persons have been extradited by the Government of India to various foreign countries and another four persons were extradited from foreign countries. Apart from the above, the Ministry of External Affairs is also receiving warrants/ summons/ notices and other judicial processes from the Judicial Authorities/State Governments /investigation agencies in India for services/ execution on the persons residing abroad.



Administration

Effective pursuance of India's foreign policy objectives necessitates greater Indian diplomatic presence abroad. For this purpose, there are 170 resident Indian Missions and Posts abroad. In October 2007 two Posts namely, Consulate General of India, Juba, Sudan and Consulate General of India, Guangzhou, China were opened .

A critical component in the effective functioning of Indian Missions/Posts abroad is the locally recruited staff. To enhance the attractiveness of working in Indian Missions/ Posts abroad, and to suitably adjust the pay scales on account of increase in cost of living, the Ministry implemented phase two of a comprehensive review of pay scales for the locally recruited staff under the scheme known as the Global Cluster Scheme. Consequently, revision in pay scales was implemented in Missions/Posts in 22 countries abroad under the second phase.

As part of continuing efforts to streamline the administrative machinery of the Ministry, steps were taken to achieve greater decentralization of decision making and simplification of processes. Rules in respect of Children Holiday Passage, Home Leave for India-based Domestic Assistants have been further liberalized and streamlined. An updated edition of the Indian Foreign Service (Pay, Leave and Compensatory Allowances) [IFS (PLCA)] Rules was published. A process for complete overhauling and simplification of IFS (PLCA) Rules to eliminate ambiguities in interpretation has been initiated. Compilation of various instructions issued by the Ministry during 2007-08 is also underway.

Despite a severe shortage in human resources on account of reduction of posts, Ministry fully implemented the austerity measures of the Government with regard to abolition of posts and held the Screening Committee meeting for Optimization of Direct Recruitment. Indents for fresh recruitment were placed on time and review of deployment of manpower at all levels was conducted periodically.

Management of the different cadres working in the Ministry was undertaken through regular Departmental Promotion Committee meetings, and through implementation of provisions under the Assured Career Promotion Scheme. Regular meetings of the Joint Consultative Machinery were also held to consult the Staff Associations on issues of concern to them, and to consider possible ways of addressing the same.

The current strength of the Ministry is 3464. Details are given in Appendix I. These personnel are deployed in India and in 170 Missions / Posts abroad. This includes officials from the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), Indian Foreign Service, Branch 'B' (IFS 'B'), Interpreters Cadre, Legal & Treaties Cadre and the Library Cadre, but excludes Group 'D' and ex-cadre posts.

Recruitment made to various groups in the Ministry from 1 April – 30 November 2007 through Direct Recruitment (DR), Departmental Promotion (DP) and Limited Departmental Examinations (LDE), including against reserved vacancies, are given in the table at Appendix II.

The table at Appendix III gives details of the language proficiency of officers of the Ministry.

Gender Issue

Gender equality has been a key element of the Ministry's overall policy. In keeping with this, equal opportunities are provided to women officers to take up important responsibilities.

Presently, there are 7 women officers at Secretary level, 7 women officers at Additional Secretary level and 29 women officers at Joint Secretary level. A total of 23 women officers are currently posted as Ambassador / High Commissioner / Permanent Representative / Consul General / Head of Office. The present distribution of women officers among the various cadres in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is at Appendix IV.

Persons with Disability

Ensuring adequate opportunity to persons with disability and to have suitable representation of persons with disability among its personnel is an important objective of the Ministry. Towards this goal, the Ministry has identified posts suitable for appointment of persons with disability, including in the Indian Foreign Service. In all, the Ministry has 37 persons with disability in various grades and cadres.

Organizational Set Up

The External Publicity Division has been bifurcated into two Divisions viz. (a) External Publicity Division and (b) Public Diplomacy Division.

Two Branch Secretariats one each at Hyderabad and Chennai were set up mainly to advise the state governments on promotion of trade and investment and also to liaise with the State Government, Consulates, Passport Offices etc. located in these cities.

The Development Partnership Division has been merged with the Technical Cooperation Division.

Vigilance

Out of total 160 cases, 58 cases were initiated between 1 April 2007 to 30 November 2007. Total 22 cases were closed during this period – 8 cases with imposition of penalty and 14 cases without further inquiry.

Vigilance Unit, brought to the notice of the Consular Officers and Heads of Chanceries working in various Missions/Posts abroad, their responsibilities, as prescribed in the consular manual, about accounting of consular revenue. Missions/Posts have been issued instructions to take a cash security/fidelity bond obtained from the employees who handle cash. Missions/Posts have also been asked to expedite the process of outsourcing collection of visa applications.

Welfare

Welfare Division looks after general welfare of all employees of the Ministry and management of canteen services at South Block, Akbar Bhawan and Patiala House. During the year 2007-2008, the Ministry lost 12 of its employees for whom all assistance was rendered for funeral and ex-gratia payment from Staff Benefit Fund. On Division's recommendation, External Affairs Spouses Association (EASA) donated Rs. 20,000/- each to eight

widows of the deceased employees. In addition, financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 15,000/- each has also been provided.

On their return from Missions to Headquarters, the officials of the Ministry face difficulties in getting admission in various public/private schools, gas connection, ration card and telephone connections. Welfare Section has been helping them by issuing letters to Schools, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) etc.

Welfare Division arranged for the collection of funds for Flag Days for Communal Harmony, Red Cross, Armed Forces and Ministry of External Affairs Staff Benefit Fund.

Compassionate Appointment

Two dependents were employed in the Ministry against regular LDC posts on compassionate grounds, during 2007.

Educational Matters

Four wards of the MEA officials were accorded admission to MBBS Course and 39 to Engineering courses, for which the Division coordinated with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Human Resource Development. 44 seats in Kendriya Vidyalaya were utilized by the children of the officers/staff of the Ministry.

Grant In-Aid

Welfare Division assisted two Indian Missions/Posts abroad to set up recreational clubs by providing grand-in-aid of Rs.10,000/- each.

Canteen

The canteens provided professional services to the officials of the Ministry. In addition, a parallel catering outlet has been established in South Block for providing professional services to visiting Diplomatic Corps, international visitors as well as VIPs.

Right to Information (RTI)

Keeping in view the importance of the Right to Information Act 2005, a separate RTI Division has been functioning in the Ministry. A Joint Secretary level officer has been designated as the Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) and an Additional Secretary has been designated as the Appellate Authority. During January-December 2007, the Ministry (excluding CPV Division)

received and processed 920 RTI applications. The Appellate Authority disposed 71 appeals and the CPIO of the Ministry appeared as respondent in 53 appeals which came up before the Central Information Commission (CIC). No penalty was imposed on any official of this Ministry by the CIC under any provision of the RTI Act during the period under report.

In addition, separate Appellate Authorities and CPIOs have been designated in the CPV Division, ICCR and ICWQ. The officer in-charge of each Passport Office has also been designated as CPIO with Joint Secretary (CPV) and Chief Passport Officer as the Appellate Authority.

Establishment

The Establishment Division primarily handles renting and maintenance of properties, fixation of Foreign Allowance and Representational Grant, purchase and supply of office equipment, furniture and official vehicles, supply of object d'Arts, management and maintenance of the Ministry housing complex and hostels, maintenance of Toshakhana and purchase and supply of stationery.

During the year 2007, efforts were made to streamline the rules, regulations and procedures governing some of these issues in order to make them simple and transparent. As part of this exercise rules governing Special Grant, club membership, insurance of official vehicles, allotment of housing, provision of cable TV in missions abroad, supply of Od'A items and maintenance of equipments at the Headquarters were reviewed and made transparent. A comprehensive policy on mobile and residential phones has been put in place with the concurrence of Ministry of Finance.

Annual review of the Foreign Allowance was undertaken under the Indexation Scheme by a joint team of Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of External Affairs has also initiated a proposal in consultation with the Ministry of Finance for rationalization of the system of Foreign Allowance both for those who are posted in missions abroad as also those deputed on projects and other assignments. Joint Ministry of External Affairs-Ministry of Finance teams also paid visits to Ramallah, Tripoli and Kabul to decide on the admissible level of allowances in these countries since their price indices were not available.

A comprehensive project for renovation of External

Affairs hostels at Kasturba Gandhi Marg and Gole Market was initiated which is presently under implementation. Similarly, several measures were taken to improve the facilities at Dwarka Housing Complex of the Ministry. As a result of these measures the occupancy rate in the housing complex increased to over 80%. A comprehensive exercise was also undertaken to dispose off perishable items lying in Toshakhana for over two decades. It has also been decided that some of the valuable items lying in Toshakhana could be made available to the National Museum for display.

Several steps were initiated to give a facelift to South Block and Akbar Bhawan. A state-of-the-art Situation Room was also created in the South Block to facilitate use of modern technology for better discharge of foreign policy objectives.

The project for renovation of Jinnah House, Mumbai was finalized and necessary approvals obtained from the Mumbai Municipal Corporation.

Projects

Projects Division is responsible for construction of properties and purchase of built-up properties in India and abroad for the use of Ministry of External Affairs. Proposals relating to repairs/renovation of Government owned properties in stations abroad are also handled by the Projects Division. As of now, Government owns Chancery Buildings in 79 stations abroad, residences for Heads of Missions/Posts in 87 stations abroad and 624 residences for officers/staff in 46 stations abroad. In addition, Government also owns property for Cultural Centres in 2 stations and a Liaison Office in one station. Currently 53 construction projects including major renovation/re-development projects are at different stages of implementation.

Amongst projects abroad, construction work for the Indian Embassy Complex in Muscat has been completed. Construction work has started in November 2007 for Embassy Complex in Kathmandu and Chancery and residences in Beijing. Renovation work at the residence of the Permanent Representative of India in Geneva has been completed and work is in progress at three Government-owned properties in Karachi.

Construction projects in Brasilia, Islamabad, Kabul, Tashkent and Warsaw are at tendering stage. The re-

development projects in Singapore, Tokyo and Prague are in progress and in London, the work is at tendering stage.

Built-up properties have been purchased for Embassy Residence in Bogota in the current financial year. The Ministry is making vigorous efforts to acquire built-up properties in high-rental stations. Major proposals under process for purchase of built-up properties include Chanceries in Bogota, Milan and Nairobi and Embassy Residences in Hamburg, Milan, Sofia and Tripoli and a Cultural Centre in Sao Paulo . In addition, a number of purchase proposals from different Indian Missions/Posts are also under consideration. An MoU has been signed for exchange of properties between Vietnam and India.

Amongst projects in India, construction work for Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan, the future Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs, Chanakyapuri Residential Complex for officers of the Ministry of External Affairs is in full swing. and Transit Accommodation project at Canning Lane are also in progress.

Construction work has been completed for the Foreign Service Institute Complex in New Delhi. The work in AALCO Complex being built in New Delhi for the Asian African Legal Consultative Organization and ICCR Cultural Centre, Kolkata is nearing completion. Other projects at various stages of implementation include Africa House project for Indian Council of Cultural Relations in New Delhi and Videsh Bhawan, Kolkata.

An allocation of Rs 250 crores has been made under

Capital Outlay during 2007-08. Budget estimates for 2008-09 have been kept at Rs 582 crores, to provide for a number of projects expected to go into construction phase in the next financial year

e-Governance and IT

Computerization of Passport and Visa issuance system was completed in Missions at Bahrain, Toronto, Kuala Lumpur, Birmingham, Jeddah, Colombo, Kandy and Vancouver. Computerization of Passport and Visa issuance system at Houston, Chicago, San Francisco, Washington, Moscow and Doha is underway.

Outsourcing of visa application process at Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Singapore, Frankfurt and Milan was completed. Facilities for issuing machine-readable passports have been extended to all Missions and Posts.

Archives and Record Management (A&RM)

The A&RM Division of the Ministry has embarked upon the project of digitization of its records to prepare a database and for preservation, maintenance and easy retrieval of records. Phase-II of the digitization programme concluded by the end of 2007. Reviewing and weeding out work is ongoing. Action is being taken for transfer of records to the National Archives of India. Separate browsing facilities are available in the A&RM Division for serving as well as non-serving officers of the Ministry in order to facilitate access to the records.



Coordination Division consists of three wings, the Parliament Section, the Coordination Section and the Education Section.

Parliament Section

Coordination Division functions as the nodal point of the Ministry of External Affairs for all work relating to Parliament including questions-answers, assurances, debates on foreign relations and laying of reports on the Table of both Houses of Parliament. The Division also has the responsibility to organize the meetings of the Consultative Committee on External Affairs, and coordinates the work relating to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs and other Parliamentary Committees.

Coordination Section

Coordination Division assisted the Inter-State Council Secretariat (ISCS) to organize the 4th International Conference on Federalism at New Delhi from 5-7 November 2007. The conference was attended by President of Comoros, President of Switzerland, Vice-President of Nigeria, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Cabinet-level Ministers from Austria, Canada, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Philippines and Switzerland, about 400 foreign delegates, large number of high dignitaries and practitioners of Federalism from India. It was inaugurated by the Prime Minister and the valedictory address was delivered by the President of India.

Large number of papers were presented on the experience of various countries in evolution of Federalism, including Building and Accommodating Diversity, Fiscal Federalism, Interaction in a Federal System and Local Government in Federal Systems which are being published by the Inter-State Council Secretariat.

Coordination Section also assisted the Lok Sabha Secretariat in the organization of the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held at New Delhi from 21-30 September 2007 and 2nd Asian Ministerial Level Disaster

Reduction Conference organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs at New Delhi on 7-8 November 2007.

Coordination Section processes all proposals for grant of no objection from the political angle for the foreign visits of Governors, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Union Ministers, Ministers in the State Governments, Members of Parliament, Members of State Legislative Assemblies, members of the judiciary, government officials etc. During April-November 2007, Coordination Division issued 2106 clearances for such visits against 1592 in the same period during 2006, thus registering an increase of 32%. The Section also handled the work relating to grant of diplomatic clearances for foreign non-scheduled flights and visits by naval ships. During April-November 2007, Coordination Division issued 859 clearances for foreign non-scheduled flights as against 675 during the same period in 2006, thus registering an increase of 27%.

During the year Coordination Section issued new guidelines on expeditious processing of political clearance for the visit of high dignitaries, ministers and officials of Central/State Governments and Union Territories and expeditious grant of visas to foreign research scholars, visiting faculty, teachers and foreign participants coming to India to attend international conferences, seminars and workshops.

Coordination Section processed a large number of approvals for participation of Indian sports teams and sportsmen in the international events abroad and visits of foreign sports persons to India. Coordination Division issued clearances for 345 sports events from April-November 2007 as against 319 during the same period in 2006 thus registering an increase of 8% in the number of such clearances. The Division coordinated with the Indian Missions/Posts abroad and provided essential inputs and assistance to the Army Headquarters/Ministry of Defence during the 2nd World Military Games held in Hyderabad and Mumbai from 14-21 October 2007.

Coordination Section coordinates the work relating to grant of Padma Awards to foreign nationals. The nominations are obtained by the Coordination Division from Indian Missions abroad and the recommendations of the Ministry conveyed to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Observance of the Anti-Terrorism Day (21 May), Sadbhavana Diwas (20 August) and Quami Ekta Week/ Diwas (19-25 November) in the Ministry and Missions/ Posts abroad was also undertaken by the Coordination Division; pledges were administered to the officials, both at Headquarters and in Missions/Posts abroad.

The Section also examines the requests for grant of no objection for holding international conferences, seminars, workshop, grant of Amateur W/T Licence under the Indian Telegraph Act 1885, grant in aid to Indo-foreign cultural friendship and cultural societies located in foreign countries. During April-November 2007, Coordination Division issued clearances for 1189 conferences/seminars and other similar events organized in India as against 950 during 2006 registering an increase of 25%. As Ex-officio Director, Additional Secretary (Coord) attended the Board Meetings of the Educational Consultants India

(Ltd.), a public sector organization and advised on its current activities and growth in newer areas abroad.

Education Section

Education Section deals with the nomination and admission of foreign self-financing students from 63 friendly neighbouring, developing countries against reserved seats in the MBBS/BDS//BE/B.Pharmacy and diploma courses in various institutions in India. It also processes the political clearance of foreign students seeking admission to the Graduate and Post-Graduate courses in Engineering, Medicine, Management, other technical and professional courses including elective training/internship in various medical institutions and research courses.

For the academic year 2007-08, Education Section received and processed 100 and 83 applications for admission to the MBBS/BDS and B.E/B.Pharmacy courses respectively. In addition, during the period from January-November 2007, 1200 applicants were granted no objection from the political angle to pursue various courses in India.



External Publicity

The External Publicity Division, the division of Ministry of External Affairs designated to engage with the media, continued to articulate the position of the Government of India on various foreign policy issues and to publicize achievements and successes in meeting our foreign policy objectives.

There were important occasions during the course of the year when Indian foreign policy parameters were articulated by our leaders. Thus, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's statement at the 14th SAARC Summit held in New Delhi in April 2007, his statements at the 2nd IBSA Summit held in South Africa in October 2007, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meet in Uganda in November 2007 as also his speech at the India-ASEAN Summit in November 2007 all served to showcase diverse aspects of our foreign policy and were widely disseminated by the Division. The Division disseminated also the thrust areas of our foreign policy as articulated by the Prime Minister during his visits abroad to Germany, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Singapore.

