



NEWSLETTER

European Commission Delegation to Pakistan

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MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR

In this issue

1

Message from the Ambassador

2

EU-Pakistan Political Dialogue

3

EU EOM Final Report

4-5

Who's Who at the EC Delegation to Pakistan

6-7

EU Development Aid at Work

8

Facilitating Market Access for Developing Countries to the EU

On the Occasion of Europe Day - 9th May

On the 9th of May 1950, the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman presented his proposal on the creation of an organised Europe, indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations. In Paris that day, against the background of the threat of a Third World War engulfing the whole of Europe, he read to the international press a declaration calling France, Germany and other European countries to pool together their coal and steel production as “the first concrete foundation of a European federation”.

This proposal, known as the “Schuman declaration”, is considered to be the beginning of the creation of what is now the European Union. Everything, therefore, began that day in 1950. That is why during the Milan Summit in 1985 EU leaders decided to celebrate every year 9th May as “Europe Day”.

Europe Day has become a European symbol which, along with the flag, the anthem, the motto and the single currency the euro, identifies the political entity of the European Union.

Every country which democratically chooses to accede to the European Union endorses its fundamental values of peace and solidarity. These values find expression through economic and social development embracing environmental and regional dimensions which are the guarantees of a decent standard of living for all citizens.

While Europe as such has existed for centuries, the elements which united it, in the absence of rules

and institutions, have in the past been insufficient to prevent the most appalling tragedies.

The integration of Europe will not come about in one day or even in a few decades. Deficiencies are still numerous and there are evident imperfections. The project which was begun just after the Second World War is still very new. In the past, efforts at uniting Europe were based on domination of one group over another. These attempts could not last, because those who had been conquered had only one aspiration: to regain their freedom.

Today's ambition is completely different: to build a Europe which respects the freedom and the identity of all the people who compose it. Only by uniting its peoples can Europe control its destiny and develop a positive role in the world.

Each year there is a special theme for Europe Day. For 2008 the theme is: “It's not them and us, it's you and me”.

For EU relations with Pakistan, this year's theme is very appropriate: We both want to strengthen our partnership on the basis of the common goals we have and with the aim to create greater stability nationally, regionally and globally.

On this note, let me wish you all a happy Europe Day 2008.

Jan de Kok

Ambassador/Head of Delegation,
European Commission to Pakistan

“A stable Pakistan in a stable region is good for the Pakistani people, but also for us in the European Union”



EU-Pakistan Political Dialogue – the “Troika” at Work

The European Union is engaged in a continuous Political Dialogue with Pakistan. This dialogue is conducted at various levels (e.g. Ministerial, Senior Officials, and European Union Heads of Mission in Islamabad.) and covers a wide range of subjects such as economic and development cooperation, human rights, non-proliferation, migration and counter-terrorism.

It is often not practical to have all 27 Member States of the European Union, the European Union Council Secretariat and the European Commission, present in these dialogues. Therefore, the European Union is usually represented by the “Troika”.

The “Troika” represents the European Union in external relations that fall within the scope of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

Since the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Troika has brought together, at Ministerial level:

- the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (i.e. Slovenia for the 1st semester and France for the 2nd semester 2008);
- the Secretary-General/High Representative for the common foreign and security policy (i.e. Javier SOLANA);
- the European Commissioner in charge of external relations and European neighbourhood policy (i.e. Benita FERRERO-WALDNER).

The Presidency can also be assisted, where necessary, by the representatives of the future Presidency.

On 3rd and 4th March the so-called “EU Political Directors Troika” was in Pakistan to discuss a wide range of issues with its

Pakistani counterparts, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and the Additional secretary Europe in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The EU Presidency was represented by Matjaz Sinkovec; the High Representative was represented by Tomasz Kozlowski and the European Commission was represented by Karel Kovanda. The EU Presidency was assisted by Michel Filhol representing the future Presidency.



The High Representative for CFSP, Dr. Javier SOLANA, visited Pakistan on 21st and 22nd April to discuss issues of common and mutual interest with his counterpart Foreign Minister Qureshi. He also called on President Pervez Musharraf, Prime Minister Gilani and leaders of the major political parties.

He congratulated Pakistan on the elections of 18th February which saw the transition to a democratic government comprising a broad-based coalition. He stressed the importance the EU attaches to its relations with Pakistan and expressed the EU's resolve to further strengthen and deepen those relations at political level.

