



## PRESS RELEASE

PAKISTAN AFGHANISTAN JOINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

Tel No: 021-99332675-6, Fax: 021-99332677, Email: [info@pajcci.com](mailto:info@pajcci.com)

January 3, 2021

### **Pakistan should get regionally preferential treatment in Afghanistan: Zubair Motiwala, Chairman PAJCCI**

In line with a series of meetings held by Ministry of Commerce pertinent to Afghanistan Pakistan bilateral trade and transit, PAJCCI was sought its recommendations on behalf of private sector.

Khan Jan Alokozai, Co-Chairman PAJCCI lauded initiatives taken by Pakistan Government in line with proposals submitted by PAJCCI across the border, reflecting true sentiments of business community of both the countries. He urged that as a landlocked and under developed country, Afghanistan should get exclusive treatment while signing the PTA.

Chairman PAJCCI, Zubair Motiwala reiterated that in line with the vision of PM Imran Khan to support and facilitate Afghanistan in all economic context, however, to support our trade and local Industry, we should get preferential and primary partner treatment in Afghanistan especially for goods manufactured domestically. Also we should get regionally best rates in contrast to other players like India, Iran, Turkey or Central Asian Republics (CARs). He also stressed that single gate operation at Torkham border is aggravating the situation and Afghanistan should ensure operations at both the gates to overcome gridlock. One gate should be reserved for trade and other for transit alongwith facilitating fast movement for empty containers and export consignments that would open up availability of trackers, containers, vehicles at the competitive rates in the market.

In reference to comments of draft APTTA and PTA submitted by Afghanistan, PAJCCI conducted several stakeholders' session across Pakistan and compiled a comprehensive proposal, which was submitted to the Ministry of Commerce as an instrumental document illustrating desires of the private sector of Pakistan. The document also inculcated challenges faced by Pakistani businesses while conducting transit to Central Asia via Afghanistan. It is pertinent to note that import duties over kinnos transited to Uzbekistan via Afghanistan fetches highest duty in the world that has a detrimental effect. It was also discussed that Pakistan should have proper bilateral agreements with Central Asian countries to reap the benefit and the reciprocal supportive duty regime may be put in place between Pakistan and Afghanistan for both bilateral and transit landscape.

Afghanistan was also urged to provide access to Central Asia and joint mechanisms may be developed to realize valuable propositions across border. It was stressed that withdrawal of illicit charges and assurance of security while passing Afghanistan territory for CARs must be ensured. He suggested that import of cotton from Uzbekistan must be facilitated and be considered in free custom list as it doesn't effect industry in Afghanistan however is a dire need of Pakistan at the moment.

Motiwala also emphasized on long standing demand to include mediation and arbitration clause in APTTA document.

He welcomed strategy to ensure open border throughout irrespective of any subversive issues but he focussed that Pakistan's national sanctity should be maintained by avoiding maligning Pakistan in Afghan media and not playing under hands on unscrupulous elements by creating chaos at the borders.

PAJCCI also specified that reciprocal visa regime by Afghanistan is awaited to accomodate long term business visas especially for Pakistani investors, skilled workers and chamber representatives that visit for policy and strategic negotiations.