



INDIA COMMITTED TO THE EXPANSION OF AFGHANISTAN–PAKISTAN TRANSIT TRADE AGREEMENT

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/06/166078.htm>

<http://www.usip.org/publications/2015/08/17/the-future-of-afghanistan-pakistan-trade-relations>

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/india-committed-to-greater-regional-integration-mukerji-115120100277_1.html

Afghanistan and Pakistan relationships have historically been tense with issues such as; cross-border infiltration, refugees, drug trafficking, militant groups, and disputes over counterterrorism policy and dialogue with terrorist networks have caused the relations of two countries eroded. However, nowadays, the two countries are among each other's largest trading partners. Trade between Afghanistan and Pakistan has increased substantially, which Pakistan supplies the largest share of total Afghan imports, however due to a combination factors, the share was declined in 2011. Afghanistan's landlocked status imply that it relies on neighbors to facilitate the transit of its trade to a broader global economy.

They have overcome an agreement known as the

Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) in 1965, and was redesigned in 2010 and gained full implementation by the Presidents of both countries on 12 June 2011. The purpose of APTTA is to strengthen trade relations and facilitate Afghan transit through Pakistan, and has also improve their trade facilitations, also as a concrete demonstration of the common shared vision of development, prosperity and peace which will make a significant contribution to regional stability. This full implementation of the agreement will provide a boost to the economies of both countries by reducing the costs and delays in transport between Pakistan and Afghanistan, which will help both countries expand their reach to

world markets and reduce cross-border smuggling.

Now, Pakistan has returned to become Afghanistan's largest trading partner, while Afghanistan is Pakistan's second largest export market. Both countries have gone through significant challenges in their respective security, political, and economic realms over the years.

With APTTA, Pakistani trucks in turn are allowed to move products to all regions of Afghanistan, which then led to the formation of a joint chamber of commerce. In 2012, Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed to extend the APTTA to Tajikistan as the primary establishment of a north-south trade corridor. This allows Tajikistan to use Pakistan's ports for its imports and exports. In late

2015, India has declared that it is open to joining and supporting regional initiatives, including the expansion of the APTTA to ensure Afghanistan's greater integration into the South Asian region. This was also voiced by India's Permanent Representative to the United Nation, Ambassador Asoke Mukerji, concerning the security situation in the country. Mukerji said that by India joining and supporting the regional initiatives, Afghanistan will be able to achieve its optimal economic potential only if it is allowed freedom of transit to major markets in South Asia. This includes India opening its markets to all Afghanistan exports and to receive Afghanistan trucks on its territory.

(DMH)

ASEAN NON-TARIFF MEASURES

<http://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-Analysis/Non-Tariff-Measures.aspx>
http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1113&SiteMap_x0020_Taxonomy=UNCTAD%20Home;

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is a world leader in statistics measuring the effects of non-tariff measures. Non-tariff measures in world trade are an ability to gain and to benefit from market access opportunities depends increasingly on compliance with non-tariff measures. The measures represent a major challenge for exporters, importers and policymakers. This measure is also important for developing countries to understand the use of Non-tariff measures and the implementation of effective development strategies.

As non-tariff measures is known to be expanding and keep consolidating data collection in different regions, October 2015 was the time for South-East Asia. UNCTAD held an ASEAN Regional nontariff measures workshop as South-East Asia aims for regional economic integration. The workshop was held by UNCTAD and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) on

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Non-Tariff Measure Data Collection Validation at the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Singapore on 5-7 October 2015. The workshop brought together national consultants and government representatives from each ASEAN country as well as East Asia region, including Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The workshop is not only to set data on non-tariff measures (i.e. instruments used to evade free trade rules), but also to research analyzing the various impacts of such measures on international trade in ASEAN and East Asia countries.

The workshop is followed by a short training on 8-9 October 2015 by UNCTAD representatives, held for policy makers working within various ministries and agencies of the government of Singapore which provided a comprehensive overview of the non-tariff measure and data collection. Both

168

the training and the workshop will greatly assist policymakers, researchers and negotiators to achieve regional economic integration in the future and in the context of the recently agreed

Trans Pacific Partnership trade deal, which most countries in the region are a part of.

(DMH)

TRANS PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP: AN AMBITIOUS FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is one of the most ambitious free trade agreements ever signed involving 12 countries: USA, Japan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Brunei, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, Chile and Peru. This free-trade zone among 12 nations around the Pacific has scope account for 40 per cent of the world's economic output. Those in favour believe that this trade will unleash new economic growth among countries involved.

TPP began with a trade agreement between just four nations Brunei, Chile, New Zealand and Singapore 10 years ago. That deal removed the tariffs on most goods traded among the countries, promised to cut more and to co-operate on wider issues such as employment practices, intellectual property and policies of competition. Recently, the pact is aimed at deepening economic ties between these nations, slashing tariffs and fostering trade to boost growth. The member countries are hoping to foster a closer relationship on economic policies and regulation.

TPP is a big deal due to the collective population of about 800-million market from 12 member countries- almost double that of the European Union's Single Market. The deal is a remarkable achievement that gives very different approach and standards including environmental protection. Most goods and services seem to be involved, but not going to remove all tariffs. The signatories have said that they will either eliminate or reduce tariffs and other restrictive policies from agricultural products and industrial goods. All tariffs will be removed on textiles and clothing immediately after the deal is ratified, says US Trade Representative. In some areas of trade services, the parties are going to liberalise trade by not making any restrictive rules in the future. Services and countries fall into each category will be contained in an annex to the agreement. In the future, the implementation of the deal will be argued out in each countries legislatures in the coming weeks and months before being implemented. (MM)