Important areas of endeavour in the foreign policy arena were also highlighted through publicizing the speeches and statements of the External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, delivered on various occasions during the year, notably at the 62nd UN General Assembly in New York in September 2007, during his official visits to several countries, i.e. Germany, Korea, Ethiopia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Russia, Libya, Cyprus, Bangladesh, China, Bhutan, Belgium and the US and at the 29th Meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers in December 2007.

The Division gave enhanced publicity to the declaration by the United Nations of 2007 as the International Year of Non-Violence. The ceremonies held in New York, including the well-attended address by the Chairperson of the UPA at an informal plenary session of the UN and the remarks by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon

on the occasion were highlighted and were well-reported in Indian and international media. Similarly, the holding of the World Hindi Conference in New York in July 2007 and the international participation in it was also well-publicized.

The External Publicity Division facilitated wide publicity, through background briefings and official statements, to all issues which are foreign policy priorities for the country. Particular focus during the latter part of the year was on climate change issues leading upto the United Nations Conference on Climate Change at Bali held in December 2007. India's views on climate change and greenhouse gas emissions which were articulated during the Bali Conference were well publicized in Indian and international media. India's views on security and disarmament and international civil nuclear cooperation were also highlighted. The continuing achievements of the Indian economy, including the worldwide success of private Indian companies in acquisitions of global companies, were also publicized on the Ministry Of External Affairs website and on the Ministry Of External Affairs Notice Board.

Another important activity for the Division was in facilitating media coverage of incoming visits by Heads of State and Government and by Foreign Ministers into India. The Division arranged joint press conferences with the visiting dignitaries and assisted visiting media and foreign media represented in India in coverage of these visits.

Media Facilitation

The press facilitation work in terms of extending logistical and liaison support to foreign media delegations accompanying Heads of State/ Government (HOS/G) visiting India and Indian media delegations accompanying President, Vice-President, Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister on their visits abroad forms an important part of the work of the Division. During the year, accompanying media delegation for President's visit to

France and Greece, Prime Minister's visits to Germany, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Singapore, and that of External Affairs Minister to Germany, Korea, Ethiopia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Russia, Libya, Cyprus, Bangladesh, China, Bhutan, Belgium and US were facilitated.

In addition, a considerable amount of work of the Division was devoted to assisting foreign media delegations and Indian media in connection with the Head of State/ Government and Vice President visits from Portugal, Russia, Finland, Bhutan, Italy, Maldives, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Brazil, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia through issue of media advisories, press conferences, facilitation access to ceremonial areas, meetings and providing assistance for transport and accommodation. Similar support was also extended for 26 Foreign Minister level visits apart from other high dignitaries.

All logistical arrangements, including setting up and operation of media centres fully equipped with facilities for filing of stories by journalists, media briefings and other arrangements, were made by the Division enabling Indian media delegations accompanying the President, Vice-President and the Prime Minister during their visits abroad, to provide timely coverage.

The Division also handled media participation in the World Hindi Conference held in New York in September 2007 and to celebration of the first International Day of Non violence at the UNGA in New York.

A Media Centre was set up at Vigyan Bhawan during the SAARC Summit in April 2007. Over 500 media persons from India and abroad registered on-line to cover the Summit. Work stations with computers with internet facilities, was made available, so also visual coverage was made available through Doordarshan to rest of Indian and Foreign Channels, at the Media Center. A Media Centre was established for the SAARC Councils of Ministers Conference in December 2007.

Over 300 strong foreign media representatives based in India were provided necessary facilitation to enable them to function smoothly through provision of relevant information on various issues of interest as well as assistance in matters of credential documents, visas, and residence permits.

Due to the increasing global character of the Indian media,

a new phenomenon of foreigners working for Indian media organizations has emerged. This raised questions about the grant of appropriate visas to such persons. Through a process of inter ministerial consultation, the Division has resolved the issue and come out with a uniform policy of grant of employment visas to such individuals. The policy has been conveyed to all visa issuing authorities and is now being uniformly applied.

Familiarization Visits

Familiarization visits by foreign journalists to India are a key element of the Division's efforts to bring about a more accurate and contemporary depiction of India in the foreign media as the journalists obtain a unique, first-hand impression of developments in India's politics, foreign policy, economy, culture and science and Technology. The Division, based on recommendations of Indian Missions abroad, continued to organize several such visits to important institutions and centers of excellence in India. During the year, the Division was able to systematize the familiarization visits by advance planning and organizing them on the basis of regional groups. Meetings for visiting journalists were also organized with ministers, senior officials, intellectuals, academicians, and business representatives. One hundred and sixty three journalists were hosted on such visits during 2007 with a special focus on India's neighbours, francophone Africa, ASEAN and new EU countries. These included senior journalists and editors from East & South Africa, SAARC, LAC, Serbia, Indonesia, Africa, West Asia, Czech Republic, Lao PDR, Netherlands, Korea and Hungary.

Training, Workshops & Conferences

In collaboration with Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), XP Division organized a two-day conference of editors from India, Brazil & South Africa (IBSA) on "Globalization, Emerging Powers and the Media" was organized in New Delhi on 3-4 September 2007. In addition to 30 Indian media participants there were 11 participants from Brazil and South Africa. A report of the Conference was published and disseminated including at the IBSA Summit organized in South Africa in October 2007.

In collaboration with Foreign Service Institute, the Division organized a "Special Course for Diplomatic Correspondents from SAARC Countries" from 16-20 July 2007. There were two participants each from Pakistan,

Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives besides several from India.

The division undertook activities aimed at capacity building within the Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation. To this effect two groups of 10 each from Radio and TV departments of BBSC have undergone two weeks training each organized by the Division at Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

Documentaries by Foreign Audio-Visual Agencies

A major area of work of the Division is clearance of documentaries by foreign audio-visual agencies. An exercise to streamline the process of approval of documentaries in India by foreign producers was undertaken by the Division through a process of inter-ministerial consultations. As a result, the procedures have been greatly streamlined.

During the year 430 documentaries were produced in India by foreign producers, major producers being BBC, National Geographic, Discovery Channel, NHK, RAI of Italy etc. Interestingly, as India is becoming a preferred world destination for tourism and trade and investment, the numbers of documentary requests are growing. Though the majority of requests came from Japan, France, UK, Germany, Korea and USA, we have had requests from China, Afghanistan, and Reunion Islands etc as well.

Official Spokesperson's Office

The Official Spokesperson's office actively functioned as the hub for information dissemination on day to day developments related to the conduct of India's foreign policies. The office conducted regular media briefings by the Spokesperson which were duly supplemented by press releases, briefing points and statements. During April-November 2007, about 80 press briefings were held or briefing points released by the Official Spokesperson. In addition, more than 200 press releases and statements were issued during this period. These were circulated to the media through emails and simultaneously placed on the Ministry's website. The Division continued to make use of SMS alerts for informing the media about briefings and updates to the website.

During the year, External Affairs Minister, Foreign Secretary and other senior officials of the Ministry addressed special media briefings on important issues of concern. The Division arranged for regular briefings by

Foreign Secretary at Vigyan Bhawan during the duration of the 14th SAARC Summit. An end of the Summit briefing by External Affairs Minister was arranged which was attended by over 150 media persons in the Vigyan Bhawan plenary hall.

Additionally, constant efforts were made to communicate the position and perspective of the Government on various significant issues by providing background briefings to media persons. Interviews with the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister, Ministers of State for External Affairs and other dignitaries were arranged with Indian and international newspapers and TV organizations.

The Division ensured that the media received regular updates on a 24x7 basis during various humanitarian crises like the Kenyan Airways plane crash and the cyclone in Oman.

Website

Ministry Of External Affairs' website continued to play a very useful role in the dissemination efforts of the Division. The press section of the website <http://meaindia.nic.in> was updated on a real-time basis with the speeches/interviews/statements on foreign policy by the Prime Minister, Minister(s), press releases, briefings by the Official Spokesperson and other senior officials. With more than 100 documents uploaded every month, this website is one of the most accessed and frequently updated websites of the Government. A separate section was created on the website for news and information about the Fourteenth SAARC Summit. Separate sub-sections were created for visits of Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister and other important developments.

The Division continued to use the Ministry Of External Affairs' Notice Board to provide our Missions/Post across the world with professionally written features on various aspects of India. From this year onwards, op/ed clippings of interest from national newspapers were also uploaded on a daily basis on the Board for use by our Missions.

The Hindi version of the website launched last year was also constantly updated by the Division. The website continued to be widely accessed both inside and outside India.

As a part of a new initiative, the Division is now working towards web-casting press briefings on a real time basis as also uploading them in audio-visual format on the website.

Public Diplomacy

The mandate of the Public Diplomacy Division includes, inter-alia, outreach activities in India and abroad, and audio-visual and print publicity. Increased involvement of India in international affairs and the expansion of the Indian economy have necessitated that the Ministry engages audiences, both within and outside India, to effectively project India's foreign policy priorities and domestic realities so that a national and consensual approach could evolve within India and a more informed understanding abroad.

To help achieve these objectives the Division organizes seminars, conferences and briefings for and in association with civil societies, NGOs, think tanks, research and academic institutions and business and industry on strategic and foreign policy issues. Contacts have been established with various national and international institutions to organize these events on a regular basis. Furthermore, within India, the Division has consciously made efforts to move away from Delhi-centric approach in organizing these interactive and brainstorming sessions.

Outreach Activities

The Division organized a number of outreach activities to highlight the various contours of India's foreign policy with a view to encourage discussion and debate and to benefit from the view of outside and independent experts. These included:

An intensive briefing programme on key domestic and foreign policy issues was organized from 24-29 October 2007 in New Delhi and Mumbai for 14 Indian Origin Parliamentarians from Europe and USA. The inaugural address was delivered by Vice President of India and the Parliamentarians also called on the Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister. This was the first in the series of programmes that the Division proposes to organise for Indian Origin and other Parliamentarians so that they may be thoroughly briefed on issues of interest and concern to India.

A briefing programme for delegation of six senior Mongolian academicians was organized from 25-18 November 2007 on India's security perceptions, Sino-Russian-Indian trilateral relations, Indo-Mongolian Cooperation and Indian Peacekeeping operations.

With a view of informing civil society, academia and policy

makers in the northeast of the Government's Look East Policy, key officials of the Division participated in the interactive sessions in different northeastern cities such as Guwahati, Imphal, Shillong and Aizwal. This was followed by a programme in Shillong on 16 June 2007 in which the Minister of External Affairs delivered a keynote address on the theme "Geography as an Opportunity".

A Conference on "India's Look East Policy: Challenges for Sub-Regional Cooperation" was organized from 7-9 October 2007 in Guwahati in association with ICRIER and the Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development. The Minister of External Affairs delivered the keynote address.

As a follow-up of the SAARC Summit earlier in the year, the Division organized a national Seminar on "SAARC: Accelerating Cooperation through Connectivity" on 1-2 September 2007 in Kolkata. The Minister of External Affairs delivered the inaugural address.

To commemorate the first International Day of Non Violence, the Division organized a Round Table Discussion at UN Headquarters in New York on 2 October 2007, which was attended by the Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma, Deputy Secretary General of UN Dr. Asha Rose Migiro, a number of Foreign Ministers and eminent thinkers including two Nobel Laureates, on the contemporary challenges confronting the global community such as increasing religious and cultural intolerance, issues relating to hunger and poverty. In the evening, a documentary film "Mahatma – The Great Soul" was screened at the UN headquarters to a large audience.

A brainstorming session, chaired by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma and attended by academicians, diplomats, think tanks and senior journalists was organized on 29 May 2007 in New Delhi, on the 'Future Direction for India's Public Diplomacy'.

On 16 August 2007 a panel discussion on educational, business and investment opportunities in India and Japan, as a curtain raiser to the visit of Japanese Prime Minister to India was organised. A bilingual document "Japan India Relations at a Glance" was also released.

The Division's officials participated in the following seminars/conferences to reach out to people and agencies within India: Seminar on "J&K and the Regional Strategic

Opportunities and Challenges” held at University of Jammu on 4-5 April 2007; Seminar on “Intangible Heritage: Protecting the Living Heritage of the North East” in Aizwal from 17-19 May 2007; Conference on “Development of Eastern India – Strategic issues in a National Perspective” in August 2007; Seminar on “Land, Identity and Development : Manipur Experience” in Imphal in November 2007.

The Division organized annual ‘Foreign Policy Dialogue’ with International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), London in New Delhi on 12 December 2007. The Dialogue was inaugurated by Foreign Secretary and was held over three sessions - The Strategic Shape of the World, International Terrorism and Energy Security. The Division in association with Utkal University, Bhubaneswar organized a seminar on ‘Aspects of Indian Foreign Policy and Strategic Issues’ on 5-6 January 2008 in Bhubaneswar. The Division organized the visit of Prof. Paul Webley, Director, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London to India (New Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai) from 13-20 January 2008. Prof. Webley delivered talks at Zakir Hussain Centre for Educational Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad and Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Contemporary Studies, University of Mumbai. The Division in association with Northern Division supported the visit of high level Business Delegation from Bhutan to India from 13-23 January 2008. The delegation attended a Seminar cum Round Table on ‘Investment and Trade Opportunities in Bhutan’ organized by the Ministry in partnership with CII in New Delhi on 15 January 2008. The Division supported the visit of Reverend Jesse Jackson to India from 27-31 January 2008.

The Division participated and supported the conference on climate change being organized by Asian Education Society in Chandigarh on 8-9 February 2008. The Division is also organizing an intensive briefing programme in Chennai, Hyderabad and New Delhi for a seven member delegation Parliamentarians representing the Labour Friends of India from UK from 11-17 February 2008.

Audio-Visual Publicity

As in the past, the Division continued to commission documentaries and acquire feature films to promote and project India’s image abroad. Participation in film festivals

and Indian film weeks abroad, organizing cultural and photo exhibitions were the other audio-visual publicity activities undertaken by the Division.

Several documentaries were completed during the year: ‘Bismillah & Banaras’; ‘India-Myanmar – An Enduring Bond’; ‘Battle of Plassey’; ‘NRIs in the Gulf – some success stories’; ‘Footsteps of Nikitin’; ‘India Infrastructure – an opportunity’; ‘Song of the Sanctuary’, ‘Cosmopolitan Culture of India’, ‘Musical Bands of India’, ‘Manufacturing Sunshine-Renewing India’, ‘Mumbai’ and ‘Mahatma – A Great Soul of 20th Century’.

The Division had specially commissioned two documentary films in Hindi, ‘Bollywood Mein Hindi’ and a multimedia CD ‘Hindi Ke Swar Computer Par’ for the 8th World Hindi Conference held in New York from 13-15 July 2007. In addition the Division acquired a DVD containing interesting clippings of films and documentaries on Hindi prepared by Films Division and one DVD containing Munshi Prem Chand’s stories by Doordarshan. These were distributed among the Conference delegates. A collector’s pack has been produced of the three CDs, viz. ‘Bollywood Mein Hindi’, ‘Sanyukt Rashtra Mein Hindi’ and ‘Hindi Ke Swar Computer Par’ and has been distributed to all Indian Parliamentarians for their information and through our Missions and Posts abroad for viewing by the Indian diaspora and distribution among Hindi scholars and Centres of Indology.

Following discussions with the History Channel, the channel launched a weekly programme ‘Mera India’ in April 2007 showcasing India through the documentary films produced by the Ministry of External Affairs. Eight of the Ministry’s documentary films were telecast by the Channel in the period of April-May 2007. The Ministry’s documentary films ‘Bismillah and Banaras’ and ‘Urdu Hai Jiska Naam’ were screened by the Division to highlight the composite Indian culture. On 2 October 2007, the History Channel screened the film ‘Mahatma – A Great Soul of 20th Century’. Discussions are underway to enter into an arrangement with Lok Sabha TV for the telecast of documentary films brought out by the Division. The Division supported the 9th Osian’s Cinefan Film Festival of Arab and Asian Cinema in New Delhi from 20-29 July 2007. Many of the documentaries acquired or commissioned by the Ministry were telecast on various foreign TV channels. The Division has taken a conscious

decision to showcase Award winning regional cinema and has processed the acquisition of three award winning regional films with subtitles in five languages.

A photo exhibition titled '*Path of Compassion*' was sent to our Missions in Colombo, India-Taipei Association and Yangon. A fifty photograph exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi specially put together by the Gandhi Museum has been sent to sixteen Indian Missions. An exhibition on '*Churches of Goa*' was sent to our Missions in Dhaka, Washington, Milan and Yangon. A photo exhibition 'A Paradise on Earth' on Jammu & Kashmir was sent to our Missions in Washington, Milan and Yerevan. The Division sent feature films and extended support to twenty-two of the Indian Missions for organizing Indian Film Festivals/Weeks abroad.

Print Publicity

The monthly journal, *India Perspectives* has been the flagship magazine of the Ministry and over the years, it has grown in popularity. The journal focuses on a wide range of subjects varying from India's emergence as a fast growing economy, to its rich cultural heritage, its literature, diverse wildlife and its vibrant film industry – as also the country's prowess in the fields of information technology, healthcare and other related fields of human endeavour. The journal, published in fifteen languages, is distributed to readers in all corners of the globe through the Indian Missions abroad. All issues of *India Perspectives* are also available in the electronic format in both English and Hindi for its readers on the Ministry's website. The *India Perspectives* has resumed publication with a Special Issue on Mahatma Gandhi.

Projecting India's image through books and publications is an integral part of the Division's publicity strategy abroad. Books on Indian economy, foreign policy, art and

culture, history and science and technology, etc. were supplied to the Missions abroad for presentation and use in their libraries. Books on Mahatma Gandhi were also supplied to all the Indian Missions, including Permanent Missions of India in New York for use during the celebrations of the first International Day of Non-Violence on 2 October 2007.

