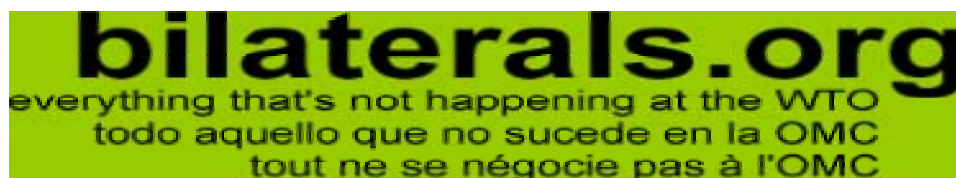


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P6_TA-PROV(2008)0455
Preparation of the EU-India Summit
PE413.274

European Parliament resolution of 24 September 2008 on the preparation of the EU-India Summit (Marseille, 29 September 2008)

The European Parliament,

- ▶ having regard to the EU-India Strategic Partnership launched at The Hague on 8 November 2004,
- ▶ having regard to the Ninth EU-India Summit, which will take place on 29 September 2008 in Marseille,
- ▶ having regard to the 2005 Strategic Partnership Joint Action Plan, adopted at the Sixth EU-India Summit, held in New Delhi on 7 September 2005,
- ▶ having regard to the conclusions of the Eighth EU-India Summit, held in New Delhi on 30 November 2007,
- ▶ having regard to its resolution of 29 September 2005 on EU-India relations: A Strategic Partnership,
- ▶ having regard to the Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and India on the Country Strategy Paper for India for 2007-2010,
- ▶ having regard to the 3rd EU India Energy Panel, held on 20 June 2007,
- ▶ having regard to its resolution of 24 May 2007 on Kashmir: present situation and future prospects,
- ▶ having regard to its resolution of 10 July 2008 on allegations of mass graves in Indian-administered Kashmir,
- ▶ having regard to its resolution of 28 September 2006 on the EU's economic and trade relations with India,

- ▶ having regard to the address by the President of the Republic of India to the European Parliament of 25 April 2007,
- ▶ having regard to the conclusions of the EU-India Civil Society Round Table held in Paris on 15-16 July 2008,
- ▶ having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas the EU and India are the biggest democracies in the world, and their shared commitment to democracy, pluralism, the rule of law and multilateralism in international relations contributes to global peace and stability,
 - B. whereas the above-mentioned EU-India Strategic Partnership Joint Action Plan has served as the basis for increasing cooperation between the EU and India since 2005,
 - C. whereas India has recorded annual economic growth in recent years of between 8 and 10%, marking it out as a country that is emerging as a major economic power which has made great strides in economic development; whereas major advances have been made by India in a variety of human development indicators, a broader middle class approaching 100 million people has emerged, and India has made progress in becoming a donor as well as a beneficiary of development aid; whereas the huge disparity in incomes and the 300 million Indians who live below the poverty line is a continuing cause for concern,
 - D. whereas in domestic politics India is currently facing a number of crises, such as the unremitting violence of Islamist jihadism and Hindu radicalism, the intercommunal tensions in Jammu and Kashmir, attacks on Christians, many of them of Dalit origin, in Orissa, the spread of the Maoist (Naxalite) insurgency in at least twelve states and natural disasters in the north-east,
 - E. whereas a wave of violence and a series of murders against Christians occurred in Orissa during August 2008; whereas there have been allegations that there was no effective intervention by the local police and that Vishwa Hindu Parishad's leaders stated that violence would not cease until Orissa was totally free of Christians; whereas certain Christian communities in India are exposed to ongoing intolerance and violence,
 - F. whereas caste discrimination and the practices of 'untouchability' against the Dalits is still affecting their socio-economic and political-civil rights in a major way in spite of the Indian Government's efforts over decades,
 - G. whereas since October 2005 more than 400 people have died in bomb attacks in Indian cities; whereas the latest of these, carried out by Islamist terrorists, took place on 13 September 2008, leaving at least 20 people dead and many injured,

