



Economic Diplomacy & States Division  
Ministry of External Affairs



# DECCAN DIALOGUE

## CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY FOR DEVELOPMENT

**CONCEPT NOTE**

May 06, 2018  
ISB Hyderabad Campus

The Deccan Dialogue, jointly organized by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, is envisioned to be an annual event aimed at promoting multi-stakeholder conversations on economic diplomacy, decentralized cooperation and India's external engagement. The Dialogue will bring together policy and decision makers, leading voices from business and industry, and members of the diplomatic and strategic community, media, and academia on a common platform, to engage, and deliberate on emerging aspects of economic diplomacy, development partnerships and decentralized cooperation.

The theme of the first edition of Deccan Dialogue is 'Economic Diplomacy for Development'. The central tenet of the current government's foreign policy is economic diplomacy — a vision to attract foreign investment while strengthening trade and commercial ties with other countries for achieving rapid economic growth and sustainable development. The objectives of economic diplomacy can only be realized if there is an active initiative, involvement and engagement with various stakeholders including State governments. This resonates with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision to involve State governments more actively in promoting exports and attracting Foreign Direct

Investment (FDI). The Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India actively advocates greater economic cooperation between various States and their counterparts by offering the services of its network of Embassies and consulates to the State governments in India.

An important framework for promoting economic cooperation in a decentralized format is by engaging the federal provinces (or States) of the partnering countries. Many State governments have been proactive in tying up with provincial governments and local administrations of other countries with the help of Ministry of External Affairs. The objective of such tie ups are to work together in select areas that would lead to not only strengthening trade and business but also jointly address developmental issues – like quality education, health, environment, sanitation, urban development, sustainable cities, skill development etc. Though there are as many as 50 sister-city agreements that are signed with different cities across the world with the cities in India, there is a need to strengthen economic relations among the provincial/state administrations. However, much more needs to be done to make these arrangements an effective and sustainable reality.

Yet another area of intervention at the international level that needs to be discussed upon is on 'Water Management', as the fair distribution of it is often an issue of growing significance on the international agenda. Water problems are complex because they cross physical, disciplinary and jurisdictional boundaries and hence it is critically important to collectively deal with it. This 'water diplomacy' is about dialogue, negotiation and reconciling conflicting interests among regions.

The developments which are outside of the country's purview – like the recent Trade spat between US and China, the Africa Free Trade Agreement, Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership negotiations, and other bilateral issues with multilateral dimensions - also have wide-ranging implications on economic growth and development as well as diplomatic relations. At a time when the global multilateral trading system is increasingly coming under strain due to growing protectionist tendencies and at a time when major realignments in bilateral and regional investment and trade relations are taking shape, it is important to revisit the role of economic diplomacy in promoting harmonious relations among different nations and come up with win-win strategies to address common challenges.

Through this first edition of 'Deccan Dialogue 2018', it is aimed to explore and strengthen partnerships for promoting economic diplomacy at the grass root level, and reinforce the crucial role of various stakeholders including local business leaders, young entrepreneurs and State/Provincial governments in advancing trade and investment relations and maximizing the benefits of economic diplomacy.

The inaugural session will feature keynote addresses by Gen V K Singh (Retd), Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India and Shri K T Rama Rao, Hon'ble Minister for IT, Industry and Commerce, Government of Telangana. Following this, a series of engaging panel discussions, with participation of senior representatives from the Ministry of External Affairs, State Governments, the diplomatic community, the business chambers and academic community, will explore specific themes related to promotion of economic diplomacy for development and decentralised cooperation. We look forward to welcoming great minds from federal and provincial governments from India and abroad, diplomatic community, academia and industry to come, participate, interact and make the first edition of the 'Deccan Dialogue' a successful and outcome oriented dialogue.