

**29**

**COMMITTEE  
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
(2023-24)**

**SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA**

**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**[Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the  
Twenty Fourth Report of the Committee on India's Policy Planning And Role Of Think  
Tanks With Special Reference To ICWA and RIS]**

**TWENTY NINTH REPORT**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

***FEBRUARY, 2024 / Magha, 1945 (Saka)***



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in the Twenty Fourth Report of the Committee on India's Policy Planning And Role Of  
Think Tanks With Special Reference To ICWA and RIS]**

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 7February, 2024*  
*Laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 7 February, 2024*



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**  
**NEW DELHI**

***FEBRUARY, 2024 / Magha, 1945 (Saka)***

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## COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2023-24)

**Shri P.P. Chaudhary - Chairperson**

### **Lok Sabha**

2. Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal
3. Shri Abhishek Banerjee
4. Shri Kalyan Banerjee
5. Shri E. T. Mohammed Basheer
6. Shri Dileshwar Kamait
7. Smt. Preneet Kaur
8. Smt. Goddeti Madhavi
9. Smt. Poonam Pramod Mahajan
10. Shri Srinivas Reddy Manne
11. Shri P. C. Mohan
12. Smt. Queen Oja
13. Shri Ritesh Pandey
14. Dr. K. C. Patel
15. Shri N.K. Premachandran
16. Smt. Navneet Ravi Rana
17. Shri Soyam Bapu Rao
18. Shri Vishnu Datt Sharma
19. Shri Rebaty Tripura
20. Dr. Harsh Vardhan
21. *Vacant*

### **Rajya Sabha**

22. Smt. Jaya Bachchan
23. Smt. Misha Bharti
24. Shri Anil Desai
25. Shri Ranjan Gogoi
26. Shri Deepender Singh Hooda
27. Shri Prakash Javadekar
28. Dr. Wanweiroy Kharlukhi
29. Dr. Ashok Kumar Mittal
30. Shri Kapil Sibal
31. Shri Abdul Wahab

### **Secretariat**

- |    |                           |   |                             |
|----|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Shri Anjani Kumar         | — | Joint Secretary             |
| 2. | Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan | — | Director                    |
| 3. | Ms. Maya Menon            | - | Under Secretary             |
| 4. | Shri Anurag Sandil        | - | Assistant Committee Officer |

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Committee on External Affairs (2023-24) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Twenty-Ninth Report (17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Twenty-Fourth Report of the Committee on the subject 'India's Policy Planning and Role of Think Tanks with Special Reference to ICWA and RIS'.

2. The Twenty-Fourth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 7 August, 2023 and laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 8 August, 2023. The Action Taken Replies of the Government on all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report were received on 10 October, 2023 (English Version) and 27 October, 2023 (Hindi Version).

3. The Committee considered and adopted this Action Taken Report at their Sitting held on 5 February, 2024. The Minutes of the Sitting of the Committee has been given at Appendix-I to the Report.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Twenty-Fourth Report of the Committee on External Affairs is given at Appendix-II.

**NEW DELHI**  
**5 February, 2024**  
**16 Magha, 1945 (Saka)**

**P.P. CHAUDHARY,**  
***Chairperson,***  
***Committee on External Affairs***

## CHAPTER-I

This Report of the Committee on External Affairs deals with the action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Twenty Fourth Report of the Committee on the subject 'India's Policy Planning and Role of Think Tanks with Special Reference to ICWA and RIS'. The Twenty Fourth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 7 August, 2023 and laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 8 August, 2023.

2. The Action Taken Notes have been received from the Ministry of External Affairs on all the 38 observations/recommendations contained in the Report. These have been categorized as follows: -

**(i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government: -**

Recommendation Nos. 5, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 35 and 36.

**Total-18  
Chapter-II**

**(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies:-**

Nil

**Total- Nil  
Chapter-III**

**(iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration: -**

Nil

**Total-Nil  
Chapter-IV**

**(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited: -**

Recommendation Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17 21, 23, 30, 31, 33, 34, 37 and 38

**Total-20  
Chapter-V**

3. The Committee desire that the final replies to the comments and observations/recommendations contained in Chapter-I of this Report and recommendations included in Chapter V may be furnished to the Committee within three months of the presentation of this Report.

4. The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some of their observations/recommendations that require reiteration or merit comments.

**POSITIONING INDIA BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THROUGH MULTIPLE  
STRUCTURAL PLATFORMS**  
**(Recommendation No. 2)**

5. The Committee in their 24<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

‘The Committee note that ever since the thrust of PP&R Division was centered towards creating Indian global flagship platforms which would allow India to articulate its foreign policy directions to a global audience, they have been reaching out to the strategic and foreign policy community by supporting several collaborative activities. As a result, several flagship Indian platforms evolved at the global level, namely, the Raisina Dialogue, the Indian Ocean Conference, the Global Technology Summit, the Asia Economic Dialogue, etc. Among these platforms, the ‘Raisina Dialogue’ by the Observer Research Foundation has become the global benchmark to reflect Indian thinking and over a period of time, it has evolved as a platform which rivals any other international conference. At the same time, the Committee take note of the popularity of certain other platforms like Shangri-La Dialogue,



the Munich Security Conference, etc. In a global scenario where it is extremely important for the world outside to know not only what you think but to appreciate and accept the same also, the Committee desire that the PP&R Division of MEA position India before the international community through multiple structural platforms and strive to make each one of them, a platform that the entire world aspire to be a part of.'

6. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The recommendation of the esteemed Committee is noted for compliance.”

7. **With a view to providing impetus to creating Indian global flagship platforms to allow India to articulate its foreign policy directions to a global audience, the Committee had desired that the PP&R Division of MEA position India before the international community through multiple structural platforms and strive to make each one of them a platform that the entire world aspire to be a part of. The Committee note that in its Action Taken Reply, the MEA has chosen to give the usual common reply “the recommendation of the esteemed committee is noted for the compliance” and has remained silent on the recommendation of the Committee with regard to assessing viable means and ways to position India before the international community through multiple structural platforms. The Committee are aware that their recommendation involves significant institutional changes which may take time, however, the Committee are of the considered view that Ministry could have mentioned some initial steps or blueprints of action initiated or proposed in this regard in the reply furnished. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and urge the Ministry to take some fruitful steps and apprise the Committee at the earliest.**

**UTILIZATION OF INDIAN MISSIONS AND POSTS ABROAD FOR A DEEPER AND REGULAR  
EXCHANGE OF IDEAS**  
**(Recommendation No. 8)**

8. The Committee in their Report had observed/recommended as under:

'The Committee are given to understand that Indian Missions/posts abroad not only act as the representative of India but also play a key role in gathering information on the diplomatic frontline, disseminating information to the overseas public and promoting of diplomatic relations. As a part of these activities, the Missions and Posts abroad maintain active engagements with prominent think tanks, research scholars and experts in the countries of their jurisdiction and the feedback is periodically shared with the Ministry in the form of political reporting and assessments by Missions. Taking note of this, the Committee feel that Indian Missions can play a more proactive role towards greater engagement with such experts and hence, urge the Ministry to utilize Indian Missions and posts abroad for a deeper and regular exchange of ideas and for channelizing the intellectual inputs/ subject expertise from abroad into the formulation of India's short, medium as well as long-term foreign policy objectives and goals.'

9. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply have stated as under:

"The recommendation of the esteemed committee is noted for compliance."

**10. Feeling that Indian Missions can play a more proactive role towards greater engagement with prominent think tanks, research scholars and experts in the countries of their jurisdiction, the Committee had urged the Ministry to utilize Indian Missions and posts abroad for deeper and regular exchange of ideas and for channelizing the intellectual inputs/subject expertise from abroad into the formulation of India's short, medium as well as long-term foreign policy objectives and goals. In its Action Taken Note, furnished to the Committee, the Ministry has submitted a stereotyped reply stating that the suggestion of the Committee have been noted for compliance. Considering that Indian Missions/posts abroad**

are already playing a key role in gathering information on the diplomatic frontline, disseminating information to the overseas public and promoting diplomatic relations, the Committee again urge the Ministry to escalate their efforts in utilizing the services of these missions and posts towards deeper and regular exchange of ideas and channelizing the intellectual inputs/subject expertise from abroad into the formulation of India's foreign policy objectives and goals. Progress and outcome achieved in this regard may be intimated to the Committee.

### **DEVELOPING RESEARCH CULTURE IN THE COUNTRY**

#### **(Recommendation No. 11)**

11. The Committee in their 24<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

'The Committee understand that India has a rich legacy of think tank ecosystem. The Committee note that the oldest think tank, United Service Institution (USI), was setup as far back as in 1870. The Committee also note that prior to the economic reforms of the 1990s, think tanks in India were largely funded by government or semi-government bodies. However, since the 1990s, private sector think tanks have come up steadily and their numbers are growing now at a healthy rate. According to a study, India now houses the third largest think-tank ecosystem in the World, after USA and China. The Committee are of the view that growing complexity of global challenges has made the role of think tanks very significant in recent years. Think tanks serve to provide well researched data and information for helping policy makers to make informed choices. They assist in breaking down the complex problems into simpler understandings and help in formulating solutions that cover all the relevant dimensions. The Committee are given to understand that think tanks play a substantive role in dialogue and collaborative work through research, seminars, track 1.5/track 2 events with other foreign think tanks and research organizations, thereby further engaging and familiarizing the global strategic and think tank community with Indian developments and policy orientations. The Committee are also given to understand that many foreign policy concepts/initiatives move from Track 2

dialogues to Track 1.5 dialogues and eventually become Government policy. Keeping in view the same, the Committee desire MEA to take the lead in developing research culture through its PP&R Division, create or support more think tanks and directly interact with universities in the country. Further, taking note of the fact that globally think tanks are projected to assume an even greater role in the implementation and evaluation of public policies and that this trend is likely to be followed in India as well, the Committee also exhort the Government to scale up its current collaboration with think tanks and universities with proper assessment of their funding requirements.'

