



INDIA
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9th IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission

Statement by

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj

27 September 2018

Excellency Mr. Aloysio Nunes Ferreira Filho

Excellency Ms. Lindiwe Sisulu

I would like to extend my warm appreciation to Minister of Foreign Affairs Aloysio Nunes Ferreira Filho for convening the 9th IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission meeting. I thank you, Excellency, for the warm welcome and facilitating our meeting.

Stocktaking of IBSA activities since the 8th Trilateral Commission

I am happy to note that our cooperation in IBSA is on a high trajectory. This is our third meeting in the last one year.

Excellencies,

I have fond memories of our previous meeting in Pretoria in June this year. We also issued a Joint IBSA Statement on South-South Cooperation which is a significant contribution to the ongoing discussions on this subject. IBSA countries share common values, aspirations, and vision for development that binds us together.

Values of democracy, pluralism, multiculturalism, tolerance, social-inclusion, rule-based international order, UN reforms, and shared commitment to 2030 agenda are enshrined deeply in IBSA cooperation. I want to emphasise here that we three share a lot more in common than other groupings and we should seek to strengthen these shared bonds.

To commemorate IBSA's fifteenth Anniversary in a befitting manner, we have agreed to organize fifteen substantive and focused events.

The draft calendar of events has already been shared. We had agreed that each of us will host some events out of this fifteen. I am sure you are giving this serious consideration.

I am happy to learn that the 6th IBSAMAR will commence shortly off the coast of South Africa. This is an important area of focus of our cooperation.

Excellencies,

It is a happy coincidence that IBSA's Fifteenth Anniversary coincides with Madiba's birth centenary and 125th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's Pietermaritzburg incident in South Africa. In 2019, we also celebrate 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

We have agreed to organize the Gandhi-Mandela Memorial Freedom Lecture. It would be opportune to organise this event at all Capitals.

We have also decided to further enhance coordination between our Permanent Representatives in New York, Geneva, and Paris.

Excellencies,

I am happy to share that India would be hosting the 6th IBSA Leaders' Summit on dates convenient to our leaders.

Our Sherpas have decided to convene the IBSA Joint Working Groups meeting in priority sectors including health, education, defence, trade & investment, culture, energy, human settlement, and environment.

India has also launched the second phase of IBSA Fellowship programme this year. Applications from scholars from Brazil, South Africa and India have been invited and the programme will commence shortly at RIS in New Delhi. This is an important initiative.

South-South Cooperation:

Excellencies,

South-South Cooperation has been a pillar of IBSA Development Cooperation. We issued the IBSA Joint Declaration on South-South cooperation which will strengthen our hands in shaping the multilateral discussions on South-South Cooperation in run up to BAPA+40. We must continue to work together at various multilateral fora to mainstream our narrative in the ongoing global discourse.

IBSA Fund Activities:

The Sustainable Development Goals, as enshrined in the 2030 Agenda, accord centrality to development and quality-life to each human being. The success of IBSA Fund, which was initiated in 2004, demonstrates most vividly the strength of South-South cooperation and the work of our three countries in using innovative approaches to share development experiences to other parts of the world.

We should work towards strengthening the IBSA Fund by enhancing our contributions and also by tapping other resources. Our experts could discuss this matter further.

Political Issues:

Excellencies,

Terrorism, non-state actors, and illicit financial flows undermine the very cause of development and prosperity. Terrorist organizations use sophisticated equipment, weapons, and ammunitions that are financed through illicit and illegitimate sources. Allowing them access to funds, finances, information, weapons, and technology enables them to carry out attacks with impunity. It is incumbent therefore to dismantle their support infrastructure.

India's proposal on Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism (CCIT) will fill in the significant vacuum. United Nations' counter-terrorism mechanism should be made efficient in listing terrorists and their outfits. Implementation of FATF standards, across all jurisdictions, will strengthen international efforts in addressing terrorism.

Excellencies,

Prime Minister Modi has underlined the importance of reforming the global institutions and has called for "reformed multilateralism". IBSA countries have been at the forefront on initiating reform of global institutions. However, above all these, we three have to ensure that our collective voice is heard clearly in BRICS and other groups on UN Security Council reforms, since if we don't speak up for our own interest, no else will.

Excellencies,

India deeply appreciates African states' desire to find collective solutions to conflicts and counter terrorist forces. Given India's longstanding contribution to peacekeeping and as net security provider to global peace,

we stand willing to contribute more to Africa, both in security and development cooperation. We are deeply concerned with continuing tensions on the border between Gaza Strip and Israel. India firmly believes that the dialogue is the only viable option to effectively address the issues in that region.

Excellencies,

We are One Global Family. We all have in our respective heritage, concepts that convey this important message, like "ubuntu" in South Africa and "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" in India. Let us build on our commonalities for a better world.

I thank you.