

Joint Statement EU-India Leaders' Meeting, 8 May 2021

Investing in EU-India Strategic Partnership

1. We, the leaders of the European Union (EU) and its Member States and India, met in hybrid format on 8 May 2021 in Porto. The meeting today highlighted our shared interests, principles and values of democracy, freedom, rule of law and respect for human rights, which underpin our Strategic Partnership.
2. We noted that today's Leaders' Meeting reflects a pivotal moment since the first India-EU Summit in 2000 and further strengthens our relationship towards a better future for our peoples. We appreciated the strides made in our partnership in the recent past and the strong momentum provided by the last Summit in July 2020. In this regard, we agreed to advance the implementation of the actions set out in the EU-India Roadmap 2025 as well as of the new decisions taken today.
3. We agreed that, as the world's two largest democracies, the EU and India have a common interest in ensuring security, prosperity and sustainable development in a multi-polar world. We agreed to further build on these convergences and foster new synergies for jointly contributing to a safer, greener, cleaner, more digital, resilient and stable world, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.
4. We underlined the importance of effective and inclusive rules-based multilateralism for tackling current and future global challenges, with the United Nations (UN) at its core, and for ensuring a stable trading environment with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) at its centre. In this context, we discussed the need for a reformed, renewed and effective multilateral system, which is fit for this purpose and reflects contemporary realities. India's memberships in the UN Security Council in 2021-2022 and in the UN Human Rights Council in 2019-2021, and its forthcoming G20 Presidency in 2023 are important opportunities to boost further our cooperation in international fora, to defend and strengthen international law, advance the achievement of Paris Agreement goals and Sustainable Development Goals, and support the necessary reforms of multilateral organisations.

Building global health preparedness and resilience – COVID-19 and beyond

5. We acknowledged the difficult circumstances caused globally by the pandemic. We deeply condoled the loss of lives and expressed the deepest sympathy with the families of the victims of this pandemic in India, Europe and the rest of the world. We agreed that defeating the COVID-19 pandemic through global cooperation and solidarity remains our priority and underlined our commitment to work together to ensure a better, safer, sustainable and inclusive recovery, including in the context of this year's G20 Summit in Rome. We supported universal, safe, equitable and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics and treatments, and the strengthening of health systems, and acknowledged the key role of the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) in this regard. Recognising the role of extensive immunisation as a global public good and concurring that the vaccination process is not a race amongst countries but a race against time, we welcomed the EU's and its Member States' contribution to vaccines' production and their substantial support to the COVAX Facility, as well as India's efforts to produce and distribute COVID-19 vaccines to over 90 countries through its 'Vaccine Maitri'. India appreciated the EU's and its Member States' quick support and assistance, coordinated through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, thus keeping the spirit of solidarity and cooperation that has been the hallmark of EU-India relations.
6. We committed to work together to better prepare for and respond to global health emergencies. We agreed to cooperate on resilient medical supply chains, vaccines and the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs), and on the application of international good manufacturing standards to ensure high quality and safety of products.

7. We committed to advance global health security, including by strengthening the World Health Organisation's (WHO) preparedness and response to health emergencies, and by reforming the WHO. The EU invited India to work towards an international treaty on pandemics within the framework of the WHO. In this context, we look forward to a successful Global Health Summit in Rome on 21 May 2021, co-hosted by the EU and Italy in the framework of the G20. We highlighted the importance of the "One-Health" approach promoted by the WHO, the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the World Organisation for Animal Health and the UN Environment Programme, in particular as regards nutrition and food safety, human-animal transmissible diseases and antibiotic resistance, and its integration in relevant policy-making processes.

