

Report on Visit of Mr. Graham Mayer, Minister Counselor for Political Affairs, U.S. Embassy New Delhi

Date: 29 August, 2024

Venue: Leh Campus, University of Ladakh

Leh, August 29, 2024 – Today was a momentous occasion when University of Ladakh warmly welcomed eminent guests Mr. Graham Mayer, Minister Counselor for Political Affairs, U.S. Embassy New Delhi accompanied by a distinguished delegation comprising Mr. Gary Applegarth, Embassy's First Secretary; Mr. A. Sukesh Senior, Political Advisor; and Mr. Abhiram Ghadyalpatil, Political Specialist.

The guests were warmly received with traditional ceremonial Khatkas at the reception at Taru Campus by Dr. Nazia Jabeen, Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Ladakh, and team. Following the welcome, the delegation had a tour to the university's state-of-the-art laboratory facilities. Dr Subrat Sharma, Dean Research Studies and faculty showcased the recently installed instruments at Centralized Interdisciplinary Science Instrumentation Centre (CISIC). Mr. Mayer applauded the university for taking lead in developing highly sophisticated facilities and infrastructure. The delegation then proceeded to the conference hall, where they were formally welcomed by Prof. S. K. Mehta, Honourable Vice Chancellor, University of Ladakh. Prof. Mehta expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the guests for their visit, emphasizing the potential for collaboration between the institutes of United States and the University of Ladakh. He conveyed his deep appreciation for the delegation's time and extended an invitation for future visits.

Dr. Subrat Sharma, Dean Research studies, University of Ladakh, presented an overview of the university's achievements, highlighting infrastructural development, major project grants received from various funding agencies and the MoUs signed with various international and national institutions, including institutions in the U.S. and Germany. Dr. Sharma also emphasized the university's commitment to sustainability, particularly its efforts to reduce carbon footprints through solar power generation. His presentation was followed by a short video showcasing university's contributions to education and research.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Graham Mayer, the Honorable Minister Counselor, highlighted strong academic relations between the U.S. and India over the past decades. He emphasized the potential for collaborations that have emerged from years of discussions among experts

from both countries. Mr. Graham Mayer highlighted stronger ties between USA and India, particularly promoting students from India to study in USA, beside the other technological collaborations such as installing Semi-Conductor facilities in the India, and training of two Indian Astronauts in USA. He emphasized that the new era is of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Clean Technologies. where USA and India are collaborating extensively.

The highlight of the meeting was an interaction of Mr. Mayer with university faculty. Varied topics ranging from exploring academic collaborations to global geo-political scenario were discussed during the extensive interactions. Topics included deepening ties between the two countries, trade imbalance, intense geo-political changes, commitment in strengthening democracy, technology transfer on clean energy, etc. As way forward, Mr. Mayer expressed appreciation for the strong academic relations between the U.S. and India, noting the growing number of Indian students in the U.S. and the potential for deeper collaborations. The visit concluded with a fruitful discussion covering various topics of mutual interest, and look forward to linking University of Ladakh with US institutions of higher learnings and the schemes for the benefits of student and faculty from Ladakh.

Dr. Rajinder Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Travel and Tourism, extended a heartfelt vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to all the delegates and participants for their valuable contributions to the session. The program was hosted by Dr. Tenzin Nakdon, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Ladakh.