

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1419
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.12.2017**

BILATERAL TALKS WITH NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

†1419. SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is contemplating to resume bilateral talks with neighbouring countries;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and**
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?**

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]**

(a) & (b) The process of bilateral engagement with our neighbouring countries is continuous and ongoing. This is reflected in Government's continuing political outreach, joint initiatives and people-to-people contacts with neighbouring countries. With Pakistan, during the visit of External Affairs Minister to Islamabad on December 9, 2015, both sides agreed to a Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue. Foreign Secretaries of the two countries were mandated to finalise the modalities of the Dialogue. However, the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries could not take place in the wake of Pathankot Air Base terrorist attack on January 2, 2016 and subsequent intensification of cross border terrorism aimed at India and emanating from Pakistan. Government has conveyed that it is committed to resolving all issues peacefully and bilaterally in keeping with the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration, in an atmosphere free from terror, hostility and violence. Onus is on Pakistan to create such a conducive atmosphere.

(c) Does not arise.
