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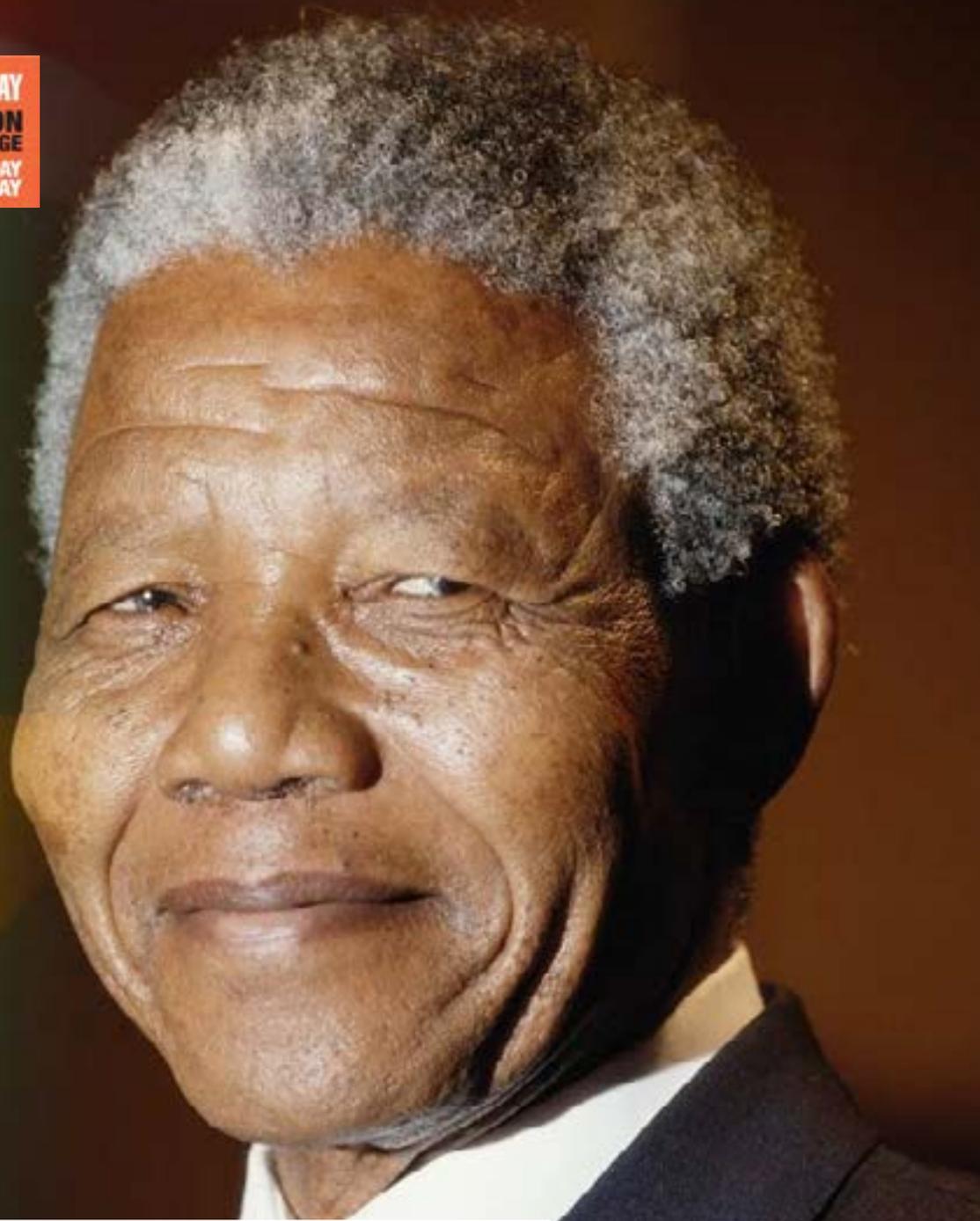
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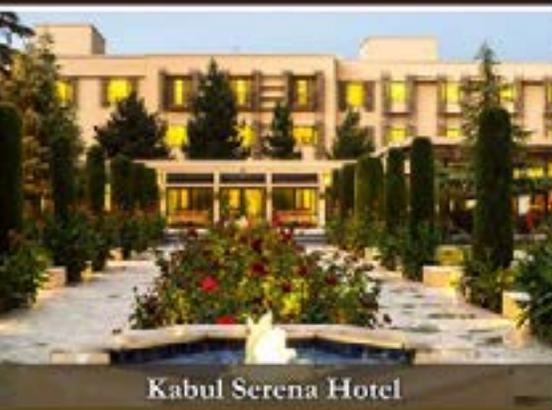
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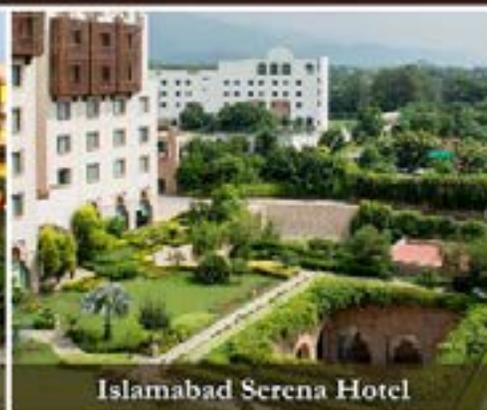
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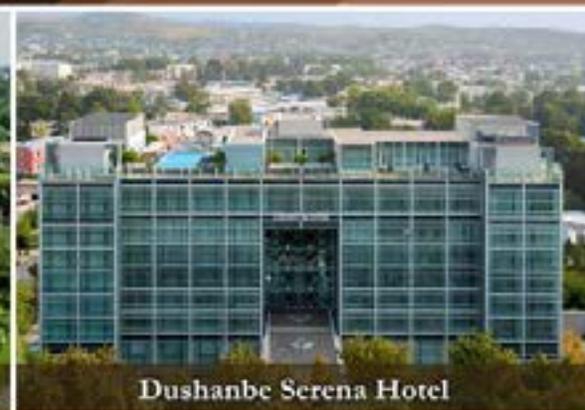
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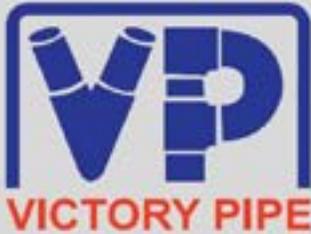
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Our previous Issues

June/July 2020



May 2020



April 2020



February 2020



Mian Fazal Elahi

Pakistan's relations with many African countries date back to their respective independence movements. Pakistan supported both morally and materially countries such as Algeria, Kenya, Sudan, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Tanzania, Namibia, Morocco, Libya, Egypt and Nigeria. Pakistan has resident missions in 13 African countries while others are covered through concurrent accreditation.

South Africa and Pakistan established full diplomatic relations in 1994. Both countries have joined other nations in pursuing a policy of peaceful co-existence and multilateral decision making and conflict resolution. South Africa on many occasions acknowledged Pakistan's contribution, both during its liberation struggle and since becoming a democracy. The two countries are enjoying cordial bilateral relations that offer an enormous potential for enhancing mutual annual trade volumes. Pakistan's trade with Africa has remained stagnant at \$3 billion/year from 2012-13 to 2016-17, but has increased to \$4.6 billion in 2018-19.

Nelson Mandela visited Pakistan in 1992 and 1999. Mandela had a deep respect for Pakistan in the context of the struggle for independence and a special affinity to Pakistan, as it is one of the few countries that Mandela visited twice. The Pakistani government presented Nishan-e-Pakistan, the country's highest civil award, to the former South African president.

The UN system celebrates International Mandela Day on 18 July to commemorate the great and iconic leader and his legacy. 'Mandela Day' is a global call-to-action for people to change the world. Today, South Africa is committed to developing partnerships around the world in the spirit of internationalism, Pan-Africanism, and South-South solidarity. It is also committed to promoting poverty alleviation around the world and resolving structural inequality within the international system of governance.

The articles, columns, Opinions are published in Magazine in good faith. However, the contents of these writings may not necessarily match the views of the Editor/Publisher/Organization.



Important Announcement

It has been announced for the general information that Mr. Mian Assad Ullah has been appointed as Editor In Chief of the Monthly "Diplomatic Focus" for the UK/EU Edition. He is entitled to participate official /non-officials diplomatic(engagements, events, national days, social evenings/gatherings, press conferences/interviews and can be contacted for all kinds of stuff including articles, supplements and advertisements etc). It is requested to all Diplomatic missions and government high officials of UK, please contact with Mr. Mian Assad Ullah on His mailing address, 4 Ipswich Road, SW17 9RH, London. Cell number:+44-7961005954/ 2087694850, Email: uk.diplomaticfocus@gmail.com, assadmian1@gmail.com

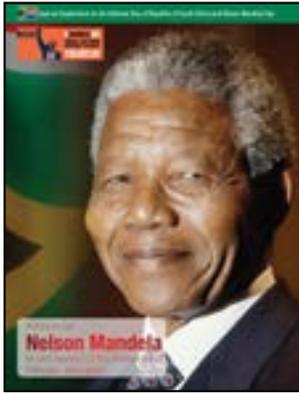
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26	Pakistan has a proud history of having been in the vanguard of freedom struggles in Africa opposing colonialism, apartheid and racism H.E. Mthuthuzeli Madikiza, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa	His Excellency Mthuthuzeli Madikiza – High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has been asked a few pertinent questions on different topics such as bilateral relations between the two countries, particularly relations post Covid-19. We have taken his opinion on...
38	Bilateral Trade PAKISTAN And SOUTH AFRICA	The total bilateral trade between South Africa and Pakistan has increased from \$186 million in 2003 to \$1.052 billion in 2019 – with steady increases almost for every year. This puts total bilateral trade with Pakistan in the top 14 of ALL the countries in Asia and the Middle East. Bilateral trade with Pakistan...
68	Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi Editor/Publisher/CEO of Diplomatic Focus hosted a welcome dinner reception in the honor of Ambassador of Italy	Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi Editor/Publisher/CEO of Diplomatic Focus hosted a welcome dinner reception in the honor of Ambassador of Italy H.E. Andreas Ferrarese and also celebrated National Day of Italy, National Day of Egypt and Nelson Mandela Day in Islamabad. Ambassador of Italy H.E. Andreas Ferrarese...



SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT ON on the National Day of Republic of South Africa and Nelson Mandela Day



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It is not our diversity which divides us; it is not our ethnicity, or religion or culture that divides us. Since we have achieved our freedom, there can only be one division amongst us: between those who cherish democracy and those who do not.

Nelson Mandela
(July 18, 1918 to December 5, 2013)



H.E. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa is the President of the Republic of South Africa; a position he was appointed to on 15 February 2018.

In December 2012, he was elected Deputy President of the African National Congress (ANC). H.E. Ramaphosa was Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa from 25 May 2014 until 15 February 2018. He was appointed Chairman of the National Planning Commission on 3 June 2014.

H.E. Ramaphosa holds a law degree from the University of South Africa obtained in 1981. He has also received several honorary doctorates from local and international universities. He received the Olof Palme Prize in Stockholm in 1987 and was included among the Time's 100 Most Influential People in the World in 2007 and in 2019.

In 2009, he was awarded the National Order of the Baobab in Silver by former President Jacob Zuma for his contribution to the multiparty negotiations and for chairing the Constitutional Assembly to draft the new Constitution



Address by

Nelson Mandela

to joint session of the Parliament of Pakistan, Islamabad



4 May 1999
Mr Prime Minister;

Honourable Members of the Senate and
the National Assembly of Pakistan

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour to have been invited
to address this distinguished assembly of
Parliamentarians and public leaders.

It is a privilege to stand before the
representatives of a people who have known
what it is to fight for independence and to
face hardship in pursuit of democratic ideals.

And we are grateful to have this opportunity,
as our first democratic government comes to
the end of its elected term, to thank those
who shared our struggle, and who helped
make our liberation less costly for our people.
I would like to put on record, on behalf of all
South Africans, our great appreciation to the





Government and people of Pakistan for their enduring and unfaltering support for the ideal of a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist South Africa.

Pakistan's proud history of solidarity with struggles in Africa against colonialism and apartheid makes your country a true partner in the rebirth of our continent.

Mr Prime Minister, Honourable members

Amongst the bonds between Pakistan and South Africa is that of a common Islamic heritage. That heritage is a vital thread in our history.

As we look back on five years of freedom, it would be right to pay tribute to Muslims who participated over generations in the struggle for justice in South Africa. Many made sacrifices so that all South Africans should be free, and we think in particular of those who died in detention: Babla Saloojee; Ahmed Timol; Imam Haroun; and Dr.Hussein Hafferjee.

It is a matter of great pride that our new constitution recognises all the religions of our country, including Islam. It accords them equal constitutional status. Unlike before, Muslim marriages are being recognised in law.

The things that our oppressors used to divide us are today a source of strength. They are becoming pillars of unity in diversity. Those same religious and cultural ties that nourished your solidarity in struggle, are today adding strength to our friendship as free nations .

That relationship has flourished since the defeat of apartheid in South Africa. The recent establishment of a Joint Commission to provide a framework for still closer bilateral co-operation in the future is a sign of our interest in and commitment to building all-round relations to benefit one another.

On the eve of our second democratic elections, the challenges for South Africa are clear. We must continue, with still greater speed, to change the lives of our people, especially the poorest of the poor, by eradicating what remains of apartheid and its legacy.

Indispensable to the achievement of that objective is growth that can be sustained within the current global economic environment and which can translate into the benefits of development for our people.

This challenge is one which we share with all developing countries, including Pakistan. Success will depend not only on our own efforts to uplift ourselves, but also on the achievement of a world order which better reflects and caters for the needs of the poor and developing nations.



Pakistan's close relations with African countries, and her influence in bodies such as the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth and the United Nations makes her an important partner in this quest for equity and development.

The benefits of our relationship would, we believe, be enhanced by closer co-operation between our regional organisations, the Southern African Development Community and the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation. Today as we reach out to our Indian Ocean neighbours to revive ancient relations of trade and interaction, for our mutual benefit, we also look forward to closer co-operation with Pakistan within that context.

Amongst other things there is an immense potential for mutually beneficial and profitable economic relations which our business people have barely touched.

Mr Prime Minister;

Already we can detail concrete benefits flowing from this relationship. Pakistan's sharing of her experience in the fields of human resource development and education with countries in Africa is true to the spirit of South-South co-operation. South Africa would like to thank the Government of Pakistan for the technical assistance it has provided to us.

We also would like to pay tribute to Pakistan for its humanitarian assistance to the African continent as exemplified in its peace-keeping contributions in Somalia, and Angola as well as assistance in de-mining in Angola. The importance of promoting peace can never be exaggerated. Peace remains the most powerful weapon for development, and

the absence of peace can undermine all the progress that is being made towards the regeneration of our continent.

In this regard, South Africa was encouraged by the latest round of dialogue between the Prime Ministers of Pakistan and India and we welcomed the conclusion of the Lahore Declaration. It is our earnest hope that the spirit which led to the signing of the Lahore Declaration will sustain progress towards peace and security in the South Asian subcontinent.

To democratic South Africa, which unilaterally dismantled the nuclear arsenal established by our apartheid predecessors, the nuclearisation of South Asia is of great concern. We would call on the countries on the subcontinent to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the region.

Mr Prime Minister; Honourable delegates;

With my retirement from public office only weeks away, this visit has for me personally an element of taking leave of those who supported us in our struggle for liberation for freedom.

But as South Africa prepares for a future under a new generation of leaders, we know that a solid foundation has been laid for an enduring relationship between our two peoples.

It has been forged in solidarity and strengthened in freedom. Long may it continue to promote prosperity and equity within our countries and amongst nations.

May Allah bless you.

I thank you.



Zindzi Mandela, daughter of Nelson Mandela, dies at 59

Zindzi Mandela, daughter of South African liberation hero Nelson Mandela and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, has died. She was 59. Ms. Mandela, known as Zindzi, had been South Africa's ambassador to Denmark since 2015.

President Cyril Ramaphosa expressed sadness at her passing days before Nelson Mandela's birthday and said she brought home "the unshakeable resolve of our fight for freedom".

"After our liberation she became an icon of the task we began of transforming our society and stepping into spaces and opportunities that had been denied to generations of South Africans," Ramaphosa's office quoted him as saying.

The Mandelas' daughter came to international prominence in 1985, when the white-minority government offered to release Nelson Mandela from prison if he denounced violence perpetrated by the African National Congress in its fight against apartheid, the brutal system of racial discrimination enforced in South Africa at that time. Zindzi Mandela

read his letter rejecting the offer at a packed public meeting that was broadcast around the world.

Educated in South Africa and Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), Zindzi Mandela spent many years involved in South Africa's freedom struggle, and embraced roles in the arts, philanthropy and business. She published a

volume of poetry, "Black as I Am" (1978), and graduated in 1985 from the University of Cape Town.

Her father was released from prison five years later and, in 1994, became the first president of a post-apartheid South Africa.

Zindzi Mandela is survived by her husband and four children.





Remarks by Chairperson of the African Union
President Cyril Ramaphosa
on the occasion of 25th May, Africa Day



Fellow Africans,

On this day 57 years ago, the Organisation of African Unity was born. From the beginning it was dedicated to the idea that only through unity could Africa safeguard its independence and unlock its potential.

Today we pay tribute to our forebears the founders of the OAU whose dream of greater African integration and unity has endured.

We also honour the legions of revolutionary leaders of Africa who took up the mantle of pan-Africanism and who fought for the economic and political integration of Africa.

They have left a formidable legacy for our continent and all its peoples. They continue to inspire us and the generations that will come after us.

It was the mission of the founders of the OAU to liberate the continent from the clutches of colonial oppression, to restore Africa's fortunes and to restore the dignity of every African man, woman and child.

We are reminded of the difficulties they had to overcome and the resistance they encountered from foreign powers that had much to gain from exploiting divisions on the continent.

Yet they taught us the power of perseverance and sacrifice, of dedication to an ideal, and that an Africa united can overcome even the greatest of challenges.

We mark this Africa Day in the shadow of the coronavirus pandemic, which has swept across the world and left no part of our continent untouched. Thus far almost 96 000 people have been infected with almost 3 000 having lost their lives.

This COVID 19 pandemic will have a lasting impact on our ability to meet the aspiration of the African Union's Agenda 2063 of a peaceful, united and prosperous continent.

The virus has exposed the deep inequalities that continue to exist on our continent and across the world.

It has shown how far we are from realising our developmental goals and our responsibilities to the citizens of our continent.

But at the same time, this global crisis should enable a new Africa to come to the fore.

It should be an Africa of heroic acts of solidarity, an Africa of cross-border collaboration and sharing of knowledge and resources, an Africa that is united by a common goal.

The challenge of this pandemic has shown how Africa is able to work together to solve its own problems.

Day by day, across our continent, we are seeing the unity that is our strength being put to the service of saving lives and supporting the vulnerable.

We salute the latter-day standard-bearers of pan-African unity: the health care workers and medical personnel, the scientists and epidemiologists. We salute the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention for leading our continent's response to the pandemic. We also pay tribute to the community workers and NGOs, and the leaders of government and business who have lent their full support to Africa's coronavirus response.

The African Union and its various organs has shown leadership and acted with speed to address this crisis.

We thank our brother, Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, for demonstrating strong and foresightful leadership to the world during this crisis.

We thank all the patriots on our continent and our friends in the international community for showing solidarity this difficult time.

We know that no country can overcome this challenge alone.

We call on developed countries, multilateral institutions and the donor community to provide vulnerable countries across the world especially in our continent with the necessary support in the form diagnostic and therapeutic medical supplies as well as necessary financial support to sustain the livelihoods of vulnerable people.

We repeat our call for a comprehensive, robust economic stimulus package for Africa that includes debt relief and other support measures for the continent's immediate humanitarian needs and necessary economic recovery. As we deal with the impact of this pandemic repeat our call for the unconditional lifting of sanctions that have been imposed on Zimbabwe and Sudan.

As Africans we have taken firm charge of managing this pandemic.

We have a comprehensive strategy formulated by the African Union, and have appointed Special Envoys to mobilise the financial and other resources necessary for its implementation.

COVID-19 knows no borders, nationality or skin colour.

To address the escalating humanitarian crisis we need to deepen our solidarity.

We must ensure the pandemic does not reverse our developmental gains. We must

forge ahead with meeting the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

We must move ahead with the most ambitious step towards pan-African integration to date, the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, and ensure that it is operational soon.

We must not let up on our efforts to drive the African agenda of security, peace and stability, of democracy and human rights, of women's emancipation and the protection of the environment.

We must not under any circumstances allow this global health emergency to derail our efforts to Silence the Guns on the continent.

The tragic conflicts that are breeding instability in a number of countries on our continent are exacting a heavy toll on human life and must end.

We must continue to affirm the supremacy of dialogue over military intervention.

As Africans we will continue to stand on the side of justice and support the people of the

Western Sahara in their enduring struggle for freedom and self-determination.

We also call for the end of the oppression of the Palestinian people and the occupation of their homeland.

Fellow Africans

Africa has known much turmoil and hardship throughout history.

We have endured the worst excesses of humankind, from slavery to colonialism, to apartheid, and to prolonged military conflict.

