

China, Pakistan reaffirm pledge to CPEC

Pakistan and China on Sunday reaffirmed their complete consensus on the future trajectory of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), timely completion of its ongoing projects and joint efforts for realization of its full potential with a focus on socio-economic development, job creation and livelihoods as well as accelerating cooperation in industrial development, industrial parks and agriculture.

Both sides reviewed the early harvest phase of the CPEC and expressed satisfaction that rapid progress has been made in all areas, especially in the energy sector. The two sides agreed on strengthening China-Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, building closer China-Pakistan community of shared future in the new era in line with the principles set forth by the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Good-neighbourly relations between the People's Republic of China and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan signed in 2005, a joint statement issued here by the Prime Minister Office Media Wing said.

Prime Minister Imran Khan, who is on his maiden five-day official visit of China commended President Xi Jinping's visionary Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that aims at enhancing regional and international connectivity. The two sides reiterated that BRI represents a win-win model of international cooperation and provides new opportunities for economic rejuvenation and prosperity of all countries. As a signature project of BRI, the fast development of CPEC has played a significant role in the Belt and Road cooperation.

Both sides agreed to task the CPEC Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) to explore new areas of cooperation. In this regard, it was decided that the eighth session of the JCC will be held in Beijing before the end of the year. To further expand cooperation under CPEC, the two sides announced the setting up of a working group on socio-economic development, to assist with livelihood projects in Pakistan.

Both Pakistan and China reaffirmed their commitment to CPEC and agreed that it was a win-win enterprise for entire region and would bring regional prosperity and development through enhanced connectivity. They agreed to discuss the CPEC-related issues including through China-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue, political consultations, and JCC.

Recognizing the significance of Gwadar as an important node in cross-regional connectivity and the central pillar of CPEC, both sides agreed to speed up progress on the Port and its auxiliary projects. Both sides dismissed the growing negative propaganda against CPEC and expressed determination to safeguard the CPEC projects from all threats. Pakistan recognized the immense contribution of the Chinese personnel working on various economic projects in Pakistan. The Chinese side expressed its appreciation for the measures taken for the security of Chinese personnel and projects in Pakistan.

Reviewing with satisfaction the historical development of China-Pakistan relations and the great strides made, both sides reiterated that the friendship between Pakistan and China has withstood the test of time, notwithstanding the changes in domestic, regional and international environments.

Political Relations and Strategic Communication: Both sides stressed that China and Pakistan are good neighbors, close friends, iron brothers and trusted partners. The friendship and cooperation between China and Pakistan serve the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples, and contribute to peace, stability and development in the region and beyond. Both sides will continue to view China-Pakistan relations from a strategic and long-term perspective.

The Chinese side reiterated that China's relationship with Pakistan is always a matter of highest priority in its foreign policy. China appreciated the consistent and strong support by Pakistan to China's issues of core interest, and reaffirmed its support and solidarity with Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and security. It appreciated Pakistan's important role in promoting regional peace, stability and security and efforts for the peaceful resolution of all outstanding issues with its neighbours.

The Pakistani side stressed that Pakistan-China relationship is the cornerstone of its foreign policy, and friendship with China represents national consensus and the common desire of all Pakistani people. Pakistan appreciated the strong support and assistance provided by the government and people of China to Pakistan in its economic development. It unequivocally upholds the one-China policy and supports all efforts made by the Chinese government to realize national reunification.

According to the joint statement, both sides agreed to maintain frequent exchange of visits and meetings at the leadership level and continue to hold bilateral meetings between their leaders on the sidelines of major multilateral conferences and events. The two sides agreed to further strengthen links between their legislative bodies. China welcomed the establishment of China-Pakistan Friendship Groups in Pakistani Parliament.

Both sides agreed to establish the mechanism of China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue and rename the former Strategic Dialogue at Vice Foreign Minister-level to Political Consultations. They also agreed to continue exchange programmes pertaining to training of diplomats.

Trade, Investment and Financial Cooperation: The two sides agreed to further consolidate and expand bilateral economic relations as a matter of high priority and to strengthen multi-faceted pragmatic cooperation in trade and investment. They agreed to boost Pakistan's industrial capacity including through joint ventures in priority areas, relocation of labor-intensive industry and SMEs collaboration.

The two sides noted the growing volume of bilateral trade and agreed to take concrete measures to address trade imbalance. These would include exchange of trade missions, broadening market access for agricultural and ICT products, and simplifying customs, quarantine and phytosanitary

procedures. In this context, the two sides agreed to conclude the second phase of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement as early as possible, and continue discussions on the Pakistan-China Agreement on Trade in Services.

The two sides agreed to strengthen economic cooperation by fully leveraging the existing cooperative arrangements such as China-Pakistan Business Council, which is composed of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), and those between Industry and Stock Exchanges of the two countries. The two sides agreed to hold the next round of the Joint Economic Commission early next year.

