



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**

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**Remarks by
Herman VAN ROMPUY
President of the European Council
following the EU-India Summit**

I am delighted to welcome Prime Minister Singh and his delegation to the 11th EU India Summit, the first under the Lisbon Treaty, 1 year after its entry into force.

We have met several times this year – in Washington for the nuclear security summit, in Canada and Korea for the G20 Summits – but this first time (for me) in the Justus Lipsius – the European Council Headquarter – gives me particular pleasure.

President Barroso and I had a very intense and productive plenary session with the PM during which we reviewed the whole spectrum of bilateral, regional and global issues on our agenda. We will further focus on some of these issues during our working lunch.

I am also pleased that Lady Ashton attended this Summit. Let me express my satisfaction for both the substance and the quality of our discussions and decisions. And let me thank Premier Singh for his leadership and vision.

On bilateral issues. Today we have agreed to consider the enormous potential in our bilateral relations that is still to be unlocked, and the necessity to bring our strategic partnership launched in 2004 to a higher level.

I would resume this common objective in 2 adjectives: make it wider (in the areas to be unfolded), make it deeper (in those already launched). You can see our progress reflected in the Joint Statement of this Summit.

So, wider. I have explained to Premier Singh how the new institutional EU setting will make this objective easier to achieve. More continuity brings more coherence. And more coherence paves the way for more results.

P R E S S

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Today, we have opened a brand new chapter of political cooperation in the defence and security fields. We have in particular agreed on the need to step up together in the fight against international terrorism. The London, Madrid and Mumbai attacks showed that terrorism knows no boundaries and that a common response is essential: the Joint Declaration on Counter Terrorism we have agreed today signals a clear commitment in this regard. This Declaration sets out a series of areas of concrete cooperation.

Deeper cooperation. As cooperation became wider, we have engaged to give new momentum to the key areas that already constitute the bulk of our cooperation, in particular in the trade and investments. The EU is the 1st India export destination; India is the 9th EU export destination. The overall trade in goods in 2009 amounted to around 52 billions euro. We believe it is not enough, particularly as in a still-difficult economic situation and where fiscal and budgetary policies are limited, free trade is a powerful engine in those circumstances to promote sustainable economic growth in two of the largest world economies, where more than one and half billion people live. President Barroso will elaborate further but I am pleased that we have created momentum in the Free Trade Agreement negotiations for an ambitious and balanced conclusion in the Spring of 2011. It would be the biggest agreement concluded by the EU and one of the biggest bilateral agreements ever.

Under this item we reiterated our common interest in a stable, peaceful and inclusive Afghanistan. I highlighted to the Prime Minister the great efforts undertaken by the EU and its Member States and the conclusion of the NATO summit in Lisbon. The aim of course is the "afghanisation" of Afghanistan.

I have also underlined that a safe, secure, stable and prosperous Pakistan is equally in the interest of the EU. In this context I have recalled the measures decided by the European Council.

With PM Singh we have reviewed the key issues of the global agenda, starting from the response to the economic crisis. We have reaffirmed the commitment we made at the G20 Seoul Summit to contribute to address positively the issue of the "global imbalances" and to make rapid progress in 2011; we also welcomed the historic agreement on the IMF reform and the great efforts made by the European countries to make it possible, as we believe it will strengthen the legitimacy of the IMF, allowing India and the other emerging economies to increase their involvement and - I believe - responsibilities in the global economic governance. We both agreed on the need to move towards more market-determined exchange rates, as the G20 meeting said.

Bringing climate and trade negotiations to a positive outcome remain a common objective.

We have also stressed the importance of cooperation in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard I expressed to PM Singh EU concern over the Iranian nuclear and ballistic missiles program and the need to cooperate to ensure Iran meets its obligation to the AIEA of Viena and the UN Security Council.

India and the EU are natural partners. We share the same core values of democracy, rule of law, respect of human rights. The strategic partnership that binds EU and India will be instrumental in reaching the shared interests for freedom, peace and security in all parts of the world.