A large number of technical books were sent to High Commission of India, Georgetown for gifting to the Rabindranath Tagore Centre, Faculty of Natural Sciences, University of Guyana, Georgetown. Books published by the *Sahitya Academi* in Tamil language were sent to Indian Missions in Colombo, Kandy, Yangon, Mandalay and Kuala Lumpur. Books published by the *Sahitya Akademi* in Maithili language were sent to the Consulate General of India in Birgunj. Books published by the *Sahitya Akademi* in Nepali language were sent to the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu. Books published on Marathi language were sent to our Mission in Tel Aviv.

The Division brought out booklets on *Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2007*, speeches of the Minister of External Affairs, and brochures on official visits of the President and the Prime Minister.

The Division extended financial support to the High Commission of India in Pretoria for publishing '*India Digest*' to aid their own publicity efforts. Financial support for bringing out translated versions of renowned Indian literary works was extended to the Indian Missions in Poland, Tajikistan, Hungary and Germany. The Division coordinated with prestigious Indian journals such as '*Dialogue*', '*Biblio*' and '*Book Review*' to bring out special issues on India's Look East Policy, on sixty years of Independence and on the contemporary relevance of Gandhian Values.



The new building of the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) was formally inaugurated on 14 November 2007 by the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee. On the occasion, the Minister also unveiled a bust of Jawaharlal Nehru at the Foreign Service Institute.

Training for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Probationers

One of the primary activities of the Institute is the training of IFS Probationers. The objective of the training programme for IFS Probationers is to prepare the Probationers to handle the wide range of tasks that they would be required to perform during their professional careers, both in Missions and Posts abroad as well as in India. The IFS Probationers of the 2006 Batch were accordingly put through a comprehensive one-year training programme which included modules on International Relations and Foreign Policy, Defence and Security, Economic Diplomacy, International Law, Parliamentary Affairs, Cultural Diplomacy, Protocol and Consular matters. The programme also included modules on practical skills such as administration and accounts, communication skills, representational skills and relations with the media. The training modules were implemented through lectures, interactive sessions, seminars as well as attachments to various leading institutions. In order to enable the participants to enhance their knowledge of India's immediate neighbourhood and to familiarize them with the work of the Indian Missions abroad, the training programmes included a Mission Orientation Visit to Myanmar in May 2007. The IFS Probationers of the 2006 Batch were also attached with our Missions in the neighbourhood and extended neighbourhood on a 4-week Mission Attachment Programme from 30 October-23 November 2007. The objective of this Programme was to provide the IFS Probationers with a first hand experience and understanding of the structure and functioning of our Missions abroad.

Promotion of links with other training institutes

The Institute maintains regular contacts with other training institutions such as the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, the National Academy of Direct Taxes, the National Academy of Customs, Excise and Narcotics, the Institute of Secretarial Training and Management and the Bureau of Police Training and Research. The FSI is making efforts to develop ties with other training institutes with a view to further develop the relationship between the Indian Foreign Service and other Services, an area which has been assigned high priority by the Ministry of External Affairs. With this objective in mind, the FSI organized special training programmes for the officers of the Cabinet Secretariat in April, May and October 2007.

Special Programmes for Diplomatic Correspondents

The Fourth Programme for Diplomatic Correspondents was organized in April 2007, in association with the External Publicity Division of the Ministry. The FSI also conducted a Special Course for Diplomatic Correspondents from SAARC Countries from 16-20 July 2007 in association with the External Publicity Division. Twenty five diplomatic correspondents, including 10 correspondents from India and 14 correspondents from seven SAARC countries participated in the Special Course.

Training of Officials of the Ministry

The FSI regularly conducted the "Basic Professional Course" for the officials of the Ministry of External Affairs. The training was aimed at enhancing the skills of officials in computers and to update them on various aspects of administration, accounts, consular related work, drafting, office procedure and forms of communication. The FSI, with the assistance of E-Governance & IT Division of

the Ministry, commenced training of officials of the Ministry on specially designed software packages, which are to be used in accounts work and in consular work. This training has now become an integral part of the Basic Professional Course. Since April 2007, two Basic Professional Courses have been organized by the FSI.

A training programme in Basic Spoken English was also organized by the FSI, in association with Central Institute of English & Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Hyderabad, from 30 April-11 May 2007 for the Security Guards of the Ministry who were scheduled to proceed on postings abroad. They also participated in a training module on "Handling of Telephones and Visitors", which was organized by the FSI in association with Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM), on 24 May 2007.

Programmes for Foreign Diplomats

The FSI has been regularly organizing courses for foreign diplomats in its efforts at building bridges of friendship and cooperation with countries around the world. The courses for foreign diplomats have been received extremely well and greatly appreciated. The 43rd and 44th Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) were organized from 11 July-17 August 2007 and 24 October-30 November 2007 respectively. Twenty four diplomats from 23 countries attended the 43rd PCFD and twenty two diplomats from 22 countries participated in the 44th PCFD. A special course for ASEAN Diplomats was also organized from 14 August-14 September 2007 in which 24 diplomats from 10 ASEAN countries participated.

Linkages with Counterpart Institutes Abroad

Agreements/MoUs providing an institutional framework of cooperation between the FSI and counterpart institutes in Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, the Philippines, Brazil, Nigeria and the Czech Republic were signed during the year. Heads of counterpart Institutes in Kyrgyzstan, South Africa, Maldives, Czech Republic and Saudi Arabia visited the FSI during April-November 2007. During these visits, various avenues of cooperation between the FSI and the counterpart Institutes were discussed. Pursuant to invitations extended by the counterpart institutes of the FSI, Dean (FSI) visited Mexico, Saudi Arabia and

Morocco in April 2007, June 2007 and November 2007 respectively to discuss possible cooperation in the areas of training of diplomats and exchange of experience and partnership in organizing seminars and lectures. The Dean (FSI) also visited Brazil to participate in the meeting of the Heads of India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Diplomatic Institutes held at the Instituto Rio Branco, Brasilia from 10-12 September 2007.

Lectures by Eminent Persons

The FSI regularly organized lectures by eminent and distinguished personalities. The series of lectures organized by the FSI on the topic "India of My Dreams" included lectures by several eminent personalities such as Sunil Bharti Mittal, Chairman & Group Managing Director, Bharti Enterprises on 10 April 2007; Shivraj Patil, Minister of Home Affairs on 14 July 2007; Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission on 6 August 2007; Mani Shankar Aiyar, Minister of Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs and Sports and Development of the North East Region on 28 August 2007; Dr. Shashi Tharoor, former Under Secretary General, United Nations on 27 October 2007 and Dr. Ramachandra Guha, the renowned historian on 2 November 2007.

During the period of report, the FSI also organized lectures by Lalu Prasad, Minister of Railways on the topic "Historic Turnaround of the Indian Railways" on 28 June 2007; M.J. Akbar, Editor-in-Chief of the Asian Age on the topic "Islam, Jihad and Global War on Terrorism" on 27 July 2007; Meghnad Desai, Professor Emeritus, London School of Economics on the topic "Emergence of India and China as Major Economic Powers" on 30 July 2007; Dr. Sam Pitroda Chairman, National Knowledge Commission on the topic "Knowledge for a More Just, Equitable and Inclusive Society" on 12 October 2007; Prof. Dipak C. Jain, Dean, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, USA on the topic "Branding India in a Global Context" on 19 October 2007 and Meira Kumar, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment on the topic "Need of a Just, Equitable and Inclusive Society in the 21st Century" on 26 October 2007. The FSI also organized a Brainstorming Session on "India at Sixty" on 29 September 2007. The Session was chaired by Justice J.S. Verma, Former Chief Justice of India and Former Chairman,

National Human Rights Commission. The distinguished participants in the Brainstorming Session included Dr. Sonal Mansingh, Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar, Saeed Naqvi, Prof. Varun Sahni, Mythili Bhusnurmath, Sadia Dehlvi and Ambassador Surendra Kumar. The lectures were

attended by representatives of the diplomatic community, serving and retired Foreign Service Officers, academicians, IFS Probationers, diplomats attending the various courses and media persons.



20 Implementation of Official Language Policy and Propagation of Hindi Abroad

Implementation of Official Language Policy of the Government of India is accorded a very high priority by the Ministry of External Affairs. Documents like Bilateral Treaties, Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding, Annual Report of the Ministry, Parliament Questions and other documents meant to be placed before the Parliament are prepared bilingually.

Training in Hindi forms an integral part of the training programmes of Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in the Ministry. Two such programmes were held on 15 May 2007 and 9 August 2007. A total of 51 officials attended the training programmes. Hindi training programmes are also conducted by Hindi Section of the Ministry.

The Ministry has a well-formulated scheme for propagation of Hindi abroad. Under this scheme Hindi teaching material is supplied to educational institutions through Indian Missions abroad. These include Hindi textbooks, literary and children's books, Hindi learning CD's, software to work in Hindi on computers, dictionaries, and so on. The Ministry also extends support to various foreign universities and other educational institutions through Indian Missions abroad for Hindi related activities. During the year 2007-08 the Ministry extended financial support for publication of Hindi text books in Suriname and publication of Korean-Hindi Dictionary in South Korea. The Ministry also helped in setting up of a Centre for Hindi Language and Indian Literature in association with Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University, Kyiv and donated computers, printers, and dish antenna to this Centre and three other universities in Ukraine to facilitate teaching of Hindi.

The Eighth World Hindi Conference was organized by the Ministry from 13-15 July 2007 in New York (USA) in association with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, New York. Over 850 delegates from different countries attended the Conference. A 95-member official delegation led by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma participated in the Conference. The inauguration of the

Conference was held at the United Nations Headquarters. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon was the honoured guest at the Inauguration Session. The first academic session on 'Hindi in the United Nations' was also held at the United Nations. 40 scholars, 20 each from India and other countries were honoured at the Conference in recognition of their distinguished service to the cause of Hindi language and literature.

Organization of Regional Hindi Conferences in different countries by the Ministry is an important step towards promotion of Hindi abroad. During 2007-08 Regional Hindi Conferences were organized in Budapest, Hungary from 24-26 October 2007 and Seoul, South Korea from 9-11 November 2007. This initiative of the Ministry has been greatly welcomed by Hindi scholars abroad. There is a demand for organizing such conferences on regular basis in different countries where Hindi is taught in local universities.

The Ministry coordinates work relating to grant of scholarship to foreign students to study Hindi at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. 100 scholarships are on offer annually. In 2007-08, 75 students from 32 countries availed of the scholarship.

The Ministry is also actively coordinating work relating to the establishment of the World Hindi Secretariat in Mauritius. The first meeting of the Executive Board of the Secretariat was held on 24-25 May 2007 in Mauritius and the first meeting of its Governing Council was held on 28 January 2008 in New Delhi. Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee chaired the meeting. Minister of Human Resource Development, Arjun Singh and Minister of Tourism and Culture, Ambika Soni from India and Minister of Education and Human Resource, D. Gokhool and Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Cooperation, M.M. Dooloo from Mauritius were the other member-Ministers who attended the meeting. The Council decided that the Secretariat will start functioning from 11 February 2008.

Many Missions organized Kavi Sammelans, essay competitions and cultural activities on the occasion of Hindi Diwas on 14 September 2007.

Hindi Salahakar Samiti of the Ministry was reconstituted under the chairmanship of the then External Affairs Minister on 8 February 2005. The Samiti is currently being headed by Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma. A meeting of the Committee was held on 17 January 2008 under the chairmanship of Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma. The Committee

reviewed the position of Hindi in the official work of the Ministry and Missions abroad.

World Hindi Day was celebrated on 10 January 2008. A Hindi essay competition was organised for foreign students studying Hindi at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan (Agra and Delhi centres), Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University. Cash prizes, Hindi books and dictionaries were presented to the winners by Chief Guest, Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma at a function organised on that day.

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The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was formally set up in 1950, with the primary objective of establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. Its aims, as enunciated in the Memorandum of Association, are:

- To participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations;
- To promote cultural exchanges with other countries and peoples;
- To promote and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries;
- To establish and develop relations with national and international organizations in the field of culture.

The Council has worked steadily to attain these objectives.

The major activities of the Council are:

Administration of scholarship schemes for overseas students on behalf of the Government of India and other agencies, welfare of international students; grant of scholarships to foreign students to learn Indian dance and music; exchange of exhibitions; organization of and participation in international seminars and symposia; participation in major cultural festival abroad; organization of "Festival of India" in countries abroad; exchange of groups of performing artistes; organization of lecture-demonstration by performing artistes abroad; distinguished visitors programme under which eminent personalities from abroad are invited to visit India and the outgoing visitor's programme in which experts are sent abroad for delivering lectures, presentation of books, audio-visual material, art objects and musical instruments to institutions abroad; providing the secretariat for the Jawaharlal Nehru award for international understanding; organization of the annual Maulana Azad memorial lecture, conducting Maulana Azad essay competition;

publication of books and journals for distribution in India and abroad; maintaining Indian Cultural Centers abroad; maintaining a well stocked library and the manuscripts of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad; digitization of rare manuscripts.

Regional Offices, Centres/Chairs Abroad

The Council has 11 Regional Offices functioning at Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Thiruvananthapuram, Pune and Varanasi.

In order to promote awareness and appreciation of India's composite cultural heritage abroad, the Council is maintaining 20 Cultural Centres in Cairo (Egypt), Berlin (Germany), Port Louis (Mauritius), Paramaribo (Suriname), Georgetown (Guyana), Jakarta (Indonesia), Moscow (Russian

Federation), London (U.K.), Almaty, (Kazakhstan), Tashkent, (Uzbekistan), Durban and Johannesburg (South Africa), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Suva (Fiji), Tokyo (Japan), Kathmandu (Nepal) and Kabul (Afghanistan) and 2 sub-Centres at Bali (Indonesia) and Lautoka (Fiji). The Council is also funding Music & Dance Academy at Dhaka (Bangladesh) and a proposal to open a new Centre is being pursued. Two new Centres at Kathmandu and Kabul were inaugurated on 16 August 2007 and 14 September 2007 respectively.

The Council is maintaining Chairs of Indian Studies abroad to teach Indian languages and other related subjects under the bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme, Scheme of Propagation of Hindi abroad and Council's own programmes. Presently 22 Chairs are maintained for teaching Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Modern Indian History, Indian Civilization in Paramaribo (Suriname), Budapest (Hungary), Moscow (Russia), Seoul (South Korea), Warsaw (Poland – 2 posts, Hindi and Tamil), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago), Sofia

(Bulgaria), Bucharest (Romania), Beijing (China), Madrid (Spain), Bangkok (Thailand), Paris (France), Osh (Kyrgyzstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Brussels (Belgium) and Jalalabad (Afghanistan). Besides these the Council is maintaining short term, Rotating Chairs which include Chair for Sanskrit & Buddhist studies in Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia), Chair for Indian studies in Pennsylvania, five Chairs of Indian Studies in Germany and one Chair of Economics at Sciences Po, Paris. There are proposals to start short-term Chairs in other countries as well.

Outgoing Visitors Programme

As part of its effort to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries, the Council facilitates exchange of scholars, intellectuals, academicians and artistes under the Outgoing Visitors Programme. During the period from April–November 2007, the Council sponsored the visits of 56 eminent scholars to various parts of the world.

Festivals

In pursuant to the Joint Statement signed between India and Japan, reciprocal festivals were organized in 2007. The Festival of India, which was jointly inaugurated by the Prime Ministers of India and Japan on 14 December 2006 concluded on 10 December 2007. The Council sponsored 24 performing groups to participate in the year long Festival of India in Japan.

Festival of India in Israel

To mark the 15th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Israel as well as to celebrate the 60th anniversary of India's Independence, the Festival 'Incredible India' was celebrated in Israel from 15–23 August 2007. A 9-member composite group was sent by the Council for participation in the above festival.

First India, Brazil & South Africa Dance and Music (IBSA) Festival

The first IBSA Dance and Music Festival was organised in Brazil from 26-29 October 2007 where performing art groups from all the three countries participated. The Council sponsored a 14-member Contemporary Dance group for the event.

Scholarships and Welfare of International Students

One of the important activities of the Council is the implementation of scholarship schemes for overseas

students for doctoral, post-graduate, under-graduate courses as well as professional courses such as engineering, pharmacy, business administration and accountancy. Around 2200 foreign students are currently studying in India under the various scholarship schemes administered by the council. During April–November 2007, the Council offered 1153 new scholarships including 500 scholarships for Afghan students.

The Council regularly organises camps and study tours for the international students.

Incoming Cultural Delegations

The Council organises the visits of foreign performing artistes to India for performances in various cities of India. These groups are hosted under the ambit of bilateral Cultural Exchange Programmes as well as in response to recommendations of Indian Missions abroad and requests received from foreign diplomatic missions and Cultural Centres in India. During the period April–November 2007, the Council hosted the visits of twenty foreign cultural groups from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives, Israel, Azerbaijan, Mexico, Egypt, Mauritius, Poland, Vietnam, Iran, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Spain and South Korea. The Council also organized a series of cultural events involving artists from all SAARC member countries to mark the hosting of the SAARC Summit in April 2007 at New Delhi.

