

GPPi / Carnegie India Workshop

"EU-India Policy Dialogue on Global Governance and Security"

Keynote Address

"A closer EU-India partnership – The potential for closer EU-India cooperation in the security and global governance domains "

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Madam Secretary, Fellow Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me to address today's seminar. Our topic: "EU-India partnership on Global Governance and Security" is very interesting and timely. At the outset, I'd like to thank the Global Public Policy Institute and Carnegie India for organising this event.

The EU and India have been partners for over 50 years, started political cooperation in the early 1990s and upgraded the relationship to a strategic partnership in 2004. The strength and potential of our economic and trade relationship has long been recognised. People-to-people contacts are growing. Our shared commitment to democracy, the fundamental freedoms and a rules-based international system – in a world where these principles are increasingly contested – is a precious asset.

But our foreign and security policy cooperation is less known. And perhaps because of this, foreign policy thinkers in Europe and in India have underestimated the depth of our shared interests, and the real scope for future cooperation. So today's conference is an important one. And I hope it will encourage people to re-assess received wisdom about what the EU and India mean together and what we can do for each other. India is a much more active foreign policy actor from what it was in 2004, when we first established the Strategic Partnership. And so is the EU.

EU as a global player

The EU is a major force in shaping the global agenda. For example, the bold choices we made about domestic energy markets allowed us to set the benchmark for an ambitious Climate Change deal in Paris. The EU's collective commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals leverage resources to tackle global poverty and the underlying causes of violent conflict. The EU is at the forefront of

discussions on setting norms for the conduct of states in outer space; its strong legal traditions are helping to steer a path through the difficult multilateral discussions on cyber-security and terrorism.

And on top of this, since roughly twenty years, the EU has been developing foreign and security structures and instruments in order to play a greater role in peace and security. Since 2003, the EU has carried out crisis management operations, using civilian and military personnel as well as military assets of the EU Member States. We have completed 17 so-called CSDP Missions (6 of them military); and today, the EU is present with 16 operations (6 of them military) in Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia with seven thousand personnel deployed.

The EU Global Strategy

The recently adopted EU Global Strategy is an important statement of intent, a call for a more confident and responsible EU with an outward- and forward-looking foreign and security policy. We need a stronger, more joined-up Europe to face today's security threats, such as terrorism or insecurity in other regions. That was precisely the message of the High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Federica Mogherini when she presented the Strategy to EU Heads of State and Government in June. In the words of the High Representative Mogherini:

"None of our countries has the strength or the resources to address threats alone. But as a Union of almost half a billion citizens our potential is unparalleled".

The Strategy has energised policy-making in Brussels and has generated a strong political endorsement from Member States' Ministers in mid-October. By the end of this year we will already see three strands of work coming together on security and defence:

- A security and defence action plan, that will set a new level of ambition for the EU's civilian and military capabilities, to enhance our commitment to peace and stabilisation and capacity building of partners;
- A programme to enhance the European defence industrial base, with a stronger mandate for the European Defence Agency;
- And a programme to implement the EU-NATO Joint Declaration that was agreed at the Warsaw Summit in July.

More quietly, but just as importantly, we will be reviewing our current country and regional strategies. We will have a fresh look at our maritime security strategy, with a particular attention to safeguarding sea lanes of communication; we will be looking for fresh thinking on our approach to

security cooperation in Asia; and we will want to develop our ideas on Eurasian connectivity. India is a natural partner in all of this work.

India's global role and increasing international activity

Likewise, we have observed with great interest that India is recently displaying intense diplomatic activity and strong interest in international outreach. India has not only hosted multiple important international or regional gatherings. Security issues have also occupied a central stage in India's activities and initiatives in the last years.

EU-India cooperation in the international realm - both an imperative and logical given shared principles and values

Against this background, the very successful EU-India Summit of March this year instilled a new political momentum in the Strategic Partnership with both sides agreeing in the vision document for the next years ("*EU-India Agenda for Action-2020*") to engage more on a broad range of issues. Therein leaders explicitly committed to stepping up foreign policy and security cooperation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Indeed, it is increasingly more obvious that EU-India security cooperation has become an imperative in this fast-moving and more complex world, characterised by multi-polarity, interdependence, unpredictability and new challenges. India and the EU are the two largest democracies in the world, functioning on the basis of rule of law and respect for human rights, and sharing important principles and values. It is only logical that they would take responsibility for the state of the world and cooperate closely when promoting effective solutions for global problems which are based on the international legal order, effective multilateralism, and international law.