- H. whereas trade between the EU and India has grown exponentially in recent years, rising from EUR 28,6 billion in 2003 to over EUR 55 billion in 2007, and whereas EU foreign investment in India more than doubled between 2002 and 2006 to EUR 2,4 billion; whereas India's trade regime and regulatory environment still remain comparatively restrictive, and in 2008 the World bank ranked India 120th (out of 178 economies) in terms of the 'ease of doing business',
- I. whereas the European Parliament and the Indian Parliament have established formal bilateral relations,
- J. whereas the EU and India remain committed to concluding a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) which is comprehensive, balanced and fully consistent with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules and which provides for progressive and reciprocal liberalisation of trade in goods and services, as well as covering trade-related issues; whereas an FTA will substantially benefit both economies, increase investment, overall exports and imports for both the EU and India, and give a valuable boost to global trade, especially in services,
- K. whereas the EU and India have developed close cooperation in the scientific and technology sectors,
- L. whereas the EU and India are committed to the eradication of all forms of terrorism, which constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security,
- M. whereas India has emerged as a major actor in the international community and one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions, and whereas this enhanced status should receive recognition from the UN in the form of a seat on the UN Security Council,
- N. whereas India has an important role to play in the affairs of South and South-East Asia, notably through its membership of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and through its cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); whereas India has a key role in supporting the stability of the region, and in relation to cooperation with the EU in Nepal and Sri Lanka,
- O. whereas the United States and India have signed an agreement on civil nuclear cooperation,
- P. whereas a peaceful future for the former princely State of Jammu and Kashmir remains an important goal for stability in South Asia,
- Q. whereas climate change, energy use and energy security are of vital concern to the international community,

R. whereas the global explosion in fuel and food prices has created serious economic difficulty and raised concerns about the prospect of social unrest,

S. whereas India is a participant in the EU Galileo project and the ITER project,

1. Welcomes the holding of the Ninth India EU-Summit meeting as an expression of a sustainable Strategic Partnership and strongly recommends that these annual summit meetings be preceded in the future by parliamentary pre-summit meetings in order to underline the democratic scrutiny of this process and to enhance understanding of the points of view and democratic systems of both sides;
2. Reaffirms its strong support for strengthening the strategic relationship between the EU and India, and for exploring further ways to upgrade the relationship, and calls for concrete conclusions to emerge from the Summit on economic, political, security, trade and other issues of mutual interest;
3. Welcomes the review of the above-mentioned Strategic Partnership Joint Action Plan, hopes that it will set clear priorities and deadlines for the activities agreed and reiterates its wish to be involved in the review process; is prepared to engage in discussions with the Commission in order to define the format of this involvement;
4. Notes that the EU and India intend to adopt a revised Strategic Partnership Joint Action Plan at the Summit; underlines the importance of giving real political substance to the joint actions proposed and of allocating sufficient resources to enable the priorities in the Plan to be fully attained;
5. Welcomes the establishment in June 2008 of the India-European Parliament Parliamentary Friendship Group, which will act within the Indian Parliament as a counterpart to the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with the Republic of India; hopes that this positive development will launch a meaningful and structured dialogue between the two Parliaments on issues of global and common interest through regular bilateral visits and round-table discussions;
6. Underlines its firm commitment to the establishment of a comprehensive, wide-ranging and ambitious FTA between the EU and India; notes that while negotiators have reached a broad consensus on trade in goods, further talks are required to find agreement on services, competition, intellectual property rights (IPR), public procurement, sustainable development, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and non-tariff barriers; urges both sides to work towards bringing negotiations to a successful conclusion by the end of 2008; notes the enormous increase in bilateral trade and investment over the past decade and emphasises the huge potential for further growth arising out of such an agreement;
7. Calls for the conclusion of a comprehensive FTA which will improve market access for goods and services, covering substantially all trade, and contain provisions on regulatory transparency in areas relevant to mutual trade and investment, including standards and conformity assessment, SPS, IPR, enforcement, trade facilitation

and customs, public procurement, and trade and competition, as well as trade and development and human rights clauses as an essential element of that FTA;

