

**India-Italy Joint Statement
during the State Visit of the President of the Council of Ministers
of the Italian Republic to India (March 02-03, 2023)**

The President of the Council of Ministers (Prime Minister) of the Italian Republic, Giorgia Meloni, and the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, met today in New Delhi, upon invitation by Prime Minister Modi. This is the first official visit to India of Prime Minister Meloni, who will also meet today with the President of India, Droupadi Murmu.

2. The two leaders held talks in a cordial atmosphere and exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. They acknowledged that the visit of Prime Minister Meloni is taking place at a significant time, as the two countries celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations.

3. Both leaders underscored their firm commitment to democracy, freedom, human rights and rule of law as key values in promoting peace, stability and development. They 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 relationship. Recalling their earlier meeting in Bali on the margins of the G20 Summit in Indonesia, they re-affirmed their commitment to further consolidate and strengthen the bilateral relationship between India and Italy in the years ahead. The Action Plan 2020-24 set an ambitious agenda for an enhanced Partnership with Italy, to whose full implementation both countries remain committed.

4. The two leaders noted with satisfaction the continued contacts, including at the highest level and during the pandemic and the fruitful collaboration within the G20, in particular over the course of their respective Presidencies. They held broad discussions on bilateral cooperation, including political and security cooperation, defence, trade and connectivity, energy security and transition, the green economy, culture and people-to-people relations. They also had discussed regional and global issues of mutual interests and concerns. Both Governments convened on the importance of a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific, based on respect for international law, sovereignty and territorial integrity, freedom of navigation, and free from coercion and conflicts. They reiterated the importance of promoting a cooperative system of international ocean and sea governance and of maintaining the rules-based maritime order, based on international law, in particular UNCLOS. In this regard, the two leaders underlined the need to adopt a holistic view in countering transnational organized crimes committed at sea and the importance of safeguarding the legitimate uses of the oceans and the lives of people at sea, as well as the livelihoods and security of coastal communities. Recalling the EU Strategy on the Indo-Pacific, PM Meloni highlighted the opportunities for collaboration in ensuring maritime security, including by promoting India's cooperation with the European Union Naval Forces Operation ATALANTA.

5. Italy reiterated its strong condemnation of the unlawful and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine by Russian Armed Forces.

6. Italy and India called for the cessation of hostilities and expressed their serious concern about the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. The two Prime Ministers discussed the destabilizing effect of the conflict in Ukraine and its broader regional and global implications. Both sides agreed to remain closely engaged on the topic.

7. They further discussed the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and the supply chain disruptions due to global developments. The leaders emphasized the need for greater collaboration in the spirit of

friendship and partnership for global prosperity and development and concurred on the importance of resilient and sustainable value-chains, in particular of critical materials, as a means to ensure energy security and accelerate the energy transition.

8. With a view to further deepening bilateral collaboration, the two leaders decided to upgrade the relations between Italy and India to the level of 'Strategic Partnership'.

Economic Cooperation, Trade and Investment

9. The two leaders appreciated the strong bilateral economic engagement and expressed their intention to further advance cooperation, including in the framework of the respective Make in India and Made in Italy frameworks.

10. The two Prime Ministers underscored the importance of intensifying their cooperation, in particular in technology, space, energy security and transition, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, food processing, education, and research and development. In this context, they also highlighted the positive impacts expected from the new MoU on Industrial Property Rights.

11. The two Prime Ministers recalled the Energy Transition partnership launched during PM Modi's visit to Rome in October 2021 and expressed satisfaction on the progress achieved in the fields of energy transition and renewable energy, also through the meaningful involvement of the private sector, emphasizing the will to further enhance collaboration in these sectors.

Defence Cooperation

12. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the steady deepening of defence cooperation between the two countries in the last two years, underscoring the need to further enhance mutual engagement in this field through the conclusion of an MOU on Defence Cooperation.

13. The two leaders agreed on the potential for defence equipment co-development and co-production in India. PM Modi invited Italian defence companies to actively participate in Make in India initiative.

Combating Extremism and Countering Terrorism

14. The two Prime Ministers condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Consistent with the various resolutions of the United Nations on the Fight against Terrorism, both sides supported a comprehensive approach in combating terrorism, extremism, preventing radicalization, stemming recruitment, use of terrorist proxies, preventing the movement of terrorists including Foreign Terrorist Fighters, disrupting financial support to terrorists, countering incitement to commit terrorist acts and facilitating the investigation and prosecution of terrorists while ensuring effective programs of disengagement and rehabilitation in prison settings.

