

4th Exchange Mechanism Conference of the CPEC Consortium of Universities
&
Establishment of China-Pakistan Higher Education Research Institute

Peking University, Beijing

15 October 2021

Honourable Mr. Shafqat Mahmood, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training,

Respected Prof. Qiu Shiping, Chair of the Peking University Council,

Mr. Du Yubo, President, China Association of Higher Education,

His Excellency Mr. Nong Rong, Ambassador of China to Pakistan,

Mr. Shu Wei, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of China Association for Science and Technology,

Dr. Shaista Sohail, Executive Director

Counsellor Cheng Feng

Distinguished colleagues from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education of China, the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, China Association of Higher Education and the Member Universities of the CPEC Consortium,

Ni Hao, Good Morning & Assalamualekum!

I am so honored to be here at the Peking University, one of the finest academic institutions of China to attend the 4th Exchange Mechanism Conference of the CPEC Consortium of Universities. First of all, please allow me to thank China Association of Higher Education for inviting me to speak at this forum.

The fact that this special event is taking place amidst the challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrates the will of the two countries to continue our engagement in the important area of education. This Conference has also assumed importance for two more reasons. *First*, it is taking place in a year when our two countries are celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties, an important milestone in the seven decades journey of friendship.

We have already organised more than 90 events so far to mark this historic occasion. Today's Conference would be listed as one of the important events of these celebrations. And *second* is the creation of the 'China-Pakistan Higher Education Research Institute' which is being inaugurated today, yet another proud moment for all of us.

I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to congratulate and also convey our gratitude to China Association of Higher education, Higher Education Commission of Pakistan and all our partner universities for bringing a new dimension and a new focus to China-Pakistan multi-faceted cooperation.

It is because of their commitment and hard work that the Consortium is today standing on a solid foundation. Starting with the membership of 19 universities, 9

Chinese and 10 Pakistani in 2017, the membership has now expanded to 83 (61 Pakistani and 22 Chinese universities). This not only means increase in the number of universities but also inclusion of more academic disciplines ranging from business administration, transport engineering, green development, and other professional disciplines.

Dear Friends

China and Pakistan have a special and unique relationship; a relationship which has stood the test of times; a relationship that transcends the usual dictates of inter-state relations;

a relationship that is rooted deep in the hearts of our two people. This iron-brotherhood is now transformed into an all-weather strategic partnership.

The canvas of our bilateral cooperation is now very wide and deep – from political to economic, defence to security, agriculture to industry, and cultural to tourism. In recent years, education and academic linkages have formed a very important part of this broad relationship. China has now become the first destination of Pakistani students with around 28,000 of our students enrolled in Chinese universities, some of whom have joined us here today.

Similarly, several Pakistan Study Centres and Urdu language departments have been established in Chinese educational institutions. The first one to be established at Peking University. Similarly, institutional linkages between both the countries are also ever increasing.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

The cooperation in higher education has its own advantages and benefits. After the launch of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the Consortium not only serves as the basic first step of knowledge-sharing, but also acts as a foundation upon which more informed mutual cooperation will stand.

For instance, academic linkages are essential to provide context to the development projects under CPEC, to prepare skilled human resource for the implementation of the CPEC Long Term Plan and to undertake joint research projects to identify areas of convergence in trade, business and industry.

The success of the Consortium is also important in promoting the study and research of China-Pakistan history, language and culture, talent-cultivation, promoting understanding of Chinese economy and business practices, cooperation in research on possible CPEC prospects, including transfer of production capacity, construction of industrial parks and regional interconnectivity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the end, I would congratulate all the participants of today's Conference for all these big achievements. We sincerely hope that these initiatives keep on expanding the scope of cooperation and deliver the results aimed at making CPEC a high-quality development project and to build a China-Pakistan community of shared future. This is the vision of the leadership and governments of our two countries. We wish you all the best and assure you of all our support.

Zhong-ba Youyi Wan Suay!

Pak-Cheen Dosti Zindabad!

Long Live Pakistan-China Friendship!
