

Bridge Communications & Research – BCR

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Bridge-Europa - Nov 2015

Part of Pakistan Awareness Initiative -PAI

Voicing against injustice – in memory of those journalists lost in search of truth

CONTEXT

Countries and Donor agencies are listed in Alphabetical order

We strongly condemn Paris, Lebanon, Baghdad attacks and extend our sympathies, support and solidarity to the bereaved families

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Editor's Note - Mes connexions français

We strongly condemn the terror attacks on Paris, Beirut and Baghdad. We assure our solidarity with the victims of terrorism all over the world. The acts to ambush innocent people including women and children show the weakness, frustration and ruthlessness of coward enemies. Pakistan is one of the hardest hit countries by the wave of terror for around two decades. According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal 27,140 Pakistani civilians and law enforcement personnel have been killed during 2003 – 2015, with 619 this year alone.

The surviving students, parents and teachers of the Army Public School – APS Pakistan - Peshawar were shocked over Paris attacks and recalled the nightmare of December 16, 2014, when Taliban brutally slaughtered 150 people, more than 130 of them children aged between nine and 19. The survivors of APS sent out a heart wrenching message to Parisian amidst tears 'You are not alone.'

French Ambassador to Pakistan, Martine Dorance knows the prolonged terror related tragedies in Pakistan and has said that the French people and government had a lot to learn from the Pakistani nation and government's resilience.

After Paris attacks, I spoke to many European and French friends. They were all shocked and traumatized equally for the tragedies occurred in Paris, Beirut and Baghdad.

It appears to be a far reaching remedy as to how and why this world can put a brake on such mass slaughters. But the mass murderers have somehow succeeded to divide this world, reintroduced hate motivated attacks, jeopardized civil liberties, privacy and made this world plunge into cynicism towards some nationalities and religion.

Our denials to the people in need, compromising on freedom and judging people on the basis of religion or nationalities are as bad as surrendering to Daesh's demands.

Contradicting the spirit of the American values, 29 states of the US are reluctant to take in Syrian refugees, but the recent victim France graciously sticking to the promise of 30,000 refugees within next two years; so as Canada, Justin Trudeau is unshaken to fulfill his promise to bring 25,000 refugees in by the end of this year. Pakistan pushed into utter anarchy with the influx of Afghans but remained

the largest host of the Afghan refugees; According to UNHCR, "Pakistan hosts almost 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees - still the largest protracted refugee population globally." Germany's intake of refugees would balloon to an estimated 800,000 by the end of this year.

We must not lose our freedom, justice and moral values to terrorism and not punish displaced victims of war and calamities for their nationalities or faith because they are the immediate and protracted victims of tragedies.

My French Connections:

I know and owe a lot to my French friends with whom I befriended in early 90s while working for one of the government of Sindh's entity. They became my family friends with frequent visits to my house. Once my friend Michelle Pochard (spelling may not be correct) invited me to tour a beach in Karachi with the French delegation. We reached to the port from services club but the security would not let me through as I did not have prior authorization. Pochard refused to go without me and missed the official tour. He was also in love with the Pakistani culture. On Eid, he was presented with Shawar Kameez (cultural outfits), he put them on in the office but remained glued to his seat because unable to walk, his shalwar was drooping down. In 1991, I was out to buy my first car but the money was short. Pochard insisted that I am a young man and really deserve a car. He let me borrowed Rs. 6000.00

I believe Pochard was the first person I know who recognised truck arts in Pakistan but was squarely surprised to see the maintenance free old trucks are still in use. We would go to SITE to make truck pictures. Flooded by his questioning about trucks, I once depict that as Mobile Art Gallery on Antique Trucks. He was swift to respond, "one day we'll take it to Paris."

