

INDIA-AFRICA FORUM SUMMIT III

India to begin Technology & Innovation sharing with Rwanda ***Round Table with Rt. Hon. Murekezi Anastase, Prime Minister of Rwanda***

NEW DELHI, 31 October 2015: Rwanda Prime Minister **Rt. Hon. Murekezi Anastase**, India's Department of Science & Technology (DST) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) have announced the first initiative by India to begin showcasing and commercializing India technology and innovation in Africa, starting with the Republic of Rwanda. The program is slated to be launched in 6 months and could become a hallmark of the next phase of the India-Africa relationship in which proved Indian innovations would be replicated in Africa to usher in the much needed socio-economic impact development.

On the sidelines of the India Africa Forum Summit III (IAFS III) held October 26-30, 2015, in Delhi, which saw the unprecedented participation of 54 African nations, FICCI together with DST organized an Interactive Roundtable with Rt. Hon. Murekezi Anastase, Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda. The roundtable brought together key stakeholders from India and Rwanda for setting up an Indo – Rwanda Technology Transfer and Commercialization Program to provide Rwandan industry with leading edge Indian innovations and technologies across critical sectors wherein India will mentor Rwandan industry and build capacity. This platform will also bring in revenues for Indian technologies and innovations that primarily come from the small and medium sector entrepreneurs, providing new international markets to Indian innovations.

FICCI through its Centre for Innovation, Science and Technology Commercialization that has been collaborating as private sector with Government of India's DST and international partners has offered a portfolio of innovations and technologies to Rwanda, opening new opportunities and collaboration. In essence, this program by India has given teeth to the United Nations' Sustainable Development goals by ensuring South-South cooperation. The proposed technologies come from diverse sectors that would be of direct relevance to Rwanda including Agriculture (Food Security - Production, Storage, Processing & transportation), Energy, Education, Healthcare, Water & Sanitation, Low Cost Housing, Infrastructure Development, Clean technology etc. Representative 10 technology-led innovations were showcased at the Roundtable that addressed the need in the above-mentioned sectors.

The Rwandan government wholeheartedly welcomed this initiative, with **Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Murekezi Anastase** stating "Rwandan government guaranteed complete support to the Indian enterprises". The Prime Minister was confident that "the impact created by demonstration of innovation and technology through this program will be an example for East Africa, and then the rest of the continent." He added that Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, has ensured the creation of the most peaceful, secure and business friendly country in Africa. Rwanda ranks Number 2 with respect to ease of doing business in sub-Saharan Africa. A company can register a local entity and get license to start business within six hours, unparalleled in any other African country.

Prof. VijayRaghavan, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology said "the Government of India is committed to Africa and provide seamless transfer of technology and innovation to African governments and businesses".

Dr. A. Didar Singh, Secretary General, FICCI stated "as India's leading industry chamber, FICCI has worked earnestly with DST, Government of India, to establish a G2G platform but one that will foster B2B relationships between India and Rwanda, and India and Africa."

Ms. Valentine Rugwabiza, Minister from the Ministry of East African Community, Rwanda, stated that the proposed program will be validated in Rwanda and the impact created will automatically open the doors for Indian technology and innovation to countries in East Africa and then rest of Africa.

Dr. Arabinda Mitra, Head, International Cooperation (Bilateral), Department of Science & Technology, detailed the program mechanism which will begin as a bilateral effort but within the next 5 years be expanded to East Africa and perhaps other regions of Africa. Dr. Mitra highlighted that the program synchronizes with the vision laid out by the Hon. Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, during his speech and interaction with Heads of Government during the India Africa Forum Summit III. Dr. Mitra assured Rwanda that the Government of India will effort to start implementing the program in the next six months.

Mr. Nirankar Saxena, Senior Director, FICCI said “we are delighted to begin the program that was started as an idea 3 years ago but finally given shape in the last few months”. Mr. Saxena said FICCI together with DST and its international partners in the Millennium Alliance have identified technologies and innovations in specific sectors requested by the government of Rwanda and other African nations.”

Mr. Munish Gupta, Director, Universal Empire Infrastructure Limited in Rwanda said that his company is a proven example of an Indian enterprise that chose Rwanda for all the right reasons, particularly the speedy clearances and investment protection measures offered by Rwanda. Gupta’s company is set to start the first private sector university, with the first phase being a medical and dental college to serve Rwanda and Africa.

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