



GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN  
DIRECTORATE OF TRANSIT TRADE  
CUSTOM HOUSE, PESHAWAR



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C. No. 22-03/DTP/2015/ 417

Dated: 09/11/2018

Subject: **MINUTES OF MEETING OF PAK-AFGHAN LIAISON COMMITTEE AT PESHAWAR FOR RESOLVING OPERATIONAL ISSUES OF AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN TRANSIT TRADE AGREEMENT (APTTA), 2010.**

In pursuance of Ministry of Commerce Notification dated 30.01.2015, a meeting of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Liaison Committee was held in the office of Director, Directorate of Transit Trade, Custom House, Peshawar on 01.11.2018 to sort out operational problems faced by all stakeholders. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Rashid Habib Khan, Director Directorate of Transit Trade, Peshawar and attended by the following:

1. Mr. Amjad-ur-Rehman, Additional Director, Directorate of Transit Trade, Peshawar.
2. Mr. Faiz Ali, Additional Collector, Model Customs Collectorate, Peshawar.
3. Mr. Hashim Mian, Consulate General, Consulate General of Afghanistan, at Peshawar
4. Mr. Naeem Sarwari, Second Secretary Consulate General of Afghanistan, at Peshawar.
5. Mr. Hamid Fazal, Facilitation Officer Trade, Consulate General of Afghanistan, Peshawar.
6. Lt. Col Shinwari®, Senior Manager, NLC-Torkham.
7. Captain: Arsalan Shahid, F.C- Torkham.
8. Mr. Shakeel ur Rehman, NTPT-Khyber, Tribal District Administration Khyber, Peshawar.
9. Mr. Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, Former SVP of Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Peshawar.
10. Mr. Amir Khan, Assistant Manager, Trade Development Authority, Peshawar.
11. Mr. Farooq Ahmad, General Secretary, Pak-Afghan Trade, KPK Chamber of Commerce and Industry Peshawar.

2. The Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Rashid Habib Khan, welcomed the participants and highlighted the purpose and importance of the Pak-Afghan Liaison Committee for smooth functioning of Pak-Afghan Transit Trade and opened discussion for the meeting.

3. Mr. Zia ul Haq Sarhadi, Former Senior Vice President (SVP), Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce, KPK appreciated conveying of the meeting and thanked the Directorate for initiating the relevant stakeholders for resolution of issues in Pak-Afghan transit trade. He then raised the issue of "Empty Containers" which are stuck up at Afghan side at Torkham border and are not being cleared by Afghan Customs Department. Reportedly, 1500 to 2000 empty containers are stuck up at Afghan side for which necessary action shall be taken by Afghan Government. Lt Col. Iftikhar Shinwari-NLC Torkham, Captain Arsalan Shahid, F.C. and Shakeel ur Rehman, NTPT-Khyber, Tribal District Administration Khyber stated that Security Agencies at Torkham take only 2-3 minutes while clearing empty containers and try to clear the vehicles entering from Afghanistan as soon as possible. So there is no delay in clearance at border on Pakistan side. In addition Director, Transit Trade, Peshawar explained that this Directorate has been regularly clearing 150-250 empty containers in a single day which clearly shows the capacity of Directorate of Transit Trade Peshawar and Border Agencies to handle large volumes of empty containers coming back from Afghanistan.

4. Mr. Farooq Ahmad, General Secretary, Pak-Afghan Trade, Chamber of Commerce of Commerce, Peshawar explained that these empty containers are the property of Shipping Lines and they impose demurrage charges on these containers when they fail to return in (15) days. Since these containers are stuck in Afghanistan for last many months, the demurrage charges have piled up adding to the cost of doing business. He further contended that transport fares have also gone up due to unavailability of sufficient number of transport units that are also stuck on Afghan side and illegal demands are being made by Afghan authorities to give them clearance.

5. The Afghan delegates accepted the contention of Pakistan side and Mr. Hamid Fazal, Facilitation Officer, Consulate General of Afghanistan assured that the matter will be conveyed to the relevant authorities of Afghanistan and assured that positive steps will be taken immediately to resolve this issue. He conceded that there is no issue in clearance of empty containers on Pakistan side and that Afghanistan government will take immediate remedial steps in this regard.

6. The Committee welcomed the participation of representatives of Frontier Corps, NLC and District Administration, Khyber in the meeting and thanked them for their valuable input during the course of discussion on various issues. The committee unanimously proposed permanent inclusion of representatives of these agencies in the Committee. It was assured that the matter would be taken up with the relevant quarters for the same.



7. The Afghan Delegates raised certain other issues related to bilateral trade. For instance, they contended that Pakistan Customs is not allowing import of Afghani apples. They further stated that mechanism of Quarantine Certificate for perishable items may be improved to promote hassle free trade. Mr. Faiz Ali, Additional Collector, MCC, Peshawar responded that there is no restriction on import of Afghani apples rather they enjoy reduced rates of duties and taxes being schedule V item, but Iranian apples are presented to be cleared as Afghani apples to avoid higher rates of duties and taxes. He informed that the matter has already been taken up with Embassy of Afghanistan through Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan wherein it has been clarified that Afghani apples shall be accompanied by Certificate of Origin duly issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Afghanistan while being presented for import in to Pakistan. Regarding the issues of problems being faced by the traders in acquiring Quarantine Certificate, Mr. Faiz Ali informed that the matter would be taken up with relevant quarters for its early resolution.

8. In the end, Director, Directorate of Transit Trade, Peshawar stated that Afghanistan – Pakistan Customs Joint Working Group meeting is scheduled to be held on 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> November, 2018 at Karachi where the high-ups of Customs administration of both countries will participate. He invited valuable suggestions/issues/points from the participants that can be highlighted in the upcoming meeting for resolution at the higher level.

9. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by the chair and the Afghan Delegates and other members of the meeting also conveyed appreciation and thanks for holding this meeting.

  
Additional Director (HQ)

Copy to:

1. The Director General, Directorate of Transit Trade, Karachi.
2. The Director, Directorate of Transit Trade, Karachi.
3. The Director, Directorate of Transit Trade, Peshawar.
4. The Consulate General / Trade Commissioner, Consulate General of Afghanistan, 10 the Mall, Peshawar.
5. The Director, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, Peshawar.
6. Ms. Maria Qazi, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Government of Pakistan with reference to Notification. No. 1 (3)/2014-AP-II dated 30.01.2015.
7. The Additional Collector-I, MCC, Peshawar.
8. Lt. Col Shinwari, Senior Manager, NLC-Torkham
9. Mr. Zia ul Haq Sarhadi, Former-Senior Vice President (SVP), Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce, KPK.
- ✓ 10. Ms. Faiza, Secretary General, Pakistan Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Room.No. 802, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, International Trade Center, Hasrat Mohani Road, Karachi.
11. Captain: Arsalan Shahid, F.C- Torkham.