Other major cultural events organized in India included the Sufi Festival in Srinagar from 27 June–7 July 2007, Malhar Festival from 6-8 August 2007 in New Delhi, a performance by noted Pakistani artist Tahira Syed and the famous Bangladeshi singer Runa Laila on 20 October 2007 at New Delhi and by another Pakistani artist Abida Parveen on 27 October 2007 at New Delhi. The Council also arranged cultural events during the 8th World Hindi Conference held in New York in July 2007. The Council organized a series of events including a Fusion Music Festival, Food Festival, Fashion Show, Students Exchange Programme, Handicraft Exhibition and a Seminar on Folk Arts to mark the First SAARC Cultural Festival held at New Delhi from 30 November–9 December 2007.

Publication

On the occasion of the '8th World Hindi Conference 2007', the Council brought out several publications including a special publication called 'Chetna ka

Aatmsangharsh', the 'World Hindi Directory' and a special edition of its own quarterly 'Gagananchal'. These publications were released by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma on 13 July 2007 at the UN Headquarters in New York. The Council also participated in the 13th Delhi Book Fair from 1-9 September 2007.

Conferences and Seminars

During the period, under review the Council collaborated in holding of various Conferences and Seminars with a view to facilitating interactions between intellectuals, opinion makers and academicians representing various countries. These included the 'South Asia Interfaith harmony Conclave' on 21-22 April 2007, International Poetry Festival from 20-23 July, Millinery of Maulana Jallaluddin Rumi from 25-27 August 2007, and the International Seminar on Storytelling from 17-19 September 2007, the International Conference on 'Economics of Non-violence ' from 1-3 November 2007. The collaboration offered by ICCR was in tune with its policy to support important conferences and seminars that involve a significant foreign participation.

Busts and Exhibitions

The Council sent two busts of Mahatma Gandhi for installation at Hamburg, (Germany) and at Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) as well as two statues of Mahatma Gandhi for installation at Willington (New Zealand) and Berne, (Switzerland). Four major exhibitions were sent out. These included the exhibition called 'Celebrating Women-Amrita Shergil Revisited' to Prague and Denmark, Exhibition of 'Women by Women' to Poland, 'SAARC Paintings Exhibition' produced by leading SAARC artists at a special camp organised by the Council to Afghanistan and Photo Exhibition on 'Religions of India' to London.

The SAARC Paintings Exhibition was inaugurated for viewing by the public by the Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee at a special function on 2 June 2007 at New Delhi. The Council also organized the Photo Exhibition on Traditional Costumes and Jewellery of Vietnam called 'Vietnam Today', Exhibition of Contemporary Croatian Modern Arts by Croatian artists,

an Exhibition by Ranjit Das, a well-known Bangladeshi painter and an exhibition of paintings by Sharifah Hind Nasser from Jordan at New Delhi.

The Council coordinated holding of a special Exhibition on advancement of Hindi language and its use in Information Technology during the 8th World Hindi Conference in New York in July. On the occasion of the observance of the first International Day of Non-Violence at the United Nations on 2 October 2007, the council put up a photographic exhibition titled 'Gandhi and Global Non-Violent Awakening' from 2-12 October 2007 at the United Nations Headquarters. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of UPA inaugurated the exhibition on 2 October 2007.

Outgoing Cultural Delegations

During the period, the Council sponsored 48 cultural delegations to 54 countries. Special emphasis was given to holding of workshops cum- lecture demonstrations with local artistes. Several of these cultural groups participated in over 20 international events /festival such as the Spring Friendship Arts Festival in DPR Korea, Thyagaraja Festival in Cleveland, Harare International Festival, Zanzibar International Film Festival and the Bangkok International Festival of Dance & Music. The Council also sponsored cultural groups to perform at Independence Day celebrations hosted by various Indian Missions abroad.

Distinguished Visitors Programme

As part of its effort to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries, the Council facilitates visits of eminent figures in public life as well as those of scholars, intellectuals, academicians and artistes under its Distinguished Visitors Programme. During the period, the Council hosted 8 distinguished visitors from different countries.

Awards

The Jawaharlal Nehru Award for international understanding for the year 2006 was presented to President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva by the President of India at a special function on 4 June 2007.



During the period April-November 2007, the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) organized the following events:

i	Lectures	06
ii	Bilateral strategic dialogues	08
iii	Seminars	04
iv	Background briefings	02
v	Other events (CSCAP, etc.)	07

In addition, ICWA organized the following book Launches/Discussion:

- 1 Contemporary Saudi Arabia & the Emerging Indo-Saudi Relations by Prof. Gulshan Dietl, Prof. Girijesh Pant, Prof. A.K. Pasha and Dr. P.C. Jain;
- 2 Asian Diplomacy: The Foreign Ministries of China, India, Japan, Singapore & Thailand by Kishan S. Rana;
- 3 Foreign Ministries: Managing Diplomatic Networks and Optimizing Value by Kishan S. Rana and Jovan Kurbalija;
- 4 Ghulam Rasul – Another Migration by Muniza Agha-Fawad;
- 5 Rising India: Friends and Foes: Essays in Honour of Professor ML Sondhi by Prakash Nanda
- 6 Group Discussion on the book: India and the United States, Politics of the sixties by Kalyani Shankar

Lectures/Events attracted about 100 persons while for Book Launches/Seminars the audience was approximately 50. A complete list of seminars, conferences, lectures and meetings organized by ICWA during the year are given in Appendix XVI.

The ICWA's master list of invitees has grown from 1000 to over 1100 during the year 2007 and includes 254

academicians, 230 intellectuals and members of think-tanks and research organizations, 135 diplomatic corps, 108 officials, 112 former diplomats and 125 senior journalists and media persons. This list is being revised regularly.

ICWA organized two conferences i.e. International Conference on "India-Nepal Relations: Looking at the Future" on 20-21 April 2007 in association with the Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad and Regional Conference on "SAARC: Fourteenth Summit & Beyond" in association with Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF).

ICWA has started research work. ICWA officials regularly participated in seminars and contributed papers/lectures in various reputed national and international journals. ICWA's magazine 'India Quarterly' was on track during 2007. Three issues of 'India Quarterly' namely: October-December 2006; January-March 2007 and April-June 2007 were brought out during the period. Besides, the ICWA signed MoUs with counterpart organizations in China and Nigeria.

ICWA arranged a visit of 20-member delegation for 3rd India-Spain Dialogue Forum Meeting on 16-17 October 2007 which included Vice-Chancellors, Professors, intellectuals, high ranking officials and dignitaries headed by S.J.S. Chhatwal, Chairman, Programmes Committee, ICWA to Valladolid, Spain

ICWA organized a meeting of Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) Study Group on Energy Security, from 13-15 September 2007, in Goa. CSCAP-India Committee activities are included in the list at Appendix XVI.

ICWA continued to be an important platform for foreign affairs discussions in India in the year 2007.



Research and Information System for Developing Countries

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Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) is a New Delhi based think-tank specialized in international economic relations and development cooperation. It is an autonomous body of the Ministry of External Affairs. Its mandate is to function as an advisory body to the Government of India on matters pertaining to multilateral economic and social issues, including regional and sub-regional cooperation arrangements, as may be referred to it from time to time. The RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue among developing country think-tanks on international economic issues.

Highlights of the RIS' work during the year 2007-08 are given below.

Research and Policy Inputs Provided to the Government

RIS conducted research studies to assist the policy formulation and preparation for major Summit Meetings and other negotiations held during the year. Some of these inputs include the following:

- **India- ASEAN and East Asia Summit:** RIS assisted the Government with inputs for the 11th India-ASEAN Working Group held in April 2007; India-East Asia Summit Countries Trade; 12th India-ASEAN Working Group held in October 2007; on India's Look East Policy – Challenges for Sub-Regional Cooperation; and on the India-East Asia Economic Cooperation and the 3rd East Asia Summit held on 21 November 2007.
- **SAARC and BIMSTEC:** RIS provided the Government with policy inputs on 'Towards a Prosperity-Neighbour Policy for Southern Asia: Some Inputs', in the context of India's Chirping of the SAARC and BIMSTEC; 'Sub-regional Economic Cooperation under SAARC – Focusing on Energy, Food, Environment and Water'; and inputs for the Thirteenth Meeting of the SAARC Committee on

Economic Cooperation (CEC) held in November 2007.

- **Second IBSA Summit:** RIS participated in the IBSA summit in Johannesburg from 15-17 October 2007 and also participated in the IBSA Academic Forum and made three lead presentations.
- **WTO:** RIS submitted two reports on WTO for the Government on the topics, 'Trade Impact on India's Exports to USA with Possible Withdrawal of US-GSP Benefit' and WTO Proposals and Indian Paper and Newsprint Industry'.
- **India-Korea Negotiations:** RIS provided the Government with inputs on sensitive products for the negotiations on India-Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.
- **CEPEA:** Director General, RIS was nominated on the Track II Study Group on Comprehensive Economic Partnership of East Asia by the Government of India. RIS has been contributing to the work of the Study Group in the form of policy papers and will be hosting the fourth meeting of the Study Group in New Delhi on 1-2 February 2008.
- **Mekong-Ganga Cooperation:** A note on 'Towards Deepening Mekong-Ganga Cooperation: Some Proposals' was made available to the Ministry of External Affairs on 26 July 2007.
- **Other Policy Papers and Inputs:** RIS provided the Government of India, with inputs on various other policy matters which included: inputs on 'India and China in the 21st Century', on 'Relevance of APEC for India, Work of APEC, and APEC membership and obligations'; note on 'Asia Pacific Bank for Infrastructure Investment'; Inputs for the G-8 Summit a note on 'India's Key Challenges to Sustaining Growth'; a report on 'Prospects of Making India's Manufacturing Sector Export-Oriented'; a report on 'Feasibility Study of Investment Cooperation between India and the GCC'; a report on the 'Resurgent China:

Imperitives on India’; and a report of the study on ‘*Deepening Financial Cooperation in Asia: An Indian Perspective*’.

Policy Dialogues, Conferences and Symposia

During 2007-08 RIS organized a number of policy dialogues, conferences and symposia to fulfill its mandate of fostering intellectual dialogue among developing countries. The select major events organized in the period include the following:

Sixth High-level Conference on Asia Economic Integration: Agenda for East Asia Summit: RIS organized a High-Level Conference on ‘*Asian Economic Integration: Agenda for the East Asia Summit*’ in collaboration with the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore and the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE), Tokyo; Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO), Tokyo; and supported by Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), Tokyo on 12-13 November 2007 in New Delhi. Around hundred delegates, comprising head of policy think-tanks in EAS countries, policy makers, media and members of the civil society participated in the conference.

Panel Discussion on Global Trade governance and the Role of the South: Enhancing the Development-Friendliness of the Doha Round: RIS jointly with the South Centre organised a two part Panel Discussion at the WTO Public Forum 2007 held in Geneva on 5 October 2007.

Seminar on RIS’ World Trade and Development Report 2007: Commonwealth Secretariat, London and RIS jointly organised a discussion meeting on the ‘*World Trade and Development Report 2007: Building a Development-Friendly World Trading System*’ in London on 31 May 2007.

Discussion Meeting on World Trade Development Report 2007: RIS and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), Geneva, organised a Discussion Meeting on the ‘*World Trade and Development Report 2007: Building a Development-Friendly World Trading System*’, in Geneva on 5 June 2007.

Conference of Editors from India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA): The Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with the RIS organised a two day conference of editors from India, Brazil and South Africa in New Delhi

on 3-4 September 2007 on the theme of ‘*Globalisation, Emerging Powers and Media*’.

National Seminar on SAARC: The RIS, jointly with the Ministry of External Affairs; Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Global India Foundation (GIF) organised the National Seminar on ‘SAARC: Accelerating Cooperation through Connectivity’ on 1-2 September 2007 in Kolkata.

International Workshop on Emergence of Large Developing Countries and Implications for International Development: RIS, with the support of the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, has undertaken a study on the subject. As a part of the study, RIS and the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, jointly organised an International Workshop on Emergence of Large Developing Countries (BICS) and Implications for International Development in New Delhi on 28-29 June 2007.

Inception Workshop for the Study on Potentials for Trade in Services under SAFTA Agreement: The RIS, jointly with SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, Nepal, organised the Inception Workshop for the Study on ‘*Potentials for Trade in Services under SAFTA Agreement*’ in New Delhi on 10-11 May 2007. The SAARC Secretariat has assigned RIS to conduct this study in consultation with the researchers from the other SAARC countries with the framework of SAARC Network of Researchers on Global Financial and Economic Issues.

RIS’ Special Session on International Trading System and Development: The World Trade and Development Report, 2007, prepared by the RIS, has summarized an agenda for reforming of the multilateral trading system to make it more development friendly and thus giving the developing countries more say in the negotiations. This provided the basis for the panel discussions in a special session on International Trading System and Development organised by the RIS at the ‘*International Conference on Emerging Powers in Global Governance – New Challenges and Policy Options*’, held in Paris on 6-7 July 2007.

Seminar on Implications of the WTO Proposals on Indian Paper and Newsprint Industry: RIS and Central Pulp and Paper Research Institute (CPPRI) organised a Seminar on ‘*Implications of the WTO Proposals on Indian Paper and Newsprint Industry*’ on 13 September 2007 in

New Delhi. Prof. Anwarul Hoda, Member Planning Commission Chaired the Seminar and Dr. Rajesh Mehta, Senior Fellow, RIS made a presentation of the study on 'WTO Proposals and Indian Paper Newsprint Industry'. Bipin Menon, Department of Commerce made the presentation on 'NAMA negotiations in Doha Round: State of Play'.

Outreach, Global Presence and Networking

RIS has taken steps to strengthen the institutional networking and international visibility of its work by organising seminars at the global events. In the past year a number of policy dialogues were organised jointly with partner institutions in different parts of the world. These included seminars organised in London, Paris and Geneva as a part of important global events to enhance RIS' international visibility and effectiveness in association with collaborating institutions such as the South Centre, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), the Commonwealth Secretariat. The RIS delegation also participated and made key presentations in the IBSA Academic Forum organised in Johannesburg as part of the Second IBSA Summit in October 2007. In addition, the RIS has also organised a number of policy dialogues with international institutions and other collaborative institutions in India including UN-ESCAP, South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS), SAARC Secretariat, Commonwealth Secretariat, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies-Singapore, Institute of Developing Economies (IDE) of Japan, among others.

RIS has entered into MoUs providing a framework for joint activities with a number of similar institutions in different countries such as with Development Research Centre (DRC) of the State Council of China, Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP), Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, Institute of Developing Economies (IDE/JETRO) in Tokyo, International Institute of Trade and Development in

Bangkok, and NAM Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation in Jakarta, among others.

Capacity Building and Training Programmes

A Programme on 'International Economic Issues and Development Policy (IEIDP)' sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs, under ITEC/SCAAP Programme was organised in RIS from 19 February-16 March 2007. Fourteen participants, which included Farida Mahomed, Member of Parliament, South Africa, took part in this programme.

Training Programme on Global Economic Regime and India's Regional Economic Engagements

RIS, on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs, organised a training programme for the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) probationers (2006 batch) on the theme of Global Economic Regime and India's Regional Economic Engagements from 27-31 August 2007. The IFS probationers also made presentations on different themes during the workshops that were held during the course of the training programme.

RIS Publications

During 2007-08, RIS published six books and reports, issued four policy briefs and thirteen discussion papers. Two issues of the south Asia Economic Journal, three issues of the Biotechnology and Development Review and four issues of New Asia Monitor were brought out. A new publication RIS Mekong-Ganga Policy Brief was also launched. In addition four issues of RIS Diary were also published as listed at Appendix XVII. RIS publications can be downloaded from its website <http://www.ris.org.in>

Budget

The RIS received a budgetary support of Rs. 175 lakhs during the year 2007-08 from the Ministry of External Affairs.



The Ministry's Library has over one hundred thousand books, rich resource material and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents. It is also equipped with modern facilities to support policy planning and research. The Library subscribes / receives and maintains about 350 periodicals, journals and newspaper titles, out of which 80 are also available on-line. The Library also subscribed to the database "J-GATE: Social Science and Management Sciences: a full text multi-user database" for the use in Headquarters and Missions abroad.

The Library has an in-house computer system consisting of a Server and 12 PC terminals. The system supports data entry and retrieval in Hindi as well. The library has CD-ROM databases on foreign affairs and current affairs. The Library PCs are also equipped with CD-writers and laser printers. It also has a colour scanner (with OCR capability as well as facility for storage and retrieval of Images), a microfilm / fiche reader printer, plain paper photocopiers and a HP Office-jet pro laser printer with Desk Top Publishing (DTP) software.

A Library Committee manages library activities including purchase of books and subscription of journals / periodicals. In August 2007, Foreign Secretary reconstituted the Library Committee.

All documentation and bibliographic services, as well as other library operations and services have been computerized, using an integrated library software package LIBSYS covering all the features of the Library. LIBSYS follows MARC as well as non-MARC format and supports

word-based free text searching using Boolean operators. It also provides online validation of input data prior to updating the database. Information on all books, maps, documents and selected articles from periodicals received in the Library since 1986, publications received in the Library since 1986 (and also pre-1986 publications in active use) are available on-line through intranet in all PCs of Ministry of External Affairs Library. Library's information can also be accessed through Internet on MEA Library's website: www.mealib.nic.in.

All new documents received in the Library such as books, maps, microfilms, and selected articles from periodicals are fed on a regular basis in the database on foreign affairs. Using this database and CD-ROM Databases, the Library provides Current Awareness Service and Bibliographical and Reference Services. In addition, the Library regularly issues a Foreign Affairs Documentation Bulletin (FADB) which lists selected articles on International Relations and related subjects and an update on recent additions which consist of an annotated list of books and publications added to the Library.

