

Press Release

SSEF and Bahrain sign Memorandum of Understanding relating to pearl research:

Basel, Switzerland -- September 1, 2010 -- Dr. Michael S. Krzemnicki, Director of the Swiss Gemmological Institute SSEF, and Mr. Ali Safar, Director of the Directorate of Precious Metals & Gemstone Testing, Ministry of Commerce Bahrain (GPTLB), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that formalizes the labs' collaboration in pearl research that began some years ago. The MoU was signed during a working visit by Dr. Krzemnicki to Bahrain in August.

SSEF and GPTLB are both internationally renowned labs reputed for their expertise in pearl research, identification and certification. Bahrain has a long history of pearl trading and remains a major hub for the natural pearl trade in the Arabian Gulf.

"We feel that while the natural pearl trade is being challenged by increasing amounts of beadless saltwater cultured pearls -- also called Keshi cultured pearls -- it is crucial that laboratories collaborate internationally in pearl research, so as to maintain the confidence of the consumer in this true product of nature," Dr. Krzemnicki said.

"It is the purpose of this MoU to establish mutual co-operation in research and training on pearls and to harmonize the testing of pearls, especially concerning the development of criteria for distinguishing natural pearls from cultured pearls. We are confident that this collaboration is in the interest of the international natural pearl trade and both parties are looking forward to a successful partnership," he concluded.



From left: Dr. Michael S. Krzemnicki, Director of the Swiss Gemmological Institute SSEF, and Mr. Ali Safar, Director of the Directorate of Precious Metals & Gemstone Testing, Ministry of Commerce Bahrain.