

Swaraj leaves for Russia to prepare ground for Putin's India visit in Oct

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPTEMBER

Days after the '2+2' ministerial-level Indo-US dialogue, external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj on Wednesday left for Russia to attend an inter-governmental meeting and prepare the ground for President Vladimir Putin's visit to India next month for the annual India-Russia summit. "Taking stock of a time-tested, special and privileged strategic partnership! EAM @SushmaSwaraj departs on a two-day visit to Moscow, Russia on 13-14 September to hold the 23rd



meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Technical & Economic Cooperation," Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar tweeted.

The meeting of the commission is to be co-chaired

Her visit to Russia comes days after she and defence minister jointly hosted US Secy of State Pompeo and Defence Secy Mattis at the inaugural 2+2 dialogue

by Swaraj and Yuri Borisov, deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation.

"IRIGC-TEC is a standing body which annually meets and reviews ongoing activities of bilateral cooperation in the fields of bilateral trade and investment, science and technology, culture and other issues of

mutual interest," the ministry stated. The last meeting of the commission was held in New Delhi in December 2017.

Earlier, Swaraj was to visit Syria and Lebanon too during the course of this overseas visit. However, her visits to Syria and Lebanon have been postponed for now.

The minister's visit to Russia comes days after she and defence minister Nirjala Sitharaman jointly hosted US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defence Secretary Jim Mattis at the inaugural India-US '2+2' dialogue.