

European Business and Technology Centre to be opened in India

Today, EUROCHAMBRES will be signing an agreement with the European Commission Delegation in New Delhi to establish the first “European Business and Technology Centre” (EBTC) in India.

The EBTC is to become the reference point for promoting European business and research in India. EU companies will be able to contact the EBTC to receive information and support for their activities in that country, with focus on the Environmental sector, Energy, Biotech and Transport.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, explains: *“The EBTC will be an invaluable tool to help EU businesses reap the benefits of a huge market such as India. In particular, it will promote market access for European innovative products related to clean technologies, which can help to fight climate change in India. But of course, on-the-ground support is not enough. EU and Indian companies need the right framework conditions to operate, and in this respect we urge the EU-India summit at the end of this month to make progress on the negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement between the two regions.”*

The EBTC will be implemented by EUROCHAMBRES and 16 partners combining business organisations, academic and research institutes from all over the EU*. The EBTC will work in close cooperation with the already established national service providers and bilateral Chambers of Commerce to ensure a complementarity of activities and thus an added value for European businesses.

The EBTC will benefit from a EUR 8.2 million budget over 60 months, 80% of which is funded by the European Commission. The project is one of the first initiatives at European level to promote European business interests abroad, as part of the European Commission’s Global Europe strategy.

The launch of the EBTC will be announced at a high-level event in New Delhi organised by the European Commission Delegation (EC) in India together with the French EU Presidency, in the presence of Danièle Smadja, Ambassador, Head of the EC Delegation; Jérôme Bonnafont, French Ambassador and Arnaldo Abruzzini, EUROCHAMBRES’ Secretary General.

EU-India relations

With a growing market of more than 1 billion people and a growth rate of between 8 and 10%, India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. It is also an important trade partner for the EU. In 2007, EU goods and services exports to India amounted to EUR 32.9 billion, while EU goods and services imports from India amounted to EUR 34.9 billion. Yet, India still maintains substantial tariff and non-tariff barriers that hinder trade with the EU.

The EU and India hope to increase their trade in both goods and services through the Free Trade Agreement negotiations (FTA) that they launched in 2007. FTA talks will be at the heart of the next EU-India summit of 29 September in Marseille, France.

* Swedish Environmental Institute – IVL (S) , Finpro (FI.), Lyon Chamber of Commerce (F), Fraunhofer Institute IFF (D), Centro Estero per l'Internazionalizzazione del Piemonte (I), Politecnico di Torino (I), Danish Technological Institute (DK), Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce (UK), Coventry University Enterprise (UK), Milan Chamber of Commerce (I), ERBI Cambridge (UK), COPCA (ES), Baltic Innovation Agency (EE), Unioncamere Piemonte (I), Steinbeis Foundation (D), the Indo-German Institute (D).

Further information: Ms Martina Kuhlmann, Tel. +32 2 282 08 59, kuhlmann@eurochambres.eu
Press contact: Ms Guendalina Cominotti, Tel. +32 2 282 08 66, cominotti@eurochambres.eu
All our press releases can be downloaded from www.eurochambres.eu/content/default.asp?PageID=153

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