

Joint Statement Towards India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership

15/12/2006

1. The Prime Minister of India, H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh, is currently paying an Official Visit to Japan from December 13 to 16, 2006 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Japan, H. E. Mr. Shinzo Abe. He is accompanied by his spouse, Mrs. Gursharan Kaur and a high-level delegation.

2. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh was accorded a ceremonial welcome on December 14. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mrs. Gursharan Kaur had audience with Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress of Japan. He held extensive talks with Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe of Japan, who also hosted a Banquet in honour of the visiting dignitary. He addressed a Joint Session of the Diet on December 14. Mr. Taro Aso, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Koji Omi, Minister for Finance and Mr. Akira Amari, Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry called on the Prime Minister of India. Mr. Yoshiro Mori, former Prime Minister and President of Indo-Japanese Association and Dr. Taro Nakayama, President of Japan-Indo Parliamentarians' Friendship League also called on the Prime Minister of India. The two Prime Ministers unveiled the Joint Logo and launched the India-Japan Friendship Year 2007, to be organised in both countries, and attended the inaugural event of the Festival of India in Japan on December 14. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh also addressed the business organisations of Japan at a luncheon meeting. Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe received representatives of the Indian business delegation who accompanied Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. Mr. Yasuhisa Shiozaki, Chief Cabinet Secretary and Mr. Akihiro Ota, Chief Representative of New Komeito will call on the Prime Minister of India on December 16.

3. The two leaders recall the impressive development of India-Japan relations in recent years, noting in particular the establishment of a Global Partnership in 2000 during Prime Minister Mr. Yoshiro Mori's visit to India and the decision taken last year during Prime Minister Mr. Junichiro Koizumi's visit to India to reinforce the strategic orientation of the partnership. They also note with satisfaction the all-round progress made towards the implementation of the Joint Statement on the "India-Japan Partnership in a New Asian Era: Strategic Orientation of the India-Japan Global Partnership" and the "Eight-fold Initiative for Strengthening India-Japan Global Partnership", signed between the Prime Ministers of the two countries on April 29, 2005 in New Delhi, and reaffirm the principles and understandings embodied in these documents.

Strategic and Global Partnership:

4. The two Prime Ministers recall that India and Japan share ancient bonds and a proud civilisational heritage. The current context of India-Japan relations is rooted in their similar perceptions of the evolving environment in the region and the world at large. It is driven by converging long-term political, economic and strategic interests, aspirations and concerns and underpinned by a common commitment to democracy, open society, human rights, rule of law and free market economy. It is based on deep respect for each other's contributions in promoting peace, stability and development in Asia and beyond, unencumbered by any historical differences.

5. The two leaders affirm that India and Japan are natural partners as the largest and most developed democracies of Asia, with a mutual stake in each other's progress and prosperity. Indeed, a strong, prosperous and dynamic India is in the interest of Japan, and likewise, a strong, prosperous and dynamic Japan is in the interest of India. They have responsibility for, and are capable of, responding to global and regional challenges, and they must play an active role in the promotion of peace and stability in Asia and world at large. Recognising that Asia is emerging as the leading growth centre of an increasingly interdependent global economy, the two countries are also keen to pursue a comprehensive economic partnership in the region and nurture sustainable economic growth, social peace and political tolerance in open and cooperative regional frameworks.

6. Given their shared determination to raise bilateral relations to a higher level, the two leaders decide to establish a Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan. This will impart stronger political, economic and strategic dimensions to bilateral relations, serve long-term interests of both countries, enhance all-round cooperation and contribute to greater regional peace and stability.

7. The Strategic and Global Partnership will involve closer political and diplomatic coordination on bilateral, regional, multilateral and global issues, comprehensive economic engagement, stronger defence relations, greater technological cooperation as well as working towards a quantum increase in cultural ties, educational linkages and people-to-people contacts. This partnership will enable both countries to harness the vast potential of bilateral relations, drawing upon complementarities and each other's intrinsic strengths, and also work together to address regional and global challenges.

