

Ministry of External Affairs
Policy Planning and Research Division

Overview of Major Achievements during the month of August 2021

I. Diplomatic Engagements and other Interactions:

1. During the month of August, India held the Presidency of the UN Security Council, which witnessed substantive outcomes on key global issues. Prime Minister (PM) presided over the high-level signature event on maritime security. EAM presided over two other signature events, namely, the UNSC Open Debate on '*Protecting the Protectors: Technology and Peacekeeping*' and '*Threats to International Peace and Security caused by Terrorist Acts*'. Foreign Secretary chaired the meeting in which Resolution 2593 on Afghanistan was adopted.
2. There were many firsts during our Presidency. This was the first time that the Prime Minister of India chaired a UN Security Council meeting. Similarly, adoption of Presidential statements on '*Maritime Security*' and '*Technology and Peacekeeping*'; and a resolution focused on ensuring accountability for crimes against peacekeepers represented firsts for the Council.
3. On August 5, PM met Tony Abbott, Australian Prime Minister's Special Trade Envoy for India. The two leaders discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation to realize the full potential of the India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
4. On August 6, PM interacted with Heads of Missions along with stakeholders of the trade and commerce sector via video conferencing. PM gave a clarion call for '*Local Goes Global - Make in India for the World*'. CIM and EAM were present during the interaction. Secretaries of more than twenty departments, state government officials, members of Export Promotion Councils and Chambers of Commerce also participated in the event.
5. On August 11, PM delivered the keynote address at the annual meeting of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on the theme '*India@75: Government and Business Working Together for Aatmanirbhar Bharat*'. EAM delivered a special address on '*Shaping a New India for Global Role*' in the event on August 12. Earlier, MoS(ML) had delivered remarks on '*Celebrating India at 75-Transitioning to India@100*' on August 11.
6. During the month, PM held telephonic conversations with the President of the European Council, Russian President, German Chancellor, and with the Prime Ministers of Israel and Italy.
7. EAM visited Iran on August 5-6 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of President-elect Ebrahim Raisi on August 5. During his visit, EAM called on the President and conveyed personal greetings of PM.

8. EAM visited New York to chair the UN Security Council meetings. He had discussions on developments in Afghanistan at the UN Security Council on August 17. An MoU was exchanged with the UN in support of the '*Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping*' initiative and with *UN CAISR Academy*, during EAM's visit.
9. EAM, along with the UN Secretary General and the Foreign Minister of Estonia participated in a solemn ceremony at the UN Peacekeepers Memorial on August 18. He chaired UNSC briefing related to counter terrorism during the visit. He also had bilateral meetings with the UN Secretary General and Foreign Ministers of other Member States on the sidelines of these UNSC high-level events.
10. On August 7, EAM met Qatar Special Envoy for Counter-terrorism & Mediation in Conflict Resolution and shared the Indian perspective on recent developments in Afghanistan. Subsequently, EAM met with the Deputy PM and FM of Qatar on August 20 during his stopover in Doha.
11. The 14th SAARC Secretary General, who was on a customary introductory visit to India met with EAM on August 10. Earlier, he met with MoS(RRS) and Secretary (East) on August 9.
12. On August 23, EAM met with K. Natarajan, the next Executive Director of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre, Singapore.
13. On August 25, EAM received the Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command in New Delhi. They discussed developments in the Indo-Pacific region. Earlier in the day, the Commander addressed an event on '*India-US Partnership: Securing the 21st Century*' organised by Observer Research Foundation.
14. On August 30, EAM met the diplomatic advisor to the President of UAE. There was a discussion on the Afghan crisis, besides the overall situation in the Gulf region.
15. EAM briefed the Floor Leaders of all political parties on the situation in Afghanistan on August 26. The meeting was attended by 31 parties.
16. EAM addressed the inaugural session of BRICS Academic Forum on August 3. On August 4, EAM attended the ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers meeting and the EAS Foreign Ministers meeting.
17. During the month, EAM held telephone calls with his counterparts from Brunei, France, Germany, UK, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia, US and Oman. He also spoke with Saudi Arabia's MoS for Foreign Affairs and welcomed the relaxation of Covid restrictions on travel.
18. MoS(VM) paid an official visit to Bahrain from August 30 to September 1. He held discussions with Ministers and dignitaries and met a wide cross-section of the Indian community based in Bahrain. On August 31, he interacted with representatives of Indian Schools in Bahrain and commended them for their contributions in educating Indian & Bahraini students about India's glorious culture & tradition.

