Ambassador Rehman’s Message

As we begin 2013, I am reminded of what we have accomplished together over the last twelve months. When I arrived in Washington, D.C. last winter, the bilateral relationship had suffered from multiple setbacks. While it has not been easy, through the hard work and great efforts of both sides including the Embassy officials and their American counterparts, the relationship between our two countries is steadily strengthening.

In recent months we have witnessed multiple high level engagements here in Washington and in Islamabad, which have resulted in increased coordination on common threats and challenges faced by both countries and a plan of action to address Pakistan’s energy, security and economic issues. We continue to be grateful to the United States for its friendship and support and look forward to future discussions on improving market access for Pakistani exports and enhancing bilateral trade. We are excited about the prospects for increased foreign investment and will continue to educate the world about the opportunities that exist within our borders.

As the United States prepares to withdraw from Afghanistan, Pakistan remains steadfast in its commitment to an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process and looks forward to continued cooperation with the United States on this front.

In the coming months, Pakistan will make history by going to the polls for the first peaceful and constitutional transfer of power in our 65-year history. This shows the strength of our young democracy and will serve as the foundation upon which our future prosperity is based. We look forward to 2013 and wish you the best in the new year!

Sherry Rehman
AMBASSADOR REHMAN HOSTED A HOLIDAY DINNER

In celebration of the holiday season, Ambassador Rehman hosted a holiday party at her residence. She welcomed guests from the U.S. Government, the private sector, academia, media and the Pakistani American community to celebrate the strong positive trends in the bi-lateral relationship. The evening provided a wonderful opportunity to bring together people of different faiths and strengthen cross cultural relationships.

PAKISTAN-U.S. RELATIONS

FOREIGN MINISTER KHAR AND SECRETARY CLINTON MEET IN BELGIUM

On the sidelines of the recent NATO meeting in Brussels, Foreign Minister Khar and Secretary Clinton discussed the progress achieved by the United States and Pakistan in 2012. They discussed counter terrorism, support for the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, the post-2014 transition in Afghanistan and various measures to further strengthen bilateral relations including the need to move the bilateral economic agenda from aid to trade with an emphasis on market access and increased foreign investment.


PAKISTAN WELCOMES THE NOMINATION OF SENATOR KERRY AS THE NEXT U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE

Senator Kerry played a key role in helping to stabilize the Pakistan-U.S. bilateral relationship and has long been considered a steadfast friend to Pakistan. In a statement praising the nomination, Ambassador Sherry Rehman noted the Senator’s extraordinary understanding of the complexities of South and Central Asia and his recognition of the strategic importance of a democratic, economically viable and stable Pakistan.

STATEMENT: http://www.embassyofpakistanusa.org/news560_12212012.php
U.S. SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE MARC GROSSMAN RETIRES

Ambassador Grossman retired after serving for nearly two years as the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. His friends and colleagues gathered at a dinner reception hosted by Ambassador Rehman to celebrate his service and friendship to Pakistan. Ambassador Rehman thanked the envoy for his efforts in rebuilding the bilateral relationship in the face of regional challenges. In his remarks on the occasion, Ambassador Grossman praised the resilience of the Pakistani people in the face of challenges and voiced his confidence that the nation would solve its problems in its own way with the continued support of the United States.

STATEMENT: http://embassyofpakistanusa.org/news553_11282012.php
VIDEO: http://embassyofpakistanusa.org/Ambassador’s%20Dinner%20_06122012(V).php

U.S. TO HELP PAKISTAN RESOLVE THE ENERGY CRISIS

U.S. Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs Ambassador Carlos Pascual led the U.S. delegation at the fourth US-Pakistan Energy Working Group meeting in Islamabad this month. The working group is part of an on-going bilateral dialogue to help address Pakistan’s energy sector challenges. At the meeting, Water and Power Secretary Nargis Sethi noted Pakistan’s commitment to the reform process, improving governance and the financial viability and efficiency of the power and energy sectors generally. At the conclusion of the meeting it was announced that the U.S. government will fund a study aimed at helping Pakistan acquire liquefied natural gas (LNG). The project adds to others already underway in Pakistan with U.S. assistance, including renovating the power plant at the Tarbela Dam; modernizing the generators at the Mangla Dam; upgrading the Guddu, Jamshoro and Muzafaragarh power plants; and building the Satpara and Gomal Zam dams.

PAKISTAN-U.S. SECURITY, STRATEGIC STABILITY, AND NONPROLIFERATION WORKING GROUP MET IN ISLAMABAD

Officials from the United States and Pakistan met to discuss international efforts to enhance nuclear security and the peaceful application of nuclear energy. The working group participants exchanged views on nonproliferation challenges, chemical and biological weapons, export controls and the importance of achieving regional stability and security. The meeting was co-chaired by Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, the Additional Secretary for United Nations and Economic Coordination, and Rose Gottemoeller, the Acting Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.


