

**REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
AT THE BANQUET HOSTED IN HIS HONOUR BY THE PRESIDENT
OF SLOVENIA**

Ljubljana, 16 September 2019

1. I thank you, Mr. President, for your gracious words of welcome. I am particularly touched by your friendship and your warm hospitality.
2. I am delighted to be paying the first ever State Visit from India to Slovenia. Our two countries enjoy warm and friendly relations under-pinned by shared values and strong people-to-people ties. I congratulate your country on its impressive achievement since becoming independent.
3. Mr. President, your visit to India in 2011, in your capacity as Prime Minister, provided much required impetus to our relations. Since then, our ties have grown from strength to strength. Today we have committed ourselves to further deepen our political, economic and cultural relations. Our discussions convinced me that our ties can only get closer and more intense from here.
4. Our economic ties hold promise. The Indian growth story and Slovenian technology make us natural partners. Let us work to make this collaboration grow and prosper.
5. Our cultural understanding has been profound and meaningful. Indian spirituality, yoga and ayurveda have taken deep roots in your country. And the history and culture that has grown alongside river Sava has ever inspired the Indian imagination and curiosity. The sweetness of the Slovenian culture and language explains why your country is the home of organized bee keeping and honey.

6. With those words, may I propose a toast to:

- the good health and personal well-being of President Pahor and First Lady;
- the peace, progress and prosperity of the people of Slovenia; and
- the ever-growing friendship between India and Slovenia.

Hvala Lepa! Thank You!