Protecting our planet and fostering green growth

8. We reconfirmed our commitment to urgently address the interdependent challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, and to contribute to the success of the upcoming Biodiversity COP15, Climate COP26 and the 2nd UN Ocean Conference. With regard to biodiversity, we recognised and welcomed the *High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People* and we are committed to work jointly for the development and full implementation of an ambitious and transformational post-2020 global biodiversity framework with a set of clear and robust goals, targets, and indicators, and an implementation mechanism at COP15. We stressed the importance of intensifying cooperation in protecting the marine environment and combatting plastic pollution. In this context, the EU invited India to consider the endorsement of the Leaders' Pledge for Nature and the effective engagement with like-minded countries on negotiations on a Global Plastics Agreement.
9. With regard to climate change, we stressed the importance of achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, including strengthening climate change mitigation as well as adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change, providing means of implementation including finance, and fully implementing them without delay. COP26 is an opportunity to demonstrate progress towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement through the ambitious implementation of our Nationally Determined Contributions. In this context, we welcomed the leadership and progress each side has made, since the Paris Agreement was adopted, in announcing policies and plans that, as they are implemented, will lead to significant additional emissions reductions. We will continue to share with the international community the progress we are making in implementing the Paris Agreement, and encourage others to do the same. We welcomed the EU's membership of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and its support to the International Solar Alliance, as well as India's leadership in promoting solar power under the International Solar Alliance.
10. We welcomed the first meeting of the EU-India High-Level Dialogue on Climate Change, held on 28 April 2021 in preparation for the Leaders' Meeting. The Dialogue provided an opportunity to mark our strengthening cooperation under the EU-India Clean Energy and Climate Partnership. We look forward to the upcoming adoption of a new work programme for the Partnership by the EU-India Energy Panel and to deepening our cooperation to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy, promote energy efficiency, collaborate on smart grid & storage technology and modernise the electricity market. Through the Partnership's new work programme, we will step up cooperation to deploy innovative renewable technologies, such as offshore wind, as well as to exploit the potential of hydrogen - in particular from renewable sources - and of electricity inter-connections, to enable the cost-effective integration of large shares of renewable electricity. We are also committed to working together to decarbonise the industrial sector, further accelerate the process of electrification of the transport sector, improve the efficiency of cooling and the cold chain sectors, promote awareness about climate change and encourage sustainable finance and investment. We agreed to continue to share lessons on adaptation and resilience. We recognised that we share a deep commitment to ensuring that the transition towards a low carbon future is just and equitable within our societies as well as sharing lessons in this respect.

11. In light of the above, we agreed to hold the next meeting of the EU-India Energy Panel as early as possible. We further agreed to reconvene the EU-India High-Level Dialogue on Climate Change on a regular basis and to arrange related events that enable us to broaden participation in our Partnership with relevant authorities on both sides, to enhance interaction on best available technologies, as well as to provide a platform for engagement with all interested EU Member States.
12. We welcomed the increasing activity in India of the European Investment Bank (EIB) through loans and equity investments, as well as of development banks of the EU Member States, focusing on climate action, including renewable energy and green urban mobility, digitalisation of the economy, small and medium enterprises and the health sector. We recognised the ongoing important work of the International Platform on Sustainable Finance to scale up the mobilisation of private capital towards environmentally sustainable investments.
13. We agreed to enhance further our partnership in support of the sustainable modernisation of our economies. We are committed to accelerate the implementation of the new Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency Partnership to intensify bilateral exchanges on relevant regulatory approaches, market-based instruments and business models. The EU invited India to join the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency.
14. We agreed to scale up our cooperation on water management in the framework of the EU-India Water Partnership, notably to tackle water pollution, in line with the water-related Sustainable Development Goals and underlined the importance to address water challenges in the context of climate change. We will also boost cooperation to address air pollution.
15. We will cooperate closely on food, nutrition and agriculture including on sustainable food systems in view of the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit and Pre-Summit consultations. We agreed to take forward our Partnership on Smart and Sustainable Urbanisation and welcomed the new dedicated Joint Action Plan with the view to stepping up the cooperation in the identified priority sectors including developing of Smart and Sustainable Cities in India, focusing on sustainable mobility, innovation and urban e-governance, climate action in cities under the ClimateSmart Cities Alliance, as well as to consider the establishment of an Urban Water Association.

