

Documents

June-December 2018

I. Foreign Policy

A. AFGHANISTAN

1. Joint Statement issued after the 2nd Afghanistan-China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue

Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi of the People's Republic of China, and Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan held the 2nd Afghanistan-China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue in Kabul, Afghanistan on 15th December 2018.

China and Pakistan congratulated Afghanistan on the completion of the parliamentary elections and welcomed the efforts of the Afghan government for holding the presidential elections in 2019.

The three sides, once again, reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening their relations, deepening cooperation, and advancing connectivity under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) and other regional economic initiatives. The three sides agreed to promote China-Afghanistan-Pakistan trilateral cooperation under the framework of jointly building the Belt and Road Initiative. The three sides reiterated their strong resolve to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and without any distinction. The three Foreign Ministers agreed to jointly continue their efforts for building political mutual trust and support reconciliation, development cooperation and connectivity, security cooperation and counter-terrorism as the three areas of the trilateral cooperation.

The three sides reiterated their support to the Afghan-owned, and Afghan led inclusive peace process that is fully supported regionally and internationally, as the most viable way to bring peace in Afghanistan. In this regard, China and Pakistan appreciated the efforts of H.E. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani especially for the comprehensive peace plans that came out of the second Kabul Process and the Geneva Conferences on Afghanistan, and therefore called on the Afghan Taliban to join the peace process at an early date. While efforts are underway to start the peace process, the three sides call upon the parties concerned to end violence and the loss of innocent lives in Afghanistan.

The three sides agreed to continue economic development cooperation in areas of mutual interest. The three sides will continue to implement and expand the "soft" projects such as exchange and capacity building programs and explore "hard" projects of livelihood facilities and connectivity. China expressed its readiness to support Afghanistan and Pakistan in building immigration reception center and drinking water supply schemes at each side of the Ghulam Khan Khel crossing point, and to explore cold storages at Chaman and Spin Boldak. China supports enhanced coordination between Afghanistan and Pakistan on major energy and connectivity projects including the construction of Quetta-Kandahar railway and Kabul-Peshawar Motorway and Railway. The three sides reiterated their firm commitment to implement the activities and projects agreed to under practical cooperation.

The three sides expressed their strong determination not to allow any country, organization or individual to use their respective territories for terrorist activities against any other countries. The three sides took stock of trilateral cooperation in their fight against terrorism and underlined the need to further strengthen counter-terrorism coordination and cooperation in an effort to combat all terrorist groups and individuals without any discrimination. They also agreed to counter terrorist' logistical capabilities including financing, recruitment, training, and strengthen trilateral cooperation for counter-terrorism capacity building, deny terrorist use of the internet and to take joint steps for deradicalization, as well as work together to break the nexus between narco-trade and terror financing. To advance their cooperation in the fields of Counter-Terrorism, the three sides signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Counter-Terrorism.

The three sides agree to implement the consensus of the 2nd Foreign Ministers' Dialogue through the trilateral Vice Ministerial Strategic Dialogue, Vice-Ministerial Consultation on Counter-Terrorism and Security, and Director Generals' Practical Cooperation as well as other agreed mechanisms.

China and Pakistan thanked Afghanistan for the successful organization of the 2st China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue and its warm hospitality, and the three sides agreed that the 3rd Afghanistan-China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue would be held in Islamabad in 2019.

Islamabad, 15 December 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

B. CHINA

1. Press Statement issued by the Foreign Office on Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister's visit to Pakistan

Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Mr. Wang Yi paid an official visit to Pakistan from 7-9 September 2018. He conveyed the message of good

will and support from the Chinese leadership for the new government of Pakistan.

During his visit, Mr. Wang Yi held delegation level talks with Foreign Minister followed by a joint press conference. He also called on the President, Prime Minister, Speaker National Assembly and Chief of Army Staff.

State Councillor Wang Yi was a special guest at the oath-taking ceremony of President of Pakistan and was the first foreign dignitary to call on him after his inauguration on the same day.

The two sides had in-depth exchange of views on all issues of mutual interest. The visit provided an opportunity to the two sides to reaffirm their "all-weather strategic cooperative partnership".

During the meetings, Pakistani leadership conveyed that CPEC was a national priority for the Government. Pakistan remains committed to the successful implementation of CPEC. There was complete consensus on the future trajectory of CPEC between Pakistan and China. The two sides agreed to work together towards implementation of the ongoing projects and agreed to expand CPEC to new areas of cooperation including socio-economic development; poverty alleviation, anti-corruption, agricultural cooperation and industrial development as per the needs and priorities of the government of Pakistan.

The visit had a special significance as it came right after the installation of new government and on the day of the oath-taking ceremony of the new President. From the substantive point of view it helped in further strengthening the strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries.

Islamabad, 10 September 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

2. Pakistan-China Joint Statement: “Strengthening China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership Building Closer China-Pakistan Community of Shared Future in the New Era”

At the invitation of H.E. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, H.E. Imran Khan, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, paid his first official visit to China on November 2-5, 2018. During his visit, H.E. Imran Khan called on H.E. Xi Jinping, President of China, held talks with H.E. Li Keqiang, Premier, and met with H.E. Li Zhanshu, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and H.E. Wang Qishan, Vice President of China respectively. Meetings were marked by traditional warmth, mutual understanding and trust, and the leaders of the two countries had an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. Prime Minister Imran Khan also delivered speech at the Party School of the CPC Central Committee. Besides Beijing, Prime Minister Imran Khan visited Shanghai to attend the First China International Import Expo.

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. The two sides agreed to further strengthen the China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, and build 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-neighboring Relations between the People's Republic of China and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan signed in 2005.

1. 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 neighbors.

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.

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.

2. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Prime Minister Imran Khan 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 reviewed the early harvest phase of CPEC and expressed satisfaction that rapid progress has been made in all areas especially in the energy sector. The two sides reaffirmed their complete consensus on the future trajectory of the CPEC, timely completion of its on-going projects and joint efforts for realization of its full potential with a focus on socio-economic development, job creation and livelihoods and accelerating cooperation in industrial development, industrial parks and agriculture.

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 sides 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

The 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).

8. 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.

Both sides 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 fifteen (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.

Beijing, 04 November 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

C. ECO

Press Release issued after the 25th Informal Meeting of Ministers of ECO member countries

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi attended the 25th Informal Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Economic

Cooperation Organization today, held on the sidelines of the seventy-third session of the UNGA.

The Foreign Minister, while recognizing the importance of the ECO platform, said Pakistan enjoys fraternal and brotherly relations with ECO member countries. These relations can be further strengthened with regional connectivity projects. In this regard the Minister highlighted CPEC as a great example of connectivity.

The Foreign Minister, referring to the last 13th ECO Summit held in Islamabad in 2017 with the theme of "Connectivity for Regional Prosperity" underscored Pakistan's priority for energy connectivity. He referred to the fact that some countries in the ECO region were energy deficient while others were energy surplus. There was thus a greater need to initiate energy projects. He also referred to projects such as CASA-1000 and TAPI in which Pakistan was already participating.

In order to strengthen trade ties, the Foreign Minister supported revisiting the ECO trade agreement, which was aimed at promoting trade liberalization within the ECO region. He also supported strengthening ECO Transit Trade Framework Agreement, which would enable the region to function as a bridge between the North and the South, Europe and Asia.

The Foreign Minister also stated that in order to supplement transit agreements, Pakistan was upgrading its rail and infrastructure to facilitate smooth flow of goods with its neighbors. He further added that the Istanbul-Tehran-Istanbul corridor and the Pakistan-Iran-Turkmenistan rail link were being made functional.

Foreign Minister Qureshi informed the meeting that out of Pakistan's pledge of US\$ 5 million to the ECO fund for the reconstruction of Afghanistan, an amount of US\$ 2 million had already been paid to the ECO.

Islamabad, 25 September 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

D. EU

Pakistan-EU Joint Statement on Counter Terrorism

The seventh round of Pakistan-EU Political Counter-Terrorism dialogue was held today, 29 November 2018 in Brussels. On the EU side the dialogue was chaired by Mr. Pawel Herczynski, Director for Security Policy (EEAS); On the Pakistan side Mr. Ahmad Farooq, Director General Counter Terrorism.

The parties held in-depth discussions and exchanged perspectives on a wide range of counter terrorism issues in a cordial and constructive manner. Reaffirming that terrorism continues to pose a threat to states and societies across the globe, both sides reiterated their resolve to jointly combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Both sides reaffirmed their solidarity with the victims of terrorist attacks across the world.

The EU side appreciated Pakistan's increasing efforts in fighting terrorism and emphasized the need for increased engagement on preventing and countering radicalization.

The parties agreed on the need for a comprehensive approach to terrorism, based on the rule of law and protection of human rights and for enhancing cooperation in dealing with violent extremism in all its aspects, including preventing and countering radicalization and addressing the root causes of thereof. The parties furthermore underlined their joint commitment to regional peace and stability.

Both sides underlined the importance of interfaith dialogue and harmony as a key to promote tolerance and social cohesion in the society.

Recalling the commitments of all States for the implementation of UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions relating to international terrorism, both sides reaffirmed their support for the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a balanced and integrated manner.

The parties also reiterated their determination to work together in promoting international cooperation through fora such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF).

They discussed the ongoing EU-Pakistan cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism, and agreed to explore further avenues of bilateral collaboration including exchange of best practices and potential co-operation projects in mutually agreed areas.

The EU and Pakistan agreed that the next meeting of the dialogue will take place in Islamabad in 2019.

(The dialogue followed the adoption of EU Council Conclusions on Pakistan on 19 November 2018. They make reference to the wish of the EU to strengthen cooperation in the field of security and defence and commend the resumption of dialogue in this area, and the holding of the annual Dialogues on Counter-Terrorism and on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. The Pakistan-EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament dialogue was held on 28 November 2018).

Islamabad, 30 November 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

E. IRAN

Press Release issued by the Foreign Office after Iranian Foreign Minister, Javad Zarifs visits to Pakistan

H.E. Mr. Javad Zarif, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Islamic Republic of Iran has held detailed talks with Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi today. He extended best wishes of the Iranian leadership and the people of Iran on the election victory led by Prime Minister Imran Khan. He also

congratulated Mr. Qureshi on his appointment as Foreign Minister. Mr. Javad Zarif arrived Islamabad yesterday for a two day visit.

Welcoming his Iranian counterpart, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi noted the potential for strengthening the already strong bilateral relationship. Pakistan and Iran have stood by each other in difficult moments.

Both sides underlined the need to promote bilateral relations in all areas of cooperation. Detailed discussions were also held on regional and global issues including the situation in Afghanistan and US decision to unilaterally withdraw from the JCPOA.

It was agreed to host the next rounds of Bilateral Political Consultations and the Joint Economic Commission at early dates. Useful exchange of views on strengthening cooperation in economic, trade and connectivity sectors, cultural and people to people links, took place. While expressing satisfaction over cooperation with regard to the Pakistan-Iran border, it was agreed to continue close consultations through various forums in this regard.

The Foreign Minister stressed that Pakistan greatly values Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's strong and unswerving support for the just struggle of the people of Kashmir.

As regards JCPOA, while supporting Iran's principled stance, Mr. Qureshi expressed the hope that remaining parties to the Agreement would uphold their commitments in letter and spirit. This was important given IAEA's repeated verification that Iran has strictly adhered to the terms of agreement. Foreign Minister added that Pakistan stands with Iran in this hour of need.

Foreign Minister Zarif thanked the government and people of Pakistan for their hospitality and warm welcome. He also congratulated the Foreign Minister that Pakistan's strong protest against the blasphemous caricature competition had led to cancellation of the event. Muslim countries needed to confront Islamophobic tendencies with one voice.

Islamabad, 31 August 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

F. KASHMIR

1. Pakistan Foreign Office statement rejecting Indian protest against Azad Jammu and Kashmir Interim Constitution (13th Amendment) Act 2018 and its claim over Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir

The Government of Pakistan categorically rejects India's protest against the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Interim Constitution (13th Amendment) Act 2018 and its fallacious and baseless claim over the Indian occupied State of Jammu & Kashmir as an 'integral part' of India. The Indian claim has no legal basis and continues to be contradicted by the situation on ground since the last seven decades.

The entire state of Jammu & Kashmir is a "disputed" territory. Its disputed status is enshrined in the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, which stipulate that the final status of Jammu & Kashmir will be determined through the democratic method of a transparent, free and fair plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations to ascertain the wishes of the Kashmiris. These resolutions, pledging the right to self-determination to the people of Kashmir, are accepted by India, Pakistan and the international community.

