

**Inauguration of Direct Flights by Serene Airlines  
19 November 2023**

**SUGGESTED REMARKS BY THE AMBASSADOR**

Honorable Air Marshall Farhat Hussain Khan,  
Deputy Party Secretary Jianzhong Feng,  
Muhammad Sardar Khan, CEO, Serene Air,  
Dr. Yang Yunchun, Chairman Serene Air,

Distinguished Guests,

Assalam o alaikum and Dajia Hao,

I am very happy to join you all at the magnificent Daxing airport in Beijing to welcome the inaugural flight of Serene Air. This flight marks an important milestone in the promotion of connectivity, linkages and people-to-people exchanges between China and Pakistan.

I am happy to note that Air Marshal (retired) Farhat Hussain Khan who took the time to take the inaugural flight and celebrate the occasion with us – the China-Pakistan community residing in Beijing. Your presence at today’s ceremony signifies the high priority accorded by Government of Pakistan to the initiatives, whether public or private, that seek to further strengthen the China-Pakistan bilateral relationship.

Reflecting on my first tenure in China from 2008 to 2010 as a Counsellor at the Pakistan Embassy in Beijing, I vividly recall the electrifying atmosphere surrounding China's inaugural Olympics. "Beijing Huan Ying Ni", translating into “Beijing Welcomes You” echoed through the streets, a melody of unity and warmth, symbolizing China's open-hearted welcome to the world.

During those years, I witnessed China's ascent under the visionary leadership of the Communist Party, with President Xi Jinping steering numerous pivotal initiatives as Vice President. It was evident then that China was charting a path toward a formidable position on the global stage. Returning now as Ambassador, I stand here at this cutting-edge airport, a testament to China’s incredible progress.

I am honored to witness this evolution and to foster stronger ties between our nations. The melody of "Beijing Huan Ying Ni" continues to resonate, now not just as a welcoming anthem but as a harmonious ode to our enduring friendship.

Distinguished Guests,

Today's launch transcends the action of mere increase in flights between two destinations. It signifies the spirit of collaboration, partnership and mutual understanding, harnessed for advancing accessibility and bonds of friendship between our two great nations.

I am confident that enhanced connectivity facilitated by today's initiative will contribute to the efforts of our two countries to complement our strong political relationship with vibrant economic partnership, creating new opportunities to expand trade, tourism, business and entrepreneurial linkages with each other.

Enhanced connectivity between China and Pakistan resonates vividly with President Xi's vision for global cooperation and development, which emphasizes the value of building bridges- literally and metaphorical - between countries and peoples.

Robust air linkages also align perfectly with the landmark Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) along with its flagship project, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that epitomizes the resolve of our two nations to promote win win partnership for shared future and prosperity. As we enter the second phase of high quality of development of CPEC, such initiatives as the launch of Serene Air represent our renewed commitment to forge new avenues for vibrant air corridor between our two countries.

Distinguished Guests,

China is Pakistan's largest trading partner and one of the main sources of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country. Our Chinese brothers and sisters, including those working in Pakistan, continue to make invaluable contribution to the socio-economic development of the country. China is also home to the largest cohort of Pakistani students anywhere in the world.

Additionally, since the easing of the global pandemic, we are seeing enhanced amount of leadership, business and people-to-people exchanges between our two

countries, which are truly commensurate with the depth and breadth of our all-weather strategic cooperative partnership. I am confident that with more frequent flights, these activities will grow further taking our relationship to even greater heights.

I would also take this opportunity to underline the scale of opportunities which the geographic proximity between our nations and a strategic location offers for extending our air connectivity to Central and Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Connectivity between Beijing and Karachi should serve as a transit for travel to more diverse destinations in other parts of the wider region.

Lastly, I extend my sincere congratulations to Serene Airlines for this significant endeavor and commend the continuous support and cooperation from both governments in realizing this shared vision of connectivity. May these flights serve as a bridge for deeper friendship, understanding, and collaboration between China and Pakistan.

Xie Xie and I thank you all.