The other French friend of mine Bernard Bardloi (spelling may not be correct – write in french) taught me French at his home in P.E.C.H.S., Karachi. The first time he met my family, he brought us a big box of MITHAI (sweets) showing the depth of love and the awareness of culture. One day, he paid a visit to my house around 5 pm, we offered him tea and some snacks, to our surprise, Bernard refused by saying, "I am fasting and will join you at Iftar." That year, he did all 30 days of fasting to show reverence, assimilation and care for the values of the country he was in. he then moved to Mali on another job assignment advising me to keep practicing French at Alliance Francis, Karachi.

Around three month after Bernard had kissed Pakistan goodbye, he sent me an English to French dictionary with a letter asking me about family and missing our friendship and hospitality. What Bernard had planted a desire in my mind to learn never extinguished and 15 years later in 2005, took me to the University of Memphis, USA for French Learning.

Our friendship was so trusted that many times French tourists and the embassy staff came direct to my house from the airport. The French ambassador sent me books and literatures about France but I was scared to go anywhere leaving my ailing mother behind.

I wish Pochard, Bernard and their families remain unscratched in the attacks, if early 90s had communications means like now; I would have reached Pochard and Bernard in this moment of shock and mourning.

There is a lot to tell about my love affair and emotionality with France, but that is not fitting to go in details for now.

I wish that aromatic Paris would soon return back to normal where romance reigns, kisses fly, food savors, music plays, fashion glitters and literature dominates.

Sincerely

Syed Naeem Uddin

Editor

Belgium: Local Newsletter of the Embassy of Belgium in Islamabad

http://countries.diplomatie.belgium.be/en/binaries/newsletter_august_2015_tcm426-271380.pdf

Denmark appoints New Honorary Consul General

October 3, 2015: The Government of Denmark has appointed well-known business man and entrepreneur Mr. Ziad Bashir as the new Honorary Consul General of Denmark in Karachi. This announcement was made at a special reception held in Karachi, which was well attended by representatives from the government, business, diplomatic core and media. Ms. Helle Nielsen, Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy of Denmark welcomed Mr. Ziad Bashir in his new role and highlighted that the Embassy had within a few years grown from being a small Embassy dealing with visa and consular affairs to an Embassy, which was fully engaged in multiple areas of cooperation such as Trade, Development, Defense and Stabilization, Consular Affairs and also Public Diplomacy. Speaking about Denmark's increased focus on 'Economic Diplomacy', Ms. Nielsen said that Mr. Ziad Bashir's experience would go a long way in building business opportunities between Danish and Pakistani companies, especially within renewable energy, water technology, pharmaceuticals and agribusiness.

"Mr. Ziad Bashir has a proven record of being innovative and creative and carries strong entrepreneurial skills. His constant drive for coming up with new ideas has earned him respect and

trust of many in the business sector in Pakistan. In addition to his remarkable business skills, Mr. Ziad Bashir also espouses the kind of values that befit a Danish Honorary Consul General, including hard work, impeccable ethical standards and sincere desire to be a force for good in this world. Denmark feels very proud to have him carry our flag high in Pakistan”, said Ms. Nielsen.

Mr. Ziad Bashir thanked the Government of Denmark for offering him the opportunity to represent Denmark in Karachi. “It is an honor and privilege to be given an opportunity to represent Denmark in the city of Karachi and gives one the opportunity to give back to Pakistan. In today's challenging global environment building bridges and helping nations collaborate is the need of the hour, and I look forward to playing my role in trying to partner the best talent from both countries together”, said Mr. Ziad.

Mr. Ziad Bashir is currently Denmark’s only Honorary Consul General and has taken the charge from Mrs. Naheed Irshad-uddin. Mrs. Irshad-uddin has served the Government of Denmark since 1985, when she first became the Danish Vice Consul in Karachi. Between the years 1994-2010, she served as Honorary Danish Consul in Karachi and from 2010-2015, she served as the Honorary Danish Consul General.

France: IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Start of operation of the Visa Information System (VIS) in the South Asia (Region 20)

On 2nd November 2015, the Visa Information System (VIS) started operations in the so-called "20th region", comprising all South Asian countries – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives.

