

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
(Afghanistan Division)**

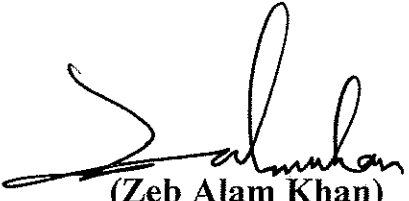
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**Subject: Minutes of the Inter Ministerial Meeting of all Working Groups of APAPPS held at MoFA on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2018**

Enclosed please find herewith Minutes of the Inter Ministerial Meeting held at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on September 10, 2018 regarding the subject cited above.

2. Forwarded for your kind information, please.

Encl: As above

  
(Zeb Alam Khan)  
Assistant Director (Afg-II)

Mr. Zahid Khokar, Member Customs, FBR, Islamabad.

Mr. Saleem Khan, Chief Commissioner, SAFRON, Islamabad.

Ms. Maria Qazi, Sr. JS (FT), Ministry of Commerce, Islamabad.

Mr. Muhammad Yousaf, Director General (Planning), Ministry of Railways, Islamabad.

Brig. Adil Iftikhar Warraich, GHQ, MO Directorate, Rawalpindi.

Mr. Shoaib Dogar, Director (R&T), Ministry of Communications, Islamabad.

Ms. Faiza, Executive Director, PAJCCI, Karachi.

Mr. Jehanzaib Khan, Project Director, HEC, Islamabad.

Mr. Assadullah, NHA, Islamabad.

Col. Muhammad Kausar, ISI, Islamabad.

Mr. Saeedullah Khan, IB, Islamabad.

Mr. Razaullah Khan, FIA, Islamabad.

**M/O Foreign Affairs' U.O. No.Afg(II)-12/2/2018 dated 03 October, 2018**

13

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
(Afghanistan Directorate)

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Minutes of the Inter Ministerial Meeting of all Working Groups of APAPPS held at MoFA on September 10, 2018

An Inter Ministerial meeting of all working groups of APAPPS was held in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on September 10, 2018. The meeting was chaired by Additional Secretary (Afghanistan/West Asia). The purpose of meeting was to review the progress made after the inaugural session of July 22, 2018 by all working groups of APAPPS in their respective areas (list of participants is attached at Annexure A).

Additional Secretary (Afgh/WA) said that two positive developments in this year were the successful operationalization of APAPPS and three days ceasefire by Taliban on the occasion of Eid. While giving a presentation about the key decisions reached at APAPPS' inaugural session, he informed that the issues regarding visas have been addressed by both Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Also the issue of extradition of Security Guard of Afghan Consulate Karachi has been actively pursued with Ministry of Interior. He added that Ministry of Foreign Affairs is actively pursuing the issue of Pakistani prisoners in Afghanistan. In this regard, follow up meetings were held by our Mission with DG Afghan MoFA. A draft treaty on Exchange of Prisoners has also been shared with the Afghan side. He further added that Foreign Minister would formally take up the issue of 7<sup>th</sup> APTTCA with the Afghan side. Soon an Ulema Conference, comprising of Ulema from both Pakistan and Afghanistan, would be convened to endorse the Declaration made in the previous Pakistani Ulema Conference.

While talking about the **Refugee Working Group**, Saleem Khan Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees said that tentative date for holding an Inter Ministerial to decide about the repatriation plan of Afghan Refugees was supposed to be in the last week of August 2018. But due to the visit of UN High Commissioner for Refugees to Pakistan and some other issues, the meeting was delayed till tomorrow (on September 11, 2018). Previously, the repatriation process was slowed down because the interim government wanted the new government to take decision regarding repatriation plan of Afghan Refugees. He added that a phase wise plan of repatriation was earlier made and the phase I was supposed to start from March 01, 2018 but unfortunately it could not be materialized. Now the new plan for repatriation of Afghan Refugees is as follows:

- In the first phase the repatriation process of undocumented Afghan would start from March 01, 2019.
- In the second phase starting from July 01, 2019 the repatriation of ACC holders would start.

He was of the view that Foreign Minister during his upcoming visit to Kabul should convey to the Afghan side that Pakistan was very serious about the issue of undocumented Afghans because they were a security threat. He said that Afghans would always be welcomed after going back to their country but with proper travel documents. He added that Cabinet has already approved a flexible visa regime on February 07, 2018. He also informed that Afghans were not willing to go back mainly due to security concerns and livelihood issues in Afghanistan. In this regard, the Afghan side should be assured that the bread winners would always be welcomed through flexible visa regime. He further said that we should talk to Afghan side for a concrete repatriation plan spanning over 3-4 years at maximum. He informed that PoR card holders can be issued visa here in Pakistan.