19. MoS(VM) met with the Ambassadors of Tunisia, Bahrain, and with the outgoing Ambassador of Egypt to India on August 17, August 24, and August 25, respectively.

20. On August 6, MoS(ML) hosted Ambassadors of Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania and Sweden. On August 12, she interacted with the outgoing Ambassador of Luxembourg to India. She also hosted Ambassadors of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan on August 13 and Ambassadors of Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Netherlands and Portugal on August 27.

21. On August 6, MoS(RRS) led India's delegation to the 28th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held virtually. MoS(RRS) inaugurated the 7th IBSA Academic Forum, which was held virtually on August 11-12 2021.

22. Foreign Secretary met with the Ambassador of the League of Arab States on August 5 and discussed the growing bilateral cooperation between India and the League of Arab States. On August 6, he welcomed the new Ambassador of Thailand and reaffirmed the strong ties of friendship & cooperation between India and Thailand. He met the Qatar Special Envoy for Counter-terrorism & Mediation in Conflict Resolution on August 7 2021.

23. On August 19, Foreign Secretary met with the President of the Confederation of British Industry and member of the UK House of Lords. Both sides discussed strengthening India-UK ties and regional issues of interest.

24. Foreign Secretary delivered a virtual address at the Launch of ORF's "*Foreign Policy Survey 2021*" on August 15. He also delivered a virtual address to the All India Management Association on "*Post-vaccine World Order: Dismantling Barriers to Global Business and Travel*" On August 19.

25. Foreign Secretary visited New York and chaired the UNSC meeting on the Middle East, including the Palestine Question on August 30. He also presided over the unanimous adoption of 3 important mandate extensions of UNSC Resolutions: Mali Sanctions, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, and UNSOM in Somalia.

26. Subsequently, Foreign Secretary travelled to Washington DC, where he called on US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken on September 2. He also had wide-ranging discussions with the Deputy Secretary of State, US Principal Deputy NSA, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

27. Foreign Secretary also interacted with the leading US companies under the aegis of US-India Business Council (USIBC) and with the members of US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) on the measures to facilitate investments into India. He had productive discussions with the strategic experts from prominent US think tanks on various facets of India-US Strategic Partnership.

28. 15th India-Singapore Foreign Office Consultations were virtually held on August 11. The second round of Foreign Office Consultations with Trinidad & Tobago took place in Port of Spain on August 16 2021.
29. On August 24, NSA virtually hosted the 11th Meeting of the BRICS High Representatives Responsible for National Security. He also hosted the Inaugural meeting of IBSA National Security Advisers, via video conferencing on August 25.
30. The Ministry has set up a Special Afghanistan Cell to coordinate repatriation and other requests from Afghanistan. It has also been decided that Afghan nationals would need e-Visas to travel to India.
31. Germany became the fifth country to sign the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement on August 4.
32. On August 26, the contract for the Government of India funded 'Greater Male Connectivity - Male to Thilafushi Link Project' was signed. This will be the largest infrastructure project to be executed in Maldives.
33. In a boost to railway connectivity between India and Bangladesh, regular operations of freight trains through the restored Haldibari (India) - Chilahati (Bangladesh) rail link commenced in August. On 17 August, the first tranche of life-saving medical equipment and 31 ambulances were delivered to Bangladesh.
34. India gifted a 960 LPM Medical Oxygen Plant to Nepal on August. Oxygen supplies and medicines (Remdesivir) were also delivered to Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam during the month.
35. The Cabinet approved the ratification of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the Ozone layer. This is another step forward towards India's leadership in tackling climate change.
36. Four Indian sites, namely, Thol and Wadhvana in Gujarat and Sultanpur and Bhindawas in Haryana have been recognized under the 1971 Ramsar Convention on Wetlands bringing the total number of such designated areas in the country to 46. This is a manifestation of India's centuries old ethos of preserving natural habitats.
37. India was elected to the Council of Administration and the Postal Operations Council of the Universal Postal Union on August 26.
38. Indian Missions and Posts have successfully undertaken various initiatives to commemorate the 75th anniversary of India's Independence - *Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav*. Earlier, on 13 August, EAM inaugurated ICCR's Amrit Mahotsav Gala Performance to celebrate India's 75th Independence Day. MoS (ML) and President, ICCR also graced the occasion.