The VIS is a central database which supports the exchange of data on short-stay visas between Schengen States, in particular between consulates, central visa authorities and border guards. It is a key element of the EU common visa policy and provides Schengen States with a modern and efficient visa application system and represents a major step forward to enhance legitimate mobility and increase security of Pakistani citizens when they travel to the EU.

For more details, visit: <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/p...> *Dernière modification : 05/11/2015*

Meeting of the Ambassador of France with the Chairman Senate

November 6, 2015

H.E. Mrs. Martine Dorance, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, was received by Mr. Mian Raza Rabbani, Chairman of the Senate of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on 5 November 2015.



Climate change and the preparations to the Paris Climate Conference 2015 in Pakistan were particularly discussed. Pakistan's internal situation and the situation of human rights in the country were also discussed.

Afghanistan/ Pakistan/ India – Earthquake (October 26, 2015)

Excerpts from the daily press briefing by Romain Nadal, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international Development spokesman (Paris, October 27th, 2015)

We were shocked to learn of the toll exacted by the powerful earthquake that struck South Asia on October 26.

France extends its condolences to the victims' families. It reaffirms its solidarity with the Afghan, Pakistani and Indian people.

Our embassies in the region are continuing to closely monitor developments in the situation.

Forum “PAKISTAN سے PARIS: On the Road to 2015 Paris Climate Conference” (13-14 October, Lahore, Alhamra)

The two-day Forum "Pakistan Sey Paris: on the road to 2015 Paris Climate Conference" organized jointly by the Embassy of France, federal and provincial governments, the United Nations, and a large array of civil society organizations comes to an end today.

This forum set the stage for Pakistan's preparation to the upcoming decisive Climate Change Conference to be held in Paris in just 50 days. The forum, at Alhamra, Lahore, gathered more than 600 people from government, academia, civil society, students, private sector, media and the general public.

Eminent speakers included the French Ambassador, Martine Dorance; the EU Ambassador, Jean-François Cautain; United Nations Resident Coordinator, Neil Buhne; Member of National Assembly and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, Ms Marriyum Aurengzeb; Secretary of the Ministry of Climate Change, Mr. Arif Ahmad Khan; representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mrs Tasneem Aslam and prominent voices from civil society such as Senator (R) Javed Jabbar, Dr Shoaib Sultan Khan, Dr Ishrat Hussain and Dr. Parvez Hassan.

In four round tables, experts discussed low-carbon development strategies in Pakistan, adaptation and impacts of climate change on food and water security, on health and gender, disaster risk management and climate smart solutions.

The lead author of the National Climate Change Policy, Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman Chaudhry said "Climate Change is the 21st century's most difficult challenge humans have ever created."

Senator (R) Javed Jabbar advocated strengthening the capacity of civil society and decreasing their dependency on donor organizations; reconceptualising the development approaches and adopting a collaborative rather than confrontational approach to address climate change.

Senator Nisar A. Memon, Chairman Water and Environment Forum Pakistan, former Federal Minister underlined that "small solutions had to be developed together with the private sector to face climate change challenges". Former ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel stressed the need to "strengthen institutional mechanisms to promote collaboration among government agencies and non-state stakeholders for formulation and implementation of a low carbon climate resilient growth paradigm". Mrs Bella Evidente, UN Habitat, called "the cities to act and identify their risks".

Talking about the impacts of health, Dr Sania Nishtar proposed establishing cross cutting institutions that can do long term thinking and planning that see beyond the short term.

Dr Dominique Reynaud, eminent French scientist, proposed establishing a scientific RPCC "regional panel on climate change" or a PPCC a "Pakistan panel on climate change" on the model of the IPCC.

Dr Shoaib Sultan defended people centric development initiatives, focused on community empowerment and economic resilience in ways that reflect their hopes and aspirations.

Mr Marc-André Franche, UNDP, strongly highlighted the importance of developing climate change literacy and of implementing effectively the policies, through better governance.

