Ambassador Rehman’s Message

As we begin a new year and a new period of cooperation between Pakistan and the United States, our countries continue to work together on strategic and pragmatic levels and remain engaged across the full spectrum of bilateral dialogue.

We hope to continue developing our economic and security ties and deepen an increasingly comprehensive relationship. I offer our sincerest congratulations to Secretary of State John Kerry on his confirmation. We look forward to working with him, other new members of the Administration and the Congress as Pakistan prepares for its own period of democratic transition.

January was a reminder of the patience and care new democracies must afford their developing institutions. Pakistan proved it will move forward, not backward, confirming for ourselves and others that peaceful demonstrations do not destroy democracy—they strengthen it at its roots. We are grateful for the continued support of the United States, both in words and actions, on behalf of our country and its spirited democracy.

Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar represented Pakistan in New York during its rotational presidency of the UN Security Council and led a discussion on comprehensive approaches to countering terrorism. Pakistan was recognized for its contribution to UN peacekeeping operations by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

We are grateful for the acknowledgement and for the opportunities and cooperation we see ahead of us in this new year.
Pakistan Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar presided over a debate at the U.N. Security Council on counter-terrorism. The open discussion considered holistic solutions to countering the challenges posed by international terrorism and the most constructive methods for formulating and implementing coherent responses. Pakistan also hosted an open debate titled “United Nations Peacekeeping: A Multi-Dimensional Approach” led by Foreign Secretary Jalil Abbas Jilani. While in New York, Foreign Minister Khar and Foreign Secretary Jilani participated in bilateral discussions with other members of the Security Council and their delegations. Foreign Minister Khar also met with experts and made remarks at the Asia Society and the Council on Foreign Relations.

Speech by FM Khar at the Asia Society: http://asiasociety.org/video/policy/hina-rabbani-khar-pakistans-perspective-complete

At a special exhibition of photographs organized by Pakistan to highlight the unwavering and steadfast resolve of Pakistani peacekeepers to promote peace and security around the globe, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recognized the efforts of Pakistani peacekeepers. Major General Jamil, who also traveled from Pakistan for the event, read a message from the Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani.

“The Pakistan Army shall remain, as it has always been, a catalyst for peace to achieve the ideal of collective security; a sine-qua-non for human prosperity...Since its inception, Pakistan has played a significant role as a responsible member of the international community to help bring global peace through active diplomatic, moral and material support in various regions of the world.”
As part of high level exchanges between Pakistan and the U.S., Vice-Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Muhammad Shafiq, traveled to Washington. During his stay, the Vice Admiral met with senior officials at the Department of Defense and the State Department to discuss the bilateral collaboration between the U.S. Navy and the Pakistan Navy. Vice Admiral Shafiq also met Ambassador Rehman and briefed her on the Pakistan Navy’s multilateral contributions including the securing of sea lanes and the international anti-piracy operations being conducted in the North Arabian Sea. He thanked the Ambassador for her leadership in reinvigorating the Pakistan-U.S. defense partnership.

U.S. SENATORS VISIT PAKISTAN TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT

U.S. Senator Carl Levin of Michigan and Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island met with Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar during a recent visit to Pakistan. During their stay, the Chairman and Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee also met with Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf and Chief of Army Staff Ashfaq Parvez Kayani and reaffirmed the United States’ commitment to work with Pakistan to fight terrorism, support a stable and secure Afghanistan, increase economic opportunity, and strengthen civilian democracy, tolerance, pluralism, and civil society.
AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH SENATOR MURPHY AND SENATOR KAINE

Ambassador Rehman met with Democrat Senators Christopher S. Murphy of Connecticut and Tim Kaine of Virginia to discuss regional security issues. Ambassador Rehman emphasized the importance of Congress in Pakistan-U.S. relations. As part of the Embassy’s outreach to Congress, Dr. Asad Khan, the Deputy Chief of Mission and Brig. Abdullah Dogar, the Defence Attaché, also met with senior foreign policy staff of Senator Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma, the Ranking Member on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

AMBASSADOR ATTENDS FRIENDS OF PAKISTAN CLUB MEETING

Ambassador Sherry Rehman attended the first general body meeting of the Friends of Pakistan Club, a society formed in the 1950s through the collaboration of the Pakistani American diaspora and the Embassy. She discussed the transformation taking place in Pakistan and urged the members of the club to play an active role in promoting Pakistani culture in the United States. She praised the role of the club in philanthropic contributions and underscored the need to highlight the profile of the Pakistani American community in the American political scene, especially by engaging the youth. She also briefed the members about the Embassy’s outreach efforts and assured them of her full support for the club’s social activities.

