



PRESS RELEASE

PAKISTAN AFGHANISTAN JOINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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PAJCCI signs MoU with Lahore Chamber and Afghanistan Chamber for collaborative endeavors

PAJCCI's efforts in strengthening B2B relationship between Pakistan & Afghanistan bore fruits when participants at first part of current stakeholder meeting jointly agreed to sign MOU between PAJCCI, ACCI & LCCI for joint collaboration for economic connectivity.

Co-Chairman PAJCCI, Khan Jan Alokozai appreciated the PAJCCI's continuous & practical efforts in reaching the goals of its formation by providing a forum where Pakistan & Afghanistan's various Chambers can work together and expand the trade volume not only between two countries but CAR and beyond. He informed the forum that Afghan delegation is extremely delighted to be in Lahore and enjoyed the hospitality, trading opportunities, discussions and relationship building with Pakistani business community. He hoped that both sides will capitalize on the high trade potential and offered his continued support.

LCCI President Noman Kabir in his welcoming note appreciated the personal efforts of Zubair Motiwala; Chairman PAJCCI in undertaking the difficult task of opening ways & means for business community to sit together at different forums and explore ways to form strong B2B, G2G and people to people relationships. He thanked Motiwala for his recent support in increase of PKR trading category items and suspension of E form & EIF.

Zubair Motiwala in his opening address informed the house of recent interactions with both governments at highest level, overview of trade quantum and potential, his strongest suggestion to set up banking counters on borders to facilitate payments which is one of major obstacles in carrying out smooth trading activities. Due to FATF pressure, SBP has withdrawn CoC facility severely affecting business community and socio-economic situation of people in border areas.

He remarked that bilateral trade is dependent upon positive bilateral actions. Unilateral actions by either of the government will have negative impact like increase of duty on Pakistani Citrus in Afghanistan, high guarantee amount for transit to CAR, visa difficulties, free movement of goods vehicle beyond border posts, unnecessary security checks, manual evaluation and appraisal, E-Form and EIF requirements. Though Pakistan has been instrumental in creating support for Afghanistan at international forums for humanitarian aid and to release frozen assets but at the same time the

commitment of Government of Pakistan to open banking counters is still not fulfilled creating bottlenecks for trade.

He emphasized the need for development of cohesive policy for trading with Afghanistan and transit trade to CAR via Afghanistan by GOP including Barter trade, transit, investment and joint ventures. He also believes that Pakistan can also explore providing important services like health care, education, technical training, banking and infrastructure development in Afghanistan as conventional trade can only go so far.

The forum jointly agreed to the recommendation of Motiwala to continue the bilateral business community visits and for joint delegation visits to CAR states under the aegis of PAJCCI.

Mian Anjum Nisar; former President FPCCI and LCCI appreciated Zubair Motiwala and PAJCCI for their efforts and innovative approach to bringing stakeholders together.

Soltan Mohammad Safi, Vice Chairman ACCI extended the appreciation of Afghan delegation and thanked Motiwala for his efforts, support & guidance to business community on both sides of borders.

The participants deliberated and agreed upon various matters of interest; increasing trade, barter trade mechanism, formation of one window to trade with Afghanistan, frequent visits to both sides and put forward solutions to be presented to governments by PAJCCI.

The second part of stakeholder meeting will be held in Islamabad on 17th February 2022, where Afghan delegation, PAJCCI members and Government of Pakistan functionaries will participate.

PAJCCI in its long journey has now become a focal point to provide an active forum to business community and also an institution which has acquired the trust of both governments. PAJCCI has provided much required real time information on border crossing points, valuation of goods, documentation, visa issues and barter trade mechanism to both governments.

