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Dear Friends,

In the month of September, Pakistan’s diplomatic efforts in the United States continued in full swing. Prime Minister Imran Khan addressed the 75th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Session on September 25, through video link. His speech covered a wide range of issues confronting the world, particularly COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, peace in Afghanistan, the situation in Palestine, Islamophobia, the rise of Hindutva and India’s illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir. The Prime Minister’s address was well received throughout the world and received the most online views among all the world leaders.

Reaffirming Pakistan’s strong commitment to ongoing peace efforts in Afghanistan, the Prime Minister penned an op-ed in the Washington Post where he articulated Pakistan’s longstanding contribution and our interest in building peace in Afghanistan and the broader region. In Islamabad, this month witnessed a historic visit by Afghan Chair of the High Council on National Reconciliation, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah. During his visit, he met the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, senior officials and military leadership as well as media and civil society. The U.S. has lauded Pakistan’s constructive role and contributions in the Afghan peace process.

On the economic front, September saw the launch of the Roshan Digital Account – a landmark innovation providing Pakistanis living overseas the option of opening bank accounts and carrying out lifestyle banking through Pakistani banks, directly online through a click of a button. This initiative of the Government is aimed at promoting the financial inclusion of Pakistan’s diaspora and building their financial stakes in the country. The Embassy hosted a special webinar for Governor State Bank of Pakistan Dr. Reza Baqir on September 16 where a detailed presentation was made on the modalities of Roshan Digital Account.

Among other outreach activities, the Embassy participated in the Paigham-e-Pakistan International Peace Conference, which is an effort to promote Islam’s cardinal message of universal peace through religious scholars, academics and diplomatic efforts around the globe. The Conference was held virtually and included renowned scholars from the U.S., the U.K., Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Egypt, Morocco and several other countries. I also had the opportunity to address the audience of this event where I highlighted Pakistan’s commitment to inter-faith harmony and building peace worldwide.

I also had useful and productive meetings with the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Agriculture, USAID and my regular interactions at the White House and State Department. In each of these engagements, we took stock of the current state of bilateral cooperation and discussed ways to enhance the level of engagement and make it more substantive.

In deference to COVID-19, our social and cultural activities remain limited, however, we solemnly observed Defence and Martyrs Day on September 6 to pay tribute to the brave armed forces of Pakistan who are committed to the defence of the nation’s frontiers and are playing a valiant role for world peace.
PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN AT THE 75TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PRIME MINISTER ADDRESSES THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Watch here.

Mr. President,

This year, I must again reiterate the threat posed to mankind due to Climate Change. Unprecedented fires in Australia, Siberia, California, Brazil unprecedented flooding in various parts of the world; record temperatures even in the Arctic Circle. This should make us all worried for our future generations. Commitments made through the Paris Agreement must be fulfilled, in particular the commitment to mobilize US$ 100 billion annually in climate finance.

Pakistan’s contribution to carbon emissions is minimal, but it is one of those countries most affected by climate change. Yet, we have decided to take the lead as we consider addressing climate change a universal responsibility.

We have launched an extremely ambitious programme to plant 10 billion trees in the next three years as our contribution to mitigating the effects of climate change.

Mr. President,

The pandemic was an opportunity to bring humanity together. Unfortunately, it has instead fostered nationalism, increased global tensions, and given rise to racial and religious hatred and violence against vulnerable minorities in several places.

These trends have also accentuated ‘Islamophobia’.

For over 72 years, India has illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir against the wishes of the Kashmiri people, and in blatant violation of the resolutions of the Security Council and indeed its own commitments to the people of Kashmir.

On 5th August last year, India illegally and unilaterally sought to change the status of the occupied territories and deployed additional troops, bringing the total number to 100,000, to impose a military siege on 8 million Kashmiris. All Kashmiri political leaders were incarcerated, about 100,000 Kashmir youth were abducted and thousands tortured. A complete curfew was imposed, accompanied by a total communications blackout.

