

# India-Italy Joint Statement and Plan of Action 2020-2024

November 06, 2020

H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India and H.E. Mr. Giuseppe Conte, Prime Minister of Republic of Italy co-chaired a Virtual Summit between India and Italy on 6 November 2020. The two Prime Ministers held wide ranging discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues. They acknowledged significant progress in bilateral relations over the past two years since Prime Minister Conte's visit to India in 2018.

## Synergising the Partnership

1. The two Prime Ministers appreciated the deep civilization ties between the two countries and welcomed the high degree of convergence in the political, economic and strategic interests of the two countries that provides an enduring basis for a long-term partnership. They expressed their views to further consolidate and strengthen the bilateral relationship between India and Italy in the years ahead. They expressed satisfaction at the steady growth of political exchanges, dialogue and policy coordination at all levels. They agreed to strengthen the existing consultation mechanisms both at ministerial and senior-official level.

## Strengthening Economic Engagement

2. The two Prime Ministers underlined the need to intensify cooperation in high technology, clean energy and energy sector development, infrastructure, food processing. The two leaders acknowledged the untapped potential of bilateral industrial partnership and projects and encouraged respective "national champions" and SMEs to explore new avenues of cooperation. The two leaders deeply appreciated holding of the High Level Economic Dialogue at the level of CEOs of Indian and Italian companies on 28 October 2020 and ministerial interaction on 2 November 2020 prior to the Summit.

3. They agreed to promote innovative financial schemes capable of supporting bilateral investments. In

this context, signing of MoU between Cassa Depositi Prestiti (CDP) and National Infrastructure Investment Fund (NIIF) was welcomed by both leaders.

4. They affirmed their commitment to work closely on common priorities and a development oriented global agenda for their respective Presidencies of the G20 in order to address, inter alia, the impact of and the response to Covid-19 in all the relevant domains. In the framework of the G20 Troika, G20 Sherpas of the two countries will hold regular consultations to take stock of activities and work towards an agenda that includes common priorities for the two Presidencies of the G20 and for their legacy.

### **Enhancing Defence Cooperation**

5. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the steady strengthening of defence cooperation between the two countries and recognized the importance of regular defence exchanges between the two countries. They underscored the need to further expand defence engagement through greater two-way collaboration and technology cooperation, co-development and co-production, by expediting discussions through the Joint Defence Committee and Military Cooperation Group. They recognised the opportunity to consolidate defence relations with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping activities within the framework of the United Nations.

### **Cooperation during Covid-19 pandemic**

6. The Italian Prime Minister thanked India for extending support to Italy during the pandemic by supplying medicines and personal protection equipment (PPE). Both leaders agreed that the pandemic has severely challenged the health and economic capabilities of all countries. The two Leaders concurred that the Covid-19 pandemic calls for an inclusive multilateral approach to health protection, especially in the framework of the United Nations and the World Health Organization. In this context, they stressed their Governments' readiness to enhance consultations for cooperation in the health sector. The Italian side highlighted the first results reached by the global initiative "ACT-Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator", including the Covax Facility, to guarantee fair and universal access to diagnostic, therapeutic and vaccines. The two Leaders also welcomed the Global Health Summit, which will be held in Italy in the context of the Italian G 20 Presidency in 2021, in cooperation with the EU Commission.

### **Enhancing science, technology and research collaboration**

7. The two Prime Ministers recognized that scientific cooperation between States is paramount to this end and reaffirmed their will to work together. They welcomed the progress made under India-Italy Science and Technology Cooperation and noted with satisfaction the implementation of various S&T activities under India-Italy Executive Programme of Cooperation.

8. Both leaders acknowledged the importance of space cooperation for peaceful purposes and suggested that the Italian Space Agency (ASI) and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) implement their cooperation by expanding some areas of common interest such as earth observation and related applications, disaster management, space science and exploration. They welcomed the establishment of Thematic Working Groups as method of work between the two agencies as well as the creation of the first joint ASI-ISRO working group in heliophysics field involving experts and scientists from both countries.

