

MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA ON HIS VISIT TO CYPRUS

Nicosia, September 3, 2018

1. Mr. President, it is indeed an honour for me to pay a State Visit to Cyprus. We fondly recall your State Visit to India last year. I must say, I have been received with great warmth and affection. I thank you for your fraternal embrace and gracious hospitality.
2. India-Cyprus special friendship is deeply rooted in our shared historical experiences and, indeed, in our common aspirations for the future. We have supported each other in our struggle for independence. And, thereafter, helped each other in progress and prosperity of our peoples. Our founding fathers, Archbishop Makarios and Mahatma Gandhi have blessed our partnership with timeless values, wisdom and foresight. We have the greatest respect for Archbishop Makarios in India.
3. I am honoured that Cyprus has called an Extraordinary Session of the Parliament for me to address later today. This special gesture will go a long way in further cementing our bilateral ties. I would also be paying my respects at the bust of Mahatma Gandhi located next to the Parliament. In less than a month's time, on 2nd October, we will be launching worldwide celebrations of the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. I look forward to Cyprus joining us in these celebrations.
4. President Anastasiades and I held detailed discussions on the way forward for our long-standing and excellent relations. I reaffirmed India's unwavering support to Cyprus for upholding its sovereignty and territorial integrity.
5. We reviewed our ongoing bilateral and multilateral engagements and discussed issues of regional and global

concern. We underlined our common objectives to negotiate the challenges that lie ahead. And we committed ourselves to further step-up our mutually beneficial ties, especially in the economic field.

6. We exchanged views on economic cooperation. India happens to be the fastest growing major economy in the world today with a growth rate of 8.2% last quarter. In this context and given Cyprus's niche expertise in financial services and investment banking, both of us agreed that there was much scope to deepen our investment partnership. We welcomed the signing of the MOU between Financial Intelligence Unit, India and Unit for Combating Money Laundering of Cyprus. This agreement would further strengthen the institutional framework to facilitate investment cross-flows. We also emphasised that the revision in the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement made in 2016 provided greater opportunities for our investment partnership to grow.
7. President Anastasiades and I also called for enhancing business collaboration in the fields of IT and IT enabled services, tourism, shipping and renewable energy. We deeply appreciated and welcomed the signing of MOU on Cooperation in the areas of Environment between the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India and the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment of Cyprus as a timely step towards joint collaboration to promote sustainable development and help tackle Climate Change.
8. We expressed deep concern at the grave threat that terrorism poses to humanity and called for developing a strong global response to defeat and destroy this evil. I thanked President Anastasiades for his express support for an early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the United Nations.

9. Going beyond global security challenges, we also reviewed our multilateral cooperation. I thanked Cyprus for extending support for India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council. I also expressed our gratitude to Cyprus for extending continued and strong support to India for its membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and help us move on clean energy pathway.

10. We expressed satisfaction at the excellent people-to-people relations between the two countries. We noted that growing tourism from India and Indian students coming to Universities in Cyprus were helping to strengthen these bonds.

11. I would once again like to thank President Anastasiades for his warmth and hospitality. I look forward to working with him to take India-Cyprus relations to greater heights.

Thank you.