Youth voices were represented by the Youth Parliament. Numerous students from Lahore Superior University helped to organize the event.

Many "made in Pakistan", local solutions to tackle climate change were presented and new ones recommended. This "agenda of solutions" will be showcased in Paris, highlighting Pakistani voices, challenges and people's priorities.

This unprecedented event, which gathered all stakeholders, turned out a success. The idea of such broad-based and inclusive forums should be replicated beyond COP21 throughout Pakistan, in urban and rural areas to raise awareness and disseminate information about this critical issue.

Signed: the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Center for Climate Research and Development (CCRD), Center for Public Policy and Governance (CPPG), Green Building Council (GBC), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), LEAD Pakistan (LEAD), Mountain and Glacier Protection Organization (MGPO), Pakistan Council for Renewable Energies Technologies (PCRET), Pakistan Council on Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment (SCOPE), Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Strengthening Participatory organization (SPO), and World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan), with the support of the French Embassy and the United Nations in Pakistan.

Consult the program of the Forum here

Register online on the website: <http://www.pakseypariscop21.policy.pk/>

Send-off ceremony held for 85 HEC scholars going to France

A send-off ceremony for Pakistani scholars who are going to pursue studies in France was held at Higher Education Commission (HEC) on August 25. 85 students have gone through a merit-based selection process and will have their master's and PhD studies in French universities fully funded by the HEC.

HEC Chairman Dr Mukhtar Ahmed congratulated the selected scholars and stressed the fact that 10 000 more PhD will be needed in the coming years in Pakistan to ensure the quality of the higher education system and to foster the economic development of the country.

Mr Pierre Fournier, chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Embassy of France saluted the outstanding increase in the number of scholars, from 7 in 2014 to 85 in 2015. He urged the students to play the role of Ambassadors of their home country once in France and wished them to also become all Ambassadors of France when they come back to Pakistan. *Dernière modification : 23/09/2015*

Professor Mirza Hafeez awarded with the Order of Academic Palms (July 29, 2015)

The Ambassador of France to Pakistan awarded Professor Hafeez Mirza with the Ordre des Palmes académiques (Order of the Academic Palms) honoring his whole career and the many services rendered to France in Pakistan, particularly in Lahore.

One of the first French professors in Pakistan, Mr. Mirza taught French language for almost 40 years in Lahore. He is the author of several textbooks and books, especially "Moalam-e-Francesi" and a tourist guide on Lahore in French and English.

The ceremony, which took place at the French Alliance of Lahore, was also an occasion to pay tribute to the remarkable work achieved by the Director of the Alliance, Mr. Dominique Scobry, who will leave his post at the end of August after passing five years in Pakistan.

Dernière modification : 23/09/2015

Economic diplomacy – Launch of “Investment in France Month” (September 15 to October 15, 2015)

Excerpt from the daily press briefing by Romain Nadal, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international Development spokesman (Paris, September 15th 2015)

“Investment in France Month” opens today. Specific events will be held from September 15 to October 15 in around 50 embassies to promote the attractiveness of France to local economic decision makers.

The goal of this unprecedented event is - based on similar presentations at the same time - to raise awareness among economic decision makers and opinion formers of France’s strengths, the reforms under way in terms of competitiveness and the measures to further improve efforts to welcome

international investment.

This operation will be expanded during the next edition in 2016.

Homage to Nilofer Shahid, renowned Fashion Designer

The Ambassador of France to Pakistan visited the workshop of Nilofer Shahid, renowned Pakistani Fashion Designer, in Lahore on 28 July 2015.

Nilofer Shahid is the pioneer among important Pakistani fashion designers. Awarded with the French Order of Arts and Letters in May 2014, Nilofer Shahid played a fundamental role for promoting Pakistani fashion abroad, especially in France.

Nilofer Shahid is one of the rare Pakistani Fashion Designers who has seen her collections displayed in Paris, alongside Balenciaga and at Boucheron. She was inspired by the French haute couture, particularly in her collection "conversation between the Empress Josephine and Noor Jehan."