But just as our ancestors were able to overcome the horrors of their time, so too will our faith, courage and resilience as Africans see us through this time of difficulty.

And so, in the words of Africa's first Nobel Peace Laureate Chief Albert Luthuli, let us cast our eyes beyond the past.

Let us fix our eyes firmly to the future that burns bright on the horizon. If we remain united, we will overcome this pandemic.

We will recover and restore our economies.

We will uplift the conditions of our people and we will be worthy inheritors of the legacy of the great Africans who met in Addis Ababa in 1963 to form the OAU.

If we draw from the deepest depths of African unity and solidarity we shall prevail. May God Bless Africa and protect her people.

I thank you.



Remarks by the President of the Republic of South Africa and African Union Chair

H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa

during the 73rd Session of the World Health Assembly, 18 May 2020

President of the 73rd World Health Assembly, Her Excellency Ms Keva Bain, Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my privilege to address the World Health Assembly. We are in the midst of the most serious public health emergency our world has experienced in over a hundred years. Containing the coronavirus pandemic has dwarfed all other issues facing the

international community and individual countries. The pandemic has profound social, political, economic and security implications for us all. It is impacting on human health, our societies and our systems of governance. Although the coronavirus pandemic has



affected both developed and developing economies, it is the poor who will suffer most.

The pandemic has highlighted the dangerous and growing inequality that exists both between countries and within them.

Health care systems are struggling to cope.

Some have been weakened by underfunding and neglect; others are under pressure because they were designed to serve the select few.

The pandemic has devastated the livelihoods of millions of people.

This virus will continue to be with us for some time, and we will have to change the way we behave, work and live.

The global recovery depends on our ability to accept these realities, to prepare for them and to adapt accordingly.

The social distancing, hygiene and other protocols recommended by the World Health Organization must become part of our everyday lives.

South Africa affirms its full support for the World Health Organization, which has been key in guiding the international response to the pandemic.

The WHO has been instrumental in providing guidance and support to African governments with early detection of the pandemic, training health workers and strengthening surveillance in communities.

Africa is extremely vulnerable to the ravages of this virus and needs every possible support

and assistance, including much-needed resources, to bolster its response and offset a potentially devastating social and economic fallout.

The African Union has taken very deliberate steps to respond to the scourge.

We have developed a comprehensive COVID-19 strategy, established an African Union COVID-19 Response Fund and embarked on a fundraising drive to strengthen the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

To date, we have raised a combined amount of US\$ 61 million for the Response Fund and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

The African Union has made a call for developing countries to be assisted in their efforts to combat the pandemic and to rebuild their economies.

This assistance needs to include debt relief, more Special Drawing Rights Allocations with the international financial institutions, and the provision of comprehensive and robust stimulus packages to vulnerable countries.

To turn back the frontiers of the pandemic, we also need to deepen international collaboration around research and development and investment in essential medical technologies, in COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics and in vaccines.

We fully support the initiative by the WHO together with many governments, non-profit organisations and industry leaders to speed up the development and production

of vaccines and therapeutics, and to ensure that they are distributed quickly and equitably across the globe.

For its part, South Africa is participating in several research initiatives with continental and international partners including the global effort to develop, manufacture and distribute a COVID-19 vaccine.

We must ensure that there is equitable access to medical equipment, technologies and best practice to combat COVID-19.

In this final decade towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, we must press ahead with our goal of making universal health care a reality for all the people of the world.

The coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated the essential value of universal health coverage and should propel countries to act with greater urgency to make it a reality.

Let us also continue to work together to improve our emergency preparedness for potential future outbreaks of this nature, and take forward the proposal made at the previous meeting of the World Health Assembly to develop a Global Disaster Response Plan.

Let us continue to be bold and courageous in confronting this pandemic.

Let us continue to collaborate and to act in the best traditions of social solidarity.

I thank you.



STATEMENT DELIVERED
BY AFRICAN UNION
CHAIRPERSON

PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA

AT THE HIGH-LEVEL
EVENT ON FINANCING
FOR DEVELOPMENT
IN THE ERA OF
COVID-19 AND
BEYOND



28 MAY 2020

Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr António Guterres,

Prime Minister of Canada, Mr Justin Trudeau,

Prime Minister of Jamaica, Mr Andrew Holness,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to thank the organisers for convening this critical and timely event.

The coronavirus pandemic will have far-reaching impacts on human health, livelihoods, security, economic development and social stability.

The pandemic presents a very real threat to our collective ability to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

This is particularly the case for developing countries.

As we mount a global effort to overcome the COVID-19 crisis, we need to ensure that the progress we have made towards the realisation of the SDGs is not reversed.

In particular, we call on developed countries to meet their commitments to support developing countries in the key areas of the

Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

In this time of crisis, we need to be innovative in the deployment of resources to both fight COVID-19 and support sustainable development.

In this regard, developing country debt is a foremost concern.

Africa is encouraged by the collaboration of the G20, the Bretton Woods institutions and the UN towards finding solutions to developing country debt sustainability and related issues.

South Africa supports the call of the African Union for a debt standstill for two years.

We support the allocation of more IMF Special Drawing Rights to help central banks, the corporate sector and small and medium-sized businesses to withstand the shocks caused by the pandemic.

We endorse the call of Secretary-General Guterres for the development of a comprehensive debt framework.

This should start with an across-the-board debt standstill for countries unable to service their debts, followed by targeted debt relief and a comprehensive approach to structural issues in the international debt architecture to prevent defaults.



We further welcome the Secretary-General's call for a global response package amounting to at least 10 percent of the world's gross domestic product.

The means more than \$200 billion of additional support for Africa.

We must also address the threat posed to the economic stability of developing countries by illicit financial flows, money laundering and corruption.

We share a collective responsibility to not just uplift our respective countries and societies, but also those less resourced and less fortunate. No one should be left behind.

Let us once again reaffirm our commitment to raising the standards of living of our citizens, to sustainably managing our natural resources, responding to the challenges brought about by climate change and to bringing material progress to all the peoples of the world.

I thank you.



Statement by **Dr Naledi Pandor**

Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa

Africa Dialogue Series 2020: COVID-19 and Silencing the Guns in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities: 20 May 2020



Secretary-General António Guterres,
UN Deputy Secretary-General,
President of the UN General Assembly,
AU Commissioners,
The EU Commissioner for International Partnerships,
The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,
The Executive Director for UN Women,
The Executive Director for AUDA-NEPAD,
The Secretary-General of the AfCFTA

I thank you for the honour of being invited to address this important Africa Dialogue Series on the theme, COVID-19 AND SILENCING THE GUNS IN AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES, in our capacity as

Chairperson of the African Union.

The African Union's theme for the year 2020: "Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development" is not only a rallying call, it is a fundamental precondition for achieving Agenda 2063. As we were intensifying efforts at "Silencing of the Guns", we have had to shift our focus to developing a comprehensive response to the outbreak and the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. This deadly virus has caused a public health crisis, created uncertainty in communities and put a stop to productive economic activity. For many African countries, the virus poses a new unconventional and existential threat.

The socio-economic and humanitarian impact of COVID-19 threatens the gains we have achieved on the Continent. Moreover, the

impact is likely to be felt months, if not years, after the pandemic, even as we implement social and economic measures to mitigate the epidemiological risks.

With over 4 million cases confirmed worldwide, reported infections in Africa remain comparatively low. Yet, with the number of confirmed cases rising every day, it is clear that the Continent will face a serious health crisis. Figures started rapidly rising in late April 2020, when Africa experienced a jump of more than 40% in just over a week. In May 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) further warned of mass casualties and overwhelmed health systems over a longer period of time, if countries fail to take a proactive approach to the crisis.

The African Union has taken very deliberate steps to respond to the scourge. We have



developed a comprehensive AU COVID-19 strategy, established an AU COVID-19 Response Fund, embarked upon a fundraising drive to enhance the capacity of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), and appointed Special Envoys to mobilise support for the AU strategy against COVID-19. To date, we have raised US \$61 million for both the Fund and the Africa CDC. These pan-African initiatives, taken by the Bureau of the Assembly of the AU, have been endorsed by all the regions of the AU, and also enjoy the support of African business leaders.

Chairperson,

During the Jubilee Summit, the 2013 Solemn Declaration marking the 50th Anniversary of the OAU/AU was adopted. This was a renewed resolve and commitment by African leaders to tackle peace and security challenges confronting the Continent, through the AU's Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020, one of the flagship projects and programmes of Agenda 2063. Agenda 2063 remains Africa's blueprint for its long-term socio-economic and integrative transformation.

Since the adoption of the AU Master Roadmap, the AU has made significant strides in reducing violent and armed conflicts throughout the Continent. The recently concluded peace agreements in South Sudan and in Central African Republic, the successful democratic elections in Madagascar and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as the historic positive developments in the Horn of Africa, are all generating optimism about a Continent emerging from the shadows and moving steadily to restore peace and stability and make a decisive move towards integration.

The AU and its regional mechanisms have also enhanced their capacity for dealing with conflict and crisis situations on the Continent. In so doing, the AU continues to strengthen its Architectures on Peace and Security (APSA) as well as on Governance (AGA), which include a powerful set of instruments and practices. This has indeed helped the African Union and the international community to enhance their collaboration and partnership to the extent that, today, consultation and coordination between the AU, the RECs/RMs, the UN and other partners to harmonise strategies and interventions, have become the rule, rather than the exception.

Chairperson,

Despite the laudable progress evident on the continent, the pandemic has starkly revealed several critical challenges. First, the preoccupation with conflict in some of our countries has detracted from a deliberate focus on our development goals.

Second, public services and public institutions are in need of significant support in order to develop the capacity to respond to unexpected challenges such as this global emergency. When we reach our peak of Coronavirus our public health systems will be overwhelmed and when vaccines and treatments are developed we will remain last in line. We must do more to invest in quality public services, research and innovation.

Third, our populations particularly women and the poor are far too dependent on survivalist economic activities and thus severely vulnerable to global threats of pandemics, food insecurity and climate change effects. All of these must be tackled as timely reminders in the post pandemic recovery phase.

Africa had begun to reorient its economic development toward increased industrialisation, manufacturing and intra-African trade through implementation of the Free Trade Area Agreement. This ambition has been paused by the pandemic but it must not be lost.

The challenges to achieve peace on the African Continent are complex and immense, involving multiple cross-cutting issues. These include, inter alia, socio-economic development and resilience; promoting access to resources and economic opportunity; and promoting and entrenching democracy and good governance.

The scale and magnitude of the challenges involved and their inter-sectionality, require not only the availability and allocation of significant resources, but, also, the establishment of strong, sustainable and vibrant partnerships at national, regional, continental and international levels.

The AU Master Roadmap identifies a number of obstacles such as the persistence of illicit flows, illegal arms transactions, financing of terrorism and external political interference; climate change, environmental degradation and others, as constituting serious threats to the African peace and security agenda. We therefore call upon the international community, in particular members of the Security Council, to support the AU and its members to address these concerns.

The African Union supports the call by Secretary-General Guterres for a global cease fire in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is against this background that we call on all parties to conflict in Africa, notably in Libya, to lay down their arms and to commence negotiations aimed at lasting peace. Attacks on medical facilities, including hospitals and clinics, are condemned under all circumstances. At this time, it is of paramount importance that health care facilities in

conflict areas are allowed to operate without hindrance.

Chairperson,

The importance of gender equality and women empowerment in achieving "Silencing of the Guns" is central. This year coincides with a number of milestones on the Continent and globally, including the end of the Decade of African Women, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women as well as the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 5th Anniversary of the Sustainable Development Goals; and the 20th Anniversary of Resolution 1325, on women, peace and security.

The COVID-19 pandemic again poses additional threats to the achievement of gender equality and women empowerment. In all our efforts to address this global crisis, we must ensure that the rights of women and girls in Africa are protected and that women's empowerment and gender equality are advanced.

In this context, the African Union calls for increased international humanitarian relief efforts to assist affected communities in conflict areas, in particular vulnerable groups such as women, children, refugees and displaced persons.

Chairperson,

Reliable and sustainable funding for the African Union has been a persistent challenge over the past two decades, with an over-reliance on funding from international donors, which has historically resulted in a very strong interdependence and subordinate role for Africa in decision-making, particularly in the domain of peace and security. The newly established Peace Fund is pivotal to efforts aimed at ensuring that the AU achieves greater autonomy, ownership and self-reliance in addressing its peace, security and developmental challenges.

Timely and vigorous actions by all our leaders will not only lead to addressing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, but will also contribute to strengthening the foundation for lasting cooperation and solidarity among African countries, in order to achieve durable peace, security and development in Africa.

Only through united, global action, can we overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, and achieve success in our efforts towards "Silencing of the Guns" on the African Continent.

I thank you.



Statement by

Dr Naledi Pandor **Minister of International Relations and Cooperation**

during the Nelson Mandela Day Outreach Programme and Virtual Celebration, 17 July 2020

Programme Director;
South African Ambassador to South Korea, Princess Zenani Mandela-Dlamini;

CEO of the Nelson Mandela Foundation, Mr Sello Hatang;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my singular honour to participate in this year's Nelson Mandela Day outreach programme in commemoration of President Mandela's towering legacy. All me to begin, most regrettably, by expressing my deepest condolences to the Mandela family on the loss of their daughter and sister so tragically sad moment.

We mourn the passing of Ambassador Zindiswa Mandela-Hlongwane.

It is all the more painful that her passing happened just five days before the world celebrates the legacy of her great father, our national and world icon, President Nelson Mandela.

In her own right, Ambassador Mandela-Hlongwane served South Africa with distinction, both as a young anti-apartheid activist and as an ambassador of our democratic South Africa. We will miss her energy, candour and commitment to the ideals that define our constitutional democracy.

We mark International Nelson Mandela, at a time and a day when the globe is confronted by the devastating crisis of the COVID-19 global pandemic which is creating untold economic, social and psychological destruction in its wake.

Its sheer scale of rack and ruin is all too overwhelming for any one country to manage on its own. It is in this spirit that we have themed this Nelson Mandela Day "A New Social Contract between Nations: Reducing Inequality at a Global Level".

As this pandemic continues to wreak havoc across the world, it has begun to transform global consciousness by forcing large sections of the international community to re-think traditional approaches to fighting poverty, global inequality and underdevelopment. Its debilitating effects are drawing the world's attention, much more closely, to the vision of President Mandela that 'we can change the

world and make it a better place. It is in your and our hands to make a difference'.

It is indeed in the hands of the international community to make a difference by building meaningful and lasting partnerships for a developmental agenda that will enable the world to stand as one against global pandemics, poverty, inequality and injustice.

We believe, as Dirco, that the outbreak of this pandemic has forced onto the global agenda the imperative of re-imagining a new social contract between nations to reduce inequality and poverty at a global level.

Failure or inadequacy to withstand the effects of this pandemic by countries in both the Global North and the Global South underscores the reality of global and national inequality as well as the need to re-evaluate current global social, economic and health structures which have been rendered very weak by the unrelenting waves of the pandemic. In this spirit of President Mandela, partnerships within a multilateral framework are our best foot forward.

While both the developed and the developing worlds have suffered the COVID-19's dreadful effects, the developing world has unequally borne the brunt due to its fragile economies, weak institutions and in particular, inadequate public health systems.

With the pandemic's destruction of this already brittle global socio-economic landscape, this moment of re-imagining President Mandela should re-embolden us to create a new vision, based on a moral and ethical foundation of our current international system.

As we celebrate the legacy of President Nelson Mandela, the world needs to take seriously the core principles which define his vision. President Nelson Mandela would expect that we look to a human vision, one revolves around the good of all as we determine responses to the pandemic.

President Mandela's legacy echoes these noble visions which he so distinctly embodied. As part of this embodiment of the President Mandela's core legacy are principles such as equality for all, both within and between nations, upholding social justice, promotion of social equity and the utilisation of solidarity as a momentum intended to eliminate communicable diseases, poverty and the



want so many experience. All of these as pre-conditions for a sustainable world conducive to human dignity.

COVID-19 has shown us that while its impact is indiscriminate, resilience to withstand and mitigate its dire consequences, hinge on developed public health systems, robust economic institutions as well as the state of social development which empowers citizens.

Happily, we have seen human responses to emerging needs.

As the Department of International Relations and Cooperation wishes to thank all the Diplomatic Missions accredited to South Africa who have responded to the call for donations of personal protective equipment, hand sanitizers, hand washing soap, gloves, cloth masks, thermometers and food parcels to a school throughout our Country as well as to the SADC region.

In keeping with President Mandela's vision for international solidarity, these interventions will go a long way towards saving human lives and contributing to a better world.

Thank you for that. Let all of us make each day a Mandela day as we combat this menace to our lives and our people. We should work towards the elimination of both national and global inequality, for the creation of a just global order as well as a humane world whose values Nelson Mandela radiated during his lifetime.

I thank you



South African Foreign Policy

Legacy of Nelson Mandela



When the African National Congress (ANC) won power in 1994, the party sought to renew South Africa’s image and reintegrate it into the international community. Its foreign policy was founded upon the pillars of: human rights; respect for justice and international law; the advancement of African interests; and regional and international economic co-operation. Under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, South Africa’s first democratic government pledged its commitment to a human-rights based foreign policy, expressing solidarity for oppressed peoples around the world. Under Nelson Mandela, South African foreign policy promoted multilateralism.

Naledi Pandor, the South African Minister of International Relations and Co-operation, has written an article “Let’s work together to create a just global order that radiates the values of Nelson Mandela” that reflects South Africa’s position on current challenges for the global community due to COVID-19 and sets out a vision for the future, drawing from the legacy of Nelson Mandela. Have a look at the article below:

This year we observed Nelson Mandela International Day under the theme: A New Social Contract between Nations: Reducing Inequality at a global level.

This calls for a re-evaluation of the current global structures that the Covid-19 global pandemic has torn apart in many instances.

Covid-19 is creating untold economic, social

and psychological destruction in its wake.

Its sheer scale of rack and ruin is all too overwhelming for any one country to manage on its own. It is in this spirit that we decided to initiate global dialogue around building a new social contract between nations in order to reduce inequality.

As this pandemic continues to wreak havoc across the world, it has begun to transform global consciousness by forcing large sections of the international community to re-think traditional approaches to fighting poverty, global inequality and underdevelopment. Its debilitating effects are drawing the world’s attention, much more closely, to the vision of President Mandela that “we can change the world and make it a better place. It is in your and our hands to make a difference”.

It is indeed in the hands of the international community to make a difference by building meaningful and lasting partnerships for a developmental agenda that will enable the world to stand as one against global pandemics, poverty, inequality and injustice.

We believe that the outbreak of this pandemic has forced on to the global agenda the imperative of re-imagining a new social contract between nations to reduce inequality and poverty at a global level.

Failure or inadequacy to withstand the effects of this pandemic by countries in both the Global North and the Global South underscores the reality of global and

national inequality as well as the need to re-evaluate current global social, economic and health structures which have been rendered very weak by the unrelenting waves of the pandemic. In this spirit of President Mandela, partnerships within a multilateral framework are our best foot forward.

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With the pandemic’s destruction of this already brittle global socio-economic landscape, this moment of re-imagining President Mandela should re-embolden us to create a new vision, based on a moral and ethical foundation of our current international system.

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President Mandela’s legacy echoes these noble visions which he so distinctly embodied. As part of this embodiment of Mandela’s core legacy are principles such as equality for all, both within and between nations, upholding social justice, promotion of social equity and the utilisation of solidarity as a momentum intended to eliminate communicable diseases

and poverty. All of these as pre-conditions for a sustainable world conducive to human dignity.

Covid-19 has shown us that while its impact is indiscriminate, resilience to withstand and mitigate its dire consequences hinge on developed public health systems, robust economic institutions as well as the state of social development which empowers citizens.

Happily, we have seen humane responses to emerging needs. We wish to see more. Those who have the means must share with the less privileged.

Everyone has the ability and the responsibility to change the world for the better. In Madiba's words:

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

We should work towards the elimination of both national and global inequality, for the creation of a just global order as well as a humane world whose values Nelson Mandela radiated during his lifetime.



Nelson Mandela showed what is possible for our world and within each one of us — if we believe, dream and work together. Let us continue each day to be inspired by his lifelong example and his call to never cease working for a better and more just world.

2013/Former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon





Exclusive Interview by Mian Fazal Elahi

Pakistan has a proud history of having been in the vanguard of freedom struggles in Africa opposing colonialism, apartheid and racism

H.E. Mthuthuzeli Madikiza, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa



PERSONAL INFORMATION AND CAREER HISTORY

HIGH COMMISSIONER OF SOUTH AFRICA TO PAKISTAN

Mthuthuzeli Madikiza, the High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, was born in a small town called Paarl in the Western Cape Province of South Africa, in 1961. He was raised by a single mother who was a seasonal factory worker and semi-literate.

He grew up in the Township of Mbekweni in Paarl and schooled there until he finished Matric (Grade 12). By this time he had joined the banned African National Congress (ANC) underground system of operatives. He had an interest in studying law and enrolled with the University of the Western Cape for a Bachelor of Arts in Law. He dropped out due to the imperatives of the political activities, which were illegal then, and fled into exile to work for the ANC full time.

