Prime Minister’s Office

Board of Investment

**PRESS RELEASE**

**PAKISTAN RUSSIA BUSINESS & INVESTMENT FORUM**

**Islamabad November 19, 2015:**The first Pakistan-Russia Investment Forum was jointly organized by the Board of Investment (BOI) Pakistan and Russian Business Council for Cooperation with Pakistan, in Islamabad at (Marriott Hotel on November 19, 2015, on the sidelines of 4th session of Pakistan-Russia Intergovernmental Commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation. The Forum was co-chaired by Finance Minister of Pakistan and Federal Minister drug control services, Russian Federation, who is the co-chairman of Pakistan Russia inter-governmental commission. The Forum was attended by around 80 businessmen from Russia and around 130 local businessmen.

In opening remarks Dr. Miftah Ismail, MOS / chairman, BOI highlighted that the existing trade and investment figures between the two countries are not reflecting the real potential exist. He highlighted the potential exist in Paksitan in terms of natural and human resources. He invited the Russian as well as Pakistani investors to invest in Pakistan as prospects of co-production; joint ventures with local partners are promising in the country.

The Russian Minister highlighted that this first investment forum has provided an excellent opportunity to businessmen and investors from both sides to interact and explore possibilities of joint cooperation trade & investment. He showed his confidence that this forum will further cement our bilateral trade & investment relations as a number of CEOs and companies representatives of both the countries are gathered here to discuss avenues of cooperation in various sectors. He pointed out that the existing volume of trade and investment is not commensurate with the available potential in both the countries.

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The Russian Minister emphasized that establishment of airlinks between the two countries would be stepping stones for setting up direct contacts between the business and investors community. The Minister also offered the supply of LNG gas to Pakistan. He particularly mentioned the agreement singned last month for establishing north south gas pipeline and asked the business representatives of both the countries to work on other possible areas of cooperation such as banking i.e through opening of bank’s branches in each other’s country, furthering cooperation in sectors like Electro energy, infrastructure, oil & gas, transport, agriculture, agriculture, telecommunication and other areas of mutual cooperation. He mentioned that Tomorrows meeting of IGC will testify these agreements at governmental level. The Minister also appreciated the economic policies of government of Pakistan and expressed the hope that the rising trend of Pakistan economy opens new avenues for business communities to enhance trade and investment which is ultimate objective of this forum.

While addressing the forum Finance Minister of Pakistan appreciated both sides for organizing first ever Investment Forum and expressed his confiden t that this initiative will go a long way to promote business and economic relations between the two countries. The Finance Minister also appreciated the efforts put by chairman BOI, advisory to Prime Minister on foreign affairs Mr.Tariq Fatmi and Russian team for resolving 17 years old issues relating to Outstanding claims of Pakistanis and Russian businesses. The Minister endorsed the views of Russian Minister that the figures of bilateral trade and investment are far below the actual existing potential.

The Finance Minister appreciated and thanks the Russian side for establishing north south gas pipeline and invited Russian side to upgrade Pakistan Steel Mill to make it a profitable entity. The minister shared the economic achievemtns of the present government particularly in the areas of energy supplies and promising future economic outlook of Pakistan with special reference to facilitation to be provided by China Pakistan Economic Cooridor to obtain 7% GDP growth. The Minister invited specific proposals with regard to facilitation required from the GOP in the areas of

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regulatory framework, administrative climate and any other area of cooperation.

Representatives of relevant Ministries/Departments from both sides have given detailed presentations in their respective sectors and highlighted huge investment opportunities in these sectors and lucrative incentives available for investors to invest in the main sectors tinted by the presenters from both sides are as under:

* Pakistan side highlighted investment opportunities in the following sectors:
	+ - energy,
		- petroleum and natural resources,
		- food and agriculture,
		- industries and production,
		- textile,
		- communication and
		- information technology
* Russian side identified following sectors for mutual cooperation:
	+ - Transport
		- Oil & Gas
		- Trade industrial potential of republic of tatatian
		- Industry & machinery
		- Cooperation in drugs, railways, irrigation of balochistan
		- Science & education
		- Capacity building of Pakistani workforce

The presenters highlighted the diversified opportunities that exist in both the countries and how the businessmen and investors from each country can get the maximum returns on their investments. They suggested that the government had a significant role to play in bringing in investments from abroad with policies such as; tax incentives, and other administrative areas to facilitate investors. In brief the focus of presentations was on the following main questions:

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* + What are the emerging scenarios of potential in each country?
	+ What are the Plans of respective governments to enhance capacity of various sectors and allied Infrastructure?
	+ What facilitations measures and Investment Initiatives have so far been taken by each government?
	+ What are the available comparative advantages in both the countries and what prospects are there for future investments in various sectors in each country?

The following MOUs are under active consideration / finalization and will be singed in tomorrow’s Inter Governmental Commission meeting :-

* MOU between OGDCL & TATNEFT
* MOU between PPL & ISCTATNETT

The purpose of above MOUs is to enhance mutual cooperation and further coordination in oil & gas sectors with particular focus on oil & gas exploration sector.

* + What are the main initiatives in each country to create conditions that are conducive to building investor confidence and a pro-growth environment?

**B2B meetings**

After main session B2B meetings were also held wherein more than 80 businessmen/investors participated and held detailed discussions with their counterparts for mutual benefit and enhancement of Investment & trade.

**Possible Outcomes**

The forum will pave the way for trade and investment delegations to visit each other’s country and explore possibilities for further expansion of trade and investment in both the countries.

At the end, the vote of thanks was delivered by Mr. Iftikhar Babar, Secretary, BOI which concluded the first Pakistan-Russia Investment Forum.

**(Amir Sultan Akhun Khel)**

Director General (IF/PR)

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