The two sides attached importance to friendly cooperation between the People's Bank of China and the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). They expressed satisfaction at the operationalization of the currency-swap agreement and reaffirmed the need to further strengthen cooperative ties of financial and banking sectors between the two countries. Both sides noted with satisfaction that Chinese and Pakistani banks have operations in both countries. Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation on tourism promotion.

Defence, Security and Counter-terrorism Cooperation: Both sides agreed to further enhance defence cooperation, maintain high-level visits and exchanges at various levels between relevant departments of the two armed forces, make full use of the China-Pakistan Defence and Security Consultation mechanism, deepen cooperation in areas such as military exercises, training cooperation, personnel exchanges, and equipment and technology cooperation.

Both sides agreed to further enhance cooperation against "Three Evils" of extremism, terrorism and separatism. Both sides will continue to regularly utilize their existing mechanisms of Strategic Dialogue and Counter-terrorism and Security Consultations to further promote communication and cooperation in relevant fields.

The Chinese side conveyed its support to Pakistan's commitment and efforts to counter terrorism, assured Pakistan of its support in implementing its counter-terrorism strategy, and commended the tremendous sacrifices made by the Pakistani nation in fight against terrorism and for Pakistan's immense contribution to regional and international peace and security through its achievements and successes. The Chinese side recognized Pakistan's efforts in actively strengthening financial regulations to combat terrorism financing, and called on all relevant parties to view Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts in an objective and fair manner.

Pakistani side reaffirmed its support to the Chinese side in safeguarding its sovereignty and security and combating separatism, terrorism and extremism including East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM). **Marine, Science and Technology, Space, Environmental and Agricultural Cooperation:**

Both sides agreed to further strengthen policy dialogue and strategic communication on maritime issues and expressed satisfaction on the Pakistan-China Maritime Cooperation Dialogue. They agreed to continue their close cooperation on navigation security, marine economy, exploration

and utilization of marine resources, marine scientific research and marine environmental protection.

Both sides agreed to further expand and deepen their collaboration including in the areas of new and emerging technologies, nanotechnology, biotechnology, ICT, which can contribute to improved living standards through their applications in the fields of health, agriculture, water, energy and food security.

The two sides agreed to actively promote 2012-2020 Space Cooperation Outline between China National Space Administration (CNSA) and Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO). Expressing satisfaction on the launch of Pakistan Remote Sensing Satellite (PRSS) earlier this year, both sides agreed to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in space technology applications.

The two sides agreed to strengthen cooperation in the field of manned space, and the China Manned Space Engineering Office (CMSEO) and SUPARCO will sign a framework agreement on cooperation.

Both sides agreed to enhance their cooperation in the areas of climate change, desertification control, desalination, water management, afforestation and ecological restoration, wetland protection and restoration, wildlife protection, forestry industry development, disaster management and risk reduction, and other areas of mutual interest.

Pakistan side recognized the great strides made by China in the field of agriculture. Both sides agreed to build on existing cooperation in the area of agriculture and explore new areas of joint collaboration.

Social Sector Cooperation: Pakistan expressed a desire to learn from the Chinese poverty alleviation model, which has lifted over 700 million people out of poverty over the last forty years. China is willing to strengthen policy dialogue, experience sharing and capacity building in the field of poverty reduction with Pakistan, and support Pakistan to establish poverty alleviation demonstration projects. The Chinese assistance will also be directed towards agriculture, education, health, poverty alleviation, safe drinking water, and vocational training.

Both sides also agreed to enhance collaboration in the field of health care, medical and surgical treatment. Both sides will share best practices and explore collaboration in the fields of disease surveillance and control, vaccine production as well as traditional medicine.

The Pakistan side recognized China's unremitting efforts to combat corruption and its great achievements, and evinced interest in learning from the Chinese experience and accomplishments in the field of anti-corruption.

People-to-People and Cultural Linkages: Both sides reiterated the importance of people-to-people contacts and cultural exchanges and agreed to encourage mutual visits of nationals of the two countries. Both sides agreed to improve visa facilitation for mutual visits.

Both sides decided to celebrate Pakistan-China Year of Friendship/Sister Cities in 2019 and to establish friendship city relationships between corresponding Chinese and Pakistani cities and provinces. It was agreed to enhance exchanges and dialogue between leaders at provincial and local levels.

The two sides agreed to further enhance cooperation between neighboring regions of the two countries, particularly in the areas of economy, trade, transportation, energy, industry, tourism, education, people-to-people contacts and livelihoods.

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the growing cooperation in the field of education and agreed to intensify educational linkages especially between higher education institutions. China is a popular destination for Pakistani students with about 25,000 Pakistanis enrolled across universities in China. China will offer additional scholarships for Pakistani students.