Political, Defence and Security Cooperation:

8. The two leaders welcome the important contribution made to bilateral cooperation by various existing dialogue mechanisms. With a view to sustaining and giving high-level guidance to the continued growth and development of bilateral relations, the two leaders confirm their intention to hold annual Summit-level meetings in respective capitals as well as on the sidelines of multilateral events. The Prime Minister of Japan will visit India in 2007 for the next bilateral Summit at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India. The two leaders encourage the continuation and enhancement of regular exchanges between members of their respective Cabinets in charge of Foreign, Defence, Finance, Trade and Industry, Agriculture, Information and Communications Technology, Science and Technology, Tourism and Civil Aviation portfolios. They also endorse the institutionalisation of Strategic Dialogue at the Foreign Ministers level as well as a regular Policy Dialogue between the National Security Advisor of India and his Japanese counterpart.

9. The two leaders endorse the continuation and enhancement of consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, including the Foreign Office Consultations (Foreign Secretary-level Talks), to advance the shared agenda of the relationship. The Indian side welcomes the Japanese plan to establish a consular post in Bangalore.

10. The two leaders welcome the Joint Statement issued following talks between the Defence Minister of India and the Minister of State for Defense of Japan in May, 2006 and reiterate their commitment to enhance defence cooperation to achieve the common goal of promoting the security, stability and prosperity in Asia and in the

world at large as well as in tackling regional and global security challenges. They urge their concerned agencies to develop an annual calendar of cooperation and exchanges relating to defence and security and to progressively enhance cooperative activities, including high-level exchanges and consultation between services. The two leaders appreciate the recent developments in service-to-service cooperation, including cooperation in UNDOF. The two sides will also undertake a goodwill exercise between the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force and the Indian Navy in 2007.

11. Recognising that India and Japan have large Exclusive Economic Zones and maritime interests, the two leaders confirm their intention to work closely to enhance cooperation in capacity building, technical assistance and information sharing between their respective agencies and undertake anti-piracy measures. They share the view that India and Japan must cooperate closely to ensure the safety and security of international maritime traffic that are vital for their economic well-being as well as that of the region.

12. The two leaders endorse regular exchanges between the two Coast Guards through meetings of heads of Coast Guards, mutual visits of Coast Guard ships and holding of combined exercises. In this context, the signing of a Memorandum on Cooperation between the Coast Guards was welcomed. They also welcome the coming into force of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) and reaffirm their intention to enhance cooperation in respect of anti-piracy countermeasures under its framework.

13. The two leaders unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stress that there can be no justification whatsoever for any act of terrorism. They share the view that international community must further intensify efforts and cooperation to fight this scourge. In this context, they confirm that the two countries will continue to work together through the India-Japan Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism. They also call upon all Member States of the UN to work towards the expeditious adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Comprehensive Economic Partnership:

14. The two leaders welcome the report of the India-Japan Joint Study Group, which has made a series of recommendations, covering trade in goods, trade in services, investment flows, role of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) in promoting economic partnership and other areas of economic cooperation, and direct that those recommendations be implemented expeditiously. Convinced that comprehensive economic engagement between the two countries must be a core element of their strategic partnership and also recognising that closer economic integration between India and Japan will contribute to further growth and stability in the broader Asian region, the two Prime Ministers have decided to launch immediate negotiations for the conclusion of a bilateral Economic Partnership Agreement/ Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA/CEPA), on the basis of the recommendations submitted by the Joint Study Group. They note with satisfaction that a Joint Ministerial Statement, constituting a Joint Task Force to undertake the inter-governmental negotiations on the EPA/CEPA, has been signed during the visit. It will be the endeavour of the Joint Task Force to expedite these negotiations aiming to complete them in substance as soon as possible in approximately two years.

15. The two leaders welcome recent positive developments in bilateral economic relations and direct that the potential of economic partnership must be fully realised.

16. The Indian side expresses its appreciation for the fact that India is presently the largest recipient of Japan's ODA. The Japanese side affirms that India will continue to be a priority country for its ODA. The two leaders confirm that Japan's ODA will continue to support India's efforts at accelerated economic and social development as well as to further strengthen India-Japan partnership. They direct their concerned agencies to intensify cooperation under the ODA, particularly in priority sectors such as infrastructure, environment, social development and human resource development.

