

Bilateral Meeting - India and Uzbekistan**Bilateral Meeting - India and Uzbekistan**

The Commerce and Industries Minister, Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman and Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Elyor Ganiev, Minister of Foreign Trade held detailed discussions on deepening trade and economic ties between India and Uzbekistan in a bilateral meeting held on 23rd August 2017 in , New Delhi.

Commerce Minister expressed happiness on formation of an **Uzbek India Trading House** at Delhi as a Joint Venture Company.

Commerce Minister suggested setting up and activation of a private industry led **Joint Business Council** to develop and enhance business relations at all levels including investments, trade in goods and services such as education and health in Uzbekistan and India. She expressed the hope that if the draft agreement under negotiation between India-CIS Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Uzbek Chamber of Commerce is quickly finalized and the Joint Business Council commences work, then it would be a very positive development for enhancing bilateral economic and trade relations.

Both the Ministers underlined the high importance of transport & logistics infrastructure for strengthening bilateral trade ties. Commerce Minister requested Uzbek Minister to become member of multilateral INSTC Agreement which would facilitate increased international transit cargo traffic through Iran.

Commerce Minister requested Uzbek Minister for reduction of import duty on leather goods and footwear in Uzbekistan from current 30% to 10%, which is current MFN rate in India. She mentioned that India could source finished leather from Uzbekistan. Commerce Minister also requested Uzbek Minister to consider reducing higher import duty on Indian engineering exports to Uzbekistan.

Commerce Minister requested Uzbek Minister to consider reduction of Import tariff imposed by Uzbekistan which are comparatively higher especially on fabrics and made-ups (upto 30%), reduction in Higher MFN duty on RMG products which is 31.1% and simplifying the procedure for registration and certification.

Commerce Minister informed Uzbek Minister that existence of Non-Tariff Barriers such as import quotas and licensing, price and foreign exchange control, complex customs and

administrative procedures, harsh sanitary norms and outright border closures have also been limiting inter-regional trade. Minister of Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan informed that Uzbek Government was seriously working to liberalise and simplify various procedures, systems and norms and expressed the hope that most of difficulties faced by exporters would get resolved shortly.

Commerce Minister requested Uzbek Minister to simplify procedure for granting visa to Indian business men and tourists and expressed the hope that if visa issues are resolved, tourism will also receive impetus in both countries.

MJPS

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