

September 16, 2020

Mr. Muhammad Samnoon Basraa
Deputy Director (TP)
Ministry of Commerce
Islamabad

Dear Mr. Basraa,

Draft Strategic Trade Policy Framework 2020-25 (STPF)

Thank you for your letter of September 2nd, 2020 with which you forwarded the revised draft of the STPF for our final comments. At the outset we acknowledge that many of the recommendations made in our letter of May 8, 2020 to the Advisor Commerce have been factored in the aforementioned draft.

In particular, we are happy with the inclusion of private sector representatives in the National Export Development Board (NEDB) headed the Prime Minister. We believe that this will allow the PM to get a direct and regular feedback on how exports are performing. A challenge in the past has been to get ministries to stop acting in silos and to work in an aligned manner. One proposal for achieving this with regards to implementation of the STPF is to also include private sector representatives on the Executive Committee which will be responsible for making recommendations to the NEDB. The presence of private sector representatives on the Executive Committee will allow an objective feedback on how this alignment of ministries is working.

We are happy with the inclusion of brand acquisition and development in the STPF. Following the support of the State Bank, which the PBC has now been assured, a new policy is being developed with the Ministry of Finance and other stakeholders to address this opportunity.

There were a few suggestions we made which have not been adequately addressed in the draft STPF. Whilst services have now been included in the priority sectors, Electronics (in its various manifestations) have not. Neither has the flexibility of adding and removing sectors from the priority list been factored. Lastly, whilst e-Commerce is mentioned, no specific measures to place Pakistani goods on portals like Amazon and Alibaba are covered.

The PBC has a Centre of Excellence in Responsible Business which amongst other facets of sustainable practices, focuses on promoting gender inclusion and assisting business to meet the UN

Sustainable Development Goals. We are encouraged by the inclusion of these important aspects in the STPF and will assist the Ministry in sharing best practice.

Thank you again for sharing the draft.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ehsan Malik', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ehsan Malik

cc: Mr Razak Dawood, Advisor to the PM on Commerce, Textiles and Investment