Indian occupation forces have use brute force including beatings against peaceful protestors imposed collective punishments, including the destruction of entire neighborhoods, and extra-judicially murdered hundreds of innocent young Kashmiris in fake ‘encounters’, denying even to feed their bodies to their families.

I have consistently maintained over the past two decades that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. I am surprised by this political settlement which involves the full spectrum of Afghanistan’s political actors.

Pakistan fully facilitated the process that culminated in the U.S.-Taliban Peace Agreement on 29th February 2020.

I am deeply gratified that it has fulfilled its part of the responsibility.

The Afghan leaders must now seize this historic opportunity to achieve reconciliation and restore peace in their war-torn country.

Through the Intra-Afghan Negotiations that commenced on 12th of September, they must work out an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political settlement. The process must be Afghan-led and Afghan-owned, and without any interference or outside influence.

Early return of Afghan refugees must be a part of this political solution. After almost two decades of war, it is imperative not to allow so-called ‘safeguards’ within and outside Afghanistan - to subvert the peace process.

Peace and stability in Afghanistan will open new opportunities for development and regional connectivity.
Prime Minister Imran Khan addressed a high-level panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (FACTI) along the sidelines of the UNGA. The Prime Minister proposed a decisive 9-point action plan which would completely eradicate illegal flow of money from developing countries and tax evasion.
ON THE SIDELINES OF UNGA75

PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN SPEAKS AT “POVERTY AT CROSSROADS: USING LEADERSHIP AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX TO BUILD BACK BETTER

POVERTY AT A CROSSROAD USING LEADERSHIP AND THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX TO BUILD BACK BETTER

Around one billion people – almost 15 percent of the world’s population – survive in poverty, lacking the income and capabilities to live with dignity.

Poverty imposes massive human suffering. It is the most pervasive violation of human rights. It is also the root cause of socio-economic instability, and of most political and security problems across the world.

It is thus only right that poverty eradication is the first among UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

Excellencies,

Over the past 30 years, poverty had visibly declined. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered the worst global recession in over a century. One hundred million people are likely to be pushed back into extreme poverty. A decade’s development could be reversed.

The COVID virus does not discriminate; but it is the poor and vulnerable who have suffered the most from it.

In Pakistan, we have been able to control the virus through our strategy of “smart lockdowns”. My Government has done its utmost to shield the poor and the vulnerable. Despite our financial difficulties, we implemented a $1.25 billion package to deliver emergency cash to over 15 million families, covering over a 100 million people.

My Government is implementing a multisectoral poverty alleviation programme – Ehsas (which means compassion in Urdu). It’s the largest poverty eradication programme in Pakistan’s history.

My Government is committed to reducing poverty from 24.5 per cent to 19 per cent by 2023. My aim is to create an Islamic welfare state based on the principles of Rasat-e-Madina through inclusive equitable growth and economic modernization.
PRIME MINISTER CO-CHAIRS THE UNITED NATIONS SUMMIT ON BIODIVERSITY

Prime Minister Imran Khan co-chaired the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity convened by the UN General Assembly President on “Urgent action on biodiversity for sustainable development”. In his address, Prime Minister Imran Khan highlighted Pakistan’s unique ecological diversity, reaffirmed the country’s resolve to preserve the valued asset and protect flora and fauna, besides achieving resilience against climate change.

Pakistan had enlisted the help of local communities for both biodiversity protection and climate change resilience.

Read here.

FOREIGN MINISTER ADDRESSES THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi virtually addressed the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi reiterated Pakistan’s firm commitment to protect and promote women rights and urged the international community to put in more efforts to achieve the goals set under Beijing Platform for Action on women rights and freedom. Foreign Minister Qureshi said through legislative initiatives, Pakistan was continuously addressing the issues of violence against women, domestic abuse, harassment, social and property rights protection. Read here.
Shah Mahmood Qureshi
@SMQureshiPTI

Today at #SAARC Council of Ministers meeting on sidelines of #UN75 reiterated need for regional approach to stop spread of #COVID19 & offered Pak’s strategic best practices. 🇵🇰 hosted SAARC Health Ministers’ Video Conference earlier precisely to aid devp of regional response.