The EU Foreign Ministers Troika is expected to visit Pakistan late May or early June this year. ■

EU Election Observation Mission Presents its Final Report

– Elections in Pakistan fall short of international standards

Two days after the national and provincial assembly elections in Pakistan on 18th February the European Union's Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) presented a preliminary statement. This was not the end of the task for the mission, which continued to analyse the electoral process even after the elections to see, for example, how the competent authorities handled complaints.

On 14th April Michael Gahler, Chief Observer and Member of the European Parliament, and Hannah Roberts, Deputy Chief Observer, returned to Pakistan to present their final report. They spoke about their findings in a press conference in Islamabad and also held separate meetings with the Election Commission of Pakistan, the National Assembly, the EU Heads of Mission, representatives of civil society and political parties both in Islamabad and Karachi.

The final report summarises the findings of the EU EOM. It concludes that despite a pluralistic process and increased confidence in comparison to previous elections “the overall process fell short of a number of international standards for genuine democratic elections”. Mr Gahler commented that “although the February 2008 elections were competitive and the results were accepted, there are enduring problems with the framework and conditions for elections in Pakistan”.

The report also puts forward over 80 recommendations to improve future elections. Key recommendations include:

1. Steps should be taken to ensure there is an independent judiciary in which there is stakeholder confidence, so that effective oversight of the election process can be undertaken.
2. Election legislation should be reviewed in a consultative manner. Specific issues to be addressed include the independence and transparency of the election administration, complaints and appeals procedures, and overly-restrictive candidacy requirements.
3. The appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and ECP members should be subject to stakeholder consultation and should provide for independence. The ECP should be

restructured, should operate transparently and consultatively, and should take full responsibility for its mandated tasks.

4. Election appeals to courts and tribunals should be dealt with in a timely manner by judges who are independently appointed.
5. All polling station results should be swiftly displayed at the constituency and on the internet.
6. The ECP should produce an accurate and complete electoral roll.
7. If only C/NICs are permissible for registration and/or voting, acquisition of a CNIC should be facilitated so that there is no barrier to participation.
8. Reform of the legal framework regulating media activities should be undertaken and should include reduced restrictions and clear-cut definitions.
9. State media should ensure impartiality in its news and public affairs broadcasts during an election campaign.
10. Efforts should be made to reduce women's severe under-representation in the electoral process.

Mr Gahler called on the Pakistani authorities, political parties and civil society swiftly to undertake electoral reform. He also urged international partners to continue to extend their support to electoral reform. Such reforms, he continued, should not be postponed until shortly before the next elections. “It is now or never”, he told journalists in a well-attended press conference in Islamabad on 20th April. Mr Gahler will return to Pakistan in a year's time and stated that by then he hoped to see “some significant advances”.

The European Commission Delegation in Islamabad will continue its cooperation with Pakistani authorities, political parties and civil society to help ensure continued and sustainable electoral reform. We also look forward to working in partnership with other European Union (EU) and non-EU donors in supporting this agenda. To facilitate your contacts with the EC Delegation on these matters, we have set up a functional mailbox to which you may send your correspondence on support to electoral reform:

DELEGATION-PAKISTAN-ELECTIONS@ec.europa.eu

Who's Who – at the EC

Administration Section



The Admin Section: FROM LEFT TO RIGHT Raja Anees, Khawar Hussain, Raja Naseem, Khurshid Shah, Ole Phillip, Arif Kiyani, M. Ali Khawaja, Khalid Mehmood, Khurram Shahzad, RanaZuberi, Imran Haider and Ilyas Tanveer.

The Delegation's Administration Section is the largest section in terms of man-power, counting a total of 14 staff. The section is responsible for logistics, infrastructure, IT, personnel, contacts with the host nation, archives, accounting and budget for all matters not related to development and cooperation.

Since September 2006, the Administration Section is headed by Ole Phillip.

Political Affairs, Trade and Communication Section

The Political Affairs, Trade and Communication (PTC) Section follows, analyses and reports to HoD and HQ on political developments in Pakistan as well as on how Pakistan's relations with regional and global partners unfold. The section is also actively involved in the European Commission's political dialogue with Pakistan and follows up on bilateral issues, such as the negotiations of a readmission agreement between the EU and Pakistan. Linked to our political reporting, we also analyse and report on the economic situation of Pakistan. Monitoring and dialogue on human rights is another important part of the section's mandate.

In the area of international trade, the European Commission has strong formal competence and negotiates in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and with bilateral partners on behalf of the European Community.



Members of the Political Affairs, Trade and Communication Section: FROM LEFT TO RIGHT Saba Kausar, Husnain Iftakhar, Georges Lefeuvre, Muhammad Shafi, Tomas Niklasson and Jennifer Mumtaz.