The library regularly provides Article Alert Service, which consists of abstracts of important articles from journals / periodicals subscribed by MEA library and is available on Internet through group e-Mails IDs to all Foreign Service officers in the Ministry and Missions abroad

Weeding out of old and obsolete books and journals which commenced few years back is still continuing and substantial progress has been made in this regard.



Appendices

Appendix I

Cadre strength at Headquarters and Missions/Posts abroad during 2007-08 (including posts budgeted by Ministry of Commerce and those ex-cadred etc.)

S. No	Cadre/Post	Posts at Headquarters	Posts at Mission	Total
1	Grade I	5	21	26
2	Grade II	3	31	34
3	Grade III	38	140	178
4	Grade IV	35	110	145
5	Junior Admn. Grade/Senior scale	44	143	187
6	(i) Junior Scale	5	30	35
	(ii) Probationers Reserve	62	-	62
	(iii) Leave Reserve	15	-	15
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	19	-	19
	(V) Training Reserve	7	-	7
	Sub Total	233	475	708
	IFS(B)			
7	(i) Grade I	65	141	206
	(ii) Deputation Reserve	6	-	6
8	(i) Integrated Grades II&III	147	234	381
	(ii) Leave Reserve	30	-	30
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	16	-	16
	(iv) Training Reserve	25	-	25
9	(i) Grade IV	197	412	609
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	-	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	55	-	55
10	(i) Grade V/VI	217	99	316
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	-	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	14	-	14
11	(i) Grade II of Cypher Cadre	37	151	188
	(ii) Leave Reserve	24	-	24
12	(i) Stenographer's cadre	184	476	660
	(ii) Leave Reserve	47	-	47
	(iii) Training Reserve(Hindi)	10	-	10
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	12	-	12
13	Interpreter's Cadre	7	-	33
14	L&T cadre	14	1	15
	Sub Total	1246	1521	2767
	Grand Total	1479	1996	3475

Appendix II

Recruitment made in various groups in the Ministry of External Affairs and reserved vacancies filled by Scheduled Caste/Schedule Tribe/Other Backward Classes (OBC) categories from April to November 2007.

Groups	Total No. of Vacancies	Number of Vacancies Reserved			Unreserved
		SC	ST	OBC	
Group A	17	5	-	3	10
Group B	36	3	1	1	31
Group C	19	6	-	3	10
Total	72	14	1	7	51

Appendix III

Language-wise Statement of Officers (Grade I to Junior Scale of IFS)

Language	Number of Officers	Language	Number of Officers
Arabic	96	Nepali	3
Bahasa Indonesia	12	Persian	20
Bahasa Malay	2	Portuguese	21
Burmese	2	Russian	82
Chinese	61	Serbo-Croatian	3
Dutch	1	Sinhalese	1
French	74	Spanish	63
German	33	Swedish	1
Hebrew	4	Thai	2
Italian	4	Tibetan	1
Japanese	24	Turkish	7
Kazakh	1	Ukrainian	1
Kiswahili	6	Vietnamese	2
Korean	3	Total (27 Languages)	531

Appendix IV

Gender-Related Statistics

Cadre	Total No. of Officers in position	No. of Lady officers	Lady Officers as a % of total strength
IFS	626	89	14.2%
IFS-B	2394	327	13.6%
L&T	11	3	27.2%
Interpreters	18	5	27.7%
Library	11	2	18.1%

Appendix V

Statement showing the number of applications received and passports issued including under Tatkaal Scheme, miscellaneous applications received and services rendered as well as Revenue (including revenue under Tatkaal Scheme) and Expenditure figures of the Passport Offices from 1 January - 31 December 2007.

Name of RPO/PO	No. of Applications received	No. of Passports issued	No. of miscellaneous applications received	Miscellaneous services rendered	Passports issued under Tatkaal	Revenue under Tatkaal Scheme	Total Revenue	Total expenditure
Ahmedabad	271278	276396	22156	21715	11645	17265449	290340100	34819227
Bangalore	270124	279812	46996	46299	33754	59468800	331586905	29427552
Bareilly	67906	64280	5194	5164	4314	6885500	77602275	10422984
Bhopal	81127	83826	6455	6405	9580	14434900	96271655	8493251
Bhubaneswar	39642	44542	3394	3020	8416	12864000	57529440	3771026
Chandigarh	283233	278411	45125	43389	12866	27334300	334079988	25917353
Chennai	299488	305238	40725	40191	67261	105384000	434038293	34636678
Cochin	215411	241205	70551	70002	38681	58957500	313620333	29031737
Delhi	247712	227330	35707	34337	35016	88557400	334040230	39901383
Ghaziabad	79784	83250	9075	8007	5801	22372100	80189460	7821721
Guwahati	29870	27254	5688	1088	1768	2629400	43273800	3746951
Hyderabad	392869	400266	47654	47239	28865	68098800	454552107	44749429
Jaipur	159989	188573	19302	15027	18801	44660200	170548125	22985316
Jalandar	223463	215750	43436	42490	1480	2414000	26714807	29219587
Jammu	17872	17113	1161	806	136	19400	19609620	2225925
Kolkata	182224	170306	19890	19509	9919	21373800	199716510	22492144
Kozhikode	169180	170070	45129	44664	30157	47220500	238071856	25814647
Lucknow	268647	303118	20574	19265	7900	12241500	293201953	28970532
Madurai	2965	346	288	280	326	0	4440000	*
Malappuram	138731	153689	28860	29183	23366	35782000	201082495	11803994
Mumbai	299028	294019	33277	33196	18744	28460600	310103001	63106916
Nagpur	50174	46701	3041	2998	5048	6484700	57043737	3631253
Panaji	28825	28421	6413	6684	1577	2440000	34989982	4101949
Patna	147395	119206	7039	6998	1446	2113500	151200110	11153772
Pune	109971	107955	13460	12888	12569	16719000	129721092	9018828
Raipur	412	46	26	24	46	265500	541700	**
Ranchi	31757	33409	3629	3261	3366	4791150	29556980	3802899
Shimla	17022	11947	1386	1321	863	2074300	16434713	2486749
Srinagar	15616	13897	1729	1508	188	304500	17111427	16017477
Surat	90773	96980	11544	11181	3047	4835700	95793700	***
Thane	142229	139669	9737	9475	10080	15370600	160222160	****
Trichy	287862	285627	28819	27379	30948	48652500	361763900	29800288
Trivandrum	151104	149135	47888	46359	19058	29263000	208576847	15635761
Vishakapatnam	82172	83773	14761	14167	7165	11124500	105026938	7760797
TOTAL	4895855	4941560	700109	675519	464157	820963099	5678596239	582768126

* Expenditure is incurred by PO Trichy.

** Expenditure is incurred by PO Bhopal.

*** Since Letter of Credit has been combined with RPO Mumbai, all expenditure has been made by them.

**** Expenditure is combined and is being sent every week by RPO Ahmedabad.

Appendix VI

Finances of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2007-2008

The Budget Allocation of the Ministry of External Affairs in the Budget Estimates (BE) 2007-2008 is Rs. 4433.60 crores, which is Rs. 738.55 crores i.e. 19.99 % more than the BE 2006-07 of Rs. 3695.05 crores. There is an increase in the Revised Estimates for 2007-08 by Rs. 549.40 crores i.e. by 12.39 % over BE 2007-08 allocation.

MEA Expenditure and Budget (2002-2003 to 2007-2008)

Years	Actuals (in Rs. Crores)	Percentage variation from previous year
2002-2003	3253.79	23.98
2003-2004	3344.53	2.79
2004-2005	3756.15	12.31
2005-2006	4089.67	8.88
2006-2007	3695.05	-9.65
2007-2008 (BE)	4433.60	19.99
2007-2008 (RE)	4783.00	29.44

Appendix VII

The Major Sectoral Allocations in the 2007-2008 Budget (RE)

Sectors	Allocation (in Rs. Crores)
MEA Secretariat	158.84
Embassies & Missions	1044.01
Passport & Emigration	267.35
Special Diplomatic Expenditure	655.67
Technical & Economic Cooperation	1656.11
Contributions to International Organizations	123.96
Grant to Indian Council for Cultural Relations	77.00
Loans and Advances to Foreign Governments	48.00
Others	752.06

Appendix VIII

Principal Destinations of India's Aid Programmes

The principal beneficiaries of our Aid and Loan Programmes in the Current Financial Years are as under: (RE)

Aid & Loan to Countries	(In Rupees Crores)
Bhutan	731.00
Bangladesh	60.00
Nepal	100.00
Sri Lanka	28.00
Maldives	19.50
Myanmar	20.00
Afghanistan	434.00
African Countries	50.00
Central Asia	20.00
Latin American Countries	1.53
Others	240.08

1. Aid to Bhutan accounts for 42.90 % of India's total aid and loan budget. Other destinations for Indian aid programs include Afghanistan – 25.47 %, Nepal – 5.87 %, Bangladesh – 3.52 %, African countries – 2.93 %, Sri Lanka- 1.64 %, Myanmar – 1.17 %, Maldives 1.14 %, and Others –14.09 %.
2. The Government of India has extended loans to the Government of Bhutan to assist in the implementation of developmental projects. During 2007-2008, the loan extended to the Government of Bhutan amounts to Rs. 48.00 crores.
3. The Budget of the Ministry of External Affairs is essentially a Non-Plan Budget. However, from 1996-97, a Plan head has been established with the approval of the Cabinet. This primarily caters to certain large developmental projects undertaken in Bhutan, as part of project assistance requested by the Government of Bhutan in the Government of India's "Aid to Bhutan" Programme. The Tala-Hydroelectric Project implemented under this Programme in Bhutan has been commissioned. The other projects in Bhutan being funded from the Plan head are the Punatsangchu Hydroelectric Project and the Dungsum Cement Plant Project. The Kabul-Pul-e-Khumri double circuit transmission line in Afghanistan is also being funded from Plan allocations. The Plan segment also caters to the loans extended to the Government of Bhutan, which is Rs. 48 Crores for the current financial year.
4. The estimated expenditure on the Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs during the current financial year is Rs. 158.84 crores, which forms about 3.88 % of the total estimated revenue budget of the Ministry. Estimated expenditure on Indian Missions and Posts abroad is expected to be of the order of Rs. 1044.01 crores which is about 25.52 % of the total revenue expenditure of the Ministry.
5. The Ministry of External Affairs' revenue from Passport and Visa fees and other receipts are likely to be of the order of Rs. 1780 crores. It is estimated that Passport fees would account for Rs. 790 crores, Visa fees for Rs. 950 crores and other receipts for Rs. 40 crores.

Appendix IX

Outcome Budget in Respect of Major Heads of Expenditure (2007-08)

S.No.	Name of Scheme/ Programme	Objective	Projected Outcomes
1	2	3	4
1.	Advertising & Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Commissioning and purchase of feature films, dubbing/ screening of documentaries, photographs/ exhibitions, ANI episodes/ subscriptions, etc. ■ Printing of various publications, purchase of books for libraries of Missions/Posts abroad and for presentation to foreign dignitaries, magazines and periodicals for Missions/Posts abroad. ■ Publication of 'India Perspective' magazine. ■ Projection of Indian foreign policy through interaction with Press Clubs, think-tank institutions and universities in India and abroad. ■ Advertisement in prominent international newspapers, handling visits of foreign journalists and VVIP visits abroad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Effective and correct projection of India's image abroad, particularly, our recent developments and foreign policy initiatives.
2.	Passport & Emigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Networking of Passport Offices. ■ Up-gradation of hardware. ■ Scanning of passport files. ■ Printing of travel documents. ■ Provision of machine readable printers. ■ Computerization of Passport, Visa and Consular services in select Missions abroad. Work Study of Passport Offices by National Institute for Smart Government (NISG). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enhanced connectivity between CPO, Passport Offices and Missions. ■ Quicker disposal of applications for Passport and Visa. ■ Efficient maintenance of records and retrieval of consular records. ■ Improved efficiency of service to applicant.
3.	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conducting 7 programmes for participants from 97 countries and the League of Arab States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exposure of foreign/Indian participants to the various facets of international diplomacy and also exposure to the Indian polity, India's foreign and security policies, economy etc.

Appendix IX

S.No.	Name of Scheme/ Programme	Objective	Projected Outcomes
1	2	3	4
4.	International Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conducting training programmes and refresher courses for officials of Ministry of External Affairs and also other Government offices and media. ■ Participation in various International bodies including the United Nations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Advancing of India's cause and profile, in line with the trend of India's role as an emerging global power.
5.	Other Expenditure		
	(i) Grant in Aid to Indian Council for Cultural Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cultural Diplomacy ("soft power") through exchange of cultural delegations, participation in international exhibitions, conferences & seminars, publications, offering scholarships, organization of Festivals of India abroad, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promotion of Indian culture abroad and also to provide a platform to other countries for showcasing their culture.
	(ii) Other Miscellaneous items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide grants-in-aid to various institutions, fund various bilateral dialogues, holding of seminars and studies, propagation of Hindi etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Obtain inputs from bilateral dialogues for shaping policy through seminars involving prominent personalities.
6.	Technical & Economic Cooperation with Other Countries		
	(i) Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providing of flood relief assistance, training of teachers in IT courses, welfare activities, repairs/renovation of institutions/historical buildings etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creation of goodwill amongst the people of Bangladesh towards India.
	(ii) Bhutan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Construct mega hydro-electric projects – Tala & Punatsangchu I, assistance for other developmental and social projects, power purchase from Bhutan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved relations with Bhutan, socio-economic development of Bhutan, availability of power, promotion of trade.
	(iii) Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Health projects, construction of hospitals, establishment of educational institutions and other development projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Socio-economic development, human resource development, infrastructure development in Nepal and creation of goodwill amongst people of Nepal towards India.
	(iv) Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Small development projects ■ Execution of small community oriented development projects ■ Tsunami relief projects-reconstruction of KKS harbour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Goodwill for India.

Appendix IX

S.No.	Name of Scheme/ Programme	Objective	Projected Outcomes
1	2	3	4
	(v) Maldives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Defence cooperation. ■ Defence cooperation and training of civil officials. ■ Deputation of Indian medical and para-medical experts. ■ Establishment of a Hydrographic Survey Unit. ■ Establishment of a Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies. ■ Up-gradation of INSAT Meteorological Data Reception. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ General goodwill for India and to develop long term interests of India.
	(vi) Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reconstruction/maintenance of infrastructure projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Infrastructure development in Myanmar, improved road connectivity, promotion of cross-border trade and tourism as well as to facilitate control of insurgency, arms smuggling, drugs trafficking and other allied problems. Strengthening of cooperation with Myanmar and creation of goodwill and influence for India.
	(vii) Other Developing Countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cooperation in remote sensing ■ Tamanthi hydroelectric project ■ Information and Communication Technology projects ■ Educational, cultural and other cooperation ■ Reconstruction of dams, infrastructure development projects, power transmission project, reconstruction of health facilities in Afghanistan ■ Bilateral assistance to countries in West Asia and North Africa ■ Rehabilitation and relief assistance to Iraq 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enhancement of cross-border connectivity and trade. ■ Energy supply to India. ■ Development of infrastructure, improved health facilities and generation of goodwill in Afghanistan ■ Development of infrastructure in Palestine, development in Sudan and other countries in the West Asia/North Africa region ■ Enhancement and improvement of bilateral relations with 156 ITEC partner countries.

Appendix IX

S.No.	Name of Scheme/ Programme	Objective	Projected Outcomes
1	2	3	4
	(viii) Aid to African Countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establishment of Information technology centers in select countries in South East Asia ■ Training of candidates from other countries in various civilian and military training programmes and SAARC Programmes. ■ Setting up of projects in the agricultural processing sector, Information Technology centers, Development projects in countries in West Africa and East & Southern Africa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Generate goodwill towards India amongst the people of the countries in West Africa and East & Southern Africa ■ Enhance connectivity through IT
	(ix) Aid to Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Setting up of IT Centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Development of skills in the Information Technology sector ■ General development of the region and generation of goodwill towards India amongst the people in the countries in Central Asia
7.	Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Defence cooperation ■ Providing agricultural implements to countries in Central Asia ■ Construction of chanceries and residential buildings in 20 countries abroad. ■ Acquisition of land and built-up properties in 4 countries abroad and in India. ■ Construction of 4 projects of construction of office and institutional buildings in India including Videsh Bhavan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creation of assets and consequential reduction in the rental liabilities of Government of India over a period of time.
8.	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Construction of residences in 9 countries abroad and residential quarters/hostel suites in India ■ Acquisition of properties for residential purposes in 1 country abroad. ■ Repairs and renovation works of properties abroad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creation of assets and consequential reduction in the rental liabilities of Government of India over a period of time

Appendix X

Extracts from C&AG's Report on Ministry of External Affairs

Deficient Internal control mechanism	<p>Non-institution of effective internal control mechanism in the Ministry/Mission of Thimpu resulted in excess release of Rs.6.57 crore to the Royal Government of Bhutan for a power project. The Ministry also made double remittance of Rs. 67.99 crore to the Mission for the same purpose and excess release of Rs. 22.99 crore for another purpose. These instances resulted in loss of interest of Rs. 58.00 lakh computed at the borrowing rate of the Union government.</p>
Irregular payment of Composite Transfer Grant	<p>In contravention of Government of India orders and its own rules, the Ministry paid composite Transfer Grant equivalent to one month's basic pay to the officials selected on temporary deputation of 2 to 3 months during the annual Haj pilgrimage resulting in irregular payment of Rs. 93.61 lakh during 2003-05. Further, the Ministry instead of recovering the overpaid amount accorded ex-post-facto sanction to incurring of expenditure which was also highly irregular.</p>
Non-adherence to norms for purchase, hiring, repair and maintenance of buildings and residential accommodation	<p>Slackness of the Ministry/Mission at Chicago in acquiring property for residential purpose led to an avoidable expenditure of Rs. 2.48 crore during October 1999 to February 2004. In disregard of the rules, Missions at Bangkok, Beijing, Ho-Chi-Minh City, Kathmandu and Mahe hired residential accommodation for their officers/staff far in excess of the prescribed plinth area norms resulting in irregular expenditure of Rs. 2.67 crore during 2001-05. Indian Missions at Johannesburg and Pretoria in disregard of Ministry's rule and delegated powers paid rent of residential accommodation in excess of the prescribed ceiling without the approval of the Ministry resulting in unauthorized expenditure of Rs. 31.12 lakh during September 2002 to March 2006. Indian Mission at Mahe, Riyadh and Colombo incurred expenditure on repairs/renovation and maintenance of Government owned buildings/residences of staff in violation of the delegation of financial powers resulting in unauthorized expenditure of Rs. 1.39 crore during 2002-06.</p>
Performance audit of functioning of Commercial Wings in the Indian Missions/Posts abroad	<p>Commercial wings in the Indian Missions/Posts abroad were not restructured keeping in view the changing international trade scenario. Several proposals to restructure and streamline these wings to enable them to discharge their functions efficiently and effectively remained unimplemented. The recommendations of the Expenditure Reforms Commission on downsizing were also not implemented by the DOC.</p>
	<p>The Commercial representation was not commensurate with the trade potential. Posts in many countries identified as "focus markets" were functioning without adequate commercial presence, whereas, a large number of India based and local staff were provided in other countries that were not regarded as top export destinations.</p>

Performance audit of Passport, Visa and Consular Services

Only 2 per cent of the total expenditure of Rs. 337 crore was incurred on 'Trade Promotion' by the commercial wings during 2001-02 and 2005-06 while the major part of the allocation (75 per cent) was utilized to meet establishment costs. The decision of the commerce Secretary (May 2000) to reduce establishment costs and increase trade promotional activities was not implemented.