17. In order to widen and deepen economic engagement even as an EPA/ CEPA is negotiated, the two leaders announce an "India-Japan Special Economic Partnership Initiative" (SEPI). This initiative will promote enhancement of investment from Japan to India and help develop India's infrastructure and manufacturing capacity, taking full advantage of the ample availability of skill and human resources and the public-private partnership policy initiative of the Government of India. The SEPI will, inter alia, consist of the following:

A. Development of Infrastructure and Promotion of Manufacturing, Trade and Investment:

- Further cooperation in realising the Dedicated Multi-modal High Axle Load Freight Corridors with computerised control on Mumbai-Delhi and Delhi-Howrah routes. The two leaders note with satisfaction that the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has submitted its Interim Report of the Feasibility Study on the Project and that the Final Report will be ready by October 2007. The two sides will consult on the ways and means to realise the Project, utilising Japan's Special Terms for Economic Partnership (STEP) Scheme and with the inputs of Japanese technology and expertise. The two sides will also examine the possibility of using Japanese technology in locomotives and signalling and electrical equipment, and in construction in railway sector;
- Promotion of "Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor", supported by Multi-modal Dedicated Freight Corridor between Delhi and Mumbai. This will include cooperation in development of one or two sea ports on the west coast and industrial estates and Special Economic Zones with high quality physical and social infrastructure, and other initiatives, through collaboration between private and governmental sectors of the two countries, with the objective of developing the requisite infrastructure and facilitating investment. The two governments will further discuss how to facilitate its development, including the formulation of a master plan;
- Cooperation in the setting up of a multi-product Special Economic Zone/Cluster in India to locate investments from Japan, with facilities for manufacturing and processing industries, hotels and recreational units, and educational and training centres. It will be an integrated conglomeration based on industrial needs and global best practices. The Government of India will facilitate the establishment of the Zone/Cluster;
- Efforts by the Government of Japan to encourage investment by Japanese companies in India, including through assistance in development of infrastructure relating to Special Economic Zones and industrial estates;

- Assistance by Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) to Japanese small and medium enterprises to set up operations in India, with its Business Support Centre in India acting as an incubator;
- Support by JETRO for the rural business and industrialisation initiatives of the Government of India, under its “One Village One Product” programme, initially through the implementation of a pilot project; and
- Promotion of participation of Japanese companies in the power sector in India, including through the initiative of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan on the establishment of a ‘Task Force on Indian Power Sector’. Projects proposed by the Indian side for the participation of Japanese companies include, inter alia, 4000 MW Coastal Ultra Mega Power Project at Chayyur, Tamil Nadu and 3000 MW Lohit Hydroelectric Project in Arunachal Pradesh.

B. Human Resource Development for Promotion of Manufacturing:

- Cooperation within the framework of Japan-assisted ‘Visionary Leaders for Manufacturing’ (VLFM) programme, under which Japanese manufacturing management and skills will be transferred to senior managers of Indian manufacturing industry;
- Continued involvement of Japanese private sector in training and quality control and utilisation of training programmes of the Government of Japan; and
- Collaboration towards the development of the Indian Institute of Information Technology for Design and Manufacturing, Jabalpur and exchanges between technological institutes of the two countries.

18. The Policy Dialogue between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, to be upgraded to the Ministerial level, will advance the relevant elements of the agenda of the SEPI. An MOU on Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor was signed between Minister of Commerce and Industry of India and Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.

19. The two leaders welcome enhanced cooperation in the financial sector, including through Japanese participation in India’s capital markets, banking and insurance. They also welcome the collaboration through cooperation agreement between the Government of India and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). They take note of the business cooperation agreement between JBIC and the ICICI Bank as a useful model to enable companies of India or Japan to raise funds in local currency in either country. The Ministries of Finance of the two countries will further exchange views on the development of regional financial and capital markets.

20. The two leaders welcome major investment projects from Japan to India, including by Suzuki Motor Corporation, Honda Motor Co. Ltd., Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. and Mitsui & Co. Ltd., among others. The two sides will cooperate to facilitate the following projects:

- Development and setting up of integrated logistic platforms with rail-connected Inland Container Depot (ICD) and specialized warehouses based on Free Trade & Warehousing Zone (FTWZ) framework; and

- Setting up of new capacities in India by Japanese auto and auto-parts companies.