They agreed to encourage respective universities to develop bilateral linkages including through joint degree and exchange programmes. They further agreed to promote teaching of Pakistan Studies and Urdu language at Chinese Universities and Sinology and Chinese language at Pakistani Universities. Both sides agreed to negotiate agreements on mutual recognition of higher education degrees, diplomas and certificates, as early as possible.

The Chinese side agreed to continue supporting Pakistan in technical and vocational training to develop a skilled manpower for employment in CEPC projects, including through assistance in upgrading vocational training institutes, vocational training exchanges, and capacity building of trainers.

Both sides agreed to further promote exchanges between the think tanks including through conferences, seminars and fellowships. Both sides would encourage cooperation between their media houses and exchange visits and training programmes for journalists/media personnel.

Both sides agreed to further enhance cooperation in culture, arts, broadcasting, films, publication and sports under the Executive Programme of the Cultural Agreement between the two countries. The two sides shall enhance exchanges and cooperation in museums and promote exchanges in the conservation and presentation of heritage and artifacts and exchange of archaeologists between the two countries.

The two sides shall discuss the possibility to organize an Ancient Pakistan and Gandhara Artifacts Exhibition in Beijing. They also agreed to strengthen cooperation in the field of sports. The respective sports authorities will discuss further details. The two sides will actively encourage and support their publishing houses to translate and print literary classics so that the people of the two countries can appreciate each other's rich culture.

The two sides also agreed to establish China-Pakistan Youth Communication Committee, which will coordinate the exchange of youth and cooperation on youth affairs.

International and Regional Issues: Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, promoting international peace and security, and safeguarding the contemporary world order and the UN-centric international system.

They agreed to jointly promote multilateralism, free trade and win-win cooperation. The two sides support a consensus-based reform of the United Nations so that it responds to the interests and concerns of all Member States. Being major contributors to the UN Peacekeeping Operations over the years, the two sides agreed to enhance policy coordination, capacity building and sharing of good practices on peacekeeping.

Both sides believe that peace, development, cooperation and win-win are shared aspirations of the peoples in the region. All nations should promote cooperative and sustainable security, refrain from developing relations targeting any third country, contribute more to the mutual trust between regional countries, and respect sovereign decisions of countries in determining their development paths and respective foreign policies, so as to jointly safeguard the peace and stability of the region.

Pakistan and China believe that a peaceful, stable, cooperative and prosperous South Asia is in the common interest of all parties. Both sides emphasized the importance of pursuit of dialogue and resolution of all outstanding disputes to promote regional cooperation and advance the goals of lasting peace, stability and shared prosperity.

China appreciates Pakistan's quest for peace through dialogue, cooperation and negotiation, on the basis of mutual respect and equality, and supports Pakistan's efforts for improvement of Pakistan-India relations and for settlement of outstanding disputes between the two countries. Pakistan supported active participation of China at the platform of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation on the Afghan issue and support the "Afghan-owned and Afghan-led" peace and reconciliation process. China appreciates that Pakistan and Afghanistan are coordinating closely through the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) to enhance cooperation between the two countries in all areas.

Both sides agreed on the importance of China-Afghanistan-Pakistan consultations at the Foreign Ministers level aimed at deepening trilateral cooperation for shared progress, development and security and for strengthening peace and stability in Afghanistan. Both sides supported Afghanistan to host the second tripartite foreign ministers dialogue within this year.

The two sides underlined the importance of peaceful settlement of all disputes in the Middle East on the basis of mutual respect and in accordance to the precepts of international law.

The two sides agreed that JCPOA is an important outcome of multilateralism and a good model of negotiated settlement of complex issues through dialogue and diplomacy. They called on parties to uphold their respective commitments and to resolve all issues through dialogue. They opposed unilateral measures and long-arm jurisdiction that is inconsistent with the principles of international law.

The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to multilateral, non-discriminatory arms control and non-proliferation endeavours. They noted with concern the continued pursuit of double standards in the application of non-proliferation norms and procedures and called for policies upholding rule of law and long-standing rules. China appreciates and supports steps taken by Pakistan for strengthening the global non-proliferation regime. In this context, China supports Pakistan's engagement with the Nuclear Suppliers Group and welcomes its adherence of NSG Guidelines.

Recalling the commitments of all states for implementation of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions relating to international terrorism, both sides underscored the need for all States to avoid politicization of the UN Sanctions regime and the work of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Both sides also reiterated the need to evolve the text of Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism on the basis of consensus.

Both sides agreed to strengthen coordination and cooperation on international and regional issues of common interest; and maintain close communication and coordination within international and regional organizations and mechanisms such as the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), SAARC, the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA). China welcomed Pakistan's membership of SCO and appreciated its active participation in the SCO Summit in Qingdao in June 2018. During the visit, the two sides also signed 15 Agreements/MoUs on a range of bilateral issues.

Prime Minister Imran Khan expressed his appreciation to the leadership and people of China for the warm hospitality accorded to him and his delegation and invited Chinese leaders to visit Pakistan at a mutually convenient time.

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