8. Supports the FTA negotiations with India while fully respecting the differing economic positions of the two partners, the particular socio-economic situation of India and, especially, the situation of poor and subsistence farmers; considers an ambitious sustainable development chapter to be an essential part of any agreement and emphasises that this should be subject to the standard dispute settlement mechanism;
9. Notes that the EU is an important source of foreign direct investment (FDI) for India, accounting for approximately 19,5% of India's total FDI flows, and that India's cumulative direct investments in joint ventures and wholly-owned subsidiaries in the EU (from April 1996 to 2006/2007) amounted to EUR 4 315,87 million, making the EU the largest destination of overseas investment for India; recognises that investment flows between the EU and India have been rising, and are due to rise even more following the successful conclusion of the FTA;
10. Recalls that the EU and India are important trading partners and founding members of the WTO; regrets the recent collapse of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) multilateral trade negotiations and the dispute on agricultural tariffs between the US and India; notes that the costs of failure of the WTO negotiations would include: the loss of possible welfare gains from new WTO reforms; the serious threat that the credibility of the international trading system and the WTO will be undermined; and the possibility of expanding trade protectionism and the risk that WTO members will replace multilateralism with bilateral and regional agreements; urges the EU and India to renew their efforts to bring about a comprehensive trade deal that would benefit not only the EU and India but also the wider international community;
11. Calls on the Commission to give due weight in its ongoing FTA negotiations with India to human rights considerations, in particular the implementation of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Labour Standards in connection with child and bonded labour (Conventions No 138 and 182), the abolition of non-tariff barriers and ongoing restrictions in the field of FDI in important sectors, and intellectual property rights;
12. Notes the announcement on 28 August 2008 of an India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement; expresses the hope that the agreement will lead to further economic growth, strengthen regional political relationships and underpin security in South East Asia;
13. Calls on the EU and India to make good progress on concluding maritime and aviation agreements which would further boost bilateral trade and investment; states that the Summit will also provide an opportunity for signing the Financing Agreement on the new civil aviation cooperation programme;
14. Welcomes the launch in New Delhi of the European Business and Technology Centre (EBTC), which will help to foster links between European and Indian

businesses, as well as between science and technology actors, with a view to responding to the demands of the Indian market;

15. Requests that the Council make urgent progress on a visa facilitation regime;
16. Welcomes the foundation of the Indian Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, while remaining deeply concerned about the plight of the wild tiger, and calls on India to protect tigers from habitat loss and trafficking by transnational criminal networks; calls for specific EU assistance for this conservation effort in the form of technical expertise, financial support and the reinforcement of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
17. Encourages the two sides to work closely together on the major environmental challenges facing the planet; urges, in this connection, the EU and India to develop as far as possible common approaches to the threat of climate change and a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; stresses the need for both sides to commit to a post-2012 agreement on GHG reductions while recognising the particular issues India faces as a developing nation;
18. Notes the soaring costs of global energy and the consequent impact on domestic consumers, business and industry; stresses the need for diversity of energy supply to be a major policy goal and emphasises the risks to political stability in Europe and South Asia posed by threats to energy security;
19. Notes the approval by the Nuclear Suppliers Group of the US-India civil nuclear accord (and of India's unilateral declaration of its intention to abide by its non-proliferation commitments and to uphold a voluntary moratorium on testing atomic weapons); calls on the Indian Government to transform its nuclear test moratorium into a legally binding commitment;
20. Recognises that India plays a major role in conflict prevention and peacekeeping in its neighbourhood and beyond; is concerned by the current volatile political situation in Pakistan and the increasingly insecure situation in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka and expresses the hope that India, as predominant country in the region, will act as a promoter of stability and peace; calls on India and the EU, particularly through the intermediary of the EU Special Envoy for Burma/Myanmar, to work together to prevail upon the Burmese military junta to release political prisoners and to respect human rights;
21. Regrets the outbreak of riots in Jammu and Kashmir in August 2008 and recommends that the authorities take all reasonable steps to ensure that elections can be held in Jammu and Kashmir in a stable environment; believes that the opening up of Kashmir to a free flow of trade and persons is essential in order to break the deadlock of repression and violence; looks forward to the time when there can be a reduction in the military presence which would be conducive to the normal functioning of civil society, business and tourism;

