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8th BRICS STI Ministerial Meeting,

**Opening Session (16.30hr – 16.50hr): Introductory
Remarks by BRICS Minister (3 mins)**

Good Afternoon to Russia, China and South Africa
and Good Morning to Brazil;

Excellencies,

Hon'ble Minister of Science and Higher education,
Russia, Mr **Valery Falkov**;

Hon'ble Minister for Science, Technology and
Innovation, Brazil Mr **Marcos Cesar Pontes**;

Hon'ble First Vice Minister of S&T of People's
Republic of China, **Mr. Huang Wei**;

Director General, Department of Science and innovation of the republic of South Africa, **Dr. Phil Mjwara;**

Ambassadors, Senior Officials, Distinguished Heads of Institutions and Research Council;

Representatives of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Let me begin by conveying my greetings to our host ... the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Russiafor organizing this ministerial meeting.

While we may be missing the opportunity to convene and interact in person in these times of physical distancing, I find it heartening that we have explored and found new avenues to engage.

It is a great privilege to be a part of the science and technology Ministers Meeting today. I'm very

happy to be able to connect with counterparts from the Russian Federation, Federative Republic of Brazil, People's Republic of China, and the Republic of South Africa. This Forum gives us the platform and opportunity for having meaningful discussions and interactions in areas of cooperation on issues of contemporary importance, which is so vital for overall well-being and healthy living.

I compliment the Russian Federation for being the Chair for the 12th BRICS Summit. The theme of the Summit '***BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth***' is very apt and relevant in pandemic times. India extends warm appreciation and full support to Russia for the upcoming BRICS Summit on 17 November 2020.

At this juncture, it is pertinent to recapitulate the collective commitment and support of our leaders for creation of an institutionalized framework for cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation.

We need to discuss further ways and means to honor this collective commitment.

I stand here to reiterate India's commitment and role in ensuring that this Science, Technology and Innovation cooperation becomes an integral part and key priority of the overall partnership of BRICS nations.

I look forward to a fruitful discussion and concrete decisions at the end of this Meeting ... which would enhance the scale, the scope and the impact of our collaborative efforts.

My best wishes for the success of this ministerial meeting. Thank you.
