

Chairman's Remarks by Ambassador Sudhir T. Devare,

**Director General, Indian Council of World Affairs at the
Seminar on "India and China: Public Diplomacy, Building Understanding"
co-hosted by the Indian Council of World Affairs and
the Institute of Chinese Studies at Sapru House on 1 April 2010**

The Institute of Chinese Studies and the Indian Council of World Affairs have great pleasure in welcoming you all today at the seminar titled "India and China : Public Diplomacy, Building Understanding" which is specially arranged to mark the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China. This is a happy occasion when two countries indeed, two civilizations are celebrating an important milestone in their relations. Sixty years in the lives of these two ancient nations is only a blip in time. However, these 60 years have been marked by tumultuous developments both internally and externally, for China as well as India, and the kind of intensity as well as the range of contacts and interaction that the two countries have witnessed between them during this period has, perhaps, no parallel in the history of their bilateral relations.

2. As we mark this occasion of the 60 years of our diplomatic relations, I am reminded of the statement by Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru in the early 1950s when he said "Our relations with new China have advanced a step further. I need hardly repeat that the emergence of new China is the most important fact in Asia and the world today." He further said that "the great neighbour of ours, China has emerged for the first time in history as a strong centralized State. That in itself is an event of world-shaking importance. Friendly relations between India and China can go a long way towards the maintenance of peace in Asia."

3. It is interesting to note that 60 years later, Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh said "we must ensure that India and China cooperate in creating a world of positive externalities and mutual prosperity, rather than one based on balance of power calculations and animosity. This involves India and China working together closely to ensure a global order in which our

simultaneous development will have a positive influence not only on our own economies but also on the rest of the world".

4. The complex, yet voluminous and ever expanding relationship between India and China constitutes a very important and central dimension of our foreign policy. We may have differences but the prospects for partnership are promising and are being constantly explored.

5. The need for an open and frank debate and for public diplomacy between the two countries and two societies cannot be over-emphasized. With a view to dealing with this important aspect of our interaction, we have at this seminar His Excellency, Ambassador of China and the National Security Advisor, Shri Shivshankar Menon. We warmly welcome them here.

6. We are also happy to have with us Secretary (East), MEA, Smt. Vijaya Latha Reddy. Scholars from China, Australia and our own scholars will also be taking part in the seminar during the course of the day. Once again, a hearty welcome to them and to the distinguished audience gathered here.