



Joint Statement on Enhanced India-Austria Partnership

July 10, 2024

1. At the invitation of Chancellor Mr Karl Nehammer, Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Austria from 9-10 July 2024. During his visit, the Prime Minister called on H.E. Alexander Van der Bellen, President of Austria, and held bilateral discussions with Chancellor Nehammer. This was the Prime Minister's first visit to Austria and that of an Indian Prime Minister after 41 years. This year marks the 75th year of diplomatic relations between the two countries.
2. The Prime Minister and the Chancellor emphasised that the shared values of democracy, freedom, international peace and security, a rules-based international order with the UN Charter at its core, the shared historical linkages, and the long-standing ties between the two countries are at the centre of the growing enhanced partnership. They reiterated their commitment to continue their efforts towards deepening and widening bilateral, regional and international cooperation for a more stable, prosperous and sustainable world.
3. Chancellor Nehammer and Prime Minister Modi recognised that the two countries have the potential to significantly upgrade their bilateral partnership to a higher level. They agreed to adopt a strategic approach to advance this shared objective. To this end, in addition to closer political-level dialogue, they emphasised on a future-oriented bilateral sustainable economic and technology partnership, covering a range of new initiatives and joint projects, collaborative technology development, research and innovation and business-to-business engagement inter alia in green and digital technologies, infrastructure, renewable energy, water management, life sciences, smart cities, mobility and transportation.

Political and Security Cooperation

4. Prime Minister Modi and Chancellor Nehammer underscored the importance of democratic countries such as India and Austria working together to contribute to international and regional peace and prosperity. In this context, they noted with satisfaction regular and substantive consultations between their Foreign Ministers in recent years. They also encouraged their officials to maintain the trend of enhanced institutional dialogue in different areas.
5. Both leaders reinforced their commitment to a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific in accordance with the international law of the sea as reflected in UNCLOS and with full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and freedom of navigation to the benefit of maritime security and international peace and stability.

6. The two leaders exchanged in-depth assessments of recent developments in Europe as well as West Asia/Middle East. They noted the complementarities in the approaches of the two countries, that prioritise efforts towards restoring peace and avoiding armed conflict as well as rigorous adherence to international law and the UN Charter.
7. Concerning the war in Ukraine, both leaders supported any collective effort to facilitate a peaceful resolution consistent with international law and the UN Charter. Both sides believe that achieving a comprehensive and lasting peace in Ukraine requires bringing together all stakeholders and a sincere and earnest engagement between the two parties to the conflict.
8. The two leaders reiterated their unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including cross-border and cyber- terrorism and emphasised that no country should provide safe haven to those who finance, plan, support or commit terrorist acts. Both sides also called for concerted action against all terrorists, including through designations or individuals affiliated with groups that are listed by the UN Security Council 1267 Sanctions Committee. Both countries reiterated their commitment to work together in FATF, NMFT and other multilateral platforms.
9. The two leaders recalled the launch of the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC) on the margins of the G20 summit in Delhi in September 2023. Chancellor Nehammer congratulated Prime Minister Modi for his leadership of this significant initiative. The two leaders agreed that this project would be of great strategic importance and would significantly enhance the potential and flow of commerce and energy between India, the Middle East and Europe. Chancellor Nehammer conveyed Austria's keen interest to engage with IMEC and pointed to Austria's location at the centre of Europe as a key enabler of connectivity.
10. The two leaders emphasised that India and the European Union have the largest and most vibrant free-market space in the world, and noted that deeper EU-India ties will be mutually beneficial as well as have a positive global impact. Chancellor Nehammer and Prime Minister Modi agreed to support various initiatives to bring India and the EU closer. In this context, they reaffirmed their strong support for the ongoing India-EU trade and investment negotiations and the early implementation of the EU-India Connectivity Partnership.