Fostering inclusive growth through trade, connectivity and technology

16. We agreed to enhance our trade and investment relationship to realise its untapped potential thus contributing to inclusive and sustainable economic growth and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. We are conscious of our joint responsibility to deepen this relationship, including to address the challenges that the multilateral trading system is facing. We welcomed the holding of the first two meetings of the High-Level Dialogue on Trade and Investment as a platform for forward-looking exchanges on strengthening our economic cooperation.
17. We agreed to resume negotiations for a balanced, ambitious, comprehensive and mutually beneficial trade agreement which would respond to the current challenges. We agreed that in order to create the required positive dynamic for negotiations, it is imperative to find solutions to long-standing market access issues. We also agreed to the launch of negotiations on a stand-alone investment protection agreement. We also agreed to start negotiations on a separate agreement on geographical indications which could be concluded separately or integrated into the trade agreement, depending on the pace of negotiations.

We confirmed the potential and need for swift engagement in areas where both sides shared interest to deepen the economic cooperation. To this end, we agreed to create a joint working group to intensify regulatory cooperation on goods and services, including but not limited to the green and digital technologies. We also agreed to set up a joint

working group on resilient supply chains, building inter alia on the experience we have gained from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The High-Level Dialogue on Trade and Investment has been tasked to ensure progress on market access issues and supervise negotiations, as well as keep progress on cooperation on regulatory aspects and resilient value chains under review.

18. We will enhance coordination on global economic governance, notably in the WTO and in the G20. In particular, we agreed to set up an EU-India Senior Officials' Dialogue to deepen bilateral cooperation on WTO issues, under the supervision of the High-Level Dialogue on Trade and Investment. The Dialogue will notably aim at contributing to positive and concrete outcomes at the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) in November 2021. Beyond MC12, it will be an important platform for discussion on the much needed reform of the WTO to ensure its continued relevance.
19. We encouraged interaction between EU and Indian businesses, such as through the Business Roundtable, and stressed the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility, UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and business and innovation opportunities in achieving the Paris Agreement goals and Sustainable Development Goals.
20. We launched today a sustainable and comprehensive Connectivity Partnership that upholds international law, conforms with international norms and affirms the shared values of democracy, freedom, rule of law and respect for international commitments. Our Partnership will promote a transparent, viable, inclusive, sustainable, comprehensive, and rules based connectivity. It is based on principles of social, economic, fiscal, climate and environmental sustainability and a level playing field for economic operators. In the context of facilitating large-scale private investments in sustainable connectivity, we expressed our commitment to implementing relevant international standards, including to ensure reciprocal access to markets. We recognised the importance of advancing the work related to the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment and welcomed the launch of a second voluntary self-assessment of the implementation of the G20 Operational Guidelines for Sustainable Financing. We aim at enhancing and widening cooperation between us through projects, including with third countries and regions, notably in Africa, Central Asia and the Indo-Pacific, in order to build digital, energy, transport and people-to-people connectivity. In this regard, we recognised the key role of the private sector and the importance of enabling private financing to achieve our goals. The Partnership will synergise our efforts with the work of the multilateral development banks, including the EIB and public and private financial institutions of the EU Member States and India for promoting sustainable infrastructure projects.
21. We will continue our cooperation on space and transport and look forward to the EU-India Aviation Summit for enhancing air connectivity in a fair and equitable manner, including by eliminating restrictions and duplications. We look forward to exploring further concrete cooperation on matters of common interest such as the greening of the railways, ports and shipping sectors, and the decarbonisation of civil aviation.
22. We are determined to pursue digital transformation to create quality jobs and improve the lives of citizens. We look forward to the early operationalisation of the Joint Task Force on Artificial Intelligence. We welcomed the close cooperation on global digital standards and network security and agreed to enhance it further including in relation to 5G technology and beyond 5G. We agreed to deepen technological cooperation on Quantum and High Performance Computing and look forward to an outcome oriented High-Level EU-India Digital Investment Forum later this year. We agreed to continue enhancing convergences between our regulatory frameworks and to ensure a high level of protection of personal data and privacy, including through possible data adequacy decisions, with a view to facilitating safe and secure cross-border data flows between us. We emphasised the importance of public sector digitalisation and sharing of best practices to support the uptake of e-governance solutions, including through human-centred platform services.