Shah Mahmood Qureshi
@SMQureshiPTI

In this same spirit, I restated Pakistan’s willingness to host the 19th SAARC Summit and for obstacles created in its way to be removed for SAARC to function as an effective instrument of regional cooperation.

Shah Mahmood Qureshi
@SMQureshiPTI

Today at #CICA meeting of FM’s, 🇵🇰 firm commitment to global/regional peace & stability emphasised. Imp of cordial relations w/ all states on basis of sovereign equality imp. We remain ready to play our part for realisation of this vision, the very basis of the founding of the Org.
IMRAN KHAN: PEACE IS WITHIN REACH IN AFGHANISTAN. A HASTY INTERNATIONAL WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE UNWISE

"Pakistan will continue to support the Afghan people in their quest for a unified, independent and sovereign Afghanistan that is at peace with itself and its neighbors. Pakistan believes that peace negotiations should not be conducted under coercion and urges all parties to reduce violence. Just as the Afghan government has recognized the Taliban as a political reality, it is hoped that the Taliban would recognize the progress Afghanistan has made.

...For Pakistan, regional peace and stability remain key to realizing the collective aspirations of our people for a better future. We are committed to multilateral collaboration to achieve this.”

Read here.

AT UN, PAKISTANI LEADER Says INDIA SPONSORS ANTI-MUSLIM HATE

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday assailed India’s Hindu nationalist government and its moves to cement control of Muslim-majority Kashmir, calling India a state sponsor of hatred and prejudice against Islam.

Khan said at the annual U.N. gathering of world leaders that Islamophobia rules India and threatens the nearly 200 million Muslims who live there.

Read here.

US HAILS PAKISTAN’S ROLE IN ADVANCING AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS

America’s peace envoy for Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, visited Pakistan on Monday and conveyed Washington’s gratitude for the “important role” Islamabad has played in easing the start of reconciliation talks between warring Afghan parties, officials said.

Read here.
AT THE UN, PAKISTAN'S IMRAN KHAN WENT ALL-IN ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Addressing the UNGA for the second time, Khan delved on a range of issues, including money laundering, climate change, and his government’s response to the COVID-19 crisis. However, the major chunk of the speech was focused on laying bare Pakistan’s foreign policy intentions, and the course the country is likely to take going forward. A clear exercise in signaling, the premier focused on the issues of Jammu and Kashmir, the Afghan imbroglio, and the Israel-Palestine conflict. Through Khan’s speech, Pakistan sent clear signals to domestic and foreign audiences while accentuating its stature as a country that favors conflict-resolution and economic connectivity.

Read here.

PAKISTAN PM CONDEMNS' ISLAMOPHOBIC CHARLIE HEBDO CARTOONS

Addressing the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Imran Khan said that rising global nationalism has "accentuated Islamophobia" and said that Muslims "continue to be targeted with impunity in many countries."

"We stress that willful provocations and incitement to hate and violence must be universally outlawed.

"This assembly should declare an international day to combat Islamophobia and build a coalition to fight the scourge."

Read here.
AMBASSADOR HOLDS VIRTUAL MEETING WITH UNDER SECRETARY TELD MCKINNEY OF US DEPARTMENT. OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

As part of bilateral engagement between Pakistan and the U.S. in the agriculture sector, the Ambassador held a virtual meeting with Under Secretary Ted McKinney of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Both sides discussed various avenues of cooperation in agriculture sector including seed development, Halal food export, cotton production as well as capacity building opportunities.

