



## Joint statement on the second meeting of the EU-India Trade and Technology Council

Brussels, 28 February 2025

The second meeting of the EU-India Trade and Technology Council (TTC) took place in New Delhi on 28 February 2025. Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy Henna **Virkkunen**, Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security, Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency Maros **Šefčovič** and Commissioner for Startups, Research and Innovation Ekaterina **Zaharieva** co-chaired on the EU side. It was co-chaired on the Indian side by India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar; Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal; and Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw.

European Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had established the EU-India TTC in April 2022 as a key bilateral platform to address challenges at the confluence of trade, trusted technology and security. The European Union and India, as two large and vibrant democracies with open market economies, shared values and pluralistic societies, are natural partners in a multipolar world.

The deepening of bilateral relations and the growing strategic convergence between the EU and India respond to the shifting dynamics of the global geopolitical landscape and a common interest in promoting global stability, economic security, and sustainable and inclusive growth. In that respect, both sides emphasized again the importance of the rules-based international order and the full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, transparency, and peaceful resolution of disputes. The TTC reflects a shared acknowledgement between the EU and India of the increasingly critical links between trade and technology, the potential of cooperation on these issues to enhance the economies of both partners, and the need to work together on the related security challenges. Both sides note the potential of their partnership to increase resilience, strengthen connectivity and drive forward the development of green and clean technologies.

The first meeting of the EU-India TTC was held in Brussels on 16 May 2023. The TTC Ministerial Meeting provided political guidance for the way forward. Subsequently on 24 November 2023, a stock-taking meeting in virtual mode reviewed the progress made by the three TTC working groups.

### **Working Group 1 on Strategic Technologies, Digital Governance, and Digital Connectivity**

The European Union and India reaffirmed the importance of deepening their digital cooperation in line with their shared values through the Working Group 1 on Strategic Technologies, Digital Governance, and Digital Connectivity. Both sides committed to leverage their respective strengths to accelerate a human-centric digital transformation and the development of advanced and trustworthy digital technologies such as AI, semiconductors, High-Performance Computing and 6G, which will benefit both economies and societies. Both sides committed to work jointly to strengthen EU-India research and innovation for this purpose to further enhance competitiveness, while increasing their economic security. Both sides committed to promoting global connectivity in a cyber-secure digital ecosystem.

Recognizing the importance of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for the development of open and inclusive digital economies and digital societies, the European Union and India agreed to collaborate on working towards interoperability of their respective DPIs that respect human rights and protect personal data, privacy, and intellectual property rights. Both sides further committed to jointly promote DPIs solutions to third countries and further emphasized the need of mutual recognition of e-signatures to enhance cross-border digital transactions and foster mutual economic growth.

Both sides emphasized their commitment to further strengthen the resilience of semiconductor supply chains and promote collaboration in the field of semiconductors. To that end, they agreed to explore joint R&D in the field of chip design, heterogeneous integration, sustainable semiconductor

technologies, technology development for advanced processes for process design kit (PDK), among others. Both sides shall promote the strengthening of the EU and Indian semiconductor ecosystems to enhance technological capabilities and ensure supply chain resilience by developing sustainable, secure and diversified semiconductor production capacities. Furthermore, they committed to developing a dedicated programme that will facilitate talent exchanges and foster semiconductor skills among students and young professionals.

The two sides reiterated their commitment to safe, secure, trustworthy, human-centric, sustainable and responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) and to promote this vision on the international level. In addition, with a view to ensuring continued and impactful cooperation on AI, the European AI Office and India AI Mission agreed to deepen cooperation, encouraging an ecosystem of innovation and fostering information exchange on common open research questions for developing trustworthy AI. They also agreed to enhance cooperation on large language models, and to harness the potential of AI for human development and common good, including through joint projects such as developing tools and frameworks for ethical and responsible AI. These will build on the progress made under R&D collaboration on high-performance computing applications in the areas of natural hazards, climate change, and bioinformatics.

The EU and India welcomed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Bharat 6G Alliance and the EU 6G Smart Networks and Services Industry Association for aligning research and development priorities and creating secured and trusted telecommunications and resilient supply chains. Both sides will also enhance cooperation on IT and telecoms standardisation with a particular focus on promoting interoperable global standards.

Furthermore, the two sides agreed to work towards bridging the digital skills gap, explore mutual recognition of certifications, and promote legal pathways of skilled professionals and exchange of talent.

Both sides agreed to collaborate on the implementation of the Global Digital Compact, agreed by consensus at the UN General Assembly in September 2024, as a key instrument for delivering on their shared objectives. They noted the need to ensure that the forthcoming World Summit on Information Society +20 maintains global support for and enhances the multi-stakeholder model of Internet governance.

### **Working Group 2 on Clean and Green Technologies**

The European Union and India recalled the importance of the priority workstreams identified under Working Group 2 on Clean and Green Technologies for achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and 2070 for the European Union and India, respectively.\* Achieving these targets will require significant investment in new clean technologies and standards. An emphasis on research and innovation (R&I) will foster technological collaboration and exchange of best practices between the EU and India. In parallel, supporting technological innovations for market uptake will enhance access to the respective markets by EU and Indian enterprises and facilitate wide adoption of innovative technologies. This opens perspectives for cooperation between EU and Indian incubators, SMEs and start-ups and building human resource capability and capacity in such technologies.

