

## **COUNTRY STATEMENT OF PAKISTAN**

### **77<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING OF ICAC**

Cotton, a major cash crop of Pakistan, is considered the backbone of the national economy. It contributes about 1.0% to GDP and 5.5% of total value addition in agriculture. Pakistan is the fourth largest producer, third largest consumer and second largest exporter of cotton yarn in the world. Export of cotton and textile products have a share of 55% in overall exports of the country. The current tariff policy is one of free trade and there are no restrictions on either import or export of cotton.

Cotton is grown by 1.3 million farmers on over 3.1 million hectares which is 15% of the cultivable area of Pakistan. During 2015-16, cotton production was recorded lower in last five years at 9.9 million bales or 1.7 million tons against the target of 14.0 million bales of 170 kg. This is consumed largely by more than 500 textile mills in the country although a significant quantity of up to 1 million bales is also exported. However, to meet the demand for extra long staple cotton, about 2 million bales are imported annually.

Pakistan Central Cotton Committee, an apex cotton research body of the country, is contributing significantly by releasing new Bt varieties within the set standards of fiber quality and National Coordinated Varietal Trials. PCCC along with provincial cotton research institutions is catering to the cotton requirement of the industry, exporters and other stakeholders by dissemination of data, documentation of cotton trade, pricing and policies at national and international level and provision of technical support for planning of cotton policies at federal level.

Planning and coordination of cotton R & D programs among federal and provincial cotton research institutions is being strengthened to increase cotton production, improve yields per hectare, evolve disease resistant varieties, promote Bt cotton cultivation and improve overall quality of cotton.

There are 1200 cotton ginning factories are in operation in Pakistan. The ginning industry operates in 80-120 saws type. However, the majority of ginning factories have saw gins of 90 saw blades type. The production capacity of ginning industry in Pakistan ranges from 12 million bales to 35 million bales. The Government is taking some serious steps to upgrade this sector of the industry.

Establishment of cotton standards through Pakistan Cotton Standard Institute (PCSI), setting up of a Ginning Institute in public sector are positive steps towards the right direction.

The future cotton policy envisages a number of strategies which include germplasm improvements, development of hybrid cotton, much improved and better farm and crop management, bringing additional area under cultivation, especially in the provinces of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkha, and minimizing post-harvest losses. Cultivation of organic cotton is also being encouraged, particularly in the virgin, fertile and pest free lands of Baluchistan. Necessary legislative and regulatory frameworks have been strengthened. Seed Act has been amended and rules are being formulated. Plant Breeder's Act has also been passed by the parliament of Pakistan. The national cotton research and development system is being streamlined with the involvement of all the key stakeholders to bring it at par with international standards. The Government is also encouraging multinational and national technology providers for introducing latest and effective insect protection technology.