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# Opening Remarks by Gen. (Dr) V K Singh (Retd.), Minister of State for External Affairs at the 15th ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Manila (August 06, 2017)

August 06, 2017

Your Excellency Pham Binh Minh, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam;

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. It is my privilege to be participating in this Special ASEAN India Foreign Ministers Meeting. I compliment Philippines for the excellent arrangements and hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I look forward to attending the Grand ceremony on 8th August to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Bangkok Declaration which gave rise to ASEAN.
2. During these 50 years, ASEAN had put behind it many of the post-decolonization debates of this region. It navigated the Cold War very adeptly to usher in an era of high economic growth that served as a model to others. Weathering the impact of the Asian financial crisis in 1997, it then went on to expand its footprint through the East Asia Summit process.
3. From the Indian perspective, ASEAN occupies a central place in the security architecture of the Asia-Pacific region. It is our view that precisely because ASEAN represents the cultural, commercial and physical cross-roads of the region, it has a unique ability to reflect and harmonize larger interests of the world beyond it.
4. Philippines, as Chair, is ably stewarding the golden jubilee celebrations with the overall theme of "Partnering for Change, Engaging the World". In consonance, the theme of our silver jubilee celebrations, which commenced earlier this year, "Shared Values, Common Destiny," is an acknowledgment of our shared socio-cultural, economic and political destiny.
5. On our 25th anniversary, the flower of our relationship, which spans thirty dialogue mechanisms including an annual summit and seven ministerial dialogues, is in full blossom, with the strategic, political, economic and cultural petals aglow.
6. This bloom is being celebrated through a broad range of governmental, business, diaspora, cultural and civil society interactions in India as also in ASEAN nations which would culminate in a special ASEAN India

Commemorative Summit. This Summit would be an affirmation of our shared quest for prosperity, stability and security.

Thank you.



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