Indian attempts to deflect attention from the ongoing atrocities in Indian occupied Jammu & Kashmir, including the use of pellet guns and humans shields, through baseless, fallacious contentions are regrettable and bound to failure.

Indian intransigence to implement UN Security Council Resolutions in letter and spirit continues to hold hostage peace and development in the region. Instead of making frivolous protests and issuing legally untenable and uncalled for statements, India should take steps to vacate its illegal occupation, fulfill its international obligations and expedite resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute in line with the UN Security Council Resolutions.

Islamabad, 14 June 2018.

2. Pakistan's reaction to the UN Report on Human Rights violations in Kashmir

Pakistan welcomes the proposal by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to establish a Commission of Inquiry for international investigation into human rights violations in the Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IoK).

This proposal is consistent with Pakistan's several calls to this effect since 2016, even as India has continued to ignore legitimate demands for probe into gross and systematic violations, including pellet guns excessive use of force, arbitrary arrest and detentions as well as continued sexual violence as part of overall impunity enjoyed by Indian security forces.

The report by Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) clearly stipulates that its main focus is on the Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir. The contents, scale and the narrative of killings, maiming, abuse and impunity articulated in the report is a reaffirmation of what Pakistan has long highlighted for the international community.

References to human rights concerns in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan should in no way be construed to create a false sense of equivalence with the gross and systematic human rights violations in IoK.

OHCHR's Report has rightly called for final political solution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute through meaningful dialogue that includes the people of Kashmir. The lasting solution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute is an essential imperative for peace, security and stability of South Asia and beyond.

India's continued denial of this imperative, its unwillingness to engage in a dialogue process with Pakistan and suppression of Kashmiri aspirations for freedom continue to endanger regional and international peace and security.

The United Nations has a key role to play in the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. Within the ambit of peace and security, the UN Security Council remains seized of numerous resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir. The OCHCR report is a reminder of this internationally recognized dispute and the urgency of its settlement both to protect human lives and promote peace.

Islamabad, 14 June 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

G. MALAYSIA

Pakistan – Malaysia Joint Statement between on the occasion of official visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to Malaysia (20-21 November 2018)

1. At the invitation of the Honourable Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, His Excellency Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan undertook an Official Visit to Malaysia from 20-21 November 2018.
2. During the visit, Prime Minister Imran Khan was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the Perdana Square, Prime Minister's Office, Putrajaya by the Honourable Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia.
3. After the welcoming ceremony, Prime Minister Imran Khan held a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in Putrajaya. Both leaders held fruitful and in-depth discussions, which took place in a warm and cordial atmosphere. The discussion covered a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interests.
4. Prime Minister Imran Khan congratulated Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad on his electoral victory and commended the smooth and peaceful transition of power from the previous government. Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad also congratulated Prime Minister Imran Khan on his recent resounding election as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan and wished Pakistan greater progress in its national development under the new government.
5. Both leaders acknowledged the long history of close cooperation between both countries since Malaysia's independence. The Malaysian side recalled the contribution by Justice Abdul Hameed of Pakistan, member of the Reid Commission, in the drafting of the Malaysian constitution. Both Leaders reaffirmed the commitment to strengthen the partnership which meets the interests of both countries. In setting the tone and future direction of bilateral relations between the two countries, both leaders stressed the importance of exchanges of visits at all levels, with a view to further expand the depth of bilateral relations.

6. The two leaders welcomed the establishment of Bilateral Consultation between the senior officials of both Ministries of Foreign Affairs as the mechanism to intensify engagements between both sides. In this regard, Malaysia and Pakistan will convene the first Bilateral Consultation in Islamabad next year.
7. Reflecting longstanding and substantial economic, commercial, and investment ties, both leaders welcomed continued efforts to intensify cooperation between Malaysia and Pakistan. They underpinned their shared desire to strengthen bilateral economic ties, expand trade and investment, create favourable conditions for commerce and business in both countries, particularly in palm oil, agri products, food retail, halal products, automotive parts, energy, science and technology, and telecommunication. The sole electric provider company in Malaysia, Tenaga Nasional Berhad is open to business opportunities with Pakistan including in renewable energy.
8. Reaffirming the Malaysia-Pakistan Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (MPCEPA) signed on 8 November 2007 in Kuala Lumpur which entered into force on 1 January 2008, Malaysia and Pakistan recognised the importance of regular discussions to strengthen the trade relationship in key sectors and addressing bilateral trade imbalance. Both leaders welcomed continuing efforts to further enhance bilateral economic relations and underscored importance of these efforts in advancing cooperation between Malaysia and Pakistan. In this regard, both sides look forward to a possible MPCEPA Joint Committee Meeting in the near future with the intention to enhance further economic partnership.
9. On the Inter-Governmental Agreement on Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) between Malaysia and Pakistan signed in November 2017, Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad reiterated Malaysia's commitment to assist Pakistan in addressing its energy shortfall. In this regard, Prime Minister Imran Khan welcomed Malaysia's cooperation in LNG and other energy sectors including hydroelectric and renewable resources.
10. Recognising Malaysia's success in the high-tech industry hub in the northern state of Penang, Pakistan highlighted their intention to explore greater collaboration between high-tech industries in Malaysia and Pakistan. Malaysia invited Pakistani companies to invest in Malaysia in both manufacturing and services sectors where the companies are able to leverage Malaysia's strategic location in expanding their investments into ASEAN and the Asia Pacific regions. Pakistan invited potential Malaysian companies to explore the possibility of investing in Special Economic Zones to take advantage of Pakistan's strategic location at the crossroads of Central, South and West Asia.
11. Both leaders reaffirmed the importance of the Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Cooperation and looked forward to the 13th Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation (JCDC) which will be convened in 2019 in Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia invited Pakistan to participate in the upcoming Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition

(LIMA) in 2019. Pakistan also welcomed Malaysia's participation in the upcoming Defence Expo IDEAS- 2018.

12. Malaysian side took note of the massive counter terrorism efforts that Pakistan has successfully undertaken in an effort to eliminate terrorism.
13. The two leaders agreed on the need to enhance educational ties between Malaysia and Pakistan and agreed that close cooperation on education and training are critical elements of the next phase of the relationship.
14. Both sides acknowledged the importance of the tourism industry and youth exchanges in promoting greater people-to-people contacts, sustainable socio- economic growth, and in fostering mutual understanding between the two countries. Both sides also reaffirmed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Recruitment of Pakistan Workers signed in Islamabad, Pakistan on 20th October 2003.
15. Noting the momentum building up worldwide for better quality products and services as consumers gain confidence in the halal process, Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad conveyed Malaysia's readiness to share its experience and expertise in the halal industry. Both leaders agreed to share information and best practices in this endeavour.
16. Recognising Malaysia's earnest efforts in eliminating corruption, Prime Minister Imran Khan expressed Pakistan's keen interest in learning from Malaysia's experience and accomplishments in this field.
17. As two peace-loving Islamic nations, the two leaders agreed to increase their collaborative efforts to uphold the true values of Islam in international for a while strengthening the solidarity of the Muslim Ummah. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to collaborate more closely on issues affecting the Muslim world including taking joint efforts in underscoring Muslim sensitivities in attacking Muslim holy personalities and religious belief. Both stressed that terrorism cannot be associated with any religion or belief. Views were exchanged on the situation in Palestine and in the Rakhine State, Myanmar involving Rohingya Muslims. On the Palestinian issue, both countries agreed to contribute positively in other forums, especially in the OIC Committee of Six on Palestine, of which Malaysia and Pakistan are members. Prime Minister Imran Khan briefed Prime Minister Tun Mahathir on the grave human rights situation in Kashmir and in this regard referred to the Reports of UNOHCHR, Amnesty International, International People's Tribunal and All Parties Parliamentary Kashmir Group, UK. He also discussed the role of OIC Contact Group on Kashmir to highlight the issue.
18. Both leaders witnessed the signing of the Partial Visa Abolishment Agreement (PVAA) which will reinforce the positive momentum in the bilateral relationship by broadening contact at the officials' level between the two countries.
19. Prime Minister Imran Khan expressed deep appreciation and sincere gratitude to Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad and the people of Malaysia for their warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to him and his delegation during their stay in Malaysia.

20. Prime Minister Imran Khan also extended an invitation to Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad to undertake a visit to Pakistan. Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad accepted the invitation with appreciation. The dates of the visit will be coordinated through diplomatic channels.

Islamabad, 21 November 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

H. SAARC

Pakistan Foreign Minister's statement at the informal meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers on the sidelines of 73rd Session of UNGA

Mr. Chairman,

Honourable Ministers,

Secretary General of SAARC,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me express my profound gratitude to the Chairperson of the SAARC Council of Ministers, His Excellency Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Foreign Minister of Nepal, for hosting this Informal Session on the sideline of the 73rd Session of the UNGA.

I also thank His Excellency Mr. Amjad Hussain B. Sial, Secretary General of SAARC, for updating us on the implementation of the important decisions and progress made so far in the key areas of cooperation under the umbrella of SAARC.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan attaches great importance to SAARC and remains committed to the principles and objectives of the SAARC Charter. Pakistan has always played a proactive role to make SAARC a useful vehicle for regional cooperation, based on the principle of sovereign equality.

Pakistan believes that SAARC can provide a conducive and congenial atmosphere to build economic synergies and transform the quality of life of the peoples of South Asia and the SAARC mechanism gives us an opportunity to find solutions to the common issues faced by our region. Over the years, Pakistan has taken substantial measures to advance SAARC ideals and objectives.

Pakistan's vibrant existence and its resilience at the trans-regional junction are crucial for trans-regional economic and energy linkages. Pakistan enjoys best geographical disposition which works as a bridge because Pakistan is the only country which helps in connecting South Asia to West Asia. It is, therefore, very much central to SAARC interests to strengthen Pakistan's economy as it is a vanguard to South Asia's sustainable progress.

Mr. Chairman,

Home to 1.78 billion consumers, having immense human capital, unexploited natural resources and a predominantly young generation, South Asia is one of the most dynamic yet one of the least integrated regions. Intra-regional trade accounts for roughly 6 percent of South Asia's total trade, compared to 22 percent in ASEAN. Intra-regional investment is smaller than 01 percent of overall investment.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe SAARC can provide a conducive atmosphere to build economic synergies throughout the region. The region of SAARC is a huge market that can act as an engine of accelerated economic growth. In this context, the aspirations of the people of SAARC region should be at the center of the Organization's processes. SAARC member states need to overcome the trust deficit and treat economic betterment of their people as the top most priority.

There is a need to strengthen regional cooperation in priority areas identified by the Member States and the programmes should be results-based and implemented in a time bound manner. A focused approach with emphasis on concrete results is the need of the hour. SAARC Development Fund can be instrumental in implementing the plans for the common good of our peoples.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan shares the view that connectivity is critical to the progress, prosperity and re-activation of SAARC. Pakistan therefore supports, in principle, road, air, rail and water connectivity within the region along with regional energy integration.

Pakistan supports all initiatives taken at the SAARC platform for seamless connectivity. The development of infrastructure in the region and enhanced intra-state and inter-state connectivity, coupled with freer trade, terror free atmosphere in the region and ease in movement across borders, are the pre-requisite of progress. All such efforts would supplement to ultimate goal of South Asian Economic Union (SAEU).

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan successfully hosted the 4th and 12th SAARC Summits in 1988 and 2004 respectively. The 19th SAARC Summit was to be held at Islamabad in November 2016. The Prime Minister of Pakistan was looking forward to welcome the SAARC leaders for their participation in the Summit. All preparations had been made for successful holding of the Summit in a befitting manner with a substantive outcome. Pakistan had prepared a climate change declaration for the 19th Summit in addition to other agreements on rail and road connectivity. However, unfortunately the SAARC process was impeded and the spirit of the SAARC Charter was violated when bilateral issues were allowed to cast shadow on this multilateral forum for regional cooperation which resulted in the postponement of the 19th SAARC Summit.

Nevertheless, Pakistan continues to pursue a positive approach in the spirit of engagement as we attach great importance to regional cooperation under the umbrella of SAARC. We remain committed to the SAARC objectives for promoting welfare of the people of South Asia, improving their quality of life, acceleration of economic growth, social progress and cultural development. Therefore, Pakistan looks forward to hosting the 19th SAARC Summit at Islamabad at the earliest so that the objectives of regional cooperation under the SAARC umbrella can be pursued more vigorously.