(Paragraphs 8.2.1. and 8.2.2.)

Commercial wings in the Indian Missions/Posts abroad did not discharge their mandated responsibilities efficiently and effectively so far as they related to preparation of annual action plan, conducting market research surveys, development of business strategy elements, settlement of trade disputes, follow up on trade and investment delegations to post countries, and furnishing of reports pertaining to the trade fairs and exhibitions in the countries where they were located.

(Paragraphs 8.4.1, 8.4.3, 8.4.4, 8.4.5, 8.4.6 and 8.4.7)

Monitoring of the performance of commercial wings by the DOC and the MEA was lax. The commercial wings did not submit the monthly annual commercial reports regularly to the DOC and the MEA. The reports received in the DOC and the MEA were seldom analyzed or reviewed to measure the performance of the wings.

(Paragraph 8.5.2){Report No. 21 of 2007 (Performance Audit)}

There were significant delays in the issue of Passports. In the 12 selected RPOs/POs, only 19 per cent of the passports were issued within the prescribed time. In nine of the selected RPOs/POs only 12 per cent passports were issued on time after receipt of police verification reports (PVRs). In 10 of these RPOs/POs even where police verification was waived, 38 per cent of the passports were issued after the prescribed time. The Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh stated that submission of PVRs in 21 days is not possible unless a separate cell is created and police verification for passport applications was not a priority item for the State Police. Under the Tatkal Scheme, in 80,725 cases passports were not issued within the specified time though in these cases additional fees of Rs. 872.49 lakh had been charged by RPOs/POs Kozhikode, Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Pune, Lucknow, Kolkata, Bareilly and Chandigarh.

(Paragraph 7.1.2.)

Large number of passports that were returned undelivered were not destroyed by RPOs/POs Lucknow, Chandigarh, Kolkata, Kozhikode, Pune, Bareilly, Delhi, Bhopal, Nagpur, Jammu and Ahmedabad although this was required. RPOs Delhi and Jammu did not maintain proper records for this category of passports. The absence of proper accounting and timely destruction of these passports could have serious implications including possible misuse.

(Paragraph 7.1.3.)

In RPOs/POs at Bhopal, Delhi, Pune, Kolkata and Lucknow, 244 passports were revoked/impounded after delays ranging from six months to more than eight years from the date of receipt of adverse PVRs. Twenty eight persons had traveled abroad after the receipt of adverse PVRs./issue of impounding/revoking circulars by the RPO/PO. Delay in revocation impounding of passports provides an opportunity to the concerned persons to continue to misuse their passports, which is against the security interest of the nation.

(Paragraph 7.1.4.)

Appendix X

Lack of adequate control in checking the issue of passports resulted in fake passports being issued by RPO, Delhi to difference individuals who impersonated others. This is a matter of serious concern because of its likely impact on the national security.

(Paragraph 7.1.5.1.)

In RPO, Delhi, the software system did not accurately reflect the status of inter-related revoked/impounded passports thereby leaving scope for manipulation and misuse of the passports not shown as revoked/impounded. The cancelled passports were also not accounted for properly leading to the possibility of their misuse.

(Paragraph 7.1.5.2)

RPO, Delhi issued 5553 loss circulars against 6683 cases of lost passports during 2001-02 to 2004-05. The non-issue/delay in issue of loss circulars can result in misuse of lost passports with adverse implications.

(Paragraph 7.1.6.1)

Sufficient care was not taken in verification of the antecedents and other particulars of the applicants before issue of clear PVRs.

(Paragraph 7.1.8.1.)

During 2000-01 to 2004-05, delay in receiving PVRs occurred in 70 to 82 per cent of the cases, resulting in the issue of passports on 'PVR overdue' basis. Such delay while adversely affecting the genuine applicants, are fraught with risk of passports being issued to ineligible applicants.

(Paragraph 7.1.8.2.)

Passports under the Tatkal Scheme were issued on the basis of verification certificates (VCs) given by the officers mostly to unknown persons on the basis of references made by their friends/relatives etc. In RPOs/POs Delhi, Bareilly, Bhopal, Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Pune, Chandigarh and Kolkata, out of 1,74,177 cases sent for post police verification during 2000 01 to 2004-05, adverse PVRs were received in 1,930 cases, incomplete PVRs in 19,672 and PVRs were not received at all in 44,191 cases. There was no practice of initiating action against the VC issuing authorities where adverse PVRs were received. Not holding the VC issuing authorities accountable has left the entire system vulnerable to malpractices.

(Paragraph 7.1.8.3.)

In RPO Delhi, in 114 cases of revoked/impounded passports, entries regarding their revocation/impounding were not made in the system. These passports could go unnoticed by the PIAs, immigration officers and other security agencies.

(Paragraph 7.1.9.1)

Blank travel documents (passport booklets, visa stickers etc.) went missing in transit while being supplied to 16 Missions/Posts from the India Security Press, Nasik. The blank travel documents received by 10 Missions/Posts/RPO were found damaged. There was absence of proper accounting of blank travel documents. In 13 Missions/Posts, discrepancies in demand, supply and receipt of the blank travel documents were also noticed. The stock registers maintained by the Mission/Posts were deficient on many counts. Poor maintenance of proper records as well as accounting of blank travel documents is a matter of serious security concern.

(Paragraph 7.3.1 and 7.3.2)

Appendix X

Effective supervision, monitoring and internal controls were lacking in passport matters. This resulted in issue of Indian passports to foreign nationals, issue of 275 fake passports and issue of passports to criminals and terrorists. The MEA did not initiate corrective measures to strengthen its internal controls even after the deficiencies and malpractices were brought to its notice.

(Paragraph 7.6){Report No.12 of 2007 (Performance Audit)}

Appendix XI

Treaties/Conventions/Agreements Concluded or Renewed by India with other countries in the year 2007

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
A. MULTILATERAL				
1	The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.	6.2.07		
2	The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.	30.3.07	24.9.07 /1.10.07	
3	The Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network.	29.6.07	7.8.07	
4	Protocol amending the TRIPS Agreement adopted by the General Council of World Trade Organization at Geneva on 6 December 2005.		9.3.07	
5	Memorandum of Understanding on Trilateral Cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Fields between the Governments of the Republic of India, The Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of South Africa under the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum Initiative.	13.09.06	10.5.07	
6	The amendments to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance Statutes were adopted by the Extraordinary Council meeting of International IDEA on the twenty fourth day of January in the year two thousand and six.	24.1.06	14.5.07	14.5.07
7	Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material adopted by the IAEA Diplomatic Conference on 8 July 2005.	8.7.05	19.9.07	
8	The International Convention against Doping in Sport was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its thirty third session on the nineteenth day of October, two thousand and five in Paris.	19.10.05	10.9.07	
9	India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty.	8.2.07	2.3.07	2.3.07
SAARC				
10	Agreement on Establishing the SAARC Food Bank.	4.4.07	17.4.07	
11	Agreement for Establishment of South Asian University.	4.4.07	17.4.07	
B. TRILATERAL				
IBSA				
1	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Health and Medicine between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	17.10.07		17.10.07

Appendix XI

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
2	Agreement on Customs and Tax Administration Co-operation between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	17.10.07		
3	Agreement on Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	17.10.07		
4	Agreement on Higher Education between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	17.10.07		
5	Agreement on Social Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	17.10.07		
6	Agreement on Wind Resources between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	17.10.07		
7	Agreement on Public Administration & Governance between the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	17.10.07		
C. BILATERAL				
Austria				
1	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Austria on Scientific and Technological Co-operation	30.11.07		
Azerbaijan				
2	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Republic of Azerbaijan on the Inter-governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation	11.4.07	16.8.07	
Belarus				
3	Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and The Republic of Belarus	16.4.07	2.8.07	
4	Agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus on Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture	16.4.07		16.4.07

Appendix XI

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
5	Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Belarus in the Field of Culture, Arts, Education, Mass Media and Press for 2007-2009	16.4.07		
6	Executive Programme of Indo-Belarusian Cooperation in the Field of Science and Technology for the Period 2007-2010	16.4.07		16.4.07
7	Protocol on the Accession of the Republic of Belarus to the World Trade Organization between the Republic of India and the Republic of Belarus	16.4.07		
Bahrain				
8	Agreement for cooperation between Prasar Bharti Radio and Bahrain Radio and Television Corporation.	20.3.07		20.3.07
9	Executive Programme for Cultural Co-operation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain for the Years 2007-2010.	20.3.07		20.3.07
Bhutan				
10	Memorandum of Understanding between national Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICSI), Government of Indian and the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Information and Communications, Royal Government of Bhutan on 'Collaboration in the area of Customization/ Development and Implementation of e-Governance Applications'.	28.6.07		28.6.07
11	Agreement between the Government of India and the Royal Government of Bhutan regarding the Punatsangchhu-I Hydroelectric Project.	28.7.07		28.7.07
12	Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation between Comptroller and Auditor General, India (C&AG) and the Royal Audit Authority of the Kingdom of Bhutan.	15.10.07		15.10.07
Brazil				
13	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Federative Republic of Brazil on Scientific and Technological Co-operation	12.9.06	7.8.07	
14	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Mutual Cooperation between the Diplomatic Academies.	12.9.07		

Appendix XI

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
15	Agreement between the Government of The Republic of India and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters.	4.6.07		
Bulgaria				
16	Agreement on Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria	12.9.07		
17	Protocol of intent on Promoting Cooperation in the Areas of Labour Relations, Employment and Social Security between the Ministry of Labour and Employment of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Bulgaria.	12.9.07		
18	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters between the Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria.	12.9.07	24.9.07	
19	Protocol between the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria amending the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the Republic of Bulgaria for the Promotion and Protection of Investment signed in new Delhi, on 26 October 1998.	12.9.07		
20	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal matters between the Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria.	12.9.07	24.9.07	
21	Memorandum of Understanding between the National Small Industries Corporation Ltd., Republic of India, and the Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency.	12.9.07		12.9.07
22	Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons between the Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria.	12.9.07		
Cambodia				
23	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and The Royal Government of Cambodia for Setting up a Centre for English language training in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.	18.5.07		
24	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation and Technical Assistance between ONGC Videsh Ltd. of India and the Cambodia National Petroleum Authority of the Kingdom of Cambodia.	8.12.07		
25	Credit Line Agreement dated 8 December 2007 between the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and Export-Import Bank of India.	8.12.07		

Appendix XI

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
26	Work plan under Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and The Royal Government of Cambodia on Agriculture Cooperation for 2007 and 2008.	8.12.07		
27	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of Kingdom of Cambodia on Defence Cooperation.	8.12.07		
28	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Royal Government of Cambodia on Cooperation in the Field of Water Resources Management.	8.12.07		
29	Memorandum of Understanding on Foreign Office Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia.	8.12.07		
30	Agreement between the Government of Republic of India and the Royal Government of Cambodia on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.	8.12.07		
China				
31	Cultural Exchange Programme between India and China for the years 2007-09.	20.6.07		
Union Postal Union Constitution (China)				
32	Sixth Additional Protocol to the Constitution of the Universal Postal Union was adopted at Beijing (People's Republic of China) on the Fifteenth day of September in the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety nine.	12.12.06		1.3.07
Cyprus				
33	Agreement between the Government of India and The Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Combating International Terrorism, Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking.	25.5.07		
34	Agreement Between the Government of The Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Abolition of Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic and Official/Service Passports.	25.5.07		
35	Executive Programme on Cultural, Educational and Scientific Cooperation between the Government of The Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus for the year 2007-2010.	25.5.07		25.5.07

Appendix XI

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
Colombia				
36	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Government of Colombia on CO-operation in the Field of Urban Public Transport Systems and Urban Transport Planning.	31.5.07		31.5.07
Croatia				
37	Agreement on Visas Exemption for Diplomatic and Official Passport Holders between India and Croatia.	19.9.07		
Czech Republic				
38	Memorandum on Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.	19.11.07		
Ethiopia				
39	Protocol for Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.	5.7.07		5.7.07
40	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on the Establishment of Joint Ministerial Commission.	5.7.07		
41	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.	5.7.07	3.9.07	
42	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology.	5.7.07		
43	Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in the Field of Education.	5.7.07		5.7.07
European Community				
44	The Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the European Community.	30.11.07		
Germany				
45	Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Communications and IT, Government of Republic of India and Deutsche Post AG, Germany.	30.10.07		

Appendix XI

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
46	Hellenic Republic Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on Scientific and Technological Cooperation.	26.4.07	18.7.07	
47	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	26.4.07		26.4.07
	Iceland			
48	Memorandum of Understanding Sustainable Fisheries Development between the Ministry of Agriculture Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Government of India and The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iceland.	30.7.07		30.7.07
49	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Earthquake Prediction Research between India and Iceland.	5.4.07		
50	Memorandum of Understanding on Indo-Iceland Renewable Energy Cooperation between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of the Republic of India and Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Iceland.	9.10.07		9.10.07
51	The Agreement and the Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Iceland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	23.11.07		
	Iraq			
52	Agreed Minutes of the Sixteenth session of the India-Iraq Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Co-operation held in New Delhi from 22-25 May 2007.	25.5.07		
	Japan			
53	Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Urban Development Government of India and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Government of Japan on Co-operation in the Field of Urban Development.	1.5.07		
54	Joint Statement by the Republic of India and Japan on the Enhancement of Cooperation on Environmental Protection and Energy Security.	22.8.07		
55	Joint Statement on the Roadmap for New Dimensions to the Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan.	22.8.07		

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
Korea				
56	Fifth session of India-Republic of Korea Joint Commission in Seoul signed on 17 September 2007	17.9.07		
Kuwait				
57	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Kuwait for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect of Taxes on Income.	15.6.07		
Kyrgyzstan				
58	Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, the Republic of India and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic.	24.4.07		
Lao PDR				
59	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic for Setting up Centre for English Language Training at Vientiane, Lao PDR.	12.6.07		
60	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic for the Conservation and Restoration of the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Wat Phou.	30.5.07		
Libya				
61	Cultural & Information Agreement between the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Government of the Republic of India.	26.5.07		26.5.07
62	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	26.5.07		
Malaysia				
63	Agreed Minutes of the 4 th India-Malaysia Joint Commission Meeting held in New Delhi on 16 February 2007.	16.2.07		
Mauritius				
64	The Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Social Defence Including Welfare of the Elderly, Programme of Drug Demand Reduction, Disability, and Other Areas in the General Field of Social Defence between Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of the Republic of India and			

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
	Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institution of the Republic of Mauritius.	3.11.07		
	Mexico			
65	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of United Mexican States on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	10.9.07	28.9.07	
66	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Mexican States on the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	21.5.07	2.7.07	
67	Treaty on Extradition between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Mexican States.	10.9.07		
	Myanmar			
68	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Union of Myanmar for Establishing Indian Myanmar Centre for enhancement of IT skills at Yangon.	12.12.07		
	Nigeria			
69	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Indian Council of World Affairs, Republic of India and Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Federal Republic of Nigeria.	15.10.07		15.10.07
70	Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Foreign Service Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.	15.10.07		15.10.07
71	Protocol for Consultations between Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.	15.10.07		15.10.07
72	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Defence of the Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Defence of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Concerning Defence Cooperation.	15.10.07		
	St. Christopher and Nevis			
73	Memorandum of Understanding on Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade, Industry and Commerce of the Government of St. Christopher and Nevis.	23.7.07		23.7.07

