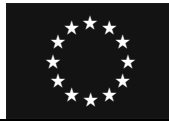


# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

## DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH INDIA

D-IN PV 8/08

### DRAFT MINUTES

of the meeting of 4 November 2008  
from 17h30 to 18h30

BRUSSELS

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Brussels, 6 November 2008  
XN/nal

1. Adoption of draft agenda

The draft agenda was adopted.

2. Adoption of the draft minutes of the meeting of 3 September 2008

The draft minutes of the meeting of 3 September 2008 were adopted.

3. Chair's announcements

The Chair thanked all Members who came to the seminar organised by the Policy Unit for the EP Delegation for Relations with India and the Foreign Affairs Committee. It was quite a successful event, attracting large participation and interest from within and outside the European Parliament.

The Chair also informed Members that the Committee on International Trade is having a hearing on the EU-India Free Trade Agreement on 5 November 2008, and that INTA will be sending a delegation to Delhi and Mumbai from 24 to 27 November to discuss trade issues.

The Chair informed Members that more bomb explosions took place recently in India. The state of Assam was the targeted area, with 70 people killed and more than 300 injured. Representatives from Manipur have expressed their wish that the European Parliament visit the area, but given the security situation, it would be difficult to visit at this time.

4. EU-India Relations and the EU-India Summit of 29 September 2008

Mr REMOND from the Commission reported on the outcomes of the summit. The Commission expressed frustration at the general performance of the bilateral relationships. Although there has been notable progress in the economic and trade area, the EU has the impression that India tend to favour bilateral relationship with individual states rather than considering the EU as a major partner.

At the summit, discussions were held under 3 chapters:

1) Bilateral relations

At the Marseille Summit, the 2005 Joint Action Plan was revised, and 4 priorities were laid down, namely promoting security, sustainable development, research in technical cooperation, and cultural and interpersonal exchange. The FTA is a priority for both sides, and the Indian Prime Minister indicated that India wanted to see overall trade volumes double in size after the FTA. The objective is to sign the FTA before 2009. A further round of negotiations is scheduled in Delhi during the week of 24 November.

The Indian side expressed their desire to collaborate more closely in energy and in high-tech space technology. They also have high priorities in areas like visa and immigration policies, because this would allow increase in trade and personal travel. The horizontal agreement in civil aviation has been signed.

Human rights was a highly visible item of the meeting, focusing especially on the Christian minority. Obviously the EU saw with satisfaction that the central government confirmed the secular nature of the country and acted on these events. The EU would now like to see local

responses to the government's policies. The EU-India dialogue on human rights will take place during the second half of December in Delhi.

## 2) Global challenges

### a) *Financial crisis*

The EU called on India to contribute actively to the conference on 15 November in Washington to review the world financial system. The Prime Minister expressed concerns on the crisis's inevitable repercussions on India's economic growth, so there was a commitment to contribute to the revision of the financial system.

### b) *Climate change*

Industrialised countries are ready to take their share of responsibilities in order to solve the problem, but that would not exonerate India from its international obligations. Common responsibilities were also discussed, but views were differentiated. There was an agreement to ensure the Poznan conference in December is a success. The leaders aim at an ambitious global agreement, and in parallel, adopt a working program in energy and climate change.

### c) *World food crisis*

The EU expressed its determination to do all in its power to address the world food crisis, and made a reference to the planned EU Food Facility. Prime Minister Singh confirmed India's commitment to support all measures to alleviate the situation, including an increase of the resources available for the World Food programme, and the reactivation of agricultural sector investments in India.

### d) *Representation of India and a permanent seat on the Security Council*

The EU does not have a common position, and could only note the ongoing request.

## 3) Regional Questions

(i) Afghanistan: The two sides agreed to have regular exchanges of view at technical level.

(ii) Burma: The EU wishes to support and provide help to the population. India felt it needed to retain a relatively normal relationship with Burma due to the presence of refugees, which will otherwise create difficulties.

(iii) Iran: The EU wishes India to actively look for a solution. Both sides have a similar position, particularly on the nuclear issue.

Mr DEMENT from the Council then took the floor. He stressed that India is and remains an EU's strategic partner, but from their perspective, the political side of the partnership is not running at its full capacity, and they would very much like to see a new impulsion given in this direction. The Council looks forward to welcoming the new Indian Ambassador who will present his credentials at the next General Affairs Council in Brussels, and it is also an occasion to make full potential and use of the strategic partnership.

