

**Minutes of the 8th Session of the
Joint Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation
between the Republic of Slovenia and India**

The 8th Session of the Joint Committee was held in New Delhi on 16th July 2013. Mr. Sumanta Chaudhuri, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, led the Indian delegation and the Slovenian delegation was headed by Dr. Stanislav Raščan, Director General, Directorate for Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The composition of the two delegations is at Annexes 'I & II'.

The agenda for the meeting as adopted is at Annex-III.

The two delegations held extensive discussions on the strengthening of bilateral, economic and commercial relations between the two countries. The deliberations of the Joint Committee were held in a spirit of friendship and cordiality.

I. Exchange of views on bilateral, regional and multilateral developments

During the session, the two Sides reviewed the economic developments and policies prevailing in their respective countries as well as the developments in their economic and commercial relations, following the last session of the Committee held in Ljubljana on 29th September 2009. Particular attention was given to reflection on world economic and financial crisis to their economies, expected developments in the future and measures taken to alleviate negative effects.

India informed that as a matter of policy, central and east European countries with which India traditionally have had good relations are being focussed to strengthen trade and economic ties. In this context, boosting bilateral trade and economic relations with Slovenia assumes significance.

Co-chair from the Slovenian side informed about the changes in the Slovenian economy in times of global economic crisis. He also expressed Slovenia's keen interest to extend the scope of bilateral economic relations between India and Slovenia and intensify them in the years to come.

Slovenia appreciates India's participation in the Bled Strategic Forum, a regional platform that evolved, over the years, into a global forum. Slovenia hopes that India continues pursuing an active role at the 8th Bled Strategic Forum 2013 to be held

between 1 and 3 September. This could be a platform to promote India's role in South Asia and globally. A future business BSF could be devoted to India.

India welcomed Slovenian proposal to designate India as a focus country at the annual BSF event which would provide India an opportunity to showcase India's economic growth. A Ministerial visit along with a business delegation could be considered for the Business BSF which would provide Indian business delegation an opportunity to meet first hand and establish contacts/linkages with business fraternity in Slovenia and in the region.

Indian side apprised the Slovene side on the latest developments regarding the EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) Negotiations. Both sides expressed hope for an early signing of the EU-India BTIA.

II. Trade Relations

(a) Review of Bilateral Trade

The two sides noted an increase in bilateral trade. However, the volume of trade between the two countries has not grown at a rate matching the potential. The co-chairs agreed to invest further efforts in promoting the growth of bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

(b) Diversification of trade

Both sides expressed determination to increase trade in traditional items and diversify it to include non-traditional items on a mutually beneficial and balanced basis.

The Slovenian side presented the newly-established SPIRIT Slovenia (Slovenian Public Agency for Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Development, Investment and Tourism), which was formed in January 2013 through the merger of three agencies: the Public Agency for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments, the Agency for Technology and Innovation, and the Slovenia Tourist Board.

India appreciated Slovenian decision to include India as one of its strategic focus markets in 2013. The following sectors were identified as the most interesting for cooperation: renewable energy and environment-friendly solutions, automation, machine building, ITC, automotive industry and tourism.

(c) Promotion of foreign direct investments

Both sides stated that bilateral FDI inflow is much below its potential. It was agreed that promotion of two way investment flows is important for strengthening the bilateral relationship.

Indian side expressed interest in collaboration in areas like electronics; Metallurgy; automobiles; electrical power equipments and machine tools.

The Slovenian side presented the measures for attracting FDI and its endeavours for creating a business environment that would be more inviting for domestic and especially foreign investors. Special emphasis was placed on the presentation of the new privatization plans that are currently underway.

In cooperation with SPIRIT Slovenia, the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology publishes public tenders under the co-financing grand scheme for the promotion of FDI. Indian companies are invited to take part in the tender. Slovenia recognises the importance of FDI as an important source of new knowledge, technology, capital and new jobs and would like to invite more foreign investors, including from India, to invest in Slovenia.

Slovenian side invited potential Indian investors to participate in the 'FDI Award' organised to present investment possibilities and investment environment to foreign investors.

In order to enhance cooperation in investments and the exchange of information on the investment policy and projects, both sides proposed to discuss a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between SPIRIT Slovenia and Invest India.

