

Minutes
of the
2nd Meeting of the Indo-Swiss Joint Committee on Science & Technology
New Delhi
(3rd October 2012)

The 2nd meeting of the Indo Swiss Joint Committee for scientific and technological cooperation, established within the framework of the Science and Technology Agreement of 10th November 2003 between the Swiss Federal Council and the Government of the Republic of India, was held in New Delhi on 3 October 2012.

The meeting was jointly inaugurated by Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Science & Technology of India and Federal Councillor Alain Berset, Head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs of Switzerland.

The Swiss delegation for the Joint Committee meeting was led by State Secretary Mauro Dell'Ambrogio, Director of the State Secretariat for Education and Research, and the Indian delegation was led by Secretary Thirumalachari Ramasami, Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Science and Technology.

The list of the Indian and Swiss delegation members is enclosed as **Annex-I**.

The adopted agenda of the Joint Committee meeting is enclosed as **Annex-II**.

The main objective of the JC meeting was to assess and review the ongoing S&T cooperation between India and Switzerland under the Indo Swiss Joint Research Programme (ISJRP) since its inception until the conclusion of the Executive Programme of Cooperation (POC) for the period 2006-2012, to exchange respective views on the future cooperation and its modalities and to work out a new POC for the period 2013-16.

Dr. **Thirumalachari Ramasami**, while welcoming the Swiss delegation to the 2nd Indo-Swiss Joint Committee meeting, highlighted some of the recent policy

developments in India particularly in science and education sector. He mentioned that Government of India in its recently adopted 12th Five Year Plan, has provided provisions for investments into the S&T sector with an annual growth rate of 20-25 percent. Dr Ramasami also highlighted the salient features of India's current growth policy, integrated energy policy, national missions on climate change, S&T innovation policy, as well as India's long term goals for investment in international mega science projects. He expressed satisfaction on the present level of S&T engagements between India and Switzerland and reiterated his Ministry's commitment in further deepening the Indo-Swiss S&T cooperation.

Dr. **Mauro Dell'Ambrogio** while thanking the Indian side for hosting the second Indo-Swiss Joint Committee meeting on Science & Technology in New Delhi, first announced the merger of the State Secretariat for Education and Research with the Federal Office for Professional Education, in a new State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, to be effective as of January 2013. He then mentioned the recent adoption of the Federal Dispatch on the Promotion of Education, Research and Innovation (ERI) for the years 2013-2016, which foresees a total of 26 billion Swiss Francs, corresponding to 10% of the Federal government's total budget. International research cooperation will be one of Switzerland's priorities in the frame of ERI for the next period, and SER is committed to further consider India as a preferred partner, in its willingness to further strengthen the cooperation between the two countries.

A) Review of the on-going S&T activities:

Both sides expressed high satisfaction on successful completion of the Indo-Swiss Executive Programme of Cooperation for the period 2006-2010, completed by its Addendum of 13 November 2007 and the Revised Addendum of 4 October 2010 (extension to the year 2012), wherein both sides invested an equivalent amount of approximately 12 Million Swiss Francs through which a total of 45 joint research projects, 4 institutional partnership projects, joint use of advanced facilities, fellowships to PhD students and 3 thematic workshops were supported. A new exchange instrument called Personnel Exchange Programme was introduced and 10 currently ongoing projects have already been supported. A joint workshop will be co-organized on the topic "Renewable Energies and rational energy use" during fourth week of October 2012 in Lausanne, Switzerland, to discuss and work out priority

topics and identify groups from both sides for the initiation of a first call along the lines of the Swiss Indian Synergies in Technologies for Energy Research (SISTER) scheme.

Dr. Rup Lal, Delhi University, through an impressive presentation, outlined an evolutionary dimension of a collaborative project involving bioremediation of waste dump sites. He emphasised the valuable impact of the R&D project, resulting in more than 70 publications and a technology lead. The need for connecting the R&D outputs from the project to industrial partnership for leveraging the benefits of collaborative project. The joint committee expressed appreciation of the collaborative project.

