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Tajikistan



Country Overview:

Location: Central Asia, west of China, south of Kyrgyzstan

Size: 143,100 sq km

Population: 7,627,200

Capital: Dushanbe

Export-commodities: Aluminum, electricity, cotton, gold, fruits, vegetable oil and textiles

Import-commodities: Electricity, petroleum products, aluminum oxide, machinery and equipment, and food

Currency: Tajikistan Somoni (TJS)

Religion: Sunni Muslim 85%, Shia Muslim 5%, other 10%

Ethnic groups: Tajik 79.9%, Uzbek 15.3%, Russian 1.1%, Kyrgyz 1.1%, other 2.6%

Government type: republic

Chief of State: President of the Republic Emomali Rakhmon (since 6 November 1994; Head of State and Supreme Assembly Chairman since 19 November 1992)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Oqil OQILOV (since 20 January 1999)

Languages: Tajik (official), Russian widely used in government and business

Republic of Tajikistan / Jumhurii Tojikiston

Meetings and Negotiations

-Tajiks are known for their **friendliness** and **hospitality**. It is a deep-rooted tradition to treat foreigners as guests with the highest respect.

-**Initial meetings** are all about relationship building.

-**Handshakes** are always used and can last a long time. Islamic etiquette recommends that one **waits** for the other to withdraw their hand first before doing the same.

-If you are introduced to a **woman**, as a male, it is advisable to wait and see if she extends her hand. If she does not, then **do not** try to shake hands. **Avoid** touching and prolonged eye contact with women.

-Do not be surprised if the person you are meeting arrives **late** or starts the meeting after the agreed time. However, **punctuality** is expected of foreigners.

-If you are not a Turkmen or Russian speaker you are advised to hire a good **interpreter**. However, most upperlevel business executives speak some English.

-Muslims are excellent **negotiators**. Haggling takes place everywhere.

-Decisions are made slowly. Bureaucratic formalities tend to add to **delays**.

-Do not use high pressure tactics as they will be counter-productive.

Business Attire

-**Conservative** is the keyword. In particular, during the warmer seasons, easing on the dark business suits is permitted.

-The foreign partner may show up in dressy traditional attire.

-If you are meeting with a Tajik **woman**, her knees and elbows will be covered at all times and a high collar is required.

Behavior

-Tajiks are known for being devoutly religious, with most holding to traditional Islamic norms of prayer and fasting, etc.

-**Never** eat with your left hand, use only the right hand (the left is considered unclean).

-Given the Islamic **dietary restrictions**, avoid ordering or serving meat, pork, fish or fowl to your.

-If you are choosing a restaurant for a business meeting, be sure there are plenty of vegetarian options available.

Gift Giving

Appropriate Gifts: - pens, solar calculators, promotional materials, compasses, items from your region/culture

Gifts to Avoid:

-liquor, perfume, products or food from scavenger animals, leather goods from pig, items related to religion

Business Tips continued

Conversation

-Building **trust** and establishing compatibility are key perquisites. One should engage in conversation and try to get to know the person before doing business.

-When your business partner arrives, they will begin with

banter and conversation centered not on business but on many other topics. Once you get down to business, you may be overwhelmed by the amount of argument and haggling. People in the Middle East love to talk, discuss/argue.

-The traditional Islamic greeting is 'Asalamu alaykum' (peace be

with you). Non-Muslims are not be expected to use it, but if were to say this, you would receive the reply 'wa alaykum salam' (and peace be with you).

Topics to Discuss: family, children and general discussions about weather or shopping.

Topics to Avoid: poverty of Tajik people and the country