## **Enhancing Cooperation in the field of counter terrorism and security**

9. The two Prime Ministers condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Consistent with relevant Resolutions of the United Nations, both sides support a comprehensive approach in preventing and combating terrorism, based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and international law.

10. They expressed satisfaction at the meetings of the India-Italy Joint working Group on Counter Terrorism and their cooperation in multilateral fora. Both sides agreed to hold the next meeting of the Working Group to further advance cooperation, exchange of expertise and capacity building in countering terrorism and transnational crime in 2021. Both the leaders pledged to strengthen cooperation in the fight against terrorism and transnational crime both at bilateral level and in multilateral fora.

## **Enhancing regional cooperation and connectivity**

11. The Leaders reaffirmed the crucial role that connectivity plays in promoting economic growth and people-to-people contacts in the 21st century. They stressed the importance of the Indo-Pacific region as a fundamental area for connecting Asia and Europe and stated their Countries' willingness to support all connectivity initiatives based on internationally recognised norms and standards, good governance, rule of law, inclusiveness, transparency and level-playing field.

12. The leaders acknowledged the potential of new international organizations such as the Coalition on Disaster Resilient Infrastructures (CDRI) and the International Solar Alliance (ISA). India welcomed Italy as a founding member of CDRI. India looks forward to Italy joining ISA after coming into force of the universalisation of ISA. India welcomed Italy's engagement in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and Italy's new status as Development Partner of Asean.

## **Partners in a multilateral world**

13. The two Leaders emphasized the importance of the consecutive G20 Presidencies that Italy and India will hold in 2021 and 2022 respectively, which will offer a significant opportunity to provide continuity in the fight against the pandemic and in addressing all other major issues of global governance. They welcomed the coordination which has been established through their relevant Government offices in order to harmonize Italy's and India's respective agendas, aimed at ensuring an inclusive recovery resulting in strong, sustainable, balanced, inclusive and resilient growth and promoting human, environmental and economic well-being.

14. In the framework of their greater coordination on global issues, the two Countries reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement and their respective nationally determined contributions. They also reiterated their commitment to cooperate in the field of disaster risk reduction and management, both at bilateral and multilateral level. The two leaders also highlighted the significance of cooperation in the run-up to the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) of the UNFCCC, which will be organized next year by the United Kingdom in partnership with Italy.

15. Both leaders underlined the strong solidarity existing between Italy and India in supporting each

other's candidatures within multilateral fora, as further evidence of their shared responsibilities in global governance.

## **EU-India**

16. The two Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the successful completion of 15th India-EU Summit held in July 2020 and expressed their shared commitment towards implementation of the "India-EU Strategic Partnership: Roadmap to 2025". They agreed that the implementation of the Roadmap will further intensify India-EU partnership in several areas including trade, investment, connectivity, digital technologies and climate. They stressed upon the need for India and the EU to actively re-engage towards an early resumption of negotiations for mutually beneficial India-EU Trade and Investment Agreements. The two leaders agreed to work closely together for the success of 16th India-EU summit to be held in 2021.

### **Culture, Tourism and People-to-people ties**

17. The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their resolve to further promote people-to-people exchanges between the two countries, particularly through youth and student exchanges. Both leaders underlined the importance of enhancing cooperation in the tourism sector to encourage and facilitate the visits of tourists to each other's country. The two Prime Ministers stressed the need to further strengthen the opportunities for tourism, culture and educational collaboration, and decided to organize culture festivals as India in Italy in year 2021 in Italy and Italy in India in year 2022 in India.

18. They reiterated their strong commitment to further consolidate friendly and amicable bilateral ties and agreed to intensify engagements at all levels.

19. The following MoUs were signed coinciding with the Summit:

I. MoU between the Italian Trade Agency and Invest India.

II. MoU to promote co-financing between Cassa Depositi e Prestiti SpA (CDP), Italy and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF), India.

