

Remarks by the Ambassador

International Forum on Democracy: The Shared Human Value

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

It is indeed a great honor and privilege to for me to virtually participate today in the '*International Forum on Democracy: the Shared Human Value*'. I would like to congratulate the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China Media Group and China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration in Beijing for organizing this important event.

I am confident that fruitful exchange of views among the distinguished participants of today's forum would further enrich our views about democracy and its role in national growth and development.

Distinguished Guests,

History is shaped by the humanity's endeavours to devise a political system based on the principles of justice, egalitarianism and inclusiveness. For the quest of such utopian ideals, humankind experimented with varying degree of success with several systems, ranging from monarchy and oligarchy to totalitarianism and absolute dictatorship.

Nevertheless, democracy has emerged today as the epitome of rights and freedom for a great multitude of humanity. After the end of World War-II, the democratic ideals proliferated rapidly across the globe as many nations from Asia, Africa and Latin America were liberated from the yoke of imperialism and foreign occupation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The universal triumph of democracy empowered common people and provided a solid foundation for their material and spiritual development. It firmly established the principle that a government without public support is devoid of legitimacy and therefore cannot claim to be their representative. Democracy promoted the concept of equality of individuals and nations and attempted to demolish the artificial divides of hatred, ignorance and isolation.

Confucius once beautifully captured the essence of democratic governance in these illuminating words:

'People despotically governed and kept in order by punishments may avoid infraction of the law but they will lose their moral sense. Good government rests in providing enough food to eat, in keeping enough soldiers to guard the State, and in winning the confidence of the people.'

As illustrated by the Great Master, the ultimate goal therefore should be to establish an inclusive governance system to ensure peace and prosperity in the society eventually leading to the development of a spiritual civilisation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The concept of democracy is ancient and has been celebrated by many civilizations in the past. However, manifestations of this concept, finding expression in diverse democratic institutions and governance systems, may vary. No single country or civilization can claim to be the progenitor of democracy and its sole proponent. It is undemocratic to measure world's rich political civilization with a monochrome eye or narrow prism of geopolitics.

True democracy is a seed which sprouts from the soil of a nation's historic experiences, watered by common aspirations and nurtured by its political culture and economic imperatives. It is against the spirit of democracy to expect nations to embrace foreign systems and alien philosophies by forcibly disconnecting them from their very own.

Such attempts to *impose* a particular style of democracy always met a spectacular failure and are doomed to fail in future too.

Distinguished Guests,

It is heartening to note that China has made rapid strides for the development of participatory democracy since 1949. The National People's Congress of China and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and their local chapters have spearheaded the development of Chinese style "*whole-process people's democracy*". Chinese system has ensured the peaceful transition of power and policy continuity to meeting socioeconomic goals.

Most significantly, it has given a clear message that there is no single path for national progress and development, and that democratic principles can be upheld by indigenous systems enjoying peoples' trust and goodwill.

Dear Friends,

Pakistan is celebrating the 75th anniversary of its independence this year. Under the inspiring leadership of our founding father Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, modern Pakistan came into existence in 1947 after a long democratic struggle against imperialism and majoritarianism.

As a constitutional democracy, Pakistan firmly believes in the democratic ideals and is striving for establishment of a pluralistic and progressive society. Pakistani democracy is aimed at evolving a just and fair system where people can freely pursue happiness and harmonise their individual aspirations with the national development goals.

To enrich its democratic experiences, Pakistan looks forward to learn best practices from all countries of the world and especially from China, our ‘iron brother and all-weather strategic cooperative partner’.

Dear Friends,

I would like to conclude my remarks with sincere wishes that through fruitful discussions on democracy as humanity’s shared value, this forum may contribute to fostering mutual understanding and realizing a diverse and tolerant society where all can live in harmony.

I thank you all!