



ACTIVITY REPORT

**PRESENTED AT THE AGM ON 10TH OF JUNE 2006
BY THE EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT, Mr RAYMOND BARRE**

Paris, the 10th of June 2006

Dear fellow-members,

I am addressing the Assembly General for the last time as Executive President of the Centre as my four-year tenure has come to an end.

Looking back, it has been four eventful years for the Centre: When it was founded over 4 years ago, India was not the acknowledged emerging power that it is now on the international scene and no institution would then exist that would dedicate itself entirely to the rejuvenation of the Euro-Indian partnership.

We may say with pride that by rallying this cause and joining as members, all of us have vindicated the cause and set up the institutional base for the Centre to now start benefiting from its early start and unique positioning.

Strategic blueprint: *Vision 2008*

The collective brainstorming that we undertook in 2005 has given us a clear strategy blueprint *Vision 2008* to build up on our assets and reach the scope and dimension that is required if we are to achieve our very ambitious goals.

You will recall that it called for a change of the Centre's strategic paradigm to set a virtuous growth circle into motion that would make co-opting new members easier, enhance our pool of Euro-Indian resources, our financial means and improve our services, etc with membership target of 100 members by end-2005 and of 200 by end-2006.

Membership status:

Against 43 members two year ago, today we count 72 members, 9 institutional and 63 individual.

Since the last AGM 3 more institutional members have rallied us: BNP-Paribas, Onward technologies, Renault against one resignation (Godrej & Boyce), 14 more

individual members against 6 resignations (including Board members, Neena Gill and Wahid Saleh), 4 more student members.

The mix is still by and large the same, 2/3 of the members based in Europe out of which 1/3 of Indian origin and 1/3 based in India, out which a few of European origin, with a noteworthy growing appeal to students growing from 2 to 6 members.

Still we fell short of the target of 100 members by end-2005, the main reason being that it took longer than expected to bring about the give and take deal for members to get value for money that was called for by *Vision 2008*.

It is reassuring however to note that:

- This reason explains 5 out of the 6 resignations that we registered in the last twelve months: alleged frustration to have to wait for tangible changes. The controversy raised by one member was directly responsible for only one resignation, that of the member concerned.
- For each individual member who left of frustration, we got one institutional member accepting the rise in membership fee from 1000 € per year to 5000 € that was decided last year: 6 paid-up, one refused (Godrej Boyce), two are still undecided (BNP-Paribas, TCS). This income bolstered the Centre's finances and enabled it to fund its development efforts.

That would not have been enough if this cash contribution had not been largely supplemented by contributions in kind made by dedicated members who took upon themselves to devote time to specific tasks, which were part of the strategic plan. Due credit is given to them nominally in the rapport.

Present status of the Vision 2008 action plan:

Vision 2008 outlined a very detailed action plan for 2005-8. Where do we stand after one year into this plan?

Whereas the **give** by members in terms of their continuing support by way of membership fees and co-option of select members is here to stay as explained above, the **take** has started taking shape by providing **services to members by members:**

A thoroughly revamped Website and a brand new newsletter that will be unveiled to you today. Both combined will:

- Facilitate exchanges between members and the Centre and among members, more so with the planned introduction of a Member Community Management System
- Help our member's canvassing efforts for new members
- Provide a dedicated congenial window to boost our members' Euro-Indian designs
- Provide up to date information on the Centre's activities to members and non-members alike.

- Disseminate information on Euro-Indian relations and opportunities
- Give a good image and visibility to the Centre
- A one stop classified entry to a selection of existing partner websites, etc.

⇒ **My special thanks to member Gajender Sharma and Secretariat members P.Balakrishna, Nitya Gupta, Ashok Kar, Michel Sabatier.**

We are also mooted a **EuroIndia Journal** edited by member Shazia Aziz and published by Sage Publications that will deal in depth with Euro-Indian issues of our choice, based on Members' and non-members' original papers.

⇒ **My special thanks to Shazia Aziz**

These communication tools will only achieve their objectives and run smoothly if all members own them up and contribute to their content, while using them for their own Euro-Indian communication. Only then our motto: **Serving members by members** will acquire a concrete meaning.

A cross-cultural training service with coaching provided by members. The definition of cross-cultural training packages had been defined very early and put on our Website. Now a core group of members who are qualified and keen to impart the proposed training on request has been formed led by Prajna Paramita from Brussels.

We completed our first assignment for COFACE Expert in 2005. We should hope that most partner-cities and -corporate will heed our advice that they undergo cross-cultural training prior to taking part in the Forum to minimize the cultural gap in discussions. That should hopefully result in a substantial workload in the next few months for our training team.

⇒ **My special thanks to members Prajna Paramita, Sanjiv Rao and Secretariat members Ashok Kar and Michel Sabatier**

Events for multi-dimensional exchange:

- Our own events:
 - Dinner and informal discussion by the Delhi Chapter on "*Expansion of the EU -Implications for India*" on 17 September 2005 in Delhi with keynote speakers and moderators, Members Dr. Rajiv Kumar & Dr. Jean-Joseph Boillot
 - Lecture on "*Will Europe still be a World Economic Player in the 21st Century?*" on November 25 2005 in Delhi jointly with the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and the Embassy of France in India.

