

**REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR OF INDIA
RECEPTION IN HONOUR OF HON'BLE SPEAKER OF LOK SABHA
SHRI OM BIRLA
AT INDIA HOUSE IN NETHERLANDS**

21 August, 2022

- Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla Ji
 - President of the Senate, His Excellency Mr. Jan Anthonie Bruijn
 - Excellencies
 - Ladies & Gentlemen
1. It is a pleasure to welcome you all to the India House. It is our esteemed privilege to have amidst us, the Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla ji and members of his delegation from the Parliament of India. This visit of the Hon'ble Speaker to the Netherlands is truly historic, as it marks the first-ever visit by Speaker of India to the Netherlands, and comes when we are celebrating 75 years of India's independence as Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in India. The visit symbolizes the close bonds between India and Netherlands, as two parliamentary democracies with shared common values.
 2. I am also extremely happy to welcome the President of the Senate H.E. Mr. Jan Anthonie Bruijn. Your presence today is a testimony of your love for India and we appreciate the importance you attach to our bilateral relations.
 3. Even though our ties date back centuries, this year is a milestone as we mark 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Netherlands. Over the years, our bilateral cooperation has grown into a wide-ranging and multi-faceted partnership, encompassing trade and investment, science and technology, research & innovation, socio-economic development and cultural cooperation. Today, India and Netherlands are partners in progress. Our substantive cooperation in Water, Agriculture and Health sector has shown immense results and we are driven to achieve more. Last year, we launched a Strategic Partnership on Water outlining our future priorities for working together.
 4. In April this year, Hon'ble President of India paid a State Visit to the Netherlands. Our Prime Ministers have maintained regular contact. They held a virtual summit last year, reviewing the entire breadth of our relations and setting an ambitious agenda for future cooperation. This was followed by 2 phone calls this year. Foreign Minister Hoekstra visited India in April and met our External Affairs Minister, they met again in July. This high level exchange of visits and meetings

demonstrates the shared commitment of both countries to further strengthen our ties and elevate them to new heights.

5. We have with us today prominent members of the Indian diaspora who represent the strong bonds of friendship between our countries. They come from diverse fields, including academics, politics, arts, science and business. Each one of them has contributed to promoting people-to-people linkages and cooperation in diverse fields. They are our brand ambassadors and I would like to thank them for joining us today.
6. I also thank the Mayor of Wassenaar Mr. Leendert de Lange, Secretary-General of the Senate Mr. Remco Nehmelman, Mr. Rabin Baldewsingh, National Coordinator against Discrimination & Racism, and Ms. Karin Mossenlechner, Director Asia & Oceania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for their presence. We are grateful for your consistent support.

Thank you ladies & Gentlemen.