A presentation was made on activities of ICMR and its collaborations with Switzerland, such as MOU between NIE Chennai and Swiss TPH on teaching & training in Public Health as well as MoU between ICMR and FIND Geneva. A Meeting between Swiss officials and ICMR scientists held on 1st October 2012 was also reported. The ICMR would welcome contact with its counterpart in Switzerland to work together in the areas of mutual interest.

Dr. Margrit Leuthold as the new Executive Director of swissnex India (Switzerland's outpost for science, technology, innovation and arts located in Bangalore), reassured her strong commitment to enhance cooperation in all fields of science and technology and innovation between the two countries. According her professional background, she has a special expertise in medical sciences determined as one of the priority fields in the next phase of ISJRP.

Prof. Suren Erkman highlighted the potential for developing human and social sciences projects within the framework of the ISJRP. Many of the issues addressed by ISJRP projects have a systemic dimension, like climate, food, energy, etc. Thus, developing projects in relation to socio-economic approaches (including governance, new business models, etc.) would be not only interesting per se, but could also generate fruitful results by cross-fertilisation between the various disciplines.

Mr. Anjan Das, CEO-GITA and Executive Director, CII presented a brief outline on the industrial R&D programmes initiated through GITA with other countries and proposed a similar programme / scheme with Switzerland.

Dr. Klara Sekanina, Director CTI gave a quick overview of the instruments of CTI. The dialogue with GITA will be taken up.

Dr. Pratibha Singh, DBT gave an overview of the Indo-Swiss collaboration in the areas of biotechnology, which is a well-established R&D programme jointly funded and steered by SDC and DBT. Currently, this programme is in the 3rd phase (2007-12) with focuses on innovative technologies in agricultural and environmental research, which have an impact on poverty reduction and food security.

Dr. Purnima Rupal, CSIR also gave an overview of CSIR activities and proposed exploring possibilities of collaboration with Swiss research institutes.

Both sides also expressed satisfaction on the progress of Indo-Swiss cooperation in the area of Glaciology under the auspices of DST and the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency. The Joint Working Group on Glaciology informed that the modalities and mechanisms, areas and modes of cooperation focusing on training and capacity building in Glaciology and related issues with the aim of developing a long-term partnership between the two countries have already been worked out and that the cooperation is progressing well.

b) Decisions taken by Joint Committee for future cooperation:

Both sides agreed to -

- i. Adopt the Executive Programme of Cooperation for the period 2013-16. A copy of the adopted Indo-Swiss Executive PoC (2013-16) is placed at **Annexure-III**.
- ii. Ensure an appropriate working level dialogue between the two sides in the period between the Joint Committee Meetings.
- iii. Implement the aforementioned joint call in the frame of SISTER and to investigate further possibilities of collaboration within the respective national funding schemes.

- iv. Encourage bilateral talks between national funding agencies, such as Global Innovation & Technology Alliance (GITA) on the Indian side and the Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI) on the Swiss side in order to exchange experiences and assess possible collaboration opportunities.

The next meeting of the Joint Committee will take place in Switzerland in the second half of 2014 at mutually agreed date and venue.

The discussions were conducted in a most friendly and cordial atmosphere.

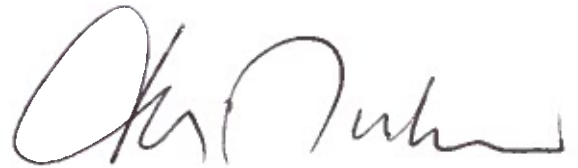
Signed in New Delhi on 3rd October 2012 in two originals in English language

For the Department of Science &
Technology (Govt. of India)



Dr Thirumalachari Ramasami
Secretary

For the State Secretariat for Education
and Research



Dr Mauro Dell'Ambrogio
State Secretary