

## India@75 Showcasing the India-UN Partnership in Action

(Date: 24 September 2022, Time: 0800 – 0930 hrs)

Venue: Lotte New York Palace

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### Background

India is celebrating 75 years of its Independence this year. Five themes of celebrations are: commemorating milestones in history, celebrating ideas and ideals that have shaped India, reinforcing commitments to specific goals and targets, highlighting steps being taken to implement policies and actualise commitments and showcasing evolution and progress across different sectors.

“India@75 Showcasing the India-UN Partnership in Action” is being organised by the Government of India and United Nations to highlight India’s partnership with the UN, its South-South Cooperation, its development journey and achievements in the 75<sup>th</sup> year of its independence.

#### Introduction

As a founding member of the United Nations, India strongly supports the purposes and principles of the UN. India’s deepening engagement with the United Nations is based on its steadfast commitment to multilateralism and dialogue as the key for achieving shared goals and addressing common challenges.

India has been an early adopter of the Global Goals as a guiding development framework. Prime Minister Modi’s statement at the UN **Sustainable Development** Summit in 2015 – “Much of India’s development agenda is mirrored in the Sustainable Development Goals. Our national plans are ambitious and purposeful; sustainable development of one-sixth of humanity will be of great consequence to the world and our beautiful planet.” – encapsulates India’s commitment to sustainable development and role in the global success of the SDGs.

India’s approach to the achievement of the **SDGs** is based on strong understanding of the interdependence of SDGs and strong collaboration between the central and state governments wherein the former drives the creation of

institutional structures for SDG adoption, monitoring, and reporting, and the latter leads implementation of programmes focused on SDG priorities. This model acknowledges the role of Centre, states, districts – all the way to individual households and the strength of cooperative and competitive federalism.

India's push for **Public Digital Infrastructure** involves building innovative governance systems and efficient citizen-oriented services by leveraging the digital architecture and digital information pathways. With unparalleled growth in mobiles, India is a nation of a billion connected people with one of the highest per capita data consumption and one of the lowest rates of per gigabyte of mobile data in the world. Public service delivery was scaled up through the use of Aadhaar, the 12-digit unique biometric identity assigned to every resident, aligned with the financial inclusion programme '*Jan Dhan Yojana*' for bringing affordable access to financial services such as bank accounts, remittances, credit, insurance and pensions. With 1.16 billion telecom subscribers as the base, unique digital biometric identities for 1.3 billion residents and more than 460 million newly opened bank accounts, India has transferred social benefits of more than US\$ 300 billion digitally and coordinated more than 2 billion Covid-19 vaccine doses.

India's Co-WIN or **Winning Against COVID-19** platform formed the backbone for vaccinating the country against the virus with increased efficiency and reporting. India is about to complete 2-billion vaccine doses, using a common technology backbone to standardise, schedule, track, trace and validate vaccinations. The Co-WIN platform has also been offered by India to interested countries. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, India supplied over 240 million vaccine doses to over 100 countries reinforcing its image as the 'pharmacy of the world'. India also donated 200,000 vaccines in early 2021 to protect UN blue helmets against COVID and was the first country to do so.

India's **Targeted Public Distribution System** (TPDS) is the world's largest food-based social protection scheme, with mandated coverage of two thirds of the most vulnerable people in India of over 800 million, providing subsidized wheat or rice through Fair Price Shops (FPS) every month. The Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM-POSHAN) school meals programme is one of the largest in the world with a universal coverage for 110 million children in primary and upper primary government schools, and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme which provides free supplemental

rations to 90 million children 6-36 months of age, adolescent girls, and pregnant and lactating women, as well as hot cooked meals to children 3-6 years of age attending community Anganwadi Centres.

The **India-UN Development Partnership Fund** is the first ever single-country South-South cooperation initiative at the UN. Launched in June 2017, this US\$ 150 million Fund supports South-owned and South-led demand driven Sustainable development projects with a focus on LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. The dedicated facility is managed by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). In last five years, the Fund has accumulated a portfolio of 66 projects in 51 countries. From supporting a project to get ready a Convention Centre in Palau to host Ocean Conference, to rehabilitating hospitals in Antigua & Barbuda and Guyana, to building a school in Dominica, an Information Technology Centre of Excellence in Papua New Guinea to developing the capacity of women to stem desertification in the Kanem and Lake Chad regions, this Fund is directly impacting the lives of communities across the developing world.

Established in 2004, the **India-Brazil-South Africa Fund** (IBSA Fund) is supporting initiatives in the area of food security, safe drinking water, addressing HIV/AIDS etc. Since 2004, a total of US\$ 42 million was contributed to the Fund by the three countries. The Fund has undertaken a total of 35 projects in 34 countries, of which 25 have been completed. India has been actively promoting sharing of development experience and capacity building and training through its development partnerships initiatives.

India's overall international **development cooperation** has expanded significantly in recent years in its geographical reach as well as in the areas of cooperation. A noteworthy feature of India's development partnerships has been its demand-based nature and the close alignment of priorities with those of the partner countries. India's approach towards developmental partnerships has been comprehensive offering assistance and sharing of India's own developmental experience in the full spectrum of activities, ranging from creation of infrastructure to building capacities to education, healthcare, agriculture and community development. India's development assistance has been a major catalyst for creation of much needed infrastructure in the partner countries such as railway links, roads & bridges, waterways, border-related infrastructure,

transmission lines, power generation, hydropower, preservation of restoration of cultural heritage sites etc.

The **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)** Programme, instituted in 1964 as a bilateral assistance programme, has grown manifold to cover 160 partner countries in Asia, Africa, East Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean as well as Pacific and Small Island countries. The Programme comprises mostly of short-term training courses organised annually across Indian public institutions in various streams for government officials and working professionals.

India has a long and distinguished history of being associated with the **UN peacekeeping**, having contributed more personnel than any other country. To date, more than 2,58,000 Indians have served in 51 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions deployed around the world since 1948. Currently, there are 5581 troops & police personnel from India who are deployed in 09 of the 12 active UN peacekeeping missions, making India one of the largest Troop Contributing Countries. Till date, 177 Indian Peacekeepers have laid down their lives in the line of duty.

An important aspect of India's leadership in **climate action** is converting domestic action into international collaboration. India is helping ensure 'access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all' through its initiatives like **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, which was formed at CoP21 in 2015 in Paris. Over the years, ISA has helped ensure energy security and sustainable livelihoods by providing poor communities in developing countries access to natural, economic, human, and social capital. ISA was accorded the multilateral treaty status by the UN in December 2017, and now has over 100 members. At CoP26 in 2021, India and the UK announced the One Sun One World One Grid initiative, the first international network of global interconnected solar power grid which will combine large-scale solar power stations, wind farms and grids with rooftop solar and community grids towards a reliable, resilient and affordable supply of clean energy.

India's is also the founder member of the **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)** which is a partnership of national governments, UN agencies and programmes that aims to promote rapid development of resilient infrastructure to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals' imperatives of expanding universal access to basic services, enabling prosperity and decent

work. At CoP26, India along with UK, Australia launched the 'Infrastructure for Resilient Island States' (IRIS) initiative to promote resilient, sustainable, and inclusive infrastructure development in Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

This 90 minute discussion will be attended by External Affairs Minister of India, President of the UN General Assembly, UN Secretary General, Heads of delegations from select countries, UNDP Administrator and other UN officials.

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