



Message:

M.J. Akbar

Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India

On 31 October, 2017, India moved up an unprecedented 30 places in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business global rankings from 130 to 100 in a single jump. This was confirmation that a series of reforms and policy initiatives were fulfilling the promise Prime Minister Narendra Modi made in 2014 : to turn a culture of red tape into a culture of red carpet for those doing business in India. India is in a breakthrough mode, reaching out to new technological, economic and business partners to realise its full economic potential.

India's cooperation with Europe covers a broad spectrum : education, environment, manufacturing, renewable energy, infrastructure and smart cities development, making the partnership truly multi-faceted. Both Indian and European businesses are ideally placed to collectively gain by tapping into each other's technical competencies, business acumen, investment opportunities and human talent.

This can be further spurred by a "Collective Consciousness" on both sides to re-energise our trade and economic relations. There is a need to identify unexplored, untapped opportunities and come up with tangible deliverables with definite timelines.

We must transform an institutionalised business platform with new creativity, and promote business dialogue. The Ministry of External Affairs, in partnership with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry(FICCI), has taken the initiative to organise the 'India-Europe 29 Business Forum' for the fourth time. The overwhelming response during the last three editions has motivated us to turn the platform into a forum for partnership in the 21st century.

The sharing of ideas between eminent experts from India and European countries during the Forum's various sectoral sessions will set the stage for greater vitality into our business engagement, and provide a new direction that can maximise opportunities in the decades ahead. I wish the 4th India-Europe 29 Business Forum great success.

(M.J. Akbar)