(d) Participation in fairs and exhibitions

India informed about some major international trade fairs organised by the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), and Council for Leather Exports (CLE) and invited Slovenia to participate in them.

Recognizing the significance of fairs and exhibitions for the promotion of bilateral trade, the two sides reiterated their desire to further support their companies and other organizations to participate in fairs and exhibitions in each other's countries. The Slovenian side invited Indian partners to take part in the International Trade and Business Fair in Celje, which is the largest international fair in Slovenia.

III. Agreements

(a) MoU on Cooperation between SID Bank and Export-Import Bank of India

Export Import bank of India (EXIM) and SID Bank have signed a MoU in May 2010 to promote cooperation in providing support for trade and investment in each other's country and for the services to be exported from India and Slovenia as part of projects in third countries. Both sides exchanged details of contact points during the meeting with a view to improve the bilateral trade and investments.

With the growth of bilateral trade, the SID Bank has become more actively involved in the monitoring of the needs of the Slovenian companies investing in the Indian market. SID Bank would be pleased to assist EXIM Bank of India in their activities in South East Europe, through Pro Kolekt, its daughter company with a wide local network.

Both sides expressed hope that the MoU would improve the exchange of bilateral information on companies' profiles and credit reports.

(b) Cooperation in the field of Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Bilateral relations between India and Slovenia in the MSME sector have been quite dynamic. National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. (NSIC) has been regularly participating in the International Trade Fair which is held every year in Celje. Several Indian MSMEs have participated in this Fair during the last three editions under the banner of NSIC. There has also been regular exchange of bilateral visits between both the countries. In January 2012, a delegation led by the Deputy Prime Minister of Slovenia called on the Hon'ble Minister for MSME at New Delhi. The president of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia was also present. During the meeting, both sides decided to explore the possibility of entering into an MOU for strengthening cooperation in the MSME sector. Several Indian SMEs are also interested to invest in Slovenia on account of its geo-strategic location and low risk business environment.

IV. Financial and banking Issues

The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia has adopted a list of fifteen companies that will be the subject of the first round of privatisation. The tender procedures will start in due course. Slovenian side invited Indian companies to participate in the tenders.

India noted and agreed to communicate this to Ministry of Finance and disseminate this among the Industry Associations and Apex chambers.

Both sides expressed interest in advancing their banking relations with special emphasis on deepening bilateral contacts between commercial banks for the promotion of mutual trade.

V. R&D, innovation and business

Both India and Slovenia recognised the significance of R&D for economic growth and social progress. All innovative business ideas should be supported, as they promote innovation, increase competitiveness and create new jobs. The Slovenian Government has initiated the development of centres of excellence and the industry-led competence centres as the key platforms for enhancing cooperation between the industry, science and entrepreneurship. India is a priority market for enhancing cooperation in these areas.

(a) Science and Technology

Both sides agreed to further promote cooperation in science and technology based on the

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of India on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, signed in 1995. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of India will prepare the Program of cooperation in Science and Technology for the period 2014-2016. The Slovenian side expects the first proposal to be submitted by the Indian side in September 2013.

(b) Centres of Excellence- linking Slovenian R&D to the world

Centres of excellence concentrate some of the best Slovenian know-how with a view to promoting commercial interests. They were established to pool Slovenia's academic, scientific and technological potential in order to improve our competitive advantages.

The Slovenian side highlighted the eight centres of excellence, each related to specific technologies such as Polymer Materials, Low-Carbon, Space Sciences, Biosensors, Instrumentation and Process Control, Nano Science and Nanotechnology, Advanced Materials, Integrated Approaches in Chemistry and Biology of Proteins, Nuclear Magnetic Resonance, Synthetic Biology and Chemistry. The Slovenian side expressed keen interest in cooperation in basic academic research and in upgrading the business network with the developments of industrial applications in these areas.

The Slovenian side requested the Indian side to focus on few and identify a suitable counterpart organization in India.

