

MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA ON HIS STATE VISIT TO CHILE

Santiago, April 1, 2019

1. Mr. President I am delighted to visit Chile. This year we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Chile. This makes my visit even more special and I thank you for your warm welcome and gracious hospitality.

2. Our two countries have always had a warm and friendly relationship. We have a similar world view, a shared philosophy and a common approach to most of the problems facing the world today, from terrorism to climate change.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. Today, President Piñera and I had a wide-ranging discussion on all issues of mutual interest. We exchanged views and assessments of our respective neighbourhoods and regions. I thanked him for his strong condemnation of the recent Pulwama Terror attack in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir. We agreed to work together to strengthen global response to defeat and destroy terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and hold those responsible, accountable for their brutality against humanity.

4. Our bilateral relations are on an upward curve. Today we have signed three MoUs in the fields of mining, culture and disability. These would further enhance our engagement in economic, social and cultural fields.

5. President Pinera and I committed ourselves to further strengthen our economic partnership. Chile is the sixth largest trading partner of India in the Latin American region. Our bilateral trade registered an impressive increase of 50% in 2017-18, to reach US \$ 2.8 billion. I am hopeful that the India-Chile Preferential Trade Agreement with increased tariff lines would further contribute towards enhancement of bilateral trade.

6. India's growth and Chile's economic competencies make us natural partners. I look forward to addressing the India-Chile business Roundtable along with President Pinera later today. I invite Chilean companies to invest

in Indian mining, infrastructure, defence and food processing sectors under our Make in India, Smart Cities and Digital India Programmes. Given our commitment to environment and sustainability, India is particularly keen to strengthen lithium partnership with Chile, and I thank President Pinera for his commitment to take this forward. Indian companies are also eager to strengthen their presence in Chile especially in IT, pharma, automobiles and mining sectors.

7. Both India and Chile are partners in the International Solar Alliance. We look forward to working with Chile to promote solar energy worldwide and enhance global action to combat climate change.

8. India is privileged to have a development cooperation partnership with Chile. I am happy that the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation training slots are being fully utilized by Chile. Today, we offered training slots to Chilean armed forces in our premier defence institutions including for courses in mountain warfare and peacekeeping. The two countries should also seize the opportunity to jointly manufacture defence equipment.

9. India and Chile have an agreement for cooperation in the field of exploration and peaceful uses of the outer space. We were privileged to launch a Chilean nano-satellite in 2017. We are keen to further strengthen our collaboration with Chile in the Space sector for the benefit of our two peoples.

10. Our people – to- people relations are strong and growing. There is deep interest in Indian culture in Chile. Yesterday, I had the occasion to pay my respects to Nobel Laureate Pablo Neruda at his home in the city. I also paid respects to the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi in Plaza De La India. This year we are celebrating his 150th Birth Anniversary. We look forward to celebrating his life and legacy in Santiago on 2nd October, 2019 with much fanfare.

11. I welcome the announcement by President Pinera of the liberalisation of visa regime for Indians travelling to Chile. This will help in strengthening business and cultural ties between the two countries.

12. I thank President Pinera for Chile's continued support for India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

13. I once again convey my gratitude to President Pinera for his deep commitment to India - Chile relations.

Thank You.

Muchas Gracias!