

India-EU/Member States Partnership for a Strategic Roadmap in research and Innovation

- Concluding plenary session: the way forward

Statement made by Ana Cristina Neves

“Thank you, Chair.

Until now we have worked together in S&T mainly through two institutional means:

- Agreement between India and the EU
- Bilateral Agreements on S&T between India and several Member States of the EU, as it is the case with Portugal.

This new Forum – The Strategic Forum on International Cooperation on Science and Technology (SFIC) set-up at the EU’s level together with its Member States -, constitutes an additional way for us to work together, scaling up and therefore allowing new levels of ambition.

SFIC started to work in the beginning of 2009 and envisaged the opportunity to collaborate with some world countries, taking advantage of the diversity of experiences that each Member State of the EU already has in collaborating with countries outside Europe.

India was considered one of the most interesting countries to work with by the Member States through this new way of collaboration, which we believe will expand, improve and will make a difference in our cooperation with India. It constitutes a new path.

We have had during these last two days some very good discussions, acknowledged very good presentations and results of on-going research developed at national level but also developed through bilateral schemes and multilateral initiatives. **I hope that, in the short time, it will be possible to have good presentations and results from this new way of collaboration with India.**

Many instruments were presented during these two days, which we also know that are not fully exploited. So, we have to learn on how to use them in a most effective way and on how to make a better use of them.

But this can only be done through more dialogue and collaboration between the Parties at both bilateral and multilateral levels.

But of course this will take time.

For the time being, this is a top-down approach but I expect that the bottom-up dynamics will take care and expand the potential of this movement.

After this session there will be the signature of the Chairpersons' Statement on "India, EU and Member States Partnership for a Strategic Roadmap in Research and Innovation."

What I want to flag here is not the signature of such document **but the day after**, when we will have to execute, to put on the right track and to start new collaboration partnerships, platforms, projects and networks between India, EU and its Member States.

On the day after, we will have to find a coherent approach where all partners will feel committed to understand and to learn from each other.

What do we want? I think that we just want to make the world a better place to live in, and to use Research, Innovation and Knowledge to do it.

And we can do it in a better way if we take advantage of the exiting competences on Research, Technological Development and Knowledge in India, EU and its Member States, not in a selfish way but in a holistic, innovative and sustainable way.

I don't know how many times I used the word "we" during my speech, but I know I used it quite a lot. It only means that it is up to us now to make this Partnership a success.

Thank you so much for your attention!"