

Joint Statement by India and Thailand on the State Visit of Prime Minister of Thailand Yingluck Shinawatra to India

January 25, 2012

1. H.E. Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand, paid a State visit to India from January 24-26, 2012 as the Chief Guest for India's Republic Day celebrations. On her first visit to India, at the invitation of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, she was accompanied by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Commerce, Industry and Information & Communication Technology; senior government officials, and a business delegation.

2. During the visit, PM Shinawatra called on Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, the President of India, and Shri Hamid Ansari, the Vice-President of India. She also held talks with Dr. Manmohan Singh, who hosted a banquet in her honour. Shri S.M. Krishna, External Affairs Minister called on the Thai PM. PM Shinawatra also attended a business luncheon hosted by (CII/FICCI/ASSOCHAM) chambers of commerce.

3. The two Prime Ministers held wide-ranging discussions on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues, and reviewed the outcome of the 6th Joint Commission Meeting held in New Delhi on December 27, 2011 co-chaired by the Minister of External Affairs of India and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

4. Both sides noted that the visit coincides with the 65th anniversary of establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations, as well as 20 years of India's enhanced engagement with ASEAN. They noted with satisfaction that India and Thailand have, over the past decades, developed a strong and mutually beneficial cooperation at both bilateral and regional levels, and have played an important role in fostering regional frameworks which have contributed to peace, social and economic development, and infrastructural linkages between India and Southeast Asia. Given the progress in the relationship, both sides expressed the desire to work together towards elevating the bilateral relations to strategic partnership for mutual benefit.

5. The Prime Minister of India once again conveyed deep condolences to the Thai Prime Minister on losses suffered during the recent devastating floods in Thailand, and offered to support reconstruction and recovery effort as required. The Thai Prime Minister expressed deep appreciation for the financial assistance provided by India. Both sides agreed to explore the possibility of cooperation in water management and flood prevention.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS

6. Both sides noted that South East Asia has grown significantly in terms of economic influence, and its dynamism continues to play an important role in global economic growth. Both leaders noted that Thailand and India have led efforts to integrate economies of the region.

7. To strengthen economic links between the two countries, both sides reaffirmed their resolve to conclude the bilateral Comprehensive Agreement on Trade in Goods, Services, and Investments by mid-2012, to further enhance economic links and between the two countries. The 2nd Protocol signed during the visit to amend the Framework Agreement for Establishing Free Trade Area would provide further boost to bilateral trade in immediate terms.

8. To further create a supportive atmosphere for the bilateral and regional comprehensive economic cooperation, the two leaders also agreed that ASEAN and India should conclude their regional Trade in Services and Investment Agreements by 2012.

9. The Prime Minister of India welcomed Thai investments into India into sectors such as infrastructure development including ports and highways, computer hardware, automobile components and parts, food processing and power generation, as well as tourism and hospitality facilities in the Buddhist circuit. The Thai Prime Minister invited Indian investments to Thailand in information technology, manufacturing, electronics and automotive industry. Both sides looked forward to the establishment of a forum comprising senior representatives of business enterprises of both countries to promote expansion of bilateral business ties.

10. The two sides agreed to explore possibilities of collaboration between their respective oil and gas companies in Exploration and Production (E&P) opportunities in Thailand and India, as well as in third countries.

SECURITY AND DEFENCE

11. Both sides noted that the increasing menace of terrorists, criminals, arms and drug traffickers trying to use this region for their nefarious activities provided an added urgency to strengthen cooperation in security and intelligence exchange. The 6th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Security Cooperation held in New Delhi on May 25-26, 2011 provided an opportunity to discuss these challenges in a comprehensive manner. It was agreed that a five-year Joint Working Programme on specific elements of cooperation would be finalized urgently.

12. The two leaders unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stressed that there could be no justification whatsoever for any act of terrorism. Recognizing the common threats to national security from transnational crimes, including international terrorism, the two Prime Ministers resolved to significantly enhance bilateral cooperation in combating terrorism, including in restricting transnational movement and unauthorized stay of known terrorists in each other's countries. The two leaders resolved to commit their countries to improve sharing of intelligence, the development of more effective counter-terrorism policies, enhance liaison between law enforcement agencies, provide assistance in the areas of border and immigration control to stem the flow of terrorist related material, money and people and specific measures against transnational crimes, through the already existing mechanisms between Thailand and India.

13. Such cooperation will also complement regional efforts as declared in the ASEAN-India Joint Declaration for Cooperation in Combating international Terrorism.

14. The two sides shared the view that, Thailand and India being maritime neighbours, defence cooperation would be mutually beneficial in addressing shared challenges and concerns. In this regard, the two sides expressed satisfaction that the inaugural meeting of the bilateral Defence Dialogue held in New Delhi on December 23, 2011, had enabled a comprehensive review of various elements of defence cooperation and its future course. The MoU on Defence Cooperation signed during the visit would help both sides to further streamline and facilitate this process on matters of mutual concern. The two sides noted the ongoing cooperation between both Navies in the conduct of coordinated patrols and agreed that such measures of cooperation should continue.