While working for the ANC, he was sent to training in a number of different disciplines. He was sent to a political school to study Marxist-Leninist Philosophy in the then German Democratic Republic, (commonly known as East Germany or GDR). He was sent to GDR later for training in Intelligence. Later, he was sent to Moscow for further training in Intelligence and Investigations. After the unbanning of the ANC and just before the first democratic elections in 1994 he was sent to the United Kingdom for further training in Intelligence.

By this time an enjoyable career was being carved in the Intelligence Services of the new and democratic South Africa. Immediately after the first democratic elections he was appointed to be the Head of the National Intelligence Agency in the Western Cape Province. Two years later, he was transferred to Head Office of Intelligence in Pretoria on a promotion to higher rank. As he rose through the ranks he underwent training in Strategic and Executive Management courses at the following universities - University of Witwatersrand (Business School), University of Stellenbosch and Harvard (Kennedy School of Governance). He rose through the ranks to Deputy Director General of the foreign Intelligence service and responsible for Africa. In the course of his career, he was posted to Damascus and Moscow as Intelligence Liaison officer, working from the South African Embassies in both cities.

He took early retirement in 2014 and joined a private company as CEO, until he was called to serve South Africa as a diplomat in 2019.

He is married with 3 children - a daughter of 31 years, a son of 28 years and a son of 18 years.

His Excellency Mthuthuzeli Madikiza – High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has been asked a few pertinent questions on different topics such as bilateral relations between the two countries, particularly relations post Covid-19. We have taken his opinion on how to improve the economy and education system in Pakistan. He has been too generous and kind with the Diplomatic Focus team. To understand the South African views on about the current issues faced by the world and especially by Pakistan, one can read the interview given below.

DF: What is best thing about relations between Pakistan and South-Africa, in which areas both the nations need improvement?

The cordial relations between Pakistan and South Africa were forged during our struggle for freedom and democracy and against apartheid, when the Government and people of Pakistan provided material and moral support to South African liberation movements. Pakistan has a proud history of having been in the vanguard of freedom struggles in Africa opposing colonialism, apartheid and racism. When our late President Nelson Mandela was on a State Visit to Pakistan in May 1999, he made a point of commending the Government and people of Pakistan for their “efforts, unselfish dedication and commitment to our cause for freedom and justice.” Our two nations are therefore united, not only by cultural and religious bonds, but also by our common experiences and challenges. Pakistan and South Africa also face similar socio-economic challenges, including from the COVID-19 pandemic. But we are confident that we will survive this, and that both our countries will emerge stronger and even more resilient than ever. One of our priorities is to expand

economic relations to mutual benefit of our respective countries, especially with the need for our respective economies to start growing again after the negative effect of the pandemic. The fortunate thing is that Pakistan is a willing and active partner in this quest. We believe that once the pandemic is over we will continue on the path set out by the bilateral Joint Commission, with increased communication and exchanges to achieve this goal.

I felt honoured and delighted when I was instructed by our President to represent South Africa in Pakistan as High Commissioner.

DF: South-Africa being a BRICS nation is in the list of fast developing nations. Pakistan has always been struggling with its economy. What Pakistan should learn from South Africa to deal with economic crisis?

The world today is characterised unfortunately by increasing levels of poverty and inequality in both the developed and developing world. Undoubtedly, in the current global political, economic and security landscape, there is





no single organisation or country that can address all its challenges alone. South Africa’s membership of BRICS acknowledges this fact. The five BRICS nations started their journey together at a time when the international community required an alternative narrative to global issues and additional modalities to provide financing for development. Our journey as BRICS must, however, not be exclusive to the rest of the global South. We believe that the BRICS Outreach and BRICS Plus initiatives must continue to strengthen dialogue and cooperation with the global South, particularly in our respective regions. This is certainly the case in Africa, where our neighbours are also starting to benefit from assistance from The New Development Bank (a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states) which supports public or private projects through loans, guarantees, equity participation and other financial instruments. Pakistan and South Africa have both learnt that cooperation with neighbours, peace and stability are key to development and economic stability. This is evidenced by the constructive role Pakistan plays in Afghanistan and its cooperation with China.

DF: South-Africa has a history of struggle for democratic inclusiveness and icon of that struggle is Nelson Mandela. Pakistan also lacks inclusiveness. What do you suggest us to do?

There is a pertinent quote from Nelson Mandela: “It is not our diversity which divides us; it is not our ethnicity, or religion or culture that divides us. Since we have achieved our freedom, there can only be one division amongst us: between those who cherish democracy and those who do not.” South Africa’s Constitution is the

South Africa’s Constitution is the highest law of the land and no other law or government action can supersede it.

result of remarkably detailed and inclusive negotiations that were carried out during 1992 – 93 with an acute awareness of the injustices of the country’s non-democratic past. It is the highest law of the land and no other law or government action can supersede it. The Bill of Rights, which is part of the Constitution, thus contains core constitutional rights that all citizens should expect to enjoy. Among other, the rights to Human Dignity, Equality and Freedom promote a socially inclusive, human-centric basis for social life. Furthermore, our State is placed under a positive obligation to “respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights”. This mandatory provision in our Constitution ensures the central role of our Bill of Rights in our society. Furthermore, a unique set of independent institutions were set up in terms of Chapter 9 of the South African Constitution to support and

enhance democracy and fundamental rights. These institutions are diverse and include the Public Protector (Ombudsman); the South African Human Rights Commission, (SAHRC), the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL Commission), the Gender Commission, the Auditor-General, and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The mission and tasks of these institutions differ, each possessing a constitutional mandate that relates to a specific substantive field or section of society. Chapter 9 institutions are located between citizens and the government, so they provide a politically neutral medium through which citizens can communicate their views, needs and concerns. They therefore play a key role in ensuring an open, transparent and accountable government at all levels.

DF: South Africa a rainbow nation is most developed country in African continent. Unity in diversity is difficult to achieve. How it was achieved in your country?

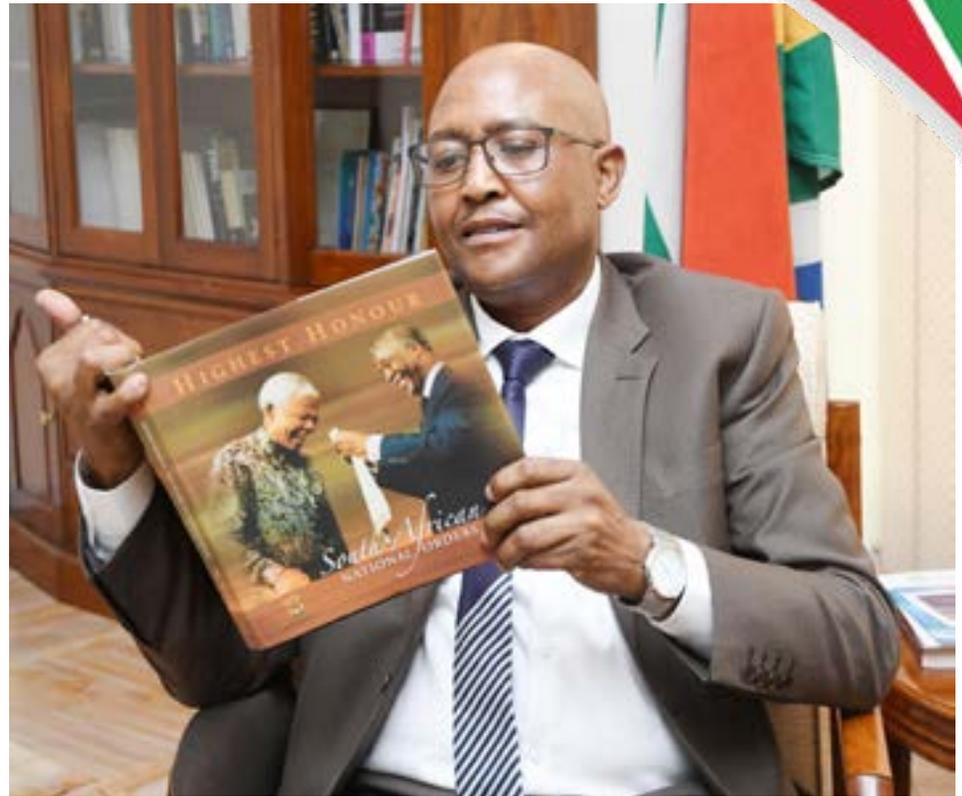
Given that we celebrate International Nelson Mandela Day every year on 18th July in the UN System; and during this month also commemorate the legacy of Nelson Mandela in various ways, another famous quote from him illustrates our challenges as a country rather aptly: “We were expected to destroy one another and ourselves collectively in the worst racial conflagration. Instead, we as a people chose the path of negotiation, compromise and peaceful settlement. Instead of hatred and revenge we chose reconciliation and nation-building.” As Africans, the people and Government of South Africa also subscribe to the African philosophy of “Ubuntu” (from the



phrase “umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu” in our Nguni languages of Zulu, Xhosa and Ndebele). Which means: “A person is a person through other persons” or “I am because we are”. In essence - a way of thinking about what it means to be human, and how to behave towards others, defined by a person’s relations with other people, and acting in ways that benefit not only the individual, but also the community. Nelson Mandela promoted the ethos of Ubuntu to advance our collective unity, irrespective of race, creed and orientation, as South Africans, and as the global community. Ubuntu also forms the value base of the Constitution of South Africa, as well the basis on which the Truth and Reconciliation apartheid hearings were conducted after the first democratic elections in 1994.

DF: Pakistan and South-Africa both share a history of colonialism. Is there a need to change colonial perceptions as it is said that colonialism impedes progress?

It is significant that both our countries were subjected for many years to colonial rule by the same country. However, it is important for South Africa to know that our rich history does not begin with European occupation. As Africans, we are privileged to know that, around 180 000 years ago, Africa (particularly Southern Africa) was the origin of the modern human species to walk this planet. The year 1994 was a ground-breaking year for South Africa when we became a democracy, with Nelson Mandela as our first democratically elected President. Given that almost the entire Continent of Africa was colonized, apart from Liberia and Ethiopia, the need for Africa to create and implement a positive and sustainable development outlook, which addresses our collective economic and social challenges, remains at the core of our national debates and policies. This means that everyone is invited to be involved, where necessary, in dealing with the remnants of oppressive and dominant thought philosophies and patterns of our interactions with colonial forces over recent centuries. This also involves a process whereby we are embracing emerging positive trends to see an Africa vested in the interests of its people, yet also remain globally relevant. These involve, among other, the roles of culture, language and gender as part of a new Africa, also to find uniquely African solutions to African problems; and to tap into indigenous systems to realise their possibilities to move the Continent forward. Improved and inclusive social welfare systems, strengthening democracy at all levels, increased literacy rates and gender parity, among others, are important building blocks to fast-track sustainable development. In this regard, another quote by Nelson Mandela is very relevant: “The truth is that we are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right



not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road. For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning.”

DF: Nelson Mandela is regarded as ‘Father of Nation’ in South-Africa. He is one of the most honoured and revered personality in the world. What lessons one should learn from his life?

The lessons we can learn from the life and

Pakistan is a potential lucrative market for some South African fruits, such as citrus and avocado, whereas South African importers and retailers would benefit from importing, among other, mangoes from Pakistan.

legacy of Nelson Mandela are indeed many, and remain relevant at various levels of society, locally and globally. His personal values and principled leadership inspired South Africa in various ways. These include defining our national interest as people-centred, including promoting the well-being, development and upliftment of our people; protecting the planet for future generations; and ensuring the prosperity of our country, the African Continent and the world. However, in pursuing our national interests, our decisions, he taught that the global community must also be informed by a desire for a just, humane and equitable world order of greater security, peace, dialogue and economic justice. Nelson Mandela reminded us that, as a beneficiary of many acts of selfless solidarity from international partners in the past, South Africa wishes for its people what it wishes for the citizens of the world. Nelson Mandela Day every 18th of July is a global call to action for people everywhere to take responsibility for changing the world into a better place. It provides all of us the opportunity to honour the legacy of Nelson Mandela by dedicating ourselves to change the lives and circumstances of our fellow human beings for the better. It also reminds us that each of us holds the potential to impact the lives of those around us by contributing to building a better tomorrow.

DF: Anti-apartheid movement a non-violent movement has become a symbol of successful change. What was major reason for its success?



The African National Congress (ANC) founded in 1912, and the ruling party in South Africa since 1994, became the major force opposing the apartheid system's oppression of the 80% black population of South Africa. Using mostly legal tactics of protest during its first four decades, the ANC became more militant in the early 1950s and began using nonviolent direct action. However, due to the intransigence of the hard-line apartheid regime and its increasingly draconic and violent responses to the nonviolent protest campaign, Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the ANC called for an armed uprising that was conducted in parallel with continued nonviolent resistance. In addition to direct confrontation with the apartheid regime, resistors also created alternative community-based institutions - such as cooperatives, community clinics, legal resource centres, and other organizations - that increasingly marginalized and replaced official governmental institutions. Many South Africans of Pakistani descent also made significant sacrifices over the many years of this struggle. The strategies and tactics used during the long anti-apartheid struggle included a large number of resistance and protest actions, which can be grouped under the broad categories of protest and persuasion, non-cooperation, civil disobedience, nonviolent intervention, as well as the armed struggle. In the end, the combination of the armed struggle and a concerted grassroots, nonviolent civil resistance movement, in coalition with international support and sanctions, forced the apartheid regime to negotiate a peaceful transition and political settlement with the liberation movements, that led to peaceful, free and fair national elections on 27 April 1994, which we celebrate every year as Freedom Day, our national day.

DF: Trade volume between Pakistan and South-Africa is low. What should be done to improve trade between the two at the

platform of Commonwealth of Nations?

The total bilateral trade between South Africa and Pakistan has increased from \$186 million in 2003 to \$1.052 billion in 2019 – with steady increases almost for every year. This puts total bilateral trade with Pakistan in the top fourteen of South Africa's bilateral trade with all the countries in Asia and the Middle East. This also illustrates the resilience and size of the Pakistan

Striving for quality academic education is supported by a focus on rights-based approaches and empowering adolescents with the skills and knowledge in finding solutions to the challenges facing the youth, including gender-based violence (GBV)

market for a wide range of products and services, despite tough global and domestic economic circumstances in some of the years since 2003. Judging from the consistent and sustainable growth in bilateral trade, and the projected continued growth of the Pakistan economy, it is foreseen that South Africa - Pakistan trade could grow by \$500m in the next five years. South Africa is also Pakistan's biggest trading partner in the African Continent, with almost one quarter of the total trade between Pakistan and Africa being with South Africa. Of course, we are always looking for opportunities to increase and improve our bilateral trade. The potential to increase

exports, and overall bilateral trade, exists in a number of niche areas, such as fresh produce, due to the complementarity of the growing seasons (Southern / Northern Hemisphere). Pakistan is a potential lucrative market for some South African fruits, such as citrus and avocado, whereas South African importers and retailers would benefit from importing, among other, mangoes from Pakistan.

DF: To what extent cultural exchange, educational exchange programs and games can improve relations between Pakistan and South-Africa?

The religious and cultural ties that played a strong role during the liberation struggle should continue to strengthen the partnership between the two countries. We also appreciate the solid contribution to our society and our economy by the Pakistani Diaspora in South Africa. Pakistan and South Africa share an enthusiasm for music, art, cuisine, hockey and cricket, among other. We would especially like to see many more exchanges between the women and young people of our respective countries, also in the context of arts and culture, including mutual participation in film festivals and art exhibitions; and also to have closer collaboration on important social issues and social entrepreneurship. Given our similar developmental challenges and opportunities, more academic exchanges are necessary to increase our bilateral cooperation in the areas of science and technology.

DF: One of the principle of Pakistan's foreign policy is having good relations with Africa. In that wake current government in Pakistan has devised the 'look Africa policy'. South-Africa is the member of African union. How far both the countries can benefit from this platform?

Pakistan's "Look Africa" strategic direction (from 2017) and their more recent policy direction "Engage Africa" (driven by the Ministry of Commerce, Textile, Industry & Production and Investment; and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) provide the opportunity for South Africa to be a strategic "partner-of-choice" for Pakistani foreign direct investment (FDI) to establish manufacturing operations in order to benefit from African markets. This is also based on advantages of regional free trade areas (FTAs), well-developed and expanding communication / transport links, and other advantages from Africa's Agenda 2063 flagship projects / 10-Year Implementation Plan. The recent progress in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) has given more impetus to the resolve of the Pakistani leadership and investors to forge ahead with the new strategic direction, which we appreciate. Once the AfCFTA is fully operationalised, Africa will be one of the world's



Nelson Mandela reminded us that, as a beneficiary of many acts of selfless solidarity from international partners in the past, South Africa wishes for its people what it wishes for the citizens of the world

largest single markets, with around 1.2 billion people, a cumulative GDP of around \$3.2 trillion and total consumer and business spending of over \$4 trillion, across all 55 member States of the African Union (AU). It is also a highly dynamic market, and increasingly urbanised. With their resilience and innovation and quality products and services, companies from Pakistan – including those run by overseas Pakistanis in African countries - are well-placed to benefit from this market, not only through exports, but establishing subsidiaries in African countries where they find suitable local partners, the necessary incentives, raw materials and other inputs, a skilled labour force and a conducive environment for business, supported by good governance. By establishing bases in Africa, these companies will be well positioned to tap into regional export destinations and can use regional markets as stepping stones for expanding into other overseas markets at a later point.

DF: Pakistan and South-Africa both have huge tourism potential how can they collaborate and learn from each other experiences?

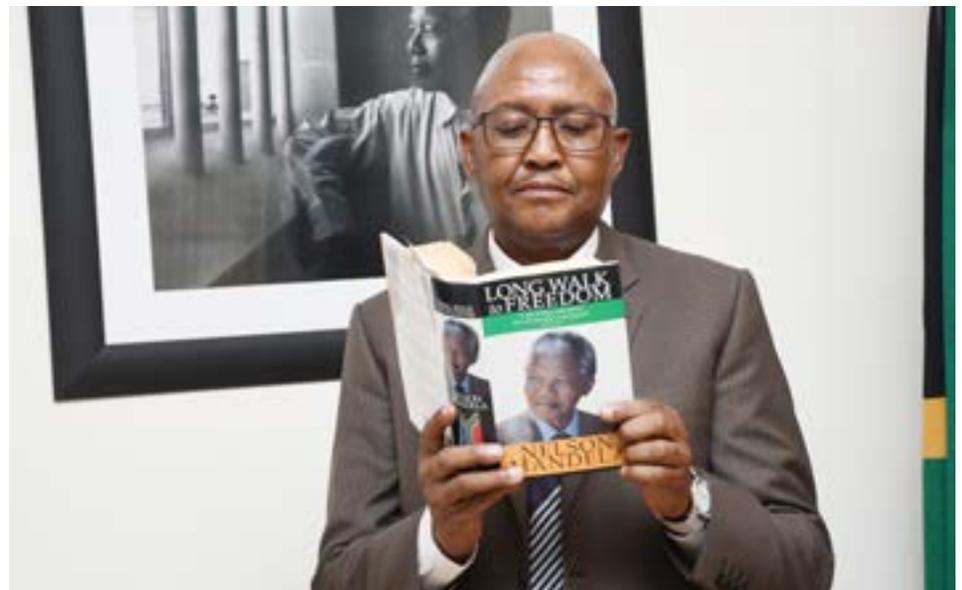
We are very happy to see that the vision of the Government of Pakistan to develop and promote tourism as one of its key economic drivers has started to pay real dividends for the country and its people. We all know that Pakistan is one of the most rewarding, hospitable, diverse (in terms of culture and geography) and exciting destinations in the world; and were happy to see increasing numbers of international tourists

visiting Pakistan in recent years, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, of course. The Pakistan Travel Mart, Tourism Dialogue, Pakistan Tourism Summit, and the Pakistan Hospitality Show were key events in 2019 to create awareness of its tourism opportunities and to promote public-private partnerships in the local industry. We are especially delighted that the increasing number of sustainable, responsible and eco-tourism projects in Pakistan are poised to make a significant contribution to creating sustainable growth in this industry. South Africa share similar challenges and opportunities in promoting tourism and our two countries should continue to support

mutual tourism and share experiences in this important field, especially given its importance for creating jobs and ensuring opportunities for small and medium sized companies.

DF: In post-Covid-19 pandemic world. How far the dynamics of bilateral relationship will change across the world?

We can only hope that the pandemic will foster closer international cooperation and provide the impetus to countries for working more closely together – on a bilateral and multilateral basis – rather than fostering disconnection, isolation and disintegrative tendencies within the global system. Bilateral relations between





key partner countries, as well as constructive and targeted multilateral initiatives, will play a significant role in restoring our societies and economies post COVID-19, apart from the importance of close cooperation during the pandemic where it is possible. The development of new technologies and products in healthcare and related fields brought on by the pandemic could also play a significant role in future cooperation. For example, South Africa has just started production of locally-designed life-saving ventilators for COVID-19 pandemic patients, to complement existing stock in public and private hospitals and the ventilators being bought from global manufacturers. These ventilators cost around \$760 each, and are being developed and manufactured by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of South Africa. This and similar projects in other countries could benefit future bilateral relations in science and technology, especially among countries of the South.

