MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR JILANI

January was another significant month for Pakistan-U.S. bilateral relations. The timely convening of the Ministerial Review of the Strategic Dialogue was an important milestone for taking the relationship forward in line with the guidelines set by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and President Obama in October last year. The joint statement issued after the Ministerial review not only highlighted the ongoing cooperation between Pakistan and the U.S. in various sectors but also put forth a comprehensive agenda for future cooperation in sectors like energy, economy, security and counterterrorism, education and regional issues.

I have also been interacting extensively with high level officials in US administration, members of the U.S. Congress, think tank community and media representatives. The focus of all these interactions has been on putting forth our perspective on important issues and looking for ways and means for engendering a mutually beneficial strategic partnership between the two countries.

Since assuming my responsibilities, I have also made it a priority to reach out to the Pakistani-American community. The main purpose of this effort is to listen to the community’s concerns, priorities and suggestions on resolving the issues of importance to them as well as fostering a cooperative relationship between the Embassy and the broader Pakistani-American Diaspora in our efforts to strengthen Pakistan-U.S. relations. I intend to continue these interactions with full vigor in future as well.

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The Adviser to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz delivered a keynote address at the Atlantic Council during his stay in Washington, DC. In his remarks, the Adviser dealt in detail with Pakistan’s vision for regional peace and prosperity. He said that economic development, internal security and improvement in relations with neighbors, especially Afghanistan and India were the main priorities underpinning this vision. The Adviser said that by the Government hoped to create an enabling atmosphere for Pakistan to take benefit of the immense economic and commercial opportunities in its neighborhood. The Adviser also reaffirmed his belief that the revived Strategic Dialogue Process provides the best framework to move forward in a structured manner towards a broad based and comprehensive partnership that will benefit the entire region.

Speaking at The School of Advanced International Studies at The Johns Hopkins University, Mr. Aziz dealt in detail with the contours of Pakistan-US bilateral ties. Mr. Aziz singled out the revived Strategic Dialogue process as the main platform designed to provide a structured framework to move towards a broad based, comprehensive and strategic partnership between the two countries. Mr. Aziz said that, as always, cooperation in the defense and security sectors will remain an important plank of the bilateral ties. He pointed out the unilateral US drone strikes as an important issue for Pakistan that needed to be addressed. Mr. Aziz lauded the important role being played by the Pakistani Diaspora in the US in bringing the two countries and societies closer to each other. He reiterated the government’s commitment to facilitate all Pakistani expatriates including those living in the US in every manner possible.

Advisor on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz met with US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel at the Pentagon. Both sides discussed a range of issues in bilateral security cooperation and identified key priorities for strengthening the defense partnership in future. During the meeting Sartaj Aziz expressed satisfaction that positive momentum in defense exchanges over the last one year has helped both sides make significant progress in a number of areas such as GLOCs, Counter IEDs cooperation and Counter terrorism. Both sides expressed the hope that forthcoming Defense Resourcing Conference will help consolidate the existing framework of bilateral security cooperation.
MEETING OF THE ADVISER TO THE PRIME MINISTER SARTAJ AZIZ AND THE DEFENSE MINISTER KHAWAJA ASIF WITH MEMBERS OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE AT CAPITOL HILL

The Advisor to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz with Committee Chair, Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ)

The Advisor to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz and Minister Defense Khawaja Mohammad Asif, interacted with key members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) at the Capitol Hill. Sharing Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s vision for a stable and prosperous South Asia, the Advisor and Minister Defense briefed the Senators on Pakistan’s efforts to seek improved relations with India and Afghanistan. In this regard, they also updated the Senators on the steps taken by Pakistan to facilitate the reconciliation process and the US drawdown from Afghanistan. The Committee members recognized the immense sacrifices made by Pakistan in the global fight against terrorism. Pakistan’s cooperation in facilitating the US/ ISAF supplies to and from Afghanistan was also appreciated.

MINISTER FOR WATER & POWER AND DEFENSE, KHAWAJA MUHAMMAD ASIF, MEETS US ENERGY SECRETARY DR. ERNEST MONIZ

The Minister for Water and Power and Defense, Khawaja Muhammad Asif met with the US Energy Secretary Dr. Ernest Moniz in Washington, DC. While reviewing the status of existing energy cooperation between the US and Pakistan, the two Ministers explored ways to further deepen and broaden cooperation in this important area. Both sides also expressed satisfaction that the Energy Working Group had agreed on a structured plan of bilateral energy cooperation and its decisions would be vigorously pursued for a meaningful impact. Secretary Moniz reaffirmed the commitment of the US Government to help Pakistan in overcoming the energy crisis and appreciated the energy policy and the steps taken by the Government of Pakistan to end the energy crisis.

