

# **PRESS STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA ON HIS STATE VISIT TO SLOVENIA**

**Ljubljana, September 16, 2019**

1. Mr President, I thank you for your warm and special welcome. I am honoured to pay the first-ever State Visit from India to Slovenia. The beauty of your country and the warmth of your friendship have made it even more special.
2. Slovenia and India share historic ties based on close cultural affinities and shared democratic values. President Pahor and I held wide ranging discussions today. We committed to further expand our bilateral ties and deepen our global partnership.
3. Mr. President, we are impressed by the technological advances made by Slovenia. We also deeply appreciate that Slovenia has carved a name for itself in the international arena and has proudly preserved its language and culture. Your country is a pioneer in conserving environment and forest. Given your strengths and India's transformative growth, there is much that we can do together to scale-up our economic partnership. India is aiming to become a 5 trillion economy by 2025. We are keen to leverage your high-end technology, sustainable business practices and research, knowledge and innovation capacities to support our rapid growth. Our Smart Cities, Start-up India, river rejuvenation and Make in India initiatives offer substantial business opportunities to Slovenian companies. We have already made progress in our defence and water partnerships.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. President Pahor and I committed ourselves to bring a new focus, a new energy to Slovenia - India economic ties. On this visit, I am accompanied by 20 Indian companies from diverse sectors. I look forward to addressing the Slovenia-India Business Forum later today along with President Pahor.
5. President Pahor and I expressed satisfaction at the vibrant state of our cultural and people-to-people ties. This year we are celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup>

birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. We are grateful to the Slovenian people for nurturing the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi in this country. I thanked President Pahor for the initiative of the Slovenian Government to release a postal stamp later this month to commemorate the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

6. Today, we have signed seven MoUs and Programmes of Cooperation in the fields of Investment, Sports, Culture, River Rejuvenation (Clean Ganga Mission), Science & Technology and Standards. These would strengthen our economic, scientific and cultural ties.
7. President Pahor noted that Slovenia has become a favourite destination for Indian tourists and film producers. On my part, I conveyed that India also desired to host greater number of tourists from Slovenia. I understand that Yoga, Ayurveda and Indian language, culture and philosophy have strong roots in Slovenia. We discussed how to further expand our close cultural connections. I congratulated President Pahor on the UN declaring 20th May as the World Bee Day. India was privileged to co-sponsor the Slovenian resolution in the UN to get this environment friendly proposal a global recognition.
8. President Pahor and I committed to enhance our global partnership. We agreed that the two countries must work together to reform and strengthen multilateralism and promote a multi-polar world. I thanked him for his support to fight cross-border terrorism and for his understanding for India's core concerns in this regard. We also agreed that terrorism was one of the gravest challenges confronting humanity today and that the world should come together to defeat and destroy these evil forces.
9. I thanked President Pahor for Slovenia's support for India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council and sought his continued support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. We renewed our commitment to strengthen global action to combat Climate Change. In this context, I invited Slovenia to join the International Solar Alliance to promote clean energy pathways.

10. I cordially invited President Pahor to visit India and he has greatly accepted my invitation. I once again thank him for his warmth and friendship. I am confident that my historic State Visit to Slovenia would bring a new vigour to India-Slovenia relations.

Hvala Lepa! Thank you!