12. In their Action Taken Reply, the Ministry of External Affairs submitted as under:

“The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted for compliance.”

**13. Taking cognizance of the substantive role played by Indian think tanks with other foreign think tanks and research organizations and the fact that many foreign policy concepts/initiatives move from Track 2 dialogues to Track 1.5 dialogues and eventually become Government policy, the Committee had desired that MEA take the lead in developing research culture through its PP&R Division, create or support more think tanks and directly interact with universities in the country. The Committee had further enjoined upon the Government to scale up its current collaboration with think tanks and universities with proper assessment of their funding requirements. The Committee feel constrained to note that the Ministry in response have given a very standardized reply and have failed to apprise the Committee of any concrete steps taken or being taken in this regard. It appears that no steps have been taken to even assess the funding requirement in this regard. The Committee are not satisfied with the reply furnished by the Ministry and while reiterating their earlier recommendation urge the Ministry to take proactive steps towards developing research culture through its PP&R Division, creating or supporting more think tanks and also scaling up its current collaboration with think tanks and universities. The Committee further would like to be kept apprised of the steps taken and the probable funding requirements in the matter.**

## **EXPLORING NEW TERRITORIES FOR TRACK 1 & TRACK1.5 DIALOGUES.**

### **(Recommendation No. 12)**

14. The Committee in their 24<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

‘The Committee note that one of the primary functions of the Policy Planning Division is to conduct bilateral and multilateral policy planning dialogues, especially Track 1, Track 1.5 dialogues. The Committee note that the various track dialogues are mostly Europe and East Asia centric and do not include any dialogue with African countries, or with our own neighbouring countries, or the North American and South American countries, except USA and Brazil. The Committee are given to understand that many of these countries do not have an established Policy Planning Division and for a Track 1 dialogue to materialise, a Policy Planning Division is needed on the other side also. Despite such constraints the Committee desire the Ministry to proactively map out each of the neighbourhood as well as the African countries and explore the possibility of initiating policy planning dialogue with them, especially in view of India’s raising interest in African countries and thrust on Neighbourhood First Policy.’

15. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted for compliance.”

16. **Having felt that the various track dialogues conducted by the Policy Planning Division are mostly Europe and East Asia centric and that many other important regions are untouched, the Committee had desired that the Ministry proactively map out each of the neighbourhood as well as the African countries and explore the possibility of initiating policy planning dialogue with them, especially in view of India’s raising interest in African countries and thrust on Neighbourhood First Policy. The Committee note that in its Action**

**Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry has submitted a stereotyped reply stating that the suggestion of the Committee has been noted down. In the considered opinion of the Committee, with India taking a lead, during its G 20 Presidency, towards inclusion of African Union, it is the need of the hour that we are also seen as a leader in fostering a more comprehensive and meaningful dialogues with the African countries. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and urge the Ministry to take immediate steps to proactively map out each of the neighbourhood as well as the African countries for the purpose without further delay. The Committee may be kept apprised of progress achieved in this regard**

**STRENGTHENING COORDINATION BETWEEN MEA & ICWA**  
**(Recommendation No. 13)**

17. The Committee in their 16<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

‘The Committee note that the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) work in close coordination with MEA to address issues that are at the top of the foreign policy agenda. As a statutory body, the mandate of ICWA, inter alia, is to promote the study of Indian foreign policy and international affairs so as to develop a body of informed opinion; to promote India’s relations with other countries through discourse and exchange of ideas as well as to serve as a clearing house of information and knowledge regarding world affairs. Since the role and mandate of ICWA are quite comprehensive and broad in scope, the Committee desire ICWA to continue focused research on areas of Government’s priority and play a more effective role in policy formulations of the Government. In order to contribute to the shaping of an India narrative on foreign policy and advance India’s priorities effectively, ICWA should also strengthen its coordination with MEA and work in a proactive than reactive mode.’

18. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. ICWA will make efforts to strengthen its coordination with MEA and work proactively to advance India’s priorities effectively through research and intellectual activities.”

19. **With a view to bestowing ICWA a more effective and meaningful role in foreign policy formulations of the Government, the Committee had desired that ICWA continue to focus its research on areas of Government’s priority as also strengthen its coordination with MEA and work in a proactive mode than reactive mode. The Committee note that the reply furnished by the Ministry is yet again a standardized version which does not indicate any tangible step being taken by the Ministry in this regard. The Committee are keen to know about the tangible action, if any, taken in regard to the Committee’s recommendation and , therefore, urge the Ministry to proactively implement the directions of the Committee and keep the Committee apprised of the progress in this regard.**

**PARTICIPATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN SEMINARS AND ACTIVITIES OF ICWA**  
**(Recommendation No. 17)**

20. The Committee in their 24<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

‘The Committee note that in pursuance of its mandate, ICWA undertakes numerous intellectual activities to promote India’s relations with other countries and discuss India’s policy towards international affairs. These activities include bilateral dialogues, international conferences, seminars, lectures and discussions. The Committee also note that since April 2021, ICWA has organized 126 events which were mix of lectures, talks, bilateral dialogues, international and national seminars, book launches, panel and roundtable discussions. The Committee have been informed that these events were organized in physical and hybrid mode. The Committee appreciate the initiative of ICWA in organizing

the events through the digital hybrid mode too as it would have enabled easier participation of scholars/experts from abroad and in turn would have had a positive impact on making the conversations more engaging and productive. The Committee have been given to understand that a number of Council's activities are organized in coordination with and support of the MEA and its representatives have been regularly participating in a range of activities organized by ICWA. The Committee note that events such as the celebration of the 50th anniversary of India-Vietnam Diplomatic Relations, 'MaitriDiwas' the India-UK Strategic Futures Forum dialogue or the international conference on Shanghai Cooperation Organization Reconnect ~ Rejuvenate under India's Presidency have been conducted by ICWA with the support MEA. The Committee further note that a number of Council's activities such as Sapru House Lectures delivered by visiting foreign dignitaries are also organized in support and coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee appreciate that some of the conferences and dialogues have the participation of External Affairs Minister, Minister of State, Foreign Secretary and Secretaries from the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee have also been informed that the ICWA conducts studies at Ministry's request, for instance on Nepal, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Africa and have submitted the reports. They have also contributed to discussion/research papers on IORA and UNSC and even carried out the publication of the book 'Covid and Diplomacy'. The Committee have been informed that these ICWA publications are regularly shared with concerned policy makers in MEA but without sharing with Parliamentarians. The Committee while recognizing the contribution of ICWA to India's foreign policy making process urge ICWA to make added efforts to increase the frequency of its intellectual activities such as seminars, conferences, roundtables, and other discussions, both in physical and hybrid mode and also ensure the participation of Parliamentarians to achieve its mandate.'

21. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

"The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. ICWA is making consistent endeavor to enhance its programmatic activities and to diversify the participation in its programs and will strive to also include Parliamentarians wherever feasible."



22. The Committee had urged upon ICWA to make added efforts to increase the frequency of its intellectual activities and also ensure the participation of Parliamentarians in its programs to achieve its mandate.' The Committee are pleased to note the Ministry's assurance that ICWA is making consistent endeavor to enhance its programmatic activities and diversify the participation in its programmes. The Committee also welcome the Ministry's assurance that ICWA would strive to include participation of Parliamentarians in its programmes. The Committee are hopeful that ICWA would actively persevere on its commitment in the coming years.

**GENERATING INCREASED INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN THE IBSA VISITING  
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME**  
**(Recommendation No. 33)**

23. The Committee in their 24<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

'The Committee note that as part of its wider dissemination programme, RIS has been conducting a number of capacity building programmes which include Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programmes and the IBSA Visiting Fellowship Programme with the Ministry of External Affairs the Summer School on Trade with EXIM Bank of India and Internship Programme for university students. In addition, RIS also conducted capacity building programmes on Agricultural Trade Policy Analysis with the support of its partner institutions. As regards the IBSA Visiting Fellowship Program instituted at RIS to promote academic exchange of young scholars in the field of economics and social sciences for strengthening research collaboration among India, Brazil and South Africa in the spirit of South-South Cooperation, the Committee find that only three candidates have joined the programme in 2023. In view of the focus of this Fellowship programme on multilateral institutional frameworks and the diverse range of important issues that concerns IBSA, the Committee urge RIS and the MEA to ensure that all the available slots are filled so that

every opportunity to do in-depth joint research and exchange of information in the fields of macro-economy, trade and development among India, Brazil and South Africa is fully utilized.'

24. In their Action Taken Reply, the Ministry of External Affairs submitted as under:

"The esteemed committee's recommendation has been duly noted."