21. Emphasizing the major role of the private sector in strengthening economic engagement, the two leaders announce the setting up of a Business Leaders' Forum, comprising ten business leaders from each country. This Forum will have the mandate to develop a roadmap for enhanced partnership and cooperation between the two countries at the business level and generate ideas for furthering the goals of the SEPI and taking forward the negotiations on the EPA/CEPA. The two leaders express the hope that this Forum will provide inputs to them for promoting a comprehensive economic engagement between India and Japan. The two leaders will also designate senior representatives to guide the Business Leaders' Forum.

22. The Japanese side welcomes Indian investments in Japan. The two sides will coordinate to facilitate their location and activities in the country. Recognising the competitive advantage of India in software development and IT-enabled services, the two sides will also work together to facilitate the functioning of Indian companies in this field in Japan.

23. The two sides will continue cooperation in the field of urban development, including water supply, sanitation and construction of urban transportation systems in Indian cities along the lines of Delhi Metro, which is a shining example of India-Japan partnership. The two countries will coordinate to launch a Working Group in the field of water environment, urban development and urban transportation.

24. The two leaders welcome the outcomes of meetings of Working Groups set up under the India-Japan Information and Communication Technology Forum, which include field trials in India for introduction of Japanese wide-band wireless technology i-Burst for field trials in India, joint research on Natural Language Processing by National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT) of Japan and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) of India, and exchange of researchers, software experts and other technical personnel. The two leaders urge their Ministries concerned to pursue actively the identified areas of cooperation. The Japanese side will give consideration to the request for assistance in setting up a National Gigabit Backbone Network in India.

25. The two sides are determined to tackle global energy security issues jointly and direct that the dialogue between their governments be strengthened. They also welcome the Joint Statement regarding cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector signed between the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas of India and Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan in September 2005, the signing of five MOUs and the progress made under them.

26. Recognising the critical importance of securing the energy needs of both countries, the two leaders share the desire to enhance the level and scope of cooperation in the energy sector. They endorse the setting up of an India-Japan Energy Dialogue, co-chaired by Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission of India and the Minister of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, to promote cooperation in the energy sector in a comprehensive manner. The areas covered will include oil and natural gas, coal, electric power, renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and other relevant sectors. The existing forum between The Energy Resources Institute (TERI) of India and New Energy and Industrial Development

Organisation (NEDO) of Japan, which was successfully convened for the first time in December 2006, will provide inputs to the Energy Dialogue.

27. The two sides will expand cooperation in energy efficiency through exchange of experts, capacity building and technical cooperation.

28. Recognising the respective strengths of India and Japan in high technology and knowledge economy and the potential benefits of fostering cooperation and also noting the importance of promoting the objectives of non-proliferation, the two leaders decide to launch a consultation mechanism to facilitate bilateral high technology trade and address matters relating to respective export control systems of the two countries.

29. Recognising the importance of intellectual property for economic development, the two leaders confirm that their governments will continue to cooperate in capacity building activities in this area, including in developing human resources.

Science and Technology Initiative:

30. The two leaders believe that cooperation in science and technology, including in frontier areas of research and development, constitutes a key element of the strategic partnership between the two countries. The two leaders welcome the holding of the 7th Joint Committee on Science and Technology in November 2005 as well as the India-Japan Science and Technology Initiative Meeting in October 2006. Taking note of the outcome of intensive bilateral consultations in recent months, including the above meetings as well as consultations at the level of the Ministers in charge of Science and Technology, they approve the launching of the following joint projects under the Science and Technology Initiative:

- Joint R&D Programme in areas such as nano-technology, life science and information and communication technology;
- Development of Open Access Database of the available ongoing and prospective research undertaken individually and through joint collaboration in their respective academic, public and industrial institutions; and
- Collaboration in the area of scientific deep sea drilling.

31. The two leaders recognise the importance of strengthening mutually beneficial research collaboration between the relevant organisations of the two countries. In this context, they welcome the signing of the following documents: (i) MOU on cooperation in science and technology between the Department of Science & Technology (DST) of India and RIKEN; and (ii) MOU on scientific cooperation programme between DST and Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), (in addition to the existing MOU between DST and Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) on Core University Program). The two leaders also welcome the collaboration between the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST) of Japan and Indian research institutions, particularly the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, DST, Department of Biotechnology and Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research in advanced industrial science and technology fields, including nano-technology and materials, energy and environment (clean coal and biomass resources), life sciences and information and communication technology.

