



## PRESS RELEASE

PAKISTAN AFGHANISTAN JOINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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### **PAJCCI urges Governments to delineate appropriate security measures and let economic aspirations be segregated for long-term peace and prosperity along the region: Zubair Motiwala, President PAJCCI**

(Karachi) PAJCCI organized a private sector stakeholders' meeting in collaboration with Ministry of Commerce for revisiting the prospective revision of Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) and resolution of current issues between Pakistan and Afghanistan that has significantly devastated the economic connectivity and has created trust deficit across the border.

Zubair Motiwala - Chairman & President PAJCCI, on behalf of the forum, reiterated the significance of national sanctity and security and supported all measures that the respective Governments may take to ensure the same. However, the same may not be continued at the beset of hurting the economic and social ties across the border that causes permanent, long-term damage to the bilateral and transit trade. He mentioned that the recent figures are showing a rise in Afghanistan's trade with Iran and a corresponding decline in business with Pakistan. Pakistan-Afghanistan trade has dropped significantly in the last 1½ years because of bilateral tension, which is estimated to be approximately 40% decline in recent years.

Motiwala strongly urged both the governments to segregate business and trade ties from political and military tensions, though, establish strong security measures that are vital for stabilization and sustainability of both the countries without compromising upon the sentiments of the business community across the border. He emphasized that both the governments should take immediate steps to enhance confidence building measures to revive the peace and economic prosperity between the both countries.

The core meeting agenda entailed discussion on time and cost of transit, issues related to custom insurance guarantees and its replacement with TIR Carnet, WeBoc and EDI issues, Afghan customs transit rules, readiness of Pakistan Railways to facilitate Afghan transit cargo.

Bilal Khan Pasha, Joint Secretary - Ministry of Commerce acknowledged the problems raised by the forum and established that all relevant ministries are keenly following up the matters in hand and ensuring appropriate preparation for the upcoming APTTCA meeting to be held in Kabul. He stated that He added

that like such forums Ministry of Commerce is also engaging in proactive dialogues with Afghan officials in alignment with other relevant ministries, customs and Directorate General of Transit Trade.

He further established that upon consistent follow-up by PAJCCI for the waiver of accrued detention / demurrage charges resulting during recent border closure, the Ministry has taken up the matter urgently and on the basis of data acquired from both Ministry of Shipping & Ports and PAJCCI, it will soon be taking appropriate measures to resolve the matter affably.

The meeting was facilitated by USAID and was attended by PAJCCI directors, representatives from trading and the business community, FPCCI and KCCI, bonded carriers and transporters, clearing and forwarding agents, freight forwarders, insurance companies, Transit Trade officials and ICC-Pakistan.

