



# SARSO NEWS

Newsletter of the South Asian Regional Standards Organization

The SARSO Secretariat commenced its operations in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

**Dr. Syed Humayun Kabir** assumed the charge of the office of Director General of SARSO as the First Director General of SARSO with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014. Two Directors, two Deputy Directors have been appointed and eight general service staffs have been recruited for functioning of SARSO.

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## SARSO Establishment

**South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO)** has been established to achieve and enhance coordination and cooperation among SAARC member countries in the fields of standardization and conformity assessment and is aimed at developing harmonized standards for the region, to facilitate intra-regional trade and to have access in global market. The Agreement on the establishment of South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO) entered into force with effect from 25 August 2011 after ratification by all member States of SAARC. All Member States have nominated their Members in the Governing Board of SARSO.

## SARSO GOVERNING BOARD MEETS

The Governing Board is the highest authority of the South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO) vested with all powers relating to its functioning. The Governing Board consists of Heads of the respective National Standards Body of each Member State.

The first Governing Board meeting was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 14-15 December 2011 and discussed on administrative and financial matters of SARSO Secretariat. The Second Meeting was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 2-3 April 2014. The meeting reviewed the progress of establishment of SARSO, reviewed the progress of ratification of the SAARC Agreement on ‘*Multilateral Arrangement on Recognition of Conformity Assessment*’ and SAARC Agreement on ‘*Implementation of Regional Standards*’. The meeting also considered the report of first Meeting of SAARC Technical Management Board (TMB) held in Dhaka from 31 March – 1 April 2014 and the report of the first and second meetings of SAARC Expert Group on Accreditation held in Maldives, 3-4 June 2012 and Nepal, 20-21 January 2014.

The Third Meeting of the Governing Board of SARSO was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 19-20 December 2014 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Phuntsho Wangdi, Director-General, Bhutan

Standards Bureau. Besides the members, Mr. Dennis Chew representative of International Electrotechnical Commission, Director, Asia Pacific Regional Centre was also present for the meeting.

Dr. Humayun Kabir, Director-General, SARSO briefed the Meeting about the existing status of the functioning, administrative and financial matters of the South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO) and presented the financial statement for 2014 and proposed Budget for the year 2015 for consideration of the Governing Board. The meeting reviewed the progress in the implementation of the decisions of the Second Meeting of the Governing Board of SARSO held in Dhaka, 2-3 April 2014. The meeting reviewed the progress of ratification of:

- (i) SAARC Agreement on Multilateral Arrangement on Recognition of Conformity Assessment;
- (ii) SAARC Agreement on Implementation of Regional Standards;

The meeting also considered the Report of Second Meeting of SAARC Technical Management Board (TMB) held in Dhaka, 18 December 2014. The meeting further considered the Report of the Third Meeting of SAARC Expert Group on Accreditation held in Lahore, Pakistan, 2-3 September 2014 and discussed the role of SEGA to support the implementation of the SAARC Agreement on Multilateral Arrangement on Recognition of Conformity Assessment (MARCA) and noted the recommendations of the Third Meeting of SEGA. The meeting discussed on formulation of a programme for capacity building in the field of standards and conformity assessment.

The Meeting also deliberated on importance of coordination amongst Member States to take a common stand during meetings/ballots of various international standardization organizations like ISO/IEC/CODEX.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> SARSO Governing Board Meeting participants**



## SARSO TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETS

The First Meeting of SARSO Technical Management Board (TMB) was held in Dhaka on 31 March – 1 April 2014. Mr. Rahul Kumar, Scientist 'F' & Head (International Relations & Technical Information Services), Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi was elected as the Chairperson for a period of three years as per SARSO Agreement. The Meeting discussed the Draft Technical Rules of Technical Management Board prepared by India and reviewed the functioning of Sectoral Technical Committees already established and discussions on constitution of other Sectoral Technical Committees, i.e. STC on Conformity Assessment Procedures. The Sectoral Technical Committees presented their reports. The Meeting also recommended that the SARSO should consider forging links with international organizations dealing with standards such as ISO/IEC etc. SARSO may also consider entering into Cooperation Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with ISO/IEC etc. for adoption of their standards and also for seeking recognition as Regional Standards Organization, with the approval of higher SAARC bodies.

