

PRESS RELEASE

E-business 2004 Conference

KARACHI – 15 January 2004: Emphasizing the need for development of information technology to meet the requirements of the modern era, Dr. Tariq Hassan, Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SEC) observed that one of the prerequisites for ensuring sustained growth of the industry was provision of a definite framework consisting of policy, legislative, financial, and operational guidelines, which can provide a stable umbrella for growth.

Dr. Hassan, who chaired the E-law session of E-business 2004, said that information technology (IT) has assumed unprecedented importance in the global economic arena and he was happy to note that the present government was according high priority to this sector.

Emphasizing the need to ensure that the laws, which were designed for an earlier and different era, do not unnecessarily impede the development of new and innovative services, Chairman SEC said, "The legal, regulatory and business environments required to support industry development and growth in the digital economy are significantly different from those needed for traditional enterprise". He was of the opinion that regulations were necessary to the extent that they did not hamper the growth of new or existing markets and stated that new regulations should be flexible enough to cater for technology changes and new global policy.

The Chairman SEC appreciated the government's endeavours to provide a framework for e-business and said that promulgation of the Electronic Transaction Ordinance, 2002 and the draft Electronic Crimes Act, 2003 would provide legal recognition to electronic documents, records, information, communications and transactions, and would provide a framework to deter any action directed against their confidentiality or integrity.

On the issue of intellectual property right and data protection, Chairman SEC said that violation of intellectual property rights acts as a deterrent to foreign investment, causes considerable leakage of revenue and is a disincentive for creative work. "It is heartening to know that work is being carried out on the areas of data protection and intellectual property rights and that the necessary legal cover for these areas will also be finalized shortly", he commented.