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P R E S S R E L E A S E

"1st Conference on International Scientific Cooperation – Supporting Research Integration": Global solutions for global problems

The international competitiveness of modern economies is linked increasingly to their ability to generate, adapt and use new knowledge. Moreover, in today's interconnected world, collective knowledge and collaborative research are considered to be among the most important drivers of sustainable development, prosperity and economic growth. At the same time, Europe wants to play a leading role in the world's research arena and assist in building a safe future. Thus, the need for opportunities and initiatives that enable international scientific cooperation (INCO) is nowadays more evident than ever before.

To this end, the European Union invests significantly on the development of International Scientific Cooperation and has developed a policy framework ("[A Strategic European Framework for International Science and Technology \(S&T\) Cooperation](#)") that identifies general principles and specific guidelines for action. International cooperation is also an integral part of the 7th Framework Programme (FP7) for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013), the EU's main instrument for funding research in Europe. Its aims are to support European competitiveness through strategic partnerships with Third Countries in selected fields of science and technology, to address specific problems that third countries face or are of global character, based on mutual interests and benefit and use S&T cooperation to reinforce the Community's external relations. The INCO program is specially designed to support the participation of Third Countries in FP7.

Focusing on all those issues research policy makers from all over the world will be present at the "**1st Conference on International Cooperation (INCO) – Supporting Research Integration**", organized by PRAXI / HELP – FORWARD Network, in Athens, **9-10 June, 2010**, with the support of the Research Directorate-General of the European Commission. This conference is part of INCONTACT, the official project for reinforcing coordination and networking among the world's National Contact Points (NCPs) for International Cooperation (INCO NCPs). PRAXI / HELP-FORWARD Network is honored to be the coordinator of this event.

The General Secretary for Research & Technology in Greece, Prof. Achilleas Mitsos, will make the welcome address, while keynote speeches will be given by representatives of renown organizations with high investment in research, such as the National Science Foundation of USA, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Dubai Institute of Technology, etc.

The overall aim of the conference is to highlight the global outlook of the 7th Framework Programme (FP7), the exchange of views, the formulation of policy on international research cooperation, as well as the networking of policy makers around the world, responsible for the administration and management of programmes. During the first day of the conference, the annual meeting between the EC and the INCO NCPs will be held. The second day, the conference is open to International Scientific cooperation stakeholders upon registration. It will host discussions on policy issues of International Cooperation on Research, as well as round-table discussions on the participation of Third Countries in the FP7 (representatives of Third Country policy makers attending) and presentation of results on International Cooperation Activities funded by the EC under the FP7.

It is noted that 130 participants are expected to attend from 60 countries. The majority of the attendees shall be from Ministries responsible for Research & Technology, the European Commission, as well as from Greek organizations engaging in international scientific cooperation.

For more information concerning the event, please visit the event website at www.ncp-incontact.eu

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PRAXI / HELP-FORWARD Network Profile

PRAXI / HELP-FORWARD Network (Hellenic Project for Wider Application of R&D, "ΠΡΑΞΗ" in Greek) is a technology transfer service providing mechanism addressing to small and medium sized enterprises and research laboratories all over Greece. Its services are extended from information to mediation and advisory support covering the whole spectrum of activities related with research collaboration, technology transfer and commercial exploitation of research results.

PRAXI / HELP-FORWARD Network is administered by the Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH) and operates since 1991 in cooperation with the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV) and the Federation of Industries of Northern Greece (FING) in panhellenic reach. Since 1995 PRAXI / HELP-FORWARD Network has become a member of the **Innovation Relay Centre (IRC)** Network of the EU with the mandate of promoting RTD results exploitation and European co-operation in research and technology, while since 2008 it continues its activities within the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) as a member of the Greek consortium of the **Enterprise Europe Network** which provides international business cooperation services, information on European policies, innovation and technology transfer services as well as services for encouraging SMEs' participation to the European programs for Research and Technology. Additionally, since 1999, PRAXI / HELP-FORWARD Network has been the National Contact Point (NCP) in Greece for the EU RTD Framework Programmes, operating as official authority for information and advisory support services regarding the European research programs.

INCONTACT PROJECT

INCONTACT (www.ncp-incontact.eu) is the official project of the FP7 INCO NCPs and is implemented as a 'Specific Support Action' (SSA), funded under the Specific International Scientific Cooperation Activities (INCO) in the 7th Framework Programme for RTD (FP7) and is operational until December 2013. The INCONTACT project aims at the development of a platform for stimulating closer cooperation among INCO National Contact Points. Within the framework of this closer cooperation, INCO NCPs will work together to effect a substantial improvement in the overall quality of NCP services in the field of International Cooperation. The positive effect of these efforts will not be limited to the NCP network alone. The international research community will ultimately benefit from the heightened level of service offered by the network. Individual researchers will profit from higher quality services and information and the establishment of a more consistent level of NCP services across Europe will contribute to greater transparency of the research funding for ICPC (International Cooperation Partner Countries) participants.