(c) Competence centres - Promising Industry of the Future

The alliance of competence centres of Slovenia supported by the government, unites over fifty leading Slovenian technology companies and over thirty research groups and institutes in the most promising national strategic fields of biotechnology, bio-medical equipment, ICT, efficient use of energy, sustainable construction technologies and advanced processes, production and manufacturing technologies. The mission of competence centres is to develop and improve competences and technologies in innovative products, services and solutions with a high added value for partner companies to be globally competitive.

The Slovenian side highlighted the competence centres particularly for biomedical engineering, Biotechnology development and innovation, Cloud computing technologies, construction, efficient use of electrical energy, advanced control technologies and open communication platform for integrated services.

The Slovenian side requested the Indian side to focus on a few and identify a suitable counterpart organization (network, cluster, centre) in India particularly with a view to establishing common technology development centre(s) in Slovenia, demonstration projects, joint "emerging industries" clusters.

Indian side welcomes Slovenian proposal for cooperation between the Slovenian Centres of Excellence & Competences centres and Indian organisations working in these areas. Concerned Ministries and FICCI/CII/Punjab and Haryana and Delhi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) will identify counterpart Indian bodies in these areas for follow up.

VI. Economic Cooperation

(a) Air transport

Slovenian side informed that the Republic of Slovenia ratified the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of India relating to scheduled air services and the Protocol amending the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of India relating to scheduled air services of 10 April 2013 and requested information on the conclusion of internal procedures in India.

The Slovenian side noted the importance of establishing direct flights between Slovenia and India, which would open up more opportunities in business and tourism. The Indian side noted the Slovene request.

(b) Information Communication Technology

Both sides found that Information technology is one of the most promising fields of cooperation between the two countries and agreed to encourage cooperation in electronics, software and other areas of information technology.

The Slovenian side informed about the interest of Association of Informatics and Telecommunications of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia to explore the possibilities of cooperation in the following areas: elimination of administrative barriers, interoperable concepts and models, registers and official documents, e-Social Security, e-Justice, transport and e-Health.

(c) Tourism

India stated that inbound tourist arrival from and departures to Slovenia are very limited. India has 33 functional Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) and Food Craft Institutes. Faculty exchange programmes can be organised between the HRD Institutes in India and Slovenia. Tour Operators in both the countries may explore possibilities for promoting more packaged tours. Indian side welcomed Slovenian participation in the annual SATTE event and noted increasing interest of Indian companies participating in Slovenian Events.

Both countries could also explore opportunities in JV Investment in hotel industry and tourism infrastructural sector. India recently has allowed 100% FDI on automatic route in Hotel and Tourism sector. Slovenia may avail this opportunity for mutual benefit.

Both countries agreed to consider exchange of statistics on tourist arrivals, targets and projection, infrastructure facilities etc. Both countries can greatly benefit by sharing experience and know in destination management, management of heritage sites, mountain tourism etc.

The Slovenian side informed the Indian side about the activities aimed at promoting Slovenia in India and about the interest of some Slovenian tourist companies and associations for closer cooperation with Indian partners (particularly travel agencies and tour operators). The arrangement to process tourist visas in six Indian cities is an important development on this regard. Untapped potential still exists for enhanced cooperation between the two tourist boards. The most important event in this regard is the annual Slovenian Incoming Workshop, which is also known among Indian travel agencies. This year three of them participated in the event. The Slovenian side will participate in SATTE 2014.

Apart from spa tourism offering Ayurveda services, the priority area of possible co-operation is the film industry, as Slovenia can offer beautiful scenery and can become a new location for the Indian film industry. The main partner in Slovenia in this regard is the Slovenian Film Centre.

(d) Cooperation in film production

The Ministry of Culture, responsible for the cinematic field, proposed the amending of the Programme of Collaboration in the Culture, Art, Education, Science, Sport and Media between the Government of Republic of Slovenia and the Government of India, regarding the promotion and the conditions of cooperation in film production.

In the light of the growing interest of Indian film productions to film in Slovenia and the interest of Slovenian film professionals to cooperate with Indian producers, the Slovenian side noted the need to amend the Programme on cooperation in culture. The aim of the document would be to promote the Slovenian and Indian film industries, and the tourist destinations in the interest of Indian filming and production companies. The competent Slovenian authority would be the Slovenian Film Centre.

The Indian side noted this request and agreed to revert on the matter.

