ASSISTANT TREASURER

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PRESS RELEASE

ASSISTANT TREASURER HOLDS IMPORTANT BILATERAL TALKS WITH KEY UZBEKISTAN MINISTERS

The Assistant Treasurer, Senator Nick Sherry, the first Australian Minister to visit Uzbekistan, has held important bilateral talks with key members of the Uzbek Cabinet to promote the Australian-Uzbekistan bilateral relationship.

The Assistant Treasurer today met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Vladimir Norov and will also hold talks with First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Mr Rustam Azimov and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Economic Relations, Investments and Trade Mr Elyor Ganiyev.

The Assistant Treasurer is visiting Tashkent to attend the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Annual Meetings. Since joining the ADB in 1995, Uzbekistan has received US$1.1 billion via 26 ADB loans and US$35.5 billion in technical assistance. Australia is one of the largest capital contributors to the ADB.

“I congratulated Foreign Minister Norov on hosting the ADB meetings, a major international gathering of finance and economic Ministers from across the region,” said the Assistant Treasurer.

“I expressed my pleasure in being the first Australian Minister to visit Uzbekistan and thanked the Foreign Minister for his commitment to deepening our bilateral relationship, including high-level political dialogue.”

The first official Uzbek visit to Australia occurred in March 2009. In addition, Austrade and its Uzbek equivalent Uzinfovest singed a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation in 2009 and Australia has appointed H.E. Mr Peter Tesch as Special Envoy to Central Asia.

“We also discussed the role played by Uzbekistan in the wider Central Asian and neighbouring regions, especially in relation to events in Afghanistan.”

“I underlined the importance of neighbouring countries such as Uzbekistan to contributing to international stabilisation efforts in Afghanistan, particularly by strengthening border security and enabling the safe passage into Afghanistan of essential equipment and material.”

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN

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