



## PRESS RELEASE

**Subject: Visit to Sindh by the European Union and EU Member States' Ambassadors**

Islamabad, 20 November 2014: The Ambassador of the European Union, H.E. Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, and Ambassadors of EU Member States, including the Czech Republic, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and France, as well as the Deputy Ambassadors of Germany, Belgium, Spain, and the Deputy High Commissioner of the United Kingdom yesterday evening concluded a two day visit to Sindh to review progress of EU-financed cooperation programs.

The EU mission engaged in a policy dialogue with the Sindh provincial authorities on the implementation of ongoing EU projects in the fields of education, technical and vocational training, nutrition, and public financial management. The meeting with the Sindh authorities also explored future areas of cooperation, in particular the upcoming Sindh Rural Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support, which has total projected budget of EUR 80 million.

The Members of the mission also met the Governor of Sindh, Dr. Ishrat ul Ebad Khan, for an in-depth exchange on the situation in the Sindh Province.

The EU mission visited the AmanTech Institute for Vocational Training in Karachi, which is funded by the European Union's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Reform Support Program. This five year program has a total budget of EUR 63 million covering all of Pakistan and is funded by the European Union, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Federal Republic of Germany and the Kingdom of Norway.

The members of the mission travelled to Thatta and Shujawal in central Sindh to gain a better understanding of the EU funded EUR 30 million nutrition program in the districts of Dadu, Thatta, Shujawal and Shakirpur. The so-called WINS program is implemented by three international NGOs, Merlin, ACF and Save the Children in close cooperation with the provincial and district health authorities. It addresses the immediate causes of malnutrition, preventive nutrition measures, including education of mothers, as well as underlying factors such as widespread poverty and inadequate healthcare in flood and drought-prone areas.

Finally, the members of the mission met with members of the Pakistan Business Council (PBC), as well as other members of the business community in Karachi, at an event hosted by the PBC Chairman, Mr. Bashir Ali Mohammad. Conditions for promoting more Foreign Direct Investment in Pakistan as well as greater market access to the EU market, including through GSP+, were among the subjects discussed with the PBC.

For further details please contact:

Ms Ayesha Babar

Press and PR Officer

Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan

Phone: +92-51-227 182 8

Fax: +92-51-282 260 4

Email address: [Ayesha.Babar@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:Ayesha.Babar@eeas.europa.eu)

Web site: [www.delpak.ec.europa.eu](http://www.delpak.ec.europa.eu)

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/EUPakistan>

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