More concerted exchanges at the global level

Cooperation at global level is a natural consequence of this commonality and it plays out at international organisations and regional level. India and the EU alike are both important contributors to United Nations peace-keeping and world-wide crisis management, and we both value our partnership with the UN. Moreover, our close involvement with the COP21 process and early ratification of the Paris Agreement demonstrated our commitment to addressing major global issues – one could also say preserving global public goods and achieving internationally agreed goals - through international negotiations and binding agreements.

While there are regular discussions between the EU and India at the seat of the UN in New York and Geneva and in the margins of international conferences, we are in the process developing deeper capitals-based contacts. We regularly discuss UN matters and global issues, including also the implementation of the Sustainable Developments Goals, with a number of strategic partners and we have agreed to establish our consultations on these topics with India too.

As an example for the potential benefits, let me mention how the EU-India Clean Energy/Climate Partnership got a boost last week when the MEA hosted the senior- level EU-India Energy panel and *launched the first-ever EU-India meeting on energy security* – which showed that as two heavily dependent energy consumers, we have similar interests to secure our provision of energy through ambitious strategies of diversification, switch to renewables and energy efficiency. In this context I hope that we will be able to launch a fully-fledged climate dialogue soon.

We already cooperate on non-proliferation and cyber security where we have regular and constructive dialogues. We would be glad to further enhance the exchange of experience therein and add relevant practical activities. The same goes for counter terrorism and action against radicalisation as we stand united and firm in the fight against violent extremism and terrorism, demonstrated by the adoption of a joint declaration on Counter Terrorism. Therein we convened to exchange good practice and step up practical cooperation to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and curb sources of terrorist financing and arms supply.

Enhanced consultation and cooperation on regional issues

Ladies and gentlemen,

For the EU, regional cooperation is an important pillar of global governance structures. In this vein let me briefly elaborate on CSDP operation "Atalanta" which contributes to maritime security and is directly relevant in the Asia region. This, the EU's first military naval mission mobilises a considerable amount of navy assets and made a significant contribution to reducing piracy in the wider maritime theatre. India and the EU work together successfully in the Contact Group on Piracy Off the coast of Somalia, and in the context of the Atalanta operation.

In this area we see many possibilities for further fruitful cooperation, for instance when it comes to reducing rivalry and tensions in the Indian Ocean as well as in the South China Seas, promotion of multilateral engagement firmly based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, maritime surveillance, and cooperation on land where piracy's root causes lie.

To sum up: The two partners have already proved that they can cooperate efficiently in the maritime domain. We could expand this cooperation through upgrading the existing anti-piracy dialogue to a

broader maritime security dialogue and bring in the EU's particular attention to the combination of traditional and more flexible, non-military means.

The new Global Strategy indeed aims at leveraging the security dimension of a wide range of EU external policies and actions, including its major contribution to development and humanitarian assistance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The EU and India share a strategic interest and are important players when it comes to Central and West Asia. Let me start with Afghanistan: Early October HRVP Mogherini hosted the successful Brussels Conference on Afghanistan with high-level Indian participation. The conference was well prepared, inter alia, through a visit of the EUSR to Delhi prior to the Ministerial meeting. India is now preparing the Heart of Asia Conference in Amritsar in December, and the EU will participate at high level in this important event. We fully back regional cooperation to support a country whose future is significant for stability and peace in the region and globally.

My point is that closer regular consultation and cooperation on regional issues would allow the EU and India to play a role commensurate to their international weight.

There is plenty of scope for greater cooperation in the wider region between Europe and India. In the EU-India Agenda for Action 2020, the two sides agreed to strengthen foreign policy cooperation in areas of mutual interest, including the Middle East where the EU plays a role as regards the peace process and in support of Palestine as well as Iran from where our High Representative has just returned last weekend. Building on the practice of keeping each other closely informed about the Iran nuclear talks and the implementation of the Agreement, a next natural step would be initiating regular consultations on the strategic West Asia region.

Conclusion / outlook

Dear Secretary Mehta, ladies and gentlemen,

I trust that my presentation has shown that there is already significant EU-India cooperation in foreign and security policy, and that the EU is worthwhile global partner for an even closer partnership. If the EU and India can find a way of expanding and deepening our cooperation, we stand to be a major force for good in this complex and contested world – safeguarding not only our own narrow interests, but building and expanding the global public goods that underpin our security.

Thank you very much!