

**Meeting between the Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh,
and
the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Kevin Rudd**

Hyderabad House, New Delhi 12 November 2009

Joint Statement

India and Australia are two countries with shared interests and shared values. We are both pluralist democracies. We are both global in our outlook, but also closely integrated into the Asian region. Our economic relationship is expanding rapidly. We have a shared desire to enhance and maintain peace, stability and prosperity in Asia. We both value multilateral institutions and recognise the need to reform and renovate them. Our people-to-people links are broad-based and growing.

To give expression to the expansion and dynamism of our bilateral ties, we have agreed to take the relationship to the level of a strategic partnership.

Bilateral cooperation

In line with this strategic partnership, the two Prime Ministers affirmed their desire to intensify their contacts with each other. Dr Singh said he looked forward to visiting Australia at a mutually convenient date.

As two countries committed to political pluralism and parliamentary democracy, the Prime Ministers emphasised the need to reinvigorate bilateral parliamentary exchanges. Aware of the critical role that the young people of today will play in meeting the challenges and taking forward the initiatives of the 21st century, the two leaders welcomed the proposal to establish a new young political leaders program. A familiarisation visit of Australian young political leaders to India is likely to take place in 2010 to work out the modalities.

International and Regional Cooperation

Dr Singh and Mr Rudd reaffirmed the strong security and defence ties between India and Australia and welcomed a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation that will see the two countries intensify their efforts to maintain peace, stability and prosperity.

Regional and multilateral cooperation is an important strand of the India – Australia relationship. The two leaders reaffirmed the key role being played in the Asian region by bodies such as the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum and the Asia Europe Meeting. The Prime Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the Fourth East Asia Summit (EAS) held in Hua Hin on 25 October, and agreed that the agenda of the EAS should continue to be strengthened. In particular, they welcomed the agreement reached by EAS leaders to convene an EAS Finance Ministers' meeting and to have officials consider a Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia. Mr Rudd reaffirmed Australia's firm support for India's membership of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation grouping when the membership moratorium ends next year.

The Prime Ministers welcomed ongoing discussion about how the institutional architecture of the region could evolve over time. Dr Singh welcomed Mr Rudd's intention to convene a 1.5 track conference in Sydney in December 2009 to consider further Australia's Asia Pacific community initiative.

The Prime Ministers reconfirmed their support for reform of the United Nations to ensure it reflects the realities of the 21st century, including by modernising the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). In this context, Mr Rudd reiterated Australia's support for a permanent seat for India on the UNSC.

Mr Rudd and Dr Singh welcomed the decision to make the G20 the premier forum for international economic cooperation.

Both countries stressed the need to increase agency-level cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as terrorism.

Dr Singh and Mr Rudd reaffirmed their shared vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and agreed to work together in a spirit of partnership on global disarmament and non-proliferation.

Expanding Economic Links

The bilateral economic relationship continues to expand rapidly to mutual benefit and there is significant untapped potential for even stronger trade and investment links. The Prime Ministers noted that the Joint Study Group Report on the feasibility of Free Trade Agreement between the two countries will be submitted shortly and agreed to consider its recommendations expeditiously with a view to taking further action.

The Prime Ministers agreed to constitute an India-Australia CEOs Forum which would involve prominent companies from each country across the spectrum of key economic sectors.

Energy, climate change and water cooperation

Energy security and climate change are serious challenges facing the international community. The Prime Ministers reiterated that Australia and India believe that a comprehensive outcome at the Copenhagen Conference in accordance with the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC and the Bali Action Plan, is critical to meeting the challenge of climate change.

Mr. Rudd noted India's plans to meet its future energy requirements by exploring and developing all sources of energy, including nuclear, renewable and non-conventional resources.

