India-Canada Joint Statement during the visit of Prime Minister

The Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, visited Canada from June 26 to June 28 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Stephen Harper. During his visit, Prime Minister Singh participated in the G-20 Toronto Summit and held bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Harper.

The two Prime Ministers, in reviewing the state of bilateral relations, welcomed the enhanced interaction in a broad range of areas, visits and other exchanges between the two countries. They expressed their desire to broaden and deepen economic, diplomatic, educational, scientific and cultural ties between India and Canada.

The two Prime Ministers also solemnly observed the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the bombing of Air India flight 182 “Kanishka” on June 23, 1985, in which 329 lives were tragically lost. They strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and agreed to direct their respective Governments toward greater cooperation in counter-terrorism and security-related matters.

Reiterating the need for intensifying global cooperation in combating international terrorism, they called for an early conclusion and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism within the UN framework.

Prime Ministers Singh and Harper welcomed the signature of the Agreement for Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, which will help facilitate civil nuclear cooperation between the two countries. They both committed to the ratification of the agreement and the completion of all remaining steps necessary to ensure its early implementation. They underscored the potential for mutually beneficial civil nuclear cooperation and trade.

The two leaders committed to expanding a range of activities and institutional frameworks that will contribute to the shared goal of increasing bilateral trade to $15 billion annually in the next five years. During Prime Minister Harper’s visit to India in November 2009, both countries had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a Joint Study Group to explore the possibility of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between India and Canada. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the conclusion of that report, in which the Joint Study Group identified substantial potential economic gains that both countries could achieve through such an agreement. The two Prime Ministers noted that the recommendations in the report will be examined by both countries and necessary processes for obtaining approvals will be initiated immediately and will aim to be completed by the end of October.

The Prime Ministers also announced their commitment to an annual dialogue on trade and investment between Canada’s Minister of International Trade and India’s Minister of Commerce and Industry. They also welcomed the possibility of an India-Canada CEO Roundtable later this year.

The two Prime Ministers looked forward to the early signing followed by ratification and implementation of the Social Security Agreement. They noted that the Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement was under negotiation and looked forward to its early conclusion. These two agreements will make a significant contribution to the commercial and economic interaction between the two countries.
The Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Earth Sciences and Mining and looked forward to signing a Memorandum of Understanding on Transportation, noting the scope for bilateral collaboration, trade and investment in the natural resources and infrastructure sectors.

Agriculture and agri-food cooperation represent another area of enhanced exchange and both leaders looked forward to the progressive implementation of projects identified under the January 2009 MOU.

The Prime Ministers recognized some of the greatest strengths in the relationship lie in the vibrant and longstanding people-to-people ties. In that regard they encouraged the expansion of linkages in key areas including education, academic relations, arts, culture, sports and tourism.

To further enhance the considerable momentum achieved in exchanges and collaboration amongst a broad range of higher education institutions in both countries, the Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Higher Education Cooperation. This framework will facilitate academic exchanges, partnerships and mobility between higher educational institutions in the two countries.

The Prime Ministers also noted initiatives to link Canadian and Indian universities and colleges, including in curriculum development and the creation of Chairs and Centres for Indian studies at a number of Canadian universities, such as, for example, those in the process of being established at Carleton University and McGill University.

They also welcomed the initiative to organize the Festival of India in Canada in 2011, which would present a comprehensive range of Indian culture through performing arts, exhibitions, film festivals, food festivals, among others, as well as the upcoming exhibition of masterworks of Inuit Art from the National Gallery of Canada, which will be presented at the National Museum in New Delhi in the fall of 2010. They look forward to the Commonwealth Games in India in October 2010. To facilitate further co-operation in these areas, the Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of an MOU on Cultural Cooperation.

To achieve the goals set out in this joint statement, the two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to sustained political engagement and a structured exchange of high-level visits and regular dialogues between their officials. Building on the existing annual India-Canada Foreign Policy Consultations, Strategic Dialogues, Trade Policy Consultations, the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, the Agriculture Working Group, the Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee, the Environment Forum and the Energy Forum, they agreed to promote further policy exchanges between ministries and departments of both Governments.

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