In this spirit, during the informal Meeting of SAARC Council of Ministers (21 September 2017) held in New York on the sidelines of the 72nd Session of UN General Assembly, Pakistan reiterated its offer for hosting the 19th Summit at an early date. Pakistan has proposed to the Current Chair (Nepal) to host an Inter-Summit Session of SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting, preceded by Senior Officials Meeting to agree on the dates for the Summit as per the convenience of the Member States. Reply to our request is still awaited.

Mr. Chairman,

There is certainly much more that we as a region can do against threats such as terrorism and regional security issues that affect us all. In view of the enormity of the challenges we face, an effective collaborative regional response is imperative.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan has been the biggest victim of terrorism. Our schools, universities, parks and hospitals have been attacked from across the borders. We have faced huge losses. Some 07 thousand of our security personnel and about sixty thousand civilians have lost their lives in our fight against terrorism. We have suffered economic losses to the tune of billions of dollars. But our resolve to combat the scourge of terrorism remains undeterred.

Pakistan has taken a number of successful initiatives to fight the scourge of terrorism and it supports all regional and international initiatives in taking concrete and practical steps against terrorism. Pakistan's Zarb-e-Azab Operation is the largest, most robust and most successful anti-terrorism campaign anywhere in the world, deploying 200,000 of our security forces. Operation Radd-ul-Fasad which has been launched as a continuation of the National Action Plan (NAP), aims at indiscriminately eliminating the residual and latent threat of terrorism and consolidating the gains made in other military operations. Pakistan is sharing its expertise in fighting with terrorism with other countries by training their personnel.

Mr. Chairman,

It is unfortunate that due to unresolved bilateral disputes amongst the member countries, SAARC could not achieve the desired socio-economic cooperation and prosperity in the region. There is a requirement for enhanced cooperation among the member states, as well as a need to collaborate with other major

international organizations to exploit our unutilized potential for the benefit of the people of South Asia.

Pakistan remains ready to play its role in the peace and development of the South Asian region along with regional actors. However, further advance in the process will be contingent upon contribution of all the member states and to activate the SAARC framework in this regard.

It was the vision of our political leadership to develop SAARC into the economic driving force that it was envisaged to be. This can only be possible in an atmosphere of mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of each other's problems and challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

The efficacy of SAARC as a forum and as a process remains in the evolutionary mode. It has yet to go a long way to learn from the lessons of ASEAN and EU to serve as the engine of South Asian advancement into the Asian dawn. To make SAARC vibrant, SAARC member states should build on convergences to minimize divergences for the greater good of the people of this region. By synergizing capabilities and creating partnerships, we can effectively address the common challenges that we all face today.

SAARC currently has nine observer states. SAARC should increase its engagement with observer states to enhance their cooperation with SAARC programmes, activities, and projects. In this context, Pakistan has always been supportive of the idea of upgrading the Observer status to Dialogue Partners of those Observer Countries that are actively engaged in SAARC process and to grant observer status to more countries that can play an important role in the development of the region. This will enhance the resource availability of SAARC. Currently, there is a moratorium in place on admission of new observers in the SAARC. However, Pakistan believes we can make SAARC a vibrant forum by rationalizing the areas of cooperation and opening it up by engaging with more nations and international and regional organizations.

Mr. Chairman,

Before I conclude, let me say that we also need to reflect on SAARC's performance during the last more than three decades. As we see, despite horizontal growth of the organization and its bodies, its overall impact on the lives of people is not up to our collective expectations. There is a need to consolidate the existing level of cooperation, so that the focus of our policies shifts from "form" to "substance."

As a representative of the Government of Pakistan, I can confidently say that Pakistan attaches great importance to regional cooperation under the umbrella of SAARC and believes that working of this organizations as per its very principles and goals will help in the development of member states and improve regional stability. Pakistan remains committed to the SAARC objectives for promoting welfare of the people of South Asia, improving their quality of life, acceleration of economic growth, social progress and cultural development.

Mr. Chairman,

In the end I would reiterate Pakistan's resolve to play a constructive role to strengthen SAARC and make it a useful vehicle for regional cooperation in diverse fields.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Source: www.mofa.gov.pk

I. SAUDI ARABIA

Foreign office condemns missile attack on Saudi Arabia

Pakistan strongly condemns the latest Houthi militia missile attack on Jazan and expresses deep concern at the sad news of three casualties in the attack.

Pakistan reiterates its full support and solidarity with Saudi Arabia against any threats to its territorial integrity and against the Haramain Sharifain.

Islamabad, 10 June 2018. Source: www.mofa.gov.pk

J. SCO

Pakistan Foreign Office's brief on the 18th meeting of the Council of Heads of States (CHS) of SCO member states, in Qingdao, China

On invitation of the Chinese President Mr. Xi Jinping, the President of Pakistan Mr. Mamnoon Hussain is visiting People's Republic of China to participate in the 18th Meeting of the Council of the Heads of State of SCO Member States at Qingdao China from 9-10 June, 2018.

The Council of the Heads of State, which convenes annually, is the highest decision-making forum of the SCO. It reviews performance of the organization and its bodies and makes fundamental decisions about future course of action. China has held chairmanship of the Council since the last Summit in Astana in June 2017, which will now pass on to Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Xi Jinping chaired the meeting today which was participated by the Heads of State of SCO Member States which, besides the President of Pakistan, included the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Prime Minister of India. The leaders of four Observer States of SCO; Presidents of Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia also participated in the meeting.

The Heads of State held a 'restricted format' meeting of the leaders of member states in the morning followed by a plenary session. The leaders exchanged views on contemporary regional and global issues. They agreed to further enhance cooperation and mutual trust to realize the maximum potential offered by the organization. The Heads of State reiterated their commitment to the Charter of SCO and to the "Shanghai Spirit" which includes reference to

mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for cultural diversity and pursuit of common development.

The Summit witnessed signing of over 20 documents outlining future SCO trajectory in a number of spheres. Besides the Qingdao Declaration these included: Action Plan on implementing the provisions of Treaty on Long-term Good Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation; Cooperation Plan on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism; Anti-Drug Strategy and its Plan of Action, Concept on Preventing the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs; Declaration on Trade Facilitation; Vision on Environment Protection; and Joint Appeal of Heads of State on the necessity to prevent involvement of youth in activities of destructive nature and Action Plan. Besides cooperation Agreements/MOUs in various fields such as cooperation on countering threats of Epidemics; MOU on stimulating cooperation in the SMEs, and cooperation in Customs related fields were signed. An MOU for cooperation between SCO and UNESCO was also signed at the occasion. The Council confirmed appointment of new Secretary General of SCO Mr. N.V.Imamovich and Mr. Mr. G. D.Fayozovichnew Executive Director of SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure.

President Mamnoon Hussain, in his address thanked member states, SCO Secretary General and Director of Executive Committee of RATS for their valuable contribution towards Pakistan's successful assimilation in the organization. He also commended the dynamic Chinese chairmanship under which SCO had made considerable progress. He stated that Pakistan was a natural and logical partner of SCO as it shares deep rooted historical and cultural links with its members.

The President reiterated Pakistan's commitment to SCO's Charter and to the Shanghai Spirit. Highlighting importance of intra SCO connectivity and economic integration he reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to act as a conduit between Eurasia, China, Central and South Asia and, offered Pakistan-SCO Trade, Transit and Energy Corridor, through its territory. In this regard, he reiterated Pakistan's offer to connect CPEC to the six main road corridors of SCO. Pakistan had been actively supporting SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (SCO-RATS). Sharing SCO's concern over drug trafficking President stressed the need of a comprehensive effort to counter Narcotics and illicit drugs in the region and its neighborhood under the ambit of SCO.

President Mamnoon Hussain also underscored Pakistan's commitment to peace and stability in Afghanistan through an Afghan led, Afghan owned process of peace and reconciliation, He welcomed President Ghani's initiatives towards this end.

The President held bilateral meetings with President Xi Jinping of China, President Putin of Russia, President Rahmon of Tajikistan, President Rouhani of Iran and President Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan. He also interacted with other SCO leaders on the sidelines of the Summit.

Islamabad, 10 June 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

K. TERRORISM

1. Foreign office's brief on United Nations Security Council Report acknowledging Pakistan's Counter-Terrorism Efforts

The Monitoring Team of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 1267/2253/2368 Sanctions Committee in its recently published twenty-second report lauded Pakistan's counter terrorism efforts by acknowledging that extensive counter-terrorist operations (in the country) have led to a reduction in the terrorism in the country.

This is not the first time that the Monitoring Team has acknowledged Pakistan's counter terrorism gains. Earlier, in February 2018, the Monitoring Team in its 21st Report had also noted with appreciation that Pakistani military operations have "denied space for ISIL to establish an organizational structure in the area. Terrorist attacks claimed by ISIL are mainly carried out by members of local groups with cross-border planning and support by ISIL." Besides UNSC Monitoring Team, the improvement in overall security situation in Pakistan has also been acknowledged by many neutral observers, including the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) of the Institute for Economics, which in its 2017 report also acknowledged the decrease in terrorism incidents in Pakistan.

The UN Security Council 1267 Sanctions Committee oversees the implementation of the 1267 sanctions regime. The Committee is supported in its work by Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team which is also responsible for publishing periodic reports on implementation of the sanctions measures by member states.

Pakistan remains committed to defeat terrorism at immense human and economic cost. Pakistan's widely recognized successes against terrorism were possible due to its unwavering resolve and indiscriminate counter terrorism efforts.

Islamabad, 17 August 2018.

2. Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi's Statement in the UN General Assembly

Madam President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I begin by felicitating Madam Maria Fernanda Espinosa Graces upon her election as President of the General Assembly.

The stewardship of this session by an accomplished leader of her ranking and stature, would undoubtedly lend to the proceedings of this Assembly greater credence and strength.

I also commend Miroslav Lackjack for his able guidance of the previous session.

We appreciate Secretary General Antonio Guterres for his exemplary leadership of the organization, and support his efforts to instill a new sense of mission and direction in the United Nations.

Our profound condolences over the passing away of former Secretary General Kofi Anan, who was a leading light and a driving force in taking the UN agenda forward into the twenty first century.

We expressed deep sympathy and condolences to the government and people of Indonesia for the damage caused by the earthquake and subsequent Tsunami.

Madam President,

Two months ago, the people of Pakistan voted for change, for reform and for a fundamental shift in their paradigm of governance.

They opted for a Pakistan, confident and compassionate, open and articulate, peaceful and principled.

A Pakistan that will engage with its neighbourhood and the world on the basis of equality and respect; a country that will seek resolution of conflicts and convergence of interests; and a state that will build upon common understandings, reciprocal commitments and shared ideals.

Pakistan will brook no compromise on the interests of the nation, the sovereignty of the State, or the security of its people.

Our Government is keen to pursue a policy of partnerships for peace, security and prosperity in our immediate neighbourhood and beyond.

We seek a peaceful environment to promote our development agenda both at the national level and in our region.

Madam President,

I stand before this Assembly as the representative of a quintessential developing country, that has at its heart, the welfare of its people.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, we have begun giving shape to the vision of a new Pakistan through a set of integrated policies and programmes.

Madam President,

The world faces a moment of inflection. The very foundations, the very principles on which the edifice of global order is constructed are under assault.

Inequality within and among nations is on the rise.

Forces of protectionism, populism and isolationism are gaining currency. Intolerance is ascendant over acceptance; rhetoric over reason, and power over principle.

Where the world needs bridges, we see fortifications; where it needs highways, we see blockades, and where it yearns freedom, we see cages.

New forms and manifestations of imperialism are appearing. Multilateralism is on a path of retreat. Unilateralist tendencies are growing. Long standing legal norms are being eroded for strategic and commercial considerations.

Dark clouds of trade wars are looming large on the horizon. Challenges of climate change, environmental degradation, pandemics, transnational organized crime and sustainable development are becoming ever more complex.

The post-world war idealism is giving way, slowly but surely, to a hardened, militaristic approach. This trend, Madam President, is not only regressive, it is downright dangerous.

Madam President,

We note with concern seismic shifts in the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East. As existing conflicts exacerbate, new threats have emerged. Competing interests of regional and extra regional powers are deepening long standing fissures, and widening the fault lines, even as the tragedy of Palestine continues to fester.

In these uncertain times, the global community appears to be in desperate quest for leadership, a vision, and an order.

Madam President,

Consider the issue of striking the right balance between freedom of expression and sentiments of a people.

Where there ought to be empathy, understanding and compassion, we see caricatured, ill informed, jaundiced judgments.

Recently, Muslims across the world, were pained at a planned competition of cartoons of our Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). This deeply hurt Muslim sentiments and sensibilities.

On its part, Pakistan will continue to collaborate with friends and partners, on the UN and OIC platforms to reverse the growing tide of bigotry, build cross-cultural understandings, and promote dialogue amongst civilizations.

