

Welcome Remarks

Inauguration of China-Pakistan Science and Technology Cooperation Centre

28 November 2022

Honorable Mr. Zhang Xiaodong, President Zhongguancun Belt and Road Industrial Promotion Association,

Mr.Liu Jianxing, Director of International Cooperation, National Development and Reform Commission,

Zhang Yi, Vice-President of China State Construction Engineering Group,

Yang Dongri, Director of China Center for Information Industry Development Institute, Ministry of Industry and Information Technology,

Colleagues from Special Technology Zones Authority,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Afternoon and Dajia Hao,

It gives me immense pleasure today to welcome you all to the launch of China-Pakistan Science and Technology Centre. I would especially like to commend and congratulate Zhongguancun Belt and Road Industrial Promotion Association and Special Technology Zones Authority for their hard work for making this project a reality.

I am confident that this unique Center would act as a bridge for the Chinese companies to strengthen cooperation in the important areas of IT, science and technology.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When China decided to embark on its reforms and opening up journey in the late 1970's, a lot of attention was paid to modernization and advancement of science and technology which gradually contributed to China's overall progress and economic prowess. Today China is leading the world in terms of ICT, artificial intelligence, big data, 5G and other emerging and cutting-edge technologies.

In this regard, Zhongguancun, rightly termed as China's Silicon Valley, has played an instrumental role in incubation, facilitation, development and nurturing of Chinese tech start-ups and has enabled the country to transform its nascent IT industry into a global technology leader.

In Pakistan too, we are trying to replicate the successful model of Z-Park by instituting special technology zones. STZA was conceived with this objective in mind.

It was a part of our government's holistic strategy to carry out sustainable development of our IT sector through accelerated digitization projects, research and innovation, and setting software technology parks. Our key goal is to create a digital ecosystem with infrastructure and institutional frameworks by ensuring availability of accessible, affordable, reliable and high-quality ICT services.

The central objective remains improving our citizen's quality of life and their economic well-being. In this journey, Pakistani youth, which forms 60% of our population, would remain our main strength. They are skilled computer literate and tech savvy. And I am sure that they would not only benefit from this Centre, but would also contribute to its successful operation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

China and Pakistan are 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partners.' Cooperation in science and technology also forms a major component of our bilateral ties and has recently gained a lot of attention from the leadership and people of our both countries. We have dedicated joint working groups on science and technology and on ICT, under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Recently our two countries also decided to launch a number of new, domain-specific and specialized corridors with China-Pakistan Digital Corridor being one of them.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Recently, Pakistan's Prime Minister visited Beijing earlier this month, and in his meetings with Chinese Leadership, it was identified as a key area of close cooperation, as part of bilateral agenda.

Given the consensus, Launching of this Centre after a few days of the PM visit signifies a very important first step. I once again congratulate ZBRA and STZA for the conception and execution of this wonderful project.

By providing a one-window facilitation to the interested Chinese companies, the Centre would streamline the entry of Chinese enterprises into Pakistan and enable them for better match-making and collaborations. Through proper guidance and hand holding, they could make better use of the preferential policies available to the IT companies in Pakistan in the special technology zones.

I am confident that this Centre and the consequent collaborations will be a resounding success. I and my team at the Embassy are of course available for any facilitation required during the process.

I thank you all