MINISTER FOR WATER AND POWER AND DEFENSE KHAWAJA MUHAMMAD ASIF MEETS USAID ADMINISTRATOR MR. RAJIV SHAH AND OPIC PRESIDENT MS. ELIZABETH LITTLEFIELD

The Minister for Water & Power and Defense, Khawaja Muhammad Asif met with the President of OPIC, Ms. Elizabeth Littlefield and USAID Administrator Mr. Rajiv Shah. Minister Khawaja M. Asif apprised OPIC’s President about the prospects of investment in Pakistan’s energy sector and government’s investor friendly policies. Elizabeth Littlefield expressed OPIC’s keenness to increase private sector investments in Pakistan laying special emphasis on the bright prospects of further investments in the renewable energy. Both sides reviewed the progress on a range of wind energy projects being financed by the U.S. companies.

MINISTER FOR WATER AND POWER AND DEFENSE KHAWAJA MUHAMMAD ASIF MEETS US NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER, SUSAN RICE

The Adviser to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz met the US National Security Adviser Susan Rice at the White House. Adviser Aziz and NSA Rice reviewed the ongoing Pakistan-US cooperation in security and non-security sectors and expressed satisfaction on the overall positive trajectory in the bilateral ties. They also recognized the need for both countries to closely coordinate and cooperate with each other and with Afghanistan to ensure peace and stability in that country beyond 2014.

ADVISER TO PRIME MINISTER ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SARTAJ AZIZ MET WITH AMERICAN (TOP) AND PAKISTANI (BOTTOM) JOURNALISTS AT THE EMBASSY
AMBASSADOR JALIL ABBAS JILANI MEETS WITH THE US DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE WILLIAM J. BURNS

Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani was received by the US Deputy Secretary of State William J. Burns at the Department of State. Conveying the greetings of the Government and people of Pakistan to Deputy Secretary Burns, Ambassador Jilani exchanged views on the Pak-US bilateral relation which has seen new vigor and momentum after the visit of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to Washington in October last year. Ambassador Jilani and Deputy Secretary Burns affirmed the importance of bilateral ties between Pakistan and the US and agreed to work closely in the coming weeks and months to further deepening and strengthening this relationship in all aspects.

PAKISTAN RESPONDS TO THE US APPROPRIATIONS BILL

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a press release issued on January 20, 2014, expressed disappointment at the US Appropriations Bill that proposed to withhold $33 million from assistance to Pakistan on account of Dr Shakil Afridi's detention.

“We are disappointed that the bill proposes to withhold US$33 million from assistance on account of Dr. Shakil Afridi's detention. Dr. Shakil Afridi, a citizen of Pakistan, is accused of having violated the country's laws. His action also caused immense damage to the polio campaign in the country. His case is sub judice and he remains entitled to due process under the law. Consequently, any linkage of US assistance to this case is not in keeping with the spirit of cooperation between the two countries. Pakistan and the United States are engaged in building a close, cooperative relationship, based on mutual respect and mutual interest. It is our hope that this process would continue to move forward in a constructive manner.” – Foreign Office Spokesperson.

LEADERS OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RECEIVE AMBASSADOR JILANI AT THE CAPITOL HILL

Leaders of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives received Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani at the Capitol Hill. In meetings with Congressman Ed Royce, Chairman House Foreign Affairs Committee and Congressman Eliot Engel, Ranking Member of the Committee, Ambassador Jilani conveyed best wishes of the leadership and the people of Pakistan. He also appreciated US consistent support to democracy in Pakistan. He noted that positive momentum in Pak-US bilateral cooperation especially in Energy sector has contributed to positive appreciation of US assistance in Pakistan. Welcoming the Ambassador, Congressman Ed Royce agreed with the need to enhance bilateral ties with enhanced focus on trade and commerce. Ranking Member Engel stated that regional developments necessitated close and sustained engagement between Pakistan and the US.

