

# Pakistan Market Outlook

December 2016



## Bulls Dominate - KSE100 Index Gains 6.8% MOM

- Foreign investors continue with their selling spree worth USD 117mn
- SBP maintains status quo policy rate at 5.75%
- CPI Inflation for November clocked in at 3.8%
- Better economic performance, moderate inflation are indicating bullish stock market performance ahead

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## Market performance summary \*

Equity	Year to date	1 month
KSE100 Index	29.88% ↑	6.84% ↑

Commodity	Year to date	1 month
Crude Oil	35.38% ↑	4.5% ↑
Gold	10.56 % ↑	-8.14% ↓

FX (against PKR)	Year to date	1 month
USD	0.10% ↑	-0.19% ↓
EUR	-2.27% ↓	-3.25% ↓
JPY	5.28% ↑	-8.11% ↓
GBP	-17.42% ↓	2.51% ↑

\*All performance shown in USD terms, unless otherwise stated.

\*YTD performance data from 31 December 2015 to 30 November 2016 and 1-month performance from 31 October to 30 November 2016

Sources: Bloomberg

## Economic and Policy Outlook

- SBP holds its policy rate at 5.75%, in line with our expectations
- Statement focuses on rising domestic inflation amid an uncertain global outlook
- We continue to expect monetary tightening in 2017 but acknowledge uncertainties around the timing of such hikes

*Pakistan – stable with improving growth prospects*

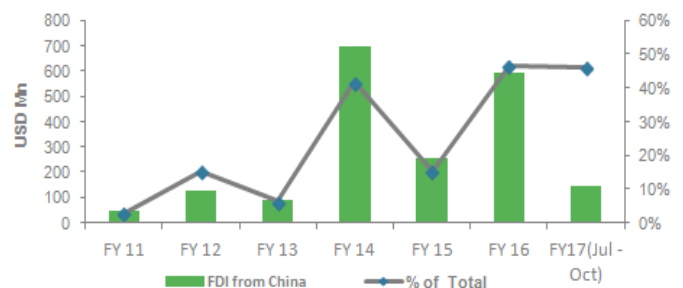
**Growth to pick up;** execution of China energy projects likely to be in focus. We expect Pakistan’s GDP growth to accelerate to 5.0% in FY17 (ending June 2017) from 4.7% in FY16. Although we see upside risks to our forecast from strong domestic demand, we think the official 5.7% target is unlikely to be met given sustained export weakness.

**SBP Policy:** The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has kept its policy rate unchanged at 5.75%, in line with our expectations. Its statement strikes a balance between the domestic and global outlook.

While the SBP appears concerned over rising inflation and consumers’ expectations of future prices, it attributes the current situation to stabilising commodity prices, fading second-round effects of lower oil prices, and strong domestic demand. Despite this, the SBP believes the near-term inflationary outlook is “manageable”. In particular, it appears to

### FDI from China continues to increase in FY17

FDI from China USD Mn and as a % of total



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

be counting on supply-side improvements in the economy as growth in private credit for investment gathers pace. Nevertheless, it sees global oil prices as an inflation risk.

On balance, the SBP flags external account risks, in line with our expectations. While we continue to expect a 25bps hike in May, we note that the timing is subject to multiple uncertainties – not least the outcome of OPEC’s 30 November meeting.

# Equity Markets

- OPEC decision positive for the domestic Oil & Gas sector
- CPEC could boost Pakistan’s long-term growth significantly

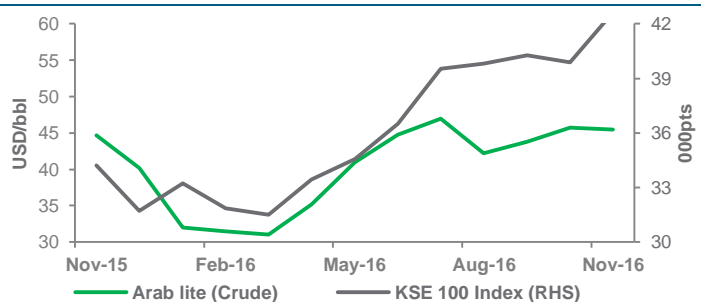
*KSE-100 gains 6.8% MoM*

**KSE 100 Index:** The KSE100 Index gained 6.8% MoM and closed the month (Nov16) at 42,620 points. Average daily volume increased by 9% MoM to clock in at 489mn shares. Sectors like, Construction (+15.9%), Textiles (+9.7%), Pharma (+9%), Chemicals (+8%) & Automobiles (+7.9%) turned out as outperformers, while Banks (+4.6%) and Electricity (+1.7%) remained laggards during the period under review.

The KSE100 Index witnessed persistent foreign selling in the major sectors, with an outflow of USD117mn in November alone. However, we believe the outflow has been primarily due to hedge funds booking year end profits, Frontier market funds may be exiting from the market following the country’s inclusion in the MSCI Emerging Market index and foreign funds having year end redemptions. Foreigners sold USD194mn worth of stocks in CY16TD. Local investors showed optimism turning out as major buyers during the month. In this regards, Mutual Funds bought USD78mn of shares, followed by Individuals (USD68mn), NBFCs (USD23mn) and Companies (USD11mn), respectively.