III. MoU among the Indian Institute of Technology (Kanpur), Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and Soprintendenza Archeologica Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Venezia on creating network and sharing skills for restoration and protection of monuments.

IV. Addendum to the Executive Protocol for Scientific and Technological Cooperation between Italy and India on industrial projects;

V. Exchange of Notes on the Rules of Procedure for approval of co-production status under art. 15 of the Audio-Visual co-production agreement between the Government of the Republic of Italy and the Government of Republic of India.

VI. MoU between Fincantieri S.p.A., Italy and Cochin Shipyard Limited, India on design, shipbuilding and manufacturing.

VII. MoU between Fincantieri S.p.A., Italy and Cochin Shipyard Limited, India on repair/refit.

VIII. Cooperation Agreement to promote energy transition between Snam S.p.A., Italy and Adani Entreprises Ltd, India.

IX. Cooperation Agreement to set-up a CNG compressors factory in India between Snam S.p.A., Italy and Adani Gas Ltd, India.

X. MoU to enhance the development of green hydrogen between Snam S.p.A., Italy and Greenko Energies Private Ltd, India.

XI. MoU to promote energy transition and cooperate on gas infrastructures development between Snam S.p.A., Italy and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. India.

XII. MoU in the area of conversion of plastic recycling between NextChem (Maire Tecnimont Group), Italy and Indian Oil Cooperation, India.

XIII. MoU on the fisheries sector between ASSOITTICA of Italy and Seafood Exporters Association of India.

XIV. MoU on Cost Free Content Exchange between ANI Media Pvt. Ltd., India and RCS Media Group S. p. A., Italy.

XV. MoU on Student Exchange between Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI), India and ZeLIG, Italy.

20. In order to expand the range of bilateral engagement and to build a strategic partnership the two Prime Ministers adopted the "Action Plan for an enhanced Partnership" between the two Countries based on four pillars (political dialogue; economic engagement; partnership in the field of science and technology; cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges). The Action Plan, which is included herewith, will represent the framework for the development of bilateral relations through the setting up of new instruments of cooperation and the streamlining of the existing ones.

### **Action Plan for an enhanced Partnership between India and Italy (2020 – 2024)**

On the occasion of today's High Level Meeting, the President of the Council of Ministers of Italy and the Prime Minister of India jointly recalled the historical ties between India and Italy based on shared principles and values of democracy, freedom, rule of law and respect of human rights.

They reached a common understanding on the development of a solid architecture for an increasingly articulate partnership and, on these grounds, decided to adopt this Action Plan to set up priorities, strategic goals and mechanisms of a bilateral partnership for the period 2020-2025. They also expressed the joint intent to monitor the implementation of this Action Plan through a Follow-up Mechanism.

### **STRATEGIC GOALS AND MECHANISMS**

## **PILLAR I (Political dialogue at bilateral level and coordination in multilateral fora).**

### **Strategic goals:**

**- Reach common understanding, convergence of interests and agreed operational decisions on all aspects of the bilateral relations.**

In an increasingly complex international scenario, India and Italy intend to strengthen the existing consultation mechanisms both at governmental and high-officials level.

**- Face together the new, unprecedented threat posed by Covid-19.**

The Covid-19 pandemic represents a global challenge, which needs to be met with a global effort. The final response to the threat posed by the virus is the development of a vaccine. India and Italy recognize that scientific cooperation between States is paramount to this end, and reaffirm their will to work together under the guidance of the World Health Organization to achieve this result.

**- Enhance cooperation in the field of counter terrorism, security, cybersecurity and Defence.**

India and Italy are committed to strengthening cooperation in the fight against terrorism and transnational crime both at bilateral level and in multilateral fora. They also recognise the opportunity to consolidate defence relations with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping activities within the framework of the United Nations.

**- Share views and priorities in view of the consecutive G20 Presidencies, which will be held in 2021 and 2022.**

India and Italy will continue to work closely on common priorities and a shared global agenda for their respective Presidencies of the G20 in order to address, inter alia, the impact of and the response to Covid-19 in all the relevant domains. In the framework of the G20 Troika, G20 Sherpas will hold regular consultations to take stock of current activities and coordinate an agenda of common priorities for the two Presidencies of the G20 and for their legacy.