AMBASSADOR JALIL ABBAS JILANI MEETS WITH SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN (D-CA)

Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani met with Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Ambassador Jilani expressed the desire to work with her to further strengthen the important relationship between Pakistan and the United States. Ambassador briefed the Senator on the latest developments in the relationship including the recent several high level exchanges from both sides as well as the forthcoming meetings. Senator Feinstein showed her keen interest in working with the democratic government of Pakistan and assisting the Pakistani people in overcoming their economic and security challenges.
AMBASSADOR JALIL ABBAS JILANI VISITS CAPITOL HILL TO MEET SENIOR LEADERS OF KEY CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani met with Congressman Michael McCaul, Chairman House Homeland Security Committee, Congresswoman Kay Granger, Chairwoman House Appropriations Subcommittee on State & Foreign Operations, and Congressman Chris Van Hollen, the Ranking Member of the House budget committee at Capitol Hill. Ambassador Jilani expressed appreciation on the positive impact of US assistance to Pakistan. He underscored the need for both countries to continue cooperation for a more secure, stable and prosperous region. Ambassador Jilani highlighted the useful role that expanded trade relations can play for economic development and fighting extremism.

AMBASSADOR JALIL ABBAS JILANI MEETS CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE (D-TX) AT THE CAPITOL HILL

Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani met with Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Chairperson of Congressional Caucus on Pakistan, at the Capitol Hill. Congresswoman Jackson Lee welcomed Ambassador Jilani and expressed a keen desire to contribute to strengthening of Pakistan US bilateral relations. She said that there was a tremendous potential to further expand commercial ties between the two countries.

Congresswoman Lee said that in her capacity as Chair of Pakistan caucus, she would like to create awareness at the Capitol Hill about policies of the new government and the opportunities in building an enduring partnership. Ambassador Jilani thanked the Congresswoman for her consistent support to Pakistan and accepted Congresswoman’s invitation to meet members of the Congressional caucus to discuss a wide range of opportunities to strengthen friendship, trade and people to people contacts between both countries.

AMBASSADOR JALIL ABBAS JILANI MEETS CONGRESSMAN DANA ROHRABACHER (R-CA)

As part of his outreach to the US Congress Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani met with Congressman Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA). During the meeting he briefed the Congressman on the positive developments that had taken place in Pakistan. Welcoming the Ambassador, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher said that Pakistan - US cooperation has achieved great results in the past and both countries can work together to overcome new challenges of poverty and underdevelopment. He emphasized that through dialogue and engagement both sides can build better convergences and reinvigorate the relationship in the new era. Ambassador Jilani extended a cordial invitation to the Congressman to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience.
AMBASSADOR JALIL ABBAS JILANI MEETS WITH MEMBERS OF THE US BASED PAKISTANI MEDIA AT THE EMBASSY

MRS SHAISTA JILANI HOSTS A MEHFIL-E-MILAD AT THE EMBASSY
is a substantial amount of good news coming out of Pakistan.

We are 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.

DIRECTOR UNESCO LAUDS PROGRESS MADE BY PAKISTAN TOWARDS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Director Asia and Pacific of UNESCO Gwang-Jo Kim has appreciated the progress made by Pakistan towards achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) despite security challenges. The Director UNESCO appreciated resolve of the present Government to double expenditure on education in four years. He also expressed satisfaction that free and compulsory school education is a constitutional commitment in Pakistan. Replying to a question, he acknowledged that there were misperceptions in the outside world about education of girls in Pakistan. He said there are ample opportunities of education for girls and Malala has been a motivation in this regard.

http://www.radio.gov.pk/newsdetail-63286

PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY GROWNS AT 3.6%, INFLATION FALLS TO SINGLE-DIGIT: SBP ANNUAL REPORT

Pakistan’s economy grew at 3.6 percent and inflation fell to single-digit in FY13, says the State Bank’s Annual Report on the State of Economy for the year 2012-13 released on Jan 15, 2014. According to the report, robust growth in construction activity and capacity enhancement in a few sub-sectors, supported the industrial sector. Global prices helped contain Pakistan’s import bill, and there was some improvement in exports.


ENGINEERING EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN ON COURSE TO GET INT’L RECOGNITION – SENATE

Engineering education in Pakistan will get the much-needed international recognition as the country is hoping to become a permanent member of the Washington Accord by next year. This is seen as a great achievement as it will bring in manifold advantages. Pakistan educated engineers will not be required to undertake special qualifying tests for recognition of their degrees by other countries. It will also enable them to open firms in other countries that will help in economic uplift of the country. Secretary PEC said that the PEC was also on course to get membership of International Professional Engineers Agreement (IPEA) which will enable framework for the establishment of international standards of competence for professional engineers.


PAKISTANI BOY CREATES O-LEVEL RECORD

Rai Harris Manzoor, a 9-year old boy from Rawalpindi, set a world record becoming the youngest student to pass Cambridge University O-Level examination. He is perhaps the only child in the world to have passed all the science subjects (Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics) of O-levels at the age of 9.

The Embassy of Pakistan welcomes your feedback.

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