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*Report- IN-HOUSE MEETING*

**“Chinese Delegation from the Department of External  
Security Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs”**

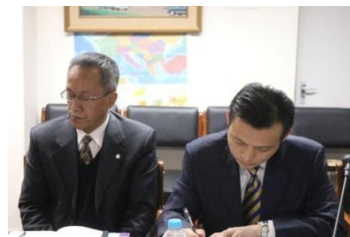
**December 20, 2016**



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*Edited by: Najam Rafique*

### Pictures of the Event



## **Meeting with Chinese Delegation from the Department of External Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

A ten-member Chinese delegation visited the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISS) on December 20, 2016. The delegation was led by Ambassador Liu Guangyuan, Director General, Department of External Security Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs accompanied by Deputy Head Mission at Chinese Embassy, Zhao Lijian. Other members of the delegation included: Mr. Liu Xiaozhong, Senior Colonel, Ministry of Defense, Mr. Yu Chengtao, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Public Security, Mr. Shen Tujiang, Director Ministry of Commerce, Mr. Zhang Maoming, Counselor, Department of External Security of Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Sun Mingji, Deputy director, Department of External Security Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Ye Xiaoning,, Interpreter, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Li Feng, Director, Ministry of State Security, Mr. She Lei, Deputy Director, State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission and Ms. Hou Yi, Ministry of Commerce.

Mr. Khurshid Anwar, Director Administration ISSI, welcomed the delegation and expressed his gratitude for paying a visit to the institute. He then briefed the delegation about the history of ISSI and about the aims and functions of the Institute. He said that the institute was founded by the then Prime Minister Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the prime architect of Pak-China relations. Many eminent former foreign ministers, foreign secretary and distinguished generals and an admiral have served the institute in the capacity of chairman and director general. He informed the delegation that the aim of the institute is to carry out research on the issues of foreign policy, strategic interests, international relations and others. Strategic Studies, the flagship project of the institute, is a quarterly research journal. Other than this, ISSI also brings out a range of publications that include Islamabad Paper, monographs, policy briefs and issue briefs. A group of researchers has been assigned to specifically conduct research on Pak-China relations. He also informed the delegation about the China Pakistan Study Project (CPSP) that has recently been established at the Institute to specifically conduct research on Pak-China relations.

Dr. Ahmad Rashid Malik gave a presentation on Pak-China relations. He said these relations are now beyond any phrase and could be rightly termed as iron relationship. China and Pakistan are not allies but true friends and iron brothers. They are trustworthy partners and their friendship is deep-rooted. Their relations date back to the times of Indus Valley Civilization and Yellow River Civilization, which is 5000 years old. There has been no single event of conflict between the two nations down the history. Pakistan was the first country that recognized People's Republic of China. Even in the Cold-war era, when Pakistan allied with the Capitalist bloc, Pak-China relations remained unaffected. Pak-China relations are multi-dimensional: diplomatic, political and economic. Pakistan played an important role in ending China's isolation from the West. It acted as a source of connectivity between the West and China by playing an integral in Kissinger's secret mission to China, which was the cause of normalization of strained Sino-US ties.

He then delved into areas of cooperation between the two friendly countries. He talked at length how China is helping Pakistan to end its energy crisis. He also discussed China's assistance to Pakistan in Civil Nuclear Technology. Since 1980, he said, China assisted Pakistan in constructing its civil nuclear plants. Seven nuclear plants are now going to be assisted by

China. Pak-China defense cooperation has also been growing since 1960. Pakistan, owing to its all-weather-friendship with China, is now self-sufficient in defense field. He, in the end, touched upon China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He was of the view that CPEC helped lighten the burden of war on terrorism being incurred by Pakistan on many fronts. Financial arrangements of the CPEC projects don't burden Pakistan's economy. CPEC is a mega-investment project, and foreign investors are looking forward to invest in Pakistan. CPEC is ahead of all the corridors in terms of progress on all other corridors under One Belt, One Road Initiative (OBOR).

