



# News Release



Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Embassy

## Provincial Assembly of Sindh Opens USAID-Funded Resource Center

**Karachi, January 10, 2007** – The Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, Syed Muzaffar Hussain Shah, and U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Ryan C. Crocker today inaugurated the first Parliamentary Information Technology Resource Center (PITRC) at the Sindh Assembly. The PITRC, a major component of the \$8 million USAID Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project (PLSP) initiated in 2005, is part of a broad program to build the capacity of all four provincial assemblies as well as the National Assembly and Senate.

The inauguration of the first PITRC at the Provincial Assembly of Sindh “is testimony to the leadership and commitment of Sindh Assembly and its leadership to the cause of legislative-strengthening in Pakistan,” said Ambassador Crocker. Beginning with the signing of MOUs with the national houses of parliament and the four provincial assemblies in 2005, “a multi-faceted effort was launched to provide tangible, sustainable tools for enhancing the ability of Members to provide better service to their constituents and their respective parliamentary bodies.”

The PITRC inaugurated today will provide Members with computers and internet connections for their research, writing and communication needs that will enhance their ability to serve the constituents they represent. Additionally, the facility will serve as a training facility for computer and other skills and well as a testing and training venue, for staff and members, on new software applications being developed to automate the legislative process.

The Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project (PLSP) is a two-year initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), implemented in partnership with the national and provincial legislatures aimed at strengthening parliamentary institutions and processes. The PLSP’s focus is to improve the capacity of the legislatures in their representation, law-making, oversight and accountability, and infrastructure and management activities. The project was initiated in September 2005 and will operate until September 2007.

The United States, through USAID, is providing more than \$1.5 billion in development assistance to Pakistan over the next five years to improve education, health, governance and economic growth. In addition, the United States has pledged a total of \$510 million in earthquake relief and reconstruction efforts to assist the people of Pakistan and to support Pakistani government efforts in the earthquake-affected region.

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