Mr GHOSH from the Indian embassy could not confirm the presence of the Prime Minister at the G20 summit on 15 November in Washington, but assured that there will be participation at the cabinet level.

Mrs TICAU expressed her concerns about the bombing events in Assam. With regards to the EU-India Summit, she wished to receive more information on transport and IT, especially on

the aviation agreement between EU and India. She also thanked NASSCOM for organizing a seminar on data protection. She would also like to know more about the internet governance event which will be held in India at the beginning of December.

Mrs MCGUINESS requested more information on agriculture with respect to increasing investment, and Research & Development. She also inquired on the talks with India regarding WTO negotiations.

Mrs GILL expressed concern about the problem of the strategic partnership not running at its full capacity, and questioned if there had been suggestions at the summit for improvements. This should be given greater priority, so both sides can achieve the many ambitions outlined in the strategic partnership. Moreover, the Chair inquired after the new joint education and cultural dialogue at the end of November. More information on the maritime agreement was also wanted, as it was a key area that the delegation would like to push forward. Human rights was also touched upon, and the Chair would like to know what assurances the Commission has received from their counterparts.

Mr REMOND agreed to provide more information on air transport to the Members. The mechanism of the horizontal agreement in civil aviation has been signed, and will enter into force once the bilateral agreements have been concluded. With regards to the maritime agreement, not much progress has been made since the last meeting. It was only raised in the summit in the context of the free trade agreement. There will be further negotiating sessions between now and the end of the year.

The summit also looked into topical matters, such as violence concerning Christian minority. The Prime Minister referred to what had happened as a national shame at both the summit and the press conference, and stated he would do anything possible, apart from sending troops. They are also going to try and ensure the local authorities would guarantee the non-religious nature of the division. There are regular meetings on human rights in Delhi, such as the one in the first half of December, and that would give the Commission an opportunity to have a closer look on the current situation. Although child labour was not discussed in the summit, the issue was touched upon informally. However, an agreement could not be reached. Nevertheless, within the framework of the revised action plan, child labour will come in within the concept of decent work.

The Commission hopes that the WTO talks are in a reanimation phase, and the last meeting at the end of September paved way for progress. The financial crisis does not imply that the WTO Doha Development Agenda talks will resume. The European Commission is ready to act as mediator again, but as it is mainly the position between India and the US, the Commission can only be a go-between.

The Commission is favourable to E-Governance, which makes things more transparent and government more accountable. This would lead to better governance, which is a main tool to eradicate poverty. The European Business and Technology Centre is an organisation set up in Delhi with EC funding that tries to use technology for eradication of poverty through e-governance, climate change, and anything that can use technology.

In the summit, both sides expressed willingness to cooperate further in education and culture. Current cooperation ranges from support for universal primary education to exchanges under the Erasmus Mundus programme at tertiary education level. Considerable exchanges on policy issues are taking place at the highest level. Both sides are keen on formalizing these exchanges

into a more formal dialogue. Commissioner Figel will visit India for discussions with his ministerial counterpart this month. In the field of education, some areas have been identified and discussed. While these have to be developed further, areas such as vocational training, technical education, mutual recognition of qualifications and general modernisation of higher education could not be covered. In the area of culture, they intend to build on the joint declaration made in 2005 at the Summit on Cultural Cooperation, and basically work at the implementation of the UNESCO convention on cultural diversity.

Ms DE VITS raised the issue of involvement of the civil society in the FTA negotiations. She also questioned about the current situation and if there had been an exchange with the economic & social committee before these happened.

Mrs GILL suggested more information on the new European Business and Technology Centre should be provided, such as when it was launched, who is going to be running it, and what services they would provide. She also asked if the Commission could circulate the revised Joint Action Plan.

Mr REMOND indicated that the civil society is always involved when policies are being developed. For instance, during the preparation for the Summit, the civil society was involved in the roundtable via the EESC representative. The contract for the European Business and Technology Centre was signed on the 11 September in Delhi with the EUROCHAMBRES, who are currently setting this up, and finding premises and partners. EUROCHAMBRES informed the Commission that all the structure will be in place by the end of this year or beginning of next year. A large number of European institutions are also participating in the operation. The centre will work closely with the Chambers of Commerce of Member States, so there will not be any conflict in terms of structures. The centre's current activity will focus mainly on energy, environment, transport and bio-technology. These are the areas that we can help to develop the Indian market. Although it is currently located in Delhi, the intention is to have other centres set up in other key cities.