Germany: CrossCulture Internships 2016 - Apply now!

The CrossCulture Internships Programme (CCP) is an exchange and dialogue programme of ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen). The programme is implemented in partnership with the German Federal Foreign Office. Since 2005 it offers young professionals and committed volunteers the opportunity to expand their professional and political competence as well as to gather international experience through a stay in another cultural context.

CCP transfers our commitment to intercultural dialogue into action. It gives young people from Germany and Islamic countries the chance to gather varied experiences abroad within their fields of professional activity and to share those experiences in their home countries. Besides the objectives of vocational and specialist qualification, the participants also gain an overview of the cultural, social and political structures in the host country. They establish new personal and professional contacts for future co-operation and familiarise themselves with cultural characteristics and behavioural patterns of the host country. Thus, the programme offers a forum for open dialogue and mutual learning for all those involved. The intercultural exchange fosters on-going dialogue of people and institutions and boosts the formation of networks between organisations in Germany and Islamic countries in a sustained manner. Further information about CCP: www.ifa.de/crossculture

Interested persons can fill out the forms in the right column and send them as a soft copy to the respective diplomatic mission.

Residents of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa must send their applications to the German Embassy in Islamabad (ku-100@isla.diplo.de), whereas residents of Sindh and Baluchistan must send their applications to the German Consulate in Karachi (pr-100@kara.diplo.de).

Message from Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the occasion of the Day of German Unity, 3 October 2015

Twenty-five years of German unity. 3 October 2015 is an occasion for us Germans to celebrate, but also to look back with gratitude.

Back when the Helsinki Final Act was signed 40 years ago, we Germans and our neighbours were already witnessing the advent of a new era in European relations.

Together we hoped for stability and peace. The process of détente between East and West paved the way towards ending the Cold War. We are deeply grateful for the trust afforded to us then by our neighbours and partners. It is only thanks to this trust and your agreement that our country could overcome its division and that Europe could grow together once again.

We are grateful to the brave people in the GDR and eastern Europe who brought down the Wall with their desire for freedom and their civic courage.

In 1990, German reunification was spurred on by something that still applies today – not only to Germany, but to the whole world: democracy and the rule of law are the guarantors of peace and stability. The reunification of Germany taught us that governments depend on the trust of their citizens. Those who protect fundamental rights win people’s trust, can enjoy full economic and social development, and can develop and maintain trusting relations with their neighbours and partners.

The reunification of Germany 25 years ago brought with it the hope of a more peaceful and stable future. Yet what we are experiencing today is a host of crises and conflicts which to someone of my generation seem unprecedented in their intensity and complexity. War, terror and violence – from the Middle East to the Sahel – are forcing thousands upon thousands of people to flee. At the same time, the most serious conflict since the end of the Cold War is smouldering in eastern Europe.

Yet today’s storms must not destroy what we have built up over many years: namely the vision of a peaceful order in Europe and beyond the continent, based on dialogue, trust and security. This is what will serve as Germany’s compass when we assume chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in 2016.

Germany has a responsibility to help shape the future international order. In doing so, it is clear to us that only one thing can provide us with a realistic and legitimate framework for our politics – European integration. Following two World Wars and the division of Germany, this is the only convincing way to organise policy at the heart of Europe.

German responsibility today – 25 years after the reunification of Germany and Europe – does not only mean taking responsibility for one’s own country, but also for the joint European project, for peace and cohesion in Europe.

Consul General pays inaugural visit to Chief Minister of Sindh

Consul General Rainer Schmiedchen paid his inaugural visit to the Chief Minister of Sindh, H.E. Syed Qaim Ali Shah recently. Both agreed to further boost up the bilateral relations between Germany and Pakistan and encourage trade activities. The other main issues of the meeting were the human rights situation and planned cultural events of the consulate.