25. **Having noted that only three candidates have joined the IBSA Visiting Fellowship Program instituted at RIS with the aim to promoting academic exchange of young scholars in the field of economics and social sciences for strengthening research collaboration among India, Brazil and South Africa, the Committee had urged that RIS and the MEA ensure that all the available slots of the Fellowship Program are filled in. The Committee, however, note that the Ministry's reply is silent on the action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard. As the Ministry are well aware, this fellowship programme aims to give opportunities to young scholars to do in-depth joint research and exchange of information in the fields of macro-economy, trade and development among India, Brazil and South Africa. The Committee, feel that the Ministry needs to be more proactive in its approach to encourage academic exchange of young scholars in the Fellowship programme. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and strongly urge the Ministry to review the fellowship programme at the earliest with a view to increasing interest and participation therein. The Committee wish to be kept apprised of the action taken in the matter.**

## OPENING UP OF RIS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

### (Recommendation No. 34)

26. The Committee in their 24<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

'The Committee note that RIS offers internship to post-graduate students in economics from reputed institutes/universities for a period of two to three months mostly during the summer and winter breaks of the academic semesters. The Committee have been informed that 14 students from different universities of India completed their internship at RIS during the last one year. The Committee feel that to inculcate interest in policy research on international affairs, training to budding scholars needs to be encouraged from a very young age. As such Committee are of the view that being a premier think-tank in India on global and regional economic policy, having accumulated unique expertise and knowledge base in the field of international trade, regional economic integration, new technologies and industrialization, regional connectivity and infrastructure development, blue economy, development finance and related areas, RIS should actively consider opening its internship programme in these specialized areas for students at graduate levels too. The Committee, hence, urge upon RIS to evaluate their internship programme and offer more opportunities to students and apprise the Committee about the same.'

27. In their Action Taken Reply, the Ministry of External Affairs submitted as under:

"The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. RIS would review its existing Internship Programme and make a vigorous effort to extend this facility to a larger number of interested candidates, including students at Graduate level also."

**28. The Committee, had urged upon RIS to evaluate their internship programme and offer more opportunities to students. The Committee had also felt that RIS should actively consider opening its internship programme to inculcate interest in policy research on specialized areas for students at graduate levels too. The Committee welcome the Ministry's**

assurance that RIS would be reviewing its existing internship Programme and make efforts to extend its internship programme to a larger number of interested candidates, including students at Graduate level also. The Committee are hopeful that RIS would take proactive steps to expedite the process of review. The Committee also urge the Ministry to keep track of the review with a view to expediting the outcome and also desire to be kept apprised of the progress in this regard.

### **CREATION OF ADDITIONAL FACULTY POSTS IN RIS**

**(Recommendation No. 36)**

29. The Committee in their 24<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

'The Committee note that RIS has been having only a tiny regular faculty ranging between 5 to 8 scholars at a given point of time since 2006 in addition to contractual faculty hovering between eight to 36. The Committee further note that the sanctioned strength is three Professors, three Associate Professors and just one or two Assistant Professors. It is learnt that despite strong recommendations by its Governing Council, expansion of regular faculty could not be done due to restrictions imposed by the Government on creation of new posts. As such, RIS has to substantially rely on its contractual faculty who due to lack of job security exits suddenly as the contractual appointments can be approved by RIS for not more than one year. At times, it becomes even difficult to get well qualified scholars as Professors or Associate Professors. The Committee feel that as a credible research institution, RIS needs to have a far stronger regular faculty base given the wide spectrum of its work programme requiring engagement of a large number of scholars with deeper domain knowledge and experience to conduct meaningful studies. The Committee are of the considered view that RIS needs to have a larger number of young and promising scholars at the level of Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, apart from Research Assistants to ensure organic growth of RIS Faculty and give its junior and middle level members a sense of security and career advancement. Hence, the Committee urge RIS

and the Ministry to take up the matter of creation of additional posts with the appropriate authority for appointment of regular faculty and intimate the Committee about the progress in this direction.'

30. In their Action Taken Reply, the Ministry of External Affairs submitted as under:

“As advised by the esteemed Committee, the Ministry would positively examine any proposal of RIS and take up with other relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Finance, for the creation of additional permanent Faculty posts at RIS to effectively and efficiently carry out its enhanced role and responsibilities as an institution of excellence to meet the emerging requirements for research.”

**31. With a view to ensuring organic growth of RIS Faculty and giving its junior and middle level members a sense of security and career advancement, the Committee had recommended that RIS and the Ministry may take up the matter of creation of additional posts of regular faculty with the appropriate authority and intimate the Committee about the progress in this direction. The Committee are pleased to note the Ministry's assurance that it would positively examine any proposal of RIS and take up with other relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Finance, for the creation of additional permanent Faculty posts at RIS. The Committee hope that RIS and the Ministry would take up the matter on a war footing and keep the Committee apprised of the developments in this regard.**

**ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES TO RIS**  
**(Recommendation No. 37)**

32. The Committee in their 24<sup>th</sup> Report had observed/recommended as under:

'The Committee note that RIS functions from the India Habitat Centre (IHC) premises in Delhi covering an initially acquired built up area of 1000 sq. mt. in September 1988 and an additional built-up space of 381.46 metres acquired by it from IHC later. The Committee have been told that RIS does not have any facility to house visiting scholars, including the six IBSA Fellowship holders or around 30 ITEC course participants coming from Global South to take part in its five specialized courses annually. Due to lack of required

conference facilities within its limited space, RIS has to frequently look for appropriate venues outside for holding its key meetings or conferences in which a large number of scholars from the country and abroad participate. Looking into the situation, the Committee feel that the built-up space available with RIS is insufficient to meet its present and emerging requirements. The existing space provides no scope for expansion of RIS's Faculty, which is absolutely essential for its organic growth to carry forward its mission of conducting evidence based specialized studies on trade and economic issues to give a boost to Government's efforts towards Atmanirbharta. The Committee are of the considered view that RIS needs to have its campus, hostel and allied facilities as an institution of excellence in the country which is mandated to conduct a large number of policy research studies for its in-house platforms such as the Global Development Centre, ASEAN India Centre, Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity (CMEC), etc. apart from the wide range of other studies commissioned by its partners. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry may seriously take up the issue of providing adequate infrastructure facilities to RIS and apprise the Committee about the specific steps taken in this regard. RIS may also, in consultation with Ministry of External Affairs, create a futuristic work plan and seek necessary budgetary allocation from the Ministry of Finance.'

33. In their Action Taken Reply, the Ministry of External Affairs submitted as under:

"The esteemed Committee's recommendation is noted for compliance."

**34. The Committee had observed that RIS does not have any facility to house visiting scholars, and due to lack of required conference facilities within its limited space, RIS has to frequently look for appropriate venues outside for holding its key meetings or conferences. The Committee had also felt that with the insufficient built-up space available, RIS is unable to meet its present and emerging requirements. The Committee, therefore, had recommended that the Ministry might seriously take up the issue of providing adequate infrastructure facilities to RIS and apprise the Committee about the specific steps taken in this regard. The Committee are disheartened to note the casual reply furnished by the**

Ministry. Time and again the Committee have impressed upon the Ministry that action taken notes furnished by the Ministry should be reflective of the actual action taken, either interim or final by the Ministry and not inconclusive, vague or couched in general terms such as 'noted or accepted'. The Committee are of the view that considering the unique place that RIS holds as a research institute in global sphere as well as its level of participation in conferences and seminars both at domestic and international level, the Ministry should have taken the matter of space crunch being faced by RIS much more earnestly. Although the Committee are aware that the given time is not sufficient for the complete execution of the recommendation but an initial proposal or some blueprint is least expected. The Committee, therefore, reiterate, its earlier recommendation and desire that the matter may be taken up more expeditiously.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT**

#### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 5)**

**The Committee note that the Ministry has taken positive steps towards initiating direct interface with the student's fraternity through their universities. The Committee have been informed that the Ministry is currently in the process of shaping an engagement with 75 identified universities all over India for the purposes of generating research content, using the interface with the universities to build a narrative, encouraging greater interest on topics of foreign policy particularly those topics which have a huge domestic resonance. The Committee appreciate the initiative taken by the Ministry to catch the next generation of potential policy makers and start interacting and interfacing with them very early on. The Committee are hopeful that the Ministry would continue its efforts to create more opportunities for the student fraternity to be actively part of foreign policy making and directly sponsor research studies of relevance in select universities and apprise the Committee about the outcomes in this regard.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry is making several efforts to reach out to the student fraternity. The Ministry takes university students on regular basis for the Ministry of External Affairs Internships Program. In addition, the Ministry also organizes distinguished



lectures in which prominent speakers share their views/opinions on contemporary foreign policy themes in top universities and academic institutions in India.

Further, both Research and Information Systems (RIS) for developing countries, and the Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) have dynamic programs to connect with young scholars through internships, participation in seminars, etc.