32. The two leaders note with satisfaction the mutually beneficial cooperation between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) in peaceful uses of outer space. The two leaders reaffirm their keenness to cooperate in such fields as space science, including lunar missions and X-ray astronomy, satellite remote sensing, satellite communication, and disaster management support. They also recognise the importance of capacity building and promotion of regional cooperation in space applications in the Asia Pacific region. In this context, the Japanese side appreciates the ISRO's decision to participate in the disaster management support system "Sentinel Asia".

33. The two leaders welcome the signing of the agreement on ITER, in which they are partners.

People-to-People Exchanges:

34. The two leaders believe that in order to substantiate the India-Japan strategic partnership there must be a quantum increase in cultural, academic and people-to-people exchanges. Such contacts will also build upon the goodwill that exists in the two countries in respect of each other and help raise the profile of India in Japan and of Japan in India. With this larger policy objective in mind, the two leaders endorse a number of initiatives to qualitatively upgrade such contacts.

35. Recognising the important role played by the youth of both countries in fostering closer people-to-people ties, the two leaders launch an Investing in the Future Initiative, the main elements of which will, inter alia, consist of the following:

- The Japanese side will expand the Aso programme, announced in January 2006, with the support of the Indian side, with the objective of sponsoring visits of five thousand persons between India and Japan over the next three years in such fields as Japanese language, technology and youth interaction;
- The Indian side welcomes the designation of India as a target country for the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme. Exchanges under this programme will be stepped up;
- The Governments of India and Japan will work together to promote Japanese language studies in India, with a target of 30,000 learners at different levels by the year 2010. The Japanese side welcomes the introduction of Japanese language as an optional foreign language in the secondary school curriculum in India;
- The two sides will continue promotion of Japanese language in India through Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers programme; and
- The Japanese side will assist the Indian side in setting up of Japanese language teaching cells in seven Indian Institutes of Technology and establishing centres of Japanese studies at selected institutions and universities in India.

36. The two leaders welcome the signing of a Memorandum on the development of the Indian Institute of Information Technology for Design and Manufacturing at Jabalpur, with Japanese assistance. The two sides will also make every effort to collaborate towards the development of an Indian Institute of Technology.

37. The two leaders designate the Year 2007 as the "India-Japan Tourism Exchange

Year” and direct the Ministries concerned to carry out various activities to promote tourism exchanges. They welcome a Joint Document on expansion of tourism exchanges between the two countries. The Indian side expressed its appreciation for Japanese assistance in development of tourism-related infrastructure, including the Buddhist pilgrimage circuit in India. The two sides will enhance their ongoing cooperation in development of infrastructure at Buddhist sites in India.

38. Noting that civil aviation links between the two countries are a key element for fostering closer economic and people-to-people contacts, the two leaders welcome the positive outcome of bilateral civil aviation talks and direct their respective authorities to expeditiously implement the agreed measures to expand air links commensurate with the requirements of growing economic relations and enhanced tourist flows. The Indian side invites Japanese participation in the development of airports in India through public-private partnership and also under the ODA. The Japanese side will give serious consideration to the idea.

39. Recalling the important role of Nalanda in the ancient period as a leading international university contributing to Buddhist and secular studies, the two sides will explore the idea of re-development of Nalanda as a major centre of learning with the establishment of an international university on the basis of regional cooperation.

40. The two leaders welcome the signing of an MOU on cooperation between the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Japan Foundation.

41. The two Prime Ministers welcome the understandings on Sister Province/State relationship reached between Delhi State and Fukuoka Prefecture and Maharashtra State and Okayama Prefecture and encourage further expansion of such twinning arrangements to enhance people-to-people relations and closer economic ties.

42. The two leaders direct the concerned authorities to implement at the earliest the arrangement on the waiver of visas for holders of Diplomatic Passports. They also direct that the simplification of visa procedures to facilitate two-way travel be undertaken as soon as possible.