Message of the Consul General Rainer Schmiedchen

As-salamu alaikum,

Dear Visitors,

Welcome to the website of the German Consulate General in Karachi, Pakistan.

More than 10 years of my career in the “Auswärtiges Amt”, the German diplomatic service, I have spent in Asia already. As a historian specialised in South-Asian history, I had a strong interest in Pakistan long before my arrival in Karachi in August 2015.

The consular area of the German Consulate General in Karachi comprises Pakistan’s Provinces Baluchistan and Sindh inclusive of the vibrant city of Karachi. During my talks with politicians, businessmen and German countrymen who live and work in Pakistan I could feel an atmosphere of huge optimism everywhere.

In my consular area, there are great chances for joint German-Pakistani business projects, e.g. in the fields of infrastructure and light industries, especially textiles. This is one of the reasons why the creation of a bilateral chamber of commerce is on top of the agenda of German and Pakistani businessmen these days. The team of the Consulate General of Germany and I personally are happy to support German companies in their attempt to establish themselves and to cooperate with companies of Pakistan.

The spectrum of our work covers trade promotion, development projects, cultural activities including sports events, assisting Germans living in Pakistan and issuing visas to citizens of Pakistan visiting Germany as well as organising visits of official German delegations. Besides, we support small-scale

projects in the fields of energy efficiency, renewable energy, protection and sustainable use of natural resources, vocational training, education and health improvement.

I hope that you will find useful information on the website of the German Consulate General in Karachi, and I look forward to receiving your suggestions, perhaps even for new joint projects between Pakistan and Germany.

With best regards,
Yours,
Rainer Schmiedchen

Ambassador Ina Lepel



Ambassador Ina Lepel presented her credentials to President Hussain on 21 August 2015.

Ms. Lepel was born 18 April 1962 in Cuxhaven, Germany. She speaks German, English and French.

Curriculum Vitae	
since July 2015	Ambassador - designated to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
6/2012 – 7/2015	Deputy Director-General for Global Issues (UN Security Council, Crisis Prevention, Humanitarian Assistance, Counter-Terrorism), Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

8/2009 – 5/2012	Head of UN Policy Division, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin
7/2006 - 7/2009	Deputy Head of Mission, German Embassy in Islamabad
2002 – 2006	Deputy Head of UN Affairs Section in the Foreign Affairs Department of the Federal Chancellor's Office, Berlin
2000 – 2002	Officer in the Spokesman's Office, German Federal Foreign Office, Berlin
1998 – 2000	Political Officer, Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN, New York
1995 – 1998	Deputy Head of Mission, German Embassy in Tbilisi, Georgia
1992 – 1995	Desk Officer for Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Political Department, German Foreign Office, Bonn
1990 - 1992	2nd Secretary, Press and Cultural Affairs, German Embassy in Bangkok
1988 - 1990	German Foreign Service Academy
1981 – 1987	Studies of Economics in Kiel, Bonn and at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, USA Master's Degrees in Economics from Indiana University and Bonn University

Message from Federal Foreign Minister Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the end of Ramadan on 16 July 2015

Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, on the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast (Eid ul-Fitr) at the end of Ramadan on 16 July 2015

All Muslim men and women around the world have my heartfelt good wishes for a blessed festival at the end of Ramadan.

Ramadan is a special time of contemplation in every Muslim's life. It is an opportunity to reflect on mutual respect and tolerance and sends out a message of compassion towards one's fellow human beings – reaching far beyond one's own family circle.

This year again, however, Muslims in many countries around the world will be unable to celebrate the end of their holy month in peace. I therefore wish great strength particularly to those having to deal with wars and conflicts. My thoughts are with you and your families.

Peace, freedom and positive development that benefits the many cannot flourish where bigotry, fanaticism and hatred hold sway. That is demonstrated by the dramatic upheaval we have been seeing in many parts of the world this year. We should therefore all take the end of Ramadan as an opportunity to pull together for a harmonious coexistence in peace and tolerance. Let's take responsibility together, regardless of origins, language or religion, for making this a world worth living in.