15. The two Leaders affirmed the need to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the fight against global terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They reiterated the urgent need for all countries to take immediate, sustained, verifiable and irreversible action to ensure that no territory under their control is used for terrorist attacks and to expeditiously bring to justice the perpetrators of such attacks.

16. Both sides agreed to assess and address potential risks associated with virtual assets and new financial technologies that may be abused for the purpose of money laundering and financing

terrorism, and to take steps to ensure that such virtual assets are subject to Anti-Money Laundering/Counteracting Financing for Terrorism (AML/CFT) regulations.

17. In this context, the two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction for the role of the India-Italy Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and for the ongoing bilateral cooperation in this field in multilateral fora.

Space Cooperation and Cyber Security

18. The two leaders agreed to expand cooperation in the field of space. They welcomed bilateral exchanges, taking stock of the wide potential of possible joint research projects in areas such as remote sensing, satellite communication, space science, lunar exploration, GW detection and practical applications of space technology between ISRO, India and ASI Italy.

19. Both leaders underlined the importance of an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment, which is seen as an enabler for economic growth and innovation. Both leaders look forward to establishing a bilateral cyber dialogue.

Science, Technology and Education

20. They expressed satisfaction on the progress made under India-Italy Science and Technology Cooperation (JSTC) and agreed, taking into account Italy's and India's national research priorities, to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in research areas of common interest, such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Internet of Things (IoT) and smart manufacturing, and to explore new ways of cooperation in Industry 4.0, Advanced Manufacturing, Bio and RNA technologies, Sustainable and Productive Blue Economy, Energy Transitions, conservation of Biodiversity, Agri and Food technologies, involving Academia and Industries on both sides.

Health Sector

21. Both leaders noted the importance of global cooperation in the context of COVID-19 and future global health challenges, and agreed to further intensify cooperation in this respect. They highlighted the mutual support and cooperation extended by both nations during the pandemic and welcomed the collaboration between vaccine manufactures in India and Italy. Both leaders also recalled their respective humanitarian initiatives to provide essential vaccines, medical supplies, and medicines to countries around the world.

22. The two Countries agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of disease control and in addressing health crises, and stressed the importance of greater scientific and academic exchanges, with an emphasis on information technology, medicine and pharmaceuticals.

Culture, Tourism and People-to-People Exchanges

23. The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their resolve to further promote people-to-people contacts between the two countries, particularly through youth, academia, professional workforce and cultural exchanges. In this context, they stressed the need to further strengthen the opportunities for cultural and educational collaboration, and decided to organize cultural initiatives to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 2023. They welcomed the signing of the Declaration of Intent on Migration and Mobility.

24. The two Countries agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fields of migration and mobility, with a view to countering irregular migration and trafficking of human beings, and to examine pathways to facilitate labour mobility and promote fair working conditions, with the aim of addressing the needs of their respective economies.

25. Both countries underlined the importance of enhancing cooperation in the tourism sector and noted the high potential for growth in tourism flows between the two countries. To this end, they expressed satisfaction for the resumption of direct flights and the addition of new ones between the two countries.

Multilateral Forums

26. Reviewing the interdependence and complexity of the global agenda, the two Prime Ministers decided to expand cooperation on global challenges such as climate change, the energy crisis, globally beneficial multilateralism and the protection of the rules-based international order, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

27. Both leaders agreed to further strengthen their cooperation and mutual support in multilateral fora, including the UN and WTO. PM Modi expressed his appreciation for Italy coming on board the Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation Pillar of the Indo Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI).

28. The two leaders praised the fruitful co-operation within the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the International Solar Alliance (ISA), as well as within the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). They also recalled their unwavering commitment to their respective climate neutrality targets, and agreed to continue to work closely in the framework of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, also in view of COP28 this year in the United Arab Emirates.

EU-India relations

29. Both leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to deepen the India-EU Strategic Partnership and to work together in the implementation of the India-EU Connectivity Partnership, and reiterated their firm support to the ongoing negotiations for an India-EU Free Trade Agreement.

30. The talks were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere, and both leaders expressed their confidence in the ample scope for the further development of bilateral relations and of the multifaceted cooperation across sectors. Prime Minister Meloni thanked PM Modi for the warm hospitality and extended an invitation to Prime Minister Modi to visit Italy at his earliest convenience.

New Delhi

March 02, 2023