



Honorable presidents,

I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to present the outcome of the discussions of the business community under the framework of the Istanbul Forum.

As you know honorable presidents, the Istanbul Forum for Economic Cooperation between Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan was established following the instruction given by the first meeting of Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Summit.

Since our first meeting in October 2007, we have held four meetings. On the occasion of the fifth meeting of Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Summit, we also worked on a joint declaration.

In our Joint Declaration we have underlined concrete projects that have been realized and will be realized. So far we have focused on capacity building. To this end, we organized a number of training programs in Turkey. Now it is time to start a concrete project on the ground.

That is why the chambers decided to identify an investment opportunity to develop agribusiness value chains. This can be a quality control lab, a refrigeration unit or a packaging investment. We go to the ground, visit the industrial estates in Afghanistan and Pakistan and figure out what we can do to catalyze private sector development. By catalyzing investments that will increase demand for local agricultural products, we can increase the cultivation of legal crops, and therefore contribute to stability and peace in the region.

We strongly believe that private sector development is the best way to enhance stability. Our shared will is to foster private sector, and Istanbul Forum is one of the best vehicles to bring peace to the region. With these thoughts, I would like to read the joint declaration of the Istanbul Forum for Economic Cooperation between Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan.



### **Joint Declaration of the Fifth Meeting of the Istanbul Forum for Economic Cooperation between Afghanistan, Turkey and Pakistan 24 December 2010**

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1. Istanbul Forum for Economic Cooperation between Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan is a trilateral dialogue mechanism established by the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), Afghanistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) in 26 October 2007 with the objective of promoting business to business contributions to the confidence building process in the region.
2. The Forum members welcome the concrete steps taken since the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, which was held on 25 January 2010.
3. Among these, the Forum members welcome the capacity building programs organized in cooperation between the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) and Islamic Development Bank, where Turkish experience on the following areas have been transferred to high-rank public officials and chamber representatives on the following areas:
  - Organized Industrial Zones
  - Chamber and private sector development
  - Investment promotion
  - Good governance in local administration authorities

The Forum calls upon TOBB and Islamic Development Bank for more capacity building programs on trade facilitation, private sector development, and vocational education.

4. Forum participants are pleased to welcome the Afghan Business Forum, held in the context of the Fourth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA IV) which was honored by H.E. Ahmet Davutoglu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and H.E Dr. Zalmay Rassoul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The Forum also support to further bilateral and trilateral contacts and events in order to further economic and commercial relations.
5. The Forum welcomes the progress made by Afghanistan and Pakistan to further preparations to join international TIR System, which is a crucial tool to facilitate international trade and decided to work together to draw a road map based on 40-year experience of TOBB as TIR guarantee institution.

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6. The Forum calls upon the need of incorporation of Afghanistan into the agenda of Islamic Development Bank's Special Economic Zone Initiative and encourage the Bank to mobilize the role of Turkish private sector for the purpose of transferring Turkey's know-how in Organized Industrial Zone development and management. Chambers also recognize the need for detecting new cooperation opportunities in fostering private sector development by overcoming key barriers that hinder development of value chains in light industries such as food processing. Specifically, chambers call upon a pilot project by the TOBB that involves choosing a suitable industrial estate in Afghanistan and to preparing a feasibility study of an investment there in food packaging, refrigeration and / or quality control in the next 6 months.
7. The Istanbul Forum decided to have its sixth meeting in the second half of 2011.