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
Pakistan				
74	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Reducing the Risk from Accidents Relating to Nuclear Weapons.	21.2.07		
Philippines				
75	Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Energy Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy Republic of Indian on Enhanced Cooperation in the Field of Renewable Energy.	5.10.07		5.10.07
76	Declaration on a Framework of Bilateral Cooperation.	5.10.07		
77	Joint Declaration to combat International Terrorism.	5.10.07		
78	Agreement on Establishment of a Joint Commission.	5.10.07		
79	MoU on Cooperation between Foreign Service Institutes.	5.10.07		5.10.07
80	Agreement on exemption visas for diplomatic and official passports.	5.10.07		
81	MoU in the Field of Health and Medicine.	5.10.07		5.10.07
Rwanda				
82	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Rwanda on Cooperation in the Fields of Agriculture and Animal Resources.	31.05.07		31.5.07
83	Agreement between Ministry of External Affairs Government of India and Hole-In-the Wall Education Ltd. (HIWEL) for setting up of a Hole-In-The-Wall Pilot Project in Rwanda 9 April 2007	9.4.07		
Russian Federation				
84	Programme of Cultural Exchanges between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation for the years 2007-2009.	25.1.07		25.1.07
85	Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on Holding "Year of Russia in India" in the Year 2008 and "Year of India in Russia" in the Year 2009	25.1.07		25.1.07
86	Minutes of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Russian-Indian Working Group on Energy.	11.10.07		
87	Protocol of the 3 rd Meeting of the Russian-Indian Working Group on Metallurgy and Mines of the Russian-Indian Intergovernmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation	12.9.07		

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
88	Russian-Indian Working Group for technologies Minutes of the Third Meeting	8.10.07		
89	Protocol of the Thirteenth Session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade , Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation	12.10.07		
90	Protocol of the 13 th Meeting of the Indian-Russian Working Group on Tourism & Culture of the Indian-Russian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade-Economic, Scientific-Technical and Cultural Cooperation.	13.9.07		
91	Protocol of the 13 th Session of the Russian-Indian Working Group on Trade, Economic Cooperation of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific-Technological and Cultural Cooperation.	31.8.07		
92	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Development and Production of Prospective Multi-Role Fighter.	18.10.07		
93	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on access of the Indian Party to a part of the Russian Global Navigation Satellite System GLONASS Radio Frequency Spectrum.	25.1.07		
94	Agreement between the Indian Space Research Organization and the Federal Space Agency on Cooperation in the Joint Satellite Project "YOUTHSAT".	25.1.07		25.1.07
95	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on the access of the Indian Party to navigation signals of the Russian Global Navigation Satellite System GLONASS for peaceful purposes.	25.1.07		
96	Protocol between the Central Board of Excise and Customs, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance (Republic of India) and the Federal Customs Service (Russian Federation) on exchange of information on the movement of goods and conveyances between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation.	25.1.07		25.1.07
97	Joint Statement on the Outcome of the Official Visit of H.E. Mr. Vladimir V. Putin, President of the Russian Federation to the Republic of India.	25.1.07		25.1.07

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
98	Memorandum of Intent between the Department of Atomic Energy, the Government of the Republic of India and Federal Atomic Energy Agency, the Russian Federation on Development of Cooperation in the Construction of Additional Nuclear Power Plant Units at Kudankulam Site as well as in the construction of Russian Design Nuclear Power Plants at New Sites in the Republic of India.	25.1.07		25.1.07
99	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Development and Production of Prospective Multi-Role Fighter.	18.10.07		
100	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation to combat illicit trafficking in Narcotics, Psychotropic substances and their precursors.	12.11.07		12.11.07
101	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Development and Production of Multi-Role Transport Aircraft.	12.11.07		12.11.07
102	Letters of Exchange (on utilization of rupee debt funds for Russian investments in India).	12.11.07		12.11.07
103	Agreement between the Indian Space Research Organization and the Federal Space Agency on Cooperation in the Field of Joint Moon Exploration.	12.11.07		12.11.07
Singapore				
104	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Singapore on the Establishment of the Joint Ministerial Committee for Bilateral Cooperation.	19.6.07		19.6.07
Spain				
105	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade of Spain For Cooperation in the Field of Science and Technology.	12.6.07		12.6.07
Serbia				
106	Agreement on Visas Exemption for Diplomatic and Official Passport Holders between India and Serbia.	17.9.07		
107	Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of India and Diplomatic Academy of Serbia.	17.9.07		17.9.07

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
108	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investment.	31.1.03	18.12.07	
109	Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Serbia.	7.2.06	18.12.07	
110	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Serbia on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education and Sports.	20.9.02	18.12.07	
	Slovenia			
111	Memorandum of Understanding by and between the CSIR of the Republic of India and the ICPE of Slovenia.	19.11.07		
	Tunisia			
112	Cultural Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Republic of Tunisia (2007-2009).	8.2.07		
113	Cooperation Agreement in the field of small and medium sized enterprises between The Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the Republic of Tunisia.	8.2.07		
114	Air Service Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia.	8.2.07		
	Thailand			
115	Executive Programme of Cultural Exchange between the Government of The Republic of India and The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for the years 2007-2009.	26.6.07		26.6.07
116	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India and The Ministry of Energy Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on Enhanced Cooperation in the Filed of Renewable Energy Preamble.	26.6.07		26.6.07
	Trinidad and Tobago			
117	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Indian and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the Promotion and Protection of Investment.	12.3.07	20.4.07	
	UAE			
118	Agreed Minutes of the Ninth Session of the India-UAE Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Co-operation.	6.6.07		

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
119	Memorandum of Understanding for Technical Cooperation between the Bureau of Indian Standards and Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology.	26.3.07		
120	Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Arab Emirates for Developing Industrial Relations.	26.3.07		26.3.07
121	Protocol Amending the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Arab Emirates for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income signed in India on 29 April 1992.	26.3.07		
122	Memorandum of Understanding between Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Emirates Securities and Commodities Authority (ESCA) in relation to Assistance and Mutual Cooperation on the Exchange of Information.	26.3.07		26.3.07
123	Memorandum of Understanding for Technical Cooperation in Accreditation Activities between National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) and The Emirates Authority for Standardization & Metrology (ESMA).	26.3.07		26.3.07
Uganda				
124	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Uganda on Cooperation in the Fields of Agriculture and Allied Sectors.	30.5.07		30.5.07
125	Agreement between Ministry of External Affairs Government of India and Hole-In-the Wall Education Ltd (HIWEL) for setting up of a Hole-In-The-Wall Pilot Project in Uganda.	21.5.07		
United State of America				
126	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Urban Development Government of the Republic of India and the Department of Transportation of the United states of America on Cooperation in Public Transportation Science and Technology.	19.9.07		
Vietnam				
127	Joint Declaration on the Strategic Partnership between India and Vietnam.	6.7.07		6.7.07

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
128	Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on Cooperation in the Field of Education.	6.7.07		6.7.07
129	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on the exchange of properties and land for their respective Diplomatic Missions.	6.7.07		
130	Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Cooperation in the field of Fisheries and Aquaculture between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Fisheries of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.	6.7.07		6.7.07
131	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for Establishing the Centre for English Language Training in Danang City – Vietnam.	6.7.07		
132	Cultural Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for the Years 2007-2010.	6.7.07		6.7.07
133	Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) of the Government of the Republic of India and Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) of Government of Socialist Republic of Vietnam.	6.7.07		6.7.07
134	Agreed Minutes of the Thirteenth Meeting of India-Vietnam Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation Held at New Delhi on 27 February 2007.	27.2.07		
135	Work Plan for the years 2007-2009 under the Indo-Vietnam MoU for Agricultural Research and Education.	6.7.07		6.7.07
136	Treaty between the Republic of India and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	8.10.07	19.10.07	
Yemen				
137	Agreed Minutes of the Sixth Session of the Indo-Yemen Joint Committee for Economic Scientific and Technical Co-operation held in New Delhi, Republic of India 10-11 April 2007.	11.4.07		

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
138	Protocol of Bilateral Cooperation in the Field of Oil and Gas Industry between the Ministry of Oil and Minerals of the Republic of Yemen and the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas of the Republic of India.	3.2.07		

Appendix XII

Instruments of Full Powers Issued during the period 1 January 2007 to December 2007

Sl. No.	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Powers
1.	In favour of Shri Nirupam Sen, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations for signing the Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property.	8.1.07
2.	In favour of Shri K.P. Singh, Secretary (Defence Production) for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of India on the Transfer to the Republic of India of Licenses and Technical Documents for the Production of RD-33 Engine ser. 3, its Aggregates, KSA-2 Aircraft Gear Box and GTDE-117 Gas Turbine Engine-Power Unit (Turbine Starter) and on Technical Assistance in Organization of their Production.	23.1.07
3.	In favour of Shri K.V. Bhagirath, Charge d' Affaires, <i>ad interim</i> of the Republic of India in France, London for signing the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	5.02.07
4	Protocol Amending the TRIPS Agreement	09.03.07
5	In favour of Shri Nirupam Sen, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations of the Government of the Republic of India for signing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	29.3.07
6	In favour of Shri Kanti Lal Bhuria, Minister of State for Agriculture for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Rwanda on Cooperation in the Fields of Agriculture and Animal Resources.	16.4.07
7	In favour of Shri Kanti Lal Bhuria, Minister of State for Agriculture for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Uganda on Cooperation in the Fields of Agriculture and Allied Sectors	16.4.07
8	In favour of Shri Kanti Lal Bhuria, Minister of State for Agriculture for signing the Agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus on Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture.	16.4.07
9	In favour of Shri P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Mexican States on the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	19.5.07
10.	In favour of Shri P. R. Dasmunsi, Minister of Information & Broadcasting for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Audio Visual Co-Productions	4.6.07
11.	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister for Science and Technology for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade of Spain For Cooperation in the Field of Science and Technology.	7.6.07
12.	In favour of Shri J. P. Batra, Chairman, Railway Board for signing the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network.	18.6.07
13.	In favour of Ms. Charusheela Sohoni, Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry Dairying and Fisheries for signing the Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Fisheries Development between the Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Government of India and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland.	18.6.07

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Sl. No.	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Powers
14.	In favour of Shri P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Iceland for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	25.6.07
15.	In favour of Shri Priyaranjan Dasmunshi, Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on Audio Visual Co-Production.	19.7.07
16.	In favour of Shri Balakrishna Shetty, then Ambassador of India to Senegal for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Senegal for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	2.8.07
17.	In favour of Shri Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs for signing the Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the State of Qatar and the Republic of India on the Regulation of the Employment of Indian Manpower signed on eleventh day of April in the year nineteen hundred and eighty five.	24.8.07
18.	In favour of Shri V. Subramanian, Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy for signing the Memorandum of Understanding on Indo-Iceland Renewable Energy Cooperation between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of the Republic of Iceland.	3.9.07
19.	In favour of Shri K.P. Singh, Secretary (Defence Production), for the signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Development and Production of Prospective Multi-Role Fighter.	25.10.07
20	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences for signing the Agreement between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of Republic of Maldives on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology	25.10.07
21	In favour of Smt. Meira Kumar, Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment for signing the Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Social Defence Including Welfare of the Elderly, Programme of Drug Demand Reduction, Disability, and Other Areas in the General Field of Social Defence between Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of the Republic of India and Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institution of the Republic of Mauritius.	30.10.07
22	In favour of Shri Nalin Surie, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Turkey concerning the Mutual Abolition of Visas for Holders of Diplomatic Passports.	15.11.07
23	In favour of Shri P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance for signing the Agreement and the Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Iceland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income	21.11.07
24	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Austria on Scientific and Technological Co-operation	23.11.07
25	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands on Co-operation in the Fields of Science, Technology and Innovation	23.11.07

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Sl. No.	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Powers
26	In favour of Shri P. P. Shukla, Ambassador of India to the Russian Federation for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of India on Russian-Indian Cooperation in Production of Empennage Aggregates for Su-30 MK Airframe and their Installation On Su-30-MK-Type Aircraft Produced in Russia	29.11.07
27	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences for signing the Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the European Community.	29.11.07
28	In favour of Shri Shivshankar Menon, Foreign Secretary for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar for Establishing India-Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of Information Technology Skills (IMCEITS) at Yangon.	10.12.07
29	In favour of Shri Nirupam Sen, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, for signing the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006	20.12.07

Appendix XIII

Instruments of Ratification/Accession issued during the period 1 January 2007 to December 2007

Sl. No.	Instruments of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification
1.	Convention on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters.	10.1.2007
2.	Agreement on cooperation in the Hydrocarbon sector between the Republic of India and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.	9.2.07
3.	Agreement on the Establishment of the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization for the Joint Implementation of the ITER Project.	19.2.07
4.	Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization for the Joint Implementation of the ITER Project	19.2.07
5.	India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty	19.2.07
6	Agreement on cooperation in the Field of Tourism between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines	21.3.07
7	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	26.3.07
8	Agreement on Establishing the SAARC Food Bank.	17.4.07
9	Agreement for Establishment of South Asian University.	17.4.07
10	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance Statutes.	19.4.07
11	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	20.04.07
12	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	20.4.07
13	Memorandum of Understanding on Trilateral Cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Fields between the Governments of the Republic of India, The Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of South Africa under the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum Initiative	10.5.07
14.	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Mexican States on the Promotion and Protection of Investments	2.7.07
15.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on Scientific and Technological Cooperation	18.7.07
16	Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Republic of Belarus	2.8.07
17	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Federative Republic of Brazil on Scientific and Technological Co-operation	7.8.07

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Sl. No.	Instruments of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification
18	Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network	7.8.07
19	Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material	9.8.07
20	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Republic of Azerbaijan on the Inter-governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation	16.8.07
21	Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Republic of Mauritius	21.8.07
22	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments	21.8.07
23	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments	3.9.07
24	The International Convention against Doping in Sport	10.9.07
25	The Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria	24.9.07
26	The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	24.9.07
27	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of United Mexican States on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	28.9.07
28	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Iceland for the Promotion and Protection of Investments	19.10.07
29	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Vietnam on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	19.10.07
30	The Agreement on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Portuguese Republic.	25.10.07
31	The Agreement between the Republic of India and the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	8.11.07
32	The Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria amending the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria for the Promotion and Protection of Investment signed in New Delhi on the twenty sixth day of October in the year nineteen thousand and ninety eight.	8.11.07
33	The Audio Visual Co-Production Agreement between the Republic of India and the Government of the Italian Republic	20.11.07
34	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia concerning the Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	21.11.07
35	The Treaty on Extradition between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Mexican States.	21.11.07

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Sl. No.	Instruments of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification
36	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.	18.12.07
37	Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Serbia.	18.12.07
38	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Serbia on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education and Sports.	18.12.07

Appendix XIV

Conference/ Seminars/ Study projects organized/ undertaken by Institutions/ NGOs, which were funded, partially or wholly, by Policy Planning & Research Division till January 2008

Sl. No.	Event	Institution / Beneficiary
1.	Seminar on "India-China Border Trade-a Strategy for Frontier Development" on 5-6 March 2007 at Gangtok.	Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) North Eastern Regional Centre, Shillong (Meghalaya)
2.	International Seminar on "Envisioning A New South Asia" from 29-31 March 2007 at Visakhapatnam.	Centre for SAARC Studies, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam (A.P)
3.	Study on "Newer Dynamics of India's Nepal Policy: Challenges, Options and Way Forward" by Prof. Mahendra P. Lama.	Centre for Public Affairs (CPA), Noida (UP)
4.	Research Projects on i. Indo-Myanmar Geo-political and security relations: Measures for improving trade & economic tie-ups. ii. Impediments in India's "Look East" policy: suggested remedies. iii. Indo-Russian strategic relations in the new world order: Opportunities/Challenges. iv. New realities in the Indian Ocean Region: How can India benefit from them?	Asia Centre, Bangalore
5.	Study on "The National Interest Project".	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi.
6.	Study by the Task Force on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation set up by Ministry of External Affairs consisting of Dr. K. Subrahmanyam, Arundhati Ghose, Shyam Saran and others.	Ministry of External Affairs
7.	Financial assistance to the Centre for the Advanced Study of India (CASI).	University of Pennsylvania (USA)
8.	7 th India-Korea Dialogue in October 2007 at Seoul (Korea).	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi.
9.	3 rd International Congress of the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA) at New Delhi from 23-25 November 2007.	Developing Countries Research Centre(DCRC), University of Delhi.
10.	Seminar on "India and the Gulf"	Association of Indian Diplomats (AID), New Delhi
11.	Publication of "Foreign Affairs Journal"	Association of Indian Diplomats (AID), New Delhi
12.	Research Project on "Contemporary Myanmar: From Isolation to Active Engagement - By Dr. K. Yhome	Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi
13.	7 th International Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation - Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar (BCIM) at Dhaka	Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), New Delhi
14.	5 th Conference on "International Dimension of Environmental Law" on 8-9 December 2007	Indian Society of International Law (ISIL)

