



## PRESS RELEASE

PAKISTAN AFGHANISTAN JOINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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### **Zubair Motiwala lauded endeavors for enhancing ease of doing business across the border**

PAJCCI has been persistently following up improvements in bilateral trade and transit regime and presented a comprehensive draft of proposal to Special Task Force of National Assembly that also highlighted disturbing issues hampering ties, especially amid COVID 19.

Chairman PAJCCI greatly welcomed the efforts of the task force in facilitating the ease of doing business and considering the recommendations presented by PAJCCI in this context. He highly welcomed the recent announcement of abolishing SRO 475 (5) that required marking of “In transit to Afghanistan”, which was one of the most pressing demands by PAJCCI lately. He stated that this requirement was valid when loose cargo was in the movement, however, now as cargo is containerized having seals of shipping and customs, therefore this condition not only delayed the process but created undue distress. He also instated that PAJCCI’s recommendation of operationalizing multiple border crossing points was also met with acceptance and recently fully rebating Ghulam Khan border and activating Angoor Ada and Kharlachi are endeavors in the right direction which would surely establish the trust across border and will help improving trade graph drastically. Another important proposal that was also executed was abandoning the requirement of 100% scanning applied to transit amid COVID 19, which has not only created the backlog, but has caused significant financial loss due to time delays and wastage of perishable goods kept for longer duration due to this requirement. He showed confidence that other significant matters like waiver of detention and demurrage amid COVID 19 and revisiting APTTA and PTA draft will also be resolved soon, keeping in view the persistence and commitment of the task force in this regard.

Zubair Motiwala believes that the recent visit of H.E. Abdullah Abdullah and the subsequent planned visit from Pakistan shortly will enhance the confidence across the border and trade quantum with Afghanistan will soon surpass the past positive indicators. He welcomed the new visa regime announced for Afghanistan by Pakistan after the visit of H.E. Abdullah Abdullah and hope for the reciprocity. He staunchly believed that the results of these meetings will surely bring the positive outlook and strategic framework will be developed on an urgent basis to help stakeholders recover from the resulting devastating effects. He mentioned that Afghanistan is

the only country with which Pakistan enjoys trade surplus and this trust deficit will critically affect economy of Pakistan more than Afghanistan, hence these issues must be sorted out on priority basis as Pakistan's efforts in reaping potential benefits in Central Asia can only be substantiated by prioritizing resolution of Af-Pak trade and transit issues.

Motiwala also reinstated the matter of undue case filed by FBR against sugar importer from Afghanistan, which is pending since more than 10 months and has strained the relationship considerably. The importer upon the directives of the Directorate of Transit Trade (DTT), got the consignment verified from three entities as advised, subsequently the verdict was also passed in favor of the importer, by the High Court of Sindh, for the release of his containers on immediate basis, instead FBR unduly took this case to Supreme Court where case is pending. He urged the committee to raise this matter on an urgent basis and ensure that FBR should withdraw this case to save the importer from further loss and agony as further delay in this context would greatly devastate the trust and would nullify the positive impact of all efforts made by the Government till date.