The recommendation of the esteemed Committee is duly noted for further compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

#### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 9)**

**The Committee have been informed that the MEA has a robust internship programme wherein opportunity is given to youths of the country to interface with the daily routine process of the foreign policy making and learn that how does the different wings of Ministry of External Affairs come together to shape a view on a foreign policy issue. It has been further given to understand that there is a high demand for internship in MEA and that the selection process to the programme is fairly rigorous. The Committee have been informed that the candidates who apply and are selected are placed across the Ministry of External Affairs including with the Policy Planning and Research Division whereby they get an opportunity to associate and to see very closely the functioning of the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee note that the programme is open to graduates and undergraduates from universities across the country. The Committee feel that internship programme of MEA is an excellent opportunity for budding scholars of our country to familiarize**

**themselves with the process of formulation of foreign policy and its implementation. The Committee are hopeful that the Ministry would continue in its efforts through its internship programme to bring foreign policy closer to the people of the country. The Committee further desire that the Ministry strive to ensure that there is sufficient diversity amongst the group of interns selected with respect to gender, underprivileged sections, geographical domicile and balanced representation from both urban and rural areas so that students from across the country are able to associate themselves with MEA. The Ministry should also create some job opportunities for utilization of services of talented young interns interested in making career in this field.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. The MEA Internship Policy of the Ministry of External Affairs is aimed at taking Foreign Policy closer to the people of the country; to bring in more focus on MEA; to provide value to the interns; to ensure better gender inclusivity and to increase diversity in terms of qualifications, domicile and socio-economic status amongst the cohort of interns engaged by the Ministry. All efforts are being made to ensure increased diversity amongst the group of interns in each term with respect to gender, underprivileged sections, geographical domicile and representation from both urban and rural areas. Candidates from districts under the ‘Transformation of Aspirational Districts Programme’ (TADP) and those belonging to SC/ST/OBC/EWS categories are given priority at different stages in the selection process. To ensure gender representation, a minimum of 30% of interns in each term are filled by women candidates.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 14)**

**The Committee finds that to fulfill its mandated objectives, ICWA has been undertaking a range of activities, of which research and disseminations form a core activity. This includes mainly the research works done by in-house faculty in the form of Issue Briefs, View Points and Special Reports- on topical issues having a bearing on Indian foreign policy interests. The Committee note that since April 2021 alone, ICWA has published 167 Issue Briefs, 136 View points, and 5 Special reports in addition to 25 Sapru House papers which are comprehensive future-oriented policy research papers on selected topics related to foreign policy. In addition, guest articles and research papers by outside experts, research projects with MoU partners, special research projects at the request of Ministry of External Affairs and research projects with Ministry of Defence are undertaken by ICWA. The Committee find that over a period of time, ICWA has diversified its research both in terms of geography as well as thematic issues, keeping in view their relevance to India's foreign and security policies. The areas and thematic studies that have received added thrust include maritime studies, Indo-Pacific, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and multilateral institutions like SCO, G-20, IORA and the UN. Since the research output is regularly shared with the Ministry and other stakeholders with an aim to influence policymakers and the public, the Committee recommend that ICWA should give added thrust to focused and indepth Research on emerging trends in international relations. At the same time, the thrust should be on quality output than quantity.**

## **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. ICWA will continue to lay emphasis on focused and in-depth research on emerging trends in international relations, and will keep striving towards bringing out high quality and effective research outputs through rigorous peer-review mechanism and greater discussion with relevant stakeholders.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 15)**

**The Committee further note that the sanctioned strength of the Research Faculty in ICWA is 30 of which 01 post has been kept for Director (Research), 05 posts for Senior Research Fellows, 12 posts for Research Fellows, 01 post for Research Associate and 05 posts for Research Interns. The Committee have been informed that one of the challenges being faced by ICWA in its working is getting quality researchers, especially when ICWA selection criteria focuses more on the expertise, knowledge and presentation skills in addition to academic qualifications like Ph.D, Masters, etc. In order to rope in Research Faculty with domain expertise and in-depth understanding of broad global themes/trends, proper incentive structure including provisions for annual increment and granting allowances is a pre-requisite. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the ICWA may come up with such proposals at the earliest and implement the same after the approval of the Governing Body and Governing Council. The Ministry should also enhance the allocation accordingly. The Committee also desire that to give a younger profile to the Research Faculty, additional hiring of Research Associates may also be**

**considered on a need basis. The Committee may be apprised of the progress in the matter.**

**(Recommendation No. 15)**

### **Reply of the Government**

In order to get quality researchers and retain good scholars, the Council will submit a proposal regarding some revision of the emolument structure of the Research Faculty to its Governing Body/Council.

ICWA has recently commenced hiring of Research Associates to give a younger profile to the Research Faculty.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 16)**

**The Committee note that ICWA brings out quite a wide range of publications which include Sapru House Papers, Special Publications, ICWA Guest Columns, Viewpoint, Issue Briefs, Special Reports, Oral history Project, etc. The Council also publishes books covering a wide spectrum of subjects which include single authored books, edited books and conference proceedings. Since April 2021 alone, ICWA has published 32 books which include 18 single authored and edited books and 14 conference proceeding books. The Committee find that the Council has brought out translations of some of its books/ publications into Hindi and regional languages. ICWA has also submitted that all Viewpoints, Issue Briefs, Sapru House Papers, Special Reports have been put on the ICWA website both in English and the Hindi**

**version. The Committee really appreciate the initiative taken by ICWA towards getting its various publications translated into Hindi. At the same time, the Committee though understand that it is a challenge to get quality translators who have knowledge of international affairs to understand the tone, tenor and the nuances of terminologies, however, MEA may also persuade the ICWA to look into the possibilities of getting its publications translated into vernacular languages as well so that their work can reach to maximum number of citizens.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Council will make efforts to get its research products translated into vernacular languages as feasible and wherever the subject is found to be relevant to the target audience.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 18)**

**The Committee have been informed that as part of its national outreach activities, ICWA has been sponsoring seminars/conferences across India on foreign policy and international relations. The Committee have further been informed that these outreach conferences are organised in collaboration with several Indian universities and think tanks including Council's MoU partners across the country. The Committee, however, note that since April 2021, only 14 outreach conferences in Universities have been supported by ICWA. In this respect, ICWA has submitted that due to pandemic, joint activities conducted**

**in collaboration with Universities had reduced as most of the Universities were badly disrupted by COVID 19 Pandemic. It has been further submitted that with the opening up of Universities, ICWA has been receiving a number of good proposals. The Committee are hopeful that ICWA is able to organize more conferences in the coming months and urge them to extend support for national/international conferences by recognised universities and UGC centres on themes of mutual interest in international relations and foreign policy. The Committee also desire that ICWA put in serious efforts to have more collaborations with other like-minded institutions, national and foreign think tanks and universities to build complementarities and explore synergies.**

### **Reply of the Government**

ICWA has been making constant endeavour to enter into collaborative arrangements with institutions and universities dealing with foreign policy and international relations at national and international level. Recently, it has entered into MoUs with, MNIT, Jaipur, IIT, Guwahati, Punjab University as well as BISR, Belarus, ISIS, Malaysia, and Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam. ICWA's outreach activities continue to be a key area of its work with the objective of promoting foreign policy discourse in India and mutual understanding on foreign policy and international affairs with foreign interlocutors.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 19)**

**The Committee understand that ICWA is the country's oldest foreign policy think tank which began seriously the study of international affairs and debate on foreign policy in a consciously non-partisan manner. The Committee also note that over the years ICWA has constantly reinvented itself with the changing times. The Committee are, however, of the view that despite setting new benchmark in terms of its institutional strength to influence the policy formulations through research and publications, policy debates and discussions, outreach to other institutions, including through translation of publications, the general public is not aware of the activities of ICWA. The Committee are of the opinion that lack of public awareness about the activities of ICWA will in the long run hinder its growth and development. The Committee, therefore, desire that ICWA should come up with more people centric programmes and activities which invite participation from the general public, especially, the student fraternity.**

**(Recommendation No. 19)**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Council's programmatic activities have been witnessing diverse participation from academic, strategic and student community, diplomatic corps, media and business. Social media promotion of Council's events has led to greater public outreach and participation including students. ICWA will continue to enhance its public outreach through its social media platforms.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]



## **Recommendation (Sl. No. 20)**

**The Committee note that one of the mandates of ICWA is to generate interest amongst the younger generation on international relations and to provide a platform for them to come to ICWA. The Committee understand that the ICWA has an internship programme through which young researchers are invited to get trained in conducting research on foreign policy and international affairs. These Young researchers can pursue research internship at ICWA for a period of 6 months, extendable to 1 year. The Internship Programme is advertised on the Council's website. The Council receives applications throughout the year and Interns are selected and taken. The Committee also note that the Council has entered into MoUs with 27 universities for collaboration, including provision for students pursuing graduation and post-graduation in International Relations to intern with ICWA. The Committee have further been informed that to train young scholars interested in policy research on international affairs, ICWA has promoted and expanded its internship programme to include not only paid interns who have completed their MA, but also nonpaid interns, who are pursuing graduation and post- graduation. It has also been submitted that during outreach programmes at universities and academic institutions, representatives from ICWA inform students about the internship opportunities which generally acquaints the student fraternity about ICWA and also generates interest in their internship program. The Committee have been told that the interns who join are given opportunities to be involved in diverse activities of the ICWA. They participate in conferences, go to seminars and are also encouraged to write at least one paper. Upon completion of internship a recommendation letter is also given to them. While the**

**Committee appreciate the steps being taken by ICWA to promote its internship program, they are disappointed to note that the results do not commensurate the efforts as only 15 interns are seen currently engaged in the Council. The Committee, therefore, urge upon ICWA to evaluate their internship program, make more concerted efforts to reach out to the student's community and take steps to put in place an eco-system wherein more and more students are encouraged to join the internship programme of ICWA and contribute in its mission.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. The Council will enhance its intake of paid and non-paid interns. While continuing with the regular 6 month internship programme, the Council will try to accommodate interns for shorter duration to allow greater flexibility to students to take up internship at the Council, especially during the vacation period of colleges and universities, to increase the intake of interns.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 22)**

**The Committee note that the Centre for Migration, Mobility and Diaspora Studies (CMMDS) at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) has come into effect on 1 August 2022 pursuant to decision of the Government of India to merge the erstwhile India Centre for Migration under the Ministry of External Affairs with the ICWA. CMMDS functions as the research unit on matters relating to international migration, mobility, and diaspora studies. It**

