

**Speech by Ambassador Masood Khalid at CPEC Summit in
Islamabad on 29 August 2016**

[Salutations]

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen!

I can see many familiar faces of our friends from China. I congratulate and thank Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms for organizing this Summit and providing an interface to the academia, scholars and corporate sector of both our nations to interact and share views. I appreciate this initiative and suggest that it should be made a regular feature.

The relationship between Pakistan and China is a unique account for the historians. Our “all weather strategic cooperative partnership” is an account of mutual-trust, equality, non-interference, harmonious co-existence and win-win cooperation based on common agenda of socio-economic development. This relationship has over time transformed into one of the most important relationships in Asia and serves as a model in inter-state relationships.

People of Pakistan see China as their most trusted friend and strategic partner. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has given a new socio-economic development dimension to our already strong relations. CPEC has evolved into a concept of mutual prosperity- an intersection where both nations’ visions of development and prosperity meet.

Pakistan believes that a comprehensive approach to regional peace and stability are essential for its long term prosperity. It is, therefore, necessary that we develop holistic and novel approaches for regional integration and global governance.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

President Xi Jinping's vision of One Belt One Road (OBOR) is a model of inter-regional and intra-regional integration and connectivity based on the concept of mutual prosperity and win-win cooperation. When this visionary concept translates into reality across the regions and continents, it would entail unparalleled dividends in economy, trade, infrastructure and energy resource development for all the countries associated with OBOR. Just like the traditional Silk Route, the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road will connect different regions and civilizations.

Pakistan's geographical location supplements the potential of the Silk Road and enhances the scope of its sustainability in the future. Our geography links the Yellow Sea with the warm waters of the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf; passing through the lofty mountain ranges of the Karakorums and Kunlun; piercing the great plains of the Tarim Basin and the Indus Valley. This is linear dimension of our relevance with the Silk Road Economic Belt.

Pakistan is at the confluence of China, the Eurasian land-bridge and the Middle East. This positions us to be en route to a three pronged economic corridor between China, Central Asia and the Middle East. This is the triangular dimension of our relevance.

Pakistan's long coastline also makes our ports of Gwadar and Karachi as key transit points on the Maritime Silk Road. It is, therefore, imperative for the peoples of our two nations to devote our energies to make this project a success for others to follow.

Pakistan Vision 2025, like OBOR, is Pakistan's long-term vision of economic development and prosperity, which emphasizes enhanced physical infrastructure development (physical connectivity), effective institutional arrangements (institutional

connectivity) and empowering people (people-to-people connectivity) for regional connectivity and economic cooperation.

In my view, CPEC complements Pakistan Vision 2025 and fits neatly with Pakistan's vision for long-term development and prosperity. CPEC is a flagship project of OBOR and President Xi has highlighted this many times.

CPEC envisions a network of roads, railways, pipelines and communication networks, development of dry and sea ports, major energy and infrastructure projects and establishment of Special Economic Zones.

When commercial ships harbor at Gwadar Port, peoples of two nations will be able to fully comprehend and understand what CPEC means to our two nations in particular and the region and the world in general.

We are glad that many projects under CPEC have been launched and work is going on smoothly. We will see rise in the number of projects and their progress in the coming days. Pakistan's economy is making a turnaround as is borne by improved economic indicators. It is the best time for Chinese investors and business community to explore our untapped market, take advantage of the facilities government is offering and become partner in two nations' cooperative endeavors.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am confident and hopeful that people will walk through this economic corridor to make the dream of Cultural and Educational Corridors a reality through more people to people interaction. . More than 13000 Pakistani students are now already studying in China and the number is increasing every year. I see yearning in young Pakistanis for the Chinese language. Chinese is being taught in various schools and

universities of Pakistan. Many institutions of the government of Pakistan have initiated programmes to send young Pakistanis to learn Chinese at the best universities. Various universities in China have also started Urdu language programmes and more and more Chinese want to learn Urdu language. This is a good sign. We need to build on this momentum.

CPEC is the agenda of mutual prosperity and a recipe for economic development, enhanced trade and energy security and equally critical for peace, prosperity and well-being of our peoples, the region and the world.

Both our countries share a vision for regional connectivity, trade, infrastructure and energy resource development for our societies. Revival of the fabled Silk Road along the lofty terrains of China, Central Asia, Middle East and Europe will bind communities and integrate economies. We are fully committed to make CPEC a reality.

I thank you all.

Zhong-Ba Youyi Wansui

Pak-Cheen Dosti Zinda Baad