In Pakistan, the PTC section of the Delegation is involved in a continuous dialogue with Pakistan on trade issues, such as preferential trade conditions granted by the EU or specific issues around for example anti-dumping cases or phyto-sanitary standards.

Communication, including press and information work, is the third pillar of the PTC section. We are currently redesigning the web site of the Delegation to ensure more easy access to up-to-date information about the European Commission and its activities in Pakistan. We provide information through our "EU corners" at Universities around the country and through the newsletter of the Delegation "EU NEWS". The PTC section will also expand its contacts with Pakistani media to promote a better understanding, and coverage, of EC and EU affairs and activities.

Since December 2007, the PTC section is headed by Tomas Niklasson.



Delegation to Pakistan

Operations Section



Members of the Operations Section: FROM LEFT TO RIGHT Rukhsana Iltaf, Kauser Bhuiyan, Daniela Forte, Siddique Bhatti, Imran Ashraf, Ghazala Gondal, Charlotte Blomhammar, Sabeen Rashid, Arshad Rashid, Roshan Ara and Frank Hess.

Under the overall supervision of the Head of Delegation or Ambassador Mr. Jan De Kok, the Operations Section (OS) of the EC Delegation to Pakistan is mandated for implementation of the external assistance of the European Commission in Pakistan.

Since the start of its co-operation with Pakistan in 1976, the Commission has committed more than €500 million to projects and programmes. Most of these commitments have been implemented by a team of European and Pakistani staff members until late 80's which has evolved as Operations Section.

In 1989 three staff members, under overall supervision of the Ambassador, were responsible for managing the entire development operations in Pakistan. Today this section has grown up to 14 European and Pakistani staff members, headed by Frank Hess.

According to the thematic focus of the assistance portfolio the Operations Section is divided into Education, Rural Development and Environment, Economic Cooperation and Governance and Civil Society teams. Staff members of each team have special expertise in their respective fields.

Core responsibility of the Operations Section is to contribute to the conception, elaboration and implementation of development cooperation strategies and programmes. Thus Operations Section is not only jointly with Contract and Finance Section responsible for management of the external assistance of the Commission but also significantly contribute to the identification, prioritise and formulation of programmes and country specific strategic policies in line with the Pakistan National Development Strategies.

The current portfolio of the Operations Section is around €270 million and an indicative allocation of €500 million in grants for 2007-2013 is expected to be managed by the Operations Section in the coming years.

Since August 2007, the Operation Section is headed by Frank Hess.

Finance and Contracts Section



The FCS Section: FROM LEFT TO RIGHT Nayyar Riaz, Lars Dahl, Ayesha Sohail, Andreas Röttger and Afshan Joseph.

Aid Delivery, helping Pakistani people to better their lives, is an inspiring and challenging task, which requires a number of skills and conditions. Clear concepts and strategies, sound operational expertise and a receptive, stable environment are definitely amongst the necessary conditions.

However, knowing the complex implementation rules is equally important for a proper take-off and successful accomplishment of a project or (sector) budget support programme. How does a call for proposal or tender function? Is budget available? Can we amend a contract to adjust to ground realities? Are those cost eligible? What are the requirements for sound financial management and reporting? How do we ensure that taxpayers' money is well spent? These are only a few questions and issues we encounter in our daily work.

The Finance & Contracts Section (FCS) advises the Operations Section and (potential) partners on the rules, keeps track of budgetary issues and ensures sound financial management, which includes necessary financial checks and audits. On all these matters it liaises with the Headquarter in Brussels as well. The section consists of a team of five, soon six, members. We work closely together with the Operations Section.

Since October 2007, the Finance and Contracts Section is headed by Andreas Röttger. ■

EU Development Aid at Work

Improving the Livelihood of Poor Farmers in Punjab and Doing Good for the Environment



Sama Satta, a small village close to Bahawalpur, on an early February morning. School has just started with a morning prayer. There are two classes, separated by gender. But the pupils are not young boys and girls. This time it is the turn again for their parents. They attend a Farmer Field School.

The aim of this school is to teach the farmers pragmatic state of the art agricultural methods. Basically, the idea is simple. Modern farming techniques can save costs, so that poor farmers can improve their profits thus their livelihood. Now, during a field mission, staff of the EC Delegation to Pakistan wants to examine how its programme succeeds in practice. Is it useful for the farmers? The classes we attend in Sama Satta concentrate on cotton farming. For generations farmers in the region cultivate this crop to earn their living.