Both sides recognized the benefits of enhancing bilateral commercial exchanges of renewable and non-renewable energy resources. The two Prime Ministers also agreed that energy security concerns are best met by reconciling the long-term interests of both energy producing and energy consuming countries through a truly open and competitive energy market. Both sides also expressed their willingness to join efforts which promote a cooperative response to any global energy crisis, noting the important role of open and transparent energy trade and investment markets.

The Prime Ministers agreed that meaningful progress in the areas of energy security and climate change should be made through national, bilateral and multilateral efforts in a manner that does not limit the possibilities of accelerated economic and social development. The leaders agreed to work to address these global challenges.

Both leaders stressed the determination of Australia and India to work together to achieve a comprehensive, fair and effective outcome at Copenhagen, with the involvement of all countries in line with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

In developing a global response to climate change, the leaders agreed to engage constructively with each other, and with other countries, including under the UNFCCC and in other multilateral fora such as the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (APP).

Practical collaboration by Indian and Australian agencies is continuing to meet the challenge of climate change, including under the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate. The Australian Government will provide A\$1 million (4.315 crore rupees) to support a joint solar cooling and mini-grids project being undertaken by India's The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). The Prime Ministers noted the positive contribution being made by the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute (GCCSI). An International Advisory Panel, which includes a TERI representative, will play a key role in guiding the work of the GCCSI.

India and Australia are faced by the imperative of managing scarce water resources. Dr Singh and Mr Rudd welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Water Resource Management. Mr Rudd also announced Australia would devote A\$20 million in funding over five years under the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research for joint research in dry-land agriculture in India.

A knowledge partnership

India and Australia are building a broad knowledge partnership, ranging from developing collaborative projects in education from primary school up to university, to conducting joint research in many fields. Science and technology cooperation is a critical part of this partnership.

Both Prime Ministers acknowledged the important role science plays in the bilateral relationship and the potential to work more closely in this area of shared strength. Building on the success of the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund, Australia will increase its commitment to bilateral research efforts to A\$10 million per year for the next five years, which will be matched by India.

The expanded fund will introduce a new 'grand challenge' component, which will support large-scale research projects designed to deliver practical solutions to some of the major challenges shared by both countries. The areas of focus will be "energy", "food and water security", "health" and "the environment". The expanded fund will also introduce a substantial new fellowship program, comprising exchanges for early-career researchers from both countries and short-term visits by senior scientists. Both governments will continue to support leading-edge

research in areas including in information and communication technology, micro-electronic devices and materials, earth sciences, nanotechnology, astronomy and biotechnology.

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the recent agreement that India and Australia would hold an annual ministerial dialogue on education, which would include representatives from education institutions and industry. Mr. Rudd welcomed India's proposal to revive Nalanda University.

Dr. Singh conveyed the high priority that Government of India attaches to the safety, security and well being of Indian community in Australia. Mr Rudd reiterated that Australia had a zero tolerance approach to violence and was committed to taking all possible measures to protect the safety and welfare of all international students including Indian students. He provided Dr Singh with an update on the efforts of the Australian Government and its state government counterparts to enhance law enforcement, extend student welfare measures, re-register all education providers, audit vocational education and training institutions, and strengthen the integrity of the visa system.

Culture and Sport

Cultural ties between Australia and India are vibrant and expanding. The Prime Ministers agreed that strengthening these enduring people-to-people links to enhance mutual understanding is vital to the future of the relationship. In 2010, India will host a 'Days of India' cultural event in seven Australian cities. The Australia International Cultural Council has selected India as the focus country for a major year-long cultural program in 2012. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the decision to launch negotiations on a film co-production agreement covering a wide range of audio visual formats.

Sport has long occupied an important place in the India-Australia relationship. Australia is looking forward to participating in the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games and is supporting the preparations. The Australian Sports Outreach Program will be boosted to deliver more grass-roots sports-based activities to India's youth, women and people with a disability, in collaboration with Indian partners. Mr Rudd also launched Business Club Australia in India, which will use sporting events, especially the Commonwealth Games, to build business links between the two countries.
