

**BRIEF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
AT THE BANQUET HOSTED IN HIS HONOUR BY GUINEA**

August 2, 2019, Conakry

1. Excellency, I thank you for your gracious words of welcome. Allow me to express my deep appreciation for your generosity and warm Guinean hospitality.

2. This is the first ever State Visit from India to the Republic of Guinea. It is indeed a historic day in our bilateral journey. You have made it truly special by bestowing upon me your highest award, the Grand Cross of the National Order of Merit. I accept this honour with humility and pride. I consider it emblematic of the long standing mutual friendship between the people of our two countries. I dedicate the award to my people, to their respect and regard for the Guinean people and to Guinea-India friendship. May this recognition ever inspire us as we work towards taking our relations to greater heights. And may this be an everlasting symbol of our mutual trust and confidence.

3. Mr. President, our discussions today convinced me that our ties can only get closer and stronger. We admire your leadership and your efforts in providing for inclusive growth for your people. We thank you for your efforts to further enhance our strong bilateral ties. India remains committed to deepen our friendship and cooperation. Let us walk together hand-in-hand for peace and progress of our people.

With these words, may I propose a toast:

- To the health and happiness of President Conde;
- To the continued prosperity of the people of Guinea;
- And to enduring and everlasting friendship between Guinea and India.

Thank you!
Merci Beaucoup!