

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Industries and Production
(WTO Unit)

Subject: **Minutes of the Seminar on “Non-Agriculture Market Access (NAMA- Negotiations)**

The WTO Cell of the Ministry of Industries and Production organized a Seminar on Non-Agriculture Market Access (NAMA-Negotiations in collaboration with Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) in the conference room of RCCI at 11.00 AM on 17.02.2011.

2. The objective of the seminar was to share information on the current issues in the WTO, to create awareness among private stakeholders about Non Agricultural Market Access (NAMA), its importance for industrial sector of Pakistan and to provide an overview of the Ministry’s efforts for industrial development. Key speaker of the seminar was Mrs. Shaista Sohail, Joint Secretary (P&P), Ministry of Industries & Production and Project Director of the WTO Cell. Representatives from different government organization/departments such as Ministry of Commerce, PITAD, IPO and Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry participated in the Seminar. The Seminar generated active interaction between the participants.

3. Mr. Najam Malik, former President welcomed the guest speaker and participants of the seminar on behalf of the RCCI. Mrs. Shaista Sohail, Joint Secretary (P&P) made a detailed presentation on the subject matter. She was of the view that Pakistan is among those countries that are facing problems and challenges of changing world trade patterns. She mentioned supply-side constraints such as lack of infrastructure, low productivity, economies of scale and dearth of latest techniques for enhancing value addition that hinder the growth of trade in accordance with WTO regulations. She highlighted the importance of Doha Round for Pakistan and stated that WTO provides us the platform which offers solutions and opportunities for the developing countries. She believed that that it is necessary to interact with the stakeholders of private sector to create awareness and sensitize them about the ongoing NAMA negotiations and its implication on manufacturing sector.

4. While discussing the challenges confronting to industrial sector, she informed the participants that MOI&P has drafted Industrial Policy in accordance with WTO rules & regulations which aims at balanced approach for all the industrial sectors. In this policy, MOI&P has suggested measures to uplift the sectors which were neglected in the past. The policy will provide gains only to the competitive producers. Input and performance based concession would be provided to the industrial sector which ultimately generate employment opportunities in the country. She emphasized on horizontal measures for the benefit of industry to offset the grievances of industrialists. She commented that subsidies & dumping are against fair trade practices and should be

discouraged. She also said that horizontal subsidies are sectoral specific subsidies and favorable for everyone, therefore, it should be encouraged.

5. She explained the principles of MFN & National Treatment and its impact to divert the world resources towards the best. She briefed the participants about the applied tariff rates and bound rates. She also mentioned that reciprocal concessions differ for developed & developing countries. She talked about the Generalized System of Preference (GSP) in which some concessions have been granted to developing countries however the principle of GSP departed from the MFN principle. She also discussed issues related to Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) and its impact on trade.

6. During discussions, the participants expressed their interest in the subject and raised questions regarding the present status of on-going NAMA-negotiations, non-technical barriers (TNTBs) to trade, existing duty structure and International Harmonized Coding System (HSC) for classification of goods. Mrs. Shaista Sohail asked Ms. Seema Bokhari, Chief WTO to brief the participants about Harmonized Commodity Description & Coding System. The Chief WTO explained that HSC is an international nomenclature developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO). The system is managed by the WCO and used by Customs Agencies of a large number of countries world over including Pakistan. She discussed the structure and layout followed by an analysis of the intricacies of the HS in the perspective of the multilateral trading system.

7. While participating in the discussion, Mr. Mohammad Atteq Sheikh, Acting President, RCCI highlighted the importance of quality and standards of manufacturing goods. He was of the view that only those manufacturers will survive in the world market who maintain international standards. Col. Mohammad Ahmed, Managing Director, Combat Security pointed out that private sector has to play a key role in providing employment opportunities to the new entrants in the job market.

8. The Acting President of the RCCI thanked Mrs. Shaista Sohail, Joint Secretary (P&P) and WTO team for comprehensive presentation to create awareness among the business community regarding WTO regime and on-going NAMA-Negotiations. While wrapping the proceedings of the seminar, he acknowledged that it was the first time ever that a team from government department had arranged a seminar for the stakeholders of private sector regarding WTO issues and recent developments on NAMA-negotiations. He requested the WTO Cell to arrange sector specific seminars in the future.