15. The two sides will also expedite the ongoing negotiations on Bilateral Extradition Treaty and the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty on Civil and Commercial Matters.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

16. Both sides agreed on the need for concerted collaboration in domains of creativity, innovation and research and development, in order to transform their economies into knowledge based ones. In this regard, enhanced cooperation on science and technology, information and communications technology, agricultural science, natural resource management, biotechnology, and marine & space sciences should be further pursued through existing mechanisms and future arrangements to be mutually agreed upon.

CULTURE, EDUCATION, AND PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE EXCHANGES

17. The two leaders agreed to deepen cultural and historical ties between the two countries by promoting diverse cultural exchanges to build a lasting understanding between the peoples of the two countries.

18. In order to accelerate people-to-people contact in cultural and other fields benefiting both societies, both sides agreed to work together towards setting up an "India-Thailand Foundation". Both sides also agreed to consider possibilities of audio-visual co-production.

19. The two sides welcomed the formation of the India-Thailand Parliamentary Friendship Group in the Indian Parliament that would facilitate parliamentary exchanges with its counterpart group in Thailand's National Assembly and agreed to intensify the exchange of parliamentary delegations between the two

countries.

20. Recognizing that education is another important area of cooperation, the two leaders welcomed the progress made towards the revival of the Nalanda University, to be a leading regional academic institution as endorsed during the East Asia Summit. The Prime Minister of India thanked the Prime Minister of Thailand for pledging USD 100,000 to the University, with further contributions to be made by Thai private sector.

21. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the greater flow of tourists and visitors between the two countries. To address issues related to travel, visa facilitation, employment, and safety of tourists, both leaders welcomed the setting up of an ad hoc Joint Working Group on all visa and consular matters which will meet at regular intervals.

22. The Indian side welcomed Thailand's participation as Partner Country in the Surajkund Crafts Mela 2012 at Faridabad between 1 - 15 February 2012 by sending a Thai cultural and crafts demonstration troupe.

REGIONAL COOPERATION AND CONNECTIVITY

23. Both sides expressed their desire to further enhance their valued partnership and cooperation in the context of India - ASEAN relations. Both Prime Ministers supported the formation of the ASEAN Community by 2015 as an important step towards greater integration and prosperity in Southeast Asia. The Thai Prime Minister supported India's engagement with ASEAN, and viewed that India's role will be important for ASEAN's continued dynamism, security, and prosperity beyond 2015.

24. In this connection, the two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their full support for the work of ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group to take stock and chart the future direction of the Dialogue relations so as to further realize the full potential of ASEAN-India partnership in the next decade.

25. Both leaders underlined the importance of the East Asia Summit as a platform for greater integration and cooperation, and, in the long term, achieving an East Asia Community of peace prosperity, and security.

26. Both leaders looked forward to the India - ASEAN Commemorative Summit in December 2012 hosted by India. In the run up to the Commemorative Summit, India will host a number of events such as the India-ASEAN Car Rally, a sailing ship expedition along the monsoon trade winds route, the 4th edition of Delhi Dialogue, the ASEAN-India Business Fair, Ministerial level meetings and cultural activities throughout the year. Thailand will support these initiatives and events through its active participation.

27. The two leaders reaffirmed the importance that both countries attached to the BIMSTEC as a link between South and South-East Asia. The two sides also agreed to synergize their development projects and capacity building in lower Mekong region through the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) initiative which could take the lead in reinvigorating this grouping.

28. Both leaders shared the view that the close cooperation on enhancing connectivity was a common theme in existing regional cooperation platforms, and agreed to focus on developing road and shipping infrastructure which will establish in the future, an economic corridor linking India with Thailand and Southeast Asia. To this end, the two sides announced setting up of a joint working group on infrastructure and connectivity to help expedite various development initiatives in these fields in both countries as well as in third countries. They agreed that the work of the Group could also aid regional connectivity efforts such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway.

MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

29. The two sides agreed to enhance cooperation in the United Nations and other international fora on matters of mutual interest. The two leaders reiterated strong support for the ongoing reform of the United Nations and its principal organs with a view to making the United Nations more democratic, transparent and efficient so that it can deal more effectively with the myriad challenges of the contemporary world. They emphasized the importance of an early reform of the United Nations Security Council so that it reflects the contemporary realities and functions in a more accountable, representative

and effective manner.

30. The Thai side acknowledged India's credentials for permanent membership of the UN Security Council, and commended India's active role and continued constructive contributions in the field of global security.

31. The following agreements were signed during the visit:

- (1) Treaty on Transfer of Sentenced Persons
- (2) Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Cooperation
- (3) The 2nd Protocol to amend the Framework Agreement for Establishing Free Trade Area between Thailand and India
- (4) Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology
- (5) Cultural Exchange Programme for 2012-14
- (6) MoU between Chulalongkorn University and ICCR for setting up a Chair at the India Studies Centre of the University.

32. The Prime Minister of Thailand expressed her gratitude to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and to the people of India for the warm welcome and hospitality that had been extended to her and to the members of her delegation on her State visit. She extended an invitation to Prime Minister of India to visit Thailand, which he gladly accepted.

New Delhi
January 25, 2012