In this regard, both sides agreed on joint research cooperation through exceptional coordinated calls on recycling of batteries for electric vehicles (EVs), marine plastic litter, and waste-to-hydrogen. The estimated total joint budget will be about EUR 60 million from the Horizon Europe programme and from matching Indian contributions. On recycling of batteries for EVs, the focus will be on battery circularity through different kinds of flexible/low cost/easy to recycle batteries. In marine plastic litter, the focus will be on developing technologies for detection, measurement and analysis of aquatic litter and for mitigation of the cumulative impact of pollution on the marine environment. On waste-to-hydrogen, the focus will be on developing technologies with greater efficiency to produce hydrogen from biogenic wastes.

The two sides recalled the importance of the substantive exchanges between experts in the identified areas of cooperation as the basis for future action. Indian experts have participated in a training and mutual learning exercise on EV interoperability and Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) at the Joint Research Centre (JRC) E-Mobility Lab in Ispra, Italy in January 2024. Furthermore, a joint hybrid workshop on EV Charging Technologies (Standardisation and Testing) was organised at the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), Pune, India and online, to deepen the EU-Indian dialogue and the industry's engagement in charging infrastructure standardisation processes with

India. The two sides also concluded a Matchmaking Event to identify, support and organise exchanges between EU and Indian startups in technology for recycling of batteries for EVs. Experts also jointly discussed assessment and monitoring tools for marine plastic litter. Finally, an "Ideathon" fostering EU-India collaboration to co-create practical solutions involving all stakeholders for addressing marine plastic pollution effectively is in preparation.

Both sides agreed to explore cooperation on harmonising standards for EV charging infrastructure, including cooperative, pre-normative research for harmonised testing solutions and knowledge exchange in the domain of e-mobility. They also agreed to explore how to enhance collaboration in the field of hydrogen-related safety standards, the science of standards as well as the market uptake of wastewater treatment technologies as outcomes of previous jointly conducted research projects.

### **Working Group 3 on Trade, Investment and Resilient Value Chains**

The European Union and India noted productive discussions under Working Group 3 on Trade, Investment and Resilient Value Chains with a view to building a closer economic partnership between the European Union and India. In an increasingly challenging geopolitical context, both sides committed to work together for creating wealth and shared prosperity. The work under Working Group 3 complements the ongoing negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), an Investment Protection Agreement (IPA) and a Geographical Indications Agreement which are proceeding on separate tracks.

Both sides committed to fostering resilient and future-ready value chains by prioritizing transparency, predictability, diversification, security and sustainability. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the progress made on Agri-food, Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) and Clean Technologies sectors and agreed on work plans in these three fields with the aim of promoting value chains that can withstand global challenges.

In agriculture, the EU and India intend to collaborate on contingency planning for food security and welcomed common efforts on shared research and innovations needs regarding climate-resilient practices, crop diversification and infrastructure improvements as promoted for cooperation through the G20 framework. In the pharmaceutical sector, both sides aim to enhance transparency and security in Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) supply chains by mapping vulnerabilities, promoting sustainable manufacturing, and establishing early warning systems to prevent disruptions. Clean technology cooperation centers on strengthening supply chains for solar energy, offshore wind, and clean hydrogen by exchanging information on sectoral capabilities and investment incentives and Research, Development and Innovation priorities as well as on methodologies to assess vulnerabilities, discussing approaches to minimize trade barriers and exploring possible synergies of the supply chains. Across these sectors, the EU and India are working to foster investment, exchange best practices, and mitigate risks through regular dialogues, research collaborations, and business-to-business engagements, ensuring supply chain resilience and sustainable economic growth.

Both sides acknowledged that relevant priority market access issues are being addressed through cooperation within the TTC framework. The EU side appreciated the Indian initiatives to approve the marketing of several EU plant products while the Indian side appreciated the listing of a number of Indian aquaculture establishments and taking up the issue of equivalence for agricultural organic products. Both sides agreed to pursue their efforts on these topics, under the TTC review mechanism, and to continue their engagement on remaining issues flagged by each other.

The two sides noted the exchanges regarding best practices in the screening of Foreign Direct Investments, which is an area of growing importance to foster economic security.

The EU and India strengthened their commitment towards the multilateral trading system as an anchor in the current challenging geopolitical context. At the same time, they recognized the need to bring necessary reform to the WTO so that it is able to address efficiently and effectively issues of interest to Members. Both sides also recognized the importance of a functioning dispute settlement system. For this purpose, they agreed to deepen their dialogue and engagement to help the WTO deliver concrete outcomes, including at MC14.

Both sides have held in-depth discussions on trade and decarbonization through several bilateral channels and have engaged jointly with stakeholders, especially on the implementation of the EU's carbon border mechanism (CBAM). Both sides discussed the challenges arising out of CBAM implementation, in particular for the small and medium enterprises and agreed to continue addressing them.

The co-chairs reaffirmed their commitment to expanding and deepening their engagement under the TTC and to working together to fulfill the goals laid out in this successful second meeting of the TTC. They agreed to meet again for the third meeting of TTC within one year from now.

*\*Updated on 4 March 2025 at 11:45 CET.*

STATEMENT/25/643