22. Is deeply concerned at the disaster caused by floods in north-east India, affecting in particular the state of Bihar, but also neighbouring Nepal and Bangladesh; deplores the fact that the disaster has claimed huge number of victims and left more than one million homeless; welcomes the granting of emergency aid by the EU; calls on the EU and India to intensify cooperation on measures to mitigate the effects of climate change and, notably, to step up cooperation on renewable energies;
23. Welcomes the efforts of the Indian Government and civil society in the rescue and evacuation process, coordination and distribution of food and relief camp management; emphasises that shelter and water sanitation must now be the top priorities in order to stabilise the public health situation; advocates greater international cooperation with India to support the urgent implementation of climate adaptation actions, since natural and man-made disasters, such as floods, are on the increase, making it necessary to step up prevention and recovery measures;
24. Recognises that India provides a model for handling cultural and religious pluralism, despite intermittent and local difficulties among religions, including those between Hindus and Christians; expresses, however, deep concern at the current situation of Christian minorities, and regrets the impact that the anti-conversion laws that have spread among several Indian states may have on freedom of religion;
25. Expresses deep concern at the recent attacks on Christians in Orissa (many of whom were of Dalit origin), and Kandhamal district in particular; underlines the need to guarantee immediate assistance and support to the victims, including compensation to the Church for damage inflicted on its property and to individuals whose private property has similarly been damaged; urges the authorities to enable those who were forced to flee from their villages to return safely; stresses the need for all those accused, including senior members of the police, to be tried speedily through the judicial system; deplores the killing of at least 35 people since the outbreak of the violence, and calls on the state and national authorities to do all in their power fully to protect the Christian minority;
26. Expresses its deep sympathy for the victims of terrorist bomb outrages in India, both on its own territory and in Afghanistan, and particularly its Embassy in Kabul; recalls in particular the latest bomb attack of 13 September 2008 in the Indian capital, and the deaths of over 180 people in Mumbai in 2006 and of over 60 people in Jaipur in May 2008; condemns these and all terrorist attacks;
27. Reaffirms the role which must be played by civil society in the debates on questions of principle in the present bilateral negotiations; insists, in this connection, on the reinforcement of the role of the EU-India Civil Society Round Table set up in 2001, and calls, in particular, for it to be given the means of effectively exercising its tasks of consulting civil society in the EU and India; calls for greater account to be taken of the results of these exchanges in the EU's decision-making process;
28. Welcomes, with regard to respect for human rights, India's cooperation with the UN Human Rights Council; also commends the Indian National Human Rights Commission on its independent and rigorous work on religious discrimination and

other issues; regrets that India has not yet ratified the international Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment or its optional protocol; recommends that India ratify both instruments without delay; urges the Indian Government immediately to abolish the death penalty by imposing a moratorium on executions; encourages the Indian Government to sign and ratify the optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; urges India to sign up to the International Criminal Court; urges the Indian authorities to reform the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, which grants impunity to soldiers and police officers;

29. Calls for a progress report to be drawn up on the human rights policy implemented with India, recalling that the EU-India human rights dialogue is presented as a model in the field; is surprised, in this context, that India is not on the list of countries eligible for European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) funding for civil society microprojects;
30. Calls on the EU and India to make clear their joint commitment to dealing with the scourge of terrorism, which is one of the main threats to international peace and security; urges enhanced cooperation on intelligence-sharing, and requests that serious consideration be given to India having privileged status within Europol;
31. Stresses that India's food security remains an area of concern; calls on the Indian Government to bridge the demand-supply gap by accelerating the pace of domestic production of food grains and ensuring public and private investment, the introduction of new technologies and crop diversification;
32. Welcomes the progress achieved by India towards poverty eradication (Millennium Development Goal 1 (MDG 1)); notes, however, the slow progress towards the MDGs on education, health, gender equality and empowerment of women; reiterates its concerns that child mortality and maternal health (MDGs 4 and 5) are the areas showing least progress and are unlikely to be achieved by 2015; calls on the Council, the Commission and the Government of India to prioritise actions on gender equality, reduction of child mortality and improvement of maternal health;
33. Calls on the EU and India to put greater emphasis on people-to-people exchanges and greater cultural dialogue;
34. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the Republic of India.

source: **AFP**