



جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان
وزارت صنعت و تجارت

Mechanism for transferring Afghan halted cargo at Torkham, Chaman and Ghulam Khan

INTRODUCTION TO MECHANISM

The spread of COVID-19 around the world has become a global pandemic. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Pakistan decided to close all the crossing points with Afghanistan. Due to this restriction, more than ten thousand Afghan transit consignments have been held inside Pakistan and are currently not permitted to enter into Afghanistan. Such cargos are being held at Torkham, Chaman, Ghulam Khan and Karachi ports since 2nd (Chaman) and 16 March 2020 (Torkham).

Therefore, to release the halted cargo, the Ministry of industry and Commerce of Afghanistan and Representatives of Private sector - including the joint chamber - developed this mechanism to ensure the safe transit of goods through all crossing points.

These mechanisms have been developed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 across the crossing points (Torkham, Chaman and Ghulam Khan), while at the same time allowing the transit of a large volume of halted Afghan cargo. This would save the Afghan business community from large demurrages and detention charges, as well to encourage bilateral trade exports from Pakistan during this urgent situation.

CHAPTER 1: PROPOSED EXCHANGE MECHANISM

Mechanism of exchanging drivers at Zero Point

To properly implement the subjected mechanism, two committees will be established: (1) an Oversight Committee to oversee implementation, and (2) implementation committees in each relevant province.

Article 1: The oversight committee will be made from the representatives of the below mentioned ministries. Its function will be to provide support to the provincial implementation committees:

1. The Ministry of industry and Commerce will lead the oversight committee from Kabul
2. Deputy from the Independent Directorate of Local Governance

3. Deputy Minister or Authorized Representative from the Ministry of Public Health
4. Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Finance
5. Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Interior Affairs
6. Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
7. Road Transport Director from the Ministry of Transport
8. A board member from the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment
9. A board member from the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber

Article 2: Three implementation committees will be made from the representatives of the below mentioned departments in each Torkham, Chaman and Ghulam Khan crossing points:

1. Representative from the Ministry of Finance, Custom Department to lead the Implementation Committee
2. Representative from the relevant Governor's Office Representative from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Directorate of Industry & Commerce
3. Representative from the Ministry of Public Health, Directorate of Public Health
4. Representative from the Ministry of Interior, Border Police or Security Agencies
5. Representative from the Ministry of Transport, Directorate of Transport
6. Representatives from Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment, and Pakistan- Afghanistan Joint Chamber

Article 3: The Implementation Committees would be the authorized and responsible entity to implement the cited mechanism.

Article 4: The Implementation Committees will select a suitable place close to the zero point to manage and monitor the system of offloading and on loading of the trucks and consignments.

Article 5: The Joint Chamber shall sign a contract with one or more bonded transport union/companies to conduct the loading and offloading system accurately within Afghanistan.

Article 6: In case of missing trucks or any equipment, the contracted transport company mentioned in article 5 will be responsible and grantee party for the trucks drivers, who will be carry out the cargo from zero point to offloading center.

Article 7: The Transport companies are liable to report the full information of Afghan drivers to the Joint Chamber.

Article 8: The numbers of drivers and their selection would be appointed by the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment observing the demand of the cargo and crossing point.

Article 9: All the selected drivers should go through health screening of COVID-19 by the Directorate of Public health..

Article 10: The selected Afghan drivers will be responsible to obtain the loaded truck from Pakistani driver at the zero point and offload the cargo back-to-back in an Afghan truck in the place chosen by the implementation committee. After offloading the cargo, the Afghan driver will drive back to the zero point, and then transfer the truck back to the Pakistani driver.

Article 11: During the return of Pakistani Trucks, the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment disinfection team will be responsible to spray each truck by antiseptic spray to avoid any chance of transferring the virus. The Authorized Representative of Directorate of Public Health shall oversee this process.

Article 12: The entire process described above (hand over the Truck, offloading and returning the truck) for each truck should not take time more than two hours.

Article 13: To avoid the spread of COVID-19, the drivers of both countries maintain at least two meters (preferably even more) distance from each other during the transfer of trucks.

Article 14: To avoid the spread of COVID-19, the Afghan drivers should follow all Afghan Ministry of Public Health regulations and instructions, including wearing mask and plastic gloves, as well as disinfecting their hands and relevant car areas (e.g. steering wheel, dashboard, etc) on an hourly basis.

Article 15: After transferring the goods to the new truck, the bonded transport company carrying the imported goods shall be responsible to carry the subjected goods directly to the Afghan customs office.

Article 16: Priority for imports will be given, where possible, to basic food necessity items

CHAPTER 3: RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH ENTITY

The following articles outline the responsibilities of each entity involved in this mechanism:

Article 17: The Minister of Industry and Commerce will be responsible for leading the initiative and coordination with other ministries, chambers, and relevant governors through the Oversight Committee

Article 18: The relevant Directorate of Public Health will be responsible for ensuring that the zero-point site meets all health requirements to prevent the spread of coronavirus. The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment shall assist the Directorate of Public Health for meeting this requirements. The Directorate of Public Health shall assign at least one ambulance in any place that is specified by the Joint Committee with the task to transfer

any driver who has shown symptoms of COVID-19 upon screening by the assigned person of Directorate of Public Health, to the nearest isolation center.

Article 19: The relevant customs department will be responsible for observing the goods and legality, seal, as per custom procedures.

Article 20: The Ministry of Interior, represented by relevant provincial border police personal, will be responsible for establishing and maintaining security at the zero site, further to implement the examination of trucks and goods in any cases of suspicion.

Article 21: The Ministry of Transport, represented by the relevant provincial Directorate of Transport personnel, will be responsible for jointly working with Transport Companies to enlist drivers and their full details, as well as to manage the drivers and trucks during the process.

Article 22: The Afghan private sector, represented by the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment and Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce, will be responsible for providing the details of goods, as well as to coordinate with the Directorate of Transport to ensure systems are in place for drivers and trucks.

Article 23: The Afghan Customs Department shall coordinate and ensure that the required data are exchanged by Pakistan Customs Department and the data exchanged is authentic.

CHAPTER 4: REQUIRED INFRASTRUCTURE AND MATERIALS

The Provincial Government office is responsible for ensuring the infrastructure requirements are in place for the implementation of this mechanism, to cooperate with all committees and relevant department, and to ensure the rapid transit of cargo from Pakistan to Afghanistan.

Article 24: The Ministry of Finance customs department should provide all required buildings and customs facilities in support of this mechanism.

Article 25: The Ministry of Public Health directorate of public health shall ensure that all required health equipment be provided at each zero point and customs point. They should also identify and seek to build a quarantine center at each crossing point as soon as possible, although this is not a requirement for the implementation of this mechanism

Article 26: Provincial and District entities should take all relevant security measures for committee members as well for implementing the cargo process.

Article 27: This mechanism shall be in force until the emergency lockdown by Pakistan is lifted or both countries comes into an agreement.

ANNEXES

1- Zero Point Map