TRADE AND ECONOMY

PAKISTAN EXPLORATION PROMOTION CONFERENCE IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

At an event organized by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources to showcase the investment friendly policies of the present government in the oil and gas sectors, including the recent offering of 60 new concession blocks for bidding, Dr. Asim Hussain, the advisor to the Prime Minister on Petroleum and Natural Resources, highlighted the salient features of the recently announced 2012 Petroleum Policy. Peter Seiting, Country Manager, OMV Pakistan, a subsidiary of Austria’s largest listed industrial company, spoke about his company’s success as the largest international gas producer in Pakistan. Pakistan has a vast sedimentary area of over 800,000 square kilometers of which over 70% is yet to be explored. The success ratio of oil and gas discoveries is one of the best in the world with a success ratio of 1:3.22 discovery rate. The conference was attended by representatives from leading international and domestic oil and gas companies.

http://embassyofpakistanusa.org/news556_12102012.php
PRIVATE EQUITY INVESTORS LOOK AT OPPORTUNITIES IN PAKISTAN

At a roundtable discussion hosted by Partners for a New Beginning, Morgan Stanley and Abraaj Capital Group, industry experts came together in New York City to discuss their experiences with entrepreneurship and investment in Pakistan.

Tom Speechley, Senior Partner at Abraaj Group and Chief Executive Officer of Aureos Capital gave a detailed presentation showcasing the huge potential for investment in Pakistan versus other emerging and regional markets. He specifically cited a combination of the following factors as an indicator of future growth potential: expanding urban markets (36% of the population); a rising middle class (4th largest in Asia); a young population (75% under 30); high penetration of mobile, internet and social media users (118 million mobile phone users); strategic location (between BRICS, GCC and CIS); and Pakistan's high quality pool of educated entrepreneurs. Abraaj’s recent success with Karachi Electric Supply Company (KESC) was presented as a case study in successful foreign investment in Pakistan.

A NEW INSURANCE SCHEME AVAILABLE TO FOREIGN INVESTORS

In response to concerns raised by executives of multinational companies, Pakistan has announced a new program to offer insurance to foreign businessmen making investments in Pakistan through the National Insurance Company. Foreigners will have the option of purchasing between $200,000 and $500,000 in coverage depending on their length of stay. The premiums will depend on the length of the stay but will range from $75 to $500. The scheme is intended to offer companies and their executives peace of mind when they visit Pakistan.

HEALTH AND EDUCATION

PRESIDENT ZARDARI PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION IN THE NAME OF MALALA

Immediately prior to attending a meeting organized by UNESCO in Paris, France to discuss crucial issues in education and childhood care, President Zardari and Aseefa Bhutto Zardari visited Malala Yousafzai at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, United Kingdom. During this meeting, which is the first occasion that Malala has met with anyone outside her immediate family, she thanked the President on behalf of her family and the people of Swat for the immediate action the Government took in her evacuation and subsequent treatment at the best hospitals in Pakistan and in the UK. Malala told her visitors that Shaheed Benazir Bhutto was her role model and she would endeavor to follow in her footsteps.

At the UNESCO meeting in Paris, President Zardari expressed his appreciation to the international community and UNESCO for its support of the Government’s efforts to promote girls’ education and to continue the mission of Malala Yousufzai. President Zardari announced that the Government of Pakistan will contribute $10 million to the newly established ‘Malala Fund’ to promote girls’ education throughout the world and witnessed the signing of an MoU for the establishment of the fund. Present during the meeting were Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar, Minister for Education & Training Sheikh Waqas Akram, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Ms. Shehnaz Wazir Ali, Pakistan’s Ambassador to France Mr. Shafkat Saeed and other senior officials.

Malala has become a role model for child education across the world. In recognition of this, the National Assembly of Pakistan unanimously adopted a resolution asking the government to give Malala Yousufzai the title of ‘Daughter of Pakistan.’

U.S. FUNDED $4.5 MILLION WOMEN’S HEALTH FACILITY OPENS IN KARACHI

A new obstetrics and gynecology facility at the Jinnah Post Graduate Medical Center (JPMC) opened in Karachi. The facility will provide 60 beds for surgery and treatment. In addition it will upgrade JPMC’s capacity as a first-rate center for graduate and post graduate medical education, training more than 1,300 students, and officers.

Senior officials from Pakistan and the United States attended the conference. Dr. Asad Khan, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Pakistan Embassy, discussed the general improvement in the relationship between the United States and Pakistan. He described Pakistan’s potential as a regional economic hub rooted in an increasingly educated, interconnected, and populous civil society with a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Dan Feldman, Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Alex Their, Assistant to the Administrator, and Director, Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs at USAID spoke about the programs implemented by the United States Government to stimulate private sector investment in Pakistan.