**- Prioritise disaster risk reduction and management.**

Cooperation in this field will be developed both at bilateral level, through a closer interaction between the Italian Civil Protection Department and the Indian National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), and at multilateral level through the common endeavour to make the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) a leading international partnership in the field of climate and geo-hazard risk reduction.

**- Fighting climate change.**

India and Italy confirm their strong commitment towards the full implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, starting from the next COP 26 whose preparatory events will be organized in Italy.

### **- Foster connectivity.**

Promote and encourage connectivity initiatives based on internationally recognised norms and standards, good governance, rule of law, inclusiveness, and transparency, in accordance with principles of fiscal, social and environmental sustainability.

### **- Uphold the strategic partnership between the European Union and India.**

In the wake of the 2020 India-EU Summit and the adoption of the India-EU Plan of Action for the period 2020-2025, India and Italy renew their commitment to strengthening the India-EU strategic partnership.

### **- Enhance regional cooperation**

India and Italy will endeavour to increase regional cooperation and cooperation in third countries with particular regard to South East Asia and the MENA region.

### **- Multilateral cooperation**

India and Italy will continue to support effective multilateralism and the rules-based international order, with the United Nations at its core. In this spirit, India and Italy will continue their cooperation on UN candidatures. India and Italy will also continue to cooperate in all relevant multilateral fora in order to strengthen gender equality, promote women empowerment and combat violence and discrimination against women. We will also support multilateral efforts aimed at establishing a level playing field to promote and enhance international trade.

### **Mechanisms:**

#### **- Memorandum of Understanding on Political Cooperation between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy (February 2005).**

The Foreign Ministers will meet within the framework of yearly consultations established by the Memorandum to preside the Follow-up Mechanism established by this Plan of Action.

#### **- Regular high official level political and sectoral consultations.**

Provide a regular framework for contacts at official level both for wide-ranging consultations – such as those held in Delhi on April 4 2019 - and for sectoral meetings – such as the Consular Dialogue held in Rome on February 12 2020.

#### **- Coordination meetings with G20 Sherpas.**

G20 Sherpas and Sous-Sherpas will hold regular consultations to coordinate an agenda of common priorities for the two Presidencies of the G20 and to strengthen the impact and relevance of their legacy.

#### **- Closer interaction between the Indian National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the**

**Italian Department of Civil Protection.** Taking into account India's and Italy's membership to the CDRI, the two Departments will negotiate a technical arrangement aimed at providing a proper bilateral framework for coordination in the sector of disaster prevention and management.

- **Italy's accession to ISA.** Italy is in the position of joining the International Solar Alliance in light of the amendment to the Framework Agreement allowing for the adhesion of non-Tropical countries which entered into force on July 15 2020.

- **Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime.**

The Working Group will continue to further advance cooperation, exchange of expertise and capacity building in countering terrorism and transnational crime, both at bilateral and multilateral level. Indian and Italian relevant Authorities will endeavour in order to resume in person meetings as soon as the circumstances allow. The next Working Group meeting will take place in Italy.

## **PILLAR II (economic engagement)**

### **Strategic goals:**

- **Improving business environment.**

India and Italy will strengthen bilateral cooperation with a view to facilitating reciprocal market access and to providing adequate protection to intellectual property rights and geographical indications.

- **Stronger contribution of Italy to India's flagship programmes "Make in India" and "Assembled in India for the world".**

The complementarity of the two Countries' economies enables exchanges of knowledge and technology with particular regard to the infrastructure and railway sector.

- **Food processing.**

Food processing is a priority sector for India and it offers vast business opportunities. Italy is one of the leading countries in the world for equipment manufacture, skill development and R&D in this field. India and Italy have mutual interest in exploring further ways to take advantage of their complementarity.

