

# MINUTES OF THE 1<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE CROATIAN-INDIAN JOINT SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

In accordance with the Article 2 of the Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology between the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, Government of Croatia and the Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, concluded in Zagreb on May 18, 2005, the 1<sup>st</sup> session of the Croatian-Indian Joint Science & Technology Committee, was held in New Delhi on 19 April 2006. The Croatian and Indian delegations were led by Dr. Radovan Fuchs, Assistant Minister for International Cooperation, Government of Croatia and Mr Y P Kumar, Adviser & Head, International Division, Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India respectively. The list of participants is placed at Annexure-I. The agenda adopted for the meeting by the Joint Committee is placed at Annexure-II.

## 1. Opening Remarks

1.1 Mr Y P Kumar welcomed the Croatian delegation and introduced the members of the Indian delegation. In his opening remarks, he said that this meeting is very important as a step forward to strengthen our bilateral S and T cooperation. He mentioned that since the conclusion of the Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology at Zagreb on May 18, 2005, a call for proposals was made which has resulted in to 10 proposals as received on the Indian side. Though this is not a big number but is likely to go further up. He suggested that in this meeting of the Joint Committee, we should work out road map for further strengthening of our bilateral cooperation.

1.2 Dr Radovan Fuchs thanked the Indian side for the arrangements made for the meeting of the Joint Committee in New Delhi and agreed with Y. P. Kumar on the importance of cooperation in the field of science and technology for the deepening of the relations between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of India, and he stressed the importance of the Programme of Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology between the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, Government of Croatia and the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India which will help to create further cooperation between scientific research institutions in the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of India. In accordance with the terms of the call, 11 project proposals were submitted. The Croatian side stresses the need for the enlargement of bilateral cooperation between the two countries through other forms of cooperation (workshops, joint international conferences...), and not only through projects selected at the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Indo-Croatian Joint Science & Technology Committee.

The Croatian policy is to support the cooperation between science and industry through institutions which were founded for this purpose (Business Innovation Centers in Croatia and Croatian Technological Institution).

1.3 Ms Maja Plancic Lelas, Charge d'Affairs, Croatian Embassy in New Delhi felt that by organization of the Joint Committee meeting, we have made a good start to bilateral scientific cooperation. She wished a successful meeting.

1.4 Shri SK Datta, Under Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs informed that two countries have maintained traditional relationship and he hoped that this cooperation would further strengthen our bilateral relations.

## **2. Exchange of Information on Science & Technology Scenario**

2.1 Mr Kumar made a presentation on S&T system and policies in India. He mentioned some of the new initiatives of the Government of India to promote science and to attract entrepreneurs to subscribe to indigenous technologies. Presentations on the activities of their respective organizations were also made by the representatives of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, Indian Council of Medical Research, Indian National Science Academy, Vigyan Prasar, Technology Development Board, and Ministry of Ocean Development.

2.2 Dr Fuchs briefly presented the S&T structure in Croatia and underlined the importance of the scientific and technological cooperation between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of India. At the same time he regarded that the cooperation between the two countries still has great potential; understandings and contact of scientists should be improved further. The governments should encourage the contacts between scientists from the two countries and provide assistance for their exchange and cooperation. Dr. Fuchs presented the structure of science in Croatia stating that in the Republic of Croatia there are 26 public research institutions in different fields (natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, technical, biotechnical, biomedical, technological and innovative sciences) as well as a number of private research institutes. The institutes are financed from the budget of the Republic of Croatia, but some of them earn a part of their income through the cooperation with the industry.

Dr. Fuchs talked about the institution of the National Science Council and he informed the Indian side about the priorities in scientific research in the Republic of Croatia.

## **3. Programme of Cooperation for the period 2006-2007**

The Joint Committee adopted the following programme of cooperation in S and T for the period 2006-2008 between Croatia and India to be coordinated by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports from the Croatian side and the Department of Science and Technology (DST) from Indian side (hereinafter referred to as the Coordinating Agencies).

### 3.1 New Project Proposals

The Joint Committee noted that 11 and 10 new joint project proposals have been received by the Croatian and Indian sides, respectively, for consideration of the Joint Committee. After discussing each of these new proposals, the Joint Committee decided that 9 of them (Annexure-III) be supported in the period of 2006-2008.

### 3.2. Joint Workshops

The Joint Committee felt that in order to boost bilateral cooperation, joint workshops should be organised one each in Croatia and in India. It was agreed that Croatian side may host a workshop on "Commercialization and Societal Applications of Science". Indian side may host a workshop on "Marine Science" or "Biotechnology".

### 3.3. Fellowships

The Joint Committee felt that in order to boost participation of young scientists; two sides would offer up to 5 fellowships to young scientists in each others' laboratories each year. Details would be worked out between two Coordinating Agencies.

### 3.4. Next Call for Proposals

The Coordinating agencies will make a public call for proposals by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007.

Research projects will be developed jointly by researchers of scientific institutions of the two countries.

The researchers will then simultaneously submit these proposals by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2007 to both of the respective Coordinating Agencies responsible for the overall management of the intergovernmental co-operation in science and technology between the two countries.

The Coordinating Agencies will exchange the lists containing the basic data of the project proposals submitted to them by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007.

The Coordinating Agencies shall rank the project proposals according to their internal procedures of review on the basis of:

- (a) The scientific merits of the proposals, as measured by a peer review,
- (b) Their national priorities with regard to scientific co-operation.

The decision regarding the projects to be jointly funded shall be made by the Joint Committee in its forthcoming session or by mutual agreement of the respective Coordinating Agencies through exchange of letters.

The unilaterally submitted projects shall not be considered,

### 3.5. Exploratory Visits

In order to boost the bilateral cooperation, both Agencies may initiate exploratory visits. An exploratory visit may not be longer than 14 days. The total exploratory visits in a year would be limited to 10 men-weeks.

#### 4. Any Other Points

4.1. It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Joint Committee in Croatia in September – October 2007.

4.2 It was agreed that the POC 2005-2008 would remain valid till the conclusion of the next Programme of Cooperation.

4.3 Indian side agreed to the Croatian proposal for participation in their International assessment of scientific proposals.

4.4 The Croatian delegation would be visiting National Physical Laboratory and International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology in New Delhi. The itinerary of the delegation is at Annexure-IV.

Done in New Delhi, on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2006 in two originals, both texts being same.

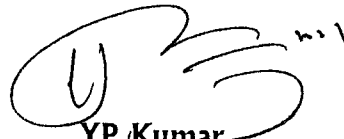
For the Croatian side



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For the Indian side



**YP Kumar**

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