**is given to understand that CMMDS seeks to promote safe and orderly mobility of Indian nationals for employment abroad through research on mobility patterns, labour market assessments, procedural and data management issues, pre-departure orientation guidance, etc. and undertakes empirical, analytical and policy related research on international migration and labour mobility as also pilot projects to document good practices. The Committee find that various categories of agreements like Labour Manpower Agreements (LMA), Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements (MMPA) are being signed by India on migration and mobility with several countries. While expressing their appreciation about such agreements which facilitate safe, orderly and legal migration for our workforce, the Committee recommend that a robust mechanism for periodic assessment of such agreements may be devised and awareness about the opportunities that arise from the agreement may be spread among the public.**

### **Reply of the Government**

As part of its work related to migration and mobility, ICWA will seek to write commentaries on such Agreements concluded by India with other countries, as well as papers on migration trends.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 24)**

**The Committee note that the ICWA Library (popularly known as Sapru House Library) has been a premier resource centre for both Indian and**

**foreign scholars for the past seven decades. The Library houses a rich collection on international relations, international law, international economy, foreign policy, political history and social sciences. The Committee also note that the Sapru House Library has various user friendly facilities such as Bibliographic service, the Digitized Institutional Repository Service, Various online databases, Reference service etc. for use of public, academicians and research scholars. It is seen that the Library is open for students, parliamentarians, legislators, academics, diplomats, historians, civil servants, journalists, students, subject experts, etc. The Committee have also been told that the recent renovation and upgradation have made it more user-friendly with a better reading environment and a modern digital section. While the Committee are happy to note the various steps are being taken by ICWA for making Sapru House Library more accessible to a wider community of individuals, experts and scholars such as remote access, Wi-Fi Facility, reader friendly environment, etc., the Committee urge upon ICWA to give wider publicity of the facilities available in the Sapru House so that the Library is used to its full capacity.**

### **Reply of the Government**

ICWA will continue to make efforts to give wider publicity to Sapru House Library, which since its renovation is seeing almost full capacity in its Reading Hall.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 25)**

**The Committee note that the Council makes use of its websites in English and Hindi as well as social media platforms to publicize, project and share its research products and its intellectual activities. The Committee have also been informed that the Council is active on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn and that there has been 23 per cent of increase followers on Twitter. Since social visibility is a necessity for any organization to grow and social media platforms are an important tool to achieve the same, the Committee encourage ICWA to continue dissemination of its publications on Council's website, and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and fortnightly electronic notifications. The Committee also urge ICWA to take serious steps to spread their presence in other social media platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat as well to provide greater visibility to activities of ICWA.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Council has been increasing its viewership on social media in the last few years. It will make efforts to further diversify its social media platforms.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 26)**

**The Committee note that Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS ) is an autonomous policy research think tank that specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and**

**technology. RIS advises the Government on all matters pertaining to multilateral and regional economic issues referred to it from time to time including collaborative arrangements with other developing countries. Pursuant to the mandate, RIS coordinates with the Policy Planning and Research Division and other Divisions in the MEA and provides its inputs and programmatic/ research support to MEA. Since RIS provides wide range of divergent views on issues of significant importance to the country which assists the government to have a multidimensional view on key issues, the Committee desire that the specialized research programme of RIS should be strengthened further and integrated within the Government system. Moreover, the Committee also desire RIS to widen its outreach to vigorously promote India's narrative on areas of critical importance in the evolving world where counter narratives need to be handled effectively through evidence-based research.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The esteemed committee's recommendation has been noted for compliance. On the advice of MEA, RIS has taken several significant initiatives to widen its outreach within the country and abroad for vigorously promoting India's evidence-based perspective on foreign policy issues.

RIS is working very closely with the MEA and the engagement has been broad-based across various divisions. The scope for systemic integration of RIS is envisaged in the very structure of the Governing Council which has representations from MEA, through the Foreign Secretary and Secretary (Economic Relations). The Governing Council also has Secretaries from the Ministry of Finance, Department of Economic Affairs; Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and

Ministry of Science and Technology. In addition, RIS is also having several studies and projects with other government agencies such as Ministry of AYUSH, Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways; Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare; and the NITI Aayog, among others.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 27)**

**The Committee understand that RIS brings out evidence-based policy research studies, policy briefs and research papers on emerging issues and organizes a wide range of events within the country and abroad under the overall guidance and support of the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee note that the RIS gets Grant in Aid from MEA as well as other agencies. In 2021-22 , the grant was Rs. 22.19 crore including a special grant of Rs. 10.22 crore for acquiring an additional built up areas from India Habitat Center to overcome space crunch and in the FY 2022-23, the outlay was Rs. 14.19 crore. The Committee have been further informed that under BE 2023- 24 the allocation is Rs. 16.64 crore which is a substantial increase of 14.05% from last year's budget. The Committee have been told that these funds are used for the day-to-day functioning of the institution in terms of pay and allowances to its employees and for holding national and international meetings/ seminars/ conferences with the participation of national, regional and global scholars. Taking into account the impeccable track record of RIS in utilization of funds over the years and the growing spectrum of its work programme including the special policy research studies on G20 issues and the specific requirements of being MEA's Knowledge Partner for Think (T20)**

**during India's Presidency of G 20, the Committee urge the Ministry to keep monitoring the budgetary requirements of RIS and make appropriate additional allocation at RE stage, if required.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. Ministry accords positive consideration to the financial requirements of RIS at the RE and BE stage every year while approving its annual grant. Over and above the annual grant, Ministry also favourably considers additional funding requirements of RIS for the assigned tasks for specific research studies or events from time to time through special sanctions.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 28)**

**The Committee note that RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues. Since its inception, the focus of the work programme of RIS has been the promotion of South-South Cooperation and collaboration with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. The Committee have been told that RIS works as a bridge to bring both Global South and Global North together to identify best possible solutions for accelerated growth of Global South. It has also been submitted that RIS has entered into research partnership agreements with the financial support of Northern partners to promote some of the best global practices for**



**the economic development of Global South. The establishment of Global Development Centre at RIS clearly shows that RIS is moving towards the engagement of its Northern partners for accelerated economic development of Global South. In the emerging global scenario of interdependence amongst the nations, the Committee feel that forging working partnerships for attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDDGs), financial inclusion, gender equality, reformed multilateralism, etc. need to be upheld and India with her rising stature in the world economy and politics, should support every effort towards that end. The Committee, therefore, desire that MEA should encourage and support RIS to continue to act as a bridge and be the voice of the country in its attempts to bring about convergence of Global South with the Global North in areas of collective interest, at the same time guiding the Global South to defend and promote its core trade and economic interests at bilateral, regional and global levels during intergovernmental negotiations.**

### **Reply of the Government**

RIS has so far made major efforts to create its global footprint and has been engaged in major international meetings and negotiations including at the WTO and the UN entities. RIS has also in the recent past made efforts to work closely with regional bodies like the BIMSTEC, ASEAN, IORA and AU. The Ministry shall, in consultation with RIS, continue to facilitate its engagement in major global forums. MEA has also supported the RIS Flagship Annual Conference the Delhi Process on South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 29)**

**The Committee understand that RIS has expertise in theoretical exposition and empirical assessment of regional connectivity initiatives to assess long term gains and related issues. The Committee note that India does not have a dedicated think-tank to address regional connectivity issues which is of critical importance in contemporary times. The Committee have been assured that RIS has supported Government of India's track 1.5 initiatives by providing robust inputs in these areas and that its inputs have provided valuable support to Government's decision making in terms of regional cooperation. The Committee understand that physical connectivity not only improves mobility between growth centers and hinterland but also promotes cross-border trade, foster people-to-people movement, and enhance cultural connect with the neighbouring countries. Closely linked with connectivity is trade facilitation. With a robust network of physical and digital connectivity, trade facilitation reforms and border infrastructure in place, trade costs gets reduced, value chains gets strengthened contributing to industrialization along the economic corridors. Taking into account the increasing role of India in the region as connectivity provider and infrastructure facilitator, the Committee urge the Ministry to utilize the expertise of RIS and encourage them to augment their expertise in the areas of trade facilitation and regional connectivity through new research, knowledge creation and data collection on neighbouring countries and specific sectors to provide valuable inputs to the Government in formulating India's connectivity strategy.**

## **Reply of the Government**

To strengthen India's Neighbourhood First policy and Act East Policy, MEA has advised RIS to work closely with Ministry of Ports Shipping and Waterways to strengthen the connectivity pillar at RIS and accordingly a new Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity (CMEC) has been launched. MEA has nominated JS Indo-Pacific as a member of the Advisory Board of this centre. In addition, to strengthen collaboration on regional issues, RIS is already working with the Indo-Pacific Division to manage and lead with ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS on issues related to multi-modal connectivity. MEA has also nominated RIS as member of the BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks (BNPTT) and the West Europe Division of MEA has also engaged RIS for leading to India-EU Connectivity Partnership launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and EU President. On trade facilitation measures, RIS has also come up with a dedicated research programme.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 32)**

**The Committee note that under its University Connect Programme, RIS organizes a wide range of national seminars in collaboration with universities and academia across the country to generate greater awareness on foreign policy issues. Under the Programme it invites young scholars and academicians to take part in its major conferences such as Annual International Conference on South-South Cooperation. The Committee are aware that as a part of the 'Jan Bhagidari' initiative of the G20 Indian**

