



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY

Directorate B : Immigration, Asylum and Borders
the director

Brussels, 21 JUN 2005
JLS/B1/YGCG/DG D (2005) 6290

Dear Mr Prasad,

President Barroso has forwarded to me your letter of 18 May concerning Schengen visa procedures applied to Indian citizens and in particular concerning the documents supporting a visa application.

According to Council Regulation n° 539/2001 of 15.3.2001, listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempted from that requirement, citizens from India indeed need a visa to enter the Schengen territory.

Specific and detailed rules on the types of visas, the procedure, criteria and conditions for issuing short term uniform visas are contained in the « Common Consular Instructions » (CCI- published in the Official Journal of the European Union C 310 of 19.12.2003).

According to the CCI, the visa applicant must establish the legitimate purpose and conditions of his stay by providing appropriate evidence such as copies proving the purpose of the journey, a letter of invitation or summons, as well as providing for guarantees of means of return and means of subsistence, including medical insurance.

When processing a visa application according to these common rules, a Member State bears full responsibility in assessing whether the person applying for a visa fulfils all the criteria laid down in the CCI and, in particular, whether the applicant represents or not a risk for illegal immigration, or for the security and for the international relations of the Member States.

Such an assessment by the competent diplomatic posts or consular missions of the Member State concerned requires a thorough check of the travel document, the other information and supporting documents provided by the applicant and, when necessary, an exchange of information with consular or central authorities of the other Member States.

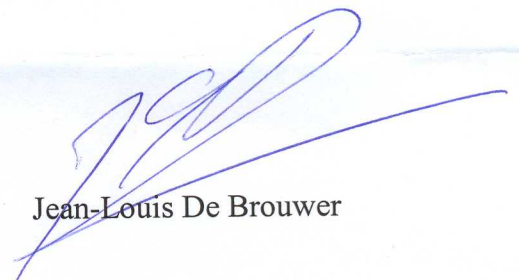
Mr Sunil PRASAD
Secretary General of the
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For bona fide applicants, i.e. for applicants well known by the consular mission, the CCI provide the possibility for the consular missions to reduce checks and simplify the documentary evidence to be submitted.

Relations between EU and India have witnessed an important boost during recent years and we are working on developing our strategic partnership. Recognising that the procedures for issuing of visas, as well as other consular matters, are of importance an EU-India Joint Working Group on Consular Issues has been set up in Delhi. Within this framework issues of common concern are regularly discussed between Indian authorities and Member States.

I hope this information is useful.

Yours sincerely,



Jean-Louis De Brouwer

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