

**Consulate General of India
Sao Paulo**

**Prime Minister's video conference with the Heads of Indian Missions
(30 March 2020)**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi held a videoconference with the Heads of all of India's Embassies and High Commissions worldwide at 1700 hrs today. This conference—the first such event for Indian Missions worldwide—was convened to discuss responses to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Prime Minister noted that extraordinary times require extraordinary solutions, which was why even in this globalized era, most of the world had quarantined itself. This was an unavoidable step taken to fight this pandemic, but it was also hugely consequential, as the closure of the globalized system has had an extensive and far-reaching impact upon the international transport system, financial markets and the global economy.

Prime Minister said that India had taken unprecedented and early steps in response to this pandemic from mid-January this year, to reduce the risk of importing the infection, and thereafter to prevent a large outbreak. This included the world's largest quarantine and lock-down, implemented by India.

The Prime Minister complimented Heads of Missions for their efforts to evacuate Indians stranded abroad in some of the epicentres of the crisis. He also exhorted them to take steps on five specific counts:

- i. To ensure their own health and safety, and that of their teams and families;
- ii. To attend to Indians who remain in various foreign countries, given the uncertainty of continuing international travel restrictions. He called on Heads of Indian Missions to help boost the morale of such compatriots abroad, and to help them address issues arising from their unplanned stay abroad, with their host

Governments, and also to address other problems Indians might face abroad, including arranging shelter, where necessary and feasible;

iii. To stay alert and identify in their countries of accreditation best practices, innovations, scientific breakthroughs and sources to procure medical equipment, for India's fight against COVID-19. He also advised Heads of Mission to suitably publicize the newly-established PM-CARES Fund to mobilize donations from abroad;

iv. Since this crisis also impacts upon the economy, PM advised Heads of Mission to also focus on ensuring that commerce in essential supplies, logistics chains, remittances and so on are unaffected, through their coordination with foreign partners;

v. To continue to pay close attention to the evolving international political and economic situation, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