A copy of Dr. Asad’s complete remarks: http://embassyofpakistanusa.org/news554_12032012.php
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 Scientist Chosen for Stars in Global Health**

Grand Challenges Canada, a program funded by the Government of Canada to identify and support the brightest scientists and innovators, has selected Pakistani scientist Dr. Mishal Khan for its Stars in Global Health program. Khan will work with the Pakistan National Forum on Women’s Health to evaluate an innovative safe birth tool developed by Dr. Shershah Syed and his colleagues that assists mothers experiencing difficult childbirth.

**Pakistani to Receive Rhodes Scholarship 2013**

Rafullah Kakar, 23, will be Pakistan’s 2013 Rhodes Scholar. The scholarship is one of the world’s most prestigious and has been awarded to one Pakistani every year since 1951.

**Girl from Khyber Shines at International Forum**

Mamaraha Afridi, 14, became the first girl from the Khyber tribal region to represent her area at an international platform. Her creativity and leadership skills were on display at the First Idea Asia Youth Forum held in Thailand. Around 200 teenagers from 22 Asian countries participated in the event.

Her team won first prize for presenting the traditional Pakhtun Attan dance in a cultural show competition. In a speech contest, she won the third prize. She also performed in a talent competition, where her team clinched two awards for Best Cultural Costumes and Creativity for Peace Poem.

**Embassy Hosts Ideas Forum for CFR Members**

Ambassador Rehman hosted a luncheon meeting with board members from the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a prominent Washington, D.C. thinktank. The 17 participants included leading foreign policy analysts, media personalities, and academics. Ambassador Rehman shared her views on the current state of Pakistan-U.S. relations, coming elections and the country’s strategic shift that has led to substantive improvements in its relations with the neighboring countries. Ambassador Rehman stressed Pakistan’s pivotal role and commitment to creating a conducive environment for a successful Afghan-led peace process. She urged both Pakistan and the United States to continue working to overcome the “cognitive disconnect” that had led to a lack of trust and adversely affected the relationship in the recent past. She said full-scale engagement has resumed with working group meetings held in five key areas -- defense, economy, energy, security and nuclear security. Members from the CFR board expressed their appreciation for the Ambassador’s frank and candid discourse. The Embassy endeavors to benefit from this rich intellectual resource in Washington through a series of similar engagements in the coming weeks.
EMBASSY HOSTS MEMBERS OF INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

The Embassy hosted a traditional Pakistani lunch for members of The Hospitality and Information Service for Diplomats (THIS). The event was attended by THIS members from both the diplomatic corps and the United States, including Dr. Phyllis Kaplan, the President of THIS, and spouses of the Ambassadors of Brazil, Brunei, Bangladesh, Korea, Iraq, Spain and Afghanistan. Deputy Chief of Mission, Dr. Asad Khan, made a presentation to the guests highlighting Pakistan’s cultural, religious, linguistic, and geographic diversity.

AMBASSADOR REHMAN MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

Representatives from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) called on the Ambassador to discuss preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections in Pakistan in 2013. Michael Svetlik, IFES Vice President, briefed the Ambassador on the organization’s activities in Pakistan, including its work with the Election Commission of Pakistan.

AMBASSADOR MEETS REPRESENTATIVE DAN BURTON AT EMBASSY

Congressman Dan Burton (R-IN), founder and co-chair of the Pakistan Caucus, met with Ambassador Rehman at the Embassy as he prepares to retire after serving for 30 years in the House of Representatives. The Ambassador expressed her appreciation for all the support and assistance that Congressman Burton has provided to Pakistan during his tenure in the House.

STUDENTS FROM THE EDLIN SCHOOL IN RESTON, VIRGINIA VISITED THE EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN

Faculty, teachers, parents and students of Edlin Private School visited the Embassy for an orientation about Pakistan during the course of their social sciences studies. The group was received by Dr. Zunaira Khan, President, and Shehzana Hotiana, General Secretary of the Ladies Club. After a Flag hoisting ceremony, the students were given a briefing on Pakistan, demonstrated traditional bhangra dance steps and given a snap-shot of traditional Pakistani items depicting the culture and traditions of the country. Members of the Ladies Club; Fozia Fayyaz, Musarrat Chandna, Kamila Adnan and Maryam Zaman Mehdi participated in organizing the event. Uzma Shujjat Rathore, in her capacity as a teacher at the Eldin School, had coordinated the visit.
AMBASSADOR REHMAN MET WITH PAKISTANI STUDENTS STUDYING AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY UNDER THE GENERATION NEXT INITIATIVE

AMBASSADOR REHMAN MET WITH PAKISTANI SCHOOL CHILDREN VISITING THE UNITED STATES AT THE INVITATION OF APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTH CAROLINA
The Embassy of Pakistan welcomes your feedback.
Please send your comments to newsletter@embassyofpakistanusa.org
or visit www.embassyofpakistanusa.org