Madam President,

The theme of this year's General Assembly session is not only apt but also mirrors the priorities of my Government.

As we embark upon our journey of change and reform, Pakistan stands ready to strengthen its partnership with the UN family of institutions.

Alongside like-minded States, we will continue Madam President, to be a leading voice for comprehensive reform of the UN Security Council, to make it more democratic, representative, transparent and effective. We will continue to oppose the creation of new centres of privilege and prestige, in defiance of principles of democracy, and the Charter's core tenet of sovereign equality of member states.

Madam President,

Since its inception, Pakistan has been an ardent adherent of the UN Charter, and an active participant in the UN processes. Pakistan has served seven terms on the UN Security Council, five Presidencies of the Economic and Social

Councils, and four terms at the Human Rights Council. This is reaffirmation of faith of the international community in Pakistan.

We have championed the cause of the peoples of Africa and Asia to exercise their inalienable right of self-determination and wrest independence from the yoke of colonial rule.

As we pay tribute to the memory of Nelson Mandela Madiba, we are reminded of the high ideals he sacrificed so much for. The best way to honour the legacy of this great leader is to continue to fight the good fight, for freedom, for dignity and for equality.

Madam President,

Pakistan remains one of the oldest, largest and most active contributors to UN Peacekeeping operations the world over. The Pakistani blue helmets have laid lives in the cause of global peace. We are proud of their sacrifices.

Pakistan remains also host to one of the oldest peace keeping Missions, the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). We greatly value UNMOGIP's contribution in monitoring ceasefire along the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir.

Madam President,

Pakistan desires a relationship with India based on sovereign equality and mutual respect. We seek resolution of disputes through a serious and comprehensive dialogue that covers all issues of concern. We were to meet on the sidelines of this UNGA Session to talk about all issues with India- India called off dialogue the third time for the Modi Government - each time on flimsy grounds. They preferred politics over peace. They used the pretext of stamps issued months ago, of a Kashmiri activist and depicting grave human rights violations, including pellet gun victims, as an excuse to back out from the talks.

Dialogue is the only way to address long standing issues that have long bedeviled South Asia, and prevented the region from realizing its true potential.

The unresolved Jammu and Kashmir dispute hinders the realization of the goal of durable peace between our two countries. For over seventy years now, it has remained on the agenda of the UN Security Council and a blot on the conscience of humanity.

For seventy years the people of occupied Jammu & Kashmir have struggled for their rights of self-determination in the face of overwhelming oppression and gross violations of their fundamental human rights by the Indian occupation forces.

There can be no lasting peace in South Asia without a just settlement of the Kashmir dispute based on the UN Security Council resolutions and the will of the Kashmiri people.

Pakistan welcomes the recently released report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The report rightly lifts the veil from decades of obfuscation and chronicles the massive ongoing violations of human rights in

Indian Occupied Kashmir. It vindicates our position. No longer the excuse of terrorism can be used to continue to systematically oppress the Kashmiri people.

Pakistan endorses the UN Report and calls for early institution of a Commission of Inquiry under UN auspices to investigate and fix responsibility. We will welcome the Commission to Azad Jammu & Kashmir, and hope that India too, will do the same.

To divert the world's attention from its brutalities, India frequently violates the ceasefire along the Line of Control in Kashmir. Despite numerous violations Pakistan has acted with restraint. But if India does venture across the LoC, or acts upon its doctrine of "limited" war against Pakistan, it will evoke a strong and matching response.

Madam President,

Strategic stability in our region has been and continues to be undermined. This is evident in different ways-by introduction of destabilizing weapon systems, pursuit of discriminatory approaches by certain states to supply advanced military hardware and sensitive technologies, and adoption of offensive force postures and doctrines, that imagine conflict beneath a nuclear threshold.

Under the circumstances, Pakistan has no option but to maintain a minimum credible deterrence.

We have been advocating for many years now, a Strategic Restraint Regime for South Asia.

Pakistan is ready to engage with India for meaningful confidence building, risk reduction and avoidance of arms race.

Madam President,

Let me also reiterate Pakistan's continued support for strengthening of regional organizations as a platform for poverty alleviation and socio-economic uplift. The regional body for South Asia, SAARC has been rendered ineffective due to the intransigence of one country. We remain fully committed to a functioning SAARC that can improve the lives of the people of the region.

Madam President,

Afghanistan and together with it, Pakistan, has suffered heavily at the hands of global power play, strategic miscalculations and cognitive dissonance.

That there is no military solution to the war in Afghanistan is now a foregone conclusion. It is time to act upon that conclusion. A negotiated settlement has assumed urgency in the face of the worrisome and growing presence of Daesh in Afghanistan.

Pakistan will continue to lend its support to an Afghan owned and Afghan led process of peace and reconciliation.

On the bilateral plane, our two countries have operationalized the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity. It lays down the blueprint for extensive engagements in all areas of common interests.

Pakistan has hosted the longest protracted refugee presence of modern times.

Our role and sacrifices can perhaps be better appreciated when juxtaposed against the rising tide of anti-immigrant sentiments in nations, more resourceful and developed than ours, that have faced the brunt of fewer immigrants, over a shorter timescale.

Because of this protracted situation, Afghanistan's security has a direct spill over impact on our own security and stability. We look forward to the safe, dignified and voluntary return of Afghan refugees to their homeland.

Madam President,

For the past seventeen years, Pakistan at great cost of life and resources, has been combating the fires of terrorism and extremism.

By the determined operations of our armed forces, and the full support of our people, Pakistan has turned the tide against terrorism. With the deployment of 200,000 troops, Pakistan has conducted the largest and most effective counter terrorism campaign in the world.

Peace and security have returned to our cities and towns.

In our own national interest, and in line with our National Action Plan, we will continue to strengthen our counter terrorism frameworks and regimes.

Pakistan continues to face terrorism that is financed, facilitated and orchestrated by our eastern neighbour. We wanted to sit with India to discuss all issues, including terrorism, that have created violence in our cities and towns, and have led to tens of thousands of casualties of innocent Pakistanis. Pakistan shall never forget the mass murder of more than 150 children in a Peshawar School, the terrible Mastung attack and many others that have links with terrorists supported by India. And we will never forget the terrorist attack in India against Samjhota Express carrying innocent Pakistanis - and now its confessed perpetrators are being allowed to walk free.

We wanted to share this evidence with India and the international community on who supported these acts of violence and terrorism. We have already shared this evidence with the UN. We have in our custody a serving Indian Naval officer, Commander Kalbhushan Yadav, who has provided us with the most incriminating evidence by accepting that he, on the instructions of his government, financed, planned and executed acts of terrorism and violence in Pakistan. This is but one Indian state sponsored official terrorist. Many more are launched inside Pakistan to create terror and mayhem by our eastern neighbour.

And it is India, that in plain sight of the international community, perpetrates state sponsored terrorism in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. It is the concern of the United Nations, as Jammu and Kashmir remains on the agenda of the UN Security Council. And it is a matter of concern for the international community as humanity is being crushed and human rights being violated all over India, where people have stood up against oppression, occupation and to demand their fundamental rights.

It is also a matter of concern of the international community that India has sponsored terrorism and aggression against all its neighbours.

Madam President,

The strongest antidote to the poison of terrorism is development that yields dividends.

The vision of Belt and Road is a path-breaking initiative by a world leader of great sagacity and foresight to create a community of common destiny.

It is a global common good beneficial to all.

Our vision for China Pakistan Economic Corridor is to help translate our geo-strategic potential into geo-economic dividend.

Pakistan looks to offer the vital connectivity nodes linking the Middle East with western China, and affording Central Asia the shortest most feasible access to the Sea.

Madam President,

The challenges of our times have enhanced, not diminished, the relevance of the United Nations. The United Nations must remain the central platform for dialogue and diplomacy. For the UN to remain relevant to the needs of the people and respond to the demands of the twenty first century, we believe that:

One: Sustainable development goals must be pursued in order to reduce inequality within and among nations. We hope the Secretary General's high-level event on Financing the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, earlier this week, will serve as a catalyst for rapid progress towards realizing the SDGs.

Two: Corruption is a grave crime. Those who provide safe haven to ill-gotten wealth, are partners in the crime, and equally culpable. Existing international conventions on corruption do not go far enough in addressing this malaise. It is time to return the looted wealth to their rightful owners, the people, and to take to task, both the perpetrators, and their abettors.

Three: Climate change poses serious challenges to all States. The Paris Agreement must not be allowed to become hostage to sectoral interests. Even as Pakistan contributes minimally to global emissions, our country remains among the most vulnerable. Our Government completed the plantation of a billion trees project in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. We have now launched an ambitious project of planting 10 billion trees across Pakistan.

Four: A rules-based global order is vital for promotion of international trade in goods and services as well as global nuclear commerce and governance mechanisms. Carving out exemptions and bending established rules to suit partisan interests must be eschewed.

Five: An objective and transparent criterion must be evolved to facilitate trade in strategic goods and membership of groupings governing it. This is essential for countries pursuing economic growth and development.

Six: Sanctity and integrity of international agreements must be maintained. Strategic stability must be nurtured by policies of restraint and responsibility, not by considerations of profits and politics.

Seven: Technology and innovation are key to reshaping our states and societies. We must strike a prudent balance between guarding against misuse of emerging technologies and facilitating their access to developing countries. It is essential to develop universally agreed legal frameworks in the area of cyber

security, lethal autonomous weapons system, Artificial Intelligence and weaponization of outer space.

Eight: Dislocation of people in recent years, primarily because of wars but also due to pervasive poverty, has energized the global debate on refugees and migrants. The deliberations leading to the Global Compacts on Refugees and Migrants represent a step in the right direction. The true litmus test of these compacts lies in the effective implementation of commitments.

Madam President,

Pakistan believes that a new consensus on peace, security and development, can and should be developed. A new paradigm for universal peace and prosperity is both desirable and achievable. Pakistan will be a willing and able partner of the international community in this worthwhile pursuit.

Madam President,

The challenges ahead are daunting; the road forward, untraveled, the route uncharted. These times call for deliberation and diligence, but also cooperation and concerted action. They call for a truly united, United Nations.

The Kashmiri wife who lost her husband; the Kashmiri school boy who lost his eye sight and his future to pellet gun injuries; the Syrian father who saw his child drown, the Palestinian girl who suffocates under siege, the African migrant willing to risk all for a better life, continue to look to this, the United Nations for support and succor.

Let us not fail them any longer.

Islamabad, 29 September 2018.

3. Foreign Minister's Message on the Fourth Anniversary of the Peshawar Army Public School Attack

On the fourth anniversary of the horrific and barbaric Army Public School (APS) terrorist attack in Peshawar on 16 December 2014, our thoughts and prayers are with the families, friends and loved ones of all the victims.

The fateful "black day", which resulted in loss of more than 130 precious lives, continues to remain a scar on the collective memory of the nation. Even after four years, the pain and sorrow of this utterly senselessness and heinous act remains fresh. So does the outrage.

While the attack shocked the whole nation, it also tested the resilience and resolve of Pakistan to fight terrorism and extremism. The country emerged from that test not only intact, but strengthened. The tragedy brought the whole nation together and gave us the direction to eliminate this menace from our territory. The improved security situation in the country and successes achieved against terrorism in the last four years are owed to the martyrs of the APS attack.

On this day we also remember the immense sacrifices rendered by our security forces. It is through their tremendous efforts that we have been able to turn the tide against the menace of terrorism. This fight is not yet over and we will persevere until terrorism is completely eradicated from our country.

The anniversary of this tragic day is also a reminder for the international community that terrorism is a common enemy and must be jointly fought.

As we remember with sorrow the devastating terrorist attack, we must ensure that this should never happen again, so that our children and future generations can live in peace and pursue their dreams without fear. We will never forget the sacrifices made by our innocent children.

Pakistan Zindabad!

Islamabad, 16 December 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

L. TURKEY

1. **President Mamnoon Hussain congratulatory message on President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey on victory in the elections**

On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, President Mamnoon Hussain has extended heartfelt felicitations to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey on his victory in the elections held in Turkey on 24 June 2018.

The President underscored that the large turn-out and the peaceful conduct of the parliamentary and presidential elections is a testimony to the strength and vibrancy of Turkey's democratic values and institutions.

He expressed hope that Turkey will continue on its path of progress and prosperity under the leadership of President Erdogan and the historic and unparalleled bilateral relations between Pakistan and Turkey will continue to grow from strength to strength.

