

Draft Speech for Ambassador at the Donations Ceremony at HQ of Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

Sunday, 25 September 2022, 0940 hours

H.E. Mr. Lin Songtian,

President, Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries,

H.E. Ambassador Sha Zukang,

President, China-Pakistan Friendship Association,

Mr. Li Xikui,

President, China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development

Vice President of CPAFFC

Friends from Beijing FAO and Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning!

Da Jia Hao!

It is a matter of great honour and pride for me to participate in today's ceremony for the donation of relief and rehabilitation items for flood-affected people of Pakistan.

On the behalf of the government and people of Pakistan, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development and China-Pakistan Friendship Association for their donation of relief items urgently needed in Pakistan.

This donation indeed is very generous and timely and would be immensely helpful in reinforcing Pakistan's ongoing efforts to provide relief to the suffering humanity.

I would especially like to express my heartiest admiration and gratitude to H.E. Ambassador Lin Songtian and Ambassador Sha Zukang for their efforts for arranging this donation.

I am always impressed by the enthusiasm and energy of these two distinguished diplomats for deepening Pakistan-China Friendship.

Dear Friends,

Pakistan is suffering from one of the worst natural calamities in the shape of ongoing rain-floods.

It is difficult to capture the scale of destruction caused by this climate-induced disaster. To date, 1500 people have died including over 340 children; 1700 injured and over 33 million people affected and displaced.

Besides colossal loss to human life, a wide network of road-transport infrastructure has been damaged mounting another challenge to the relief efforts. Destruction of standing crops and livestock has raised the spectre of food-security challenge in the coming days.

And now we are facing a serious challenge of spread of water-borne diseases like dengue fever, malaria and cholera.

Dear Friends,

As per initial estimates, the ongoing floods have caused a loss of USD 30 billion to Pakistan's economy. In the aftermath of devastating floods, Pakistan looks forward to Chinese support and financing for rehabilitation of our people, infrastructure development and rebuilding of our battered economy.

We also want to deepen cooperation with China on enhancing our capability for mitigation of climate change and disaster management especially in the areas of climate resilience, early warning system, disaster-resistant construction, energy transition etc.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pakistan is not alone in facing the adverse effects of climate change. We have noted that draught in Sichuan province caused economic losses too. Many people were also affected by recent earthquake in Luding County in Sichuan.

Our condolences on the precious lives lost, and thoughts and prayers for our Chinese brothers and sisters affected by long dry spell and earthquake.

Distinguished Guests,

As Iron Brothers and the most reliable partners, Pakistan and China have always stood together in all perils and predicaments and extended utmost support to each other. Our bilateral cooperation after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and now for flood relief efforts have demonstrated the uniqueness and strength of our iron brotherhood and time-tested friendship.

To demonstrate China's support to Pakistan, President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang shared messages of condolences and sympathies with Pakistan while Chinese government institutions, SOEs and general public made generous donations to Pakistan for reinforcing our flood relief efforts.

People have donated their monthly salaries and children have given their yearly pocket-money. The outpouring and sympathy from across China is very touching and moving.

Today's donation ceremony is yet another demonstration of this act of friendship and generosity. We are grateful to Chinese friends for their support and would always remember it.

Dear Friends,

People of Pakistan today are deeply aggrieved at the great tragedy and the climate catastrophe which has unfolded in our country. However, we find solace in those timeless words of Chairman Mao Zedong who once advised Chinese people to convert their grief into strength.

Remembering these golden words of Chairman Mao, we are hopeful that with our joint efforts and the resolve of the Pakistani people, we would soon overcome this tragedy as well.

However, Pakistan-China cooperation and determination to stand together would always remain alive in history and the collective consciousness of our peoples!

I thank you all!