MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR JILANI

The past two months witnessed increased activity on the Pakistan-US bilateral front. The Economic and Finance Working Group met in Washington, DC under the Strategic Dialogue. The two sides discussed ways to increase bilateral trade and investment and enhance market access for Pakistani goods. Finance Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar’s visit was marked by significant achievements reflecting Washington’s commitment to a long-term economic and investment relationship with Pakistan, particularly in the field of energy. Under the aegis of the US Pakistan Business Council and USAID ‘Diamer Bhasha Dam Opportunities Conference’ was held at the US Chamber of Commerce which was attended by a large number of prospective investors. The US pledged support for Pakistan’s massive $14 billion 4500-MW Diamer Basha Dam project and assured the investors of effective results.

I am pleased to share that during the Finance Minister’s visit Pakistan and Afghanistan signed the CASA-1000 agreement on electricity transit fees between the two countries, taking an important step forward for energy trading between Central and South Asia. The Finance Minister also held very productive meetings at the IMF and the World Bank. He availed the opportunity to meet with delegations from various countries to highlight the economic revival of Pakistan and its investor-friendly environment created through the government’s initiatives.

On the military side, the visit of Chief of Army Staff, General Raheel Sharif will go a long way in establishing an enduring and enhanced military-to-military relationship between Pakistan and the US. The Army Chief held useful meetings with the US Administration, including senior defense personnel and members of the Congress. He highlighted the latest operation by the military to eliminate all extremist in the country without exception and elucidated Pakistan’s perspective on regional security and stability.

This October, for the first time ever, the Embassy also took the initiative to host a Convention of the Pakistani-American Community (CPAC-2014) and had a very useful, day-long, interactive session with leading community members from across the United States.

IN THIS ISSUE…

2-6 Pakistan- US Relations
2-4 - Finance Minister visits the US
5-6 – Chief of Army Staff visits the US
6-8 Embassy Outreach and Events
8 Also Pakistan
PRESIDENT OBAMA CALLS PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD NAWAZ SHARIF

US President Barack Obama phoned Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and discussed Pakistan-US bilateral relations and the evolving situation in the region. The Prime Minister expressed satisfaction at the direction of Pakistan-US relations which have been on an upward trajectory, since his government came to power. President Obama noted that Pakistan-US relations were strong and robust. He was pleased to see that the Government had determined the right economic priorities and was successfully overcoming the challenges. Discussing the regional situation, the Prime Minister referred to the improvement of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations, as manifest in President Ashraf Ghani’s recent visit to Islamabad. The US President appreciated the Prime Minister’s efforts in this regard and called it pivotal for the peace and stability in the region. The Prime Minister referred to his visit to India earlier this year, which was aimed at taking Pakistan-India relations forward. Subsequent unfortunate steps on India’s part, including cancellation of Foreign Secretary level talks and the unprovoked firing across the LoC/Working Boundary resulting in civilian casualties, indicated that India was averse to normalization of relations with Pakistan. Thus, while we remain open to the resumption of bilateral dialogue, the onus is on India to create a conducive environment in this regard. President Obama expressed his understanding for our position. The Prime Minister also urged President Obama to take up the cause of Kashmir with the Indian leadership, as its early resolution would bring enduring peace, stability and economic cooperation to Asia. The two leaders agreed to stay engaged to further strengthen Pakistan-US relations in their common desire to promote peace and prosperity in South Asia.

DAN FELDMAN, US SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN, CALLS ON SARTAJ AZIZ, ADVISER TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The US Special Representative on Afghanistan and Pakistan, Dan Feldman, called on the Adviser to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz during his visit to Islamabad. The discussions focused on bilateral relations, recent developments in Afghanistan and in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations and relations with India. Adviser Sartaj Aziz restated Pakistan’s determination to open a new chapter in its relations with Afghanistan and reaffirmed support for an Afghan led reconciliation process. Regarding relations with India, the Adviser stated that Pakistan wanted normalization of relations with India despite the recent provocations along the Line of Control and the Working Boundary. The international community needed to support an early resumption of the peace process and a resolution of all outstanding issues including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir. Both the SRAP and the Adviser expressed their satisfaction on the progress being made in Pakistan-US bilateral relations and agreed that the current round of meeting of the Working Groups with the Strategic Dialogue should be completed by the end of the year. Mr. Dan Feldman acknowledged Pakistan’s important contribution towards peace and stability and deeper engagement on issues of trade and economic cooperation with Afghanistan. He said that the United States was willing to extend its full support in this regard. On India, he agreed that there was a need to resume the dialogue process as expeditiously as possible.

