

Speaking Version

3<sup>rd</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Statement by H.E. Mr. Jayant Sinha, Hon'ble Minister for State for Finance, Government  
of India

Plenary Meeting, July 15, 2015

Mr. President,

It is a distinct honor for me to participate in this landmark Conference.

Allow me first and foremost, to thank the Government and people of Ethiopia for graciously hosting this landmark Conference in the beautiful city of Addis Ababa.

As the first Conference on Financing for Development to be held on the soil of Africa, this Conference is imbued with historic symbolism.

As we renew our faith in multilateralism to chart a collective path towards making poverty a history and achieving shared prosperity for all, there could be no better venue than Africa-the cradle of humankind and the torchbearer for the future.

In the interest of time, my full statement is being distributed.

Mr. President,

Apart from the historic symbolism of its venue, this Conference also comes at an opportune time.

We are at the cusp of a generational change when it comes to development policy and international development cooperation.

The global development agenda under the SDGs is expected to make a change from quick fixes to long term solutions, from limited interventions to broad-based programs and from symptoms to root causes.

The proposed SDGs have a good mix of ambition, scope and depth.

The raison d'etre of the FfD process - of ensuring enhanced and predictable flows of finance and resources to assist developing countries in pursuing their development priorities - is even more relevant today, 13 years after Monterrey.

Mr. President,

The world has seen remarkable progress in the period since the first Financing for Development Conference in Monterrey. Yet, some realities unfortunately have not changed.

Poverty remains the greatest global challenge and a collective blot for humanity.

The needs and priorities of more than a billion of the most destitute must remain the centre of our attention. To be successful, this Conference must make a meaningful contribution to their lives as soon as possible.

**Mr. President,**

Our record of action since Monterrey has been mixed.

We can and must do better.

Our vision here in Addis Ababa must be to go beyond merely 'financing for development' and aim at 'making development happen'.

Our ultimate aim must be a world in which developing countries can generate the resources they need themselves.

To do this **Mr. President**, we must recognize that sustained economic growth is the surest solution to development.

**Mr. President,**

The falling or stagnating levels of aid are a matter of concern, particularly as the world commits to an ambitious Post-2015 Development Agenda. We need to urgently scale up the delivery of aid from developed countries to where it is most needed, with special attention to the Least Developed Countries.

Increased public support to climate change must be new, predictable and additional and not at the cost of assistance to the poorest developing countries and to social sectors like health and education.

On its part, India is fully committed to increasing its support to other developing countries in the spirit of solidarity that underpins South-South Cooperation.

**Mr. President,**

The reform of the international financial system to make it more democratic and representative and more responsive to the needs and interests of developing countries must be pursued with greater vigor.

Policy coherence must mean that our actions must be balanced across the economic, social and environmental dimensions, not exclusively focused on one of them.

Policy coherence also has a geo-spatial dimension, whereby developing countries must have the requisite policy space to pursue their development objectives even as developed countries take the visible lead in addressing climate change and environmental concerns.

**Mr. President,**

We are happy that the outcome document of this Conference has reaffirmed the Rio principles on Environment and Development in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Anchoring as it does a development agenda that is universal in scope and differentiated in action, this principle remains a vital underpinning for international cooperation in the post-2015 period.

**Mr. President,**

In anchoring a 'dedicated yet integrated' mechanism for the follow-up and review of Financing for Development outcomes and the means of implementation commitments of the SDGs, this Conference is making a welcome new advance.

We have long maintained that technology cooperation should be seen as a win-win proposition. We are also happy therefore that in this Conference, we are taking a decision to establish a Technology Facilitation Mechanism to enhance technology cooperation for the achievement of the SDGs.

**Mr. President,**

We are deeply disappointed however that the spirit of multilateralism and universality did not go far enough when it came to global discussions on key issues like taxation.

In today's interconnected world, tax policy is a global public good, having ramifications far beyond national borders.

Greater information exchange is good, but not a substitute for genuine and equitable multilateralism in deciding global norms and standards on taxation.

If this is truly a universal agenda, then all of us must have an equal seat at the table to legislate on global issues.

The lack of an ambitious decision on upgrading the UN Committee of Experts on international cooperation on tax matters into an intergovernmental body, in our view, is a historic missed opportunity.

**Mr. President,**

India's unique development model has made the country one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

The combination of a large market driven economy with state driven investment in public goods such as education, health and basic infrastructure largely through domestic resources, has given India a stable and sustainable model of growth. While there remain many challenges, India's development model - a combination of a liberal democracy and an open market economy - will hopefully be a beacon of hope for other poor countries.

**Mr. President,**

Major economic priorities for our Government are fiscal federalism, universal social security, higher agricultural productivity, investment in public infrastructure, and the "*Make in India*" program. We have also launched an ambitious *Skill India* programme to impart the necessary skills to the Indian youth to meet the needs for a rapidly growing and industrializing economy.

*Financial Inclusion* another priority for the Indian Government. Under *Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)* - a National Mission on Financial Inclusion, a record number of over 160 million new bank accounts have been opened in less than a year's time.

**Mr President,**

On July 1<sup>st</sup> this year, Prime Minister Modi launched an ambitious '*Digital India*' project which aims to create a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.

Government's recent initiative of *Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)* proposes to further boost our vibrant entrepreneurial eco-system. Our innovations are producing wave after wave of innovations that will benefit India and the world.

**Mr. President,**

The developmental vision endorsed by the international community under the SDGs is remarkably similar to the one articulated by the Indian Government under Prime Minister Modi.

In fact, one can easily find parallels for almost each of the SDGs in one or more initiatives for development taken by the new Indian government.

This is not merely a happy coincidence, it is a necessary one.

India's efforts in eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development will be an important contribution to our collective success. The world can count on India and we also look forward to the support of the international community for assisting the endeavors of India and other developing countries.

**Mr President,**

Today, we have an opportunity to define the future of not just our countries but the world at large.

Coming from the largest democracy in the World, the philosophy that animates us in India is that of '*Antyodaya*' or the up-liftment of the poorest of the poor.

We hope that the same vision - of ensuring the welfare and prosperity of those at the bottom of the pyramid - will continue to inspire all of us in fulfilling the commitments we are making in this Conference.

I thank you.

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