DF: How do you see future of Pakistan and South-Africa bilateral relationship?

The existing cordial bilateral relations between South Africa and Pakistan are expanding across a number of sectors. The elevation of the bilateral Joint Commission to the level of political leadership, as well as planned high-level political visits (once international travel is possible again) could provide new impetus to bilateral relations. The 5th Session of the Joint Commission is scheduled to be hosted by Pakistan at a convenient time. Building on existing collaboration, we also look forward to further constructive engagement to ensure our respective national Defence Forces and defence industries continue to make important contributions to the security, sustainability and prosperity of our respective nations.

DF: Literacy rate in South Africa is almost 95%. How South Africa has improved its education and in your opinion what Pakistan should do to improve literacy rate in Pakistan.

Since 1994, South Africa has made great strides in realising the right to education, rapidly building an efficient, accessible and quality education system for children and adolescents. This notable progress has been recorded across the three components of basic education - in early childhood development, primary and secondary education. For example, the number of children under five attending an Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre or pre-school has increased to one in three from one in ten since 2002. Primary school attendance is at 99%. Secondary school attendance is at 90%, with notable gender parity. Children with disabilities continue to be better included within the schooling system. Striving for quality academic education is supported by a focus on rights-based approaches and empowering



adolescents with the skills and knowledge to engage one another, policymakers and society in finding solutions to the challenges facing the youth, including gender-based violence (GBV). Through the “TechnoGirl” programme, job-shadowing opportunities are provided for adolescent girls pursuing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related careers, with an emphasis on

We also appreciate the solid contribution to our society and our economy by the Pakistani Diaspora in South Africa. Pakistan and South Africa share an enthusiasm for music, art, cuisine, hockey and cricket, among other

a technology-orientated and gender-equal future. There is also a national Sports for Development Programme (PES4D) programme, which contributes to the physical, mental, psychological and social development of adolescents through physical education and leadership development. Interestingly, South Africa spends a larger share of its wealth (4.1% of GDP) on the public funding of primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary

education than most OECD and OECD partner countries.

DF: How both Pakistan and South Africa being the members of modern Commonwealth can impact each other in positive way.

The Commonwealth is a unique organisation of 53 member states representing all the races, religions and cultural diversity of humankind, some 2.4 billion people. As two of the larger members of this organisation, both Pakistan and South Africa have the opportunity to, according to their respective strengths and capabilities, contribute to processes within the Commonwealth to assist fellow members who are still classified as Least Developed Countries to increase their levels of development. This opens up the possibility of tri-lateral cooperation among the two countries and other Commonwealth members.

DF: Excellency, what do you think of the opportunity to promote cricket in Pakistan, especially after the terrorist attack on an international team in Lahore (2009), when international tours to Pakistan were suspended? Will the South African National Team visit Pakistan, also for the public in Pakistan to enjoy the contest between the two sides? Are there any plans to bring the team over to play some matches in Lahore and Karachi and other centres?

Sport remains an important aspect of our people-to-people relations. As our two countries share a passion for cricket, we look forward to the South African men and women national cricket teams visiting Pakistan to compete and to celebrate the important role of sport in bringing people together. A good number of South African cricket players are playing in the local Pakistan Super League and are popular among local crowds. Similarly, many Pakistani cricketers have fans in South Africa.



DF: Excellency, before coming to Islamabad, what was your feeling about Pakistan, because Pakistan has suffered in the past with terrorism and a lot of other issues after 9/11? So how did you feel when you got this posting to Islamabad? Can you please give us a short briefing on this?

I had heard and read a lot about Pakistan's beauty and the generosity of people, the richness of the culture, the cuisine and interesting history. All this made me wish to visit here one day. I felt honoured and delighted when I was instructed by our President to represent South Africa in Pakistan as High Commissioner. I have travelled throughout the world and seen most parts of it. I had also heard and read about the negative images of Pakistan, but I have always known too well that every household and every country has got its own difficult times and moments that no one wants to remember.

Admittedly, I have not yet seen much of Pakistan, except a short and busy working visit to Lahore in March this year, shortly after I arrived. I think and believe there is a lot more to see, especially after I visited the fascinating museum at Taxila. History really excites me, but unfortunately COVID-19 has temporarily interrupted my dream of traveling throughout the length and breadth of Pakistan.

Even though I previously had some knowledge of the generosity of Pakistanis, I am still amazed by the extent of it. I have also come to realize that there is a lot in common between Pakistani cultural traditions and those of African, even though some may have changed over the years.

DF: Excellency, I need to know, how do you like the Pakistani cuisine and culture?

From the little I have seen and experienced, unfortunately as a result of the restrictions of COVID-19, I have enjoyed the Pakistani cuisine I have come across. So far I have not been

disappointed. When I think about why I feel entirely at home with what I have seen and tasted so far, I get the feeling that perhaps the strong presence of Pakistanis and other South Asians in South Africa has indeed prepared me for Pakistani cuisine. I often say, when I am asked this question, that I have known and eaten a samosa since I have known myself. I am looking forward to explore more of the cuisine, including regional and local dishes of the places I will be visiting once the coronavirus loses its grip on our lives.

DF: Excellency! Would you like to give any

The total bilateral trade between South Africa and Pakistan has increased from \$186 million in 2003 to \$1.052 billion in 2019

message to Diplomatic Focus for the business community and people of Pakistan?

To the business community, we would like to say that South Africa is a country with much to offer and a viable and profitable investment destination. This include a young and able workforce, abundant natural and mineral resources, world class infrastructure, sophisticated telecommunications systems, and a well-regulated financial and banking sector. All of this are underpinned by an independent judiciary and a strong legal framework,

especially around commerce, taxation, maritime issues, competition law, intellectual property, property rights and other basic human rights. Our Government and its social partners are also committed to policy consistency and regulatory certainty, fiscal responsibility, and decisive interventions to stimulate economic activity. Central to our efforts to ignite growth and create jobs is an ambitious execution oriented industrial strategy founded on partnerships between government, labour and industry. This strategy prioritises growth in important sectors such as automotive, clothing and textiles, gas, chemicals and plastics, tourism, renewable energy, oceans economy, agriculture, mining and beneficiation, the digital economy and the high-tech industries. South Africa is a friendly and welcoming country, and a popular international tourist destination, under normal circumstances. We look forward to welcoming business and other visitors from Pakistan again when international travel hopefully normalise again soon. As the Government and people of South Africa, we are privileged to stand next to Pakistan as it builds peace and prosperity for all of its people.

H.E has rightly expressed his views conclusively that the two countries share similar challenges and opportunities. He said, "we are privileged to reconfirm our solidarity with Pakistan, one of the friendliest, most capable, hospitable, vibrant and resilient countries in the world! Long live Pakistan-South Africa bilateral relations – Zindabad!". H.E belongs to the land of Nelson Medella an icon of freedom that realises us the importance of democracy, freedom, human rights and equality among the ethnic groups, classes, gender and among the races.

Thank you His Excellency Mthuthuzeli Madikiza.





The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and related issues

Opportunities for **Pakistan's** economic diplomacy and development

The Assembly of Heads of States of the African Union launched the operational phase of the AfCFTA on 7 July 2019. Fifty-three of the 55 African Union (AU) member states have now signed the Agreement (waiting for Eritrea and Benin) and it has entered into force, with 24 countries ratifying it. It is one of the flagship programmes of the AU Agenda 2063, which is a blueprint for Africa's sustainable development.

The AfCFTA aspires to deepen the integration of the Continent, beyond merely a free trade area. Among its objectives are to "create a liberalized market [...] through successive rounds of negotiations," "lay the ground for the establishment of a Continental Customs Union" and "contribute to the movement of capital and natural persons." The AfCFTA is essentially a system of protocols, rules and procedures on trade, simplified customs procedures as well as dispute resolution mechanisms – all aimed at creating a single market and legal framework for trade in

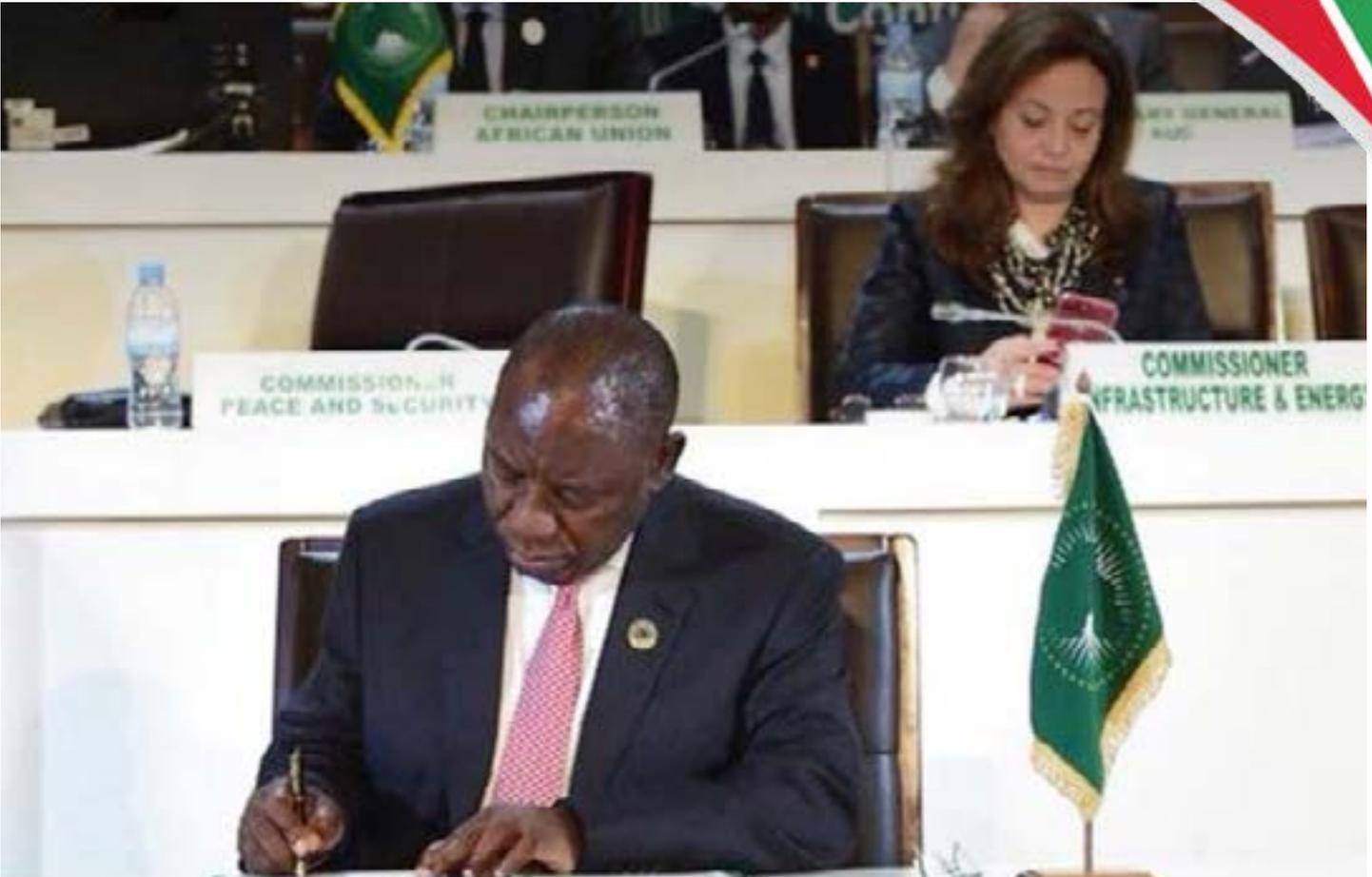
goods and services and for investment in the Continent.

Once fully operationalised, Africa will be one of the world's largest single markets, with

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around 1.2 billion people, a cumulative GDP of around \$3.2 trillion and total consumer and business spending of over \$4 trillion, across all 55 member States of the African Union (AU). It is also a highly dynamic market, and increasingly urbanised. Africa's consumer class is already more than 300 million and heavily concentrated in a handful of large metropolitan areas such as Cairo, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos and Luanda; and whose consumption is expected to hit \$2.2 trillion by 2030. By 2050, it's estimated that the Continent will host at least nine "megacities" of more than 10 million people and around 25 cities in excess of 5 million. The population of Africa is projected to reach 2.5 billion by 2050, at which point it will comprise 26% of the world's working age population, with an economy that is estimated to grow twice as fast as that of the developed world.

With the operational phase having started, businesses (including trading and manufacturing enterprises and services



President Ramaphosa Signs Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement

companies) across Africa will be able to make use of preferential trading arrangements offered by the AfCFTA, with the understanding that the trade transactions are among the Member States that have ratified the Agreement and those that conform to the provisions on rules of origin governing trade in the AfCFTA. Critical technical components needed before the agreement can be operationalized, include schedules of concessions for trade in goods, rules of origin and schedules of specific commitments for trade in services.

Further actions that will take place include the establishment of the necessary AfCFTA institutions, such as the Secretariat being established in Ghana, and to have AfCFTA obligations incorporated into the laws and regulations of each participating state.

AfCFTA will progressively eliminate tariffs on intra-African trade and has the potential both to boost intra-African trade by 52.3 per cent by eliminating import duties, and to double this trade if non-tariff barriers are also reduced. It will also provide exporters and investors with much needed legal certainty and predictability of markets across Africa.

What does AfCFTA mean in concrete terms?

- African businesses, traders and consumers will no longer pay tariffs on a large variety of goods that they trade between African countries – in essence, member countries agreed to remove trade barriers and tariffs on an estimated 90% of the more or less 200 items that are traded in the Continent;
 - Traders constrained by non-tariff barriers, including overly burdensome customs procedures or excessive paperwork, will have a mechanism through which to seek the removal of such burdens;
 - Cooperation between customs authorities over product standards and regulations, as well as trade transit and facilitation, will make it easier for goods and to flow between Africa's borders;
 - Through the progressive liberalization of services, service suppliers will have access to the markets of all African countries on terms no less favourable than domestic suppliers;
 - Mutual recognition of standards,
- licensing and certification of service suppliers will make it easier for businesses and individuals to satisfy the regulatory requirements of operating in each other's markets;
 - The easing of trade between African countries will facilitate the establishment of regional value chains in which inputs are sourced from different African countries to add value before exporting externally – in essence, the AfCFTA will assist in the creation of an aggregate economy in the Continent, which will also attract more large scale and sustainable investments, as well as act as a buffer to global shocks with the consolidated local market offering an alternative in the event of global volatility or dips in demand for certain products / commodities;
 - To protect against unanticipated trade surges, State Parties will have recourse to trade remedies to ensure that domestic industries can be safeguarded, if necessary;
 - A dispute settlement mechanism



provides a rule-based avenue for the resolution of any disputes that may arise between State Parties in the application of the agreement;

- Upon conclusion, the “Phase two” negotiations will provide a more conducive environment for recognizing African intellectual property rights, facilitating intra-African investment, and addressing anti-competitive challenges.

With their resilience and innovation and quality products and services, companies from Pakistan – including those run by overseas Pakistanis in African countries - are well-placed to benefit from this market, not only through exports, but establishing subsidiaries in African countries where they find suitable local partners, the necessary incentives, raw materials and other inputs, a skilled labour force and a conducive environment for business, supported by good governance.

By establishing bases in Africa, these companies will be well positioned to tap into regional export destinations and can use regional markets as stepping stones for expanding into overseas markets at a later point. Another way in they can benefit is by the AfCFTA making it easier to supply inputs to other, larger regional companies, who then export. For businesses based in Africa, this new phase of trade heralds a world of opportunities from reduced cost of doing

businesses owing to removal of some of the most prohibitive tariffs and barriers, availability of qualified labour as skills and technology transfer becomes simplified and an expansion and diversification of goods and services, which will be crucial in turning raw materials into finished goods and products.

Once fully operationalised, Africa will be one of the world’s largest single markets, with around 1.2 billion people, a cumulative GDP of around \$3.2 trillion and total consumer and business spending of over \$4 trillion, across all 55 member States of the African Union (AU).

One of the key spin-offs is expected to be greater focus and urgency for infrastructure development across the Continent to support economic activities. The AfCFTA is already underpinned by improved infrastructure and connectivity, with many countries in Africa also benefitting from China’s Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) in major projects in the power and infrastructure sectors.

The services sector will also benefit, as more integrated markets will need joined-up business ecosystems, which will need to be integrated by technology networks, connecting companies, suppliers and customers across countries to drive results, shorten time-to-market and continually enhance Africa’s competitive positioning. The so-called “business-to-business” (B2B) and “business-to-consumer” (B2C) platforms. Furthermore, the Continent’s population growth leads to increased consumer spending which has resulted in big demand for 24/7 services. For example, e-commerce has not only helped jump-start small businesses but also helped large companies enter a market full of energized consumers. Online buying is spreading steadily on the Continent; and in 2017, e-commerce in Africa was valued at \$16.5 billion, with this value predicted to go up to \$75 billion by 2025, also contributing massively to the Continent’s GDP.

With regard to technology, AfCFTA is going to bring together more African and international



partners with complementary interests and strength. This will permit both existing and new companies to harness various technologies more efficiently, and creating higher standards of operations in the different countries they operate in. African and international tech companies should, therefore, maximize on this new opportunity. Advanced technologies that will become increasingly crucial in this regard include Artificial Intelligence, robotics, the Internet of Things, and Big Data, especially when African countries can “leapfrog” to catch up with the rest of the world.

Companies from Pakistan have a lot to offer Africa in the fields of services and relevant technologies, and can be involved in a substantial way.

Apart from the larger economies in Africa attracting investment from foreign companies who need a base and gateway in the Continent, such as Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Kenya, Mauritius and South Africa, other countries such as Namibia, Botswana, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Algeria, Tunisia and Ghana, all with good governance, services, infrastructure and investment incentives, could also be considered for their potential as bases for manufacturing, trading or services and technology enterprises from abroad.

Africa has over the years also seen the

development of regional economic communities (RECs), such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that have already made considerable progress in harnessing the power of integration. Economies of scale and standardized rules of trade by such regional trade blocs give them an added advantage within the AfCFTA. Ultimately, a single, fully liberalized, African trade area will subsume the existing REC free trade areas.

An example of what works well at regional level in SADC and could be translated to the Continental level is the Integrated Real Time Gross Settlement System (SADC-RTGS), which is hosted by the South African Reserve Bank. A total of 81 banks (central banks and commercial banks) are participating in the system. The system is promoting increased intra-SADC trade and investment to further strengthen regional financial integration. The SADC-RTGS has performed impressively since July 2013 when the system went live, with a total of 1,275,591 transactions settled as at end 2018, representing \$371 billion. The benefits of the cross-border payment system are its efficiency and the reduction in

transaction costs. This experience will be taken further into the AfCFTA.

Where this has not been done already, Pakistan’s diplomats posted in various countries in Africa would do well to establish close relations with the heads and senior officials of the secretariats of relevant regional and Continental bodies, such as the AfCFTA secretariat and the regional economic communities. The UN Economic Commission for Africa is also a depository and generator of a lot of useful studies and information on the Continent.

CONCLUSION

South Africa’s commitment to the AU and its Agenda 2063 remains steadfast, and it is honoured to have been selected as the 2020 AU Chair. The theme for South Africa’s term as AU Chair will be “Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa’s Development.” The choice of the theme is primarily based on the fact that South Africa’s term as AU Chair coincides with the final year of the implementation of the Master Roadmap for Silencing the Guns by 2020, one of the other flagship programmes of Agenda 2063. Thus, South Africa will be faced with the momentous task of leading the process of reviewing implementation of the Roadmap.





Bilateral Trade PAKISTAN and SOUTH AFRICA



The total bilateral trade between South Africa and Pakistan has increased from \$186 million in 2003 to \$1.052 billion in 2019 – with steady increases almost for every year. This puts total bilateral trade with Pakistan in the top 14 of ALL the countries in Asia and the Middle East. Bilateral trade with Pakistan is also heavily in favour of South Africa. This illustrates the resilience and size of the Pakistan market for a wide range of products and services, despite tough global and domestic economic circumstances in some of the years since 2003. Judging from the consistent and sustainable growth in bilateral trade, and the projected continued growth of the Pakistan economy, it is foreseen that South Africa/Pakistan trade could grow by \$500m in the next five years. Top South African exports: Mineral Products (coal); Iron & Steel; Defence Products, vehicles and machinery. South Africa is Pakistan’s biggest trading partner in the African Continent, with almost one quarter of the total trade between Pakistan and Africa being with South Africa.

