

Remarks for Second Fa Xian International Cultural Summit

Theme: “the Modern Enlightenment of Fa Xian’s Spirit”

Xiangyuan County, Changzhi City – 23 October 2020

**Distinguished Guests,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would first like to congratulate China International Chamber of Commerce for Private Sector, All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce and People’s Government of Changzhi City and Xiangyuan County for organizing the second Fa Xian International Cultural Summit.

It is a matter of profound honour to be invited for this summit at Xiangyuan, the birthplace of Fa Xian, the legendary Chinese monk who visited Pakistan and other countries of the region in ancient times for seeking knowledge and wisdom.

Distinguished Guests,

Fa Xian, as one of the earliest travelers of ancient Silk Road, played a pioneering role in establishment of enduring cultural linkages between China and the western regions including Pakistan. The historical process set in motion by Fa Xian has continued unabated and inspired many others to undertake the similar voyages of exploration, discovery and understanding.

In our age, it has found due manifestation in Belt and Road Initiative to carry forward the spirit of openness and cooperation, and make useful contribution for the shared future of the entire humanity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Cultures are born in the cradle of civilizations. Over period of time, the political fortunes and strength of countries may rise and fall. But the cultural values finding expression in philosophy, religion, music, art and architecture assume permanence.

Lying at the cross-road of history and civilizations, Pakistan is the birthplace of primordial cultures and ancient civilizations which have fashioned modern day cultural tapestry of the entire region including China and the East Asia.

Pakistan, as the proud heir to this rich heritage, has retained its ancient spirit with the same zeal with which it has embraced modernity and progress.

Since the pre-historic times, there was a frequent exchange of goods, ideas and values between the ancient civilizations of Pakistan and China. Many Chinese monks like Fa Xian and Xuan Zang arrived at the famous Buddhist seminaries of Taxila, Swat and Peshawar in ancient Pakistan to seek spirituality and wisdom. They brought back to China with them not only the light of faith and knowledge but also the warmth and passion of friendship which underpins our wide-ranging bilateral engagements today.

My dear Friends,

As the humanity finds itself at the cusp of new changes brought about by COVID-19 pandemic, we need to learn from Fa Xian, reinvigorate his spirit and promote his legacy. The most befitting tribute we can pay him is to deepen our people-to-people, cultural and trade exchanges, and struggle for a beautiful, civilised and harmonious world.

The prevailing crisis should serve us with a pertinent reminder about the myriad challenges of the new age. We must take cognizance of the reality that transnational issues neither originate from one nation, nor any one country alone, despite its resources and technological advancement can overcome them. We, therefore, should also not lose sight of the fact that unending efforts are required to preserve our past achievements in trade, economics and cultural cooperation and safeguard them against visible and invisible challenges.

Distinguished Guests,

History and culture are the most inexhaustible resources for shaping our future. Walking Fa Xian's footsteps, we should make concerted efforts to keep our doors ajar for fresh breeze of new ideas and initiatives and continue forward the march of globalisation and internationalism.

Like Fa Xian, who surmounted many a scorching desert, barren plateau and inhospitable mountain to connect our regions and our hearts, we need to work together to building bridges of cooperation and trust, and demolish the artificial walls of doubt and divisiveness.

We owe this to Fa Xian, our future generations and to the entire humanity.

Thank You !

