

PhRMA signs cooperation agreement with Chinese pharma assn, SINO-PhIRDA

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After expressing reservations on the regulatory environment and patent laws of India, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), representing the powerful multinationals, has now tied up with Chinese pharma industry by signing a cooperative framework.

Following a two-day conference in Washington recently, the China Pharmaceutical Industry Research and Development Association (SINO-PhIRDA) and the PhRMA signed a cooperation framework that embodies the intent of the multi-national pharmaceutical companies and Chinese pharmaceutical companies to continue a regular dialogue to facilitate the two organizations to work together.

Sources said no such agreement was signed in India as similar incentives are not offered here. India's new Patent law which was introduced in 2005 does not recognize incremental innovation as grounds for acquiring a patent. This in addition to weak regulatory data protection provisions serving as a disincentive to foreign investors to invest in India may have prompted the American lobby to prefer China to India.

During a recent visit to India, the high-level delegation of PhRMA had raised many concerns and urged the Indian government to create a conducive environment for innovation so that country does not miss out opportunities in the global competition.

PhRMA executive vice-president and the chief operating officer Christopher A Singer had also explained the pro-active and friendly atmosphere in China where they went after the Indian round of discussions. "India has the potential to emerge as a leader in the pack, with right policies for innovation. It is global competition and countries like Brazil, Singapore and China are seizing the opportunity and our member companies are going there. India also can be competitive with right policies and better regulatory frameworks," he said.

"Everyone is impressed by the dedication and commitment of Chinese biopharmaceutical research companies to create new and better medicines for the global market. At PhRMA we all look forward to the time when we, hopefully, will count many of the companies here today as PhRMA member companies," said John J Castellani, president and CEO of PhRMA, in a statement after the agreement with China.

PhRMA has highlighted China's strong intellectual property rights and other incentives for innovation, ensuring safety and efficacy of drugs as reasons for this collaboration.

Castellani further stated, "The better ties between our two countries, along with better ties between PhRMA member companies and SINO-PhIRDA and the Chinese biopharmaceutical research industry will help us to better address the scientific, medical, regulatory and other challenges we face. This will help us, together, make better medicines available to the world's patients who need and hope for new cures and treatments."