23. We recognised our mutual interest in protecting geographical indications. In this regard, we underlined the benefits of a balanced bilateral agreement on the protection of geographical indications. We look forward to the early conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding between the EU Intellectual Property Office and Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.
24. We encouraged people-to-people exchanges in education, research, science and technology, professional activities including in areas such as information technology, environment, climate, healthcare, business and tourism. We committed to a close and comprehensive cooperation on all pillars of the Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility, and we will continue our engagement under the High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility.
25. We also highlighted the positive cooperation on higher education, including under Erasmus+, and the relevance of cultural exchanges. We also agreed to achieve a balanced two-way mobility of researchers.
26. Building on the good progress achieved under the India-EU Science & Technology Agreement, we will further advance the cooperation and mobility on research and innovation in areas of mutual interest aiming at advancing the overall EU-India Strategic Partnership through increased efforts on research and innovation, in particular on green transition, digital agenda and global health challenges. We also agreed to foster cooperation on innovation through matchmaking and co-creation in each other's innovation ecosystem.

Striving for a safer, prosperous and more democratic world

27. We underscored the importance of enhanced and structured parliamentary exchanges for fostering greater mutual understanding and appreciation between the EU and India.
28. We reaffirmed our commitment to protecting and promoting all human rights, including gender equality and women empowerment in all spheres of life, and the importance we attach to our cooperation. We recognised the importance of strengthening the specific mechanisms for the promotion of human rights and the role of national human rights institutions, civil society actors and journalists. We welcomed the resumption of the Human Rights Dialogue, which nurtured a constructive engagement between both sides, and look forward to the next meeting in 2022. We agreed to intensify cooperation in international human rights fora, in particular the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council.
29. We valued our close coordination on regional issues of mutual interest such as the preservation of the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) and Afghanistan, and we discussed the developments in our respective neighbourhoods, inter alia Myanmar, Belarus and Ukraine. In this context, we welcomed the Joint Press Statement on Afghanistan, adopted on 4 May 2021.
30. Sharing a common interest in a prosperous, peaceful, democratic and resilient Africa, we will enhance synergies in our cooperation with African partners.
31. We welcomed the recent strengthening of our cooperation on international security, including on non-proliferation and disarmament, countering terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism, maritime security, as well as on cyber and other threats through our regular consultations. We reiterated our full cooperation for promoting an open, free, stable and secure cyberspace, and for fostering responsible behaviour of all actors in the cyberspace including through mechanisms under the UN. We strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and underlined that it is crucial that perpetrators of violence and terrorism are brought to justice. We also emphasised the need for strengthening international cooperation to combat terrorism and terrorism financing in a comprehensive and sustained manner. In this context, we welcomed the imminent

conclusion of the Working Arrangement between Europol and India's Central Bureau of Investigation, which will support coordination and synergies in preventing and fighting terrorism and organised crime. We welcomed the holding of our inaugural dialogue on maritime security and looked forward to enhanced cooperation between the Indian Navy and EUNAVFOR Atalanta in the Indo-Pacific region. We expressed our desire to further enhance dialogue in the area of security and defence, including through joint initiatives and exploring negotiations for a framework partnership agreement.

32. We highlighted our commitment to the comprehensive reform of the UN Security Council, to make it more effective, transparent, representative and accountable, to reflect contemporary realities. We also acknowledged the role of the UN Peacekeeping in countries that transition from conflict to peace and reiterated our support to the Declaration of Shared Commitments on Peacekeeping Operations – Action for Peacekeeping.
33. We emphasised our commitment to a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific space, underpinned by respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, democracy, and rule of law, transparency, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded lawful commerce, and peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In this context, we welcomed the development by the EU of its Strategy for cooperation with the Indo-Pacific and agreed to strengthen our cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, including in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and in relevant regional fora. We recognised the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) unity and centrality and commit to increasing cooperation and exchanges in the ASEAN-led framework such as the ASEAN Regional Forum. The EU also appreciated India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, which intends to promote international coordination and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.