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NOTE

From:	European Commission
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Draft Joint Statement to be adopted at the meeting of the first EU-India Trade and Technology Council

On 5 April, the Commission informed the Council of its intent to initiate discussions with India to develop a Joint Statement on behalf of the EU in the context of the upcoming meeting of the EU-India Trade and Technology Council scheduled to take place on 16 May 2023. The Commission is now providing an early draft of the joint statement to be adopted at the TTC Ministerial meeting on 16 May 2023.

The objective of the EU-India Joint Statement is to:

- reaffirm the political commitment of the EU and India towards the Trade and Technology Council;
- underline the importance of a strong EU-India partnership in addressing strategic challenges related to trade, trusted technology and security;
- provide guidance to the three TTC working groups.

The Commission has engaged with India to negotiate the attached text of a Joint Statement on behalf of the EU and is still awaiting India's comments. The Commission will then provide the Council with an updated version in due course, and will seek Council's endorsement of the Joint Statement, in accordance with the relevant procedures. The Commission remains committed to the agreed-upon NBI procedure timelines to the best of its ability.

The Commission will continue to keep the Council informed of the progress with India through the Trade Policy Committee, the Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society, the Working Party on Research, and other pertinent Council Working Groups and Committees.

EU – India Joint Statement of the Trade and Technology Council

16 May 2023

Brussels, Belgium

The EU-India Trade and Technology Council (TTC) met in Brussels on 16 May 2023. The meeting was co-chaired by European Commission Executive Vice-Presidents Vestager and Dombrovskis, with Indian Ministers Jaishankar, Vaishnaw and Goya, and, joined by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell and European Commissioner Breton. Rapid changes in the world's geopolitical environment highlight the need for deeper strategic engagement between the European Union and India. As vibrant democracies, the European Union and India share fundamental values and have a common interest in ensuring security, prosperity and sustainable development in a multi-polar world. Both partners also face a challenging global political, economic and security landscape. This is true particularly in the trade and technological domains. Therefore, the EU and India have set up the TTC as a key coordination platform to address key trade, trusted technology and security challenges, and to deepen their bilateral relationship in these fields. After the TTC was launched on 6 February 2023, both sides immediately started operational work to prepare for the Ministerial Meeting, which took place on 16 May 2023.

The European Union and India are committed to deepening their partnership and leveraging their respective strengths to accelerate the development and deployment of cutting-edge digital technologies that will benefit both societies and promote global progress. The EU-India TTC Working Group 1 on strategic technologies, digital governance and digital connectivity defined priority areas and outlined the next steps. The EU and India will explore Quantum and High-Performance Computing research and development projects that could address climate change, natural hazards, personalised medicine, biomolecular research, and drug development. In addition, the European Union and India intend to coordinate within the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) and explore bilateral cooperation on trustworthy and responsible Artificial Intelligence, including in research and innovation. Both sides will exchange on policies and share best practices for the semiconductors sector, covering research and development, design, manufacturing, market monitoring, and talent development. Furthermore, the European Union and India will work towards bridging the digital skills gap and explore mutual recognition of certifications. They will also enhance cooperation on IT and Telecoms Standardisation with a particular focus on machine-to-machine communications, 5G and beyond 5G/6G, Internet of Things, and promoting international standards. Finally, the two sides will collaborate on enhancing the interoperability of their respective digital public infrastructures and jointly promote solutions between the EU and India. In addition to the abovementioned priorities, there is an opportunity for both parties to work together over time on areas such as platforms and data governance, and telecoms regulation.

The European Union and India have set ambitious goals of achieving climate neutrality by 2050 and 2070, respectively. They have also taken commitments to tackle biodiversity loss and to promote circular economy. Achieving these targets and objectives will require significant investments in new technologies, as well as increased research and innovation efforts. When developing new products and technologies, impacts on overall competitiveness should also be considered. To this end, Working Group 2 on green and clean energy technologies will focus on three areas: (1) waste management with a focus on water technologies and waste to energy, with a particular focus on Green Hydrogen; (2) Electrical vehicles battery circularity and recycling and (3) standards through pre-normative research. By investing in these areas, the European Union and India can drive innovation and promote sustainable development while also meeting their climate targets, limiting pollution and environmental degradation, strengthening the role of start-ups, and building skills and capacity.

Working Group 3 on trade, investment and resilient value chains aims to deepen the bilateral cooperation in specific areas of mutual interest. They complement the on-going negotiations for legally binding agreements on trade, investment protection and geographical indications, that proceed on a separate track. To this end, the two sides intend, in the year to come, to focus on the following four areas: (1) resilient value chains, with a possible initial emphasis on the resilience of agri-food value chains; (2) market access issues identified by each side; (3) exchange of information of each side's mechanisms for screening of foreign direct investment; and (4) multilateral trade issues, with particular emphasis on the World Trade Organization, and possibly including the G20.

The European Union and India underline the importance of advancing across all Working Groups established under the TTC. The co-chairs will meet again in [a year in India] to take stock of the progress achieved and decide on further actions.