ADVISER TO THE PM ON COMMERCE ADDRESSES U.S. PAKISTAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (USPBC) VIRTUAL SERIES

The U.S. Pakistan Business Council (USPBC) organized a virtual webinar with Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Commerce Mr. Abdul Razzaq Dawood. The participants included Mr. Steve Kobos, Chairman USPBC as well as representatives of U.S. companies that are registered members of USPBC including Exxon Mobil, Excelerate, PepsiCo, Google, Abbott, Pfizer, etc. The Adviser briefed the audience on various measures taken by the Government in the wake COVID-19 pandemic. He also took questions on the various issues including IT policy, drugs policy, pricing of sugary beverages, etc.
FOREIGN MINISTER SHAH MAHMOOD QURESHI ON THE AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS

Historic day for #AfghanPeaceProcess. ✌️ has long maintained peace not war is the answer. We are proud to champion a partnership for peace and move forward with faith & resolve that will not be deterred. Pakistan will continue to be a force for a stable & prosperous region. 🇵🇰

It was a pleasure to have welcomed @DrabdullahCE to MoFA. The #AfghanPeaceProcess is of paramount importance for both ☘️ and 🇪🇺 & its success ensures socio-economic prosperity for all. @DrabdullahCE's visit further strengthens the amity & fraternity between our countries.
US ENVOY LAUDS PAKISTAN’S ROLE IN AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS

Washington’s peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and a U.S. delegation visiting Pakistan praised its assistance in efforts aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the 17-year war in Afghanistan. The U.S. team met with Pakistan’s army chief, Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa. A military statement said the visiting delegation “greatly appreciated” Pakistan’s role in the ongoing peace process, saying that “it could not have succeeded without Pakistan’s sincere and unconditional support.”

Read here.

U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE WELCOMES THE LAUNCH OF AFGHANISTAN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

The United States welcomes the announcement that Afghanistan peace negotiations will begin on September 12th. The start of these talks marks a historic opportunity for Afghanistan to bring an end to four decades of war and bloodshed... Only through an Afghan-owned, Afghan-led political process — one that respects the views of all Afghan communities, including women and ethnic and religious minorities — can the parties achieve a durable peace...Immense sacrifice and investment by the United States, our partners, and the people of Afghanistan have made this moment of hope possible.

Read here.
WEBINAR: ‘BANKING FACILITATION FOR OVERSEAS PAKISTANIS’

The Embassy of Pakistan, Washington Post organised a webinar on 'Banking Facilitation for Overseas Pakistanis'. Dr. Reza Baqir, Governor State Bank of Pakistan, shared initiatives of State Bank of Pakistan to connect Non-Resident Pakistanis financially with their homeland.

Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan, reiterated that the Government attaches highest importance to serving the Pakistani-American diaspora for its crucial role in Pakistan’s national development.

The Deputy Governor (Policy) of the State Bank, Dr. Murtaza Syed, gave a detailed presentation on the ‘Roshan Digital Accounts’ that allows Non-resident Pakistanis (NRPs) to remotely open bank accounts in Pakistan entirely through digital means.

Watch here.

Roshan Digital Accounts for Overseas Pakistanis are now a click away. Details available on the SBP website. Use the link to choose a bank and get an account opened in 48 hours.

http://sbp.org.pk/RDA/index.html Email support is available at RDASupport@sbp.org.pk
PAIGHAM-E-PAKISTAN’S INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE

Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan participated in Paigham-e-Pakistan’s International Peace Conference and reiterated Pakistan’s commitment towards a peaceful nation free from sectarianism, extremism and terrorism.

Watch here.

AMBASSADOR HOLDS A WEB CONFERENCE WITH ASSISTANT TO THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE OFFICE OF AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN AFFAIRS
AMBASSADOR HOSTS U.S.-BASED PAKISTANI MEDIA

AMBASSADOR’S INTERVIEW ON ARY TV

Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan gave a detailed interview regarding ‘Roshan Digital Accounts’ to Jahanzaib Ali on his show ‘Free Speech with Jahanzaib Ali’

AMBASSADOR’S INTERVIEW WITH BOL TV

Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan gave a detailed interview on Pakistan-U.S. relations to Kausar Javed of Bol TV.
The Embassy of Pakistan, Washington DC held a ceremony to commemorate and pay tribute to the invaluable sacrifices of our Armed forces as well as resilient Nation on the eve of Defence and Martyrs Day.