Islamabad, 24 June 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

2. **Prime Minister of Pakistan's congratulatory message on the Turkish President's victory in the Parliamentary and Presidential elections**

Prime Minister of Pakistan, Justice (Retd) Nasir-ul-Mulk, in a message, congratulated President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey on his historic win in the presidential election as well as the success of his Justice and Development Party (AKP) in the parliamentary elections, held on 24 June 2018.

The Prime Minister underlined that this electoral victory was a vote of strong confidence in the leadership and vision of President Erdogan, and the remarkable progress made by Turkey under the AK Party.

The Prime Minister also commended the strength of Turkish democratic institutions and values, and felicitated the people and the

Government of Turkey on the peaceful conduct of the parliamentary and presidential elections.

Prime Minister Justice (Retd) Nasir-ul-Mulk conveyed that the people of Pakistan take great pride in the progress and development achieved by Turkey, and expressed the hope that the bonds of historic brotherhood between the people of Pakistan and Turkey will continue to grow ever stronger in future.

He also reiterated Government of Pakistan's strong commitment to continue working with the brotherly Government of Turkey to expand the existing strategic bilateral relations in all spheres.

Islamabad, 25 June 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

M. UAE

Foreign Office statement issued after Prime Minister Imran Khan and Crown Prince HH Shiekh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan agreed to transform Pakistan-UAE Relations into Long Term Strategic Economic Partnership

On the invitation of His Highness Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of UAE Armed Forces, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, H.E. Imran Khan paid an official visit to the United Arab Emirates on 18 November 2018.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by a high level delegation comprising Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Finance Minister Asad Umar, Minister for Petroleum Ghulam Sarwar Khan, Minister for Power Omar Ayub Khan, Advisor on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood and Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

The Prime Minister was received by His Highness Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan and accorded a ceremonial reception at the Presidential Palace, which was followed by delegation level talks. In Dubai, the Prime Minister was received by His Highness Sheikh Muhammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Prime Minister Khan also visited Sheikh Zayed Mosque, and the Martyrs' Memorial where he paid homage to Emirati heroes who had sacrificed in the service of their nation.

Delegation level talks with Crown Prince His Highness Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed focused on all areas of bilateral, regional, and global interest.

Expressing satisfaction at the positive trajectory of relations, the two leaders agreed to take immediate measures to further elevate their historic partnership. They resolved to strengthen trade and economic ties and eliminate all impediments to seamless flow of trade and investment between the two countries.

They expressed satisfaction over the fruitful outcome of the visit of the high-level UAE economic delegation to Pakistan recently and reiterated their resolve to transform the existing special relations into a Strategic Long-Term Economic Partnership by adopting a direct, transparent and time bound approach.

The two sides agreed to chalk out a comprehensive roadmap to accelerate cooperation and partnership in areas encompassing trade, investment, economic development, energy, infrastructure and agriculture., with a view to accrue early dividends from the economic partnership.

Prime Minister Khan and Crown Prince Muhammad bin Zayed decided to hold the next Pakistan-UAE Joint Ministerial Commission, to be co-chaired by the respective Foreign Ministers in Abu Dhabi in February 2019. They further reaffirmed their commitment to hold the Senior Officials' Bilateral Political Consultations between the Foreign Ministries and fast track finalization of pending agreements at the earliest.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the on-going defence and security cooperation, and resolved to explore further collaboration in the areas of training, joint exercises and defence production.

The two leaders noted that a key element of partnership between the two countries was the complete identity of views on regional and global importance. They reiterated their strong belief that only by espousing the principles of tolerance, inclusivity, non-interference and focusing on a people centric development agenda can the region attain sustainable peace and stability.

They strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and expressed their resolve to work closely to root out this scourge. The Crown Prince recognized the efforts and unparalleled sacrifices made by Pakistan to eliminate terrorism and extremism.

The two sides also agreed to further strengthen their cooperation to deal with transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, money laundering and human trafficking.

Prime Minister Imran Khan paid rich tribute to the founder and first President of the UAE, His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan for his foresight and visionary leadership and his contribution towards laying the foundation of Pakistan-UAE friendship. Sheikh Zayed, the Prime Minister recalled, was a sincere friend of Pakistan, who had great love in his heart for Pakistan and its people. The people of Pakistan reciprocated this love, and continue to hold Sheikh Zayed and the leadership of the UAE in high esteem.

The Prime Minister further lauded the progress achieved by the UAE in fostering tolerance, inclusive economic development, innovation, and youth and women empowerment. In particular, he appreciated UAE's success in promoting tourism, and leveraging technology for improved governance.

Prime Minister Imran Khan thanked the UAE and its leadership for their continued commitment to Pakistan's socioeconomic development in the shape of Pakistan Assistance Programme. He specifically thanked His Highness Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan for his support to eradicate polio from Pakistan.

Prime Minister Imran Khan briefed the UAE leadership about his government's people centric reform agenda including the steps being taken to eliminate corruption and promote transparency and accountability at all levels of government.

Pakistan reiterated its readiness to actively participate in Expo 2020 and extend full support to the UAE in making this mega event a great success. Pakistan offered UAE the services of its IT professionals and skilled labour, in preparing for Expo 2020.

Acknowledging the contribution of Pakistani professionals as well as skilled and unskilled workers in the development of UAE, the two sides agreed to enhance cooperation on all labour related issues.

This was the second visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to the UAE in as many months. The visit underscored the strength and substance of the Pakistan-UAE special relationship, which is based on the spirit of mutual affection and deep trust, and rooted in age old civilizational, religious, cultural and commercial affinities.

Prime Minister Imran Khan expressed his sincere appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to him and his delegation. He reiterated his invitation to H.H Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to visit Pakistan on mutually convenient dates. His Highness happily accepted the invitation.

Islamabad, 18 November 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

N. UK

Text of a lecture by Henry Tillman On at the Foreign Office "Britain And CPEC"

Mr. Henry Tillman, in a comprehensive presentation made on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 20 July 2018, outlined the impressive successes and milestones achieved by CPEC. Mr. Tillman, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Grisons Peak Investment Bank, UK, is an authority on BRI & CPEC and other Chinese economic initiatives the world over.

The event which was hosted by Foreign Minister Abdullah Hussain Haroon, was attended inter alia by Minister for Finance, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar; Minister for Law and Justice Syed Ali Zafar, Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Pakistan, HE Yao Jing, CEOs of Chinese Companies and senior government officials. A large number of members of Islamabad's think tank community and academia also participated.

In his remarks at the occasion, Foreign Minister Abdullah Hussain Haroon said that Pakistan-China relations were a shining example of win-win cooperation. He commended President Xi Jinping's visionary Belt and Road Initiative and CPEC as the flagship project of BRI. He stressed that CPEC had added a practical dimension to the strategic partnership between the two

countries. Through its energy and infrastructure projects, CPEC has already started yielding dividends for Pakistan.

Agreeing with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Tillman highlighted the successes of BRI and CPEC projects and their economic impact. He said that CPEC was benefiting Pakistan in practical terms especially in the energy and infrastructure sectors. Several power projects had been completed and a number of roads had been built. Many projects in energy and infrastructure were in completion phases. CPEC would generate 800,000 jobs.

Mr. Tillman also highlighted the expected positive spillover impact of BRI and CPEC on FDI from other countries, as well as development of Pakistan's construction, manufacturing, tourism and e-commerce sectors. He focused on the tremendous opportunities to be made available through the Special Economic Zones, which were already attracting international interest and could act as catalysts for accelerated economic and industrial growth.

Appreciating the success of CPEC, Tillman opined that in comparison to other BRI corridors Pakistan had done well in fast tracking CPEC, due to which negativity about Pakistan was dissipating, many major companies were coming to Pakistan, revenue was being generated and new opportunities for investment were opening up.

President Xi Jinping had shown his full confidence in Pakistan by committing to invest more than US \$ 60 billion through CPEC. He stressed that Pakistan had the gift of being ahead of everyone else involved in BRI.

The event is part of Ministry of Foreign Affairs' ongoing efforts to highlight the positive impact of CPEC on Pakistan's economy and its importance for regional connectivity.

Islamabad, 20 July 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

O. USA

1. **Pakistan Foreign Office comment on US decision to waive licensing requirement for high technology weapons exports to India**

Responding to media queries about the recent US decision to waive individual licensing requirements for export of high technology weapons exports to India, the Spokesperson described it as a disturbing continuation of policies of discrimination and exceptionalism, further eroding the longstanding non-proliferation norms.

The Spokesperson underscored the serious implications on strategic stability arising from the cumulative effect of several civilian nuclear cooperation agreements between India and members of export control regimes, the latest of which is the recent licensing waivers.

Pakistan believes all States have the right to acquire and use advanced and dual use technologies for socio-economic development under appropriate safeguards and without discrimination.

Pakistan urges faithful adherence by all to the letter and spirit of relevant international treaties and export control regimes. Pakistan also calls on all States to carefully review their strategic export control policies that directly impinge on national security of Pakistan and undercut stated goals of preserving strategic stability in the region.

Disavowal of established legal and normative frameworks regulating strategic goods and technologies only undermines the global rules-based order.

Islamabad, 02 August 2018.

2. Foreign Office's comment on President Trump's Letter to Prime Minister Imran Khan

US President Donald Trump, in his letter addressed to Prime Minister Imran Khan, has stated that his most important regional priority was achieving a negotiated settlement of the Afghan war. In this regard, he has sought Pakistan's support and facilitation.

President Trump has also acknowledged that the war had cost both USA and Pakistan. He has emphasized that Pakistan and USA should explore opportunities to work together and renew partnership.

Since Pakistan has always advocated a political settlement to end war in Afghanistan, US decision is welcomed. Pakistan reiterates its commitment to play a facilitation role in good faith. Peace and stability in Afghanistan remains a shared responsibility.

Islamabad, 3 December 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

II: Political Development

Text of Imran Khan's Maiden Speech

"First of all, I want to thank all my workers who started with me in this movement and jihad 22 years ago. There are two types of politics one in which one would do his pursue his career, and the second, my role model, Qa'eda-e-Azam, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who conducted politics for a mission, that our prophet Hazrat Muhammad brought revolution in the world's history by creating state of Madinah. I never thought of this politics as a career and profession. 22 years ago I joined politics with the mission to make my country, that way made as an Islamic welfare state envisioned by Allama Muhammad Iqbal which have been showcased in the comity of nations that what is real Islam. I am remembering those colleagues, especially those two who started with me, Ahsan Rasheed, and Saloni Bukhari, they joined me in this mission at the beginning

and are no more in this world. I pay tributes to the workers, who walked with me even during difficult times, who were teased, people used to argue with them that which tonga party they are associated with. Thanks to all these workers. Without all these people I could not reach here today. First of all, I put it in front of my people that where we stand today and what challenges we are facing as a nation. I will also give solution of these challenges. In the history of Pakistan economic conditions were not as bad as are today. Presently, Pakistan is burdened with a loan of Rs 28000 billion, while 10 years ago, the loan of Pakistan was Rs. 6 thousand billion, that our debt in the 60 years history. Rs. 6 thousand billion increased up to Rs 15,000 billion in 2013. And today this loan has reached Rs 28,000 billion. Debt of 60 years of domestic history is on one side and the last 10 years loan is on the other. InshaAllah, we will bring facts before you where that money has gone. What have been done with that money? Secondly, today we are borrowing money to pay the interest on those loans. In the last year of the previous PPP government foreign debt was \$ 2 billion, in the past one year, we are borrowing \$ 2 billion each month and when the Pakistan People's Party government ended in 2013 our foreign debt went to 60 billion, which is \$ 95 billion today and that is the real problem of our country that our overseas debt has increased so much and the main reason for the highest pressure on rupees is that our Foreign loans grew so fast and we have reached today that we are facing difficulty to return back those loans. I will also come up with the solution as to how to resolve this issue. No need to be afraid of this situation. The second thing I want to tell you is that there are so many loans on us and second I want to tell you that on the other hand there exists a society around us that spends on humans and now I want tell you what is the condition of human beings here and this is not (just being said by) Imran Khan, but it is a report of "UNDP". According to this report Pakistan is among those 5 countries in which most of our children die before the age of 5 due to diseases caused by contaminated water. Pakistan is also included in top 5 countries of the world where rate of female mortality is very high unfortunately, we are among the top 5 countries in the world where children die because of mal nutrition resulted in stunted growth. I have been telling people till today, but people have not understood. Today I show you a picture that shows a 2-year-old child on one side who is getting nourishing food, and has normal mental health and on the other hand, a child of 2 years has been shown with insufficient diet. His brain has not been growing completely. We are talking about 45 percent of Pakistan's children, that is, almost every other Pakistani child, suffers from this disease. I am worried because we are not able to give them food completely and they are not getting nutrition too, and thus they have left behind in the race of life. They can not compete. They can not move forward in the 21st century. What were feelings of parents of those children I am telling you just to make you realize that where are we standing in this regard and how we will change our way Insha Allah. The Prime Minister stated that there are two paths in front of us, one which we have been following and reached here, nation in debt, which has no money to spend on its children, to raise the standard of living of its people, to

