



November 21, 2010

Bratislava

India appreciates effort of the Forum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and thanks for the preparation of the second draft. India also highly appreciates consideration and incorporation of some observations of India to the new version of the final document.

After detailed study of the second draft, India would like to express the following comments:

### 1. Global English as Lingua Franca

India is in agreement with the suggestion of the Forum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century to develop a unitarian functional system of the English language, also referred to as Global English, being used as lingua franca for the global communication and to create a commission formed by native English speaking professionals from the academic field as the main platform.

India appreciates Forum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century has implemented proposal of India that such commission should be supported by representatives of each country, in order to bring their view and their meaning for the terminology of Global English, along with the representatives of institutions, with the aim to set an internationally comprehensive terminology that would express the same meaning in all languages. India also appreciates and respects the willingness of UNESCO to participate by offering its know-how, scientific and cultural researchers and institutions.

India considers reasonable to create a special body which will supervise activities and all accomplishments of the commission.

As far as the functioning of this commission is concerned **India does not agree** that it should be financed by devoting of 1% of GDP of each participating country to the commission's budget. India finds such contribution inefficient and overestimated.

As the objective is to enhance and facilitate the communication among professionals, representatives of international organizations and representatives of the nation on international level, their education will be crucial, so India suggests Global English should be part of education only at schools specialized on educating these representatives of nation and





international organizations. In this respect materials for a system of learning English should not be available free of charge, but these special schools should buy them on their own.

Under these circumstances *India suggests devoting 0.3 % of GDP* of each participating country to the commission's budget. Next, each country should devote to its schools another part of money under own consideration in order to enable them to educate Global English.

## 2. Secularization and Harmonization of Religious Differences

India accepts the ideas of respecting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and will promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities. India undertakes to minimize the risks of clashes among people of different religions and avoid demonstrations of communal bigotry in the society. In this respect India favours establishing a system of bilateral and multilateral agreements between different religious associations.

India stipulates that the recommendations of the Forum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be put into practice in India in the form of legally binding guidelines, in order to ensure secularization in the sense of equal protection to all religions and people of different faiths.

In the secular India of our times, it is the law of the land that determines the scope of religion in the society, and it is the judiciary that defines the role of religion in state affairs and the role of the state in religious affairs.

However, religious values and traditions continue to have a strong influence on Indian society. The only demand of secularism, as mandated by the Indian Constitution, is that the state must treat all religious creeds and their respective adherents absolutely equally and without any discrimination in all matters under its direct or indirect control.

There is a blend of secular and religious elements within the text of the Constitution that defines and determines the contours of secularism to be acted upon by the state and the religious freedom to be exercised by individuals and communities in modern India.

There is a large body of legislative enactments in India dealing with, or having a bearing on religious matters pertaining to various faith groups. All this legislation, as well as





the established state practice, fully conforms to the Constitutional dictates relating to secularism and parameters of religious freedom.

India ensures there will be several legislative enactments imposing state surveillance on the management of particular religious practices by various religious communities which would eventually lead to bigotry. For example, destroying, damaging or defiling any place of worship, or any object held sacred by any class of persons with the intention of thereby insulting the religion of any class of persons shall be punished with imprisonment.

Regarding creation a fiscal system that allows citizens to devote part of their taxes as a financial support to the church they belong to, India finds this idea reasonable. And there shall be freedom, as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion, by virtue of which no person shall be compelled to pay any taxes where the proceeds are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religious denomination.

### 3. Multiculturalism and Importance of Common Values

India shares the opinion a research on the cultural, historical, political, social, psychological, educational and economic factors, which facilitate the peaceful coexistence of different cultures, is essential. In this respect India welcomes the suggestion of the Forum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century to create a special body, functioning under the Ministry of Culture, responsible for this research in every state.

India highly appreciates that Forum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century accepted the ideas of India about a concept of the so called “democratic multiculturalism” which would combine cultural and political communitarianism, recognise the importance of cultural identity and be committed to bringing the issue into the political domain.

As India has already proclaimed, the state should intervene in religious and cultural practices in order to banish any kind of demonstration of racism, xenophobia or affirmative actions. This is one of the most important roles of an effective democratic state, in order to create and maintain favourable conditions for sustainable multiculturalism.

### 4. Intercultural dialogue as Prevention of Intra-national Conflicts





Though all the religions of the world teach love, preach sympathy for others and encourage people to exercise utmost self-restraint and at their most profound level have been a source of highest good of mankind, the world today is torn by conflicts, enmity and religious hatred.

Under these circumstances a lasting and peaceful society is impossible if different faiths and cultures do not understand each other. There was a time when various religions and cultures were unable to cooperate and were even antagonistic to each other. But the time has changed to a great extent. Now religions and cultures, in spite of historic differences, must seek to unite all men for the attainment of world peace.

India is in agreement with the suggestion of the Forum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century to build a foundation for an active international network of experts (from university, policy, NGO, and think-tank sectors) which would bridge the gap in knowledge about other cultures, lay foundations for a debate based on universally shared values and help the governments undertake concrete activities especially in the areas of education, cultural diversity and heritage, the sciences and media.

India welcomes the ideas that this international entity should consist of scholars representing each member state, selected by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, according to the fields of interests of each particular country. It is very important that also representatives of nongovernmental organizations will help to bring a broader picture to the debates, providing information coming directly from the citizens.

India fully agrees that cooperation within this organization has to be built on the basis of equality, mutual respect, trust and benefit, with focus on achieving strategic long-term harmony. Moreover it has to be built on the basis of respecting the fundamental principles of international law and the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

Regarding the financing, India is in agreement with the proposal to create a common budget of the organization. But a contribution of 1.5 % of GDP from each state is too much; ***India suggests 0.7 % of GDP.***

India believes that her opinions and comments will be considered and incorporated into a final document. India highly appreciates the initiative and preparation of the final





**The Model Conference**

**Cross-Cultural Issues in the Global Context**

Faculty of International Relations, University of Economics in Bratislava



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document by the Forum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and hopes the forthcoming Model conference will bring effective solutions in cross-cultural issues.

