Joint Statement following the 5th EU-Korea Joint S&T Cooperation Committee

The Republic of Korea and the European Union held the fifth Joint Scientific & Technological Cooperation Committee meeting in Seoul, Korea, on 15 June 2015. The Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning of Korea and the Directorate General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission agreed on the following statement:

The meeting was a further testimony of the breadth and dynamism of the EU-Korea partnership that continues to develop very rapidly and favourably. The successful cooperation on political, economic, security and science & technology affairs reflects the EU's and Korea's increasing international engagement and shows that they face similar challenges and share many of the same values and concerns.

To provide solutions to these challenges, the EU and Korea are designing comparable policies, instruments and actions to tackle them. They are improving the framework conditions for their scientists and innovators to work together and they are joining forces in a number of strategic focus areas of mutual benefit.

Improving the framework conditions

At the meeting both sides agreed on early exchange of the maximum possible level of programme information (proposals/applicants and projects/participants figures at call opening and closure and at project selection and start) to enable provision of matching funds and to allow for monitoring of cooperation intensity. The participants also shared information on the achievements made through the KONNECT project – a project aimed at strengthening research and innovation (R&I) cooperation between the EU and Korea – and agreed to make joint efforts towards creating follow-up activities.

Participants also agreed to continue to support efforts of multipliers, notably National Contact Points, for facilitating access to information and partnering of R&I stakeholders. Moreover, both sides agreed to jointly promote the organisation of R&I Days and other matchmaking events to facilitate partnering with both academia and industry, notably SMEs.

Both sides also emphasised the role of KIC-Europe, a research and innovation centre opened during the Korea-EU summit in 2013, aimed at effectively supporting the comprehensive cooperation activities between the two sides.

Deepening, scaling up and opening cooperation in selected thematic areas

The substantial progress of current Korea-EU R&I cooperation was appreciated from both sides that also emphasised the need to deepen, scale up and open cooperation in selected thematic areas.

In the ICT area, both sides are scheduled to launch a joint call in the autumn of 2015 addressing the topics of 5G communication networks, Internet of Things and brokerage of mobile cloud services with an estimated budget of € 12 million (€6 million from each side). A joint evaluation of the proposals is planned for early 2016 with projects starting by mid-2016. The bilateral ICT cooperation, a follow-up of the joint declaration signed in June 2014 by former Vice-President Neelie Kroes and former Minister Mun-Kee Choi also includes other 5G areas such as standardisation and spectrum management.

Furthermore, both sides agreed to engage in twinning activities in the area of technologies and
processes for post- and/or pre-combustion CO2 capture. Initiatives for collaboration between selected EU project(s) and endorsed Korean project(s) will be launched from 2016. Both sides also confirmed that Smart Grids and other emerging areas in the energy industry sector are common priority topics.

In the area of nanotechnology, during 2015 and 2016 both sides agreed to cooperate on Nanoreg, the initiative for regulatory testing of nanomaterials. The two sides agreed to offer continued support for this cooperation. In the area of materials modelling, participants agreed to promote cooperation and Korea's active cooperation with the European Materials Modelling Council (EMMC), a network of materials modelling stakeholders. In nanoelectronics, the two sides will exchange roadmaps and pursue with twinning activities (e.g. workshops aimed at exploring the possibilities of joint research and other cooperative activities) in view of exploiting synergies and developing a more intense cooperation.

In the area of health and bio-medical challenges, cooperation will continue in the context of the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GloPID-R), as a Korea-EU Flagship Programme. The two sides agreed to consider innovative medicine and medical equipment as potential new common priority topics.

Both sides also agreed to continue promoting joint research activities and partnering in the field of satellite navigation.

**Promoting researchers' mobility**

The Implementing Arrangement for Korean researchers to join the teams of ERC Principal Investigators, signed during the Korea-EU summit in 2013, is progressing well with two calls launched already.

Researchers' mobility is also promoted through EU’s Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellowship Programme with hundreds of exchanges already taking place. The two sides agreed to make joint efforts to promote the participation of Korean researchers and research institutes in this programme.

**Emphasising bottom-up type cooperation**

These Korea-EU targeted cooperation activities complement cooperation through the general opening of Horizon 2020 that is also essential for enhancing cooperation between Korean and European researchers and innovators. The two sides emphasised the importance of bottom-up type cooperation, driven by the demands and voluntary participation of private and public sector actors, complementing the top-down type cooperation driven by government-to-government agreements. Recognizing its vital role in Korea-EU bilateral cooperation, the two sides agreed to expand support for bottom-up type cooperative activities.

Besides the Joint S&T Cooperation Committee Meeting, the two sides also organised a Technology Commercialisation Forum, aimed at building a bilateral cooperation network on R&D-based startup support and discussing ways to better cooperate in the field of technology commercialisation. The two sides agreed to carry out follow-up activities for promoting startups of the two sides on the global stage.

The next Korea-EU Joint Science & Technology Cooperation Committee is planned to be held in Brussels in the first half of 2017.