

CUTS-FICCI Bi-partisan Growth Compact Dialogue

Tuesday, April 30, 2013, Time: 6 pm – 8 pm, Venue: Council Room, FICCI, New Delhi

A Discussion on Bi-partisan Growth Compact New Delhi, April 30, 2013

BACKGROUND

CUTS-PARFORE (Parliamentarians Forum on Economic Policy Issues) and FICCI – Forum of Parliamentarians jointly organised a roundtable with Parliamentarians on a **Bi-partisan Growth Compact**, Tuesday, April 30, 2013 at FICCI, New Delhi.

The meeting was attended by parliamentarians representing both the houses, which included: Dr. Ashok Sekhar Ganguly, Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar, Shri V.P. Singh Bandore from Rajya Sabha and Shri Dinesh Trivedi from Lok Sabha. Few other confirmed MPs could not attend the meeting due to last minute hitches. Shri N. K. Singh, who has propagated such a compact could not attend as he met with an accident at home in the morning.

While PARFORE, an initiative of CUTS International, was conceived as non-partisan and informal forum where MPs are able to air their views on a periodic basis on the core economic issues in the field of trade, competition, regulatory reforms, investment and their cross linkages. FICCI–Forum of Parliamentarians is a multiparty body of twelve Forums with 250 MPs belonging to various political parties of India with many of its members serving on important parliamentary committees. The Forums have gone beyond and facilitated dialogue with senior government officials, leading think tank experts, business leaders and civil society at large, on several issues of bilateral and global concerns.

The objective of the ongoing dialogue is to create a bipartisan platform of parliamentarians where issues relating to the growth agenda can be discussed and agreed upon by the whole national polity. Such a compact should include key ministers and opposition leaders, and stakeholders such as businessmen, labour, civil society, media and academia, and select state chief ministers. While the main compact will be necessarily big to avoid any ill feelings, it can work through smaller working groups in a non-partisan manner.

The focus of the meeting was to identify the process rather than the content to create a bipartisan platform of MPs that they can agree on a national consensus to look at growth issues only, detached from other issues.

Some of the important points emerged out of the meeting include:

1. Primacy for actual job creation not in numbers only but quality i.e. Growth that creates good jobs rather than numbers of six, eight nine percent GDP. Issues like Health and Education Status and Social Accountability etc. must be given priority over the rest.
2. Need for building consensus on core infrastructure issues impeding growth

3. Need for organising such dialogue is a reflection of current political realities of our country which requires serious correction
4. Problem of Governance Deficit and measures to be taken to re-inforce peoples' trust to restore growth. A serious concern was raised that this country has gone beyond governance all across with pointers towards dangerous signals.
5. There was general consensus among parliamentarians to focus on growth issues and to be realistic of on "what is possible" and "what is not". And if growth means upper strata and remains there, then it is dangerous signal and hence we need to find ways and means to address inclusive growth.
6. GDP numbers doesn't really reflect real progress at the grass root level, the saving rate is fast decreasing, which has an adverse impact on the whole economy.
7. India has been marginally impacted by global meltdown and external factors such as exports to the Western economies are less important compared to huge domestic demand and consumption. Expanding South-South Trade too is important.
8. Political process is an 'aggregate' of all factors, economy is one of them, hence we need to focus on the actual political processes.
9. Concern over putting party agenda by political parties over and above national agenda and unless a common denominator is not found, addressed and implemented, we will soon reach a point of no return.
10. Problem of accommodating regional aspirations of regional parties and constraints therewith to priority national agenda issues pertaining to growth.
11. Lack of communication between State and Centre on issues pertaining to growth and development.
12. Economic processes are necessary for social cohesion
13. Agricultural productivity absolutely abysmal in the current share of GDP, an area to explore seriously. Country has witnessed suicide of lakhs of farmers. This is a grim reminder of current shape of Indian economy.
14. There are various other issues apart from growth issues to ponder upon e.g. water security, energy security etc.
15. A mention was made of the JPC on the Ketan Parikh Stock Scam, and how the bipartisan committee could adopt a unanimous report. There is a need to develop a case study on this JPC, which can serve as a good guideline for cross-party collaborative processes.
16. Premier Chambers of Commerce and Industry are too drumming issues of growth in their own manner, and that there is no major difference between them also. They too, like political parties, need to arrive on a common platform to advocate on core growth issues
17. Towards the end of the meeting, it was proposed that a tri-partite forum be steered by CUTS International along with the two premier Chambers in the country viz. FICCI and CII can be organised to push this process, so that there can be a better understanding and agreement in future.

List of Participants
CUTS-FICCI Bi-partisan Growth Compact Dialogue

Tuesday, April 30, 2013, Time: 6 pm – 8 pm,
Venue: FICCI, New Delhi

S.No.	Name & Organisation
1	Dr. Ashok S. Ganguly Member of Parliament Rajya Sabha, New Delhi
2	Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar Member of Parliament Rajya Sabha New Delhi
3	Mr. Bipul Chatterjee Dy. Executive Director CUTS International Jaipur
4	Shri Dinesh Trivedi Member of Parliament Lok Sabha New Delhi
5	Dr. A Didar Singh Secretary General Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry FICCI
6	Ms. Jyoti Malhotra Consultant FICCI
7	Mr. Pradeep S Mehta Secretary General CUTS International Jaipur
8	Mr. Sidharth Birla Sr. Vice President Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry FICCI
9	Mr. Tuhin S Chakraborty Research Associate Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry FICCI
10	Shri V.P.Singh Badnore Member of Parliament Rajya Sabha New Delhi
11	Mr. Vijay Singh Centre Head CUTS International Delhi Resource Centre New Delhi

CUTS Delhi/RS2/2013.05.03

CUTS-FICCI Bi-partisan Growth Compact Dialogue

Tuesday, April 30, 2013, Time: 6 pm – 8 pm
Venue: FICCI, Federation House, Tansen Marg, New Delhi

Programme Agenda

- 5.30 p.m.- 6.00 p.m. Registration & Tea / Coffee with cookies
- 6.00 -6.05 p.m. Introduction by Jyoti Malhotra, FICCI
- 6.05 - 6.15 p.m. Welcome Address by Sidharth Birla, Senior Vice - President, FICCI
- 6.15. – 7.30 Discussion to be moderated by Pradeep S. Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International
- **Why have a 'new' dialogue? After all, there are many debates/dialogues already happening in the country?**
 - **What is hoped to be achieved by this 'new' dialogue?**
 - **What will be required to make this new dialogue successful in achieving its objectives?**
 - **What should be the contour of India's Growth compact?**
- 7.30 –8.00 p.m. Conclusion