Going forward, the recent announcement of gas prices reduction, positive activities related to CPEC projects, possibility of Non-OPEC members seconding the recent OPEC decision on slashing oil production levels, clarity regarding upcoming strategic buyer of the Paksitan Stock Exchange could result in fresh flows towards equities. Hence, we foresee the bullish sentiment dominating into year end (CY16).

## Reclassification into the MSCI Emerging Market index and CPEC related optimism likely to drive equities higher



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

**CPEC the Game Changer:** Pakistan is currently going through a transformation phase. The US\$51bn investment in CPEC will open new doors for energy with and limelight towards infrastructural development, we believe. CPEC is a 3,000-km network of roads, railways and pipelines to transport oil and gas from Gwadar Port to Kashgar city in north western China’s Xinjiang region. The project will act as a bridge for the new Maritime Silk Route that envisages linking three billion people in Asia, Africa and Europe. The project links China’s strategy to develop its western region with Pakistan. Pakistan’s focus is on boosting its economy through infrastructure development, including the construction of the Gwadar Port, together with some energy cooperation and investment programmes.

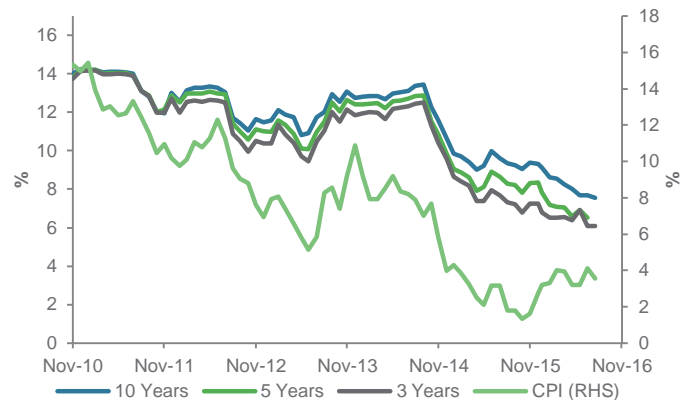
## Bonds

- Shorter tenors bonds our favourite pick amid rising inflation expectations
- The yield curve has steepened with a rise in inflation and volatility in oil prices

*SBP decision to keep policy rate unchanged at 5.75% has supported yields*

### Government bonds yields

Pakistan 3, 5, 10 year government bond yields and CPI y/y



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

The November CPI clocked in at 3.8% vs. 4.2% in Oct'16. The SBP expects increased economic activity in FY17 to push inflation to a higher plateau. Accordingly, it forecasts average CPI inflation in the range of 4.5-5.5% for FY17. On balance, the Monetary Policy Committee appears focused on the SBP's parallel role of promoting growth. We continue to believe that the SBP will have to respond to emerging current account (C/A) risks by tightening monetary policy if FX policy remains

inflexible. We expect 100bps tightening in FY17, but believe SBP could delay the move until H2-FY17. This is likely if oil prices remain in the USD 45-50 range. Our call for rate hike is largely driven by our expectations of modestly higher oil prices over the next 12 months.

We also expect this to add further pressure on longer term yields, which would be negative for longer maturity bonds. Hence we retain our reference for shorter term PKR bonds.

## Foreign exchange

- Modest PKR weakness going forward
- C/A deficit remains near term risk amid slowing exports and remittances

*PKR remains overvalued, as per IMF's REER estimates*

**Interbank:** The rupee fell modestly against the USD and shed 52 paisa's for buying and selling at Rs.104.80/82, which has raised concerns over further PKR depreciation. Sliding trend in the value of the rupee was due to strong buying of dollars.

In the meantime, slight improvement in supply of dollars helped rupee to recover modest ground versus the dollar. Country's foreign exchange reserves fell to USD 23.6bn.

However, it seems that SBP is committed to keeping the Rupee stable compared to our regional peers China & India who have devalued their currency periodically.

We maintain our view of modest Pakistani rupee weakness going forward. PKR remains overvalued, as per IMF's Real-effective Exchange Rate (REER) estimates. Partly as a result of the strong REER, we expect the C/A deficit to widen to 2% of GDP in FY17 (ending June 2017) and to 2.3% of GDP in FY18.

Though the C/A deficit is manageable for now, it remains a near term risk; exports continue to decline on weak global

### SBP favouring a stable PKR for now

#### USD/PKR spot



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

demand and an FX policy aimed at maintaining USD-PKR stability. As such, we expect (REER) strength to maintain pressure on the trade balance, limiting the effectiveness of budgetary measures to support exports.

Overseas Pakistani workers remitted USD 6.2bn in the first four months (July to October) of FY17, compared with USD 6.5bn received during the same period in the preceding year.

A statement of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) said that during October 2016, the inflow of worker's remittances amounted to USD 1.5bn, which is 3.1% lower than September 2016 and 1.2% higher than October 2015.

## Disclosure appendix

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