The Second Meeting of SARSO Technical Management Board (TMB) was held in Dhaka on 18 December 2014. The Meeting was opened by Ms. L. Savithri, Director, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu on behalf of Secretary-General of SAARC H.E. Mr. Arjun Bahadur Thapa and the meeting was chaired by Ms. Parminder Bajaj, Deputy Director General (Standardization), Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the leader of the delegation of India.

The Meeting held brief discussion on the Technical Rules of Technical Management Board which were finalized in its First

Meeting and found them to be adequate at present. It reiterated its earlier decision that these Rules will remain under review in its future meetings. The meeting discussed the Draft of Part-I of SARSO Directives on Procedures for Technical Work prepared by Bangladesh and Draft of Part-II of SARSO Directives on the Rules for Structure and Drafting of SARSO Standards prepared by India. The Meeting also decided to recommend to the Governing Board that STCs may conduct the standards development work in compliance with these draft directives till such time they are approved by the Governing Board. The meetings reviewed the functioning of existing Sectoral Technical Committees and also hold discussion on the following STC's:

- (i) Fourth Meeting of SAARC Sectoral Technical Committee on Food and Agricultural Products (New Delhi, 21-22 September 2014)
- (ii) First Meeting of SAARC Sectoral Technical Committee on Chemical and Chemical Products (New Delhi, 23-24 September 2014)
- (iii) First Meeting of SAARC Sectoral Technical Committee on Electrical, Electronics, Telecom and IT (New Delhi, 25-26 September 2014)

The Meeting recommended that the SARSO Secretariat may circulate the final Draft SAARC Standards on Biscuits and Refined Sugar to all Member States for their final comments. The Meeting considered the Reports and endorsed the recommendations of the following Sectoral Technical Committees (STC's):

- (i) Fourth Meeting of SAARC Sectoral Technical Committee on Food and

- Agricultural Products (New Delhi, 21-22 September 2014)
- (ii) First Meeting of SAARC Sectoral Technical Committee on Chemical and Chemical Products (New Delhi, 23-24 September 2014)
- (iii) First Meeting of SAARC Sectoral Technical Committee on Electrical, Electronics, Telecom and IT (New Delhi, 25-26 September 2014)

The Meeting urged Member States which have not done so to take expeditious action in ratifying the SAARC Agreement on Multilateral Arrangement on Recognition of Conformity Assessment and SAARC Agreement on Implementation of Regional Standards. The Members also requested Director General, SARSO to formally communicate with ISO and IEC about the intent of SARSO to adopt ISO/IEC Standards and request for modalities to be followed in this regard including signing of MOU, if required.

## STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

The following Sectoral Technical Committees have been established to facilitate harmonization of SARSO standards. The Sectoral Technical Committees are established to carry out all technical activities for the development of standards.

1. STC on Food and Agricultural Products
2. STC on Jute, Textile and Leather
3. STC on Building Materials
4. STC on Chemicals and Chemical Products
5. STC on Electrical, Electronics, Telecom & IT
6. STC on Conformity Assessment

The Sectoral Technical Committees (STC's) are established by the Governing Board on the recommendations of the Technical Management Board. Below are the current status of harmonization of identified products by the respective Sectoral Technical Committees under SARSO:

