**[China will bring golden development opportunities for Pakistan](https://nation.com.pk/24-Nov-2020/china-will-bring-golden-development-opportunities-for-pakistan%22%20%5Ct%20%22_new)**

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At the recent China International Import Expo (CIIE), a Chinese speaking Pakistani jeweler Aqeel Ahmed Chaudhry was very happy because the sapphires and other jewels he exhibited attracted many Chinese businessmen. He was among many Pakistani businessmen who actively participated in this major global trade gala to explore market opportunities in China. The CIIE has successfully concluded with a cumulative intention of trade of US$72.62 billion, an increase of 2.1 percent over the previous year.

In his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the third CIIE, President Xi Jinping pledged to turn the China market into a market for the world, a market shared by all, and a market accessible to all, so as to bring more positive energy to the global community.

President Xi’s speech fully demonstrated China’s confidence in cooperation with the international community which arises from three aspects. First, it comes from China’s major strategic victory in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. The Communist Party of China adheres to the people-centred policy and the life-first principle. From babies born in 30 hours to the elderly in their 100’s, every life is fully protected. At present, China’s daily new cases have dramatically dropped to single digits. Meanwhile, China’s economy has shown a stable improving trend. Positive economic growth has been achieved in the first three quarters. Foreign trade increased by 0.7 percent and the actual use of foreign capital increased by 5.2 percent, providing a big boost for the recovery of the global economy.

Secondly, China’s confidence comes from the great achievements made during the 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020). It is estimated that in 2020, China’s GDP will exceed RMB 100 trillion. 55.75 million rural people have been lifted out of poverty, more than 60 million new jobs have been created in urban areas, and the world’s largest social security system has been established in China, with the basic medical insurance covering more than 1.3 billion people and basic endowment insurance covering nearly 1 billion people.

Thirdly, China’s confidence comes from the development targets for 2 the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025) proposed by the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. This year, China will achieve the goal of finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and eradicating poverty. From next year on, China will begin a new journey toward fully building a modern socialist country. Answering to the changing circumstances and new requirements, we have set out to foster a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other. What we envision is not a development loop behind closed doors, but more open domestic and international circulations. We will do so not only to meet China’s own development needs but also for the greater benefit of people in all countries.

Facing the impact of the COVID-19 to the global economy, some countries have chosen to pursue protectionism and set up trade barriers, while China has chosen to strengthen cooperation and communication and expand opening up. As President Xi Jinping pointed out, we must uphold the principle of mutually beneficial cooperation; we need to build trust rather than second-guess each other; we need to join hands rather than throw punches at each other; and we need to consult rather than slander each other. Bearing in mind the common interests that bind us all, countries need to work together to make economic globalisation more open, inclusive and balanced for the benefits of all. Going forward, China will steadfastly expand all-round opening up and explore more efficient ways to connect domestic and foreign markets and share factors of production and resources. It will bring more opportunities for China-Pakistan cooperation.

The first opportunity arises in synergising the development strategies of the two countries. China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic partners, offering each other development opportunities. From now to 2035, China will work towards basically realising the long-term goal of socialist modernisation. China’s overall national strength will continue to rise, enhancing its capacity of participating in international economic cooperation and competition. We appreciate the efforts of the Pakistani government to build a “Naya Pakistan” and are ready to work with Pakistan in exchanges of experience of governance, and join hands for common development.

The second opportunity is the BRI cooperation. As an important pioneering project of the BRI, the CPEC has progressed rapidly in recent 3 years, bringing transformation to Pakistani economy and society. According to the latest statistics, against the adverse impact of COVID-19 pandemic, the Chinese investment in Pakistan rose to $332.1 billion in the first four months of this fiscal year (July-October), accounting for 45 percent of the total FDI. During the 14th Five-Year Plan period, China will promote the high-quality development of BRI, advance the CPEC projects with high standards, ensure a smooth implementation and operation of ongoing projects, and divert more resources to industry, agriculture, science and technology and social welfare, so that more common people can enjoy the benefit of our bilateral cooperation.

The third opportunity is exports to China. With a population of 1.4 billion and middle-income people of over 400 million, China is the largest market in the world. China is also the biggest trade partner and second largest export destination for Pakistan. As the CPFTA Phase II came into effect this year, the zero-tariff items between the two countries have been widened to 75 percent. China not only applies zero-tariff to products such as yarn, leather and nuts from Pakistan, but also actively promotes the export of Pakistani agriculture products of cherries, potatoes and onions. In the next five years, China will expand its domestic mega market with robust consumption, promote the dual circulations at home and abroad. This will help Pakistan expand its exports to China, promote its economic recovery, and help to solve the problem of trade imbalance.

The fourth opportunity is for collaboration in poverty reduction. Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, China has astonished the world with the miracle of poverty reduction by enabling over 10 million people annually to rise out of poverty over the past seven years. This year, China will achieve its target as scheduled to enable all of its rural poor below current standard to rise out of poverty. Prime Minister Imran Khan also attaches great importance to poverty reduction and has on several occasions spoken highly of China’s achievements in this aspect. At the recent SCO summit, President Xi Jinping declared that China supported setting up an SCO joint working group on poverty reduction. Bilaterally and multilaterally, we will share our experiences in poverty reduction with Pakistan, and contribute to its poverty reduction drive through cooperation.

Peace, development and win-win cooperation are beliefs both China and Pakistan uphold. Let’s follow the trend of the times to make full use of the golden opportunities of China’s development, and jointly work for a closer China-Pakistan community of shared future in the new era.