help its farmers, which cannot provide clean drinking water to its citizens even children. We cannot give jobs, debts are on the rise, on the other hand is the path of which I will tell you how to reach. Another shameful thing for us is that on the one hand are these conditions and on the other, is the life style of those in power. Pakistan's Prime Minister has 524 workers, 80 cars, of which 33 are bullet proof. The price of each is more than Rs.5 crore; helicopters, aeroplanes; the Prime Minister House is spread over 1100 canals, we have Governor Houses, Rest Houses, Chief Ministers' Houses they have cars, Secretaries 100 have 2/3 cars. Our D.Cs, Commissioners reside in large residences. On one hand is the nation in debt which cannot spend on its citizens and on the other hand are those in power who live as the Britishers lived during their rule. They, like our rulers, built huge Governor Houses. We were (their) slaves then, but now that we are free we continue to live in the same manner. We are not worried that we cannot meet the basic needs of our people, look at our life style. Just consider that the Prime Minister spent 65 crores on his foreign tours. Why do they go abroad? Where does this money go? The budget of Speaker National Assembly was 16 crores; what do they do? are they going to conquer some country. Today I am presenting all these things in front of you, because I want you to realize that if we continue thus, we are heading towards disaster. Allah also says in the Quran that he does not change the condition of a nation if it does not make an effort itself – We will have to change our thinking. we will have to invoke kindness in our hearts as half our population cannot even get 2 times meals. We cannot feed 45% of Pakistan's children. If we do not change our way of thinking what will become of our 2.5 billion out of school children. If our population continues to increase and we cannot educate our children then obviously they will not be able to get livelihood, if conditions remain so, who will solve the water issue. We are faced with another problem that is environmental change. Pakistan is 7th among countries affected by this phenomenon. I will again ask you to change. There is only one role model who we all Muslims follow and Allah in the Quran too asks us to learn from his life. Prophet Mohammad united the pagan Arabs Tribes who used to fight with each other – They had 2 super powers on either side – Romans and Persians. This great leader brought together these warring tribes and within the span of few years transformed them into a great nation. What were those elements? I would like to share with you which ever nation follows those principles rises. These are the principles adopted by the West – rule of law, protects weak against the powerful – A civilization that adopts these principles rises (among nations). The Prophet said that he would punish even his daughter, if she broke the law. Hazrat Ali lost a case to a Jewish citizen, in the Court. This shows that all are equal in the eyes of law and minorities have equal rights. The Prime Minister mentioned Zakat – money paid according to position. The concept of progressive taxation is present even in the West – Norway, Sweden, Denmark. Provision of education to poor, justice are principles which were present in the State of Madina. Hazrat Umar one said that he would be responsible even if a dog went to sleep hungry. A leader should be Sadiq and Ameen. This is in America and Britian – The American President was

ousted for lying. In Madina, all Khulfa were honest and trustful. They presented themselves for accountability. Once Hazrat Umar was asked about his clothes, which means that even rulers were accountable to public. When Hazrat Abu Bakr become Khalifa, he closed down his clothes' shop as he realized that his being in that position will be disadvantageous for his counterparts. Such laws are present in the West but have we can compare what those who come to power had and what they have. These people come only to make money. But this is not so in the West. Those democracies which have progressed do not allow such practices i.e to mint money when in power. This was the law in practice in the State of Madina, 1400 years ago. After war of Badr, the Prophet gave emphasis on education. When he said that every slave who would educate 10 slaves would be set free. Telling the world that without education nations cannot progress. But look at us, our 2.5 billion children are out of school. The West is spending a lot on education, the principles which were made 1400 years ago in Madina are in practice in the West but not by us. We are not following any of the principles for which this country was made. It was not established for the reason that Hindus were moneyed or now Muslims have a lot, but it was the vision of Allama Iqbal who I consider to be the greatest Muslim in 500 years, we will put into practice the principles on which the Prophet built his State. Let me show you what we will do now. I was told that I cannot become Captain or a bowler, hospital cannot be made, and University cannot be established in private sector in rural area, there cannot be a third party in the two-party system. I have been hearing this throughout my life, but I have learnt to fight such challenges. You all will be my team; I will fight against these things, I will not live in PM house but in these two the 3 bedroom Military Secretary's House. Will use 2 servants and 2 vehicles two on account of security considerations. I had wanted to stay in my own house to cut government expenses but am going to reside here as there are threats to my life according to security agencies We will auction the vehicles. Businessmen will be invited to purchase these expensive vehicles. The money will be deposited in the national treasury. I plan to introduce simplicity in all Governor and Chief Minister Houses. We will reduce expenditure and inform public accordingly. No Governor will stay in Governor Houses. A Committee of has been formed to decide their fate. I intend to convert Prime Minister House into a Research University where reputable scholars will be called. A Task Force under guidance of Dr. Ishrat Hussain which will ensure austerity in every department. I want to state that we have this habit of asking foreign countries for loans, wish any qualms. Our leaders ask for money from one or the other, IMF – No country can proper in this way. Loans are for a short time. Germany and Japan after world war took loan for a particular time and eventually were able to stand on their own feet. We have to stand on our own feet. Things cannot continue like this anymore, besides others are not willing to provide loans. I asked for money for Shaukat Khannum from my countrymen. It will be shameful for me and you if I ask some other country for money. A nation which has self-respected is respected by others. Pakistanis are after made to one while other nationals easily pass (through immigration at airports). It is

unfortunate. It is our own fault not others. He said it was unfortunate that only 800,000 people of 200 million pay taxes and resolved to revive the public trust in the Federal Board of Revenue to ensure spending of people's tax money on their own. The Prime Minister advised the people to pay taxes religiously as tax evaders did nothing but to hurt the country and burden the poor. He announced to constitute a high-powered task force to ensure the repatriation of money stashed abroad through money laundering or other illegal means. He quoted a US State Department's report saying the black money worth Rs 1,000 billion was transferred abroad annually from Pakistan. He urged the masses not to elect a leader running businesses abroad and questioned as to how a person could be loyal to Pakistan and his people while having his own interests in other countries. PM announced that his government would take all-out measures to uplift national industry to boost exports, besides facilitating the SME sector and investors through one-widow operations. He said he would direct the embassies to find out Pakistani expatriates languishing in jails abroad and reasons behind their imprisonment so that they could be helped out. He urged the overseas Pakistanis to invest their money in Pakistan or deposit in US dollar accounts as the country direly needed the same to address the imbalance of payment. He also urged them to send their remittances through banks to help the country in the trying time. To cleanse the country of corruption, he said the National Accountability Bureau would be strengthened by extending all-out assistance and funding. Moreover, the government would also introduce whistleblowers act across the country as it had done in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to award the informers of any embezzlement of public money. The prime minister said he would keep the portfolio of Interior ministry with him to deal with the issues of money laundering and those related to the Federal Investigation Agency. He said following the crackdown by the government, those involved in corrupt practices would make hue and cry, and propaganda of imperiling the democracy. "But you should stand by me. Either the country will survive or the corrupt people," he resolved. Imran said in order to reform the judicial system and ensure speedy disposal of civil cases within a year, the government would amend the law and requested the Chief Justice of Pakistan to hear the cases involving widows on priority. He said the government would also send lawyers' teams to prisons to know about the ordeals of poor prisoners as in some cases the poor people languished in jails just for not affording to hire counsel. The prime minister said his government was keen and committed to bring about police reforms in other provinces with the help of respective provincial governments just like the PTI-led government had introduced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said the PTI registered triumph in the general election in KP due to the reason that its government had made the police force to function on professional lines. He credited former inspector general of police Nasir Durrani for making the reforms feasible in the province. He said Durrani had agreed to accept an advisory role for bringing about the much needed reforms in the Punjab police. The federal government would also work with the Sindh government in that regard. He stated with regret about the rise in the child-abuse cases and referred to the

heinous incident in Kasur. He dropped a hint that his government would take strict action over such cases while the Ministry of Human Rights would focus on it. About reforms in the education sector, Imran Khan said efforts would be made to improve the education standards in the government schools where the situation was not satisfactory. He said he knew how salaried people managed to send their children to private institutions to get quality education with their meager resources and by doing dual jobs. Prime Minister Imran stressed that they would have to raise standard of education in the government schools and deal with the issue of 22.5 million children out of school. The proposal for running the dual shifts in the government schools was also under consideration, he added. He said the children studying in Madaris should also get the quality education and should be afforded opportunities to excel in different fields of life. About his other priority, he said a task force would be formed to improve the conditions in government-run hospitals. He acknowledged that in the government hospitals, bringing about swift reforms was a difficult task, however, the government was determined to take drastic steps in other provinces as it had taken in the KP. All the countrymen would be given the facility of Sehat Insaf Card in the shape of free medical services of up to Rs 500,000 at government and private health institutions like the one already introduced in the KP. He noted that the country was facing the water scarcity issues, which were impacting the rural areas and the agriculture sector. He underscored the importance of imparting proper and adequate knowledge to farmers about the use of the latest agriculture technologies, so that their crop yield could be increased without burdening them financially. He also highlighted the importance of agri-research, besides proper water rationalizing by the famers' community. The prime minister maintained that the construction of Bhasha Dam was must to face the emerging water related problems. He also lauded the Chief Justice of Pakistan for taking the initiative in that regard. The government, he said, would support all efforts to collect funds for the construction of dam with the help of expatriates. Regarding the role of civil servants in running the government affairs and accomplishment of its policies, the prime minister hinted that he would re-introduce the merit policy. He regretted that the political interferences and lack of merit policy had impinged upon the functioning of the civil service, which was once regarded as the backbone of the country. The civil service required reformation, he said and assured that there would be no interference from the PTI government. The honest and dedicated people would be accorded due respect and protection no matter whatsoever they had the political affiliations, he added. The prime minister reiterated that ordinary man should be treated equally in the society and given the due rights. He referred to Right to Public Service Act of KP, where bonuses were announced for the departments who delivered on time whereas the others, who failed to achieve the targets, were penalized. Imran said the local government system introduced in the KP had transferred powers to the grassroots level and the same would now be strengthened across the country. He said plans were afoot in which the district *nazims* would be elected directly, so that there should be checks and

balances. Giving an example of the Punjab province, he said in the past, all resources were accumulated in office of chief minister, and the MNAs and MPAs were given the development funds. The prime minister also unveiled his plans to construct five million low cost housing units which would create immense job opportunities for the youth as at least 50 industries would be directly benefitted from such investment. He said energies would be devoted on skill development of the youth, besides, provision of interest free loans so that they could set up their personal businesses. About the role of games in the lives of youth, the prime minister said sports facilities with proper playgrounds would be constructed for the youth across the country. For the families' recreation, parks with all facilities would be provided. The prime minister also noted with concern the issue of global warming which was affecting the country. The government would kick-start a massive tree plantation campaign all over the country to turn Pakistan green, and in that campaign, the youth would be involved. He also enumerated the environmental challenges posed by air and water pollution. He mentioned Karachi and Lahore which were affected with air pollution, besides facing the recurring issue of garbage dunes. He said campaigns would be launched to clean sea and environment which was one of his major targets. The prime minister expressed the confidence that after five years, there would be a different Pakistan. He said Pakistan was bestowed with huge tourism potential as he was one among few Pakistanis who had toured the country thoroughly. He announced that every year, four new tourist resorts would be opened to promote tourism industry. He especially mentioned the tourism potential of sea beaches and said Karachi and Gwadar beaches would be developed. The prime minister said the government would fast track the merger of tribal areas with the KP to improve the living conditions in those areas which were hard hit by the militancy and terrorism in the past. He said the local government elections would be arranged in those areas though it was not an easy task but there was no other way. He also emphasized to develop the Balochistan province by bringing back all the estranged elements in the mainstream of life. About the South Punjab province, he said it should be created. He also linked the country's progress with the economic activities in Karachi and said for maintaining law and order there, the police reforms would be introduced with the support of the provincial government. The prime minister said the 20-point National Action Plan as agreed upon by all the political parties would be fully implemented. There would be no national progress without peace and tranquility, he added. The prime minister maintained they would strive to improve relations with all the neighbouring countries. He said it was his vision to make Pakistan 'a real welfare state' with full attention paid to pathetic conditions of street children, widows and the handicapped. Imran Khan said they had to differentiate between the human society and the life led by animals. It was the human compassion, pity and sympathy which made it distinct from the animal world, he added. The prime minister laid stress upon emulating the principles as laid down by Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) in the creation of Madina state. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) paid full attention to lift the