Ambassador Liu Guangyuan expressed his heart-felt gratitude for being in Pakistan and the Institute as well. He said that since his childhood, he was impressed by all-weather-friendship of the countries. He was touched by the hospitality of the Institute. He said that he was sent particularly to see progress on CPEC projects. It's, he believed, a short way to achieve win-win results. China, being the second-largest economy, is well-positioned to assist Pakistan in carrying out such a mega-investment project.

He said that China also cannot forget its old friend that lent a helping hand to it. Pakistan is our dear friend and our relations have been developing very fast. CPEC is not a gift, but a reward China has given back to Pakistan. It's time we should pay back the favor our brothers gave to us. It is a long-term and systematic project. Over 30 projects are under construction. Speaking on bilateral friendship and geo-political issues, he said that certain common neighboring countries are not comfortable with advancing of CPEC. These countries undermined advancement of the CPEC progress. Our common neighbor wants to make use of separatist issues in Pakistan by supporting separatist elements and other non-state actors such as NGOs. All these efforts are directed to make irresponsible remarks on China and to smear Pak-China relations.

He took the brotherly relations as liberty to raise some questions on certain issues: He wanted to know why the Pakistani media criticize CPEC and China. He said that he had talked to some of the representatives from Chinese media but they replied "we can do nothing." He said that China was investing in Pakistan, but we also face this kind of criticism. There should be freedom of speech by all means, but Pakistani media should be conscious of China's support to Pakistan in all trying times. If an American journalist does so, it is not unnatural. But when it comes to Pakistani journalists, it frustrates me. This criticism is also prevalent on social media.

He also requested researchers to play their role in countering this negative and baseless propaganda."

Ms. Ume Farwa, Research Fellow at ISSI, was of the view that this criticism represents a very small portion of Pakistani civil society. Yet to counter these issues, transparency on financial arrangement should be made so that a common man remains satisfied. She suggested increasing people-to-people contacts, joint research of scholars both from China and Pakistan and to respond intelligently to this unintelligent treatment.

On this, Deputy Head Mission at Chinese Embassy Mr. Zhao Lijian, briefed the researcher about financial arrangements of the CPEC project. He informed that these projects are open to bidding and investment to any company, be it national or international. He also added that the

Government of Pakistan has the final say on which company would get the contract. He further said that financial arrangement won't burden Pakistan's economy as companies involved in the projects would have to pay the loans, not the State of Pakistan.

Ms. Neelum Nigar, Research Fellow working under China-Pakistan study Project, said that the issue of CPEC has now entered in the academic debate which will certainly help giving better policy directions to both the governments of Pakistan and China. Ms. Neelum said that as CPEC is based on South-South Cooperation as opposed to the North-South Cooperation. This model is fine but the model is not inclusive. Pakistan has much to offer in terms of relatively cheap labor. She further emphasized that in order to make the project more inclusive the government of China must tap the young working age workforce of Pakistan, so that much of the grievances of the general public can be resolved. She wanted to know what arrangements China has made to utilize this labor force.

The Ambassador replied that researchers should pay a visit to the sites of the CPEC projects to see what arrangements China has been making to utilize this asset of Pakistan. Second, he suggested joint research to further allay the people's concerns. But he said that his main task was the security of the CPEC officers. Two of the Chinese officers have been recently attacked in Pakistan, which is not a work-conducive environment.

Ms. Amina Khan, Research Fellow at ISSI, opined that overall, the Pakistani population welcomes CPEC and it's only a small segment of it which criticizes it. Afterwards, Dr. Ahmed Rashid said that these are minor events and one shouldn't worry about it. Pakistan's Army, Navy and Government have assigned special task-forces to protect Chinese nationals. In comparison with previous situation of terrorism in the country, it has now been reduced significantly. These minor events are foreign-funded terrorism in Pakistan. Also, the criticism on and propaganda against CPEC has died down.

The Ambassador thanked the Institute and asked the researchers to focus on these important issues, which have the potential to damage Pak-China relations. He further emphasized that institutes like ISSI can play a major role in highlighting the benefits of this mega project to the general public especially by educating them regarding the potential outcomes which, according to the Ambassador, will help in removing the negative propaganda against this big initiative. This will further strengthen the bilateral relations between China and Pakistan.