Bilateral economic opportunities:

The rising cost of imports and technology from traditional Western partners, increasing investment from China and Arab states in Pakistan, and growing African markets, as well as science & technology and tourism (niche markets) may also provide opportunities for cooperation that have economic benefit for South Africa

Bilateral trade and investment: The size and growth of Pakistan’s economy provides several opportunities for expanding trade, investment and economic relations between the two countries. The rising cost of imports and technology from traditional Western partners, increasing investment from China and Arab states in Pakistan, and growing African markets, as well as science & technology and tourism (niche markets) may also provide opportunities for cooperation that have economic benefit for South Africa. Pakistan’s “Look Africa” strategic direction (from 2017) and their more recent policy direction “Engage Africa” (driven by the Ministry of Commerce, Textile, Industry & Production and Investment; and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) provides the opportunity for South Africa to be a strategic “partner-of-choice” for Pakistani foreign direct investment (FDI) to establish manufacturing operations in order to benefit from African markets. This is also based on perceived advantages of free trade areas (FTAs), well-developed and expanding communication / transport links,



TRADE

and other advantages from Agenda 2063 flagship projects / 10-Year Implementation Plan. The recent developments relating to the AfCTA have given more impetus to the resolve of the Pakistani leadership and investors to forge ahead with the new policies and strategic direction. To this end Pakistan has organized two gatherings, one late last year in Islamabad and another in Nairobi early 2020, where the focus was on strengthening and expanding economic relations with Africa. At the “Pakistan and Africa Trade Development Conference” held in Nairobi, it was pointed out that Pakistan’s total bilateral trade with the African Continent was around \$4.2 billion in 2018-19, which was still a fraction of Africa’s total trade (and keeping in mind that South Africa’s total bilateral trade with Pakistan for 2019 was \$1.05 billion).

SECTORAL AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR SOUTH AFRICA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT:

- Manufacture and distribution of value-added products (including FMCG) for the African and South/Central Asian markets: Large Pakistani companies are keen to invest abroad and have capital resources available for projects in manufacturing of household goods, clothing and textiles, food products, medical instruments / equipment, pharmaceuticals, sports goods, leather goods / footwear and furniture, among others.
- Minerals/mining: The mineral sector in Pakistan provides opportunities for growth and investment. Pakistan has considerable unexploited mineral resources, including coal and gold. The country needs technology and resources to make better use of its coal resources, including through “coal gasification” and “coal-to-liquid” processes, where South African entities may benefit.
- Agriculture and livestock: Agriculture (primary and secondary production and necessary inputs) contributes a significant portion of Pakistan’s GDP, with the country exporting and importing large

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Pakistan’s “Look Africa” strategic direction (from 2017) and their more recent policy direction “Engage Africa” (driven by the Ministry of Commerce, Textile, Industry & Production and Investment; and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) provides the opportunity for South Africa to be a strategic “partner-of-choice” for Pakistani foreign direct investment (FDI) to establish manufacturing operations in order to benefit from African markets.

quantities of staple crops, fresh produce and processed foods. Considerable potential exist to expand mutual bilateral trade in fresh produce, including Citrus, Apples, Mango, Persimmons and Avocado; also to benefit from counter-seasonal trade (northern and southern hemisphere seasons) to ensure better supply for existing demand for these products in both countries. There is also a potential growing market for surplus maize crop from South Africa from local animal feed mills processing and for consumer value added maize-based products. South African authorities / institutions could utilize regular international tenders for commodities i.e. sugar, maize invited by “Trading Corporation of Pakistan – TCP”. With Pakistani society continuing to have a large agrarian segment, livestock improvement is a strategic priority for the government, which may provide opportunities for South African entities involved in genetics, breeding / improvement of livestock, especially for small farmers. There are also opportunities for closer cooperation in agriculture and food security and related research / technology.

A. South Africa and Pakistan Defence Cooperation

South Africa and Pakistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence and Defence Industrial Cooperation on 28 March 2017. Defence relations are good and there is a frequent exchange of high level and senior officials’ visits between the two countries. The South African Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, visited Pakistan during March 2017, when the above-mentioned MoU was also signed

B. South Africa Pakistan Bilateral Joint Commission:

Joint Commission: South Africa and Pakistan have enjoyed cordial bilateral relations since 1994, which are expanding across a number of sectors. The elevation of the Joint Commission to the level of political leadership, as well as planned high-level political visits, could provide new impetus to bilateral relations. Some initiatives of the government of PM Imran Khan coincide with the fundamental values of the South African Constitution and priorities of Government. The 5th Session of the Joint Commission, for the first time to be co-chaired at the level of Deputy Minister, is scheduled to be hosted by Pakistan at a convenient time.



Education in South Africa

Education in South Africa is governed by two national departments, namely the department of Basic Education (DBE), which is responsible for primary and secondary schools, and the department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), which is responsible for tertiary education and vocational training.

All South Africans have a right to basic education and the Bill of Rights obliges the government to progressively make education available and accessible through reasonable measures. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) is responsible for Outcome 1 (quality basic education) of government's Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2014-2019.

Schooling 2025, the overarching plan for the basic education sector, encapsulates the long-term vision of education priorities, targets and programmes articulated for the sector in the National Development Plan (NDP).

South African Council for Educators (SACE)

The SACE aims to enhance the status of the teaching profession through registering educators appropriately, managing professional development and promoting a code of ethics for all educators.

Umalusi

Umalusi is responsible for developing and maintaining a sub-framework of qualifications for the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Subframework (NQF Level 1 – 4) and the quality assurance of these qualifications.

1. Institutions of higher learning

The following institutions, among other:

- University of Cape Town
- University of the Witwatersrand
- Stellenbosch University
- University of KwaZulu-Natal



- North-West University
- University of Johannesburg
- University of Pretoria

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

The DHET is mandated to provide quality skills programmes that address the need in the labour market for intermediate skills accompanied by practical training. TVET comprises vocational, occupational and artisan education and training as offered by TVET colleges.

This band of education and training is also referred to as 'post-school', meaning that it refers to education and training that takes place after leaving school, even if only with a Grade 9 completed.

The only age restriction for a person wishing to study at the TVET level is that the person should be 16 years or older.

There are 50 registered and accredited public TVET colleges in South Africa operating on more than 264 campuses spread across the rural and urban areas of the country.

National Skills Authority

The NSA is an advisory body to give guidance to the Minister of Higher Education and Training on:

- policy, strategy, implementation and NSA allocations
- liaising with Sector Education and Training Authorities about policy, strategy and sector-skills plans
- implementing the NSDS
- reviewing the accounts and balance sheet of NSA annually
- Receiving and using information from the Skills Development Planning Unit.

National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)

The NSFAS is responsible for providing loans and bursaries, developing criteria and conditions for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students, raising funds, recovering loans, maintaining and analysing a database of funded students, undertaking research for the better use of financial resources and advising the Minister on matters relating to student financial aid.

In March 2019, the DHET allocated an additional R967 million to the NSFAS to settle the historic debt owed to universities by 52 514 NSFAS-funded continuing students.

International Students

South Africa's tertiary education system is the most extensive and highest quality on the

African continent. It attracts more international students than any other African nation. Data from UNESCO's Institute for Statistics (UIS) indicates that some 42,594 international students sought degrees in South Africa in



2014. The vast majority are from other African countries. The same year, just 7,395 South African students sought degrees abroad.

Inbound Mobility

As of 2014, South Africa was the fourth most popular destination for internationally mobile degree seekers from across Africa, behind France, the U.S., and the U.K. The largest sender by far is Zimbabwe, which, per UIS, sent a reported 10,602 degree-seeking students to South Africa in 2014. Other top countries

of origin include Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia, Lesotho, Nigeria, and Swaziland, each of which accounted for more than 2,000 enrollments in 2014. The low cost and relatively high quality of these institutions is likely one factor.

The only non-African country of origin among the top ten senders is the United States. According to IIE's Open Doors report for 2015/16, South Africa was the eleventh leading destination for U.S. study abroad participants. That year, some 5,337 American students studied on South African campuses, 17.6 percent more than the previous year.





South African Tourism: A Treasure...

South Africa, officially known as the Republic of South Africa, offers a great introduction to the many jewels of the African Continent. Tourists here will find classic African scenery: golden savannah, great gaping gorges, and hauntingly beautiful deserts, as well as their favorite African creatures - and, as a bonus- the creature comforts. Apart from the big-name game parks of Kruger and the Kgalagadi (Kalahari) Transfrontier Park, South Africa is home to some of the world’s most luxurious private game reserves and lodges. Wildlife lovers come here from all corners of the globe in search of the “Big Five”: lion, buffalo, leopard, rhino, and elephant, and often they find it, and so much more.

Coral reefs, shark dives, dragon-backed mountain ranges, white-water rafting, and golden beaches lapped by legendary surf breaks are some of South Africa’s many other attractions. Traveling around this vast land and touring the vibrant cities, visitors can learn about the nation’s turbulent history: in Cape Town, one of the world’s most beautiful

cities; in Durban, a melting pot of cultures and cuisines, at the poignant museums and galleries in Johannesburg, and in Soweto, birthplace of Nelson Mandela, who helped birth democracy in this astoundingly diverse nation.

1 Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces

Kruger National Park is one of the world’s most famous safari parks. One of the oldest game





reserves in South Africa, the park lies about a 3.5 to 4.5 hour drive from Johannesburg and offers visitors the chance to see the “Big Five”: lion, leopard, buffalo, elephant, and rhino, as well as an astounding diversity of other wildlife. It’s also home to bushman rock paintings and archaeological sites. Visitors can explore Kruger on the large network of sealed roads; organize a walking safari; or soar over the vast grasslands, gallery forests, and river systems in a hot air balloon.

2 Cape Town, Western Cape

One of the planet’s most breathtaking cities, Cape Town is, by population, the second largest settlement in South Africa. Nature surrounds this multicultural city,



which nuzzles between a rugged range of mountains and the sea. For a spectacular overview, hike to the peak of flat-topped Table Mountain, or glide up on the cableway. The hour-long hike up Lion’s Head also provides panoramic city vistas. On Table Mountain’s eastern slopes, the magnificent Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens lie within a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Strolling along the waterfront boardwalk, visitors might see whales spouting from the harbor. Penguins waddle along the golden beaches in False Bay, while south of the city, Cape Point is home to abundant wildlife and diverse botanical wonders. One of Cape Town’s top attractions is the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront. Reminiscent of Fisherman’s Wharf in San Francisco, visitors come here to shop, dine, and enjoy the many entertainment venues, including Two Ocean’s Aquarium. Camp’s Bay, rimmed by beautiful boulder-flanked beaches, offers chic shops and cafes. At sunset, nature lovers stake a spot along spectacular Chapman’s Peak Drive in a dusk ritual known as “sundowners” to watch

the sun sink slowly into the sea.

3 Kgalagadi (Kalahari) Transfrontier Park, Northern Cape

A merger of South Africa’s Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Botswana’s Gemsbok National Park, the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park is one of the largest wilderness areas in the world. Established in 2000, it is Africa’s first officially declared transfrontier park and lies in a remote region of South Africa’s Northern Cape. Gnarled camel thorn trees, red sands, golden grasslands, and deep blue skies provide a bold backdrop for photographs and game viewing. Among the huge diversity of wildlife, this vast conservation area is home to the famous black-maned Kalahari lion,

stately gemsbok with their V-shaped horns, the sprawling nests of sociable weavers, meerkats, and many birds of prey. Other predators such as leopard, cheetah, and hyenas are also found here. Four-wheel drive vehicles are recommended for some of the minor rugged roads or for those venturing into Botswana.

4 Stellenbosch, Western Cape

Stellenbosch is one of the most picturesque towns in South Africa. A mosaic of farms, old



oak trees, and white-washed Cape Dutch dwellings, Stellenbosch is one of the best preserved towns from the era of the Dutch East India Company. Today, it’s a university town with a vibrant feel and fantastic scenery. Foodies will love it here. Stellenbosch is home to some of South Africa’s best restaurants as well as many sidewalk cafes. History buffs can take a walk back in time at the Village Museum, a group of four restored houses and gardens dating from 1709 to 1850. Rupert Museum displays important works by South African artists, and the Botanic Garden at the University of Stellenbosch is another top tourist attraction. In the surrounding area, nature buffs can hike and bike on the wilderness trails in the breathtaking Jonkershoek Nature Reserve

5 The Drakensberg, KwaZulu-Natal

The spectacular Drakensberg, meaning



“Dragon Mountains,” is one of the most popular vacation destinations in South Africa and home to the country’s highest peaks. The region encompasses the World Heritage-listed uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park, a region of jaw-dropping beauty with jagged basalt buttresses and San rock art, and Royal Natal National Park, home to the awe-inspiring Amphitheatre, a magnificent cliff face and source of South Africa’s main rivers. The Giant’s Castle Game Reserve in the region protects large herds of eland. Dense forests flourish in the sheltered valleys, and the area is home to more than 800 different species of flowering plants as well as a rich diversity of wildlife. In the summer, the mountain landscapes are lush and fertile with gushing waterfalls and crystal-clear streams. In the winter, snow cloaks the dramatic peaks. Visitors flock here to hike and bike the scenic mountain trails, fish for trout, rock climb, abseil, parasail, and raft the waters of the fast-flowing rivers. Hot air balloon rides are a great way to appreciate the dramatic topography

6 The Garden Route

Along the country’s southeast coast, the Garden Route runs for about 200 kilometers



through some of South Africa’s most breathtaking coastal scenery. The route stretches along the Indian Ocean from Mossel Bay, in the Western Cape, to the Storms River, in the Eastern Cape. This popular driving route passes through rolling green hills, pretty coastal towns, lagoons, lakes, and coastal cliffs. Highlights of the route include the charming town of Knysna snuggled between dense forests and a sparkling lagoon; the beautiful Garden Route National Park with its gorges, tidal pools, and thick forests; Oudtshoorn’s ostrich farms and Cango Caves; and the seal colony of the Robberg Nature Reserve in Plettenberg Bay. Adventures along the way run the gamut, from elephant back rides and whale watching trips to bungee jumping and tree canopy tours

7 Cage Dive with Great White Sharks

Climb into a thick iron cage, plunge into the ocean, and come face-to-face with a great white shark. Believe it or not, this is one of South Africa’s top attractions - for thrill



seekers. The sport has become so popular that new tour operators keep sprouting up every year. The best time to try the dive is April through October, but great whites swim these waters throughout the year thanks to healthy populations of seals and fish. Cape Town tour operators organize shark cage dives to areas such as Simon’s Town, Seal Island, Dyer Island, Mossel Bay, and Gansbaai, the self-proclaimed “Great White Shark Capital of the World.” Trips can also be arranged out of Durban and Rocky Bay. Since divers are enclosed in the custom-designed cages, no diving certification is required. For a little less excitement, it’s also possible to watch the action from the boat.

8 Durban’s Golden Mile, KwaZulu-Natal

Durban’s sweeping waterfront promenade, the Golden Mile, is a legendary tourist magnet and a great starting point for a tour of the city.



Long blond beaches lure swimmers, surfers, and anglers, while the bustling promenade feels like Miami Beach with its high-rise hotels, shops, restaurants, and flashy entertainment complexes. Visitors can stroll along here or rent a bike or Segway. Besides the beach scene, top attractions along this stretch include uShaka Marine World, a wonderland of sea-themed attractions; Moses Mabhida Stadium; and Mini Town, a tiny replica of Durban with a miniature rail network, airport, and harbor scene.

9 Johannesburg and Pretoria, Gauteng

Johannesburg, also known as Jo’burg, is the largest city in South Africa by population and a gateway for many travelers on safari. Named the “City of Gold” for its rich deposits of the precious metal, it’s also the economic engine



and vibrant heart of the country. Top historical attractions include the Apartheid Museum, a poignant look at the oppression of apartheid to the birth of democracy; Constitution Hill; and Gold Reef City, which traces the region’s history through mining-themed attractions. If Johannesburg is the heart of South Africa, the shanty towns of Soweto, are its soul. An abbreviation for “southwestern townships,”



Soweto birthed the freedom movement, which created South Africa’s new democratic constitution. Guided tours of the townships often include a visit to the Mandela House, now a national monument. Close in distance, but a world away in feel, Pretoria is the administrative capital of the country. It’s a city of parks and gardens, and home to the Voortrekker Monument and Heritage Site and the highly-lauded Freedom Park.

10. Robben Island, Western Cape

In Table Bay, World-Heritage-listed Robben Island is a haunting reminder of the horrors of apartheid. Nelson Mandela spent 18 years imprisoned in a tiny cell here along with other political dissidents and social misfits. Perhaps



the best part about this experience is that ex-prisoners are usually the guides, sharing poignant first-hand accounts of the atrocities they endured. Tours to the island begin with multimedia exhibits in the museum at the Nelson Mandela Gateway at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront. Sightseers then board boats to Robben Island, often braving rough swells on the 30-45-minute ride. Be sure to book early as the tours can fill up fast.

11. List of World Heritage Sites in South Africa

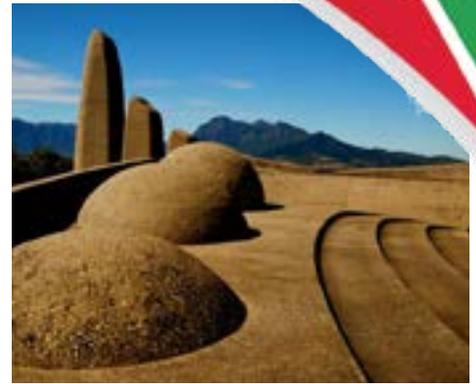
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites are places of importance to cultural or natural heritage as described in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, established in 1972.[1] South Africa accepted the convention on 10 July 1997, making its historical sites eligible for inclusion on the list. As of 2018, there are nine World Heritage Sites in South Africa, including four cultural sites, four natural sites and one mixed site.

1. Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa
2. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape

3. Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape
4. Robben Island
5. Cape Floral Region Protected Areas
6. Vredefort Dome
7. uKhahlamba / Drakensberg Park
8. Khomani Cultural Landscape
9. Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains
10. iSimangaliso Wetland Park

Tourism Opportunities:

South Africa offers real and growing potential for “meetings, incentives, conferences and



exhibitions (MICE) tourism” from large Pakistan companies – which could involve organised visits by tour groups for a particular purpose. South Africa is well suited to cater for Muslim tourists, with its high standards of infrastructure and services and most food products certified Halaal, at much lower costs than Europe or North America.

There is also a growing potential for “medical tourism” from Pakistani citizens, who may have traditionally preferred Europe or North America for specialized medical treatment. South Africa offers highly affordable medical treatment and procedures, some of the world’s best doctors and health care facilities, together with unrivalled holiday options – as a “package”. South Africa also competes well with other developing country medical tourism hubs like Singapore or Thailand.

South Africa is also becoming an increasingly popular tourism destination for Pakistani families who undertake international holidays. There is also a high volume of family visits, also in view of the growing number of Pakistani Diaspora in South Africa.



South Africa: The Rainbow Nation

South Africa has been famously referred to as the rainbow nation because it is made up of so many diverse cultures and religions. Contained within South Africa's borders are Zulu, Xhosa, Pedi, Tswana, Ndebele, Khoisan, Hindu, Muslim, and Afrikaner people to name but a few. All of these people are united by calling South Africa home, and therefore their lives all contribute to forming a part of the country's heritage, identity and culture. Understanding that South Africa is composed of all these various influences is essential for helping South Africans to understand and respect each other and to learn from each other's cultural practices. This is part of the healing that democracy has brought after culture was used to divide South Africans in the past.

Blending Western technology with indigenous technology, Western traditions with African and Asian traditions, South Africa is a study in contrasts.

The culture of South Africa is known for its ethnic and cultural diversity. As they are everywhere in the world, patterns of daily life in South Africa are conditioned by social class, ethnicity, religion, and residence: the life of a black diamond miner in Limpopo province is much different from that of an Indian shopkeeper in Durban, an Afrikaner office worker in Johannesburg, or a teacher of English extraction in Cape Town .

Art

The oldest art objects in the world were

discovered in a South African cave. Dating from 75,000 years ago, these small drilled snail shells could have no other function than to have been strung on a string as a necklace. South Africa was one of the cradles of the human species.

New forms of art evolved in the mines and townships: a dynamic art using everything from plastic strips to bicycle spokes. The Dutch-influenced folk art of the Afrikaner

The culture of South Africa is known for its ethnic and cultural diversity

Trekboer and the urban white artists earnestly following changing European traditions from the 1850s onwards also contributed to this eclectic mix, which continues to evolve today.

One form of art developed during the period of apartheid. This new characterization was termed "township art" and became common in the 1960s and 1970s. This art style tended to depict scenes from everyday life of poor

black individuals in South Africa.

Traditional art forms such as dancing and textile weaving are used as vehicles of ethnic identity and are carefully preserved, while modern art forms from painting to literature have flourished in the years since the end of apartheid.

There is strong support from the private sector to the arts, to complement state funding. Traditional western art traditions have transformed to become more inclusive, also to empower especially the youth from previously disadvantaged communities, for example the South African National Youth Orchestra Foundation

Architecture

The architecture of South Africa mirrors the vast ethnic and cultural diversity of the country and its historical colonial period. In addition, influences from other distant countries have contributed to the variety of the South African architectural landscape.

Herbert Baker, among the country's most influential architects, designed the Union Buildings in Pretoria. Other buildings of note include the Rhodes memorial and St George's Cathedral in Cape Town, and St John's College in Johannesburg.

Cape Dutch architecture was prominent in the early days (17th century) of the Cape Colony, and the name derives from the fact that the initial settlers of the Cape were primarily Dutch. The style has roots in medieval Holland,



apartheid. Another famous black novelist, Zakes Mda, transitioned from poetry and plays to becoming a novelist in the same time period. His novel, *The Heart of Redness* won the 2001 Commonwealth Writers Prize and was made a part of the school curriculum across South Africa.

