

Remarks by Ambassador Sibi George at the Event 'India's G20 Presidency', Embassy of India, Tokyo, 27 Sept 2023

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon!

I am delighted to speak to you at today's event on India's G20 Presidency. At the Embassy, each month we have been sharing important developments on India's G20 Presidency and highlight different aspects of it. This is the first meeting that we are organising after the G 20 Summit in New Delhi.

We have all seen the successful conclusion of India's G 20 Presidency. In terms of scale, theme and outcome it has indeed been a unique summit, the challenges have been unprecedented but when we look back today each one of us can be proud that it has been a grand success. Given the state of geopolitics 2023, this summit has been a model for successful multilateralism with the 34-page 83 points Delhi Declaration is reflective of the hope in the world.

Let me quote Prime Minister Modi who said in his remarks at the beginning of the Summit in New Delhi, I quote, "After COVID-19, a huge crisis of lack of trust has come in the world. Conflict has deepened this trust deficit. Just as we can overcome COVID, we can also overcome this crisis of mutual trust. Today, as the President of the G20, India invites the entire world to come together and, first and foremost, transform this Global Trust Deficit into Global Trust and confidence." Unquote. This is exactly what we saw in New Delhi summit.

The theme that India chose was Vasudaiva Kudumbakam, one Earth, One Family, One World. One of the objectives of India as the G 20 chair was to make the G20 more inclusive and

expand it to include the African Union as a permanent member. With this, the representative voices of 1.4 billion people of Africa, situated in 54 countries, with an economic size of US\$2.7 trillion have been brought to the G 20 table and world focus. The Voice of Global South that India hosted in January this year with the participation of 125 countries brought to the agenda of G 20 their concerns and aspirations. These were among the topics discussed in over 220 meetings held in sixty cities of India during its G 20 presidency. In his concluding remarks Prime Minister said that he will host another G 20 summit virtually before the end of its Presidency in November this year.

Friends,

I would also like to quote from External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar who spoke at the UNGA yesterday, he said I quote: "Recognizing that growth and development must focus on the most vulnerable, we began the G20 Presidency by convening the 'Voice of the Global South' Summit. This enabled us to hear directly from 125 nations and place their concerns on the G20 agenda.

As a consequence, the issues which deserve global attention got a fair hearing. More than that, the deliberations produced outcomes that have great significance for the international community.

Mr. President, it was also noteworthy that at India's initiative, the African Union was admitted as a permanent member of the G20. By doing so, we gave voice to an entire continent which has long been its due.

This significant step in reform should inspire the United Nations, a much older organization, to also make the Security Council contemporary. Broad representation is after all, a prerequisite for both effectiveness and credibility.

The outcomes of the New Delhi G20 Summit will surely resonate for years ahead. Among them is the Action Plan for Sustainable Development Goals, a crucial need of the day. Equally important are the High Principles of LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) and the Green Development Pact, as they shape our approach to our planet's future.

The transformative role of Digital Public Infrastructure has also finally been recognized. As has the salience of women-led development in building an inclusive and progressive society. The reform of international financial institutions (IFI) has been given due weight, as has the resolution of debt vulnerabilities.

Friends,

The New Delhi G20 outcomes are expressed both as larger policies and as specific initiatives. They could be about building cities for tomorrow or fighting corruption. Eliminating hunger or delivering quality education. Ending plastic pollution or preserving the ocean-based economy. Or for that matter, enhancing food security or even mapping global skills.

Some address longstanding issues like the gender divide and climate action. Others focus on new concerns such as responsible harnessing of Artificial Intelligence. All in all, we have placed for the world's consideration a set of actionable propositions, constructive solutions and new directions.

Even as we encourage collective endeavours, India also seeks to promote cooperation with diverse partners. From the era of non-alignment, we have now evolved to that of Vishwa Mitra (a friend to the world). This is reflected in our ability and willingness to engage with a broad range of nations. And, where necessary, harmonize interests.

It is visible in the rapid growth of the Quad, a mechanism today so relevant to the Indo-Pacific. It is equally apparent in the

expansion of the BRICS grouping of independent-minded nations. Or in fact, the emergence of the I2U2 combination.

Recently, we hosted the creation of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). The forging of the Global Biofuels Alliance was another notable development. This willingness to work in an open-minded manner on specific domains is now a defining characteristic of the emerging multipolar order.

Mr. President, all nations pursue their national interests. We, in India, have never seen that as being in contradiction with global good. When we aspire to be a leading power, this is not for self-aggrandizement but to take on greater responsibility and make more contributions. The goals we have set for ourselves will make us different from all those whose rise preceded ours.

India demonstrated this during the Covid through the Vaccine Maitri initiative. Our endeavors like the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure have gathered wide support. Our espousing of the International Year of Millets is enhancing global food security today.

We have built development partnerships with 78 nations across geographies. We have also been First Responder in disaster emergency situations. The people of Turkiye saw that in February, as did those in Syria.

Our commitment is understandably even greater, closer home. When Sri Lanka experienced a severe economic crisis, it was India that first stepped forward. But even in distant regions, partners such as the Pacific Islands have appreciated our contributions to meet their needs in health, in technology and in climate action.

Mr. President, the most populous nation and the fifth largest economy in the world knows that its progress makes a real difference to the world. Especially when so many nations identify

with us for reasons of history, geography and culture. They follow our experiences closely and evaluate our solutions for their larger relevance.” Unquote

Friends,

I would like to conclude by thanking our Japanese friends for their active participation at the G 20 events in India. This was the third meeting of our Prime Ministers in each other's countries this year. I would also like to mention that each one of Japanese friends who attended the G 20 meetings in India, whether it is G to G or B to B they all returned with a great appreciation of India's growth story and its cultural diversity. They have only one message to share - India has transformed, what we see is a new India.

Once again thank you for joining us today.