I sincerely wish you all a blessed Eid ul-Fitr!
(sgd) Frank-Walter Steinmeier

The Netherlands

Scam Alert

News article | November 13, 2015

The Embassy would like to alert everyone of the fraud regarding restaurant staff being required in the Netherlands. This is a scam and please read further for more details.

Please note that this advertisement is a fraud.

Mr. Bilal Hassan who is advertising this is in no capacity attached with the Embassy.

Do not deposit or transfer money to any person and do not send your passport to the Netherlands Embassy.

If you have been a victim of this scam please report it to the local Police.

Holland Alumni Networking Reception

News article | November 11, 2015

Ambassador Seppen hosted a networking reception for the Holland Alumni in Islamabad. This was an occasion to reminisce, share experiences and to reestablish contacts.

There were many alumni present who had studied from different institutions of the Netherlands and in varied fields. Ambassador Seppen expressed the desire to collaborate further with the alumni to strengthen this cooperation between the Netherlands and Pakistan.



Dutch cattle now available for Pakistan's dairy sector.

News article | November 7, 2014

Today cattle trade between the Netherlands and Pakistan has resumed after 11 years. The import restrictions have been lifted and a protocol has been agreed, finally allowing trade to resume. The availability of world class Dutch dairy cattle presents a unique opportunity to Pakistan's growing dairy sector.

After all, the Netherlands are the cradle of the famous Holstein Friesian cow, and have perfected this healthy and fertile breed over the centuries. Dutch Holstein Frisian cows can produce no less than 30,000kg of milk in a lifetime; a yield that is unmatched worldwide.

Moreover, the Netherlands also provide the best feed, medicine and management skills to fulfil the complete genetic potential of these cows, tremendously raising the potential profitability of dairy farming in Pakistan.

The Netherlands' excellence in dairy farming is a prime example of the high-intensity, high-sustainability agribusiness that Pakistan needs to modernise and expand its agricultural sector, to address the growing demand for the next generation.

To learn more about importing Dutch dairy cattle and related products, please contact the Trade Section of the Netherlands Embassy at ISL-EA@minbuza.nl

The Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) has published the instruction for exporting cattle to Pakistan.

Trade Figures Bilateral Trade Increases

News article | October 26, 2015

Commercial ties between Pakistan and the Netherlands continue to strengthen. In the first half of 2015, the combined exports and imports of goods grew by 7,7% on average, as compared to a year earlier. This development forms a continuation of the steep growth in trade throughout 2014, and is

reflected in the stark increase in business requests received by the Embassy. If these trends continue, the bilateral trade volume is expected to exceed \$1 billion for the first time this year.

Tragedy in Mecca **Message from Minister Koenders**

News article | September 25, 2015

I was shocked and saddened to learn of the tragedy that struck during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca yesterday, resulting in hundreds of deaths and injuries.

Eid al-Adha is normally a festive occasion, but for many, this day of celebration has now become a day of grief. My sympathy goes out to the entire Islamic faith community at this sad time. My thoughts are with the victims' families and loved ones, and I offer them my sincere condolences.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is monitoring the situation closely and is in contact with travel companies. We stand ready to offer consular assistance where needed.

Bert Koenders

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Scam Alert

News article | September 21, 2015

The Embassy has been informed about scammers targeting Pakistani applicants for Dutch visas. Please be advised that the Netherlands Embassy in Islamabad and the Honorary Consulates in Lahore and Karachi do not endorse or have any relationship with any individual or business offering advice or assistance with the visa process.

The only facility available is the VFS/Gerry's drop box service see link
Please also note that there are criminals on the internet who offer jobs and visas through different advertisements. Please be aware that this too is a scam. Do not transfer money or send copies of your education documents and passports to the advertisers.

The Embassy advises everyone to consult the Embassy website first for all information on visas.

