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WORLD VIEW

More than just an idea



Frank Kendall.

Special Arrangement

The India-U.S. Defence Technology and Trade Initiative promises enhanced prosperity and security for both the nations

For approximately three years, I have been involved in the India-U.S. Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI). Originally called “the Carter Initiative,” when Secretary Ashton Carter was the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defence, DTTI aims to strengthen defence cooperation between India and the United States by elevating defence cooperation to the most senior levels of our governments.

I can proudly state that today the U.S. commitment to this initiative has never been stronger. We are delighted that DTTI is moving forward with strong support from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his team. DTTI is real, it is important to the U.S., it is important to India, and it promises enhanced prosperity and security for both our nations.

DTTI is one facet of U.S. policy to build a deeper, closer, and broader relationship with India, one of the most important countries on earth. We see India as a country which shares our values and aspirations and a hunger for growth that will directly serve its people. We see India as a partner for peace and stability in a crucial part of the world and see a convergence of interests between our two countries, especially when we look at security challenges in East and South Asia. In the words of President Barack Obama, “India and the United States are not just natural partners... America can be India’s best partner.”

DTTI is one of the several flexible mechanisms intended to ensure that senior leaders from our nations are focussed on real opportunities and challenges associated with strengthening our defence partnership. DTTI is not a treaty or law. Rather, it elevates and accelerates our shared commitment to defence trade, helps eliminate bureaucratic obstacles, promotes collaborative technology exchange, and enables co-production and co-development of select defence systems to our countries’ mutual benefit. DTTI is not a concept — it is an instrument of real progress for U.S.- India ties, now and far into the future.

DTTI aims to strengthen U.S.-India cooperative research, co-production, and co-development of capabilities that are needed for the sustainment and modernisation of our military forces and the growth of our economies. Currently four pathfinder projects, plus a working group on aircraft carrier cooperation, and the investigation of jet engine technology cooperation are all in discussion as part of DTTI. These topics represent the modest beginning, not the conclusion of DTTI.

Our hope is that these efforts will begin a process of continued growth over time, until India and the U.S. achieve a strong and enduring partnership in military modernisation, technology, and manufacturing — because a strong Indian military serving as a security provider both regionally and throughout the globe is in the mutual interest of both our countries.

Together, our governments and industries can work to strengthen India's industrial base to not only 'Make in India,' but to make the region and the world a safer place. DTTI is firmly grounded in our nations' mutual interests. Our shared efforts aspire to be larger than the sum of their parts. We have gained momentum, but our good intentions must lead to tangible results, or the momentum we built will fade. We are primed to unlock the full potential of the India-U.S. relationship. For the U.S., this is more than an intention — it is a commitment.

Forward together we go — *chalein saath saath*.

(Frank Kendall is U.S. Under Secretary of Defence.)

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