- **Manufacturing sector.**

Italy's share of export to India is mainly based on machinery. The potential for further bilateral cooperation is therefore extensive and pivotal in order to take advantage of the existing complementarities between the two economic systems, in the broader context of the "Make in India" and "Assembled in India for the world" initiatives.

- **Financial sector.**

Promotion of innovative financial schemes capable of supporting bilateral investments.

## **Mechanisms:**

### **- Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation.**

Set to convene again in 2021, the JCEC is the primary mechanism for taking stock of the advances in bilateral cooperation in the economic sector.

### **- Fast-track mechanism.**

Established in 2019, the mechanism aims at promoting two-ways investments and at dealing with issues, if any, confronted by the businesses of the two countries.

### **- India-Italy Joint Working Group (JWGFP) on Food Processing.**

Devised in December 2017, the first meeting of the JWGFP took place on February 27, 2019 in New Delhi, in conjunction with the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation, followed, on February 28, by a visit to the Tumkur Mega Food Park (Bangalore region). Core aim of the JWGFP is to evaluate potential complementarities between the two countries' food processing systems and to identify specific sectors where to start concrete bilateral projects.

## **PILLAR III (Partnership in the field of Science and Technology)**

### **Strategic goals:**

#### **- A more robust partnership in the field of Science and Technology.**

Build up on the legacy of the India-Italy Technology Summit through a wide array of existing tools that could be enriched by specific new bilateral instruments for cooperation in the field of biotechnology, space research, healthcare and technology applied to the protection of cultural heritage.

#### **- A new alliance on environment protection.**

Following fruitful bilateral meetings between the two Countries' Ministers of Environment, India and Italy are ready to enhance their cooperation in the following sectors: food safety and security; climate change; water management; resource efficiency and circular economy; waste management; biodiversity; land degradation.

## **Mechanisms:**

### **- India-Italy Executive Programme for Scientific and Technological Cooperation (2021-2023).**

The programme will provide an overarching umbrella to current and future initiatives in the field of Science and Technology (S&T), with particular regard to: the establishment of Indo-Italian networks of Excellence in selected areas of mutual strength (cultural heritage preservation; renewable energy; life and environmental sciences; geo-hazards); the implementation of the new phase of the bilateral Industrial

Research & Development Cooperation Programme and the funding of joint industrial research projects.

**- A new set of sectoral agreements.**

In order to achieve the strategic goals laid out under the S&T pillar, India and Italian relevant Authorities will start negotiations for a set of new bilateral arrangements, namely: a MoU between the Ministries of Environment; and a MoU between the Italian Space Agency and ISRO.

**PILLAR IV (Cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges)**

**Strategic goals:**

**- Enhanced partnership in the field of cultural and creative industries.**

Both India and Italy rely largely on individual creativity for wealth creation. Design, fashion, promotion of cultural heritage, film production are some of the sectors where the two countries can join forces to enhance their cooperation by joint initiatives aimed at generating cultural and economic added value by an appropriate mix of tradition and innovation thus protecting the relevant intellectual property.

**- Increased student mobility**

Intensify and support students' mobility and exchanges between universities and other higher education institutions of the two Countries.

**Mechanisms:**

**- Cultural and creative industries toolbox.**

This would be a set of existing bilateral agreements and arrangements, such as the co-production agreement, the intellectual property protection agreement and the reinvigoration of the cultural cooperation agreement, and of sectoral ententes such as UNESCO sites twinnings, the memorandum between Venice La Biennale and FICCI, and among other relevant institutions, including museums and design institutions (La Triennale).

**- Reciprocal knowledge of higher education systems**

Organize events and presentations of the Indian higher education system in Italy and of the Italian higher education system in India, including through the participation of universities and other relevant actors in educational fairs in both countries.

**FOLLOW-UP MECHANISM**

The implementation of this Plan of Action will require adequate monitoring. To this aim, a Follow-up Mechanism will be presided by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy and the External Affairs Minister of India and will convene alternatively in India and Italy on a yearly basis.