

1st High-Level Women Forum
25 May 2021, Kunming

Madam Xia Jie, Vice President ACWF

Gao Feng, Vice Chairman, Yunnan People's Political Consultative Conference,

Dr. Zhao Beige,

Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi,

Ms. Charmaine Hidayatullah, President, All Pakistan Women's Association

Ms. Mu Hong, Director General, Liaison Department ACWF

Mr. Du Xiolin, Counsel, IDCPC

Mr. Chen Wei, Counsellor, Asian Affairs Department, MFA

Mr. Wang Wei, DDG, Foreign Office of the Yunna Province

Distinguished lady participants

Young students from Pakistan and China

- It is a great pleasure to be in Kunming, the beautiful capital city of Yunnan Province, the city of flowers to attend the 1st High-level Women Forum to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic relations.
- I would like to thank All China Women Federation and All Pakistan Women's Association for co-hosting this historical Forum. On behalf of my delegation, I would like to express our gratitude to the provincial Government of Yunnan Province and Kunming city for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of this event.
- It is also a matter of personal satisfaction that an idea, which I conceived right after my arrival to Beijing of a platform between the women of our two countries has now been realized through the full support of ACWF, APWA and the excellent work done by my colleague Mariam.
- Before I proceed, I would first wish to express sincere condolences and sympathy, on behalf of the government and people of Pakistan, over the loss of precious lives and property due to the recent earthquake in Dali. We stand in solidarity with people of China in this tragedy.
- Such calamities, though unfortunate, have always demonstrated the resilience and strength of our two nations. We cannot forget the support provided by China during 2005 earthquake in Pakistan.

- Recently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, our two governments and people came to help each other yet again, signifying the exemplary nature of our all-weather relationship. We specially thank All China Women's Federation for their generous support of the people of Pakistan.
- These inner qualities of compassion and generosity are intrinsic part of the national characteristic of our two people, reinforced by the strong and defining role played by the women of our two countries.
- Therefore, this event, the 1st High-level Women Forum, is of great significance. Today, we celebrate the women of our two nations, and acknowledge their essential role in our countries' development and progress, and fostering friendship and better understanding.
- I, therefore, congratulate Madam Charmaine Hidayatullah, President, All Pakistan Women's Association and Madam Xia Jie, Vice President, All-China Women's Federation, on setting this new trend and opening up new possibilities for cooperation.
- I am confident that through this forum and active collaboration of these two premier women organizations, a whole new dimension would be added to our bilateral ties.
- I would like to thank Honourable Minister Shireen Mazari, and Honourable Minister Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to PM for sending video messages. Despite her personal loss, Dr. Mazari recorded a video message to ensure her participation in the Forum. This reflects the importance attached by our Government to this Forum.
- I would also like to thank Dr. Zhao Beige and Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi, and other prominent Pakistani and Chinese ladies, for participating in this forum despite their busy schedules.
- Ladies and Gentlemen, please allow me to share my thoughts about women of Pakistan who have always been a source of pride for the entire nations. Their contributions in politics, diplomacy, governance, community service, business, sports, arts, music and literature have been immense. They have held high offices scaled tallest mountains, won Nobel Prize and Oscar awards, and flown fighter jets.
- From Ms. Benazir Bhutto, the first woman PM of Pakistan to Ms. Fahmida Mirza, the first Speaker so National Assembly, from Malala Yousafzai, the youngest Nobel Laureate to Ms. Charmain Obaid Chinoy, the two times Oscar winner, from Ms. Saima Baig, the youngest alpinist

who scaled highest peaks in all continents, to Ms. Namira Saleem, the first Pakistani signed up to visit space, from Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, the first lady Governor of State Bank of Pakistan, to Ambassador Tehmina Janjua, the first woman Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi, first woman Ambassador to China, the list goes on.

- Out two Ministers who sent their video messages for today's forum have played a leadership role in their respective fields of human rights, health and poverty alleviation.
- Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, was a staunch advocate of women rights. He is known to uphold equal participation of women in all walks of socio-economic life. His sister Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah was always beside him in the struggle for Pakistan.
- Muhammad Lai Jinnah hailed Muslim women leaders from all classes who actively supported the Pakistan movement in the mid-1940s. They created a women's movement for independence like Chinese women did in the People's War of China's liberation.
- The creation of the All-Pakistan Women Association, was at the initiative of Begum Liaquat Ali Khan, wife of our first Prime Minister. APWA has since then played a great role in championing women causes and eliminating socio-economic difference between men and women.
- And I understand that All China Women's Federation was also created with similar aims and objectives. We look forward to learning more about its role and contributions in this forum, which has turned into be of enormous value and significance in forging deeper ties between women of the two countries.
- I would like to make the following recommendations for the consideration for today's forum:
 - a) Establish an institutional linkage between APWA and ACWA through signing of an MoU.
 - b) Establish a permanent platform for the female entrepreneurs and young professionals to come together and create joint socio-economic impact through sharing experiences and expertise.
 - c) Carry out joint projects like issuing a joint publication to highlight our leading women and disseminate their success stories. This could be published in our national languages.

- d) Make a consortium of talented women in fields of education, health, culture, arts, literature, film and drama and music.
- The objectives of these proposed platforms and institutions are:
 - a) Build emotional bridges to strengthen the solid foundation of our iron-clad friendship.
 - b) Exchange positive stories about women's resilience and achievements in Pakistan and China. These stories would contribute to our collective voice in international and multilateral forums like UN Women, dispelling the counter-productive and damaging propaganda against our two countries.
 - c) Pass on the sentiments of our fraternal bonds to our younger generations.
- I am confident that the outcomes of today's forum would not only chart a plan of action for the years to come but would help create an enabling environment for substantive and result-oriented engagement.
- In the end, on behalf of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and my own behalf, I wish to thank the Chinese leadership of Beijing and Yunnan Province for their full support to this forum and active engagement with us to make it a success.
- Thank you, Yunnan, for hosting this momentous high-level dialogue!
- We keenly look forward to today's discussions and hope that this important discourse would continue and shape a shared narrative of our national strength and poise.
- Long-Live Pakistan-China Friendship.
