



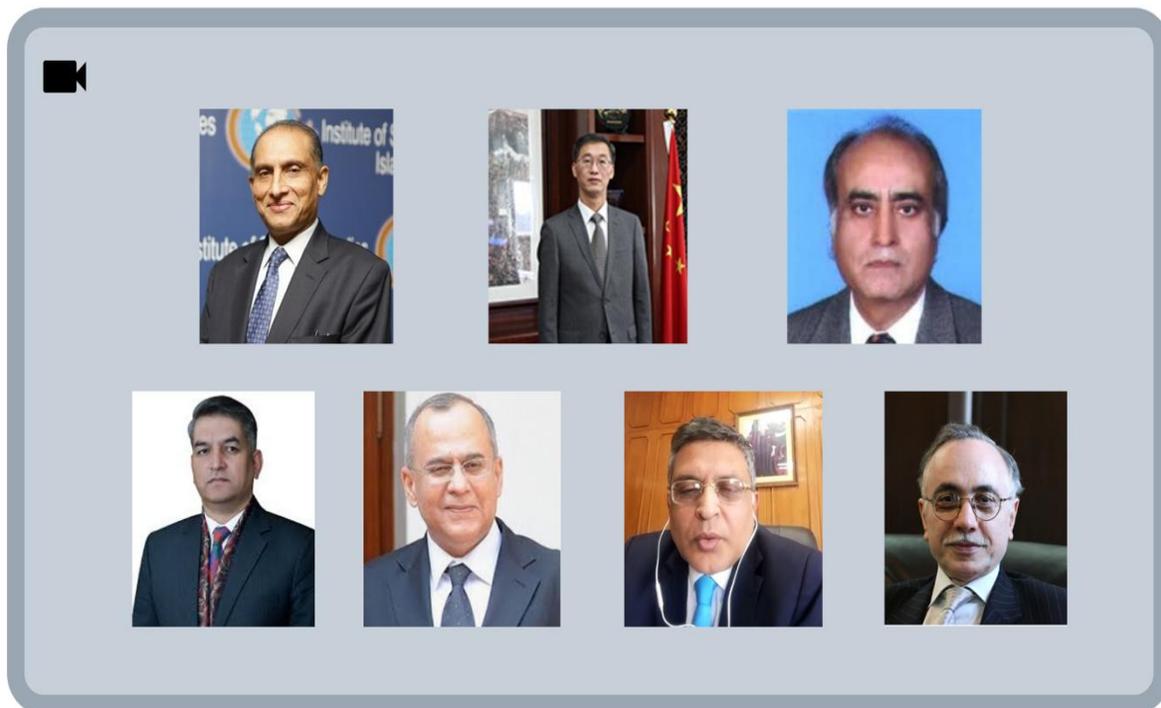
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Report – Webinar

**“69th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic
Relations between Pakistan and China”**

May 21, 2020



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China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organised a webinar to commemorate *69th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Pakistan and China* on May 21, 2020. Mr. Zahoor Ahmad, Additional Secretary (Asia-Pacific), Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the Chief Guest. H.E. Yao Jing, Ambassador of China delivered keynote address. Meanwhile, speakers at the occasion included Ambassador Khalid Masood, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Ambassador Salman Bashir and Ambassador Riaz Khokar, all former Ambassador of Pakistan to China. Moreover, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director-General ISSI delivered welcome address. The webinar was moderated by Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director CPSC.

In his introductory remarks, Dr. Talat Shabbir said, Pakistan and China have complete identity of views and approach on all major regional and international issues and this was reflected in ever-increasing cooperation in political, strategic and economic spheres. He further stated that through our work at the Institute and the Centre, we will continue to work for strengthen people to people contact in education, economic development, media and other areas.

In his welcome address Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director-General ISSI, stated it is special occasion, as it marks the anniversary of a special diplomatic relationship for Pakistan and China. He noted that this vital relationship has two elements: software and hardware. It commenced with software i.e., political and strategic understanding between two sides. It was cemented through hardware such as construction of Karakorum Highway in 1970s, JF-17 projects in 1990s, and economic cooperation such as Free-Trade Agreement in 2006, and enhanced cooperation through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects in recent years. These and other projects have been building blocks of the relationship, which has continued to progress through successive governments in both countries. It is a unique relationship which enjoy broad consensus in Pakistan and China.