U.S. AMBASSADOR ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR PAKISTANI ENTREPRENEURS AT NEW TECHNOLOGY CENTER

U.S. Ambassador to Islamabad, Richard Olson, unveiled an entrepreneurship program called Khushhali Ka Safar (Journey to Prosperity) that will focus on supporting Pakistani entrepreneurs by connecting innovative Pakistani entrepreneurs with American investors and mentors, particularly from the Pakistani-American diaspora and academic institutions.

USAID AGREES TO PROVIDE $10 MILLION TO SINDH PROVINCE FOR HEALTH PROGRAMS

USAID has executed an MOU to provide $10 million to the Sindh Province for the development of the Jacobabad institute of Medical Sciences (JIMC).

JOINT SYMPOSIUM ANNOUNCES NEW FUNDING FOR PAKISTANIS

At its annual symposium, the Pakistan-US Science and Technology Cooperation Program announced new funding for Pakistanis to turn their research into commercially viable projects with private sector partners. The program will sponsor competitive grants of up to $15,000 starting the summer of 2013. The theme of this year’s meeting, “Economic Growth through Technology Transfer”, highlighted the Symposium’s new focus on scientific cooperation, technology transfer and interactions between research projects and the private sector.
ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONTINUES TO FUEL GROWTH

Pakistan’s entrepreneurs are continuing to push forward as more companies spring up across the country. The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) registered 329 companies in the first month of 2013, including 304 private companies, two non-profit associations and two foreign companies from the Cayman Islands and the United States. Hailing largely from the information technology, tourism, finance and banking and food and beverages sectors, the companies authorized and paid-up capital totaling Rs5 billion and Rs573 million respectively. Four associations focusing on education and charity were also granted licenses, as were associations in dairy, rural development, social welfare and research and development.

GENERAL ELECTRIC KEEN TO INVEST IN PAKISTAN

Finance Minister Hafeez Shaikh invited General Electric to invest in Pakistan’s aviation, transport, railways, energy and alternate energy sectors. GE’s Vice Chairman John Rice expressed interest in supplying locomotives to Pakistan Railways and in setting up wind energy projects. Minister Shaikh described Pakistan’s favorable environment for foreign investment and assured GE of the government’s full support and facilitation.

ALSO PAKISTAN

While the mainstream media often focuses on the problems Pakistan faces and the challenges confronted by our government and our society, there is a substantial amount of good news coming out of Pakistan.

The Embassy is pleased to share these stories of achievement with you as we redefine a narrative for Pakistan based on the values of equitable democratic and social entitlements, pluralism, rule of law and transparent governance.

PAKISTANI WRITER AMONG FINALISTS FOR “MAN BOOKER INTERNATIONAL PRIZE”

Pakistani writer Intizar Husain is among the 10 finalists nominated at the Jaipur Literature Festival in India for the 5th Man Booker International Prize 2013. Around 150 authors were considered for the prize, which will be awarded on May 22 in London. The Man Booker International Prize is awarded every two years to a living author of fiction. The winner receives £60,000 in prize money.

PAKISTANI ARTIST AWARDED THE US MEDAL OF ARTS

Pakistani-American artist Shahzia Sikander was awarded the State Department’s inaugural Medal of Arts. The award acknowledges artists’ outstanding commitment to the Art in Embassies program and to international cultural exchange. Sikander’s works have been on permanent display at the US Consulate in Karachi since 2011. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton conferred the award at a ceremony in Washington.

PAKISTANI ORGANIZATION WINS PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

The Citizens Foundation (TCF) of Pakistan, a not-for-profit organization set up in 1995 by a group of Pakistani citizens, won the Skoll Foundation’s prestigious, self-named award for Social Entrepreneurship.
PAKISTANIS FROM U.S. LEADERSHIP PROGRAM VISIT EMBASSY

Ambassador Sherry Rehman received a group of Pakistanis currently in the U.S. on a three-week tour under the State Department’s International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). The Ambassador welcomed them to the U.S. and wished them a fruitful and productive stay in the country. The Deputy Chief of Mission, Dr. Asad M. Khan, spoke with the participants about the Pakistan-U.S. relationship.

NDU DELEGATION VISITS EMBASSY

Ambassador Rehman met with members from the National Defense University during their visit to the Embassy of Pakistan. They discussed mutual security interests and avenues for greater cooperation.
AMBASSADOR REHMAN MET WITH MALDIVES AMBASSADOR AHMED SAREER

EMBASSY HOSTS U.S. JOURNALISTS PRIOR TO VISITING PAKISTAN

Chargé d’Affaires Dr. Asad Khan and Press Attaché Nadeem Hotiana met with U.S. journalists slated to visit Pakistan under an arrangement with the International Center for Journalists.
The Embassy of Pakistan welcomes your feedback.
Please send your comments to newsletter@embassyofpakistanusa.org
or visit www.embassyofpakistanusa.org