

Written Remarks to The President of the United States of America

Mr. President,

It is my honour and privilege to present to you the Letter of Credence from the President of India, His Excellency Mr. Ram Nath Kovind, accrediting me as India's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States of America. Please allow me to also present to you the Letter of Recall of my predecessor, Ambassador Navtej Singh Sarna

I bring with me, Mr. President, the warmest personal greetings to you and the First Lady from the President and the Prime Minister of India. I also take this opportunity to extend to you, your Administration and the people of the United States of America the warm good wishes of the Government and the people of India.

India and the United States are the world's largest and the oldest democracies. Our relationship has been nurtured by shared belief in democratic values, individual freedom and rule of law, and increasingly, by strong convergences of interest on key regional and global issues --- making ours a truly global partnership.

I am excited to assume my important new responsibility at a moment of great promise and reckoning in India's relations with the United States. Our relations have been transformed dramatically under your leadership, building on continuous and incremental progress in recent times. Close personal friendship between you and my Prime Minister, and the unstinting support from both of you to our bilateral relations, have allowed the Indian and American peoples to come together like never before.

The vision unveiled by my Prime Minister and you during his visit to Washington DC in June 2017 for our bilateral relations and for the wider Indo-Pacific region shows the limitless potential for cooperation. Our cooperation today spans every conceivable area of human endeavour --- encompassing

political, strategic, defense, security, trade and economic, energy, science & technology and people-to-people ties.

The inaugural 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in September 2018, held in fulfilment of decision taken by you and Prime Minister Modi, has brought new synergies to our diplomatic and strategic engagement and resulted in greater alignment of our interests, priorities and pursuits. As you know, India has been a positive and stabilizing partner of the United States in South Asia and Indo-Pacific region; our approach and action in the region have largely complemented each other's. India has scaled up its economic development assistance to Afghanistan. We have forged a robust dialogue with each other and other partners to secure a peaceful, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific. India will always strive to remain the net security provider and the first responder in the Indian Ocean Region, working in concert with our most important partners, including the United States.

Our defence relationship with the United States has grown in every sphere -- be it defence policy coordination, defence trade, technology and innovation partnership, defence industry collaboration or mil-to-mil cooperation. Your decision to ease transfer of high-end defence equipment, platforms and technology to India not only enhances our security, but contributes to our defence trade with the United States. Recent measures taken by the two governments, at home and bilaterally, have enabled American defence industry to better leverage India's market and cost advantages to meet defence needs of India as well as other countries. Our two militaries conduct more bilateral exercises with each other than with any other partner. New enabling agreements concluded between India and the United States for logistics sharing and communication security will further strengthen operational cooperation between our armed forces.

There has been a qualitative change in our bilateral engagement in the fields of homeland security and counter-terrorism. We have launched new mechanisms and put in place cooperative arrangements to identify and degrade common challenges and terrorist threats through better information

exchange, intelligence sharing, coordinated messaging and collaborative response.

Trade and economic cooperation has always been a major pillar of our relationship. Strong revival of economic growth in the United States under your leadership and market-friendly policies in India under Prime Minister Modi have created new businesses opportunities for both sides. As a result, our bilateral trade volume continues to expand rapidly, including in new and strategic areas. For the first time ever, India imported significant quantities of American oil and natural gas in 2017-18, showcasing vast potential as we seek to meet our large energy needs. The launch of Strategic Energy Partnership in 2018 will further boost our cooperation in all forms of energy.

The United States is the partner of choice in India's remarkable journey of transformation. Our investment relationship has become increasingly reciprocal, with growing American investments in India being matched by rapid growth in Indian investments in the United States. These have helped fulfil our common objective of creating more jobs, promoting prosperity and economic growth in our respective countries.

Strong people-to-people ties remain a vital chord in our relationship that binds us together as a society. The large and enterprising Indian American community in the United States has been a source of strength and a bridge that connects our two societies, fostering friendship and understanding between our two countries. They are imbued with talent, democratic values and love for the United States, enabling them to easily integrate into the American mainstream and to make valued contribution to the growth and prosperity of their adoptive country. A vibrant digital partnership has been built and continues to be enriched through their contribution. The presence of over 200,000 Indian students in the United States is another important element of our growing people-to-people ties.

Mr. President,

While a lot has been achieved in the past, the opportunity ahead is enormous. I am mandated by my Prime Minister to work hard to take our relations with the United States to the next level. During my tenure as India's Ambassador, I assure you of my fullest dedication in further expanding and strengthening our strategic partnership in all its dimensions. I am confident that I could count on your personal goodwill and support to help translate the vision, which you forged with my Prime Minister, to reality, benefitting both our nations and our peoples.

(Harsh Vardhan Shringla)

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America,
Washington D.C.