1910. It was followed through the 1910s and '20s by several epics that rivaled the Hollywood productions of Cecil B. DeMille, notably I.W. Schlesinger's *Symbol of Sacrifice* (1918), which employed 25,000 Zulu warriors as extras to depict the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879.

launched to fame with her song "Weekend Special", which was sung in English. More famous traditional musicians include Ladysmith Black Mambazo, while the Soweto String Quartet performs classic music with an African flavour. White and Coloured South African singers are historically influenced by European musical styles.



As is the case with other arts, film has also been used as a means of political commentary, despite official censorship in the apartheid era. In the 1970s director Ross Devenish brought Fugard's highly political play *Boesman and Lena* (1973) to the screen, and Soweto-based playwright and filmmaker Gibson Kente directed *How Long (Must We Suffer...)?* (1976), the first major South African film made by a black artist. *A Dry White Season* (1989), based on a novel by Brink, used a largely American cast to bring the harsh reality of apartheid to an international audience. Other films that reached a wider audience include Afrikaner director Jamie Uys's *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980), Oliver Schmitz and Thomas Mogotlane's *Mapantsula* (1988), Manie van Rensburg's *Taxi to Soweto* (1991), Anant Singh and Darrell Roodt's *Sarafina!* (1992), and Gavin Hood's *Tsotsi* (2005), based on a novel by Fugard.

South Africa has produced world-famous jazz musicians, notably Hugh Masekela, Jonas Gwangwa, Abdullah Ibrahim, Miriam Makeba, Jonathan Butler, Chris McGregor, and Sathima Bea Benjamin. Afrikaans music covers multiple genres, such as the contemporary Steve Hofmeyr and the punk rock band Fokopolisiekar. Crossover artists such as Verity (internationally recognised for innovation in the music industry) and Johnny Clegg and his bands Juluka and Savuka have enjoyed various success underground, publicly, and abroad.

The South African music scene includes Kwaito, a new music genre that had developed in the mid-1980s and has since developed to become the most popular socio-economic form of representation among the populace. Some may argue that the political aspects of Kwaito have diminished after Apartheid, and the relative interest in politics has become a minor aspect of daily life. Others argue that in a sense, Kwaito is in fact a political force that shows activism in its apolitical actions.

Film

Since the 1890s, when the medium was first introduced, film has been an important means of cultural expression for South African artists. The country's first major narrative film, *The Kimberley Diamond Robbery*, appeared in

Music

There is great diversity in music from South Africa. Many black musicians who sang in Afrikaans or English during apartheid have since begun to sing in traditional African languages, and have developed a unique style called Kwaito. Of note is Brenda Fassie, who

Today, major corporations like Sony, BMG, and EMI have appeared on the South African scene to produce and distribute Kwaito music. Due to its overwhelming popularity, as well as the general influence of DJs, who are among the top 5 most influential types of people within the country, Kwaito has taken over radio, television, and magazines.



South African rock music is a very popular subculture, especially within the Johannesburg region. The alternative rock band Seether gained international popularity in the early 2000s, with four of their albums achieving Gold or Platinum certification in the United States. Two other alternative bands,



KONGOS and Civil Twilight, also achieved success abroad in the late 2000s.

Theatre

South African playwrights responded to the new cultural and political milieu with such innovations as multilingual plays. Support for the newer indigenous theatre came from independent and nonracial theatrical organizations, such as the Market Theatre in Johannesburg. Plays by Athol Fugard, Mbongeni Ngema, Fatima Dike, Zakes Mda, and Pieter-Dirk Uys have been performed worldwide

Cuisine

The cuisine of South Africa is heavily meat-based and has spawned the distinctively South African social gathering known as a braai. A variation of the barbecue, braais often feature boerewors or spicy sausages, and mielies (maize) or Mielie-meal, often as a porridge, or pearl millet, a staple food of black South Africans. Pastries such like koeksisters and desserts like melktert (milk tart) are also universally popular.

Indian food like curry is also popular, especially in Durban with its large Indian population. Another local Indian Durban speciality is the 'bunny' or bunny chow, which consists of a hollowed-out loaf of white bread filled with curry.

The Portuguese community has also made its mark, with spicy peri-peri chicken being a favourite. The South African Portuguese-themed restaurant chain Nando's now has



restaurants in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, Malaysia, Kenya and the United Arab Emirates.

Sports

The most popular sports in South Africa are

association football, rugby and cricket. Other sports with significant support are hockey, swimming, athletics, golf, boxing, tennis and netball. Although association football commands the greatest following among the youth, other sports like basketball, surfing, and skateboarding are increasingly popular.





Pakistan President Receives Credentials of Qatar's Ambassador

By Mian Fazal Elahi

HE President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Arif Alvi received at the presidential palace the credentials of HE Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Qatar to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

HE the Ambassador conveyed the greetings of HH the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani to HE the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and HH the Amir's wishes to HE the President of health and well-being, and to the government and people of Pakistan continuous progress and prosperity.

For his part, HE the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan entrusted HE the Ambassador to convey his greetings to HH the Amir, and his wishes to HH the Amir of health and happiness, and to the State of Qatar constant progress and prosperity.

HE the President wished HE the Ambassador success in his duties, assuring him of providing all support to promote the bilateral relations to a closer cooperation in various fields.

**HE Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman
Al-Thani**

**Ambassador of the State of Qatar to
Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

I extend my sincere gratitude and great appreciation to His Excellency

Dr. Arif Alvi, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for receiving me and accepting my credentials as Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the brotherly Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I was honored to convey to His Excellency the greetings of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, And His Highness' wishes for His Excellency the president's health and well-being, and for the prosperity, development, health and wellness of the brotherly people of Pakistan.

The State of Qatar and Pakistan enjoy distinguished historical relations with deep roots and a steady step forward, and we appreciate the role of Pakistan in the comprehensive progress witnessed by the State of Qatar.

Our relations have been strengthened over time thanks to mutual interest and eagerness, and through bilateral visits at the highest levels, especially the visit of His Highness / Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the state of Qatar, to Islamabad during 2019, which witnessed signing a number of Agreements to strengthen existing ties of cooperation in many areas. This visit gave bilateral relations



new impetus in all aspects, particularly in the economic, political, social as well as military fields. It is a great honor to represent my country in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and to work with the Pakistani government and people in strengthening the existing close ties as directed by His Highness The Amir Sheikh / Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and by His Excellency Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh / Khalid bin Khalifa Al Thani, and His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh / Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman Al Thani.

In conclusion, I pray Allah Almighty to protect Pakistan and its people from the pandemic caused by Corona, wishing that the life will soon be normal again, In sha Allah...)



Qatar Participates in 9th Session of Arab-Chinese Forum at Ministerial Level

The State of Qatar participated in the ninth session of the Arab-Chinese forum at the ministerial level, which began today and held via video conference.

The delegation of the State of Qatar in the session was chaired by HE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

During the session, the State of Qatar said that the Arab-Chinese cooperation is based on common interests, a long history and convergent views regarding many global issues, stressing that the prosperity and security of the Arab world and China require enhancing cooperation and joint action through strengthening joint institutions and projects, in a way that serves the causes of our peoples and achieve regional and global peace.

The transformations and challenges that the world is going through oblige us to work together towards rearranging international relations according to a vision based on cooperation, solidarity and coexistence among all peoples, because peace is what will lead to a bright future in the world and its stability and development, the State of Qatar said.

The Palestinian cause remains at the top of the list of the joint agenda between the Arab world and China, the State of Qatar affirmed, while appreciating the continuous efforts of the friendly Republic of China to advocate the

Palestinian people and their legitimate rights to obtain their freedom and end the Israeli occupation of their lands, which necessitates that the international community fulfils its responsibilities in achieving a just solution to the key issue in the region, in accordance with international legitimacy resolutions, the principle of a two-state solution and the Arab Peace Initiative.

The stalled peace process in the region is the result of Israel's continuous disregard of all international convents and norms, and its persistence in flagrant practices and violations that contravene the provisions of international law, international legitimacy resolutions and the references of the peace process, which will ultimately lead to a crack in the credibility of the international community and its institutions, Qatar added.

The political solution remains the only way out of the protracted Syrian crisis, with all its humanitarian and economic consequences that exceeded the borders of Syria, Qatar stressed, emphasizing that the international community should make sufficient efforts to deal with the Syrian catastrophe and its various complications in order to find a comprehensive solution to the suffering of the Syrians in a manner that preserves the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the Syrian lands.

The State of Qatar pointed out that the situations in Libya is facing many challenges,

and everyone's commitment must be renewed to support the Libyan state and its people to reach stability and to also encourage political dialogue between its parties, in accordance with the aspirations of the Libyan people.

On the Yemeni crisis, Qatar said, "We are all concerned about the continuing political impasse to resolve this crisis that led to the killing, sabotage and destruction of the capabilities of the Yemeni people and their cultural heritage, which requires us to cooperate in order to put an end to this crisis to preserve Yemen's unity, sovereignty and stop bloodshed of its people. Our move shall be based on the outcomes of the Yemeni national dialogue, the Gulf initiative and Security Council Resolution 2216."

It explained that this forum is a testament to the shared will of Arab countries and China to establish a successful model for South-South cooperation.

The State of Qatar hoped that the forum would be a strong impetus to accelerate the pace of sustainable development at the national level through complementary work accompanying the efforts to advance the human element, build capacity, transfer expertise, technology and capital, increase the volume of trade exchanges, and create economic investment opportunities without overlooking the cultural aspect.



A defeated Modi and peace in South Asia



Senator Rehman Malik

I would like to analyse the present Indo-China row and threats to South Asian peace and the role of world powers especially Russia, USA, and Australia; where do we stand as a neighbour of highly-hostile India?

We need to understand why this region has been selected by world powers to destabilise and the response is very simple, that the west does not like the phenomenal rise of China as an economic unit. Secondly, US President Donald Trump had openly announced that he does not like China's One-Belt-One-Road (OBOR) initiative. While the US has failed technically, and has faced defeat in Afghanistan, however, it wants to leave Afghanistan while saving some face in the process. In the given situation, it cannot stand the indulgence of its arch-rivals; China and Russia in the peace process.

In the meantime, India is also playing dirty and does not want peace in Afghanistan. In the emerging situation, there is likely a gulf between Russia and the US, in which Russia will be seen closer to China. The west and the

US chose Indian PM Narendra Modi with low intelligence capabilities who easily fell in their trap against China, which PM Modi realised for the first time when he had to ditch the Blue Dot Network, which was aimed at shifting investors from China to India. But Modi was not allowed by the Indian elite and opposition to provide such a big cost in terms of land and logistics for the US in this anti-China project.

The confusion in Modi, after deliberate conflict with China displays that he might have now realised that fighting for the sake of the US will be counterproductive. PM Modi has been exposed both here and abroad.

PM Modi helped the Americans via a joint defence pact and built six airports outside India to stop supplies via the blue line to China. India collaborated with Australia as well to share two of its islands which are strategically important from the defence point of view. In this way, India provided the US three-way support, whereas China's intelligence was aware of these moves

via Indian mobile service providers. I must say that it was India that initiated provoking China to make the US happy.

India opted to build infrastructure in eastern Ladakh as it is away from Pakistan and India did not want to see both Pakistan and China counter the attack together. This strategy of India will be detrimental for Pakistan. One can clearly see the defeated face of Modi nowadays as he looks to have been beaten well by Chinese and the Chinese have served him right and indirectly sent a stinging message to the US as well.

India is buying arms from Russia and building its defence on the Sino-Indian border. Apart from having a 75-year-old relationship, the defence facet of the relationship is one of the strongest pillars of the India-Russia friendship. It remains to be seen how India can play a balancing act between the US and Russia. The latest cause of the strength of this relationship is the S-400 deal between India and Russia. Russia's S-400 system—a mobile, long-range, surface-to-air missile system was launched in 2007. India signed a \$5bn deal for the state-of-the-art missile defence system in 2018. It will be delivered to India by the end of 2021. Russia is now under sanctions by the US so in such commotion, the US finds one of its closest allies, India doing a hand-to-hand deal for S-400s with Russia. The sanctions came in after the deal, but now India can't back off at this juncture since Russia is one of its oldest defence partners and that's why so far, there has been no anti-India statement from Russia. India has lost heavy exports of over \$100 billion

and losing such a volume of exports is going to bring a huge setback.

Meanwhile, when China completed its industrialisation within 60 years and became the world's second-largest economic and military power, and has already challenged the US to pull out its ships from South China Sea, it also gained the power and ability to deny the US Navy access to its littorals and near the sea.

India is also playing dirty and does not want peace in Afghanistan

This reflects badly on the United States as there is no single body of water under the US Navy's control in the South China Sea. Thus began the pivot back to some Asian countries that were to provoke China with tacit US backing as it hopes that a myriad of provocations will prompt China to fire the first shot, but in the case of Philippines, the opposite happened near Scarborough Shoals in 2012 when they tried to detain Chinese fishermen. This triggered a chain of events that enabled China to reclaim land and deploy fighter jets in the Parcel Islands.

From 1945 to 1972, there had never been disputes in the South China Sea, which had returned to China from Japanese occupation and the 11 dash lines until the discovery of oil reserves underneath the South China Sea. After it was found that there is a huge energy reserve underneath the South China Sea, Vietnam broke into the 9 dashed line and claimed some islands. Philippines and Indonesia jointly encroached Chinese sovereignty and built many artificial islands within the 9 dash line and made profit from the extraction of oil and gas. It is important to note that all the countries bordering the South China Sea are allies of the USA. It is quite apparent now that India has been emboldened by the US to provoke China in a recent standoff to engage it on the borders while US warships illegally trespassed the disputed South China Seas. It is in China's and other Asian countries' interest to maintain a peaceful SCS where \$5.3 trillion worth of global trade passes through.

The confusion in Modi, after deliberate conflict

with China displays that he might have now realised that fighting for the sake of the US will be counterproductive. PM Modi has been exposed both here and abroad. One question is circulating; whether India can attack Pakistan in sheer desperation to save some face in front of its own people? My analysis is that Modi is basically a coward and an RSS-infected terrorist. Indian politicians and the general public, in particular, are both aware of this mentally unstable man who is badly influenced by Indian films and is likely to put India in big trouble because of his brainless self. Someone has to tell him to get out of the Bollywood syndrome and be practical enough to learn to survive with neighbours in the changing world.

There is a little fear that India might try to attack to cut CPEC from China to Pakistan via Gilgit Baltistan as it is making false claims of possession of GB territory, but it is worth noting that we have more than 21000 Pakistani security personnel who have been tasked with protecting Chinese nationals in Pakistan working on CPEC—amongst other projects—starting from Khunjerab to Karachi and Punjab. Both countries are facing terrorism from Taliban and ETMI and I feel proud in declaring that I orchestrated the arrest of 23 hardcore terrorists of ETMI and handed them over to the Chinese authorities.

As a frightening and unfortunate development, after US President Donald Trump's recent visit to India, both countries had signed a multi-billion-dollar arms deal. It will definitely have no effect on the American arms industry, but it will take a huge toll on the peace of South Asia. Pakistan and China both need to voice concerns over the deal and India's aggressive designs and try to counter these threats together appropriately. China recently defended Pakistan openly against Donald Trump's criticism against the country. The Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi reaffirmed Beijing's support to Pakistan. Spokeswoman Hua Chunying asserted that Pakistan was on the frontline in the struggle against terrorism and had made "great sacrifices" and "important contributions" in the fight. Chunying called on the international community to recognise Pakistan's role in the fight against terrorism. This is a fact and it is part of Sino-Pak history. Pakistan, Russia, China, and Turkey should become part of an alliance. China performed to rise as an economic leader which has dismayed many and this US-China Cold War will further step up in the future. There is no doubt that China can act as balancing power to block any US venture in South Asia and the above alliance can play a very positive role.

In the end, I would like to add that India should try to work out some honourable way to wriggle out from this row with China to keep South Asia peaceful. In reference to Pakistan, I feel that India will continue to have limited violations on

It is in China's and other Asian countries' interest to maintain a peaceful SCS where \$5.3 trillion worth of global trade passes through.

our Line of Control (LoC) to keep us engaged on the border, whereas Modi has done whatever he had to do in Indian Occupied Kashmir. Modi is very fond of airstrikes as evidenced earlier by the two unsuccessful strikes against Pakistan. Modi by now has fully realised the capability of Pakistan's armed forces and the nation need not to worry, as Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajawa is capable of countering and defeating the enemy. Pakistan has emerged as a closer friend to China during the recent Indo-China clashes duly supported by the west. The defeated Modi was looking even more demoralised during his visit to the hospital in Galwan to see the soldiers, badly beaten by Chinese soldiers in eastern Ladakh.

The desperate Modi may be prompted by his western bosses to seek revenge either through a proxy war in China or a limited attack on China in some selected parts of the Indo-China border in due time.

Note: Opinions expressed are solely my own and not necessarily to reflect the views or opinions of my party.

The writer is a PPP Senator, former Interior Minister of Pakistan, and Chairman of think tank "Global Eye" and Senate Standing Committee on Interior. He can be reached at: rmalik1212@gmail.com, Twitter @Senrehmanmalik



JF-17 participates in Virtual Air Tattoo show

Besides indigenously manufactured fighter aircraft, time tested C-130 Hercules also participated in mega event

By Mian Asadullah

It was a moment of pride for Pakistan when the country's JF-17 Thunder participated in the Virtual Air Tattoo Show-2020 at Royal Air Force Base Fairford (UK).

This year, owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, air forces from all over the world were asked to send short video clips of the participating aircraft and aircrew. Besides the indigenously-manufactured multirole fighter aircraft, the

time-tested C-130 Hercules also participated in the mega event. As per the conditions, PAF sent short video clips of each participating aircraft along with message from the aircrew. These clips were telecast on the official social media channels of RIAT and were widely appreciated by the online users.

The event would go a long way in showcasing the potential of JF-17 for the international market besides projecting the soft image of the country across the world.

Fans of the Royal International Air Tattoo enjoyed a weekend of virtual flying displays, interviews and never seen before aerial footages of modern aircraft. Ranked among the biggest air shows of the world, the Royal International Air Tattoo features aircraft from the leading air forces across the globe. Various air forces, aircraft manufacturers, aerospace technology firms participate in this mega show each year.

Induction Ceremony of Pakistan Navy Ship Yarmook Held at Karachi



Agency

Induction ceremony of state of the art Corvette, Pakistan Navy Ship YARMOOK was held at Pakistan Navy Dockyard, Karachi. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Speaking at the occasion, the Chief Guest termed the induction event as important milestone for Pakistan Navy. He added that PNS YARMOOK in Pakistan Navy Fleet will significantly act as force multiplier to safeguard maritime interests of Pakistan. The Admiral further underscored that the ship will contribute towards achieving sustained maritime order through Pakistan Navy Regional Maritime Security Patrols (RMSP) initiatives. While highlighting the plight of Kashmiris in Indian Occupied Kashmir (Iok), the Chief Guest paid tribute to their exemplary struggle of self-determination against Indian oppression. He also paid rich tribute to the medical and paramedical staff of the country to fight COVID-19 pandemic.

PNS YARMOOK is latest warship with an effective amalgam of weapons & sensors possessing cutting edge self-protection and terminal defence systems constructed at M/S DAMEN Shipyards, Romania. The ship is capable to perform variety of naval operations and transport helicopter & Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) simultaneously. The second Corvette PNS TABUK is expected to join Pakistan Navy Fleet towards end of this year.

Later, the Chief Guest lauded professional competence of M/s DAMEN Shipyards (Romania) and cooperation for delivering high quality platforms to Pakistan Navy. The induction ceremony was attended by Senior Naval Officers.



20th China-France Strategic Dialogue held successfully: China



42 concrete cooperation outcomes were reached at the High-Level Economic and Financial Dialogue, which is quite impressive

State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Diplomatic Counselor to French President Emmanuel Bonne successfully held the 20th China-France Strategic Dialogue said by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference. He further added that On July 21, Vice Premier Hu Chunhua of the State Council and French Economy and Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire co-chaired the 7th China-France High Level Economic and Financial Dialogue. Press releases of the Chinese side have offered detailed information about the dialogues. I would like to stress that it was an important consensus of the two heads of state in their fourth telephone call of the year to hold the two dialogues as soon as possible. They are the first high-level institutional dialogues between China and another major country. It is of great significance to preparing for the resumption of high-level exchanges between China and France at an early date, and to realizing new and greater development in bilateral relations after standing the test of COVID-19.

