

# USAID to Support Pakistani Industry: U.S. Ambassador

**December 13, 2004 – Karachi** -Mr. Ryan C. Crocker, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan, visited with representatives from the Gems and Jewelry industry today in Karachi. The visit was facilitated by the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA), which is cooperating with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on a project aimed at increasing the competitiveness of key Pakistani industries.

Through the project, called the *Pakistan Initiative for Strategic Development and Competitiveness*, leaders from the gems and jewelry sector are working to develop and implement a strategy to upgrade the quality of local production. The industry, with assistance from USAID and SMEDA, is looking at improvements in technology, human resources, management, and processing required for more effective marketing of gems and jewelry both in Pakistan and abroad.

It is also envisioned that the program will boost the reputation of Pakistani gems and jewelry in international markets.

During his visit, the Ambassador observed various traditional processes for crafting intricate jewelry. He also attended a briefing on the strategy development activities intended to enhance the gems and jewelry sector's competitiveness. The Ambassador lauded the efforts of the industry in taking a collaborative approach to addressing constraints to growth.

On behalf of SMEDA, Mr. Iqbal Kidwai, General Manager Outreach paid a warm welcome the U.S. Ambassador and apprised him about the on-going projects of SMEDA.

USAID has a \$300 million assistance program in Pakistan aimed at improving primary and secondary education, improving health care services, creating economic opportunities, and strengthening governance. More information about USAID's program in Pakistan can be found at [www.usaid.gov/pk](http://www.usaid.gov/pk).