**Pakistan-China Relations: The Journey of Friendship**

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The Pakistan-China partnership is unparalleled among inter-state relations. The history of our friendship is a unique account of unwavering mutual support, mutual trust and mutual respect. Nurtured by successive generations of our leadership and peoples across seven decades, this iron-brotherhood has blossomed into a strong and vibrant All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

Our relationship is time-tested and timeless; it transcends the normal precepts of inter-state relations and has withstood the vicissitudes of regional and global developments. The grand celebrations to mark the 70th anniversary of our diplomatic ties last year helped in injecting a new vigor and vitality to our friendship.

For us in Pakistan, relations with China are the cornerstone of our foreign policy enjoying support across the political spectrum. I can say with great confidence that our people fully understand the real value of this friendship and enthusiastically contribute to its splendor and glory. No wonder special metaphors have been coined to illustrate its depth and intensity; the expression Ba Tie only reserved for Pakistanis in China is one such example.

[Tottenham acquire Bentancur, Kulusevski from Juventus](https://nation.com.pk/01-Feb-2022/tottenham-acquire-bentancur-kulusevski-from-juventus)

In the next few days, I will be arriving in Beijing to attend the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games. Being a sportsperson myself, I can very well relate to the spirit that sporting events like Olympics instill in a nation. I strongly feel that sports should be a unifying factor and should transcend politics. I congratulate the leadership and people of China for hosting this mega event and wish all participants safe, healthy and successful games.

Since my last visit to China in October 2019, the world has undergone a profound transformation. COVID-19, the biggest contemporary challenge, continues to negatively impact lives and livelihoods across the globe. Climate change is yet another monster staring down our eyes with the potential to disrupt all that humankind has achieved to date.

The imperatives of geopolitics have engendered new alignments in our region, which to many, are reminiscent of ideological confrontation of the last century. Instability and turmoil that plagued Afghanistan for the past 20 years have come close with a hope of peace finally returning to the region. The international community’s engagement is essential to avoid an economic meltdown and avert a humanitarian crisis in that country.

[Russia seeking to ramp up troops in Belarus to 30,000, US charges](https://nation.com.pk/01-Feb-2022/russia-seeking-to-ramp-up-troops-in-belarus-to-30-000-us-charges)

The present challenges, colossal as they be, nevertheless stress the need for international cooperation and call for rekindling the spark of multilateralism for peace and prosperity in our region and beyond. As President Xi Jinping pertinently mentioned in his recent address to World Economic Forum,

“Amidst the raging torrents of global crisis, countries are not riding separately in some 190 small boats, but are rather all in a giant ship on which our shared destiny hinges”.

History bears witness to the fact that Pakistan and China have jointly traversed such epochal changes in the past and emerged successful. Our two countries have always supported each other on matters of core national interests.

It is our common vision that enduring peace in South Asia is contingent on maintaining a strategic balance in the region and all outstanding issues like border questions and the Kashmir dispute should be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy and as per norms of international law.

[PSL 7: Multan Sultans crush Quetta Gladiators by six runs](https://nation.com.pk/31-Jan-2022/psl-7-multan-sultans-crush-quetta-gladiators-by-six-runs)

Our bilateral cooperation against COVID-19 further validates the strength of our friendship. As iron brothers, Pakistan solidly stood by China after the outbreak of the pandemic. From President Arif Alvi’s solidarity visit to Beijing to the dispatch of over 60 plane loads of Chinese anti-epidemic goods to Pakistan, emerged a shining example of mutual support and goodwill. Chinese vaccines have now become the mainstay of Pakistan’s ongoing mass vaccination drive.

Pakistan is charting a new path for robust and sustainable development and making efforts to harness its potential as a geo-economics hub. The new National Security Policy of Pakistan centers on my government’s vision of a people-centric approach for ensuring their prosperity, fundamental rights and social justice.

In pursuance of these objectives, we draw inspiration from China’s achievements; be it the miraculous lifting of 800 million people out of absolute poverty or victory in people’s war against the pandemic.