The two dialogues have yielded fruitful results, which can be summarized in the following aspects. First, the two sides had extensive and in-depth exchanges on international and

multilateral cooperation against the pandemic, deepening bilateral practical cooperation, and promoting the sound and steady development of China-France and China-EU relations, which deepened mutual understanding and enhanced political mutual trust. Second, both sides identified future priorities in bilateral relations, and agreed to maintain the momentum of frequent high-level exchanges, seek steady progress in key cooperation projects in such areas as emerging infectious diseases prevention and control, agri-food and aviation. Fast-track arrangement will be fully leveraged to boost resumption of work and production and keep industrial chains and supply chains stable. The two sides will actively explore new areas of cooperation conducive to economic recovery and industrial transformation and upgrade. In particular, 42 concrete cooperation outcomes were reached at the High-Level Economic and Financial Dialogue, which is quite impressive. Third, the two sides stressed the importance of China-EU relations and in this context, agreed to speed up negotiations on an investment agreement, sign an agreement on geographical indications as soon as possible, earnestly strengthen cooperation in climate change, biodiversity protection and other fields, and uphold multilateralism with concrete

actions. Fourth, the two sides undertook to adopt effective macroeconomic policies to support economic growth, strengthen policy coordination to jointly tackle the fallout of COVID-19, support G20's role as a premier forum for international economic cooperation, and oppose all forms of protectionism. Both support WHO's critical leading role in promoting and coordinating the global pandemic response and call for efforts to keep regional and global industrial chains and supply chains stable to help resumption of work and production. The two sides also agreed to jointly safeguard a fair and non-discriminatory market environment and encourage companies from all countries to participate in 5G development in accordance with market and security principles.

As can be seen from the dialogues, relations between China and France, both permanent members of the UN Security Council and influential major countries, have comprehensive and strategic connotations at a very high level. Deepening and expanding this comprehensive strategic partnership is not only in the interests of both countries, but also conducive to promoting China-EU relations, safeguarding world peace and development, and bringing more stability into an uncertain world.

Chinese minister bids farewell to Pakistani Envoy



Ambassador of Pakistan to China Ms. Naghmana Alamgir Hashmi was accorded farewell after one-year tenure in Beijing.

Moin-ul-Haque, currently serving as Ambassador of Pakistan to Paris will replace Hashmi as the new envoy to Beijing. Vice Foreign Minister of China Luo Zhaohui met with Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi. On the occasion, Luo conveyed his thankfulness to

duties and believed Pakistan-China relations would overcome any difficulties and challenges and constantly achieve greater development.

Hashmi is recognized for her contribution to the cultural understanding between China and Pakistan. As an ambassador in favor of Chinese culture, she depicts the traits of Chinese civilization as peaceful and benevolent.

Meanwhile, she has endeavored to share the core spirit of Pakistan and its people by introducing Sufism to the Chinese audience. Her deep understanding of both Chinese

and Pakistani cultures has warranted her achievements in bringing the two peoples closer.

Hashmi is a champion of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). She highlighted the tangible results and benefits to the local people brought about by CPEC and recognized its renewed vitality into Pakistan's socioeconomic development. Her signed article "From Khunjerab to Gwadar: 69 years of concord, cooperation, and connectivity" represents part of her efforts in promoting the CPEC project.

Hashmi is recognized for her contribution to the cultural understanding between China and Pakistan

Hashmi for her great contribution to promoting friendly exchanges and cooperation between China and Pakistan, and expressed the hope that Hashmi would continue to care for and support China-Pakistan relations.

Hashmi thanked the Chinese side for its valuable support during her performance of





Embassy of Pakistan Organised a Farewell Ceremony for Ambassador Naghmana A. Hashmi

The Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing organised a ceremony to bid farewell to Ambassador Naghmana A. Hashmi who is retiring after a distinguished career spanning nearly four decades in the Foreign Service of Pakistan.

Before assuming her responsibilities as Pakistan's Ambassador to China last year, Ambassador Hashmi earlier served as Pakistan's envoy to European Union, Belgium, Luxembourg and Ireland. At the Headquarters, she served in important divisions including Amercias, the United Nations, OIC and the Foreign Secretary's Office.

During her previous stint in Beijing as Pakistan's Deputy Head of Mission from 2003-2007, Ambassador Hashmi played a pivotal role in the conception of CPEC which was crystallised in subsequent years. Her tenure as Pakistan's Ambassador to China witnessed the steady development of Pakistan-China ties in diverse fields of bilateral cooperation, tangible progress on Phase-II of CPEC, and joint efforts by both countries after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

In his remarks to the outgoing Ambassador, Mr. Ahmed Farooq, the Deputy Head of Mission paid a glowing tribute to the Ambassador for valuable contribution to Pakistan in her long diplomatic career and especially her passion for the deepening of Pakistan-China friendship. Appreciating her leadership role after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the Deputy Head of Mission added that Ambassador Hashmi, by virtue of her dynamic persona,

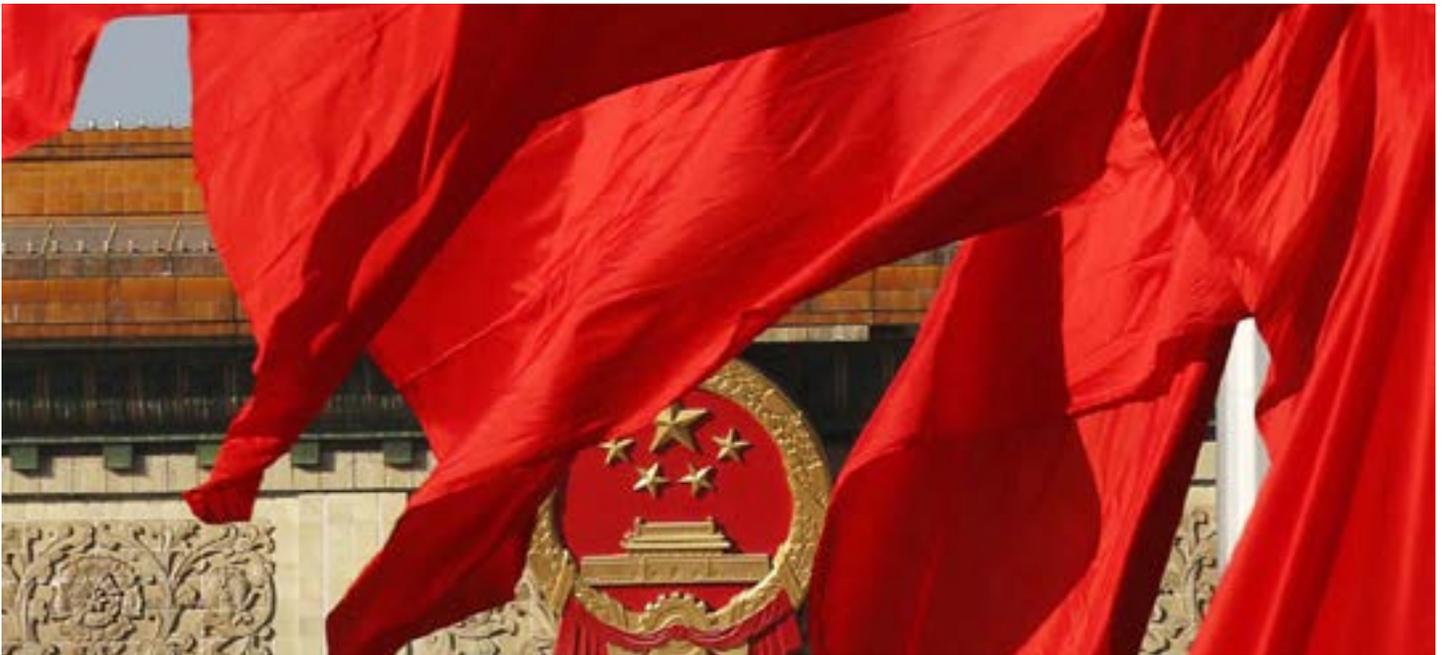
galvanised practical cooperation between Pakistan and China in the field of health, for the mutual benefit of two countries.

In her farewell address, Ambassador Naghmana spoke fondly of her long and sentimental association with China. Sharing her thoughts on time-tested relations between Pakistan and China, the Ambassador said that friendship between the two countries was rooted in history, culture and geography and that the bright future of two nations was inextricably intertwined and interlinked.

Ambassador Naghmana also appreciated the selfless devotion and efforts of her team and their able assistance to her in furtherance of Pakistan's interests and deepening of all-weather ties between the two countries.



Marking 99 years of China's Communist Party



By Zamir Ahmed Awan

This month marks the 99th anniversary of the Communist Party of China, celebrated officially all over China in true spirit. The Communist Party of China, commonly known as the CPC, is the founding and ruling political party of the People's Republic of China, with its membership up to 92 million. It was founded on July 23, 1921, in the Shanghai French Concession, under the great leadership of Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Chen Duxiu, and Li Dazhao.

President Xi Jinping, who also is secretary-general of the CPC and chairman of the military commission, presided over a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee on June 29 to review two sets of regulations on Party-building in the military and the election of primary-level Party organizations.

The meeting stressed resolutely upholding the absolute leadership of the CPC over the military and focusing on enhancing combat capabilities, and called for efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the regulations. The meeting also emphasized the strict enforcement of the rules on the Party's electoral system, urging efforts to improve intraparty elections and safeguard Party members' rights endowed by the Party Constitution. He has encouraged CPC members to build firm ideals and convictions and strive to fulfill the Party's original aspirations and mission.

The significant achievement of the CPC was to unite the Chinese people on one platform. Chinese society was scattered and divided into

various groups and interest-based factions before liberation. Society was divided into class systems, and the gap between the elite and the common man was huge. However, the CPC united the whole nation on equal footing with equal rights, a classless society. It took almost three decades under Chairman Mao to rectify the community, remove the evils and bad habits, and create political awareness among the masses.

Then economic reforms were launched under the great leader Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s, which transformed China into an economic power, and today China is the second-largest economy in the world, just behind the US. His primary task was to fight against poverty and he succeeded in eradicating it to a considerable extent; roughly 800 million people were lifted above the poverty line. This significant achievement is the only example of such in the modern history of the world; no other country was ever able to eliminate poverty to such an extent. The CPC plans to reduce poverty absolutely in 2020. It is believed that the CPC has strong will, rich experience, and sufficient resources to achieve this goal and produce a moderately prosperous society all over China.

During the outbreak of COVID-19, the CPC leadership made the right decisions, enacted the right policies and did strict implementation, which resulted in China's victory against the virus. The CPC leadership decided that human lives are their priority, and saving their lives was the goal. The government pooled resources from all over the country and mobilized teams, experts and the PLA to the epicentre of the

outbreak. Although the implementation of a strict lockdown and comprehensive isolation has caused significant economic loss, the CPC cared more about human life than economic loss. It is believed that the financial loss can be compensated by hard work and the right policies, but the loss of human life is irreversible and irrecoverable.

China was the first country to become a victim of the outbreak, but due to the right approach by the CPC and hard work among the public, it became the first country to defeat COVID-19. Now China is a global leader in fighting against the pandemic and helping many countries in this regard.

The CPC has changed the fate of the Chinese people and has improved their standard of life. Today, Chinese people enjoy great purchasing power, as well as outstanding public transport, infrastructure, housing, healthcare and public security.

A political system or political party is considered a good one if it keeps the common man happy and satisfied. The CPC cared for the people and considered the welfare of the common man. It is hoped that the CPC will deliver more and meet the expectations of the general public. I wish the CPC all success in the future.

Courtesy to China Daily and China Daily website

Professor Zamir Ahmed Awan is a Sinologist (ex-diplomat), editor, analyst, and non-resident fellow at the Center for China and Globalization, National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan.

WHO/Europe mission expressed gratitude for assistance and efforts of the Government of Turkmenistan



A briefing was held in the premises of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan upon the results of the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe consultative-technical mission's visit to Turkmenistan. As is known, Catherine Smallwood, Senior Emergency Officer at WHO/Europe is heading the given mission.

The heads and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan, Ministry of Agriculture and Nature Protection of Turkmenistan, State Committee for Water Management of Turkmenistan, heads of foreign diplomatic missions and representations of the international organizations working in Turkmenistan, the representatives of the national mass media of Turkmenistan, as well as foreign journalists accredited in Turkmenistan participated to the briefing.

During his speech at the event, Minister of Healthcare and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan Nurmuhmet Amanepesov highly appraised the work done by the WHO/Europe mission in Turkmenistan and voiced the results of the latest session of the Governmental Commission on Combatting the Acute Infectious Diseases which took place on July 12 of the current year. The Minister voiced the practical actions implemented in regard to further strengthening of preventive measures aimed at the counteraction against the acute dangerous diseases in the country. This information was also visually presented through video.

Then the Head of WHO Country Office in Turkmenistan Paulina Karwowska gave a speech. She expressed gratitude to the Turkmen side for assistance in organizing the WHO mission's visit

and highlighted the efforts of the Government of Turkmenistan on consolidating the actions in combatting the global pandemic.

The head of the given mission, Catherine Smallwood shared the outcomes of the ten-day work done in Turkmenistan, during which the experts visited various medical institutions, points of entry, laboratories in the regions and in the capital of the country, met with the medical personnel, got acquainted with the activities in the area of epidemiological surveillance. She stated that Turkmenistan remains the only country in the European region of WHO, where no cases of diseases evolved from the COVID-19 were registered. Therefore, it is necessary to continue to strengthen the preventive measures adopted in Turkmenistan, she added. Thus, the WHO experts shared strategic recommendations on the elevation of the level of preparedness and response measures in case of COVID-19.

Then the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov made an address. He expressed gratitude to the expert mission of WHO for constructive work, recommendations and proposals which added to the practical measures adopted by Turkmenistan on the prevention of the spread of new type of coronavirus. The key and leading role of WHO in coordinating the actions of the international community in combatting the COVID-19 was underlined.

Rashid Meredov noted the necessity of taking into account all the scientific researches including the impact of environmental factors on the emergence and spread of various types of dangerous infections. In this regard, the Aral problems and approach to it of the Government of Turkmenistan were noted. Taking into account the geographic peculiarities

of Turkmenistan, it was noted about the dust and salt storms which are able to transmit the hazardous substances from the dried ground of the Aral Sea along vast territories which pose threat to the health of the human being.

Hereby, the significance of ongoing scientific researches on studying the interrelation between the levels of air pollution and special types of morbidity was emphasized. Thus, the Minister noted the start of disinfection procedures by the means of aviation for preventing the spread of pathogenic microorganisms through air and airborne droplets.

Thereupon, Rashid Meredov once again called for cooperation in the field of scientific diplomacy, which can contribute to the search of information on the emergence of acute dangerous viruses, as well as develop the methods and means of curing the hazardous diseases and their prevention, including the development of vaccines. It was underlined that the adherence of Turkmenistan to these goals is reflected in the fact that the country has joined the C-TAP Platform and other WHO mechanisms.

In her speech, the UN Resident Coordinator in Turkmenistan Elena Panova noted the high level of cooperation of Turkmenistan with all the UN structures. Emphasizing the importance of the Preparedness and Response Plan of Turkmenistan for Acute Infectious Diseases developed jointly with the UN, Elena Panova stated the necessity of reducing the social and humanitarian impacts evolved from the pandemic.

In the end of the briefing, the parties expressed the need of continuing joint work for the sake of the whole humankind through solidarity and mutual support.



New Hotspot in the Conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

On July 12, 2020, the armed forces of Armenia attempted to attack, using artillery, in order to seize positions in the direction of Tovuz district along the state border between Azerbaijan and Armenia said in a press release by embassy of Azerbaijan, Islamabad. The attack of the Armenian forces was prevented by retaliatory measures. As a result of the combat, four servicemen of the Azerbaijani army were killed and five others were wounded. The Armenian provocation and shelling of Azerbaijani military positions, as well as civilian populated villages across the Azerbaijan-Armenia border from large-caliber artillery and mortars.

The military analysis of the recent tension in the direction of Tovuz district of the Azerbaijani-Armenian state border shows that the provocation was started by Armenia. Armenia has purposefully prepared itself for this provocation. The Armenian side suddenly started to use artillery, and as a result, the Azerbaijani servicemen were killed. The losses at the Armenian side were caused afterwards – by the retaliatory fire of the Azerbaijani army.

Armenia claimed that Azerbaijan allegedly attacked Armenian positions with a UAZ military vehicle, which sounds very ridiculous and nonsense. Had Azerbaijan wanted to attack Armenia, it would not have used light UAZ military vehicle, but armored fighting vehicles and other destructive heavy military suitable for offensive operations, existing in the disposal of its army.

Armenia's purpose in committing this provocation was not only to divert attention from the difficult socio-economic situation in the country and the deplorable situation with regard to COVID-19. The aim was also to involve the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO, which includes six countries of the former Soviet Union and does not enjoy any mandate with regard to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict) into the conflict by creating tensions on its state border. Armenia is trying to enslave the CSTO countries in its ugly policy and hide itself behind this organization.

Common sense prevailed within the CSTO, and the organization's scheduled extraordinary Permanent Council meeting on the issue was canceled. The CSTO countries also understand very well Armenia's insidious intentions.

This provocative act of the Armenian armed forces should be seen as a continuation of the recent actions and statements of the leadership of aggressor state Armenia, which serve to increase tensions in the region. Recently, Armenia was trying to strengthen its military capabilities and was concentrating military equipment near the line of contact, which proves that it had plans to attack military positions of Azerbaijan. Moreover, Armenian armed forces started to open fire on the nearby residential settlements as well, putting the lives of civilian population under danger.

Armenia has purposefully prepared for this provocative offensive, which aimed to avenge Azerbaijan for its successful counteroffensive military operations in the Nagorno-Karabakh

region of Azerbaijan in response to Armenian April 2016 provocations, which resulted with liberation of more than 2000 hectares of Azerbaijani land from Armenian occupation, including the strategically important height of Leletepe and new positions on the Talish Mountain, as well as liberation of 11 thousand hectares of Nakhchevani land of Azerbaijan, including village of Junnut, by Azerbaijan Army, in 2018.

Armenia, which has reflected its aggressive policy in the country's recently adopted national security strategy, openly demonstrates that it aims to seize new positions and increase tensions in the region instead of eliminating the consequences of the conflict and withdrawing its occupying forces from the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan. President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev said in this regard: "On the one hand, Armenian leadership appeals to the international community and asks for help to strengthen the ceasefire on the line of contact of the troops, on the other hand, by carrying out military provocations, it seeks to attack the territory of Azerbaijan, seize our positions, expose the civilian population, our villages".

This provocation by Armenia casts serious doubt on the essence of the negotiations mediated by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs (Russia, USA and France) on the settlement of the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions which demand immediate, full and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied lands of Azerbaijan.



Iran backs BRI, CPEC - Baseless rumours are being spread about China-Iran cooperation, says Tehran's envoy

Monitoring

After reports suggesting Iran had dropped India from a key project linked to Chabahar Port, Iran threw its weight behind the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as well as its flagship project, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini said the BRI and CPEC were beneficial for the regional development particularly for China, Iran and Pakistan.

Hosseini was all in praise for BRI and CPEC in an unprecedented move suggesting a major shift in Iran's foreign policy.

"Undoubtedly, Belt-Road initiative and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor are suitable platforms for the development of regional cooperation, especially for the three countries of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the People's Republic of China, which can be a unique model of development not only for us, but as a model of cooperation for other countries in our region," the Iranian Ambassador said in a statement.

His statement came amid reports that Iran dropped India from key Chabahar to Zahedan railway project and started the project from its own resources.

India media claimed that India was kicked out from the project after Iran entered a massive 25-year \$400 billion strategic partnership deal with China.

An Indian Newspaper The Hindu claimed that Iran drops India from Chabahar rail project,

BRI and CPEC were beneficial for the regional development particularly for China, Iran and Pakistan

cites funding delay. But Aljazeera reported that Iran denied an Indian newspaper report that New Delhi was dropped from a key rail project along the border with Afghanistan after it showed reluctance in investing fearing American sanctions.

A deputy to Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization, Farhad Montaser, called the story "totally false because Iran has not inked any deal with India regarding the Zahedan-Chabahar" railway.

"Iran has only signed two agreements with Indians for investment in Chabahar: one is

related to port's machinery and equipment, and the second is related to India's investment to the tune of \$150m,"

But the Iranian ambassador dismissed the Indian media claims saying the 25-year deal was a public document, contrary to reports in the media.

"This cooperation is a very public issue and even in the sixth paragraph of the joint statement published during the Chinese president's visit to Iran in 2016, the parties explicitly expressed their desire to conclude a comprehensive document for 25 years of cooperation," the top Iranian diplomat said.

He said baseless rumours are being spread about China-Iran cooperation, like in the case of CPEC, by some western officials and the media with an intentional focus on the secret nature of this cooperation.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, in accordance with its constitutional principles, faces no barrier in concluding comprehensive and long-term agreements with countries in the East and the West," the ambassador said.

"Iran's offer for cooperation was a general one that was perceived by Chinese who has shown independence in developing its relations with Iran and has not tied the promotion of relations to the advice of third countries,"



Chairman FBR assures to address tax issues of business community

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Muhammad Javed Ghani, Chairman FBR said that he would try to address the tax related issues of business community so that they could be facilitated in promoting business activities and strengthening the economy. He said this while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) that called on him led by Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President. Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President ICCI, Malik Sohail Hussain Chief Coordinator UBG FPCCI and Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari former Vice President ICCI were in the delegation.

Accepting the invitation of Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, Javed Ghani said that he would visit ICCI for an interaction with the business community to know about their tax issues and get their input for bringing further improvements in the prevailing tax system. He said that efforts would be made to evolve a taxation system that could facilitate the growth of economic activities and help in improving tax revenue of the country. He welcomed the suggestions of delegation members for

Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry congratulated Muhammad Javed Ghani for assuming the charge of Chairman FBR and hoped that he would take measures to address the key tax issues of business community and promote the vision of the Prime Minister to turn Pakistan into a fast growing economy.

resolving problems and broadening the tax base.

