

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110 001

PRESS NOTE

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ECI IS ELECTED CHAIR OF ASSOCIATION OF ASIAN ELECTION AUTHORITIES (AAEA)

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA HOSTS THE 2014 GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING OF AAEA

The General Assembly of Association of Asian Election Authorities today elected Election Commission of India as Chair of the organisation for the next two years. Commissioner Cho Byoung-Hun of South Korea (outgoing Chair) felicitated Mr. V. S. Sampath, the Chief Election Commissioner of India, and assured him of full cooperation of S. Korea in strengthening AAEA and expanding its activities. The host of the meeting held in New Delhi, Election Commission of India was represented by Mr. V.S. Sampath, Chief Election Commissioner of India and Election Commissioners Mr. H.S. Brahma, and Dr. Nasim Zaidi.



Mr. V. S. Sampath, Chief Election Commissioner of India taking over as Chair of AAEA from South Korea

Mr. V.S. Sampath accepted the responsibility of Chair, and thanked the members for the trust and confidence reposed in ECI. He underlined the importance of Asia as home of more than 60% of the world population and some of the strongest economies in the world. He stressed that AAEA should maintain a prominent profile in the fields of democracy and election management. He shared his vision of expanding AAEA and making it truly representative by

admitting several Asian countries, which are eligible to become members. He also reiterated ECI's commitment to experience sharing and capacity building of EMBs in the region.

The Executive Board comprising S. Korea, India, the Philippines, Taiwan and Kazakhstan which met earlier in the day, decided to endorse, among other things, admission of the Russian Federation as a new member of AAEA. The Executive Board meets annually to discuss important issues and report to the General Assembly of the Association which meets every two years.

The General Assembly elected the Philippines as Vice Chair and designated it as host for the next General Assembly. Mongolia, Bhutan and S. Korea (outgoing Chair) were also elected as Executive Members. The General Assembly also admitted the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan and Maldives as new members, reviewed the activities of AAEA, received a report from the AAEA Secretariat and approved some amendments to the AAEA Charter to streamline selection of Executive Board members, their tenure and functioning of the Secretariat. Matters relating to Financing and future activities of AAEA were also discussed.

Election Commissioners Mr. H.S. Brahma and Dr. Nasim Zaidi chaired a special session of the delegates, where Mr. Brahma briefed the delegates about India's successful conduct of the 2014 General Election. India International Institute of Democracy & Election Management (IIIDEM) also made a presentation about its capacity building programmes, and use of technology in Elections by ECI. The delegates were particularly impressed by the demonstration of the Electronic Voting Machine and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail equipment used by ECI.

India is a founding member of AAEA which was established in 1998 and, with admission of three new members, now has 20 member-countries. Besides India, other members are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Kyrgyz Republic, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The organisation's vision is to promote and institutionalise open and transparent elections, independent and impartial election authorities, professionalization of Asian election authorities, citizen participation in the electoral and civic process, information sharing, and the development of resources for election-related information and research.

Sd/-
(Dhirendra Ojha)
Director