

विदेश मंत्री
भारत



Minister of External Affairs
India

सुषमा स्वराज
Sushma Swaraj



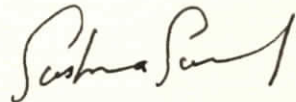
MESSAGE

I am happy to note that the Secretariat of BIMSTEC is celebrating the BIMSTEC Day on 6th June 2016 to commemorate the successful completion of 19 years of the formation of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, which was set up to foster socio-economic cooperation among 7 Member Countries in the Bay of Bengal region. My heartiest congratulations to the current Chair viz. Government of Nepal and to Mr. Sumith Nakandala, Secretary General of BIMSTEC.

The BIMSTEC region brings together 1.5 billion people-22% of the world population and a combined GDP of over US \$ 2.5 trillion. BIMSTEC constitutes a bridge between South and South-East Asia with five Members from South Asia and two from South-East Asia. Since its inception in 1997, BIMSTEC has been growing steadily and has metamorphosed from a declaratory to an implementation phase. It has accelerated the momentum for greater people-to-people contacts and trade and economic relations in the region. There have been several important achievements over these years, but much more remains to be done, given the enormous potential for cooperation in this region.

India, as the largest country in the region, has an asymmetric and non-reciprocal commitment to BIMSTEC. We have excellent relations with all countries in this grouping and look forward to deepening our social, economic and political ties with them through the auspices of BIMSTEC. We shall continue to contribute to the progress of BIMSTEC with the objective of enabling the organization to become more effective and result-oriented, and to meet the expectations of the people of this region.

I wish BIMSTEC all success in its future endeavours.


Sushma Swaraj