FINANCE MINISTER VISITS THE UNITED STATES

THE UNITED STATES HOSTS THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCE WORKING GROUP OF THE U.S.-PAKISTAN STRATEGIC DIALOGUE

Finance Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar met with Deputy Secretary William J. Burns and Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Catherine Novelli to discuss a range of strategic and economic issues in Washington D.C. Minister Dar and Under Secretary Novelli convened the Economic and Finance Working Group of the U.S.-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue to discuss Pakistan’s economic reform efforts, look at ways to increase bilateral trade and investment, and identify specific steps where innovation and technology could improve cooperation and Pakistan’s competitiveness in the global economy. The two delegations discussed Pakistan’s ongoing efforts to bolster macroeconomic stability and growth. Pakistan highlighted its intention to continue working closely with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to maintain progress on the reform agenda. Minister Dar discussed Pakistan’s energy reforms, which would encourage increased U.S. investment in renewable energy. Under Secretary Novelli highlighted U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) support for the expansion of clean and renewable energy in Pakistan, and recent
US PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR PAKISTAN’S “TRANSFORMATIONAL” DIAMER BASHA DAM PROJECT

The US Agency for International Development and the US-Pakistan Business Council co-hosted a joint platform where both Pakistan's Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and Minister for Water, Power and Defense Khawaja Muhammad Asif and the U.S. officials including USAID Administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah and U.S. Special Representative Dan Feldman highlighted tremendous opportunities for American and international investors in the Diamer Basha Dam Project. The US side pledged support for Pakistan’s massive $14 billion 4500-MW Diamer Basha Dam project and the Obama Administration officials assured the investors of effective results, citing U.S.-financed energy upgradation projects. Daniel Feldman said the U.S. and Pakistan have a wide-ranging strategic partnership and that Washington is in for a long-term economic and investment relationship with Pakistan, particularly in the energy field. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s government is committed to encouraging foreign investment into various sectors of the economy and is crystal clear that the country needs both the Dasu and Basha dams. Minister for Water, Power and Defense, Khawaja Muhammad Asif reaffirmed Islamabad’s commitment to offering one window operation to investors. Ambassador Jilani hailed the tremendous response to the conference. Ambassador Jilani said the security has improved vastly in Pakistan and investors have not raised any concerns on this count. He also added that Islamabad is working in letter and spirit of Indus Water Treaty and saw no reason for any Indian objection to the construction of Diamer Basha Dam. U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Richard Olson said the meeting on Diamer Basha dam has generated enthusiasm and interest among investors. Pakistan has been on the path of democratization for the last several years and the rule of law sends an important message to investors.

PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN SIGN THE CASA 1000 AGREEMENT

Pakistan and Afghanistan signed an agreement on electricity transit fees between the two countries, taking an important step forward for energy trading between Central and South Asia. The Pakistani side negotiated the price bringing it down from the initial asking price of 2.5 cents to 1.25 cents per KW helping establish the commercial arrangements for 1,300 megawatts (MW) off sustainable regional electricity trade between Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan as part of the Central Asia South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project (CASA-1000). CASA-1000 will build more than 1,200 kilometers of electricity transmission lines and associated substations to transmit excess summer hydropower energy from existing power generation stations in Tajikistan and the Krgyz Republic to Pakistan and Afghanistan. To oversee the complex, four-country process, an inter-Governmental Council has been established to supervise the design and implementation of the project. Commercial and operating framework for CASA-1000 is specifically based on “open access” principles that will allow additional energy supplying countries to connect with wider regional transmission networks. CASA-1000 will enable the development of the Central Asia South Asia Regional Electricity Market, (CASAREM) – a long-term plan for regional energy trade.
US-PAKISTAN WOMEN’S COUNCIL HOSTED A SPECIAL EVENT AT THE US STATE DEPARTMENT

The US-Pakistan Women's Council hosted a special event at the US State Department to commemorate the second anniversary of the Council. The event focused on “Increasing Women's Economic Participation in Pakistan”. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Jilani stressed the importance of creating greater economic and employment opportunities to empower women. The Ambassador highlighted the key role that the US-Pakistan Women Council could play in identifying trade and investment opportunities for women entrepreneurs in Pakistan and the US. He added that enhanced market access for Pakistani products, particularly in the textile sector, which is the largest employer of women in Pakistan could really go a long way in economically empowering the women of Pakistan. He urged the Council and its board to look at this more closely and seriously to identify ways in which the Council can help Pakistani textile exports and other products, including jewelry secure greater access to the US market.

Ambassador Jilani speaking at the 2nd anniversary of the US-Pakistan Women's Council
Chief of Army Staff, General Raheel Sharif visited the US and held several high level meetings with US military and civil leadership. He visited the CENTCOM HQ in Tampa, FL and met with Commander CENTCOM Gen. Llyod J. Austin. General Sharif gave Pakistan’s perspective on regional security, stability and Pak-Afghan military relations. He also discussed Indian aggression along LOC. Gen Austin praised Zarb-e-Azb and paid tributes to Pakistan Army for its commitment, professionalism and achievements in the fight against terror.