In his address as Chief Guest, Mr. Zahoor Ahmad, Additional Secretary (Asia-Pacific), termed Pakistan-China ties a unique relationship where both sides have taken care of each other's interests and supported each other at all international forums. He said, with passage of time new dimensions have added to the relationship, making it today a far more diverse and vibrant. Now this relationship is deep rooted in society and governments of both countries. This is unique

strength of this crucial diplomatic relationship. He noted that China has acknowledged Pakistan's contribution against terrorism, and Pakistan acknowledges China's efforts for maintenance of global peace and security.

He particularly, referred to China's extensive cooperation with Pakistan in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. Early on, when China was battling the epidemic, Pakistan reached out to China and dispatched masks and other personal protective equipment. Similarly, when pandemic reached Pakistan, China extended extensive assistance, with so far over 1million N95 masks, 6 million surgical masks and over 300thousand testing kits have been provided to Pakistan. Moreover, Chinese medical teams also visited Pakistan and shared their experienced. He noted that this is common struggle, and Pakistan will continue to engage with China over COVID-19 and related developments.

Ambassador Masood Khalid, Pakistan's envoy to China until 2018, said that over the decades, relationship has evolved into a robust architecture, and now relationship itself has assumed regional and international significance. In this, Pakistan-China strategic cooperation continues to promote regional stability. He underscored that friendship with China is cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy. And in recent years CPEC has given new dimension to already strong relations. Now relationship peace, development and prosperity are anchor of bilateral engagement. On on-going COVID-19 pandemic Ambassador Khalid underlined that, both sides have shown that they stand by each other in difficult times.

Ambassador Salman Bashir, former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to China, highlighted tremendous strides in development made by China in recent decades. He noted that Pakistan is proud the way China fought poverty, its economic development and rise in recent decades. He underscored that Pakistan-China relationship, is a truly remarkable friendship in all spheres. We have stood together at all times and today we stand together again for welfare of our peoples. Most importantly, he noted, no theory of international relations literature can quantify the depth and explain contours of Pakistan-China relationship.

Ambassador Riaz Khokhar, former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to China stated that evolution of Pakistan-China relationship is a story of a model relationship. He credited leaderships in both countries, from Mao to Xi and from Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra

and Hussain Shaheed Shurwardy to Imran Khan for strengthening the relationship. He particularly, underscored the 1955 Bandung meeting between leadership of both countries which addressed Chinese reservations over Pakistan joining SEATO and CENTO pacts. He also acknowledged hard work of diplomats over the decades for advancing this relationship through constant engagement. Referring to current stage of relationship he noted that at present, bilateral ties are dynamic and multidimensional. Both countries stand for peace and development, and CPEC is a manifestation of just that.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman ISSI Board of Governors and former Ambassador to China, said that Pakistan-China relationship has withstood internal and international changes, as five principles of peaceful co-existence continue to guide overall relationship. He underscored that real value of relationship is the consensus at the level of leadership and its acceptance by society in both countries. While strategic cooperation continued for decades, there existed gaps in terms of economic, trade and people-to-people contacts. These voids are being filled by CPEC. He underscored that a unique strength of relationship is both sides looking after each other's interests, instead of solely pursuing own interests.

Ambassador Yao Jing delivered keynote address and paid rich tributes to the leadership, diplomats and academics of both countries who have worked hard to strengthen and deepen bilateral relationship. He underscored that China will be steadfast in its friendship with Pakistan, as Beijing considers Pakistan-China relationship as model to follow. Highlighting key features of bilateral relationship, he noted that first feature is principle of mutual support and non-interference in internal affairs of each other. This has been demonstrated through Pakistan supporting China's seat at the United Nations, and One-China policy. Similarly, China support just struggle of people of Kashmir and is resolutely against unilateral changes in international disputes. Second feature is strategic cooperation and coordination for maintenance of international peace and security. Both countries acknowledge crucial role played by each other for promoting regional peace and stability. Third feature is, win-win cooperation as demonstrated by CPEC.

Commenting on the contemporary situation, he noted that because of growing relationship, Pakistan-China cooperation has attracted attention from the United States and other in West. U.S.

is pushing back against CPEC and growing role of China. It is crucial that Pakistan and China continue to work together for a stable relationship amid global uncertainties. He underscored that China is satisfied with the current trajectory of the relationship and is confident that through bilateral coordination and cooperation both countries can meet every challenge.

In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, DG-ISSI, surmised key takeaways from the remarks of esteemed panellists, keynote speaker and the Chief Guest. He underlined that friendship with China is the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy and there is an across-the-board political and public consensus on maintaining strong bilateral ties with China. As strategic partner both sides will continue to support each other's core interests, as they have done during past 69 years.