conditions of his people, he added. The prime minister resolved to lead a simple life marked with austerity and to fully safeguard the public money. He said he would not do any business while in office and called upon the people to identify and discourage those who stole away the public money. He said the elements, who stashed away the public money, were also his enemies though he had no personal grudge against them. It was their collective responsibility to halt such elements, he said and referred to efficacy of the social media in that regard. The prime minister said they had to save the country by giving it a top priority. He said it was his vision that one day would dawn upon the country when there would be no person to avail the Zakat money and it would be in a position to lend financial support to other deserving countries. The prime minister at the outset thanked all the workers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), who had stood with him during the last 22 years of his political struggle. He also paid rich tribute to late PTI workers Ahsan Rasheed and Saloni Bukhari, who, he said, stood with him in the struggle even at a time when some people used to ridicule and call the PTI a “Tanga” party. Imran Khan said his struggle was not aimed at achieving a political career but was a mission as the Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was his role model. His 22-year struggle was aimed at turning Pakistan into a state like Madina created by Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). The Holy Prophet (PBUH) brought a revolution and led the world. He said the country at present was facing multiple challenges, particularly economic problems. Pakistan today owed a huge debt of Rs 28,000 billion as against Rs 6,000 billion ten years back. The he country’s debt reached from Rs 6,000 billion in 2008 to Rs 13,000 billion and Rs 28,000 billion, respectively, in 2013 and 2018. He vowed to tell the nation why this huge amount of loans was taken during the last ten years and how it was spent. “Today, we are in a situation, when we have to borrow even for debt-servicing.” The prime minister said the PPP during its first year of government took loans worth \$ 2 billion. Now the country required \$ 2 billion a month for debt-servicing as the foreign debt had reached to US \$ 95 billion in 2018 from US \$ 60 billion in 2013, causing depreciation of rupee against dollar. Imran Khan said at one hand there was huge debt and on the other, there was a poor Human Development Index (HDI). He said according to a UNDP report, Pakistan was among the five countries with the highest rate of infant mortality due to contaminated water intake; women mortality during pregnancy and delivery, stunted growth of children due to malnutrition. The prime minister said with 45% stunted growth every second child in two years of age in Pakistan was facing malnutrition. With a country owing heavy debt, he made a comparison of two classes of society including the ones who did not have resources to spend on their children and were deprived of basic facilities, and the second ones were the ruling elite who were leading luxury lives. Imran Khan said that there were 524 persons to serve the prime minister at the 1100-Kanal PM House, coupled with 80 cars, including 33 bulletproof ones having price of Rs 50 million each, besides helicopters and an aeroplane. He also mentioned the huge and luxurious state buildings like governor houses, CM houses, rest houses, residences of secretaries,

commissioners, DCs etc. "At one hand the nation was burdened with debt and on the other, we have the elite. This system was created by the British during the colonial era to rule the masses, but even after independence the same practice was being followed," Imran Khan remarked. He said the former Prime Minister (Nawaz Sharif) spent Rs 650 million on foreign trips and the Speaker National Assembly out of Rs 160 million budget spent Rs 80 million on foreign visits. "If we did not mend our ways, then we will be heading towards a disaster. We have to be compassionate, as there are people (in our country) who struggle hard for two meals a day; and 45% children are facing malnutrition," he said and added, "We will have to review our thinking." The prime minister said with 22.5 million out-of-school children, water scarcity and global warming issues, the country required serious efforts to tackle the challenges. Imran Khan said Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) was a role model as he, at a time when there were two super powers of Roman and Persian empires, succeeded in uniting those Arabs who used to live in tribes and often fought with one another and turned them into a great nation in a few years. He said the principles of a welfare state introduced by Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) were being followed and implemented by the West. He said the rule of law was the first principle without which no nation could move forward, adding, "Our Holy Prophet had declared that even if her daughter broke the law she would be punished." Similarly, Hazrat Umar (RA) and Hazrat Ali (RA) presented themselves for accountability, he added. The prime minister said the system of Zakat (in Islam) was a progressive taxation. The Scandinavian countries, including Norway, Sweden and Denmark, were following a system in which the richer paid more and that money was used for the welfare of the poor and the provision of basic facilities for the masses.

Source: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/357736-complete-text-of-imran-khans- maiden-speech>

III: Judiciary

Excerpts from Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar's Judgement on Asia Bib's Appeal against the Judgement of Lahore High Court dated 16-10-2014

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PAKISTAN
(APPELLATE JURISDICTION)

PRESENT: MR. JUSTICE MIAN SAQIB NISAR, HCJ
MR. JUSTICE ASIF SAEED KHAN KHOSA
MR. JUSTICE MAZHAR ALAM KHAN MIANKHEL

CRIMINAL APPEAL NO.39-L OF 2015

(Against the judgment dated 16.10.2014 of the Lahore High Court, Lahore passed in Crl.A.No.2509/2010 and M.R.No.614/2010)

Mst. Asia Bibi

...Appellant(s)

VERSUS

The State etc.

...Respondent(s)

For the appellant(s):

Mr. Saif-ul-Malook, ASC

For the State:

Mr. Zubair Ahmed Farooq, Addl.P.G.

For the complainant:

Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Chaudhry, ASC

Date of hearing:

8.10.2018

JUDGMENT

MIAN SAQIB NISAR, CJ. –

“I bear witness that there is no God worthy to be worshiped but Allah, the One alone, without partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his Servant and Messenger”

The Qalimah-e-Shahadat as shown above, is deemed to be the essence of Islam and the recitation of which makes us Muslims, is self explanatory and testifies that there is no God but Allah and our Prophet Muhammad _____ is the Last Messenger of Allah. It is our declaration of faith in the unseen and belief, to bow down our heads before our Lord Allah, admitting the fact that there is none like Him.

2. The sanctity of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is further evident from the Qalimah-e-Shahadat, as His name is being read together with Allah, thus ultimate care and great importance should be drawn while taking this Holy name. Tolerance is the basic principle of Islam. It is a religious and a moral duty and further relates to the dignity of human beings, the equality amongst all creations of Allah and also to the fundamental freedom of thought, conscience and belief. It does not mean compromise, lack of principles or lack of seriousness about one's principles rather it means accepting the fact that human beings, naturally distinct in their appearance, situation, speech, behavior, and values, have the right to live in peace and to be as they are. Islam may tolerate anything but it teaches zero tolerance for injustice, oppression, and violation of the rights of other human beings the Quran speaks about, from the very beginning. Freedom of religion has been guaranteed by Islam. It prohibits coercion in matters of faith and belief.

“There should be no compulsion in religion. Surely, the right way has become distinct from error.” [Al-Baqara (2:256)]

* * * * *

8. These Verses clearly prescribe the severe punishment of death for the opponents of Allah and his Prophet ﷺ, who include contemnners of the Prophet ﷺ. Thus, no one by words - either spoken or written - directly or indirectly, is allowed to disobey, disregard and rebel against the Holy name of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and if found guilty of disrespecting the name they are liable to be punished. History has remained a witness itself to the incidents pertaining to any attempts of defiance made in the name of our Beloved Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Muslim communities that exist around the globe have always acted against any such act of contempt and have openly reacted to such, followed by serious repercussions. That is why anything which in any way attacks any aspect of his sacred life, infuriates Muslims to an intolerable limit, resulting in extremely serious law and order situation, with grievous, disastrous consequences. That is why Section 295-C had to be enacted to bring such contemnners before the Court of Law.

* * * * *

14. At this juncture, it is to be noted that Islam as stipulated in Holy Book “Quran” teaches us, amongst many other virtues, to live in peace and harmony, with compassion and love to our other fellow human beings. It is the masterpiece of guidance and knowledge bestowed upon us by the Allah Almighty, which cannot be modified in any way whatsoever, thus being the final book. The commandments of Allah are entrenched in the Quran which provides for a complete way of life and teaches us the concept of tolerance. It is however to be kept in mind that unless proven guilty, through a fair trial, as provided for in the Constitution and the law, every person is considered innocent, irrespective of their creed, caste and colour. The Holy Quran has mentioned in clear terms that:-

“..... he who slays a soul unless it be (in punishment) for murder or for spreading mischief on earth shall be as if he had slain all mankind; and he who saves a life shall be as if he had given life to all mankind.”. [Al-Ma'idah (5:32)]

Moreover, it is also pertinent to mention that awarding a sentence is the duty of the State and no one else has the authority to take law into his hands and punish

anyone on his own. After allegations regarding contempt etc., a fair opportunity for offering defence before a competent court, has to be provided so that proper justice is done. This will eliminate the chances of false allegations prompted by ulterior motives, as has been done in several cases in the past.

* * * * *

16. In this backdrop, we shall now consider the facts of the instant case. This matter has genesis in a criminal case, which has emanated from FIR No.326 dated 19.06.2009 under Section 295-C P.P.C., registered at Police Station Sadar Nankana Sahib, by one Qari Muhammad Salaam (PW.1) stating therein that on 14.6.2009, the appellant Mst. Asia Bibi, belonging to Christian community of the village, along with other Muslim ladies, including Mafia Bibi (PW.2), Asma Bibi (PW.3) and Yasmin Bibi (given up PW), was plucking Falsa (Grewia/purple berry), in the field belonging to one Muhammad Idrees (CW.1) where the appellant uttered derogatory remarks against the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ. The said PWs narrated the matter to the complainant/Qari Muhammad Salaam, who on 19.6.2009, called the appellant in a public meeting and inquired about the occurrence, where the appellant confessed her guilt. Thereafter, Qari Muhammad Salaam lodged the complaint before police and consequently the FIR was registered.

17. Before proceeding further, it may be pertinent to signify that the alleged incident, being a heinous crime and involving religious sentiments, attracted the media, both electronic and print, and generated both grief and rage in the public at large.

18. On account of the investigation, the appellant was indicted in the matter; she was arrested and challaned by the police and charged by the learned Addl. Sessions Judge, Nankana Sahib with the offence under Section 295-C of PPC.

19. During the course of the trial the prosecution examined as many as seven witnesses, including Qari Muhammad Salaam/complainant (PW.1), two eye witnesses of the occurrence i.e. Mafia Bibi (PW.2) and Asma Bibi (PW.3), a witness of extra judicial confession Muhammad Afzal (PW.4) and three police witnesses (PW.5 to 7). Whereas, (PW's) Yasmin Bibi and Mukhtar Ahmad were given up and the prosecution evidence was closed. However, Muhammad Idrees, the owner of the fields was examined as Court witness (CW-1).

20. The appellant had her statement recorded under Section 342 Cr.P.C. wherein she categorically denied the allegations made against her. Further to that, it was also stated that her involvement in this case is being maliciously framed by the eye witnesses due to a quarrel arising out of the fetching of water which escalated the situation and led to the exchange of heated words between her and the said ladies. However, neither the appellant appeared as her own witness to

record statement on oath under Section 340 (2) Cr.P.C. nor did she opt to lead any defence evidence.

21. After the conclusion of the trial, the learned trial Court *vide* impugned judgment dated 08.11.2010, convicted the appellant under Section 295-C and sentenced her to death with a fine of Rs.100,000/- and in default whereof, to further undergo six months' SI. The Capital Sentence Reference No.614 of 2010 (*wrongly mentioned as Murder Reference*) was forwarded under Section 374 Cr.P.C. by the trial Court to the learned High Court for confirmation or otherwise of the sentence of death, whereas, the appellant challenged her conviction/sentence through Criminal Appeal No.2509 of 2010.

22. The learned High Court heard the appeal as well as the reference and *vide* the impugned judgment, dismissed the appeal of the appellant and answered the Reference in the affirmative, consequently the death sentence awarded to the appellant Mst. Asia Bibi was confirmed. Being aggrieved, the appellant has filed this appeal with the leave of the Court granted *vide* order dated 22.7.2015, inter alia, to consider and appreciate the evidence on the record.

