

18<sup>th</sup> China-ASEAN EXPO, Nanning, 10-13 September 2021

**Speech by Ambassador of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Moin-ul-Haque  
at  
Special Forum to Commemorate 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pak-  
China Diplomatic Relations and Trade Promotion  
(11 September 2021)**

**Mr. Wang Lei, Secretary General China-ASEAN Expo,**

**Mr. Liu Hongwu, Vice Governor of Guangxi Zhuang  
Autonomous Region,**

**Mr. Ren Hongbin, Vice Minister of Commerce of China,**

**Leaders and senior officials from Guangxi Provincial & City  
Government,**

**Friends from Chinese & Pakistani enterprises,**

**Members of media**

**Distinguished guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

***Good Morning/Dajia Shangwu Hao***

I am very pleased to welcome you all to this special event, which being held in the beautiful and green city of Nanning at the sidelines of 18<sup>th</sup> China-ASEAN Expo. This trade and investment cooperation Forum has been organized as part of the celebrations of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between two Iron Brothers - Pakistan and China. I am grateful to all of you for sparing your precious time to join us today.

This year Pakistan has been invited as Special Partner Country for the second time in a row, so let me convey our gratitude to CAEXPO Secretariat, particularly to Secretary General Wang Lei.

Giving Pakistan this special honour, which I am confident would lead to a more robust and meaningful cooperation with this vital trade and investment promotion platform of Asia-Pacific. I also thank Secretary General Wang and his team for their support in organizing today's event.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

This year is indeed a milestone marking the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of China-Pakistan diplomatic relations. In the last seven decades journey of friendship, our relationship has evolved into a timeless and time-tested iron-brotherhood. During President Xi's visit to Pakistan in 2015, it was agreed to elevate into an all-weather strategic comprehensive partnership. At that time, CPEC, the flagship project of BRI was also launched.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Mutual respect, mutual trust and mutual cooperation to advance peace and development has always been the cornerstone of Pakistan China friendship and cooperation. In recent years, Pak-China trade has grown rapidly. After implementation of FTA in 2007, our bilateral trade went up from US\$ 7 billion in 2008 to around US\$ 20 billion in 2020 making China, Pakistan's largest trading partner. With the launch of the second phase of the FTA in June 2019, further deepening access to each other's markets, now over one thousand tariff lines enjoy zero tariff. This has given a new momentum to our trade despite the pandemic. In the first half of this year, our exports to China increased by 88%. Our bilateral trade with Guangxi province went up by about 50% last year; and our exports to Guangxi registered sharp increase of 350%.

The multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is the flagship project of BRI is moving smoothly and transforming the socio-economic landscape of Pakistan.

After the first phase of CPEC has helped in upgrading of physical infrastructure and addressing our critical energy needs, we have now embarked on CPEC Phase-II in which our focus is on industrialization, agricultural cooperation, science and technology and projects of socio-economic development. Out of the total 9 SEZs in pipeline, three have already been launched with the first major investment coming from China. We are also making rapid progress on Gwadar Deep Sea Port and Free Trade Zone, and attention is now being focused the renewal of our main national railway line ML-I.

These ongoing and planned CPEC projects provide tremendous opportunities for Chinese companies to invest in Pakistan in different fields, especially in the CPEC SEZs.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Pakistan government has decided to shift our focus to geo-economics making Pakistan a hub of economic activity and regional connectivity. There are certain unique aspects about Pakistan and its economy that makes us an attractive destination for overseas investment, especially from China.

**First** is our location; Sharing borders with China, Pakistan lies at the cross-roads of three regions: South Asia, Central Asia & West Asia, and has the potential to act as trade and energy corridor between these regions. The development of Gwadar Port and the prospects of stability in Afghanistan would help realize this tremendous potential.

**Secondly**, Pakistan represents a large market of 210 million people, with a fast-growing middle class. Our labor force is 65.5 million strong. Nearly 60% of our population is under the age of 30, offering good prospects of demographic dividend.

**Thirdly**, Pakistan is rich in natural resources like coal, marble, gemstones, copper, chromite, gold and vast untapped reservoirs of oil & gas.

**Fourthly**, Pakistan has a strong agriculture base. It has a fertile land and figures in top ten in production of , milk, sugarcane and rice. With right investment in our agriculture sector, it can become an important source of food products for China

**Fifthly**, Pakistan offers attractive and liberalized policies and tax regime for foreign investors not only for setting their new manufacturing units, but also for export of their products. 100% equity ownership and 100% repatriation of profits is allowed.

**Sixthly**, historically no one of the foreign investor has lost money in Pakistan. This is reflected in the presence of large number of multinationals in Pakistan with continuous operation and high rate of returns.

**Lastly**, due to our close friendly ties, the Chinese businessmen will receive a warm welcome and special treatment in Pakistan.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Guangxi has a special connection with Pakistan. The new Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan, Ambassador Nong Rong is from this region. He is working very hard to develop strong business ties between our two countries and especially with Guangxi.

With new MoU signed between CAEXPO-Secretariat and FPCCI, establishment of Pakistan Pavilion at China-Singapore Nanning International Logistics Park, the proposed sister province relationship between Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Punjab, and interest of big local company like Royal Group to invest in dairy sector in Pakistan, I am confident that our future cooperation in trade and investment areas is poised to grow stronger and stronger. In this journey, Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing and Consulate General of Pakistan in Guangzhou will be your strong supporter and provide full facilitation.

**I thank you ladies and gentlemen**

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