**Presidency, RIS has been organizing G20 Lecture Series in 75 universities across the country with the aim to reaching out to the youth and student fraternity of our country. The Committee view University Connect as an important means to connect with the youth of the country and generate awareness about the importance of India's G20 Presidency. It is also an opportunity for young Indians to bring new ideas and perspectives to G-20-related topics. The Committee hope that MEA will facilitate the RIS to successfully cover all the 75 Universities under the Jan Bhagedari Programme and rope in the youth of the country as cultural ambassadors who can help build long-lasting relationships with G-20 fraternity. Moreover, MEA alongwith RIS should also look into the possibility of continuing to bring in more and more Universities under the umbrella of University Connect Programme even after the end of India's G20 Presidency on 30 November 2023 and chalk out a mechanism to use the networks created during this period to build long-lasting relationships with the Universities in the country.**

**(Recommendation No. 32)**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. The University Connect Programme has emerged as a grand success under the Jan Bhagidari initiative of India's G20 Presidency. RIS would make efforts to continue effective partnership under this platform and work towards greater participation and engagement of Indian universities in priority areas like LiFE and similar themes where wider adoption is critical.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 35)**

**The Committee note that RIS disseminates its research output through a wide range of its publications like Policy Briefs, Reports, Discussion Papers, etc. The Committee also note RIS has brought out several publications on various themes including India-EU Connectivity: Partnership for Development, Demand and Democracy; Ayush Sector in India: Prospects and Challenges; Deepening Cooperation in IBSA Perspectives From Key Sectors; ASEAN-India Development Cooperation Report-2021; E-Commerce Issues at the WTO Discussions and in India; ASEAN and India Partners of Integration in Asia, etc. The Committee concur with submission of RIS that these research publications provide vital information to policy makers and shapers and are valuable reference points to the research community on issues related to trade, investment, finance, technology, health, development partnership, etc. The Committee, however, feel that there is a need for wider publicity for the research output of RIS and hence, urge RIS to take steps to ensure wider dissemination and easy availability of its publications for research scholars and academicians.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The esteemed committee's recommendation is duly noted. RIS website has been revamped and has been made more interactive. RIS has also started the practice of translating its research and knowledge outputs in Indian and foreign languages. This has been widely implemented for the G20 related publications. RIS has been further encouraged to make effective use of social media as well as mainstream media and widen its reach through the University Connect platform. RIS has also

been advised to make optimum use of digital media for live dissemination of its events, programmes, dialogues and conferences as part of its outreach programme.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 36)**

**The Committee note that RIS has been having only a tiny regular faculty ranging between 5 to 8 scholars at a given point of time since 2006 in addition to contractual faculty hovering between eight to 36. The Committee further note that the sanctioned strength is three Professors, three Associate Professors and just one or two Assistant Professors. It is learnt that despite strong recommendations by its Governing Council, expansion of regular faculty could not be done due to restrictions imposed by the Government on creation of new posts. As such, RIS has to substantially rely on its contractual faculty who due to lack of job security exits suddenly as the contractual appointments can be approved by RIS for not more than one year. At times, it becomes even difficult to get well qualified scholars as Professors or Associate Professors. The Committee feel that as a credible research institution, RIS needs to have a far stronger regular faculty base given the wide spectrum of its work programme requiring engagement of a large number of scholars with deeper domain knowledge and experience to conduct meaningful studies. The Committee are of the considered view that RIS needs to have a larger number of young and promising scholars at the level of Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, apart from Research Assistants to ensure organic growth of RIS Faculty and give its junior and middle level members a sense of security and career advancement. Hence, the Committee urge RIS and the Ministry to take up the matter of creation of additional posts with the appropriate authority**

**for appointment of regular faculty and intimate the Committee about the progress in this direction.**

### **Reply of the Government**

As advised by the esteemed Committee, the Ministry would positively examine any proposal of RIS and take up with other relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Finance, for the creation of additional permanent Faculty posts at RIS to effectively and efficiently carry out its enhanced role and responsibilities as an institution of excellence to meet the emerging requirements for research.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

**CHAPTER-III**

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE  
DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES OF THE  
GOVERNMENT**

**-NIL-**



**CHAPTER- IV**

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH  
REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY  
THE COMMITTEE AND REQUIRE REITERATION**

**-NIL-**

## CHAPTER V

### OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

#### Recommendation (Sl. No. 1)

The Committee note that the Policy Planning & Research Division was established in the Ministry of External Affairs in 1966. In 1984, the mandate of the division was enhanced to assist in foreign policy formulation, preparation of position papers, analysis of international affairs, assessment of critical situations, preparation of drafts for speeches of President/ PM/ EAM, conduct of seminars and studies, etc. The Committee also note that the division's mandate was extended further in 2015 with an aim to providing greater visibility to Indian foreign policy, articulate the Indian view on major emerging global developments, receive and deliberate on new ideas, attract high-level international participation in flagship events, provide useful exposure to the Indian think-tank institutions and help advance India's leadership projection in the world. The Committee are pleased to note that the PP&R Division of the Ministry has in the years since supported several collaborative activities with think tanks through conferences, seminars/webinars, Track 1.5/2 dialogues, and research projects to advance the extended mandate assigned to them. However, in Committee's view the division needs to be strengthened and well equipped to conduct or collaborate in more and more established conferences/dialogues to upscale the targets and outcomes while simultaneously enlarging the scope of engagement with more

**think-tanks and regions across the country and the world and they may be apprised accordingly.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed Committee is noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 2)**

**The Committee note that ever since the thrust of PP&R Division was centered towards creating Indian global flagship platforms which would allow India to articulate its foreign policy directions to a global audience, they have been reaching out to the strategic and foreign policy community by supporting several collaborative activities. As a result, several flagship Indian platforms evolved at the global level, namely, the Raisina Dialogue, the Indian Ocean Conference, the Global Technology Summit, the Asia Economic Dialogue, etc. Among these platforms, the ‘Raisina Dialogue’ by the Observer Research Foundation has become the global benchmark to reflect Indian thinking and over a period of time, it has evolved as a platform which rivals any other international conference. At the same time, the Committee take note of the popularity of certain other platforms like Shangri-La Dialogue, the Munich Security Conference, etc. In a global scenario where it is extremely important for the world outside to know not only what you think but to appreciate and accept the same also, the Committee desire that the PP&R Division of MEA position India before the international community through multiple structural platforms and strive to make each one of them, a platform that the entire world aspire to be a part of.**

## **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed Committee is noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No. 7 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 3)**

**The Committee understand that the Policy Planning Division of the Ministry is a true junction box of all thinking where all ideas, information and inputs land from different sources from within the Ministry and outside, including from Policy Planning Dialogues. It is their job to assimilate, analyze and filter through all of it to generate meaningful research output that builds the knowledge base of the Ministry and our Missions abroad. The Committee also note that the policy planning is not just limited to what the Government thinks but also to respond to what is happening outside the Government including the thoughts of international think tanks, thoughts of civil society about India's position and they way the academia look at different relationships that India have. Hence, the Committee desire that the division maintain robust interfaces with all elements which are external to the Government including the business and the corporate community. Since the policy planning work needs whole of Government approach and the work is very crucial, the Committee further desire that the division keeps itself up to date with the latest thinking, with the best of the personnel who could create anchored policy framework for building a strong India narrative abroad.**

## **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed Committee is noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 4)**

**The Committee note that the Policy Planning Division prepares research papers, policy briefs and situation reports pertaining to global developments/ international affairs in general and India's foreign policy in particular. The publications of Policy Planning Division are non-classified and shared mostly within the government apparatus, and also to heads of leading think tanks. The Annual Report of the Ministry which is a compilation of its activities is a public document. The speeches of the External Affairs Minister, spokesperson and the contents of conferences are all put together into an India Narrative, which is also out in the market. Further, the website of the Ministry also provides for information on bilateral relations of India with various countries. The Committee, however, feel that there is lack of awareness amongst the general public regarding the activities of the Ministry and access to most of the pertinent information compiled by Ministry is restricted to limited fraternity. The Committee desire that the Ministry may take steps towards wider dissemination of its publications, including Reports, Briefs and compendia as well as that of its network of think tanks and autonomous bodies. The Committee also desire that the Ministry actively work on a mechanism to proactively converse with the people of India in layman**

**language, as well as in Rajbhasha and major regional languages on the issues related to external affairs and India's foreign policy.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed Committee to engage in layman language & Rajbhasha is duly noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 6)**

**The Committee are given to understand that as part of India's G 20 residency the Ministry are organizing G-20 university connect wherein about 200 meetings of G-20 are being organized spread over each and every State and Union Territory of India. The Committee have also been given to understand that directions have been given to organizers of these G-20 meetings to mandatorily connect with the local universities and the think tank ecosystem available there in respective State and Union territory and to engage them through a side event of the G-20 meeting. While the Committee appreciate the initiative taken by the Ministry to utilise the G20 Summit as an opportunity to connect with the various Think Tanks and Universities in the country, the Committee are of the considered view that the Ministry should utilize this opportunity and those of similar events in future too to strengthen its network of interaction with the think tanks and extend it further to go regional and sub-regional levels. The Committee are also hopeful that the Ministry would continue in its endeavours to connect to local Universities and think tanks of the country and utilize the interface for the purposes of generating research**

**content as well as encouraging greater interest amongst the student community on topics of foreign policy particularly topics which have a huge domestic resonance and apprise the Committee about the achievements made through such initiatives.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed Committee is noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 7)**

**The Committee understand that outreach to the strategic and foreign policy community is one of the core verticals of PP&R Division. The Committee are given to understand that the Division supports four annual flagship conferences organized in partnership with prominent Indian think-tanks - Raisina Dialogue (in partnership with Observer Research foundation), Asia Economic Dialogue (in partnership with Pune International Centre), Global Technology Summit (in partnership with Carnegie India) and Indian Ocean Conference (in partnership with India Foundation), which are broadly themed under geopolitics, geoeconomics, geotechnology and geostrategy, respectively. The Committee note that these Conferences have been organized across various cities in India and abroad, for instance the Global Technology Summit was held in Bengaluru, Indian Ocean Conference was held in various countries in the Indian Ocean Region and the Asia Economic Dialogue was held in Pune. The Committee have also been informed that besides these conferences there are various national level seminars being held from time to**

