

(b) and (c) India and France are today the leading nations in the fight against climate change. The joint hosting by India and France of the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 11th March 2018 in New Delhi and the first General Assembly in New Delhi from 2nd to 5th October 2018 has bolstered our joint resolve to fight climate change.

The ISA has now transformed into a treaty based international and intergovernmental organization headquartered in India. Out of 71 countries that have signed Framework Agreement of the ISA, 48 countries have deposited the instrument of ratification. India and France share a common interest to cooperate and collaborate for the stability and prosperity of Africa, including through development oriented initiatives such as capacity building programs and joint projects.

The second India-France Dialogue on Africa, which took place on 11th December 2018, provided both countries an opportunity to exchange views on the latest developments in Africa as well as to explore possibilities for joint endeavour to contribute towards peace, stability and prosperity in Africa.

During the visit of French President Mr. Emmanuel Macron to India in March 2018, both leaders reiterated their willingness to implement common projects in Africa. Discussion on projects to be implemented on ground are currently being discussed by the two sides.

Visit of president of Russia to India

2414. DR. BANDA PRAKASH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the President of Russian Federation met Indian Prime Minister for the 19th edition of the Annual Bilateral Summit in New Delhi on October 4-5, 2018; and

(b) if so, the details thereof along with details of Agreements/MoUs exchanged between India and Russia during the visit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH): (a) President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir V. Putin, paid an official visit to India on 04-05 October, 2018, for the 19th India-Russia Annual Summit.

(b) Prime Minister and President Putin held talks on issues of bilateral and international interest. President Putin also met our President. A Joint Statement was

adopted by the two sides titled 'India-Russia: An Enduring Partnership in a Changing World'. Both leaders noted the intensification of contacts in all spheres of bilateral cooperation viz. political, strategic, military and security cooperation, as also in the spheres of economy, energy, industry, science and technology, and culture. The leaders emphasized that the India-Russia relationship is an important factor for global peace and stability and appreciated each other's respective roles as major powers with common responsibilities for maintaining global peace and stability.

The first India-Russia Business Summit was organized on 5 October, 2018, on the margins of the Annual Summit, involving participation of over 100 Russian and Indian companies from each side. The Business Summit was addressed by both PM and President Putin. The two leaders also interacted with a group of young students from the Sirius Centre of Talented Children, Sochi, Russia, who were on a week-long visit to India coinciding with the dates of the Summit, and a matching group of talented Indian students from our side. The 19th Annual Summit provided an opportunity for both sides to reinforce their commitment to strengthening of their partnership.

The following documents were concluded during the visit:

- (i) Protocol for Consultations between the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs for the period 2019-2023.
- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog).
- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and the Federal Space Agency of Russia 'ROSCOSMOS' on Joint Activities in the field of Human Spaceflight Programme.
- (iv) Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and the Joint Stock Company "Russian Railways".
- (v) Action Plan for Prioritization and Implementation of Cooperation Areas in the Nuclear Field identified jointly by India and Russia.
- (vi) Memorandum of Understanding between the Russian Ministry of Transport and Indian Railways in the Development Cooperation in Transport Education.
- (vii) Memorandum of Understanding between the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), of India and the Russian Small and Medium Business

Corporation (RSMB), on Cooperation in the field of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

- (viii) Cooperation Agreement in the Fertilizers Sector between the Russian Direct Investment Fund ("RDIF"); PJSC Phosagro (PhosAgro) and Indian Potash Limited (IPL).
- (ix) Memorandum of Understanding in the field of revelation, development and support of talented youth between Fund "Talent and Success" and the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, India.

Indo-ASEAN maritime connectivity

2415. SHRI JOSE K. MANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the major challenges to the Indo-ASEAN maritime connectivity;
- (b) whether India proposes to join the regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership to boost Indian trade volumes; and
- (c) the details of bilateral trade volume between ASEAN and India during 2018?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH): (a) Under the India-ASEAN Partnership for Peace, Progress and Prosperity, both sides are committed to enhancing physical connectivity, including maritime connectivity.

India, as a maritime neighbour of ASEAN, seeks to enhance its maritime connectivity with the ASEAN countries through augmentation of regional infrastructure, development of seaports, maritime logistics network and maritime services in order to create greater efficient linkages. India continues to remain engaged in dialogue with the ASEAN countries on these priority areas under various fora such as the ASEAN Connectivity Coordination Committee—India Meetings and the ASEAN-India Maritime Transport Working Group Meetings, among others.

- (b) India is one of the 16 countries negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which is intended to deepen economic engagement comprehensively amongst the participating countries. India remains committed to an effective and comprehensive agreement that is balanced, satisfactory and mutually beneficial to all Negotiating Parties.