

## CAREC 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference

### IMF Remarks for Session 4

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to focus on three issues:

*First, let me briefly comment on the new Trade Policy Strategic Action Plan (TPSAP) for 2013-2017, which the ADB and the IMF have prepared.*

This plan has been endorsed by the SOM, and we now seek the Ministers' approval so that it can take effect immediately. The new strategy expands the sector's agenda beyond the original priority objectives set out in the 2008-12 action plan, which are advancing WTO accession, and conducting capacity-building and knowledge-sharing programs on trade liberalization. In addition to these long-standing areas of work, the updated TPSAP includes non-tariff measures and removal of quantitative restrictions, specifically through reducing the trade impeding impact of the sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures and technical barriers to trade (TBT) measures. The strategy also introduces measures to expand trade in services as a path to greater regional cooperation and integration in the global trading system. Let me also stress here that, in addition to enhancing trade openness and integration, the IMF will continue to support other CAREC initiatives, for example the review underway to improve CAREC's results-based monitoring framework to further align it with CAREC 2020.

***Second, I now turn to the current nature of IMF engagement in CAREC countries under its core mandate.***

Consistent with the IMF's mandate, our focus is to help CAREC countries manage their economies effectively and prevent crises. This involves, in particular, providing advice on macroeconomic and structural policies, and technical assistance to build capacity. Our involvement with CAREC member countries varies widely: from program relationships with Afghanistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Pakistan, which involve lending and intensive monitoring, to a standard or enhanced surveillance engagement with Azerbaijan, China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. We also have ongoing discussions on a potential new program with Tajikistan.

***Finally, I would like to say a few words about our involvement in promoting regional cooperation.***

Earlier in the year, the IMF co-organized a high-level conference in Bishkek on the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) entitled "Transition Journey and the Road Ahead" that a number of officials from CCA countries participated in. A key theme that emerged from the conference was the need to further enhance regional cooperation and integration. The IMF stands ready to help achieve this goal,

including by promoting peer-to-peer interactions and through strengthened collaboration with our multilateral partners.

We look forward to continuing a close and productive relationship with CAREC member countries, as they strive to promote macroeconomic stability, trade integration, and sustainable and inclusive growth that can form the basis for prosperity across the region.

Thank you.