

I would like to inform you that yesterday, 26th March 2013, I had the opportunity to meet Shri Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India along with Dr. Paul Flather and Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar to invite him to inaugurate an International Conference on **"Federalisms v. Localisms: Competing Demands and Conflicting Aspirations?"** to be held on **Thursday 10th October 2013** at the campus of O.P. Jindal Global University. It was a wonderful meeting in which we discussed a range of issues relating to federalism and his own perspectives on these matters. The Vice President was aware that the President had visited our campus recently.

I am delighted to share the good news that Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari has kindly accepted our invitation and will be visiting our campus on 10th October to inaugurate this conference. The 3-day conference will be held during 10-12 October 2013.



The aim of this conference is to review current ideas around federalisms and localisms across the world, and to examine different thinking with particular reference to Europe, India and North America. Our Conference Statement with further details will follow shortly. The proposed event has managed to secure backing and sponsorship from the James Madison Trust, the Indian Government,

and The Europaeum based at the University of Oxford. The Europaeum was set up in the 1990s to promote intellectual collaboration between scholars from leading European universities with policymakers, business and other sectors of society.

Specific themes for the event will include: 'New Narratives of Global Power: Arrival of a Bipolar World?'; 'Confederation or Federation: Which ways forward?'; 'A New Politics of Localism and Devolution? Telengana, Scotland, Quebec: Three Case Studies'; 'Culture and Context: Identity, Diversity, Citizenship?'; 'The Rules of Law, Governance and Sovereignty?'; 'The Politics of Multi-level Governance in a Global World?'; 'The Fallout from the Global Economic Crisis: Winners and Losers?'

Our Academic Directors are Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar, MP and former Minister for Panchayati Raj, and Professor David Marquand, former MP (Labour), a former Chief Adviser in the EC Cabinet of Roy Jenkins, former Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, and Fellow of the British Academy, Dr Paul Flather, Fellow of Mansfield College, Oxford University and Secretary-General of the Europaeum Consortium and myself from O.P. Jindal Global University.

I am pleased to report that Professor Lord (Meghnad) Desai, Professor Yves Meny, Mr. Mel Cappe, Professor Vijay Joshi, Professor Kanti Bajpai, Professor Peter D'Souza, Dr. Hartmut Ayer, and many others will be with us. A draft programme will follow, indicating additional experts from politics, the media, government and academia, drawn from across the world. As you will see, we envisage this as very much a working event – with around 35 'expert' participants, engaged over the two days including dinners, with contributions from the platform, on the whole, kept to 15-20 minutes each.

I request all the schools of JGU actively participate in this conference. We will have some of our faculty members who are interested in this theme to be able to substantively contribute to this conference. We will have a brainstorming session soon about the particular thematic sessions that will be formulated as a part of the agenda of the conference.

For now, I wanted to share this news with you as we begin the planning process for this conference. Our partners, Dr. Paul Flather and Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar are very excited about this conference and we have the fullest support from all relevant people to address these critical issues.

Thanks and best regards  
Raj