Briefing about the progress made by the **Military to Military Working Group** in last one and a half month, Representative from Army informed that our bilateral engagement with Afghanistan include establishment of hotline communication and deployment of coordination centers both at Chaman Spin-Boldak and Torkham. In this regard, names of Liaison Officers, Ground Coordination Centers and contact numbers have been exchanged but no further progress has been made. Afghan side is not responding very positively. We are waiting for TORs from Afghanistan side so that the contours for engagement are determined. Tripartite meetings are also conducted on routine basis.

Representative from Army further said that the Western Zone fencing is also underway and we are pursuing it aggressively. This fencing has a lot of benefits and needs to be carried out but we are facing resistance from Afghan side due to the Durand line issue. And that's why we are trying not to highlight it too much. Sixteen (16) villages are divided in this area by the Durand line. Afghan side may be approached to engage their locals and get their support for fencing of this area otherwise the issue could escalate. And it could make it to the media which would further complicate the issue. At the moment, Chaman and Torkham border terminals are fully operational although Chaman has some issues. Other border terminals should also open so that people can easily cross over through notified crossings. We have requested Afghan side through MoFA to improve their passport regime for better cross border movement especially at Chaman where Rahdaari system is still in place and Afghans use Tazkira for cross border movement.

Representative from Military Working Group informed that cross border fire violations have been curtailed and it has been acknowledged by Afghan side that there is a 20% reduction in cross border violation but also alleged that deep cross border violations are still there. On this we conveyed to the Afghan side through MoFA that our policy in this regard is very clear and

such cross border firing is only against point of origin which targets us. We have many posts along the border which are amply covered by deployment of troops but there are many areas on the Afghan side along the border where Afghan posts do not exist. So we requested Afghan side to establish their posts for better border management.

Intelligence representative while informing about the progress made during their **Intelligence to Intelligence Group** interaction until now, said that contacts numbers have been shared with Afghan side but they didn't respond until they were reminded again through a memorandum to share their contact numbers with us. We are also working on establishing a secure communication line between the two sides. We have hired experts for the purpose and hopefully in a week or so the communication line would be established. We also took the initiative to exchange names of Liaison Officers. Afghan side conveyed that a liaison officer from their side would be nominated by mid August but it has not been shared so far. Previously we agreed to hold Expert Level meeting every two months, Directorate Level meetings every three months and DG Level every four months. In this regard an Expert Level meeting would be held in the end of this month.

Member Customs, representative from **Economic Working Group**, said that after discussions at APAPPS on APTTCA, the Afghan side expressed their willingness to talk about it in the next 15 days but until now Afghan side is silent on the issue of holding 7<sup>th</sup> APTTCA. We also requested the Afghan side to share list of negative items with us. Positive news is that the Afghan side has shown interest to hold a Custom Working Group level meeting next month.

While talking about Economic Working Group (EWG), participants, especially representative from Ministry of Commerce observed that EWG has ownership issue which is adversely affecting the working of this group.

Representative from HEC gave an update on the scholarship program for Afghan students. He said that Phase I of scholarship program has been completed and Phase II has been approved by the Government. First batch of Phase II has availed their scholarships while process for placing of second batch is underway. He informed that HEC has received instructions from Parez Kabul to stop the scholarship program. He added that it could adversely affect the whole scholarship program for the year 2019. However, he was assured by AS(Afgh/WA) that this little delay is only to review and assess the impact of scholarship program and soon the scholarship program would be restarted.

Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees suggested that some scholarships should be set aside as an incentive for the Afghan refugees who are going back to their country. All participants supported this point and commented that it could act as a pull factor for the returning Afghan refugees.

Representative from Railway, while commenting on the connectivity projects, said that work is underway on Chaman-Spin Boldak-Kandahar Railway and Peshawar-Jalalabad Railway

projects. He further said that Pakistan Railway is also imparting training to Afghan Railway Officials for last few years. He said that Railway could also play its part in delivering goods through railway from Karachi to Peshawar. On this point, representative from Customs commented that if Railway takes responsibility for delivering goods from Peshawar to Torkham as well through other means because there is no railway connectivity between Peshawar and Torkham, then Railway can be given this task. Representative from Railway also informed that feasibility work and PC I of Torkham-Jalalabad Motorway have been carried out and Pakistan has completed its part of the project but Afghan side made no progress.

At the end, it was agreed that that all stakeholders would suggest a date at the earliest for the next APAPPS session to be held in Pakistan. AS(Afgh/WA) instructed Director(Afghanistan) to settle the issue of ownership of Economic Working Group and the lead in this regard should be given to Ministry of Commerce. All stakeholders agreed to share a short brief with this Ministry on the progress made in the backdrop of inaugural session of APAPPS.

The meeting ended with a note of thanks from and to the Chair.

Recorded by:

Zeb Alam Khan  
Assistant Director (Afghan-II)