⇒ **Our special thanks to the Delhi Chapter members and Jean-Joseph Boillot, Rajiv Kumar, NK Mehra in particular and to Secretariat members Rama Naidu and Michel Sabatier**

- Our India Conference organised by the Paris Chapter on the 19th December as the European launch of the Centre with keynote speakers

the Ambassador of India in France, members Bertrand Collomb and Deepak Parekh.

⇒ **Our special thanks to members Dominique Bouvier, Pierre Florin and Jacques Etienne T'Serclaes and Secretariat members Nitya Gupta and Michel Sabatier who organized the conference and to keynote speaker members Bertrand Collomb and Deepak Parekh. Special thanks to the latter who made a return trip from Mumbai only to honour this one commitment!**

- Co-sponsored events:

- The Wolfsberg Forum on "Is the Indian Economy Ready for Takeoff?" with member Dr Rajiv Kumar, 25 January 2005, courtesy member Prabhu Guptara
- Soirée AFPLANE on 9 June 2005 : « *L'éléphant indien s'est réveillé. Quels enjeux pour l'économie française?* » with keynote speaker member J.J.Boillot, courtesy member Dominique Turcq
- Release of the book '*Europe after Enlargement, challenges for EU and India*' published by Academic Foundation on Thursday 24 November 2005, courtesy member J.J. Boillot
- Conference on India at Dauphine University on 17 may 2006

⇒ **My special thanks to members Jean-Joseph Boillot, Prabhu Guptara, Dominique Turcq,**

- Invited to third parties' events:

- The 6th India – EU Business Summit, September 2005, New Delhi
- A conference on "EU - India Strategic Plan: Enhancing Trade and Investment" on 9 November 2005 in Brussels organized the EU-India Chamber of Commerce, courtesy member Sunil Prasad
- The India Economic Summit on 27-29 November 2005 organized by CII and the World Economic Forum, courtesy member Colette Mathur
- The International Cultural Forum organized by the Bertelsmann Foundation on 25-26 November 2005 in New-Delhi on "A Europe-India dialogue on Global Challenges and Cultural Visions", courtesy Colette Mathur
- The first Indo-Spanish Tribune organized by Casa Asia and Casa de la India in Barcelona on 15-16 December 2005

It is to be noted that participation by the SG in the last three events costs nothing to the Centre as the organizers refunded all expenses.

⇒ **My special thanks to members Colette Mathur and Sunil Prasad.**

First and foremost *Vision 2008* has translated into two clear missions where both sides need each other equally to progress:

- **1st Mission: “Urban India 2020: Creating partnerships for growth, leveraging European expertise”,** in Goa on 8-11 February 2006

How can Indian cities leverage European cities expertise to modernize to mutual benefit? With practical solutions through co-operation.

- **2nd Mission: “Europe 2020: Enhancing global competitiveness, leveraging Indian talents”,** on European soil in 2008

How can Europe leverage Indian intellectual talents effectively?

⇒ **Special thanks to those 23 members who replied to the internal consultation and helped us outline the above two missions.**

⇒ **Special thanks to members Colette Mathur and Anand Mahindra who proposed the concept and drive its implementation and to Secretariat members Nitya Gupta, Nilima Kapur, Rama Naidu and Michel Sabatier who support them.**

⇒ **Special thanks to the members who support the Goa Forum in cash or kind: Soumitra Dutta, HDFC, IDFC, Raj Isar, Lafarge, Mahindra & Mahindra, Renault,**

The fate of the first mission will decide the fate of the Centre.

A success in Goa would embolden us 1) to repeat the Forum in order to achieve tangible results over a period of time in the urban field that is both critical and wide open for Euro-Indian co-operation and 2) to embark upon the second mission in 2008 on European soil.

It would attract to the Centre a new breed of European and Indian members: cities, professional organizations, academic institutions, individual experts and professionals and new corporate members too both in the large and medium size categories. In the process, we gain international recognition and the means to carry on with the implementation of *Vision 2008* making the declared target of 400 members at the end of 2008 an achievable target.

A lot of ground has already been covered in its organization under the masterly guidance of Colette Mathur and Anand Mahindra and the Forum is now well poised for success. A lot of demanding and complex work however remains to be done in the next 8 months’ run up to the event.

It would logical therefore that Colette Mathur and Anand Mahindra jointly shoulder the Centre’s presidency that I am relinquishing. Should the freshly elected Board follow my advice, I could rest assured that the Centre is in their safe hands for the next two critical years with the full support of all members.

As for my part, I shall fully support your collective endeavours to the best of ability.

⇒ Lastly, I'd like to thank on behalf of the Centre and on my personal behalf, two members in particular who've been providing crucial administrative support for a long time, namely our host Pierre Florin and Jacques Etienne T'Serclaes. Whereas the former provided the gorgeous venue of its headquarters for all our Board and Bureau meetings and for the India Conference, the latter put Nitya Gupta at our part time disposal, who proved to be of very efficient assistance to the Secretariat. I would kindly request them to consider carrying on with their philanthropic assistance for as long as they can.

⇒ Last but not least, I'd like to make a special mention of the outstanding contribution of Ashok Kar who worked hand in hand with our Secretary General as midwives and nurses of the EuroIndia Centre for the last 6 years. It is high time that his contribution is publicly acknowledged. I would recommend that he be made Member Emeritus.

These are the highlights of the last twelve months in the life of our Centre that I wanted to share with you. I thank you for your patient hearing.

I also wish to sincerely thank you for the trust that you had reposed in me to guide the Centre in its budding four years. I wish the Centre long life and success!

Raymond Barre,
Executive President