



PRESS RELEASE

PAKISTAN AFGHANISTAN JOINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

Tel No: 021-99332675-6, Fax: 021-99332677, Email: info@pajcci.com

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PAJCCI urges Governments to immediately open Chaman borders without further affecting economic connectivity between the two countries: Zubair Motiwala, Chairman

Zubair Motiwala, Chairman and Khan Jan Alokozai, Co-Chairman - Pakistan Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce & Industry, reflected grave concern over closure of Chaman border, that is critically affecting traders on both the sides, in terms of immense financial losses and trust deficit. They also took note of frequent border closures during the short span of time that has been the major reason behind the wavering confidence of business and trading communities across the border.

Motiwala commented that the sanctity of Pakistan and Afghanistan comes first and PAJCCI stands by all relevant measures that are required to be taken. However, closure of borders for such long duration intermittently causes permanent, long-term damage to the bilateral and transit trade. The stranded consignments of previous closure were still uncleared at the border and this recent closure has further aggravated the situation. The resulting financial losses, heavy demurrages, waiting time, uncertainty and diversion of both bilateral and transit trade to other avenues is causing psychological rift and is resulting in long-run instability in relations with the prime neighbor of Pakistan.

In a recent press conference in Afghanistan, Khan Jan Alokozai, presented the impacts of the recent political tension and shutdown of the Afghan- Pak Border on bilateral and transit trade and established that by having the transit agreement with Pakistan and also as a member of WTO, SAARC and ECO, it is urged that Pakistani Authorities should consider this matter as utmost priority as sealing of border causes damages in millions of dollars, which is now intolerable for the Afghan business community. While representing the sentiments of the Afghan business community, he feared that due to frequent closures transit route of Pakistan may not remain a potential choice for Afghan businesses which will also significantly affect the bilateral ties between the two countries not only economically and politically but also in terms of social connectivity.

Motiwala strongly urged both the governments to segregate business and trade ties from political tensions, establish strong security measures that are vital for stabilization and sustainability of both the countries but without compromising upon the sentiments of the business community across the border. He stated that Governments should allow economics to function freely and help politics rather than politics obstruct the free flow of economic activities. He mentioned that such economic disturbances cause other countries to penetrate Afghanistan as quantum of trade with Iran and India is growing positively in recent years. He believed that both the Governments would keenly follow-up the matter and would develop measures of a long term nature, for ensuring overall economic stability in the region.