



News Release



Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Embassy

U.S. Congressional Delegation Visits USAID Gems and Jewelry Project

Lahore, April 8, 2007 – A six-person U.S. Congressional delegation led by Congresswoman Nita Lowey (Democrat, New York) met with representatives of the USAID gems and jewelry project in Lahore today. Under its economic growth program, USAID is providing \$22 million for improving business development in Pakistan.

“It is a pleasure to be here today and witness first-hand the important work Pakistani gems and jewelry industry is doing with assistance from the USAID and invaluable support from the Government of Pakistan. We appreciate the fact that the industry is taking a collaborative approach to addressing constraints to growth,” remarked Congresswoman Lowey.

Through the Pakistan Initiative for Strategic Development and Competitiveness (PISDAC), USAID aims to increase competitiveness of Pakistan’s small and medium sized enterprises. Sectors currently covered under the project are Gems and Jewelry, Dairy, Marble and Granite, Horticulture, Surgical Instruments and Medical Devices, and Furniture. Started in May 2004, PISDAC has worked with several Pakistani industries and helped form Strategic Working Groups (SWOGs) which develop strategies aimed at upgrading production, improving marketing, and meeting consumer demands.

The delegation also observed the traditional processes for crafting intricate jewelry and attended a briefing on the strategy development activities intended to enhance the gems and jewelry sector’s competitiveness.

The U.S. Congressional delegation also called on the Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, met with politicians and civil society, and toured the historic Badshahi Mosque.

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