In Washington, DC General Raheel Sharif visited the Pentagon where he was received with Army Full Honour Guard. He was also conferred with the US Legion of Merit Medal for his brave leadership, sagacity, vision and efforts for peace and stability in the region. The Army Chief met with Chairman Joint Chief Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey, Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work and Commander US Marines Gen. Joseph Dunford. The focus of these meetings was long term-enhanced and enduring military-to-military relations as well as regional security.

COAS had meetings at the Hill where he met with members of the Committee on Foreign relations, US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Armed Services Committee. At the White House he met with Ambassador Susan Rice, US National Security Adviser where they had in-depth discussions on the ongoing Pakistan-U.S. security issues and expressed satisfaction on the overall positive trajectory in the bilateral relationship. General Sharif thanked Ambassador Rice for understanding of Pakistan’s perspective on regional security and counter terrorism efforts. NSA Rice appreciated the high level exchanges between Pakistan and Afghanistan following the inauguration of the new Unity Government led by Dr. Ashraf Ghani. Both sides also recognized the continued need for close coordination and cooperation for ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan.

On the west coast COAS visited the US Military National Training Centre (NTC) at Fort Irvin, California where he received a command brief before visiting the operations group. During a visit to the National Urban War Fighting Center he was briefed about training scenarios that take place in the village. While in California he was also invited to Stanford University for a roundtable discussion where he highlighted Pakistan’s role in combating globalised terror and asserted that Pakistan is a nation of resilient people who have defended themselves at great cost.

General Sharif also met with US Secretary of State, John Kerry. They discussed several items of mutual interest including ongoing efforts toward regional peace and security. The Secretary recognized the tremendous sacrifices the Pakistani military has made in its efforts to improve the security situation in Pakistan and acknowledged Pakistan’s commitment to counter all extremist elements.

General and Mrs. Raheel Sharif with Ambassador and Mrs. Jalil Jilani and Army & Defense Attaché, Brigadier and Mrs. Abdullah Dogar at the Embassy dinner.

Army Chief General Raheel Sharif with CENTCOM Commander Gen. Lloyd J. Austin

General Raheel Sharif reviewing the parade during the Honour Guard ceremony

General Raheel Sharif with US Secretary of State, John Kerry

General Raheel Sharif with Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Robert Corker (R-TN), members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.
EMBASSY OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN in Washington DC

AMBASSADOR JILANI'S MEETS WITH SENATOR TIM KAINE (D-VA)

Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani met Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA), member of the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees. Ambassador Jilani briefed Senator Kaine on the recent developments in the bilateral relationship and elaborated on wide ranging cooperation in the fields of economy and trade, defence, security and counter-terrorism. Ambassador also apprised the Senator on the ongoing military operation in North Waziristan which was aimed at eliminating all terrorists from Pakistani soil. The Ambassador underscored the need for peace in the region for economic development. Senator Kaine appreciated Pakistan's efforts to address the challenges of terrorism and assured the US support for peace and stability in the region. Pakistan India relations and the situation in Afghanistan were also discussed in the meeting.

EMBASSY OUTREACH & EVENTS

EMBASSY HOSTS THE FIRST CONVENTION OF PAKISTANI-AMERICAN COMMUNITY (CPAC-2014)

The Embassy of Pakistan, Washington DC hosted the first Convention of Pakistani-American Community (CPAC-2014) in the month of October. The convention aimed to bring together leading community members from across the United States on one platform as part of the Embassy's outreach efforts to engage the growing Pakistani American community and discuss issues of mutual interest. In his address, Ambassador Jilani emphasized that the welfare of the Pakistani American community was a top priority of the Government of Pakistan, and the Embassy and Consulates are dedicated to assisting Pakistanis in every possible way. Ambassador Jilani urged the community to shun their parochial differences and act as a unified group to effectively leverage their political capital in the U.S. political system. Highlighting the importance of diaspora communities in strengthening bilateral relations, Ambassador Jilani said the community could play a bigger role in countering the negative narrative in Pakistan and the U.S. The participants of the Convention were given detailed briefings on the economic situation of Pakistan as well as the available trade and investment opportunities. Representatives of USAID and OPIC also highlighted the economic cooperation between Pakistan and the United States and facilitative role played by U.S. Government to spur private sector investments in Pakistan. The participants greatly appreciated the initiative of the Embassy in organizing the nationwide Convention.

