

**Remarks by Ambassador Gautam Bambawale at the reception
to celebrate the 69th Republic Day of India**

[26 January 2018, Beijing]

Chief Guest Vice Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I extend a very warm welcome to all of you present here this evening. Thank you for being with us to celebrate the 69th Republic Day of India.

2. As most of you know, it was on 26 January 1950 that India's Constitution came into force and the people of India organized our nation as a Republic. In these years, India has come far as a political entity based on democratic values and principles as well as a developing economy. Naturally, there is much more to do. Therefore, today, the energies of the people of India are focused inward on economic development, social progress and national transformation. Recently, we have launched many programmes to further these goals. These include 'Make in India', 'Skill India', 'Clean India', 'Digital India', 'Smart Cities' and some others. We have invited the international community to participate in these endeavors and assist us in achieving our objectives. We look forward to support from all of you.

3. We welcome China's participation and help in furthering these national goals of India. 2017 has been a significant year in India-China relations. It has been a year of challenges but also one of many achievements. Our two countries handled some sensitive situations with great maturity and wisdom. Simultaneously, there have been successes in our bilateral ties too. Dangal, the Bollywood movie from India, became one of the highest earning non-Chinese language films in China. Conversely, the Chinese firm Xiaomi became the largest supplier of mobile phone handsets in the Indian market. India looks forward to building on these successes in 2018. I, for one, am confident that the wisdom of the people of India and China will make this vision a reality.

4. Ladies and Gentlemen, we have just entered the new calendar year 2018. We will soon celebrate the Chinese Spring Festival. Therefore, I extend my warmest good wishes to all of you. I once again thank you for being with us this evening to celebrate India's 69th Republic Day.

5. With these words, I invite you all to raise your glass in a toast: to enhanced friendship and stronger partnership between India and China.

Thank you.