Ms DE VITS clarified her question, and asked if there has been progress on the Indian side, with regards to civil society.

Ms Madisha from the EESC explained that the EESC discussed climate change and FTA at its last roundtable meeting. On their next agenda, they will discuss education and culture. A meeting with both the European Commission and the MEA from the Indian side took place in Delhi. The key stakeholders from the civil society were also involved, particularly on education and culture. A lot of the civil society stakeholders are involved in the education fair that the Commission is holding next week. Ms Madisha will also be a speaker, which implies that there will be representation from the civil society on the European side, and participation of European Universities and Indian Universities. Meanwhile, EESC can also help the FTA negotiations by bringing civil society contacts and links on it. They would like to develop those links further, especially in areas like education and culture. The next goal is to set up small working groups between Europe and India, and support both the MEA and the European Commission on education.

##### 5. Report of the Bureau's visit to Delhi, 11-14 August 2008

A report has been circulated to Members. Unfortunately the visit had to be postponed from July to August, so other Members of the bureau were unable to participate. However, the Chair did have a useful meeting with the Ministry of External affairs and the Chair of the nearly

established parliamentary friendship group. There is no formal supportive structure in India for these friendship groups, so it is not clear whether the friendship group from India could come to Brussels or Strasbourg. The Chair would like Mr Ghosh to give some more information as to how that issue is developing. According to her knowledge, they are suggesting the Parliament delegation to visit around the 10-11 December, which is when the next Indian Parliament is likely to be in session. Mr Ghosh is invited to comment on this. Since it is a group week, special permission will be required for the Delegation to travel to India.

Mr GHOSH thanked the Chair's concern on the bombing explosions. There have been many violent incidents in the north-eastern part of the country, but this is the first time of serial bombing of such scale. According to him, it is clear now that there are links growing between tribal extremist groups and the Islamic groups across the border.

With regards to the visit, it will be difficult for the Indian Parliament to visit the European Parliament either in Brussels or Strasbourg. There was an invitation from the President of the Parliament to the speaker of Lok Sabha, and the response was that it will be difficult at this point of time. The next sitting of Parliament of Lok Sabha will be from the 10 December, and they do not know how long it will proceed. At least 9 to 10 days are expected. The only window that the Indian side could offer is 10-12 December.

Mr. BUSHILL-MATTHEWS does not support the idea of going during the suggested period, because there is a number of key votes in the Strasbourg plenary the week after, thus it will be important to attend the meetings of the political groups. Moreover, it is only 5 weeks away. The delegation may not have enough time to prepare for it.

Mrs GILL noticed that it is a difficult situation as there might not be other alternatives for a meeting to take place before the end of this legislature. The Chair requested the Indian side to provide written confirmation that the visit would be suitable, and detailed arrangements, in order to inform Members, and get permission from the Conference of Presidents.

#### 6. Any other business

The EP High Level group for Equality and Diversity has decided that it would be appropriate to address the question of gender mainstreaming in the activities of the delegations as it is already the case with Committees. They have asked the delegation to put forward a name that will represent the delegation in this network. This will be done via email.

#### 7. Date and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Delegation will be decided once the details of the visit to India are known.

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The meeting closed at 18h30.

**DELTAGERLISTE/ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KATAΣΤΑΣΗ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/LIITE RECORD  
OF ATTENDANCE/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/LISTE DE PRESENCE/ELENCO DEI  
PRESENTI/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA**

Til stede	Formandskabet/Vorstand/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Ufficio di Presidenza/Mesa/Puhemiehistö/J.L. Presidium: (*)
Anwesend	GILL (P)
Παρόντες	Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Μέλη/Members/Diputados/Deputés/Deputati/Leden/Deputados/Jäsenet/Ledamöter: Philip Bushill-Matthews Panayiotis; Mia De Vits; Harald Ettl; Mairead McGuinness; Silvia-Adriana Ţicău;
Present	Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/?ναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suplentes/Suppléants/ Membri supplenti/Plaatsvervangers/Membros suplentes/Varajäsenet/Suppleanter: Jean Marie Beaupuy; James Nicholson
Presentes	
Présents	
Presenti	
Aanwezig	
Lasna	
Närvarande	
Art. 178,2	
Art. 183,3	
Endv. Deltog/Weitere Teiln./ Συμμετείχαν επίσης/Also present Participaron igualmente/ Participaient également/ Hanno partecipato altresì/ Andere deelnemers/ Outros participantes/ Muut osallistujat/ Dessutom deltog	
(Dagsorden/Tagesordnung Pkt/Ημερήσια Διάταξη Σημεί/Point OJ/Punto OG/Agenda Punt/Ordem do dia Punto/punto orden del dia/Esityslist Kohta/ Föredragningslista punkt):	