Appendix XIV

Sl. No.	Event	Institution / Beneficiary
15.	International Seminar on “Democracy, Nation Building and Peace in South Asia: Challenges and Prospects” from 10-12 December 2007	Rajiv Gandhi Chair in Contemporary Studies, Allahabad University University of Allahabad.
16.	2nd Sustainability Summit: Asia 2007 held on 11-12 December 2007	Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), New Delhi
17.	Research Study on “Foundational Crisis in South and South East Asia - A study of Bangladesh, Indonesia & Malaysia” - By Dr. Abu Nasar Saied Ahmed	Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development (OKDISCD), Guwahati
18.	Research Project on “Central Asia-China Relations, 1991-2006” by Prof. K. Warikoo, JNU, New Delhi	The Centre for South, Central & South East Asian Studies (CSCSEAS), JNU, New Delhi
19.	International Seminar on “India and South-Asia : Strategic Convergence in the 21 st Century” from 3-5 January 2008	Centre for SAARC Studies (CSS) Andhra University, Vishakapatnam (AP)
20.	Conference on “The Landscape of Regional Integration” on 11-12 January 2008	Association of Asia Scholars (AAS), New Delhi.
21.	International Conference on “Afghanistan” February 2008.	Centre for South, Central Southeast Asia and Southwest Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi.
22.	Seminar on “State and Society in Pakistan” and “India-Pakistan Relations”	India-Pakistan Friendship Society (IPFS), New Delhi
23.	28 th Round Talks of Track-II Dialogue with Pakistan at Islamabad.	India-Pakistan Neemrana Initiative (IPNI), New Delhi
24.	Seminar on “Cooperation Development and Peace in Central Asia: An Indian Perspective”	The Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID), Chandigarh
25.	Study Project on “Analysis of Alternative Course for India: Post Kyoto Negotiations”	Integrated Research and Action for Development (IRADe), New Delhi

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List of ITEC/SCAAP partner countries

S. No	Countries	S. No	Countries
1	Afghanistan	41	Democratic Republic of Congo
2	Albania	42	Djibouti
3	Algeria	43	Dominican Republic
4	Angola	44	East Timor
5	Anguilla	45	Ecuador
6	Antigua and Barbuda	46	Egypt
7	Argentina	47	El-Salvador
8	Armenia	48	Equatorial Guinea
9	Azerbaijan	49	Eritrea
10	Bahamas	50	Estonia
11	Bahrain	51	Ethiopia
12	Bangladesh	52	Fiji
13	Barbados	53	Gabon
14	Belarus	54	Gambia
15	Belize	55	Georgia
16	Benin	56	Ghana
17	Bhutan	57	Grenada
18	Bolivia	58	Guatemala
19	Bosnia - Herzegovina	59	Guinea
20	Botswana	60	Guinea Bissau
21	Brazil	61	Guyana
22	Brunei Darussalam	62	Haiti
23	Bulgaria	63	Honduras
24	Burkina Faso	64	Hungary
25	Burundi	65	Indonesia
26	Cambodia	66	Iran
27	Cameroon	67	Iraq
28	Cape Verde Island	68	Ivory Coast
29	Cayman Island	69	Jamaica
30	Central African Republic	70	Jordan
31	Chad	71	Kazakhstan
32	Chile	72	Kenya
33	Colombia	73	Kiribati
34	Commonwealth of Dominica	74	Korea (DPRK)
35	Comoros	75	Kyrgyzstan
36	Congo	76	Laos
37	Costa Rica	77	Latvia
38	Croatia	78	Lebanon
39	Cuba	79	Lesotho
40	Czech Republic	80	Liberia

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S. No	Countries	S. No	Countries
81	Libya	119	Rwanda
82	Lithuania	120	Samoa
83	Macedonia	121	Senegal
84	Madagascar	122	Seychelles
85	Malaysia	123	Singapore
86	Malawi	124	Sierra Leone
87	Maldives	125	Slovak Republic
88	Mali	126	Solomon Island
89	Marshall Islands	127	South Africa
90	Mauritius	128	Sri Lanka
91	Mauritania	129	St. Kitts & Nevis
92	Mexico	130	St. Lucia
93	Micronesia	131	St. Vincent & Grenadines
94	Moldova	132	Sudan
95	Mongolia	133	Suriname
96	Montserrat	134	Syria
97	Morocco	135	Swaziland
98	Mozambique	136	Tanzania
99	Myanmar	137	Tajikistan
100	Namibia	138	Thailand
101	Nauru	139	Togo
102	Nepal	140	Tonga
103	Nicaragua	141	Trinidad & Tobago
104	Niger	142	Tunisia
105	Nigeria	143	Turkey
106	Oman	144	Turkmenistan
107	Palau	145	Turks & Caicos Island
108	Palestine	146	Tuvalu
109	Panama	147	Uganda
110	Papua New Guinea	148	Ukraine
111	Paraguay	149	Uruguay
112	Peru	150	Uzbekistan
113	Philippines	151	Vanuatu
114	Poland	152	Venezuela
115	Qatar	153	Vietnam
116	Republic Of Sao Tome	154	Yemen
117	Romania	155	Zambia
118	Russia	156	Zimbabwe

Appendix XVI

Seminars/Conferences/Lectures/Meetings organized by ICWA

S. No.	Date	Event
1.	2 April 2007	Lecture on Russia's Strategic Partnerships in Asia by Mikhail Titarenko, Director, Institute of Far Eastern Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow (in association with the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS))
2.	9-10 April 2007	India-Malaysia Strategic Dialogue including Luncheon Keynote Address on 10 April 2007 by Syed Hamid Albar, Foreign Minister of Malaysia. Chaired by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma
3.	15-17 April 2007	1 st Meeting of CSCAP Study Group on Oceania held in Wellington New Zealand, attended by Dr. Sanjay Chaturvedi.
4.	19 April 2007	Talk on Recent Developments in Afghanistan and Afghanistan Pakistan Relations: Implications for the Region by Dr. Frederic Grare, Director, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington DC.
5.	20-21 April 2007	International Conference on India-Nepal Relations: Looking at the Future - Visit of Nepal Delegation . Inaugural Address by M.K. Rasgotra (in collaboration with the Antar Rashtriya Sahyog Parishad)
6.	23-24 April 2007	1 st Study Group Meeting of CSCAP on Asia Pacific Cooperation for Energy Security held in Singapore, attended by Talmiz Ahmad and Dr. B. Mohanty.
7.	1 May 2007	Release of the book: Contemporary Saudi Arabia & the Emerging Indo-Saudi Relations by Ishrat Aziz (in association with the Gulf Studies Programme, Jawaharlal Nehru University).
8.	1-2 June 2007	Regional Conference on SAARC: Fourteenth Summit & Beyond (in association with Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF)).
9.	03 June 2007	27 th Steering Committee Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, attended by K.K.S. Rana and Prof. Radha Kumar.
10.	4-8 June 2007	21 st Asia Pacific Round Table meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, attended by Prof. Radha Kumar.
11.	12 June 2007	Foreign Affairs Discussion on The Role of Taiwan's Economy in the Regional and International Environment Lead Speaker: Ma Ying-Jeou from Taiwan.
12.	18-20 June 2007	Visit of ICWA delegation led by P.K. Kapur, DDG, ICWA to Hanoi in the Commemorative Seminar to mark the 35 th Anniversary of the Establishment of full Diplomatic Relations between India and Vietnam.
13.	22 June 2007	Seminar on Palestine: 1967 and After (in association with the League of Arab States Mission)
14.	7 July 2007	Release of two books: Asian Diplomacy: The Foreign Ministries of China, India, Japan, Singapore & Thailand [Written by Kishan S. Rana] and Foreign Ministries: Managing Diplomatic Networks and Optimizing Value (Edited by Kishan S. Rana and Jovan Kurbalija,

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S. No.	Date	Event
		Director, DiploFoundation) by Shivshankar Menon, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.
15.	20 July 2007	Discussion on Politics in 21st Century India led by Mahesh Rangarajan Visiting Professor, Department of History, Jadavpur University, Kolkata and Yogendra Yadav, Co-Director of Lokniti and Senior Fellow, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies.
16..	23 July 2007	Lecture on India and Germany – Partners of Choice in a Globalising World by Bernd Muetzelburg, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to India (in association with the Federation of Indo-German Societies in India)
17.	26 July 2007	Release of Muniza Agha-Fawad's book: Ghulam Rasul – Another Migration by Satish Gujral and an Exhibition of Paintings by Ghulam Rasul.
18.	31 July 2007	Meeting with the Delegation of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Federal Parliament of Germany on Foreign and Security Policy Issues.
19.	6-9 September 2007	2 nd Meeting of CSCAP Study Group on Malacca and Singapore Straits held in Jakarta, Indonesia, attended by Commodore Uday C. Bhaskar (Retd.).
20.	11 September 2007	Lecture by Sergei Stanishev, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria on Bulgaria in the European Union: Strengthening the Bulgaria – India Partnership.
21.	13-15 September 2007	2 nd Meeting of Study Group on Energy Security held in Goa, hosted by CSCAP India.
22.	24 September 2007	Launch of the book Rising India: Friends and Foes: Essays in Honour of Professor ML Sondhi by Satinder K. Lambah, Special Envoy, Prime Minister's Office (in collaboration with The Professor ML Sondhi Memorial Committee (auxiliary of the ML Sondhi Memorial Trust)).
23.	9 October 2007	Group Discussion on the book: India and the United States, Politics of the sixties.
24.	10 October 2007	Lecture by Massimo D' Alema, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy on Italy, Europe and India: Making the Multilateral System Stronger.
25.	15 October 2007	MoU between ICWA and Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.
26.	16-17 October 2007	Third India-Spain Dialogue Forum
27.	18-20 October 2007	Bilateral Dialogue with Poland
28.	24 October 2007	Lecture by Ilan Mizrahi, Head of Israel's National Security Council on Trends and Challenges in the Middle East and Beyond.
29.	30-31 October 2007	CSCAP Study Group Meeting on Preventive Diplomacy held in Brunei, attended by K.K.S. Rana, Prof. Pushpesh Pant, JNU, Dr. Rajan Kumar, JNU.

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S. No.	Date	Event
30.	13 November 2007	Interaction with the Study Group from Australian Institute of the International Affairs (AIIA), Canberra.
31.	14 November 2007	Seminar on Proliferation of Bio-Weapons: Challenges for Asian countries (in collaboration with the Association of Asia Scholars (AAS)).
32.	23 November 2007	Meeting with Egyptian Delegation

Appendix XVII

Seminars Organized by RIS

- Seminar on Governance Matters: Examining the Dimensions of Governance Relevant for Private Investment, New Delhi on 27 December 2007.
- Seminar on Third East Asia Summit and Future Prospects, New Delhi on 18 December 2007.
- Seminar on Regional Cooperation and Integration Prospects in Asia, New Delhi on 5 December 2007.
- Seminar on Regional Cooperation in Asia: Lessons from the Nordic Cooperation, New Delhi on 16 November 2007.
- RIS-UNESCAP High-Level Policy Dialogue on Regional Cooperation for Infrastructure Development and Financing, New Delhi on 21-22 March 2007.
- Regional Conference on Economic Cooperation in SAARC New Delhi on 19 March 2007.
- Seminar on Governance and Voice in the International Financial Institutions, New Delhi on 10 August 2007.

RIS Publications

Books and Reports

- World Trade and Development Report 2007: Building a Development Friendly World Trading System, Oxford University Press 2007.
- Trinity of the South: Potential of India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Partnership, RIS in association with Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2007.
- International Competitiveness and Knowledge-based Industries in India, Editors: Nagesh Kumar and KJ Joseph, RIS and Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Asia's New Regionalism and Global Role: Agenda for the East Asia Summit, Editors: Nagesh Kumar, K. Kesavapany and Yao Chao Cheng, RIS and ISEAS, Singapore in association with Bookwell, New Delhi, 2007.
- Environmental Risk Assessment, Socio-Economic Considerations and Decision – Making Support for LMOs in India, RIS, International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), Ministry of Environment and Forest, GEF and World Bank.
- Economic Considerations of Biosafety and Biotechnology Regulations in India, RIS and International Food Policy Research Institute and South Asia Bio-safety Programme, 2007.

Policy Briefs

- #30 Restoring Afghanistan-Pakistan-India-Bangladesh-Myanmar (APIBM) Corridor: Towards a New Silk Road in Asia
- #31 Towards an Asian Regional Mechanism for Addressing Excess Foreign Exchange Reserves, Infrastructure Deficits and Global Imbalances
- #32 Strengthening International Competitiveness in Knowledge-based Industries: A Strategic Approach
- #33 Broader Regional Economic Integration in Asia: An Agenda for the East Asia Summit Report of the RIS-ISEAS-IDE Sixth High-Level Conference on Asian Economic Integration

Discussion Papers

- #118 Trade Facilitation Measures in South Asian FTAs: An Overview of Initiatives and Policy Approaches by Sachin Chaturvedi
- #119 India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Free Trade Agreement: Six Years Performance and Beyond by Indra Nath Mukherji
- #120 Relevance of 'Policy Space' for Development: Implications for Multilateral Trade Negotiations by Nagesh Kumar and Kevin P. Gallagher
- #121 India's Rising Role in Asia by Mukul G. Asher
- #122 Community-based Rights and IPR Regime: Revisiting the Debate by Srividhya Raghvan and Jamie Mayer
- #123 Regional Economic Integration, Foreign Direct Investment and Efficiency-Seeking Industrial Restructuring in Asia: The Case of India by Nagesh Kumar
- #124 Emergence of Indian Biopharmaceutical Sector: Issues and Prospects by Sachin Chaturvedi
- #125 Investment Provisions in Regional Trading Arrangements in Asia: Relevance, Emerging Trends and Policy Implications by Nagesh Kumar

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#126	Welfare Gains from Regional Economic Integration in Asia: ASEAN+3 or EAS by SK Mohanty and Sanjib Pohit	3.	Asian Biotechnology and Development Review, Vol. 9(2), March 2007.
#127	Brazilian Economy: recent evolution and new perspectives for South-South cooperation by Maria Lúcia LM Pádua Lima	4.	Asian Biotechnology and Development Review, Vol. 9(3), July 2007.
#128	WTO and Trade in Electronically Delivered Software (EDS): Emerging Challenges and Policy Options – An Indian Perspective by Sachin Chaturvedi and SK Mohanty	5.	Asian Biotechnology and Development Review, Vol. 10(1), November 2007.
#129	Intellectual Property Regime, Indigenous Knowledge and Access and Benefit Sharing: Drawing Lessons from Kani Case by Sachin Chaturvedi	6.	New Asia Monitor, Vol. 4 No. 2, April 2007.
#130	Deepening India-Bangladesh Economic Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities by Prabir De and Biswa N Bhattacharya	7.	New Asia Monitor, Vol. 4 No. 3, July 2007.
#131	Regional Cooperation and Integration Prospects in Asia by Rajat Nag	8.	New Asia Monitor, Vol. 4 No. 4, October 2007.
	Periodicals	9.	Mekong-Ganga Policy Brief, No. 1, March 2007.
1.	South Asia Economic Journal (Vol. 8 No. 1) January-June 2007.	10.	Mekong-Ganga Policy Brief, No. 2, October 2007.
2.	South Asia Economic Journal (Vol. 8 No. 1) July-December 2007.		Newsletter
			RIS Diary, Vol. 5 No. 2, April 2007.
			RIS Diary, Vol. 5 No. 3, July 2007.
			RIS Diary, Vol. 5 No. 4, October 2007.
			RIS Diary, Vol. 6 No. 1, January 2008.

Abbreviations

AALCO	Asian African Legal Consultative Organisation	ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
AMM	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting	EIL	Engineers India Limited
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum	EMM	East Asia Energy Ministers Meeting
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations	EU	European Union
ASEM	Asia Europe Meeting	EXIM	Export Import Bank of India
ASSO-CHAM	Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry	FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
AU	African Union	FIPB	Foreign Investment Promotion Board
AYUSH	Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy	FOC	Foreign Office Consultations
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation	FTA	Free Trade Agreement
CECA	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement	GAIL	Gas Authority of India Limited
CEP	Cultural Exchange Programme	GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meet	GST	Goods and Service Tax
CIC	Central Information Commission	HAL	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry	HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno Virus / Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	IBF	India Business Forum
CORPAT	Coordinated Patrol	ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
COSC	Chiefs of Staff Committee	ICRIER	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations
CPIO	Central Public Information Officer	ICT	Information and Communication Technology
CPV	Consular Passport and Visa	ICWA	Indian Council of World Affairs
CSCAP	Council for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific	IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
CSD	Comprehensive Security Dialogue	IFS	Indian Foreign Service
DIPP	Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion	IIBF	Indian Institute of Banking and Finance
DSSC	Defence Services Staff College	IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
DTAC	Double Taxation Avoidance Convention	ILO	International Labour Organisation
EAC	East African Community	INS	Indian Navy Ship
EAS	East Asia Summit	INSTC	International North-South Transport Corridor
		IOR-ARC	Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation

Abbreviations

ISCS	Inter-State Council Secretariat	RBI	Reserve of Bank of India
ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation	RITES	Rail India Technical Economic Service
JWG	Joint Working Group	RTI	Right to Information
LNG	Liquified Natural Gas	SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
MERC-OSUR	Market of Southern Cone Countries	SADC	Southern African Development Community
MFN	Most Favoured Nation	SAFTA	South Asia Free Trade Agreement
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding	SBI	State Bank of India
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development	SCAAP	Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme
NAFED	National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited	SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement	SEBI	Securities and Exchange Board of India
NASSCOM	National Association of Software and Service Companies	SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	SEZ	Special Economic Zone
NELP	New Exploration Licensing Policy	SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development	STPI	Software Technology Parks of India
NIC	National Information Centre	TEAM-9	Techno-Economic Approach for Africa India Movement
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	UNCTAD	United Nations Conferences on Trade and Development
NSC	National Security Council	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group	UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
OCI	Overseas Citizenship of India	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	UPA	United Progressive Alliance
ONGC	Oil and Natural Gas Corporation	VSNL	Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited
PIO	Persons of Indian Origin	WTO	World Trade Organisation