(e) Power

Both sides agreed to enhance joint cooperation in the area of hydro power projects in both countries.

Indian side stated that it could extend technical and financial assistance and invest in Slovenia in the development of untapped hydro potential. India side offered to contribute in renovation & modernisation (R&M) of older hydro power plants. Slovenia may also cooperate and contribute in R&M works yet to be taken up for execution by the concerned State/Central generating utilities in India. Project wise details of these R&M schemes were handed to the Slovene side.

Slovenian side mentioned the ongoing cooperation in solar energy and hoped that renewable energy would be one of the pillars of future bilateral engagement.

(f) Standardisation

A MoU between the Bureau of India Standards (BIS) and Slovenian Institute for Standardisation (SIST) was signed on 14th June 2011 with an objective to facilitate closer cooperation and provide a mechanism by which BIS and SIST can work together

towards common aim of strengthening standardisation and training activities and facilitate sharing of expertise. The Slovenian side proposed certain specific areas of cooperation to build up on the existing MoU. BIS noted the proposal and agreed to revert shortly.

Both sides agreed to take follow-up action on the existing MoU for mutual benefit.

(g) Cooperation in Mining

The Slovenian side identified mineral exploitation and mining as one of the possible areas to further technology cooperation. The patented mining method developed in Slovenia has been internationally proven as a safer and more effective manner of underground coal mining exploitation.

A Joint venture agreement was signed between the Slovenian Premogovnik Velenje and Fairwood India during the visit of the then Prime Minister Pahor to India on 14 June 2011.

VIII. Other matters

(a) Travel facilitation

The Indian side stated that complexity of procedures and uncertainty regarding the time taken for issuance of long term visas and work permits can be a deterrent to investments.

Both Sides emphasised the importance of facilitating travel to promote bilateral trade, investment and tourism in both directions within the framework of domestic laws.

Investors in both countries would be encouraged if they had the confidence that they would be able to move managerial and skilled resources in a time-bound manner.

(b) Cooperation between business chambers

It was noted that several memorandums of understanding between the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS) and partner institutions have been signed, namely with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), 28 January 2013 (Agra), and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), 26 June 1995 (Ljubljana), to mention but a few at the national level.

The CCIS action plan for India has been launched, within the framework of the CCIS programme "Go International Slovenia", for strengthening the Slovenian economy on

foreign markets. The CCIS announced to establish, by September 2013, the Slovenian-Indian Business Club under the auspices of the CCIS.

CCIS is seeking to identify Indian companies that could serve as strategic partners for the Slovenian industry (metal processing, paper and chemical industry) as well as the establishment of a consortium of Slovenian engineering companies to enter the Indian market.

Indian side noted with satisfaction that informal consulting bodies, like the CCIS Joint Business Council (and foreseen formal Slovenian-Indian Business Club), FICCI Joint Business Council and the CII Regional Committee on Central Europe, enhance direct contacts between the companies of both countries.

Indian side proposed visits by Slovenian high-level business delegations to the selected CII Partnership Summit, FICCI Business Summit and India Engineering Sourcing Show (IESS 2014).

The CCIS invited major Indian national and regional chambers to consider organizing business delegations to Slovenia to accompany visits to Central and Eastern Europe.

(c) Koper Port

The Slovenian side drew attention on the importance of the Port of Koper as the EU Entrance point for the entire Central and Eastern Europe. The Slovenian side expresses the importance of establishing a direct shipping link between the Port of Koper and the Indian ports.

Indian side observed that presently a direct link between India and port (Koper) would not be viable given the present levels of cargo/container volumes in the bilateral trade.

(d) ICPE

The Slovenian side drew attention to proposals of the International Centre for Public Enterprises (ICPE) for the assistance which would be appreciated in the implementation of ICPE's activities/programs including the ICPE renewed international postgraduate MBA programme in partnership with the Faculty of economics, University of Ljubljana; sponsorship of joint research/studies to ICPE, and a joint international conference by ICPE and IPE, Institute of Public Enterprise, in Hyderabad, India by the end of 2013 for fostering EU-India research&education cooperation.

