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Opening Remarks
Launch of the U.S.–India Standards and
Conformance Cooperation Program (SCCP)
February 20, 2009 – New Delhi

Good morning, everyone.

My name is Joe Bhatia, and I am president and CEO of the American National Standards Institute.

It is my pleasure to be here today, and I would like to thank you all for joining us in launching the U.S.– India Standards and Conformance Cooperation Program.

For those of you who are not familiar with ANSI, we are the coordinator of the U.S. private-sector led and public sector-supported voluntary consensus standards and conformity assessment system. The Institute's activities cross all industry sectors from technology to services, and from consumer safety to protection of the environment.

ANSI speaks as the U.S. voice in standardization forums around the globe. Through our network of members, we represent the interests of more than 125,000 companies and 3.5 million professionals worldwide.

ANSI is pleased to partner with the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, the Confederation of Indian Industry, and the Bureau of Indian Standards to launch this exciting new program to support trade, investment, and technical exchange between the U.S. and India.

America's trade relationship with India is healthy and growing.

Just listen to the numbers...

- Bilateral trade in merchandise goods has increased almost 400% in the last 15 years.
- In 2007 alone, Indian exports to the U.S. totaled nearly 20 billion dollars. U.S. exports to India totaled 14 billion dollars.

In our fast-paced global economy, there is no question that standardization and trade are linked. Dozens of studies from the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the World Trade Organization back up the statement with data.

In total, 80% of global commodity trade is impacted by standards and conformity assessment programs. This means roughly \$11.2 trillion in 2007 alone. If we are not all on the same page, the international community – particularly industry – experiences a lot of duplicative effort and incurs a lot of unnecessary cost.

Time and again, we have seen that those who understand how to effectively influence and address standardization and compliance issues have the greatest success in the international marketplace.

Already, alliances between Indian and American firms are creating investment openings across industries. Several ANSI members—including IBM, Intel, Microsoft, GE and Boeing—have found their footing in the IT, services and manufacturing sectors. They are recognizing the economic promise in the Indian business environment.

Likewise, an increasing number of Indian companies are finding tremendous potential for trade and investment in the U.S. market. Examples include companies like Bharat Forge, Essar Group, HCL, Jet Airways, Mahindra, Tata Group, and Wockhardt. Together these companies represent a diverse array of industries: steel, airlines, pharmaceuticals, auto parts, healthcare, hotels, chemicals and information technology.¹

Standards are not limited to just technical specifications for manufactured products or safety codes. Internationally, the services sector is one of the fastest growing areas for standards development.

Why? Because services represent the largest and most dynamic segment of the world economy — in 2008, they accounted for more than 64% of the global gross domestic product².

And India's trade in services has been growing even faster than merchandise trade. You are wisely capitalizing on your well-educated, highly skilled English-speaking workforce to become a major exporter of services.

Whether we are talking about IT, manufacturing, or services, the SCCP has been designed to facilitate trade and offer U.S. and Indian companies an additional path to success in a foreign market.

This program is built upon a strong foundation of collaboration and mutual understanding. In December 2007, ANSI, CII, and BIS came together to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), making a formal commitment to cooperation and the advancement of trade between the U.S. and India.

¹ Names and info come from a U.S.-India Business Council press release (February 2008): <http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/02-12-2008/0004754704&EDATE=>

² Figure comes from the CIA World Fact Book as republished on Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_sector_composition

According to the chart, the services sector percentage is well over 70% in the U.S. (78.6%), but is actually below the global GDP in India (60.7%). It remains the fastest-growing sector in India, though.

In signing the MoU, we not only opened the door for increased collaboration among our three organizations. . . we also created a mechanism for increased engagement by Indian and U.S. industry. In short, we agreed to exchange information and best practices, and to make our collective resources available to those who need them.

The SCCP, too, is focused primarily on the exchange of information. Together, ANSI, USTDA, CII, and BIS are making a commitment to empower U.S. and Indian stakeholders with the standards and conformity assessment information resources they need.

Our program will consist of three main components:

- We will develop a directory of the mandatory and voluntary requirements for entering and competing in the U.S. market.

A similar directory of Indian information will also be developed under a mirror program.

- We will convene a series of sector-specific workshops that will bring together industry and technical experts to address regulatory issues.

The workshops will be co-sponsored by U.S. organizations, and will offer an excellent opportunity for U.S. and Indian organization to participate in technical discussions.

- We will expand U.S. and Indian resources on StandardsPortal, an online resource that facilitates international trade by helping companies better understand the standards, regulatory, and conformance related technical requirements that they face around the world.

We will be adding information on the standards and conformance systems in India, a guide to U.S. best practices, a directory of conformity assessment bodies in the U.S., and a directory of U.S. regulatory agencies.

Each of these components will be a critical piece of an overall information infrastructure that supports and facilitates cooperation between U.S. and Indian stakeholders . . . from individual organizations and companies to government agencies, ministries, and entire industry sectors.

I believe that the effectiveness of the SCCP will reach far past the completion of the program itself. The information we share and the relationships we form will continue to support Indo-U.S. trade facilitation today, tomorrow, and well into the future.

India has changed a lot in recent years. There is no denying that this country is an economic power—not just in Asia but worldwide.

Ever since I emigrated to the U.S. in 1964, I have routinely traveled back to India to visit family and friends as well as for business purposes. I have witnessed India's growth firsthand, and I am proud to join you as we kick off this new program in support of increased economic growth and trade between our two countries.

Thank you very much for your attention and for the warm welcome. I look forward to working with you to make this program a success.

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