

## India, Italy agree to revitalise bilateral ties

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte with External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj in Rome on Monday. PTI

India and Italy on Monday agreed to boost cooperation in counter-terrorism and cybersecurity as External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj met the top Italian leadership and discussed steps to revitalise bilateral ties.

In her first engagement of the day, Ms. Swaraj called on Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte and their discussions focussed on forging bilateral cooperation across sectors, said a statement issued by the External Affairs Ministry.

It was the first major political exchange between the two countries after Mr. Conte assumed charge early this month.

Ms. Swaraj “conveyed felicitations of the Government of India to the newly elected Government of Italy, and reiterated India’s desire to strengthen bilateral relations with Italy,” the statement said.

Ms. Swaraj, who is here on the first leg of her seven-day tour of four European countries, also met her Italian counterpart, Enzo Moavero Milanesi.

“They exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest,” External Affairs Ministry spokesman Raveesh Kumar said.

“Recognising the need to sustain the momentum generated by the visit of former Italian Prime Minister [Paolo] Gentiloni to India in October 2017, the Ministers emphasised the importance of promoting regular high-level contacts and bilateral dialogue mechanisms,” the statement said.

### JCEC meet in India

“To augment collaboration in areas of mutual benefit, the Ministers agreed to hold the next meeting of the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) in India later this year,” it said.

They also welcomed Italy’s participation as a partner country at the Tech Summit in India in November 2018 which would boost cooperation in technology and innovation.

The year also marks the 70th year of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Later in the day, Ms. Swaraj left for France for the second leg of her visit.

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