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Title: The Minister of External Affairs laid a statement regarding visit to India by the President of the United States of America Hon'ble Barack H. Obama.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall take up item no. 7 – Statements,

Shri S.M. Krishna, you may kindly lay your Statement on the Table of the House.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): Mr. Chairman, I rise to lay a statement on the visit of the United States President Barack Obama to India from 6-9 November 2010,

India and the United States have in the recent years built a broadbased framework of cooperation. Government attaches high importance to the India-US strategic partnership, both in the pursuit of achieving India's national development goals and for advancing global peace, stability and progress. President Obama has characterized the India-US relationship as one of the defining partnerships of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

President Obama's wide-ranging programme in Mumbai and Delhi, included in addition to the official engagements, events that covered diverse aspects of our wide-ranging bilateral cooperation. President Obama expressed his gratitude for the honour and privilege of addressing Members of Parliament on 8 November 2010.

The visit was successful in strengthening mutual understanding on regional and global issues; accelerating the momentum of our bilateral cooperation; and creating a long-term framework to elevate the India-US strategic partnership to a new level.

I place on the Table of the House a copy of the Joint Statement issued after the visit which summarises the outcomes of the visit.

Briefly, I draw the attention of the august House to the following:-

i) In the area of economic cooperation, we have agreed to take steps to realise the potential for trade and investment in both directions and to harness the scientific and technological capabilities in the two countries for the benefit of our two countries and the world. We welcome US investments in key sectors of our economy, including in the areas of infrastructure and nuclear energy. We also agreed to facilitate greater movement of professionals, investors and business travellers between our countries.

ii) We announced a number of new bilateral initiatives, which include agreements on establishing a Joint Clean Energy Research and Development Centre in India; exploration and assessment of shale gas resources in India; Energy Cooperation Programme; establishment of Global Disease Detection India Centre in India; and an implementing arrangement for enhanced monsoon forecasting that will begin to transmit detailed forecasts to farmers beginning with the 2011 monsoon rain season.

iii) To promote collaboration in the field of higher education, Prime Minister and President Obama agreed to convene an India-US Higher Education Summit in 2011.

iv) We welcome the decisions taken by the United States to ease controls on exports of dual use items and technologies to India. These measures include removing Indian entities from its so-called Entity List, realignment of India in US export control regulations, as well the intention of the United States to support India's full membership in the multilateral export control regimes.

v) Prime Minister and President Obama have put forth a common vision of a world without nuclear weapons and decided to lead global efforts for non-proliferation and universal and non-discriminatory global nuclear disarmament. This is a historic and bold bilateral initiative which reflects the evolution of our partnership with the United States. We have decided to strengthen cooperation to tackle nuclear terrorism.

vi) We welcome President Obama's affirmation of US support for India's permanent membership of a reformed United Nations Security Council. This reflects the shared belief of our two sides that an efficient, effective, credible and legitimate United Nations is required to ensure a just and sustainable international order.

vii) India-US understanding and cooperation on the shared challenge of terrorism emanating from our neighbourhood continues to grow. Our two governments have decided to further strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation and to begin a Homeland Security Dialogue.

viii) India has an interest in peace, stability and prosperity in Asia, based on an open, balanced and inclusive regional architecture. We have decided to deepen our existing consultations with the United States on developments in East Asia and expand our consultations to cover regional and global issues of mutual interest, including Central and West Asia. We have also agreed to intensify our consultations on Afghanistan. President Obama appreciated India's contribution to Afghanistan and welcomed enhanced Indian assistance to help Afghanistan achieve self-sufficiency.

Mr. Chairman, India-US relations have matured over the years. We conduct this relationship in a spirit of mutual respect and as equal partners. This relationship stands on its own merits and is not directed against any other country. It is a relationship that is based on shared values and growing opportunities for mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation and a global partnership. It is an important factor for peace, stability and prosperity in the region and the world.

In this context, President Obama's visit was a milestone in the process of strengthening the strategic partnership between the world's two largest democracies and in bringing our two peoples closer together.

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