Video: http://embassyofpakistanusa.org/C_Pak_Convention_010182014_V.php

AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH DAVID SHEAR, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENCE FOR ASIA & PACIFIC SECRETARY AFFAIRS
Ambassador Jilani joined a gathering of eminent personalities from Pakistan and the US to discuss the future of Pakistan-US relations at an event hosted by the Atlantic Council. Highlighting the inherent strengths of this vital relationship, Ambassador Jilani explained that the common goals of strengthening democracy, securing peace and stability in the region and building economic integration for shared prosperity were among the numerous factors that bind Pakistan and the United States in an enduring partnership. Outlining the common challenges to peace and security in South Asia, Ambassador Jilani stressed that Pakistan and the US had convergence of interest to develop a mutually beneficial relationship to promote stability in the region. Pakistan's unparalleled sacrifices in the global war against terrorism, its efforts to eradicate terrorism from the region through the ongoing comprehensive security operations in FATA and consistent support for the democratic process in Afghanistan were concrete expression of Pakistan's commitment to bring stability in the region, Ambassador explained. Ambassador Jilani expressed disappointment on the unilateral decision by India to cancel Foreign Secretary level talks and the recent escalation on the line of control through multiple violations by the Indian security forces. Such aggressive posturing in a volatile region, Ambassador noted, not only runs counter to the stated Indian objectives for a peace dialogue with Pakistan but also jeopardizes the security and stability of the entire region.

Video: http://goo.gl/5fBRsa

Reaffirming his continued support for the Pakistani-American Christians and Pakistan’s minorities, Ambassador Jilani attended the Annual Dinner for Reach Out International, Inc. USA / Pakistan, Non-Profit Christian Interfaith Ministry. The Dinner was jointly sponsored by the Missions Board of Vienna Presbyterian Church, Vienna, Virginia, including the ADAMS CENTER and Church of the Holy Comforter, in Virginia.

AMBASSADOR HOSTS PAKISTANI-AMERICAN CONGRESS DELEGATION

AMBASSADOR JILANI SPEAKS AT THE COHEN GROUP POLICY DINNER HOSTED BY SECRETARY WILLIAM S. COHEN AND AMB. MARC GROSSMAN

AMBASSADOR JILANI ATTENDS THE ANNUAL DINNER FOR REACH OUT INTERNATIONAL, INC. USA/PAKISTAN

AMBASSADOR JILANI WITH VISITING PAKISTANI JOURNALISTS
SHORT FILM 'DEFENDER' WINS AWARD AT INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE FILM FESTIVAL

"Defender", an ISPR documentary on Pakistan Armed Forces won the best documentary award at the Rome Film Festival, 2014.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI WINS 2014 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AND WORLD'S CHILDREN'S PRIZE 2014

Children's rights activists Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2014 along with Kailash Satyarthi of India. The Norwegian Nobel Committee cited the two “for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education.” Malala Yousafzai became the second Pakistani and the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. Malala Yousafzai also received the World's Children's Prize 2014 — a global vote involving millions of children. The Sweden-based awards organization attributed the win to "her courageous and dangerous fight for girls' right to education.”

BURKA AVENGER NOMINATED FOR EMMY KIDS AWARDS

Pakistan's first animated television series, Burka Avenger has been nominated by the International Emmy Kids Awards. The multi-award winning series has been nominated in the animation category and this is the first time any Pakistani animated series has been recognised in the Kids Awards. Burka Avenger's story revolves around an animated superheroine, Jiya who wears a burqa as a disguise to conceal her identity while fighting villains for justice, peace and education for all.

PAKISTANI AMERICAN ANILA QUAYYUM AGHA WINS ARTPRIZE'S PUBLIC VOTE GRAND PRIZE AND THE JURIED GRAND PRIZE

Anila Agha became the first person to win both the $200,000 Public Vote Grand Prize, as well as, in a tie, $100,000 of the Juried Grand Prize. She won the prizes for her work “Intersections,” a shadow box on display at the Grand Rapids Art Museum that emulates the intricate patterns from the Alhambra in Grenada, Spain.

Embassy Outreach

AMBASSADOR JILANI CONVEYED HIS DEEP CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF THE CHICAGO AIR CRASH VICTIMS

Ambassador Jilani conveyed his deep condolences to the families of the three Pakistani-American physicians who lost their lives in an unfortunate air crash near Palos Hills, Chicago on Oct 13, 2014. In his condolence messages to the families of Dr. Ali Kanchwala, Dr. Maria Javed and Dr. Taufeeq-ur-Rehman, Ambassador Jilani said the tragic accident was a great loss to their families and the Pakistani-American community. He prayed for the departed souls who were great assets for their families and the community. Ambassador Jilani assured the bereaved families and friends of his full support and cooperation.

Also Pakistan

While the mainstream media often focuses on the problems Pakistan faces and the challenges confronted by our government and society, there 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 equity, democracy, pluralism, rule of law and transparent governance.

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Washington DC
The Embassy of Pakistan welcomes your feedback. Please send your comments to newsletter@embassyofpakistanusa.org or visit www.embassyofpakistanusa.org