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Statement by

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At the

Anti-Corruption Summit

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Mr. Prime Minister, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Mr. Prime Minister, it is a great privilege and honour to represent India at the London Anti-Corruption Summit in this historical city of London. We thank the Government of United Kingdom for its hospitality and providing this excellent locale to further delve into the multifarious complexities of the menace of “corruption”.

2. Ladies and Gentlemen, as you are aware, India has recognized the need for effectively fighting corruption and has established robust and time tested institutional and legislative framework. We have had the Prevention of Corruption Act as early as 1948, a Central Vigilance Commissioner since 1964 and the Judges (Inquiry) Act since 1968. Recently, a spate of legislations including The Lokpal & Lokayuktas Act, 2013, Right to Information Act, 2005, Whistle Blower Protection Act 2011, Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 which covers a number of areas that need international standards for the criminalization of bribery have been enacted. The Prevention of Bribery of Foreign Public Officials and Officials of Public International Organizations Bill which seeks to prevent corruption relating to bribery of foreign officials and officials of international organizations, is on the anvil. Also the existing Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 is being comprehensively amended as has been done by the United Kingdom in 2010. To provide transparency, the Public servants in India are required to disclose their assets annually.

3. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India is an independent constitutional agency, which audits the public accounts of the Government and Public Sector Undertakings to oversee the legality and effectiveness of public spending. It has made significant contributions, by identifying factors in decision making which could lead to corrupt practices. Further, the Central Information Commission constituted under the Right to Information Act, has enabled public access to Government information and documents.

4. India has a very strong, independent and vibrant judiciary. Apart from interpreting law and resolving disputes, they have taken up several issues vital to the society in Public Interest Litigations.

5. India ratified United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) in May, 2011 and has been actively participating in the Review process. While it has already reviewed South Korea and Vanuatu, it is under review by Uganda and Kazakhstan.

6. India supports the launching of the Second cycle of the review mechanism at this Conference in accordance with Resolution 3/1 and looks forward to starting the review of Chapter-II on Preventive Measures and Chapter-V on Asset Recovery.

7. Mr. Prime Minister, the Central Vigilance Commissioner is the nodal agency entrusted with the task to overseeing preventive and punitive vigilance administration. It is the endeavour of the Central Vigilance Commission to ensure transparency, objectivity and accountability in public administration, as these are important tools for preventing corruption. It has to its credit, initiatives like the public portal – VIGEYE through which a citizen is able to lodge complaints and upload pictures and videos on line, or through mobile phones. Its newsletters Vigvani disseminates awareness and information. CVC has taken various preventive measures which include (i) Leveraging Technology to Prevent Corruption; (ii) Ensuring transparency and Integrity in public procurement (iii) encouraging e-tendering and e-procurement practices, adoption of Integrity Pact and appointment of Independent External Monitors; (iv) Promote Ethics through education of students and youth; (v) Observance of Vigilance Awareness Week, during which all public servants take pledge of honesty and integrity; (vi) Re-engineering process to simplify them, reduce discretion and points of contact with public servants; (vi) Initiate surveillance and (vii) Advising exemplary punishment in all cases of proven misconduct to create deterrence.

8. Mr. Prime Minister, on Asset recovery, India has a robust legal framework and institutional mechanism to deal with issues of money laundering and unaccounted money. Under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, the proceeds of crime generated out of scheduled offences committed by the accused persons are liable for attachment and confiscation. The offence of money laundering is cognizable and non-bailable offence and even the discretionary powers of Courts to grant bail are restricted to some extent. It provides for attachment and confiscation of equal amount of assets if proceeds of crime have been stashed outside India. India is committed to strengthen asset recovery legislations, including through non-conviction based confiscation powers and the introduction of unexplained wealth orders.

9. Mr. Prime Minister, India would like to stress that as stated in Article, 51, the return of assets is a fundamental principle of UNCAC, and States Parties must afford one another widest measures of international cooperation in facilitating quick return of stolen assets, including unaccounted assets and particularly assets in safe havens, to the countries of origin. As advised by G-20 and endorsed by the Doha Declaration adopted at the 13<sup>th</sup> UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, India advocates the extending of all assistance to the requesting States in identification, tracing, freezing, seizure, recovery and repatriation of assets, India emphasizes that all State Parties should ensure that no unaccounted money of foreign origin lies in their banks and financial institutions. We firmly

advocate that all State Parties should ensure cooperation in dissemination of information without any impediment of bank secrecy laws, to the requesting country.

10. Mr. Prime Minister, keeping in view its experience, India offers to provide technical assistance to Member States in the areas of Legislative Drafting, Investigation process, legal academics, in its premier training institutes and build capacities for the global community.

11. India appreciates the consistent efforts of the UNODC in providing a platform for all States parties to engage on practical anti-corruption issues in a positive and constructive spirit. One of the most important achievements in this regard has been the evolution of a transparent, efficient, inclusive and impartial Review Mechanism, which has emerged as a tool of great value. It not only enables us to identify gaps, and exchange and develop expertise, but also collates valuable information on a single platform encompassing laws, regulations, policies and good practices.

12. Mr. Prime Minister, India is fully committed to tackle corruption and adopts a 'zero tolerance' approach. We will implement the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations to ensure accurate and timely beneficial ownership information is available and fully accessible to detect and fight corruption. We would also support automatic exchange of beneficial ownership information and call upon more countries to join and maximize transparency and explore ways of sharing information on corrupt bidders across borders. We support the development of a global commitment for public country by country reporting on tax information for large multinational enterprises. We will take all such steps required for preventing corruption in Government, its institutions and in businesses. We are also committed on the issue of return of unaccounted wealth from safe havens and for persistent and consistent efforts on asset recovery.

13. India will ensure that public contracts are awarded and managed transparently and fairly and commit to ensure integrity in public contracting and procurement. We support the independence of supreme audit institutions and the publications of audit reports and findings in public domain for greater awareness of all stake-holders.

14. India is also committed to safeguard whistle blowers and others of the public to provide critical information of corruption. We will increase transparency on tax, to detect tax evasion and avoidance to prevent individuals from concealing proceeds on crime including corruption in other jurisdictions. We support the international efforts to tackle individuals and corporations that facilitate tax evasion and call on all countries to tackle this menace.

15. India is committed to eliminate corruption in Sports in any form.

16. India would work with other countries, civil society, international organizations to support accelerate implementation of the voluntary provisions of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

17. Our experience over the years in tackling corruption by leveraging technology through various initiatives has provided significant results. We would like each other's experiences to be shared and would welcome the proposal of United Kingdom to launch an Anti-Corruption Innovation Hub (the Hub).

18. We also welcome the proposal of United Kingdom to establish an independent international Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre (IACCC) to help law enforcement investigators work together collectively across multiple jurisdictions and to end the impunity associated with grand corruption. India firmly believes that such an initiative would strengthen the co-operation between jurisdictions and result in effective enforcement action.

19. India is confident that the deliberations at this Anti-Corruption Summit will help in working out effective strategies to deal firmly with corruption, in all its forms and manifestations. I would also like to reassure the World community about India's steadfast and strong commitment to combating this menace. I wish the summit all success.

Thank you very much.