['Blatant attack': Russia denounces UK sanctions threat](https://nation.com.pk/31-Jan-2022/blatant-attack-russia-denounces-uk-sanctions-threat)

As a friend, neighbor and partner, Pakistan has much to offer to the people, enterprises and business persons of China. Pakistan has a rich history, cultural diversity and majestic landscapes. With a population of 220 million people, young and skilled labor force, strategic location, friendly investment regime and warm sentiments for the Chinese people, Pakistan welcomes you for your next investment and next leisure trip.

China has lately become Pakistan’s largest trade and investment partner. Bilateral trade reached historic levels in 2021. Many Chinese enterprises have established a strong presence in Pakistan and are contributing to our socio-economic growth. China can become a huge market for Pakistan’s livestock and agricultural products. Similarly, Pakistan can benefit from Chinese expertise in industrialization, agricultural modernization, e-commerce and digital finance.

Pakistan is one of the earliest participants of President Xi’s Belt and Road Initiative. As the flagship project of the BRI, CPEC has immense economic and strategic significance for our two countries. There is complete consensus in Pakistan on CPEC’s indispensability for Pakistan’s national development. My government is fully committed to making CPEC a High Quality Demonstration Project of BRI.

[Huge coal reserves discovered in Tharparkar](https://nation.com.pk/31-Jan-2022/huge-coal-reserves-discovered-in-tharparkar)

CPEC has been instrumental in addressing Pakistan’s chronic energy crisis and improving connectivity through infrastructure development. We are also making rapid progress on the development of Gwadar Port and Special Economic Zones which would benefit the entire region.

No quantum of development is meaningful unless its fruits trickle down to the underprivileged section of society. My vision therefore is aimed at rooting out poverty and empowering the people of Pakistan to become masters of their own destiny.

Phase-II of CPEC has therefore accordingly been designed for job creation, industrial modernization, livelihood improvement, rural revitalization, socio-economic development and poverty alleviation. Complementing these projects is my government’s flagship initiative called “Ehsaas,” a large social security network for poverty alleviation and upward social mobility.

Safety and security of Chinese personnel and projects in Pakistan remains our top priority. Our people and state institutions are determined to safeguard CPEC from the detractors of Pakistan-China friendship and bring to justice those responsible for harming our interests.

It is heartening to note that China is leading the cause of mitigating climate change and restoring Mother Nature to its pristine beauty. We look forward to working with China to address climate change and undertake futuristic developments based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.

My Clean and Green Initiative resonates with President Xi’s vision of a “prosperous, clean and beautiful world.” Pakistan is already in the midst of one of the world’s most ambitious efforts to expand and restore its forests, having already planted a billion trees as part of the 10 Billion Tree Tsunami Project.

In the digital era where innovation and technology serve as the primary vehicle of sustainable and robust development, Pakistan is eager to enhance mutually beneficial cooperation with China in quantum computing, robotics, AI, Cloud, and Big Data.

Pakistan will also be working closely with China to advance the objectives of the Global Development Initiative put forward by President Xi Jinping.

Over the last few years, one of the most promising and reassuring aspects of our bilateral relations is increasing contacts between the peoples of our two countries. The warmth at the top echelons of leadership is mirrored by sentiments of love and fraternity between our masses. With over 40 provinces and cities sister relationships, I am confident that linkages between our peoples would deepen, and finest traditions of our friendship would be passed on to our future generations.

We are happy to see the Chinese people guided by the capable leadership of President Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China for achieving the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation.

On behalf of the government and people of Pakistan, I would like to reaffirm that in Pakistan, China would always find a trusted friend which would stand by it, not only amidst the gentle tides of peace and prosperity but also in the rising storms of challenges.

In conveying to the Chinese leadership and the people, my best wishes for the Year of the Tiger and the Spring Festival. I hope that the sacred flame of Pakistan-China friendship will keep glowing with ever-increasing brightness and warmth!

Long Live Pakistan-China Friendship!

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