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## प्रेस विज्ञप्ति PRESS RELEASE

### PROUD OF INDIAN DIASPORA, SAYS LOK SABHA SPEAKER

**Camp: Seychelles, 11 January 2018:** Lok Sabha Speaker Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, who is leading an Indian Parliamentary Delegation to Seychelles, attended the 'Pravasi Bharatiya Celebrations' in Victoria, Seychelles last evening. Smt. Mahajan said that relations between India and Seychelles are characterized by historical ties, cultural linkages, friendship, understanding with a view to moving forward together. She said that Seychelles enjoys the unbound love, affection and unconditional support of India. She remarked that the Indian nationals have been among the earliest inhabitants of the island nation and have evolved over the decades to constitute the heart and soul of Seychelles.

Smt. Mahajan lauded the significant contributions of the People of Indian Origin in Seychelles and said that they have not only enriched the Seychellois culture and imbibed it, but have also proved their mettle in diverse fields thereby contributing to the country's industrial and economic development. She said that the Diaspora linkages between India and Seychelles are amongst the strongest and the presence of the Indian Ocean has actually connected them. The goodwill generated by the Diaspora has contributed profoundly to the strong and vibrant relationship between India and Seychelles.

Underlining that the presence of 30 million Indian Diaspora worldwide as an energetic and confident community for its work culture, social values and discipline, Smt. Mahajan appreciated the contributions made by them in the foreign lands which have made India very proud and honoured. They are the real ambassadors of Indian culture across the world and it is remarkable that they continue to maintain and preserve the Indian traditions, values and ethos, she added.

Smt. Mahajan said that India is at the threshold of a new era of rapid economic development under the leadership of Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and she urged and invited the Overseas Indians to share their skills and explore the possibilities for investment under schemes like 'Make in India'.

Smt. Mahajan said that in the year 2003, an initiative was taken by the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji to celebrate the achievements of Indian Diaspora on 9<sup>th</sup> of January every year as Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, to coincide with the date which marks the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa in 1915.

She remarked that the exchange of visits of Parliamentary Delegations between the two countries has given tremendous impetus to our bilateral relations. She committed to extend all support for establishing Museum and TV telecasting in Seychelles Parliament, which are successfully functioning in the Indian Parliament.

The 'Pravasi Bharatiya Celebrations' function was organized by the Indian Association of Seychelles and the High Commission of India in Seychelles.

Earlier, Smt. Mahajan had attended various sessions of the 24<sup>th</sup> Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC) held in Victoria, Seychelles from 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and also delivered the Keynote Address on the theme, "Strengthening Parliamentary Research for the Effective functioning of Legislatures".

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