

INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE PROJECTS IN TAJIKISTAN

1 October 2015, Dushanbe

ITC TAJIKISTAN REPORTS ITS ACHIEVEMENTS AND DISCUSSES CHALLENGES

The results of the International Trade Centre's (ITC) project activities in Tajikistan were evaluated as successful at the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting held today, 1 October, in Dushanbe.

The project activities, achievements and challenges, as well as ITC in Tajikistan's future plans were discussed at the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting. The PSC was established to support the projects' activities, as well as to ensure transparency in implementation and that the projects' outputs respond to the country's priorities. The PSC consists of representatives from relevant ministries and state agencies, local universities, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), ITC and Tajikistan's private sector. All ITC projects in the Republic of Tajikistan are funded by the Government of Switzerland, within its Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan.

Mr. Saidrahmon Nazrizoda, First Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade, opened the PSC meeting. He evaluated the results of ITC activities in Tajikistan as successful, highlighting ITC's contribution in the development of the textile and clothing sector, assistance to Tajikistan's accession to the WTO and implementing the country's commitments, as well as raising awareness of the public and private sectors on the WTO rules and agreements. He says: *"We have already observed several results from Tajikistan's accession to the WTO. WTO membership has given us a lot of opportunities, starting with non-discriminatory access of our products to the WTO member countries. Our entrepreneurs already feel a certain legal protection. Interest in our country, as a country with predictable legislation has risen, which means our legislation, meets WTO requirements and we have a good investment climate. The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade highly appreciates SECO and ITC's contributions to Tajikistan's accession to the WTO, and implementation of our commitments in the post-accession period. I hope that we continue this joint effort for the benefit of our economy and our people"*.

Since 2012 ITC Tajikistan has provided support to the Government of Tajikistan to complete negotiations and gain WTO membership. It has also assisted the Tajik private sector to improve its engagement in negotiations and raise its awareness of WTO benefits and challenges. Mr. Armen Zargaryan, ITC's Programme Coordinator for the Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, says, *"Under its projects ITC has contributed to the improvement of the general understanding among relevant Government institutions and private sector stakeholders of the implications of WTO accession. ITC provided technical assistance for the development of the Tajikistan's National Food Safety Strategy; establishment of the National Enquiry Points (NEPs) on TBT and SPS, and the National Trade Facilitation Committee. ITC conducted a study on the trade obstacles faced by Tajik exporters in foreign markets and also helped to bring local laws and regulations into conformity with WTO requirements"*.

The achievements and challenges of ITC's projects in Tajikistan on strengthening the Tajik textile and clothing sector's export competitiveness were also a focus of the PSC meeting. Mr. Saidmumin Kamolov, ITC Tajikistan's National Programme Manager, listed some of the main outcomes under this project in 2015: *"We organized participation of Tajik textile and clothing companies in international trade fairs in Moscow and Istanbul; organized a study tour to Singapore; conducted several workshops and training courses on priority subjects for local textile and clothing companies; provided assistance in developing a new textile and clothing industry strategy; and trained local auditors on ISO standards"*.

The International Trade Centre (ITC) projects in the Republic of Tajikistan:

- **Components One and TWO of SECO's Trade Cooperation Programme (TCP) in Tajikistan.** The projects' main objective is to help Tajikistan bring its trade regime into conformity with WTO rules, strengthen public and private sectors' knowledge of the opportunities and threats of WTO accession and improve the capacities of SQAM, SPS and TBT.



- **Component Four of SECO's Trade Cooperation Programme (TCP) in Tajikistan.** Under this component, the ITC aims to increase the export competitiveness of the textile and clothing 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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