- \* (P) = Formand/Vorsitzender/Πρόεδρος/Chairman/President/Presidente/Voorzitter/Presidente/Puhemies/Ordförande  
(VP) = Næstform./Stellv. Vorsitz./?ντιπρόεδρος/Vice-Chairman/Vice-President/Vicepresidente/VarapuhemiesOndervoorz./  
Vice-Pres./Vicepres/Vice ordförande.

Til stede den/Anwesend am/Παρόν στις/Present on/Present le/Presente il/Aanwezig op/Presente em/Presenteel/Läsna/Närvarande den.

Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung d. Vorsitzenden/Με πρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chairman/Por invitacion del presidente/Sur l'invitation du président/Su invito del presidente/Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/A convite do presidente/Puhemiehen kutsusta/På ordförandens inbjudan:

Rådet/Rat/Συμβούλιο/Council/Consejo/Conseil/Consiglio/Raad/Conselho/Neuvosto/Rådet: (\*)

DEMENT, MCSWINEY

Kommissionen/Kommission/Επιτροπή/Commission/Comision/Commissione/Commissie/Comissão/Komissio/Kommissionen: (\*)

REMOND, WILINSON, CHAIBI; STICHELMANS

Cour des comptes:

C.E.S.:

<p>Andre deltagere/Andere Teilnehmer Επίσης Παρόντες/Also present Otros participantes/Autres participants/Altri partecipanti Andere aanwezigen/Outros participantes Muut osallistajat/Övriga deltagare</p>		<p>Embassad'Inde: GHOSH; WEISERT (HILL &amp; KNOWLTON); BARABESI; FAUTRE; (HRWF) FORD (INTASEL)</p>
<p>Gruppernes sekretariat Sekretariat der Fraktionen Γραμματεία των Πολ. Ομάδων Secretariat political groups Secr. De los grupos políticos Secr. Groupes politiques Segr. Dei gruppi politici Secr. Van de fracties Secr. Dos grupos políticos Puolueryhmien sihteeristö Gruppernas sekretariat</p>	<p>PPE-DE PSE ALDE Verts/ALE GUE/NGL IND/DEM UEN NI ITS</p>	<p>CARTER DE CESARE, MARZULLO</p>
<p>Cab. Du Président</p>		
<p>Cab. Du Secrétaire Général</p>		
<p>Generaldirektorat Generaldirektion Γενική Διεύθυνση Directorate-General Dirección general Direction générale Direzione generale Directoraat-generaal Direcção geral Contrôle financier Service juridique Pääosasto Generaldirektorat</p>	<p>I II III IV V VI VII</p>	<p>SUBHAN; OPACIC</p>
<p>Udvalgssekretariatet Ausschubsekretariat Γραμματεία επιτροπής Committee secretariat Secretaria de la comisión Secrétariat de la commission Segretariato della commissione Commissiesecretariaat Secretaria de comissão Valiokunnan sihteeristö Utskottssekretariatet</p>		<p>NUTTIN</p>
<p>Assist./Βοηθός</p>		<p>AZPIRI LEJARDI</p>

\* (P) = Formand/Pres./Πρόεδρος/Chairman/President/Voorzitter/Puhemies/Ordförande

(VP) = Næstform./Vize-Pres./?ντιπρόεδρος/Vice-Chairman/Vice-President/Ondervoorz./Vice-pres/Varapuhemies/Vice ordförande.

(M) = Medlem./Mitglied/Μέλος/Member/Miembro/Membre/Membro/Lid/Membro/Jasen/Ledamot

(F) = Tjenestemand/Beamter/Υπάλληλος/Official/Funcionario/Fonctionnaire/Funzionario/Ambtenaar/Functionario/Virkamies/Tjänsteman