



PRESS RELEASE

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CEN, CENELEC and SARSO enable concrete cooperation opportunities between Europe and South Asia

Vladivostok, 11 October 2017 - CEN, CENELEC and SARSO's leaders formalized their cooperation today through the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding concluded in the realm of the IEC General Meeting. This Memorandum of Understanding offers tangible opportunities for greater technical and systemic alignment, with a view to facilitate trade in goods and services between Europe and South Asian countries.

The three organizations – CEN (European Committee for Standardization), CENELEC (European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization) and SARSO (South Asian Regional Standards Organization) – have committed themselves to formalize their cooperation on issues of joint interest, in order to foster greater technical alignment between Europe and South Asian countries, including India, where a European standardization expert is already located to represent the three European Standardization Organizations (together with ETSI). By establishing a concrete dialogue and promoting the harmonization of standards at international level, they will help facilitate trade in goods and services between Europe and SAARC's member states, thereby contributing to sustainable growth in these regions.

This MoU between CEN, CENELEC and SARSO provides a common framework for the sharing of information, transferring of technical knowledge, exchange of best practices in sectors such as textile, electrical and electronic goods, chemicals, food and building materials, as well as for supporting the work made by the international standardization organizations, namely ISO and IEC.

The partners took the opportunity of the signature ceremony to discuss a roadmap for the implementation of this MoU, which will include the organization of several events in 2018 aiming to strengthen the role of SARSO in the region, as well as activities which will support SARSO's capacity-building strategy.

By developing and deepening their cooperation in the field of standardization, CEN, CENELEC and SARSO will contribute to overcome technical barriers to trade and thus facilitate trade between Europe and the whole South Asian region.

CEN (European Committee for Standardization) and **CENELEC** (European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization) are recognized by the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) as European Standardization Organizations responsible for developing standards at European level. These standards set out specifications and procedures in relation to a wide range of materials, processes, products and services.

The members of CEN and CENELEC are the National Standardization Bodies and National Electrotechnical Committees of 34 European countries. European Standards (ENs) and other standardization deliverables adopted by CEN and CENELEC, are accepted and recognized in all of these countries.

European Standards (ENs) contribute to enhancing safety, improving quality, facilitating cross-border trade and strengthening the European Single Market. They are developed through a process of collaboration among experts nominated by business and industry, research institutes, consumer and environmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders.

CEN and CENELEC work to promote the international alignment of standards in the framework of technical cooperation agreements with ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and the IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission).

CEN-CENELEC website: www.cencenelec.eu

SARSO (South Asian Regional Standards Organization) is a regional standardization organization which was created to achieve and enhance coordination and cooperation among SAARC member countries in the fields of standardization and conformity assessment and is aimed to develop harmonized standards for the region to facilitate intra-regional trade and to have access in the global market. The SARSO was established in August 2011 after ratification by all SAARC's member States of SAARC. Its secretariat is based in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

SARSO website: <http://www.sarso.org.bd>