**time in collaboration with think tanks, universities and academic institutions in different locations across the country to generate greater awareness on foreign policy issues such as the NADI Dialogue (Guwahati), Maha Rana Pratap Annual Geopolitics Dialogue (Udaipur), Policy Dialogue “Act East to Indo-Pacific: Role of North-east Indian states in ‘Connecting the Connectivities’” (Imphal), Third India-Japan Intellectual Conclave (Agartala), etc. The Committee are happy to note that the policy discourse is not restricted to Delhi and urge the Policy Planning Division to take it to regional locations more often and ensure involvement of more think tanks and organizations across India in such endeavours.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No.8)**

**The Committee are given to understand that Indian Missions/posts abroad not only act as the representative of India but also play a key role in gathering information on the diplomatic frontline, disseminating information to the overseas public and promoting of diplomatic relations. As a part of these activities, the Missions and Posts abroad maintain active engagements with prominent think tanks, research scholars and experts in the countries of their jurisdiction and the feedback is periodically shared with the Ministry in the form of political reporting and assessments by Missions. Taking note of this, the Committee feel that Indian Missions can play a more proactive role**



**towards greater engagement with such experts and hence, urge the Ministry to utilize Indian Missions and posts abroad for a deeper and regular exchange of ideas and for channelizing the intellectual inputs/ subject expertise from abroad into the formulation of India's short, medium as well as long-term foreign policy objectives and goals.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No. 10 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 10)**

**1.47 The Committee note that Policy Planning Division interfaces with all three Track Dialogues in the country. For Track 1, it is directly responsible, for Track 1.5, it is semiresponsible and for Track 2 its responsibility is only to present Government of India's viewpoint. The Committee are aware that these interfaces generate ideas, which translates to initiatives which then translate into processes, conferences or conference themes. While appreciating the fact that the Division is expanding the number of conferences that it supports to encourage dialogue on foreign policy and international affairs across the country, the Committee find that Track Dialogues in our country are dealt by domain experts. The Committee feel that in an increasingly complex global environment, where peace builders and diplomats looking to address difficult policy challenges are increasingly incorporating track 1.5 and**

**track 2 dialogues in their strategies, the Ministry should seek guidance from Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs on topical issues.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No.11)**

**The Committee understand that India has a rich legacy of think tank ecosystem. The Committee note that the oldest think tank, United Service Institution (USI), was setup as far back as in 1870. The Committee also note that prior to the economic reforms of the 1990s, think tanks in India were largely funded by government or semi-government bodies. However, since the 1990s, private sector think tanks have come up steadily and their numbers are growing now at a healthy rate. According to a study, India now houses the third largest think-tank ecosystem in the World, after USA and China. The Committee are of the view that growing complexity of global challenges has made the role of think tanks very significant in recent years. Think tanks serve to provide well researched data and information for helping policy makers to make informed choices. They assist in breaking down the complex problems into simpler understandings and help in formulating solutions that cover all the relevant dimensions. The Committee are given to understand that think tanks play a substantive role in dialogue and collaborative work through research, seminars, track 1.5/track 2 events with other foreign think tanks and research organizations, thereby further engaging and familiarizing**

**the global strategic and think tank community with Indian developments and policy orientations. The Committee are also given to understand that many foreign policy concepts/initiatives move from Track 2 dialogues to Track 1.5 dialogues and eventually become Government policy. Keeping in view the same, the Committee desire MEA to take the lead in developing research culture through its PP&R Division, create or support more think tanks and directly interact with universities in the country. Further, taking note of the fact that globally think tanks are projected to assume an even greater role in the implementation and evaluation of public policies and that this trend is likely to be followed in India as well, the Committee also exhort the Government to scale up its current collaboration with think tanks and universities with proper assessment of their funding requirements.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No. 13 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 12)**

**The Committee note that one of the primary functions of the Policy Planning Division is to conduct bilateral and multilateral policy planning dialogues, especially Track 1, Track 1.5 dialogues. The Committee note that the various track dialogues are mostly Europe and East Asia centric and do not include any dialogue with African countries, or with our own neighbouring countries,**

**or the North American and South American countries, except USA and Brazil. The Committee are given to understand that many of these countries do not have an established Policy Planning Division and for a Track 1 dialogue to materialise, a Policy Planning Division is needed on the other side also. Despite such constraints the Committee desire the Ministry to proactively map out each of the neighbourhood as well as the African countries and explore the possibility of initiating policy planning dialogue with them, especially in view of India's raising interest in African countries and thrust on Neighbourhood First Policy.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No.16 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 13)**

**The Committee note that the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) work in close coordination with MEA to address issues that are at the top of the foreign policy agenda. As a statutory body, the mandate of ICWA, inter alia, is to promote the study of Indian foreign policy and international affairs so as to develop a body of informed opinion; to promote India's relations with other countries through discourse and exchange of ideas as well as to serve as a clearing house of information and knowledge regarding world affairs. Since the role and mandate of ICWA are quite comprehensive and broad in scope,**

**the Committee desire ICWA to continue focused research on areas of Government's priority and play a more effective role in policy formulations of the Government. In order to contribute to the shaping of an India narrative on foreign policy and advance India's priorities effectively, ICWA should also strengthen its coordination with MEA and work in a proactive than reactive mode.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. ICWA will make efforts to strengthen its coordination with MEA and work proactively to advance India's priorities effectively through research and intellectual activities.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No. 19 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 17)**

**The Committee note that in pursuance of its mandate, ICWA undertakes numerous intellectual activities to promote India's relations with other countries and discuss India's policy towards international affairs. These activities include bilateral dialogues, international conferences, seminars, lectures and discussions. The Committee also note that since April 2021, ICWA has organized 126 events which were mix of lectures, talks, bilateral dialogues, international and national seminars, book launches, panel and roundtable discussions. The Committee have been informed that these events were organized in physical and hybrid mode. The Committee appreciate the initiative of ICWA in organizing the events through the digital hybrid mode too as it would have enabled easier participation of scholars/experts from**

abroad and in turn would have had a positive impact on making the conversations more engaging and productive. The Committee have been given to understand that a number of Council's activities are organized in coordination with and support of the MEA and its representatives have been regularly participating in a range of activities organized by ICWA. The Committee note that events such as the celebration of the 50th anniversary of India-Vietnam Diplomatic Relations, 'Maitri Diwas' the India-UK Strategic Futures Forum dialogue or the international conference on Shanghai Cooperation Organization Reconnect ~ Rejuvenate under India's Presidency have been conducted by ICWA with the support MEA. The Committee further note that a number of Council's activities such as Sapru House Lectures delivered by visiting foreign dignitaries are also organized in support and coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee appreciate that some of the conferences and dialogues have the participation of External Affairs Minister, Minister of State, Foreign Secretary and Secretaries from the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee have also been informed that the ICWA conducts studies at Ministry's request, for instance on Nepal, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Africa and have submitted the reports. They have also contributed to discussion/research papers on IORA and UNSC and even carried out the publication of the book 'Covid and Diplomacy'. The Committee have been informed that these ICWA publications are regularly shared with concerned policy makers in MEA but without sharing with Parliamentarians. The Committee while recognizing the contribution of ICWA to India's foreign policy making process urge ICWA to make added efforts to increase the frequency of its intellectual activities such as seminars, conferences, roundtables, and other discussions, both in physical and hybrid mode and also ensure the participation of Parliamentarians to achieve its mandate.

## **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. ICWA is making consistent endeavor to enhance its programmatic activities and to diversify the participation in its programs and will strive to also include Parliamentarians wherever feasible.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

## **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No. 19 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

## **Recommendation (Sl. No. 21)**

**The Committee note that since its inception the thrust areas of work of ICWA has evolved over the years. From an initial focus on Asian Relations, Afro-Asian Solidarity and related area studies it has now evolved to cover area studies across the globe and thematic issues such as maritime studies, Indo-Pacific, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and multilateral institutions like SCO, G-20, IORA and the UN, Digital diplomacy, Gender issues in international affairs and SDG issues, etc. The Committee have been informed that as part of its expansion programme ICWA has setup three Special Centers namely Centre for Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Centre on Migration Mobility and Diaspora Studies (CMMDS) and Centre for Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) to undertake focused research and dialogues in specific areas in order to contribute to emerging discourse on these areas. The Committee have been told that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Study Centre is a lead think tank engaged in SCO-related activities. The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP)**

**is a Track 2 network of member institutions which serves as an important mechanism to build closer interaction with various countries in the ASEAN and the wider Indo-Pacific region. The Committee are also given to understand that these centres publish their own research papers on themes relevant to the organization which have been acknowledged by policy makers and foreign and Indian scholars to be very useful. The Committee appreciate the proactive steps being taken by ICWA to have focused research and dialogues in specific areas. The Committee urge ICWA to further strengthen and widen its endeavours in area specific research through its special centres and support the MEA to address issues that are at the top of the foreign policy agenda more effectively.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 23)**

