

Your Excellency Mr. President,

Dear Colleagues:

It is a great pleasure to gather with you in Lahore. First of all, please allow me to extend my sincere gratitude to Chairman of the Senate Honorable Bokhari and the National Assembly of Pakistan for the considerate arrangement of this annual session!

Today, the international landscape is undergoing profound and intricate changes, the world economy is recovering slowly, local conflicts and regional hot spot issues keep flaring up, and non-traditional security challenges, such as terrorism and massive infectious diseases, are increasingly mounting, which calls for joint response of the international community. It is pleased to note that the overall development of Asia has picked up a sound momentum, and Asia boasts the greatest development vitality and potential in the world in spite of the complicated international situation. Asia boasts one third of the global GDP and ample supply of labor force. It enjoys distinct advantages as a late comer and has tremendous untapped development potential. Peace, development and win-win cooperation remain the mainstream theme of the region, and it is the principal policy choice of the regional countries to peacefully resolve differences through consultations and negotiations. Asia is enjoying a rising position in the world, and is bound to play a significant role in

building a multi-polar world, promoting greater democracy in international relations and advancing regional economic integration. Meanwhile, Asia still faces multiple challenges in such areas as development and poverty reduction, urbanization process, environmental governance and counter-terrorism. The future of Asia is at a crucial crossroad. The realization of Asian Century depends on the decisions and actions we make today. Against this backdrop, we gather in Lahore to discuss how to put into greater play the role of parliaments, which is of vital significance to safeguarding regional peace and stability, promoting sustainable development of Asia and jointly creating an Asian Century.

Dear Colleagues,

Since the establishment of Asian Parliamentary Assembly eight years ago, APA has become one of the most influential inter parliamentary organizations in this region thanks to the concerted efforts and proactive promotion of parties concerned. It plays an active role in enhancing understanding, coordinating positions and building consensus among parliaments and parliamentarians of various countries. As representatives of our people, we are responsible for the people of this region, and we are obliged to make positive efforts to create and realize the Asian Century. It is important for us to put into full play the function of parliaments, urge and support our respective governments to adhere to peaceful development path, advocate the spirit of Big Asian Family, and work



together to promote prosperity and progress of Asia. It is imperative for us to play a constructive role in furthering friendly exchanges, boosting trade and economic cooperation, strengthening connectivity, and advancing people-to-people exchanges between our countries.

I'd like to share with you a few thoughts on this aspect:

First, we shall firmly uphold the security of Asia. The fundamental reason of Asia's rapid development is the existence of an overall peaceful and stable regional environment. Asian countries, as direct beneficiaries of regional peace, should staunchly safeguard the security of Asia. It is vital for us to strengthen communication and coordination on major regional and international issues, adhere to resolving disputes through dialogue and negotiation, abide by the purposes of the UN Charter and basic norms governing international relations, and to safeguard the core role of UN in handling international issues. China advocates an Asian security concept that features common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and it is striving to develop an approach to Asian security that features joint efforts, shared benefits and win-win results, so as to provide a strong institutional guarantee for the lasting peace and stability of Asia.

Second, we shall work together to build an open economy in Asia. In the grand trend of world multipolarity, economic globalization, cultural diversity and information-based society, a country can only develop by

staying open to the outside world. Openness brings progress while close-door policy leads to backwardness. Keeping open to the outside world is a major prerequisite for achieving Asia's sustainable growth. It is important for Asian countries to deepen openness within our respective economies to give full play of labor, knowledge, technology, managerial expertise and capital flow, while remain opening-up to the outside so that the diversity and variety of member economies can be turned into potential and driver for development. While endeavoring to bring regional economic integration to a higher level and promoting relevant free trade arrangements, we should also remain committed to open regionalism and work for new and open economic institutions and regional cooperation architecture.

Third, we shall cooperate to build full-dimensional connectivity. Under current circumstances, a new round of industrial and technological revolution is poised to take off, all major economies are dedicated to structural adjustment, reform and innovation. Asia needs to cultivate new economic growth points and competitive edges, to which connectivity holds the key. We need to integrate our national strategies and plans, identify the priority areas and projects in the field of infrastructure, and pool together our resources for coordinated progress in implementation. This will help bring down the logistic costs, give play to our comparative advantages, secure favorable position in the global supply chain and



value chain, and raise our comprehensive competitiveness. We need to follow an incremental approach and address the easier issues before tackling the more difficult ones, and resolve through consultation such issues as institutions, policies and standards that affect connectivity, so as to reduce the costs and time required for cross-border flows of production elements. We need to always put people first, listen to the views of the people at the grassroots, ensure a better life for them and address practical problems in their daily life through connectivity programs. We need to draw our peoples closer to one another for exchanges of ideas, minds and hearts, and cement the social foundation for jointly building an Asian Century featuring peace, strength and prosperity.

Dear Colleagues,

Last year, China's state leaders put forward the initiatives to build the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road with Asian countries, namely, the "Belt and Road", which has won positive responses from the leaders of international community, especially of Asian countries. It is widely known that the historic Silk Road was a road of peace, friendship and cooperation, which is the precious heritage and priceless fortune shared by Asian countries. Today, as a major engine for driving global economy, the ancient Asian continent is embracing a brand new Asian Century. The essence of the "Belt and Road" proposed by China is to carry forward the spirit of the ancient Silk Road, and make greater

contribution to the peace, cooperation and development of Asia and world' prosperity.

Asian Parliamentary Assembly is a parliamentary organization covering the entire Asia, which boasts a broad geographical coverage and a convincing representation. Many ideals upheld by the assembly coincide with the "Connectivity in Five Areas" stressed by the "Belt and Road", namely, connectivity of policy, roads, trade, currency and the heart of the people. APA could become a major platform of discussion and exchanges for the "Belt and Road", through which we can promote the connectivity of Asia, jointly dedicate to safeguarding regional peace and tranquility, and achieve mutual benefit, win-win results and common development, so that we will work together to build a beautiful Asia.

Looking to the future, the development and prosperity of Asia and world at large face both unprecedented historic opportunities and ever more complex risks and challenges. We are willing to work with Asian countries to conform to the trend of the times, build new type of comprehensive partnership, and strive to realize the bright vision of the Asian Century.

Thank you!