

STRENGTHENING EXPORT COMPETITIVENESS OF SMES IN THE TEXTILE AND CLOTHING SECTOR AND ENHANCING TRADE SUPPORT INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES IN TAJIKISTAN

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TAJIK HANDICRAFT PRODUCTS IN THE BIGGEST HANDMADE GIFT FAIR IN CIS

Tajik jewellery, soozani style carpets, national design bags and socks, and other national handicraft products will be presented at the CIS biggest fair for gifts and crafts – Podarki, to be held in Moscow on 16-19 March 2015.

The Union of Craftsmen of Tajikistan (UCT) and four other handicraft companies - NGO “Umed”, “Suman”, “De Pamiri Handicraft”, and the National Association of Business Women of Tajikistan’s “Ozara” have taken Tajik handicrafts to “Podarki”, the biggest professional exhibition on handmade products, gifts, décor items and bijouterie in the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS). This participation was made possible by the International Trade Centre (ITC) project funded by the Government of Switzerland within its Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan.

Handicraft market development and trade fair - Podarki will host 22,000 expected guests and 300 exhibited companies from Russia, CIS and other countries. The visitors of this trade fair are specialists, retailers and buyers of gifts, accessories and home items. Ms. Elina Mannurova, ITC international consultant, who has been assisted Tajikistan handicraftsmen since December 2014 to expansively prepare for the Moscow fair, says, the participation of the Tajik craft producers in Podarki *“should be considered as a market test that will give clear understanding on the potential clients’ needs and the ways to enter the Russian market and stay there stable. Participation at this fair will lead Tajik handicraft sector to long-term business relations in Russia. Despite of lack of experience and market knowledge, it is strongly recommended for Tajik artisans to focus on the Russian market in the development of their export capacity. This recommendation is based on the lack of language barrier and visa requirements, as well as close travelling destination”*.

Mr. Abdurahmon Nazirmatov, Chairman of the Union of Craftsmen of Tajikistan says, *“we are happy for having this opportunity to take the Tajik handicraft products to Moscow and knock the door to a wider clientele marketplace. We hope, our delegation will return with a bag full of knowledge and ideas on how to expand our market to Russia. The experience to be gained in the Podarki will help us to respond the higher design and quality demands of our clients in both inside the country and outside”*.

Tajik companies were fully assisted by ITC with preparations for the fair. As part of preparations a workshop was conducted and the fair participants were trained on the effectiveness of participation at international fairs, from the planning stage to success in gaining new contracts and clients.

The International Trade Centre since the beginning of its work in Tajikistan in 2002 annually supports its focused private sector to enter the foreign markets through improving products, deepening design and marketing skills, as well as establishing international contacts through participation at the international fairs.

The present project is component FOUR of the Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan and aims to increase the export competitiveness of the textile and clothing (T&C) sector, by providing sector specific support to SMEs and relevant trade support institutions (TSIs), as well as supporting respective stakeholders in taking a strategic approach to the sector’s development. It will also explore the challenges and development potential of the tourism and handicraft sectors in Tajikistan, outlining relevant trade related technical assistance priorities.

Swiss support: Within its Cooperation Strategy for 2012-2015, Switzerland focuses on four sectors in Tajikistan; Health, Rule of Law, Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, and Private Sector Development. The overall goal of Swiss Cooperation in Tajikistan is to support the transition process in the country through contributing to economic development and by helping build institutions and systems which are responsive to the population’s needs. www.swisscoop.tj, www.deza.admin.ch, www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch

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