Modern cotton farming poses numerous challenges. How to use water more efficiently, an increasingly scarce resource? What are the techniques to apply more prudently and targeted pesticides and fertilizers, substances which are not only costly but can be environmentally hazardous and pose health risks?

All these topics are part of the curriculum. The men in their class, the final wrap up training module, discuss eagerly modern water saving farming techniques (laser land levelling, alternate row irrigation, bed & furrow technique), ways to identify useful insects which should not be sprayed to death (usage of less pesticides) and means to cut down on fertilizer usage whilst maintaining the same harvest yields. Unequivocally the message of the farmers is clear and positive. This training course has a positive direct impact on their lives. It has helped them to improve their farming methods and thereby their capacity to earn their living. The new irrigation methods are far superior than their outdated old practices. With regard to fertilizer and pesticides in the past the peasants have essentially been advised by agents of the chemical industry, which followed their own agenda, i.e. to sell as much of these chemical products as possible. Here again, practical objective information helps the farmers now to apply these substances more prudently.

In addition, using less water and chemicals makes farming more environment friendly. In the class for the ladies we encounter a different training approach. Some of the female students perform a play to demonstrate the health risks of imprudent cotton picking. Even today, it is mainly the lot of the female farmers to carry out the cumbersome task of cotton picking. Due to a lack of awareness too often in the past cotton picking took place briefly after using pesticides – not rarely with dramatic consequences for the health. The play creates awareness of these risks and visualizes better practices. The feedback of the female students is as positive as the one of their husbands. They stress an interesting side effect of the training course. Their increased knowledge about farming methods raised the standing of the women in the farming household. Now they can discuss these important matters with their husbands at eye level.

The progress of the project so far is encouraging. Sustainable success lies in ensuring the continuation of the Farmer Field Schools after completion of the project and the multiplier effect of trained farmers





After a simple but tasty lunch, fresh chapattis, turnips and chicken tikka, we move on further north. Next day we want to visit the Farmer Field School Ganga Sing in the Faisalabad region. Here the focus is on sugar cane farming. Again we have fruitful and open discussions with the farmers. Their feedback concerning the project is equally encouraging and positive as in Sama Satta. However, in Faisalabad we encounter in our debate two important aspects not directly addressed by the project. The negotiating power of farmers vis à vis the sugar mill owners, traders and middle men appears to have declined further over time. Often, farmers are not in a position to negotiate sustainable and fair prices with their counterparts, who do the trading and reap a bigger share of the profits. What could be a solution to this thorny issue? Farmers' selling collectives to increase their momentum in the negotiations? Avoiding over production? Political intervention? Clearly, there is no easy solution for this complex problem. However, it appears to be equally evident that this issue merits further reflection. Another pertinent aspect stressed by the farmers is linked to demography, inheritance laws and eventually land reform. The number of families in the village has grown from around 30 in the 1960s to almost 200 today. Obviously, the farming land has not increased in parallel. In other words, the plots of land a family has to live from decrease with every succession. At one stage this is no longer economically viable. Again, this is a multifaceted issue without an easy panacea at hand. However, credible pro poor policies cannot avoid to address it at one stage.

Summing up: The progress of the project so far is encouraging. Sustainable success lies in ensuring the continuation of the Farmer Field Schools after completion of the project and the multiplier effect of trained farmers. We will work on this. However, as we have seen in the field, there are a number of other important issues which require reflection to better the lives of poor farmers.

Some background facts

Rural development remains a key issue in Pakistan to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Almost 70% of the total population of the country lives in rural areas most of them are poor and

disadvantaged. Consequently, the European Union (EU) takes a keen interest to help the new Pakistani governments on federal and provincial level to tackle the numerous challenges in the rural areas. This dialogue will further intensify. Rural development has been identified in the EU Country Strategy 2007-2013 for Pakistan along with education as focal areas. For the period 2007-2010 the EU earmarked €108 million for rural development projects in Pakistan, specifically in Balochistan and NWFP, the two most disadvantaged provinces.

Together with various implementing partners the EU already runs a number of important rural projects in Pakistan, for instance in the field of livestock the €23 million “Strengthening of Livestock Services Project (SLSP)” and the €1 million project “Better Management Practices for Water Thirsty Crops”. A core objective of all projects is to improve the livelihood of poor farmers.



The EU funded project “Better Management Practices for Water Thirsty Crops” visited recently during a field mission of the Delegation is implemented by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) since 2006 and focuses on improving farming methods of sugar cane and cotton in Punjab – two of the major crops grown in Pakistan, which play a significant role in the country's economy. However, inefficient cotton and sugar cane farming methods are amongst the main causes of water shortages and also major contributors to environmental and health hazards due to excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers. The project addresses these issues so far with tangible and promising results. Farmers have recorded water savings of up to 30%, up to 40-50 % reduction in the use of chemical pesticides and up to 30% reduction in the use of chemical fertilizers due to the information they learned in the project's Farmer Field Schools. In the course of the project 1,400 farmers will receive this training and can serve as multiplier for other farmers in the region. Moreover, training material will be disseminated to a further 23,500 farmers. Other elements of this programme are to support farming methods research conducted in the Punjab Agricultural Research Department and to facilitate micro-credit financing for farmers. ■

To contact the Export Helpdesk:

To read about the Export Europa server:
http://ec.europa.eu/trade/issues/global/development/thd_en.htm

To visit the database:
<http://exporthelp.europa.eu/>

To contact the Export Helpdesk team:
exporthelp@ec.europa.eu

For users to lodge detailed questions:
<http://exporthelp.europa.eu/>

Articles and news items in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official view of the European Commission.

Facilitating Market Access for Developing Countries to the EU

The European Commission launched in February 2004 the Export Helpdesk for Developing Countries. It is a free online service to offer exporters from developing countries a practical instrument to assist them in taking better advantage of market access opportunities offered by the European Union. This project plays an important role in giving an operational character to the development dimension of the EU Trade Policy.

This service provides the following information to exporters, importers, trade associations and governments:

- EU and Member States' import requirements as well as internal taxes applicable to products (Requirements and Taxes section)
- EU preferential import regimes benefiting developing countries (Import Tariffs, Customs Documents and Rules of Origin sections)
- Trade data for the EU and its individual Member States (Trade Statistics section)
- A market place where exporters in developing countries can establish contacts with importers from the EU (Market Place section)
- Links to other authorities and international organisations involved in practical trade operations and trade promotion (Links section)
- The possibility to lodge detailed information requests about real-life situations encountered by exporters (Contact section).

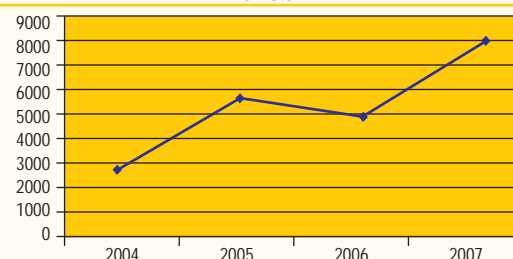
This service is totally free of charge. Everybody has access to it; no password is required. It is available in four languages (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) so as to reach the largest number of people in the developing countries. User-friendliness is a key aim. To this end, a User Guide and a list of Frequently Asked Questions are available and offer guidance on the use of the service.

Confirmation of the importance of this service for developing country exporters is provided by the impressive statistics of its use: from its launch to December 2004, it received an average of nearly 1,500 hits per day, which has surged to an average of well over 7,500 hits per day in 2007. Added to this, an average of 80 questions is received per month by the

Contact Section and about 80 offers and demands are published also per month in the Market Place section.

The main user of the Export Helpdesk in 2007 from the developing countries was Latin America with 26% of total hits, followed by Asia with 18% of total use. ACP countries account for 4% of users and the Euromed zone for 5.5%. It is interesting to note that in 2007, 38% of hits came from the European Union, which indicates the importance of the Export Helpdesk also for EU importers.

Pakistan



The Export Helpdesk in Asia
In Asia more specifically, China is the main user with 143,000 hits in 2007, followed by India, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines.

The Export Helpdesk and Pakistan
Pakistan is a good user as well. Indeed, the use of the Export Helpdesk started from about 2,500 yearly hits in 2004, to reach 8,000 hits in 2007! This means that its use has more than tripled over 4 years.

These web statistics are a very important indicator to assess the use of the Export Helpdesk world wide, and also helps us plan better our communication and awareness-raising strategy so as to promote the Export Helpdesk in regions and countries, where its visibility appears to be still low.

Last but not least, the Export Helpdesk Team has recently launched a Newsletter to inform its readers of the various activities related to the Export Helpdesk as well as about changes to the database.

If you wish to receive the Newsletter, please send an email to TRADE-G1-MARKETACCESS@ec.europa.eu, mentioning "Subscribe Export Helpdesk Newsletter" in the subject line.

Delegation of the European Commission to Pakistan

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Contributors should include their names with complete contact details.



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