

Beat: Arts

INAUGURATION OF INDIA-PALESTINE DIGITAL LEARNING AND INNOVATION CENTRE

REMARKS BY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

PARIS - NEW DELHI - PALESTINE, 21.01.2016, 10:28 Time

USPA NEWS - Remarks by External Affairs Minister at inauguration of India-Palestine Digital Learning and Innovation Centre on January 17, 2016.

Below the full statement :

President of the Al Quds University,
Dr. Imad Abu Kisk
Deputy Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tayser Jaradat,...

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President of the Al Quds University,
Dr. Imad Abu Kisk
Deputy Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tayser Jaradat,
Members of the Faculty and the academic community,
Distinguished guests,

Salam Alekum ! Namaste !

I thank the President of the Al-Quds University for his generous words for India and for me.

We value your kind words as a sign of friendship and regard of the people of Palestine for India.

I am very happy to inaugurate the India-Palestine Digital Learning and Innovation Centre today. This is yet another example of India's commitment to help its brothers and sisters in Palestine.

Friends, I am coming here after fruitful discussions with President Abbas and Foreign Minister Riyad Al Malki on a wide range of bilateral, multilateral and regional issues.

In my meetings, I was happy to see that we have shared views on issues and there is great warmth in our friendship.

We also discussed India's capacity building assistance to the people of Palestine of which this Center is a shining example.

Let me thank Al Quds University for establishing this Centre of Excellence.

You are playing an important role in fostering India-Palestine relations through initiatives like this.

I would also like to thank the University for its gesture of conferring Honorary Doctorate on President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee recently.

I am also very happy to note the University will soon host an Indian Studies Chair and that it has institutionalized academic and

research cooperation with the prestigious Jamia Millia Islamia University of India.

The University's efforts in strengthening India-Palestine partnership in the field of IT are also commendable.

India's strengths in IT and IT-enabled services could immensely benefit the Palestinian economy and society.

We are ready to assist Palestine in IT, as well as other sectors, as much as we can.

On the lines of this Centre at Al-Quds University, we are committed to build another Centre for Excellence in ICT and Innovation in Gaza city.

We are also developing a Techno-Park in Ramallah. President Abbas views the Techno-Park as a transformative project. I am aware that Al Quds University intends to contribute in developing the Techno-Park. I welcome your offer.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is my first visit abroad in 2016 and Palestine is my first destination. This in itself reflects the importance Palestine holds for India.

The fact that my visit is taking place shortly after the visit of President of India to Palestine in October 2015, also reflects our keen interest in further deepening the very rich and historic relationship that we have with Palestine.

India's solidarity with the Palestinian people and its principled support to the Palestinian cause is rooted in our own freedom struggle.

Over the years our approach to Palestine has crystallized into a policy with three core dimensions:

- solidarity with the Palestinian people;
- support to the Palestinian cause; and
- support to Palestine's nation building and capacity building efforts.

The entire Indian political leadership remains steadfastly committed to these policies.

We have also started to put in motion the framework suggested by our President for the future of our partnership during his visit.

Accordingly, we are working for closer political interaction and deeper economic engagement with Palestine.

We are also looking at ways and means to further increase academic collaboration between India and Palestine.

It is also important that we further intensify our cultural contacts and people-to-people exchanges, which are the bedrock of our relationship. Over the years hundreds of Palestinian students have studied in the best of Indian institutions. We must harness their experience in furthering our friendship.

Friends,

Let me end by reiterating that India's empathy with the Palestinian cause and our friendship with the Palestinian people remain undiluted.

This is an integral part of our foreign policy.

We will also continue to support the developmental aspirations of the Palestinian people by all possible means at our disposal.

Thank you.

Source : Indian Ministry of External Affairs

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Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-7010/inauguration-of-india-palestine-digital-learning-and-innovation-centre.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Ruby BIRD (Journalist/photographer/Director)

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619