Sustainable Economic Partnership

11. The two leaders identified a stronger economic and technology partnership between the two countries as a strategic objective. In this context, they welcomed the convening of the first-ever high-level bilateral Business Forum with the participation of the CEOs of several companies in Vienna during the visit. The two leaders addressed the Business Forum and encouraged business representatives to work towards new and more dynamic tie-ups across different sectors.
12. The two leaders recognised the vital importance of research, scientific tie-ups, technology partnerships and innovation in driving forward the bilateral partnership and called for all such opportunities to be explored in mutual interest. They emphasised the need for stronger collaboration to develop and commercialise technologies in identified areas through new business, industry and R&D partnership models.

13. The leaders welcomed initiatives to link the innovation and start-up ecosystems of the two countries through the Start-Up Bridge set up during the visit of the Austrian Minister of Labour and Economy to India in February 2024 and the successful visit of a group of Indian Start-Ups to Austria in June 2024. They encouraged relevant agencies of both countries to work to deepen further similar exchanges in future, including through frameworks such as Austria's Global Incubator Network and the Start Up India initiative.
14. Being parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and as countries committed to holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels, the leaders recognised that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change. They recalled the binding targets adopted at the EU level for climate neutrality by 2050, the Austrian government's commitment to achieve climate neutrality by 2040, and the Indian government's commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2070.
15. They noted the scope for engagement in the context of the Austrian government's Hydrogen Strategy and the National Green Hydrogen Mission launched by India to address the energy transition challenges and supported a wide-ranging partnership between the companies and R&D institutions of both countries in renewable/green hydrogen.
16. The leaders identified a range of environmental technologies for targeted cooperation in areas such as clean transportation, water and wastewater management, waste management, renewable energy and other clean technologies. They encouraged public and private institutions to extend financing for ventures and projects in these sectors to support an expanded engagement in these and allied sectors. They also recognised the growing role of digital technologies in industrial processes (Industry 4.0), including in the area of sustainable economy.

Skills for a Shared Future

17. Chancellor Nehammer and Prime Minister Modi recognised the importance of skill development and mobility of skilled personnel to support an expanded engagement in high-tech sectors. In this regard, they welcomed the operationalisation of the bilateral Migration and Mobility Agreement, which provides an institutional framework to facilitate such exchanges, while at the same time combating irregular migration.
18. They encouraged academic institutions of both countries to build future-oriented partnerships focused on areas of mutual interest, especially in science, technology, and engineering.

People-to-people Ties

19. The two leaders appreciated the long tradition of cultural exchanges, particularly the role of Austrian Indologists and leading Indian cultural personalities who engaged with Austria. The leaders also noted the growing interest among Austrians in yoga and Ayurveda. They welcomed efforts to promote further bilateral cultural ties in music, dance, opera, theatre, films, literature, sports and other fields, including in the framework of the recently signed MOU on Cultural Cooperation.
20. The leaders recognised the role played by tourism in generating economic, sustainable and inclusive growth as well as greater understanding between the people of both countries. They encouraged efforts by relevant agencies to work together to expand tourist flows in both directions, including by expanding direct flight connectivity, the lengths of stay and other initiatives.

Multilateral Cooperation

21. The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism and the principles of the United Nations Charter. They agreed to work together to safeguard and promote these fundamental principles through regular bilateral consultations and coordination at multilateral forums.
22. They reiterated their commitment to achieving comprehensive reforms of the United Nations, including its Security Council. India reiterated its support for Austria's UNSC candidature for the term 2027-28, while Austria expressed its support for India's candidature for the period 2028-29.
23. Prime Minister Modi conveyed India's invitation to Austria for its membership in the International Solar Alliance, which recently achieved an important milestone by welcoming its 100th member.
24. Prime Minister Modi thanked Chancellor Nehammer for the gracious hospitality extended by the Government and people of Austria during the visit. Prime Minister Modi extended an invitation to Chancellor Nehammer to visit India at his convenience, which the Chancellor accepted with pleasure.