SARSO Sectoral Technical Committee	Identified Products	Host Country
SARSO STC on Food and Agricultural Products	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Refined Sugar</li> <li>2. Biscuits</li> <li>3. Standards on Microbiological requirements for cream portion of filled biscuits</li> <li>4. Instant Noodles</li> <li>5. Black tea</li> <li>6. Vanaspati/Banaspati (veg. ghee)</li> <li>7. Skimmed Milk Powder</li> <li>8. National/CODEX Standard for Hygienic condition</li> </ol>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> meeting: Nepal, 2011            2<sup>nd</sup> meeting: Dhaka, 2011            3<sup>rd</sup> meeting: Pakistan, 2012            4<sup>th</sup> meeting: India, 2014</p> <p>5<sup>th</sup> Meeting is to be hosted by Sri Lanka</p>

SARSO STC on Jute, Textile and Leather	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identified Hessian products</li> <li>2. Jute Tarpaulin Fabric</li> <li>3. Jute Bags for packing of various commodities</li> <li>4. Jute twine</li> <li>5. Jute Carpet backing Fabric</li> <li>6. Jute yarn</li> <li>7. Cotton Drill Fabric</li> <li>8. Cotton Twill Fabric</li> <li>9. Towels and Toweling Fabric</li> </ol>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> meeting: Nepal, 2012  2<sup>nd</sup> meeting: Dhaka, 2012  3<sup>rd</sup> meeting: Sri Lanka, 2013</p> <p>4<sup>th</sup> Meeting is to be hosted by India</p>
SARSO STC on Building Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Steel Tube for Structural purposes</li> <li>2. Ordinary Portland Cement</li> <li>3. Steel Bars for Concrete Reinforcement</li> <li>4. Structural Steel</li> <li>5. High strength deformed steel bars and wires for concrete reinforcement</li> <li>6. Steel wires used in pre-stressed concrete</li> <li>7. Method of testing of steel and steel tubes</li> <li>8. Ceramic Tiles</li> </ol>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> meeting: Nepal, 2011  2<sup>nd</sup> meeting: Nepal, 2012  3<sup>rd</sup> meeting: Nepal, 2013</p> <p>4<sup>th</sup> Meeting is to be hosted by Nepal</p>
SARSO STC on Electrical, Electronics, Telecom & IT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Electric cable (PVC insulated/sheathed)</li> <li>2. Double capped fluorescent Lamp (Safety Requirements and Performance Requirements)</li> <li>3. New Products Identified: Switches, Sockets, MCBs, Solar photovoltaic systems, transformers</li> </ol>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> meeting India, 2014</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting is to be hosted by Afghanistan</p>
SARSO STC on Chemical and Chemical Products	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Toilet soap</li> <li>2. Liquid Toilet Soap</li> <li>3. Baby Toilet Soap</li> <li>4. Soft Soap</li> <li>5. Laundry Soap</li> <li>6. Detergent Powder</li> <li>7. Tooth Paste</li> <li>8. Shampoo (Hair Shampoo)</li> <li>9. Shampoo for Babies</li> </ol>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> meeting India, 2014</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting is to be hosted by Sri Lanka</p>
SARSO STC on Conformity Assessment	Established by the First Meeting of the SARSO Technical Management Board (Dhaka, 31 March – 1 April 2014)	

***Under the STC on Food and Agriculture products the Draft Standards on Refined Sugar and Biscuits have been finalized***

## SECOND SEGA REVIEW & PLANNING MEETING

The second SAARC Expert Group of Accreditation (SEGA) review and planning SAARC New Delhi, India was held from 24 – 25 March 2015 organized by National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), India with the financial assistance of PTB-Germany. The meeting aimed at reviewing and following-up activities of the *SEGA Action Plan*, which was formulated during the 1<sup>st</sup> *SEGA Review & Planning*

*Meeting* as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> *SEGA Meeting* in Lahore (Pakistan) in September 2014. Clarifications on proposed amendments of SAARC agreement on ‘Multilateral Agreement on Recognition of Conformity Assessment (MARCA)’ and proposal for establishing a link between SARSO and SEGA were made which will be further discussed in the next SEGA meeting to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in August 2015.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> SEGA Review and Planning Meeting participants