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry congratulated Muhammad Javed Ghani for assuming the charge of Chairman FBR and hoped that he would take measures to address the key tax issues of business community and promote the vision of the Prime Minister to turn Pakistan into a fast growing economy. He said that another better option to solve the refunds issue was to allow taxpayers to adjust their payable taxes against the accumulated refunds. This mechanism would not only address the liquidity issues of business community; it would also improve the tax revenue of the government.

Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President ICCI, Malik Sohail Hussain Chief Coordinator UBG FPCCI and Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari former Vice President ICCI also gave many useful suggestions. They said that taxpayers should be allowed 100 percent adjustment of input tax as depriving them of 10 percent input tax was an injustice with them.

Promoting trade among SAARC region would be top priority: Iftikhar Ali Malik



Iftikhar Ali Malik, the newly elected President, SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and while addressing the business community, said that promoting regional trade among SAARC countries would be his top priority. He said that SAARC region is one of the largest markets in the world and only by promoting trade among SAARC countries can poverty and unemployment be reduced from the region and the living standards of the people be improved. He said he will do his utmost to strengthen ties among the business community of SAARC countries to improve regional trade. He also urged the government to make every effort to improve Pakistan's trade with SAARC countries which would help stabilize our economy.

S.M. Munir Patron-in-Chief UBG, Zubair A.

Tufail Secretary General UBG, Sheikh Khalid Tawab, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed President, Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President ICCI, Mian Akram Farid Chairman Founder Group, Abdul Rauf Alam, Khalid Javed, Tariq Sadiq, Chaudhry Waheed-ud-Din, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Mian Shaukat Masood, Nasir Qureshi, Zafar Bakhtawari, Karim Aziz Malik, Ahmad Hassan Mughal, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Saboor Malik President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Sohail Altaf Group Leader RCCI, Malik Sohail Hussain Chief Coordinator UBG FPCCI, Khalid Chaudhry and others were also present at the occasion. Founder Group hosted lunch in honor for the visiting guests.

Expressing his views, Muhammad Ahmad Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that ICCI in cooperation with SAARC CCI would play role to

further enhance Pakistan's trade with SAARC countries. He said that election of Iftikhar Ali Malik as President SAARC CCI is an honor for Pakistan and hoped that under his leadership, SAARC Chamber will emerge as a stronger regional trade body to promote regional trade.

Tahir Abbasi, Senior Vice President, ICCI thanked Iftikhar Ali Malik President SAARC CCI, S.M. Munir Patron-in-Chief UBG and other guests for visiting the chamber. UBG Secretary General Zubair Tufail, Sheikh Khalid Tawab, Founder Group Chairman Mian Akram Farid and others also expressed their views and demanded from the government to address the key issues of the business community on priority basis that would help in reviving the business and economic activities in the country.



WHO Persistent Support to AJ&K during COVID 19 Pandemic



By Sadaf Liaquat

COVID-19 pandemic brought the health care systems around the globe to their heels. Mostly, the governments scrambled to cope with this global health emergency, therefore, collaborated their efforts to monitor pandemic and response activities. The WHO remained at the centre of the battle against the novel Corona Virus since its outbreak in China last December. It stood shoulder to shoulder with the governments and supported them to its capacity. It adopted all the hands-on-deck approach to scale up its response to prevent and control COVID-19 in every country. Here in Pakistan and Azad & Jammu Kashmir, WHO stood at the forefront with the government and local authorities, who were working with commitment and dedication, to build up immediate and rapid response mechanism. WHO assisted them in various areas such as coordination and planning, case management, disease surveillance, laboratory, community mobilization and sensitization to curtail the spread of the coronavirus. Pronto, after its emergence in China, WHO initiated multi-sectoral, multi-partner coordination mechanisms, conducted an initial capacity assessment and risk analysis and established metrics, monitoring and evaluation systems to support preparedness and response activities at the national and provincial level in Pakistan. It engaged with local

donors and existing programmes to mobilize and allocate resources to implement an area-specific operational plan. It also implemented a risk-communication and community engagement plan for COVID-19. The proactive leadership of WHO lent its support to policymakers, local authorities and other organizations at every tier to control the spread of deadly Coronavirus.

In July, Dr Palitha Mahipala (WR Pakistan) visited Azad Jammu & Kashmir. He discussed the spread of COVID-19 infection, strategy to flatten the COVID-19 pandemic curve, smart lockdown and implementation of SOPs with the medical specialists, government officials and the political leaders. He assured them of WHO support and assistance to control this humanitarian health crisis. During the visit to the office of Secretary Health, Dr Palitha Mahipala was briefed about the status of the pandemic, the measures taken to control its spread, the unfaltering efforts of PEI/ EPI team for keeping AJ&K polio-free since past 2 decades and on-going activities of WHO for

curtailment of COVID-19 at provincial, divisional and district levels. Secretary Health General Tahir Sardar thanked WR for extending timely support for Mirpur Earthquake, Avalanche Emergency in Neelum and now for COVID-19 pandemic in AJ&K. Further, they discussed the ways to expand the testing capacity of laboratories, official nomination of lab staff for WHO training for designated COVID-19 labs at different hospitals. They chalked out the plan for the official nomination of main clinicians designated for COVID-19 for WHO Case Management training at Muzaffarabad, Poonch and Mirpur. He also highlighted the need for equipment such as ventilators, PPEs, COVID-19 beds and antiviral drugs to ensure the health facilities are fully equipped to diagnose and treat patients of COVID-19. WR met Chief Secretary Mr Mutahar Hussain Rana and appreciated AJK Government efforts to stop the pandemic. He assured him of WHO support to expand the capacity of the health department in the light of discussions held in the office of Secretary Health.

WR met with Prime Minister AJ&K Sardar Farooq Haider, thanked PM for a warm reception and praised AJ&K Government for taking several comprehensive measures (declaring his residence as isolation centre) which kept COVID-19 incidence lowest in AJK compared to other parts of Pakistan. He assured Prime Minister of steady WHO support and donated PCR Machine, PPEs and other medical supply. WR last meeting was with Program Manager EPI Dr Bushra Shams with whom WR discussed the situation of on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of lockdown and closure or partial functioning of health facilities. Certainly, WHO persistent efforts for prevention and control of COVID-19 deserved praise in Pakistan. It worked day and night to help Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir to handle the COVID-19 pandemic robustly. COVID-19 pandemic is a global issue and an integrated global response can save humanity from its effects. Only mutual efforts on a global scale can prevent recurrence of such a pandemic in future.





European Union Provides Euro 20 Million for Rule of Law Support to Pakistan

By Sharyar

Mr. Noor Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Ms. Anne Marchal, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the European Union, welcomed the signing of a new EU Financing Agreement on "Rule of Law Support to Pakistan (RoL)" between the Government of Pakistan and the European Union amidst the COVID-19 crisis.

The European Union will provide total grant assistance worth Euro Twenty (€ 20) Million (PKR 3.6 Billion) for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its newly merged districts (EX-FATA), as well as Balochistan. The RoL Programme will be implemented over a period of five (05) years (2020-2024). This programme will support Pakistan's efforts to improve the rule of law, access to justice, and delivery of timely justice in the two targeted Provinces, with a special focus on women, children and less privileged groups.

This programme will also provide technical assistance and capacity building to key government institutions in the security sector and the judiciary at federal & provincial level. Under this programme, the police and judiciary will be supported in becoming more efficient, accessible for all, and faster in terms of procedures. As part of the programme, software and IT solutions will be developed and made available, police and judiciary staff will be trained and model police stations will be established with dedicated desks for women. The programme will also help citizens to better understand legal matters, their rights and the functioning of the legal system. This will be done through free legal aid, alternative dispute resolution and mobilizing paralegals who will support citizens with legal know-how. Women



and less privileged citizens will benefit from this component of the programme in particular.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women, the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) will implement the programme.

Ms. Anne Marchal commented: "This programme aims to provide equal access to justice for all, which is a key policy of the European Union. I would particularly like to thank the Economic Affairs Division (EAD), the line ministries involved and the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan that designed the programme in close cooperation with us. We are delighted to work with our

Pakistani partners help improve the capacity of the police and judiciary to provide the services to the citizens they expect and deserve."

Mr. Noor Ahmed hailed EU and Pakistan's long-term partnership and appreciated the EU specific sectoral interventions in Health, Education, Good Governance and Rule of Law under the Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP 2014-20). Commenting on Rule of Law Support, he mentioned that "it is essential for peace, social security, economic development and stability in the Provinces. It will ensure that fundamental rights of the people are protected and supremacy of law is ensured where all are equally accountable before law, this will ensure speedy justice by creating legal certainty and transparency."



An Insight into Retail Sector of Pakistan

By Zahra Arshad

Retail sector collaborates the retailers and the consumers for the exchange of finished goods via departmental stores, retail outlets, and e-retailers. The share of wholesale and retail sector is 34% in overall service sector of Pakistan. According to Punjab Board of Investment and Trade, Retail sector is the third largest sector in Pakistan. It is the second largest employer, employing around 16% of the labor force. According to the report of Economic Survey of Pakistan, the sectoral share of Services in GDP for FY2020 is 61.40 percent. The retail sector of Pakistan is moving away from conventional small 'mom and pop' stores to prestigious malls, supermarkets, discount stores, and specialty stores. Retailers in Pakistan are investing in real estate rental properties by attracting consumer aspiration towards real estate. Planet Retail, a global retail forecasting firm in its recent report, has calculated the country's retail market size to be around \$152 billion with annual growth rate of 8%.

While attending the seminar arranged by State Bank of Pakistan, Chairman and CEO of Gul-Ahmed stated that the sector will become more competitive in global value chains. It has extensive chain of more than 40 retail stores across the country, offering diverse range of products from home accessories to fashion clothing.

Retail sector in Pakistan is exponentially growing with passage of time due to developing urbanization. The middle-class consumers and the youth, along with the improvement of per-capita income has paved the way in generating volume sales. Recently, encouraging growth in retail outlets in current years has been recorded by the local footwear industry by producing some assuring brands like Servis, Ehsan Chappal House (ECS), Stylo, Metro, Starlet, Borjan, Urban sole. The retailers have completely altered the consumer perception in Pakistan. The ratio of upper medium class have enormously contributed in the growth of food and fashion sector. Al-Fateh departmental

stores, Canteen Stores Department (CSD), Utility Stores Corporation (USC), and Imtiaz Super market have grown immensely, with its contribution to FMCG businesses. And also by playing crucial role in the allocation of the consumer goods under one umbrella.

As a result of globalization, the global players have changed the dimensions of retail sector as Metro-Makro did in past by operating more than ten stores in major cities of including Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad and Faisalabad. Retailers in Pakistan have shifted their focus to revenue growth, profitability, unique consumers, capital deployment, and cash management. Many local brands have expanded and are now adopting modern trends. The phenomenal growth in retail sector is pivotal for the country's economic health, as the sector can create enormous job opportunities and attract foreign investment into the country by alluring global brands to the local market. COVID-19 has prompted a spike in demand for cold and influenza cures, invulnerability boosting nutrients and dietary enhancements just as analgesics, with higher transactions of the-counter medications, to a great extent has been identified with stock accumulation and less treatment.

According to a survey conducted by Pak-Retailers platform, deduced two major findings. First, the organized retail penetration is almost 5% in Pakistan. And second, the limitations occurred due to the lack of communication between the company and the retailer are hampering the growth of the retail sector in Pakistan.

The retail sector in Pakistan is uniquely unorganized. There are intrinsic limitations which lead towards dissemination of incorporate SME's, lack of financial strength, and lower level of functional expertise. Retailers have started appealing customers to support their local shops to help them survive the COVID-19 pandemic, which has devastated high street trade. The absence of concrete data and authentic information have paved haphazard paths which does not permit foreign entities in Pakistan. The government of

Pakistan should gather accurate information by accessing the complete record of the number of retail entrants in the economy. As retailers have started generating faulty ways in order to abstain their retail outlets from revealing accurate sales volume because of the restricted tax policy given by the taxation department of the government.

The government should provide a pleasant business environment to retail employers in order to boost the growth of the retail sector. There is a dire need of security provision in the sector of tourism by the government of Pakistan so that they may actively participate in bringing the large volume of sales in the retail sector. As we know that after every short period of time the tax regime changes which creates hurdles and uncertainties for retailers. The consistent regulation of tax regime by the government of Pakistan can help in reshaping the unorganized and collapsed structure of retail sector.

E-Commerce, the Eventual Fate of Pakistan

The number of registered e-commerce business vendors expanded emphatically over the review period of time in Pakistan due to accessibility of internet connectivity across the country, essentially on account of less expensive cell phones. COVID-19 cases have developed in business sectors around the globe, numerous retailers have bolted due to government orders. The driving force behind clearance of stocks and smooth run of sale discounts is E-commerce which is used by almost every retailer. The biggest categories within internet retailing in Pakistan relative to FMCG businesses are Consumer electronics, and footwear with grocery category to be in its initial phase. For the expansion of retail industry, advanced technological reforms must be incorporated by the retail matrix. The government should design policy in a way which can smooth the transaction of retail sector. Decision regarding global development of retail industry in Pakistan lies in the hand of business visionaries and entrepreneurs who can uplift the retail sector more efficiently.

Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi Editor/Publisher/CEO of Diplomatic Focus hosted a dinner reception in the honor of H.E Mr. Andreas Ferrarese, Ambassador of Italy, H.E. Tarek Dahroug Ambassador of Egypt, H.E. Mthuthuzeli Madikiza High Commissionaire of South Africa, H.E. Mr. Nizar A Nabiyah Ambassador of Libya and H.E. Mr. Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka at his residence in Islamabad

H.E. Andreas Ferrarese Ambassador of Italy, H.E. Tarek Dahroug Ambassador of Egypt and H.E. Mthuthuzeli Madikiza High Commissionaire of South Africa cut the cake of their national days along with Senator Rehman Malik and Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries in the presence of other diplomates, bureaucrats and former ambassadors.







H.E Mr. Andreas Ferrarese, Ambassador of Italy called on Federal Minister for Defence Mr. Pervez Khattak

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Federal Minister said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Republic of Italy and wants to further enhance defence collaboration in different fields. Minister for Defence also mentioned that exchanged military training can be mutually beneficial, as being part of NATO, Italian Armed Forces have valuable military exposure while Pakistan's Armed Forces, who are fighting the war on terror, have rich experience in counter terrorism operations.

Federal Minister conveyed gratitude for facilitating provision of military equipment to Pakistan Air Force. He further emphasized on the need to explore areas of cooperation in the field of joint defence production. Minister for Defence informed that defence cooperation between Pakistan and Italy was established in 60's. It has steadily increased over the past few years. The broad domain of defence cooperation is governed by high level visits, military training and procurement of defence equipment.

During the meeting latest security situation along Pak-Afghan Border and Pakistan's commitment to peace and stability in the region came under discussion. The Minister appreciated the role, contribution and sacrifices of Italy in Afghanistan.

Italian Ambassador held meeting with COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa at GHQ

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Italian Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Andreas Ferrarese called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at GHQ.

Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa has offered all possible assistance to Italy in its fight against the coronavirus pandemic during a meeting with Rome's ambassador, Andreas Ferrarese, the ISPR said in a statement released.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Ferrarese, the Italian ambassador to Pakistan, called on Gen Bajwa at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

Matters of mutual interest, regional security, and measures to enhance bilateral cooperation between Italy and Pakistan were discussed during the meeting.

The ISPR added that the visiting dignitary acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan's medical assistance as well as the country's role in the peace and stability of the region.

General Qamar Javed Bajwa has offered all possible assistance to Italy in its fight against the coronavirus pandemic

German government commits 6.5 million euros to mitigate the socio-economic effects of the pandemic

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

In times of crisis, solidarity is more important than ever! This is why the German government has made available 6.5 million euros to support two bilateral technical cooperation measures in Pakistan.

Firstly and in view of the challenges the world has to face due to COVID-19, Germany as part of #TeamEurope decided to upscale its support to local Pakistani governments in their fight against the pandemic. Therefore, the German government has made available 0.5 million euros to promote activities that contribute to mitigating socio-economic effects of the pandemic on a local level.

Moreover, in these testing times it is more important than ever to focus on the vulnerable parts of society. Therefore Germany will commit 6 million euros to support Pakistani communities which host Afghan refugees to improve local health and education services. The projects will be implemented by the German development organization Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Pakistan and Germany look back on several



decades of successful bilateral development cooperation since 1961. The current portfolio encompasses more than 500 million euros in the areas of Renewable Energy and Climate Change, Sustainable Economic Development and Good Governance.

Ambassador Bernhard Schlagheck underlined:

“COVID-19 has shaken the world unexpectedly – and we will continue to feel the socio-economic consequences of the virus for quite a long-time. Showing solidarity with each other during these trying times is the responsibility of us all. The pandemic highlighted the importance of access to health and education and stressed the necessity to support the weakest parts of society. Germany is looking forward to supporting Pakistan in its efforts to overcome the crisis and to build back better – for a more sustainable future.”

Korea extends additional assistance for Pakistan’s fight against Coronavirus

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

Standing by Pakistan in its fight against COVID-19 pandemic, the Korean government this time decided to extend in-kind assistance worth \$500,000, on top of \$300,000 already extended in April. Korea will ship Korea-produced test kits which can be utilized in enhancing Pakistan’s testing capacity, and face masks etc. to Pakistan.

“I am encouraged to see Pakistan’s new daily COVID-19 cases declining due to timely measures taken by the Pakistani government, and Korea will continue to render support for Pakistan’s efforts to successfully contain the deadly virus.” Korean Ambassador Kwak Sung-Kyu said in his meeting with Mr. Noor Ahmed, Secretary, Economic Affairs Division in Islamabad on Friday.

“Pakistan highly appreciates Korea’s additional support for its precautionary actions against the pandemic, and it reflects the wonderful bilateral

relations and solidarity during this challenging time.” Mr. Ahmed mentioned. In providing in-kind assistance, the Korean Embassy in Islamabad will closely coordinate with the Pakistani government and the World Health Organization (WHO) office in Islamabad to ensure that the assistance items are delivered to where they are most needed.



President Alvi urges secrecy, transparency in E-voting process



By Mian Fazal Elahi

President Dr. Arif Alvi has urged that the secrecy of vote and transparency in the I-voting (internet-voting) process must be ensured while developing electronic voting system (EVS). He gave these remarks while chairing a meeting to review progress on the EVS, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. The meeting was attended by the Secretary IT and Telecommunication, Mr. Shoaib Ahmed Siddiqui, Secretary to President, Mr. Tariq Najeem Najmi, and Chairman NADRA, Mr. Usman Yousaf Mobin. Officials from Election Commission of Pakistan and NADRA were also present. The President was briefed about the steps being taken for establishing an effective and reliable I-Voting system for overseas Pakistanis. It was apprised that all measures were being taken for the development of a fool-proof voting system. The President was also briefed about the technical efficacy, secrecy and safety aspects of the system. The EVS being developed had been pilot tested in the bye-elections, the meeting was informed, and an independent evaluation of the system would also be conducted. The meeting underscored the primacy of putting the system to test prior to poll-day to detect and overcome any technical issues. President Arif Alvi remarked that I-voting system should be transparent and people should have complete confidence in it. He also highlighted the importance of maintaining voters' secrecy, and fulfilling all the legal requirements. President Alvi stressed that the system should be efficient possessing the technical capacity to cater the large number of overseas voters on poll-day. The President directed that a committee of experts to be formed to assess the technical capacity and reliability of the system and to propose possible solutions. The report along with recommendations would be presented before the Parliament.

UAE launches Hope probe in Arab world's first mission to Mars



By M.Saeed Yousafzai

The United Arab Emirates has launched a landmark Hope Probe Mission to Mars, the first from the Arab world.

The rocket carrying the probe took off from Japan's Tanegashima Space Center, marking the beginning of an almost 500 million kilometer journey into space.

The Hope Probe will be "the first probe to

The Hope Probe will be "the first probe to provide a complete picture of the Martian atmosphere and its layers when it reaches the red planet's orbit in 2021

provide a complete picture of the Martian atmosphere and its layers when it reaches the red planet's orbit in 2021.

The mission was initially due to launch on July 14, but was delayed by bad weather.

Just over an hour after launch, the probe

deployed solar panels to power its systems and established radio communication with the mission on earth.

There are currently eight active missions exploring Mars; some orbit the planet and some have landed on its surface. China and the United States each plan to send another this year.

The Emirates Mars Mission has cost \$200m, according to Minister for Advanced Sciences Sarah Amiri. It aims to provide a complete picture of the planet's atmosphere for the first time, studying daily and seasonal changes.

The UAE first announced plans for the mission in 2014 and launched a National Space Programme in 2017 to develop local expertise. Its population of 9.4 million people, most of whom are foreign workers, lacks the scientific and industrial base of the big spacefaring nations.

It has an ambitious plan for a Mars settlement by 2117.

Hazza al-Mansouri became the first Emirati in space last September when he flew to the International Space Station.

Emiratis and Dubai's Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) worked with US educational institutions to develop and build the Hope Probe.

The MBRSC space centre in Dubai will oversee the spacecraft during its 494 million km (307 million mile) journey at an average speed of 121,000kph.

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