Asad M. Khan @asadm17 · Sep 5
On #DefenceAndMartyrsDay2020 the nation remembers all the Shuhada who have made the ultimate sacrifice so we can live in peace and security. Our gratitude and prayers for the brave men and women serving in our Armed Forces! Pakistan Zindabad @OfficialDGISPR
#6SeptDayOfPride
USAID'S "PAKISTAN READING PROJECT" ANNOUNCED AS THE U.S. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS' INTERNATIONAL LITERACY PROGRAM OF THE YEAR FOR 2020

The United States Library of Congress announced it has selected the Pakistan Reading Project, a literacy program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as the International Literacy Program of the Year for 2020.

Implemented by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), along with Creative Associates International, World Learning, and the Institute of Rural Management, this early-grade literacy project also has worked closely with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to institutionalize positive change by improving policies and systems to improve reading instruction across the national, provincial, and local levels.

Read here.

PAKISTAN AND THE U.S. PROVIDE FORTIFIED FOOD TO MALNOURISHED CHILDREN
PM IMRAN KHAN’S GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPEECH MOST VIEWED AMONG WORLD LEADERS ON UN’S YOUTUBE

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HALTS INDIA OPERATIONS AFTER 'FREEZING' OF ITS BANK ACCOUNT
WHO LISTS PAKISTAN AMONG 7 COUNTRIES WORLD CAN LEARN FROM TO FIGHT FUTURE PANDEMICS

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, while speaking at a media briefing on COVID-19, highlighted Pakistan amongst seven countries, amongst many, whose preparation and response offer lessons for the rest of the world in how to deal with a global pandemic.

Pakistan’s response reinforces "the lesson that the choice is not between controlling the virus or saving the economy; the two go hand-in-hand".- WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Read here.

PAKISTAN’S ECONOMY SHOWS MOMENTUM AS VIRUS CASES TAPER OFF

Pakistan is showing signs of business activity picking up at a faster clip, as worries about new coronavirus infections fade in an economy that contracted for the first time in seven decades.

Evidence of momentum returning can be seen from growing cement-to-fuel sales and demand for home appliances to cars. That’s happening even as Pakistan added fewer than 2,900 cases last week compared with almost 35,000 cases in a week in June, and 96% of the total 300,000 infected have fully recovered.

Read here.

IMAN VELLANI TO PLAY MS MARVEL, MCU’S FIRST PAKISTANI-AMERICAN TEEN SUPERHERO, IN DISNEY+ SERIES

Ms Marvel, who debuted in 2014 as Marvel’s first Muslim character to lead a comic book title, follows Kamala Khan, a Pakistani-American teenager based in New Jersey whose alter-ego superhero Ms. Marvel tries to find her own way as a Pakistani American living in a religious family. Marvel will be played by newcomer Iman Vellani who will make history as Marvel Studio’s first onscreen Muslim superhero.

Read here.
PULITZER-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT AYAD AKHTAR TO LEAD PEN AMERICA

PEN America announced that the playwright and novelist Ayad Akhtar would serve as its next president. Mr. Akhtar, who traces his roots back to Pakistan, has been on the board of trustees for the nonprofit literary and human rights organization for five years, won the Pulitzer for his play “Disgraced” in 2013, and is publishing a highly anticipated new novel, “Homeland Elegies,” on Sept. 15.

Read here.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI AMONGST CELEBS HOSTING NEW THEMED BOOK CLUBS

A subscription-based monthly book service for children, Literati is expanding to monthly book clubs for adults that are curated by notable figures, known as “luminaries.” The curators include Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai.

There will be several discussion boards in each club depending where you are in the book. Through an app, each luminary will check in a few times a month to join and participate in the discussion with their readers.

Read here.