**The Committee note that Think Tank 20 or T20 is one of the eleven Engagement Groups within G20. The Committee have been informed that DG, ICWA is the Chair of Task Force 7 (TF7) on ‘Towards Reformed Multilateralism: Transforming Global Institutions and Frameworks’. In this capacity, ICWA has been participating in the T20 meetings to advance the agenda of reformed multilateralism. It has also been submitted that a curtain raiser talk on “G20 @ 2023 - The Road Map to Indian Presidency” was held on 08 August 2022. It is further seen that ICWA has published a book ‘G20@2023: The Roadmap to Indian Presidency’ and brought out papers by**



**in-house faculty and external experts on themes related to G-20. The Committee also hope that India's core interests are upheld during its G20 Presidency by ICWA and that it utilizes this opportunity to ensure that the priorities set by India during its G20 Presidency are carried forward beyond the Indian Presidency.**

### **Reply of the Government**

ICWA has noted the recommendation of the esteemed committee. It will strive to promote a discourse on India's G20 Presidency priorities as relevant to its mandate.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 30)**

**The Committee are given to understand that fostering policy dialogue on trade, investment and economic cooperation forms an integral part of the RIS work programme. The Committee note that in the recent past RIS has organized a number of dialogues, meetings and discussions encompassing various themes of national interest such as Energy Efficiency in Effective Energy Transition; Future Digital Currencies and CryptoCurrencies; Revisiting Economic Cooperation in BIMSTEC in Post-COVID-19; Need for Setting Up of a New Development Bank, etc. The Committee feel that such policy dialogues are of profound importance for our country since these enable academicians, policy makers, practitioners and other stakeholders to carry out extensive deliberations on various economic issues confronting the Global South at national, regional, sub-regional and multilateral level and share their insights towards evolving possible solutions. The Committee, hope**

**that RIS would plan to organize similar in-depth discussions on regular basis in coordination with its wide range of national and international partner institutions on key issues and strengthen its connect to the Ministries of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), Ministry of Finance (MoF) and Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) to bring to table holistic understanding of issues on trade, investment and economic cooperation assimilated from subject scholars from across the globe with different affiliations and MEA should appropriately utilize the value of such discussions for betterment of foreign policy.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 31)**

**The Committee note that RIS has been engaged in G20 work for Indian Presidency at multiple levels in the ‘Working Group’ as well as the ‘Engagement Group’ tracks. The Committee have been told that RIS is a knowledge partner for the Agriculture Working Group (AWG) and the Development Working Group (DWG) wherein it has been providing inputs and comments on various thematic issues concerned to each group. The Committee note that in addition to the above, RIS is also actively working with five engagement groups viz. Think 20 (T20), Science 20 (S20), Youth 20 (Y20) and Civil 20 (C20) as one of the lead coordination institutions for organizing events/conferences/seminars as also providing valued inputs to**

**various activities being organized by these groups. In view of the diversity of issues and complex challenges the world is grappling with, the Committee are aware that the expectations from India's Presidency of G20 has really multiplied. While applauding the humongous role RIS is playing in shaping concerns of Think 20, Science 20, Youth 20 and Civil 20, the Committee urge RIS to infuse fresh ideas on G20 by carefully assessing its implications for global economy. The Committee also desire RIS to compare, contrast and create new knowledge that matter for the people in the G20 countries and in rest of the world, including the developing countries, LDCs, SIDS, etc.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The esteemed committee's recommendation is duly noted.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 33)**

**The Committee note that as part of its wider dissemination programme, RIS has been conducting a number of capacity building programmes which include Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programmes and the IBSA Visiting Fellowship Programme with the Ministry of External Affairs the Summer School on Trade with EXIM Bank of India and Internship Programme for university students. In addition, RIS also conducted capacity building programmes on Agricultural Trade Policy Analysis with the support of its partner institutions. As regards the IBSA Visiting Fellowship Program instituted at RIS to promote academic exchange of young scholars in the field of economics and social sciences for**

**strengthening research collaboration among India, Brazil and South Africa in the spirit of South-South Cooperation, the Committee find that only three candidates have joined the programme in 2023. In view of the focus of this Fellowship programme on multilateral institutional frameworks and the diverse range of important issues that concerns IBSA, the Committee urge RIS and the MEA to ensure that all the available slots are filled so that every opportunity to do in-depth joint research and exchange of information in the fields of macro-economy, trade and development among India, Brazil and South Africa is fully utilized.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The esteemed committee's recommendation has been duly noted.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No.25 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 34)**

**The Committee note that RIS offers internship to post-graduate students in economics from reputed institutes/universities for a period of two to three months mostly during the summer and winter breaks of the academic semesters. The Committee have been informed that 14 students from different universities of India completed their internship at RIS during the last one year. The Committee feel that to inculcate interest in policy research on international affairs, training to budding scholars needs to be encouraged from a very young age. As such Committee are of the view that being a**

**premier think-tank in India on global and regional economic policy, having accumulated unique expertise and knowledge base in the field of international trade, regional economic integration, new technologies and industrialization, regional connectivity and infrastructure development, blue economy, development finance and related areas, RIS should actively consider opening its internship programme in these specialized areas for students at graduate levels too. The Committee, hence, urge upon RIS to evaluate their internship programme and offer more opportunities to students and apprise the Committee about the same.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed committee is duly noted. RIS would review its existing Internship Programme and make a vigorous effort to extend this facility to a larger number of interested candidates, including students at Graduate level also.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No. 28 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 37)**

**The Committee note that RIS functions from the India Habitat Centre (IHC) premises in Delhi covering an initially acquired built up area of 1000 sq. mt. in September 1988 and an additional built-up space of 381.46 metres acquired by it from IHC later. The Committee have been told that RIS does not have any facility to house visiting scholars, including the six IBSA Fellowship holders or around 30 ITEC course participants coming from Global South to take part in**

**its five specialized courses annually. Due to lack of required conference facilities within its limited space, RIS has to frequently look for appropriate venues outside for holding its key meetings or conferences in which a large number of scholars from the country and abroad participate. Looking into the situation, the Committee feel that the built-up space available with RIS is insufficient to meet its present and emerging requirements. The existing space provides no scope for expansion of RIS's Faculty, which is absolutely essential for its organic growth to carry forward its mission of conducting evidence based specialized studies on trade and economic issues to give a boost to Government's efforts towards Atmanirbharta. The Committee are of the considered view that RIS needs to have its campus, hostel and allied facilities as an institution of excellence in the country which is mandated to conduct a large number of policy research studies for its in-house platforms such as the Global Development Centre, ASEAN India Centre, Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity (CMEC), etc. apart from the wide range of other studies commissioned by its partners. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry may seriously take up the issue of providing adequate infrastructure facilities to RIS and apprise the Committee about the specific steps taken in this regard. RIS may also, in consultation with Ministry of External Affairs, create a futuristic work plan and seek necessary budgetary allocation from the Ministry of Finance.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The esteemed Committee's recommendation is dated for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

#### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see para No.34 of the Chapter– I of the Report)

### **Recommendation (Sl. No. 38)**

**The Committee desire that the Ministry of External Affairs may closely monitor the recommendation of the Committee with ICWA and RIS and submit the outcome to the Committee.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the esteemed Committee is noted for compliance.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/76/2023 dated 10/10/2023]

**NEW DELHI**  
**5 February, 2024**  
***16 Magha, 1945 (Saka)***

**P.P. CHAUDHARY,**  
***Chairperson,***  
***Committee on External Affairs***

**MINUTES OF THE TENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL  
AFFAIRS (2023-24) HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY, 2024**

The Committee sat on Monday, 5 February, 2024 from 1500 hrs. to 1520 hrs. in  
Main Committee Room, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**1. Shri P.P. Chaudhary, Chairperson**

**Lok Sabha**

2. Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal
3. Shri Dileshwar Kamait
4. Smt. Preneet Kaur
5. Shri P. C. Mohan
6. Smt. Queen Oja
7. Dr. K. C. Patel
8. Shri N.K. Premachandran
9. Shri Soyam Babu Rao
10. Dr. Harsh Vardhan
11. Shri E.T. Mohammed Basheer

**Rajya Sabha**

12. Smt. Jaya Bachchan
13. Shri Anil Desai
14. Dr. Ashok Kumar Mittal



## Secretariat

- |    |                           |   |                  |
|----|---------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Shri Anjani Kumar         | - | Joint Secretary  |
| 2. | Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan | - | Director         |
| 3. | Ms. K. Muanniang Tunglut  | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | Smt. Maya Menon           | - | Under Secretary  |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Sitting of the Committee.

3. Thereafter the Committee took up for consideration the draft Report on the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Twenty-Fourth Report of the Committee on External Affairs on the subject 'India's Policy Planning and Role of Think Tanks with Special Reference to ICWA and RIS'.

4. The Chairperson invited the members to offer their suggestions, if any, for incorporation in the draft Report after some deliberations. The Committee adopted the draft report without any modification.

5. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the Action Taken Report and present the same to Parliament.

6. XXXX.

7. XXXX

8. XXXX

*The Committee then adjourned.*

(Vide Para 4 of Introduction of Report)

**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE OBSERVATIONS/  
RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE TWENTY FOURTH REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE  
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (17<sup>TH</sup> LOK SABHA)**

(i) Total Number of Recommendations 38

(ii) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.

Recommendation Nos. 5, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 35  
and 36.

**Total-18  
Percentage: 47.4%**

(iii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in  
view of the Government's replies.

NIL

**Total- Nil  
Percentage: 0 %**

(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government  
have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration.

NIL

**Total- Nil  
Percentage: 0 %**

(v) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the  
Government are still awaited.

Recommendation Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 21, 23, 30, 31, 33, 34,  
37 and 38

**Total- 20  
Percentage: 52.6%**