Regional and Multilateral Cooperation:

43. The two leaders confirm their intention to continue to work closely in the East Asia Summit (EAS) framework. While acknowledging the ASEAN as the driving force in the process of creating this new regional architecture, they reaffirm the need for all sixteen EAS countries to fully participate in and actively contribute to the objective of closer cooperation and community building in the region. In this regard, they stress the importance of the development of a roadmap and modalities for the progressive realisation of an East Asian community in the EAS framework.

44. The two leaders reaffirm the need to further promote regional economic integration and, in this context, recall their respective proposals for a Pan Asian Free Trade Area and for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia. They decide to cooperate with each other in studies that will take forward these proposals. It is also decided that the two sides will cooperate towards the establishment of the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, which will conduct research, analyses as well as develop policy recommendations to advance the regional economic integration.

45. The two leaders note that the initiative by the G-4 for reforming the Security Council has brought the issue to the attention of the international community. They further reaffirm the determination to strengthen cooperation and coordination between India and Japan for comprehensive reform of the United Nations, including the expansion of the UN Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories to reflect contemporary realities of the world.

46. The two leaders share the view on the usefulness of having dialogue among India, Japan and other like-minded countries in the Asia-Pacific region on themes of mutual interest. The two governments will consult on the modalities.

47. The two sides reiterate their commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation objectives, and their determination to work as partners against proliferation. While expressing their respective positions on the approaches towards the shared goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, they reaffirm that they will continue to promote commonalities and identify areas of convergence for mutual cooperation between them in a constructive manner, contributing to the advancement of overall bilateral relations. In this context, they welcome the First Joint Secretary/Director General level Annual Dialogue on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, held in New Delhi in May 2006, and confirm that the Second Round of the Dialogue will be held in Tokyo in 2007.

48. The two leaders express serious concern regarding the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, which confront the region and the wider world. They reaffirm that India and Japan need to work in a concerted manner to effectively counter these dangers, which imperil their peaceful societies.

49. The two leaders discussed recent events on the Korean Peninsula and shared grave concerns on the nuclear test conducted by DPRK, which has greatly complicated the security situation in the region and highlighted the true extent of clandestine proliferation. The two leaders stress the importance of fully implementing the UN Security Council resolution 1718 and confirm that they will promote practical cooperation towards this end. They welcome the recent progress towards the resumption of the Six-Party Talks for the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, an objective DPRK has also endorsed. They urge that the abduction issue be resolved at the earliest as a humanitarian concern.

50. The two leaders share the view that nuclear energy can play an important role as a safe, sustainable and non-polluting source of energy in meeting the rising global demands for energy, and that international civil nuclear energy cooperation should be enhanced through constructive approaches under appropriate IAEA safeguards. The two sides will continue to discuss the international civil nuclear cooperation framework with respect to India.

51. The two sides will establish Inter-Governmental Consultations on Environment and Climate Change. They will also promote cooperation in Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate.

52. Recognizing that it is a matter of priority for both countries to also strengthen the ability to mitigate damages caused by natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunami and cyclones, the two sides confirm that they will promote mutual cooperation, including through Asian Disaster Reduction Centre, in the field of

disaster management in line with the Hyogo Framework of Action.

53. The two Prime Ministers note with satisfaction that India has become a Member of ASEM and Japan an Observer in SAARC. Both countries resolve to work in close consultation in these forums. The Indian side looks forward to Japan's attendance as an Observer at the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi in April 2007.

54. The two leaders reaffirm their shared recognition of the importance of strengthening the multilateral trading system. The two countries will make their utmost efforts towards the early conclusion of the WTO Doha Round negotiations as responsible members of the G-6.

Conclusion:

55. The two leaders express their conviction that Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's highly successful Official Visit to Japan and the decision of the two countries to establish a Strategic and Global Partnership has opened a new chapter in friendly and cooperative relations between them.

56. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has extended an invitation to Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress to pay a State Visit to India.

57. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh thanks the Government and the people of Japan for the warm hospitality accorded to him and his delegation. He has extended a cordial invitation to Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe to pay a return visit to India at a mutually convenient date in 2007. The invitation was accepted with pleasure, with dates to be decided through diplomatic channels.

(Manmohan Singh)

(Shinzo Abe)

**Prime Minister of Republic of
India**

Prime Minister of Japan

Tokyo, December 15, 2006

Joint Statements Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi