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Trade Related Technical Assistance (TRTA II) Programme

Public Private Dialogue on Regional Trade with ECO Countries in Textile made ups and Light Engineering Sector

21 December 2011, Marriott Hotel, Islamabad

PRESS RELEASE

European Union supports Public Private Dialogue for enhancing regional trade with Economic Cooperation Organization countries

Under an EU-funded Trade Related Technical Assistance (TRTA II) programme, a Public Private Dialogue (PPD) on regional trade with Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) countries in textile made-ups and light engineering sectors took place in Islamabad on 21 December 2011. Participants from public and private sectors as well as civil society attended the seminar.

The purpose of this PPD was to define policy recommendations for trade policy and attendant domestic regulatory reform for the development of trade with the ECO countries in textile made-ups and light engineering sectors. In the wake of global advocacy and trend for regional trade, it is extremely important for Pakistan to rely more on trade with its neighbors particularly in those sectors where it has a comparative advantage.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Pierre Mayaudon, Deputy Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, emphasized that the EU was standing by Pakistan side in its endeavors to develop regional integration. To translate this commitment into practical terms, the TRTA II program allows promoting trade policy capacity building, development of quality infrastructure and enforcement of intellectual property rights. He informed about the EU support in future will further built on the proposed new programmes in trade with Pakistan.

As reflected during the PPD, a focus has been put on two sectors initially for developing trade with ECO countries: Textile made-ups and light engineering. These are critical areas where Pakistan has comparative advantage and can enhance its exports in the two sectors by appropriate policy reform to overcome hurdles to trade with ECO countries.

The Additional Secretary Commerce, Mr. Kamran Ali Qureshi, commended the initiative of the TRTA II programme and expressed the desire and willingness of the Ministry of Commerce to focus attention on the development and promotion of regional trade. He highlighted the government's current efforts for normalization of trade relations with India. He flagged that there is a global trend for regional trade and Pakistan will do its best to develop trade and economic integration within the region.

Open house discussions among the invited participants also took place in which representatives of Federal Government Ministries, implementing agencies, provincial departments, Chambers of Commerce, trade associations, individual firms, independent research organizations and Academia discussed the issues being faced by the selected sectors for trade with ECO countries and possible policy reform to overcome them.

The TRTA II programme is implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in collaboration with International Trade Centre (ITC) and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The dialogue was organized under Component 1 of the TRTA II programme which is about trade policy capacity building and is implemented by ITC.

