

Statement of Ambassador Guðni Bragason at a Seminar on Innovation in the Icelandic Health Care Sector, 9th March 2022, New Delhi.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I like to welcome you all to this Seminar on Innovation in the Icelandic Health Care Sector, both those here in the room and those on-line. I also appreciate the participation of the Indo-Icelandic Business Association (IIBA) and its Chairman Mr. Prasson Dewan.

Innovation lies at the heart of the policies of the new Icelandic Government, coming into office at the end of last year, as outlined in the Policy Platform. Understandably a strong focus is now on health care. The Government is promoting a healthy society in a broad context and universal access to healthcare is the hallmark of a just society.

Strengthening of the health care system will not happen without innovation and new technology, such as digital solutions to increase the quality and efficiency of services.

There is a need to begin at the beginning and strengthen the education system to promote innovative thinking, foster the young generation and to provide a robust support for research and technological development and provide green investment incentives.

Green by Iceland is the motto for the Business Iceland initiatives. Correspondingly, one of the six emphasis of the Icelandic export policies is innovation and green solutions.

Allow me to mention that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has set up funding mechanisms to support projects of small companies that are within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Recently an innovative company in health care benefitted from such a grant.

Innovation needs to be supported by promoting public-private partnerships to develop new solutions and get private investment capital aboard.

Dear Colleagues.

Both our countries, Iceland and India, are innovative countries, despite the difference in size, with a strong technical infrastructure, education system, research and development institutions and first and foremost people with new ideas.

Opportunities lie in healthcare and life sciences, software development, green technology, telemedicine and the creative sector. We want to foster an environment where creativity can flourish and people can grow, prosper and develop in an open and free environment of international cooperation and competition.

Recently, the Foreign Minister gave a new order of the day: be innovative and think outside the box.

Thank you.