* * * * *

24. It is the case of the appellant that on the fateful day an altercation took place between the appellant and both the eye witnesses, namely Mafia Bibi (PW.2) and Asma Bibi (PW.3) in the vicinity of the field owned by Muhammad Idrees (CW.1), over the fetching of water which was offered by the appellant. However, the offer was refused, and it was said that because she is a Christian they would never take water from her hand. Over this, a heated argument took place with the exchange of some bitter words between them and as a result of this disagreement, those ladies, in connivance with the complainant, Qari Muhammad Salaam, ignited the situation and wrongly implicated her (the appellant) in this case. Furthermore, the alleged extra-judicial confession was not voluntary but rather resulted out of coercion and undue pressure as the appellant was forcibly brought before the complainant in presence of a gathering, who were threatening to kill her; as such, it cannot be made the basis of a conviction. There is an inordinate delay of about five days in lodging of the FIR which casts a serious doubt and shadow about the probity of the witnesses, and in fact, after the deliberations, a false story was concocted by the witnesses and reported to the police. Even otherwise, the complaint submitted to the police was drafted by an Advocate. The appellant, in her statement recorded u/s 342 Cr.P.C, expressed her full respect to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Holy Quran and she offered to take an oath on the Bible to the Investigation Officer (IO) to prove her innocence which was refused by the IO. Therefore, the appellant being innocent deserves acquittal. Further, no prior permission of the Central/Provincial Government was obtained before the registration of the FIR.

* * * * *

28. The entirety of the prosecution case revolved around the statement of two ladies, namely, Mafia Bibi (PW.2) and Asma Bibi (PW.3) and the extra-judicial confession of appellant. The said (PW's) stated that the appellant, in the presence of other Muslim ladies, passed derogatory remarks against the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It is pertinent to mention here that admittedly, as is evident from the contents of the FIR and also the statements of the witnesses, there were 25-30 ladies present at the spot when the appellant allegedly passed blasphemous remarks against the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, however, none of the other ladies except Mafia Bibi (PW.2) and Asma Bibi (PW.3) reported the matter to anyone. At this stage, it is to be noted that the said ladies did not appear before the Court to support the prosecution case. One of the other ladies, i.e. Yasmin Bibi (given up PW), though was initially included in the list of witnesses, yet was not produced in the witness box and was given up. This creates doubt regarding the prosecution story, however, a thorough analysis of the statements of all the essential witnesses is required in order to reach towards a just and proper conclusion, which shall be made at the later stage. Whereas, as is apparent from the statement of the appellant recorded under Section 342 Cr.P.C., she negated the allegations in the following terms: -

"I am a married woman having two daughters. My husband is a poor labourer. I used to pluck Falsa from the fields of Muhammad Idrees along with a number of other ladies on the basis of daily wages. On the alleged day of occurrence, I along with number of ladies were working in the fields. Both the ladies Mst. Mafia Bibi and Mst. Asma Bibi PWs quarreled with me over fetching water which was offered by me to bring for them, but they refused saying that since I am Christian, they will never take water from my hand. Over this the quarrel ensued and some hot words were exchanged between me and the PWs ladies. The PWs then approached Qari Saalam complainant through his wife who remained teaching the both ladies, hence, the PWs were conspiring with Qari Saalam got a false, fabricated and fictitious case against me. I offered my oath to police on Bible that I had never passed such derogatory and shameful remarks against the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Holy Quran. I have great respect and honour to the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as well as Holy Quran and since police had conspired with the complainant, so, the police have falsely booked me in this case. The PWs are real sisters and interested to unfaithfully involve me in this case as they both felt disgrace and dishonour on the basis of altercation and hard words extended to them. Qari Saalam, the complainant is also an interested person and both the ladies remained teaching Holy Quran from his wife. My forefathers are living in this village since the creation of Pakistan. I am also about 40 years old and

since the alleged occurrence, no complaint of such nature has ever accrued. I am a Christian and I live in the village, so, being ignorant of any Islamic thought, how can I use such clumsy and derogatory remarks against the beloved Prophet (PBUH) of Allah and the Divine book viz. Holy Quran. (PW) Idrees is also an interested witness who has close family links with their above said ladies.”

* * * * *

48. It is a well settled principle of law that one who makes an assertion has to prove it. Thus, the onus rests on the prosecution to prove guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt throughout the trial. Presumption of innocence remains throughout the case until such time the prosecution on the evidence satisfies the Court beyond reasonable doubt that the accused is guilty of the offence alleged against him. There cannot be a fair trial, which is itself the primary purpose of criminal jurisprudence, if the judges have not been able to clearly elucidate the rudimentary concept of standard of proof that prosecution must meet in order to obtain a conviction. Two concepts i.e., “proof beyond reasonable doubt” and “presumption of innocence” are so closely linked together that the same must be presented as one unit. If the presumption of innocence is a golden thread to criminal jurisprudence, then proof beyond reasonable doubt is silver, and these two threads are forever intertwined in the fabric of criminal justice system. As such, the expression “proof beyond reasonable doubt” is of fundamental importance to the criminal justice: it is one of the principles which seeks to ensure that no innocent person is convicted. Where there is any doubt in the prosecution story, benefit should be given to the accused, which is quite consistent with the safe administration of criminal justice. Further, suspicion howsoever grave or strong can never be a proper substitute for the standard of proof required in a criminal case, i.e. beyond reasonable doubt. In the presence of enmity between the accused and the complainant/witnesses, usually a strict standard of proof is applied for determining the innocence or guilt of the accused. If the PWs are found inimical towards the accused, she deserves acquittal on the principle of the benefit of the doubt. Keeping in mind the evidence produced by the prosecution against the alleged blasphemy committed by the appellant, the prosecution has categorically failed to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt. Reliance in this behalf may be made to the cases reported as Muhammad Ashraf Vs. The State (2016 SCMR 1617), Muhammad Jamshaid Vs. The State (2016 SCMR 1019), Muhammad Asghar alias Nannah Vs. The State (2010 SCMR 1706), Noor Muhammad alias Noora Vs. The State (1992 SCMR 2079) and Ayub Masih Vs. The State (PLD 2002 SC 1048).

49. I will end this Judgement on a Hadith of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

“Beware! Whoever is cruel and hard on a non-Muslim minority, or curtails their rights, or burdens them with more than they can bear, or takes anything from them against their free will; I (Prophet Muhammad) will complain against the person on the Day of Judgment.” (Abu Dawud)

50. For the foregoing reasons, this appeal is allowed. The judgments of the High Court as well as the Trial Court are reversed. Consequently, the conviction as also the sentence of death awarded to the appellant is set aside and she is acquitted of the charge. She be released from jail forthwith, if not required in any other criminal case.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I agree and have appended a
separate concurring opinion.

JUDGE

JUDGE

Announced in open Court
on **31.10.2018** at **Islamabad**
Approved for reporting
Waqas Naseer/*

Asif Saeed Khan Khosa, J.: I have had the privilege of perusing the proposed judgment authored by my lord the Hon'ble Chief Justice and I agree with the reasons recorded and the conclusions reached therein. However, because of some important legal and factual issues involved in the case I have decided to record this separate concurring opinion.

* * * * *

20. The glaring and stark contradictions in the evidence produced by the prosecution in respect of every factual aspect of this case, noticed by me above, lead to an irresistible and unfortunate impression that all those concerned in the case with providing evidence and conducting investigation had taken upon themselves not to speak the truth or at least not to divulge the whole truth. It is equally disturbing to note that the courts below had also, conveniently or otherwise, failed to advert to such contradictions and some downright falsehood. All concerned would have certainly done better if they had paid heed to what Almighty Allah has ordained in the Holy Qur'an:

“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is acquainted with what you do.”

(Surah Al-Ma'idah: verse 8)

“So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, acquainted.”

(Surah An-Nisa: verse 135)

* * * * *

In the backdrop of that statement of the appellant, suppression of the fact by the complainant party about the quarrel over drinking water and confirmation about such quarrel by the Court Witness and the senior investigating officer there are two possibilities which appeal to reason: firstly, the appellant had uttered the offending words after her own religion or religious sensibilities had been insulted and injured by the Muslim co-workers at the spot or, secondly, due to the quarrel taking place between the appellant and her Muslim co-workers at the spot without any offending word having been uttered by the appellant the quarrel was reported by the Muslim ladies to others who then, after deliberating over the matter for five long days, had decided to go after the appellant with a false allegation regarding commission of blasphemy. Both these possibilities require some examination.

23. The statements made by Muhammad Idrees (CW1) and Muhammad Amin Bukhari, SP (Investigation) (PW6) before the trial court revealed that the alleged blasphemy had been committed by the Christian appellant after her Muslim co-workers had insulted the appellant's religion and had injured her religious sensibilities only because she believed in and was a follower of Jesus Christ. According to the Holy Qur'an a Muslim's faith is not complete till he believes in all the Holy Prophets and Messengers of Almighty Allah including Jesus Christ (Isa son of Maryam) (Peace Be Upon Him) and all the revealed Holy Books of Almighty Allah including the Holy Bible. From that perspective insulting the appellant's religion by her Muslim co-workers was no less blasphemous. Almighty Allah, the Creator of mankind, knew how a human being whose religion and religious sensibilities are insulted is likely to snap and retort and that is why it was ordained in the Holy Qur'an that

“And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge. Thus We have made pleasing to every community their deeds. Then to their

Lord is their return, and He will inform them about what they used to do.”

(*Surah Al-An'am: verse 108*)

The Muslim co-workers of the appellant had violated the command of Almighty Allah by insulting the Deity believed in and the religion followed by the appellant and, even if the prosecution's allegations against the appellant were to be accepted as correct, the stated reaction to the same by the appellant was not different from that warned about by Almighty Allah.

24. In view of the glaring contradictions in the evidence produced by the prosecution it has appeared to me to be equally plausible that due to the quarrel taking place between the appellant and her Muslim coworkers at the spot without any offending word having been uttered by the appellant the quarrel was reported by the Muslim ladies to others who then, after deliberating over the matter for five long days, had decided to go after the appellant with a false allegation regarding commission of blasphemy. If that were so then the Muslim witnesses in this case had violated a covenant of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with those professing the Christian faith. In his book *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* (published by Angelico Press on 01.09.2013) John A. Morrow has referred to and reproduced many covenants entered into by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with people of the Christian faith and one of such covenants is called the Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with the Monks of Mount Sinai. It is reported that in or around the year 628 A.D. a delegation from St. Catherine's Monastery, the world's oldest monastery located at the foot of Mount Sinai in Egypt, came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), requested for his protection and he responded by granting them a charter of rights. That charter, also known as The Promise to St. Catherine, was translated from Arabic to English language by Dr. A. Zahoor and Dr. Z. Haq as follows:

"This is a message from Muhammad ibn Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, near and far, we are with them.

Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by God! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims' houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God's covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they are my allies and have my secure charter against all that they hate.

No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day (end of the world)."

The promise made was eternal and universal and was not limited to St. Catherine alone. The rights conferred by the charter are inalienable and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) had declared that Christians, all of them, were his allies and he equated ill treatment of Christians with violating God's covenant. It is noticeable that the charter imposed no conditions on Christians for enjoying its privileges and it was enough that they were Christians. They were not required to alter their beliefs, they did not have to make any payments and they did not have any obligations. The charter was of rights without any duties and it clearly protected the right to property, freedom of religion, freedom of work, and security of person.

25. It is unfortunate that while utilizing the sacred concept of *Namoose-Risalat* (honour and dignity of Prophethood) the above mentioned promise made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) to those professing the Christian faith had not been adhered to by his followers in the present case. It appears that after an altercation taking place in the field of *Falsa* a feast of falsehood had followed and the Muslim members of the complainant party led by Qari Muhammad Salaam complainant had paid little heed to the following command of Almighty Allah in the Holy Qur'an:

"O! ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor, for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do."

(*Surah Al-Nisa: verse 135*)

Even if there was some grain of truth in the allegations levelled in this case against the appellant still the glaring contradictions in the evidence of the prosecution highlighted above clearly show that the truth in this case had been mixed with a lot which was untrue. Even in this regard the Muslim witnesses belonging to the complainant party had ignored what had been ordained by Almighty Allah in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

“And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know [it].”

(Surah Al-Baqarah: verse 42)

Blasphemy is a serious offence but the insult of the appellant's religion and religious sensibilities by the complainant party and then mixing truth with falsehood in the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) was also not short of being blasphemous. It is ironical that in the Arabic language the appellant's name Asia means 'sinful' but in the circumstances of the present case she appears to be a person, in the words of Shakespeare's *King Leare*, “more sinned against than sinning”.

26. For what has been discussed above a conclusion is inescapable and irresistible that the prosecution had failed to prove its case against the appellant beyond reasonable doubt. This appeal is, therefore, allowed, the conviction and sentence of the appellant recorded and upheld by the courts below are set aside and she is acquitted of the charge by extending the benefit of doubt to her. She shall be released from the jail forthwith if not required to be detained in connection with any other case.

(Asif Saeed Khan Khosa)
Judge