Indian side observed that for the re-introduction of the international postgraduate MBA programme planned for October 2013 or for that matter organising other short

academic courses/training programmes also, it is imperative that improvements in the infrastructure of ICPE, like renovation of hostel accommodation, upgradation of library facilities, adoption of modern teaching techniques including greater use of ICT etc take place well in time, latest by the end of August 2013.

The Slovenian side requested the Indian side to sponsor adequate number of students by end August 2013, since renovation work is ongoing in the ICPE.

Organisational issues

The two sides agreed to hold the next session of the Joint Committee in Slovenia at a date mutually agreed upon. The exact date will be decided through diplomatic channels.

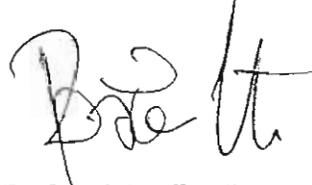
Done and signed in New Delhi on 16 July 2013, in two originals in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

For the Government of India



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Joint Secretary FT (Europe)
Department of Commerce
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Government of India

For the Government of Slovenia



Dr. Stanislav Raščan
Director General
Directorate for Economic Diplomacy
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Government of Slovenia

8th Session of India-Slovenia JCTEC

Composition of Delegation

INDIAN DELEGATION

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Shri Sumanta Chaudhuri, Joint Secretary | -Leader
Department of Commerce |
| 2. Ms. Sangeeta Godbole, Director | Department of Commerce |
| 3. Shri Vinod Kumar Jindal, Director | D/o Public Enterprises |
| 4. Shri A. R. Unnikrishnan, Scientist-E | IR & TISD Division, Bureau of
Indian Standards |
| 5. Shri Ramesh Pandey, Joint DC | O/o DC SSI, M/o MSME |
| 6. Shri Anil Oraw, Asst. Director General | M/o Tourism |
| 7. Shri S. K. Rawat, Under Secretary | M/o External Affairs |
| 8. Shri Joseph A T Barla, Under Secretary | D/o Commerce |
| 9. Shri Sanjay Kumar, Regional Director | Council of Leather Exports |
| 10. Shri Ankur Singh Chauhan, Deputy Director | Confederation of Indian
Industries |
| 11. Shri Gaurav Vats, Deputy Director | FICCI |
| 12. Shri Sandeep Kumar, Asstt. General
Manager | EXIM Bank of India |

8th Session of India-Slovenia JCTEC

Composition of Delegation

SLOVENIAN DELEGATION

1. Dr. Stanislav Rascan, Director - Leader
General Det. Of Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs,
2. Mr. Janez Premoze , Embassy of Slovenia, New Delhi
Ambassador
3. Mr. Bostjan Skalar, Acting SPIRIT Slovenia, Slovenian Public
Director Agency for Entrepreneurship, Innovation,
Development, Investment, and Tourism,
Ministry of Economic Development and
Technology
4. Ms. Jana Bajec Povse, Dte. For Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of
Secretary for JEC with India Foreign Affairs of Slovenia.
5. Ms. Mojca Hrovatic, Economic Embassy of Slovenia, New Delhi
Counsellor
6. Ms. Sabina Dolinsek Popadic, Aviation Division, Det. Of Infrastructure,
M/o Infrastructure and Spatial Planning

**8TH SESSION OF JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRADE & ECONOMIC COOPERATION
BETWEEN INDIA AND SLOVENIA
16 JULY 2013, NEW DELHI**

AGENDA

1. OVER VIEW OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN INDIA AND SLOVENIA
2. TRADE RELATION BETWEEN INDIA AND SLOVENIA
 - (a) Review of bilateral trade
 - (b) Diversification of trade
3. ECONOMIC COOPERATION
 - (a) Investment
 - (b) Small and Medium Enterprises
 - (c) Science and Technology
 - (d) Transport (air service)
 - (e) Information Technology
 - (f) Tourism
 - (g) Power
 - (h) Standardisation
 - (i) Cooperation in film production
 - (j) Health & Medicine
 - (k) Cooperation in Mining
5. FINANCIAL AND BANKING COOPERATION
 - (a) SID Bank, Ljubljana and EXIM Bank, India
6. OTHER ISSUES
 - (a) Visa issues
 - (b) Cooperation between CCIS (Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia) and FICCI
