

Intellectual Property Rights Seminar of January 22, 2020

Welcome address by Ambassador Dr. Andreas Baum

Mr. Ravinder, Joint Secretary of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT),

Mr. Gupta, Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks,

Mr. Sagar, Managing Partner of K&S Intellectual Property Attorneys,

Esteemed Panelists,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you today to the Swiss Embassy for this panel discussion on Intellectual Property Rights.

We are gathered to exchange views on the role of IPR in a world with interdependent economies. Effective national or subnational IPR regimes are crucial and a prerequisite for prospering bilateral economic relations. A working IPR regime gives exporters and investors the security that their innovations are protected and their R&D expenses validated. This ensures that the economy can play its role as innovator. Of course, other factors, such as an efficient research system or a well-trained labor force, are also important elements of an innovation system.

Another factor, crucial for a small and open economy such as Switzerland, is trade. India is a very important partner for Switzerland – as it is for the European countries in general - when it comes to trade and investment. India is our third most important trade partner in Asia. Switzerland is the eight most important investor in India. But there is still a lot of untapped potential. More generally, at last week's Raisina Dialogue, the Indian Foreign Minister referred to India's intentions to deepen the relationship with European countries.

Switzerland is committed to providing the best possible framework and legal conditions for Swiss companies to further develop their activities in India.

The most important project we are working on is a Free Trade Agreement with India. Negotiations between EFTA-member States and India, which started in 2008, are ongoing, but there are still obstacles to overcome. I am hopeful that the next round of negotiations will take place soon. IPR is of course one of the key points of discussion in the negotiations.

Another priority is the conclusion of a new Bilateral Investment Protection Treaty, which became necessary after India terminated almost all such treaties in 2017. Three rounds of negotiations have already taken place, a fourth round is planned for this spring.

But now back to IPR. Today, we wish to learn more about the Intellectual Property Rights system in India, and about its opportunities and challenges. We will be interested to discuss how India can further attract investments by innovative companies and how IPR can contribute to strengthening the innovation ecosystem between Europe and India.

I am pleased that we could gather extremely competent speakers and panelists who will elaborate on the topic from different angles.

The Indian Government is represented by Mr. Ravinder and Mr. Gupta. Mr. Ravinder is Joint Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade DPIIT and Mr. Gupta is Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks.

The corporate world is represented by Dr. Subramanyam, Managing Director of Roche Diagnostics and President of the Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Rao, Legal Counsel and Data Privacy Head for the South Asia Region of Nestle, and Mr. Karmakar, Head of Robotics at ABB India.

Before I hand over the floor to Joint Secretary Ravinder, I would like to cordially thank our partners in organizing today's event, the European Business Group Federation and K&S Intellectual Property Attorneys. Without them, it would not have been possible to have

such senior expert speakers and panelists and such a distinguished audience.

Thank you.