

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Remarks by Under Secretary Lael Brainard at a Moderated Discussion Hosted by the Confederation of Indian Industry

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As Prepared for Delivery

Thank you, Dr. Sinha, and thank you, Chanda, for joining me today for this discussion.

President Obama noted during his recent visit to India his firm belief—and a belief many of us in American share—that the relationship between the United States and India, which is bound by our shared interests and values, will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century.

I'm in India this week for the first of many visits to help translate our President's vision of partnership into reality in the financial realm. Vibrant and sound financial markets help families reach their aspirations and achieve their dreams, as much as they help individual nations and the global community to build and sustain growth.

That is why Minister Mukherjee and Secretary Geithner launched the U.S.-India Economic and Financial Partnership, which advances economic issues that are central to both of our nations, including mobilizing private finance, deepening investment and trade, and facilitating corporate bond and local debt markets.

Our economies and our societies share many fundamental similarities on which to build.

First, the United States and India share great strengths for innovation and entrepreneurship. We need to build financial systems that can effectively channel resources to power the new ideas and creativity of our people and firms, and to bring them to scale.

For example, this morning I visited a cell phone tower just outside of Delhi that fuses U.S. and Indian cutting edge technology and financing in support of green energy. Using solar panels and controllers from the United States, Indian entrepreneurs have developed a mechanism for ensuring a continuous supply of hybrid energy in support of India's vast and rapidly growing cell phone market. This collaboration, which has the potential to expand to hundreds of thousands of towers in India and internationally, is supported by financing from the International Finance Corporation, part of the World Bank Group, and the United States' Export-Import Bank, along with U.S. and Indian equity investors.

Second, the United States and India share an economic growth model powered by domestic consumption. Reaching the full potential of this economic growth model will depend on expanding financial access to all of our people. Perhaps even more than others, poorer communities need financial products that enable them to save, start small businesses, and help insure against changes in economic fortunes.

Yesterday, I travelled to Satara, a village outside of Pune, where we met with women who participate in Mann Deshi's programs, including financial and computer literacy courses, and self-help group savings initiatives that fund their businesses. The power and reach of these programs have been multiplied by the innovations of mobile banking in this area, which now allow more people to save for their future. The women I met exhibited immense drive and energy, which is the same drive and energy that I've seen when I've met with small business owners across America—a drive to rise above circumstances, to provide for your family, and to transform society.

Third, India and the United States both need to invest in the foundations for long-term economic growth by channeling more of our resources to infrastructure, as well as to education, and science and technology. President Obama's recent proposed budget for the United States has a strong emphasis on these investments, and I have heard that the budget delivered by Minister Mukherjee also reflects these priorities.

In addition, we both share an interest in a well-functioning and more balanced global economic system, and we work together in the G-20, the Financial Stability Board, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund to address critical global economic challenges. These include the need to foster growth, rebalance the global economy, aid the poorest, and address recent increases in food and commodity prices.

And, of course, both economies would do well to increase the role of women in finance and other industries. Judging on the quality of leadership and the dynamism of Chanda Kochhar and Chetna Sinha, whom I had the pleasure to meet yesterday, I know that India is well on its way.

Together, from the rural towns to the big cities of our countries, we have an enormous amount to gain from working in partnership.

Thank you.