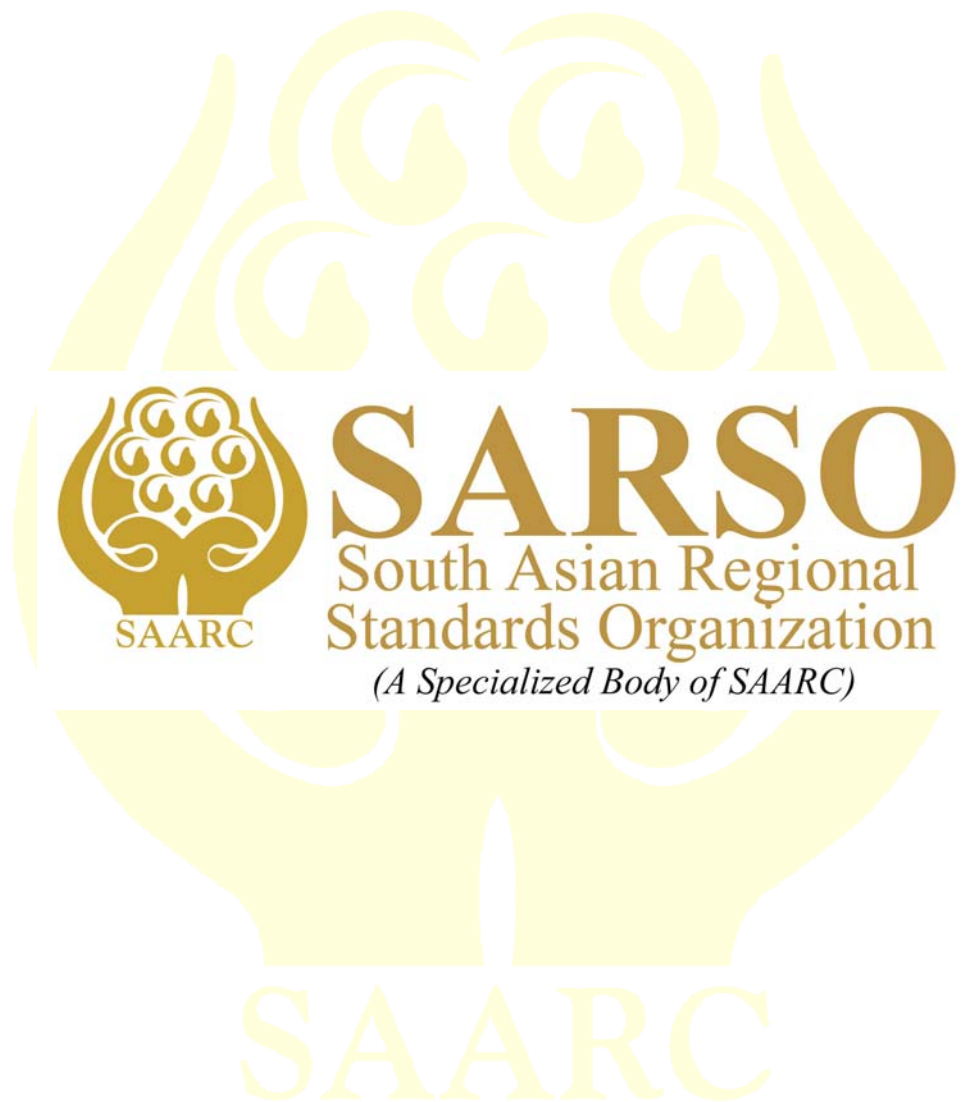
## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Cooperation Agreement has been finalized between SARSO and the International Electrotechnical Cooperation (IEC) for closer cooperation and will be signed soon. Similar discussion is underway with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), CODEX Alimentarius Commission and Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) for cooperation arrangement. The cooperation arrangement has been sought to keep abreast SARSO on latest developments in standardization and for continuous exchange of information.

**SARSO Website has  
been launched**

**Visit us at:**

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