The Human Rights Tulip

News article | September 10, 2015

The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs proudly presents the candidates for the Human Rights Tulip 2015. Support their work and vote for your favourite candidate on the link included before September 16. We are happy to see a Pakistani non-profit organisation among those nominated.

The Human Rights Tulip (Dutch: Mensenrechtentulp) is an annual prize awarded by the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs to a human rights defender or organisation who promotes and supports human

rights in innovative ways. The Human Rights Tulip was established in 2007 and presented for the first time on 10 December 2008.

The prize consists of a statuette and support worth €100.000 to assist the winning individual or organization to further develop and scale up their innovation.

Vote for your favourite candidate press here



NEW 'INVEST IN HOLLAND' WEBSITE

The Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency has launched InvestinHolland.com

News article | August 24, 2015

A new worldwide platform to help companies make informed decisions about locating and doing business in Holland. The site's new features include a fully responsive design, "geo-targeted" content tailored to locations all around the world, re-vamped company success stories, an "Orange Blog," and all the latest news and information on the Netherlands' key industries, business operations and investment climate. www.investinholland.com

Check out the new 'Invest in Holland' website to find out why companies have already invested in the Netherlands and how you can too.

In case you have any queries please contact the trade desk in Islamabad isl-ea@minbuza.nl they are happy to help.

For more information: www.investinholland.com

Norway New routines from 2 November 2015 for Schengen visa - biometric data

Last updated: 28.10.2015 // As from 2nd November 2015 everyone applying for a C Schengen visit visa, will have to appear in person. Applicants must meet at the Norway Visa Application Center VFS Global, operated by Gerry's International. As from this date, applicants must provide biometrical data together with their applications. The biometric data consists of a live digital photograph and 10

fingerprints.

Exemptions from the obligation of fingerprinting requirement are provided for the following categories of applicants only:

- Children under the age of twelve.**
- Persons for whom the collection of fingerprinting is physically impossible.**
- Holders of diplomatic, official and service passports if they are travelling for official purposes.**

Your fingerprints will be saved for a limited amount of time:

Fingerprints are normally saved for five years.

Frequent travellers:

Frequent travellers; normally have to give fingerprints once, unless there is a reasonable doubt about the identity.

For subsequent applications within 5 years, the fingerprints can be copied from previous application file in Visa Information System. You need, however, to provide a new live digital photograph each time you apply.

The collection of biometric identifiers is very quick, simple and discreet procedure that only takes a few minutes"

The EU Delegation has placed a link to the short Information Document on the introduction of the VIS in the South Asia region, including Pakistan, on its website (see link below):

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/pakistan/index_en.htm

Information Document on Schengen area Visa Information System (VIS) for South Asia including Pakistan

The Royal Norwegian Embassy visited Gujrat



The Royal Norwegian Embassy visited Gujrat

Last updated: 10.09.2015 // Representatives from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Counsellor Arne Haug and Attaché Nina Karstensen Bjørlo, visited the University of Gujrat with a guided tour of various departments and a meeting with Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum.



The Embassy also met with several local organizations, including Alfalah Scholarship Scheme, that recruits and finances poor students who do not have the opportunity to attend higher education without support from others.

It was also very gratifying to meet the women's group AMA (Afzal Mera Asjana), which presented various activities and plans for women and children in Kharian (Little Norway). This is a partnership with representatives of the Pakistani community in Norway.

The day ended with a visit to a small local hospital run by the Al-Munir Development Foundation (AMDF) in collaboration with the International Health & Social Group (IHSG) in Norway under the leadership of Executive Director, Mr. Tayyab Munir Choudri. The hospital is partly funded by Norad. Together with

Mr. Choudri the representatives from the Embassy officially opened a new project in the hospital facilities; NAZ - A Youth Leadership innovative program. It was especially heartwarming to meet so many young girls who will now participate in IT-learning and leadership training through NAZ. Our sincere thanks goes to our host for the day Mr. Tayyab M. Choudri, who is also President of PDN (Pakistan Development Network, Norway)

UK Diplomatic community remembers those who gave their lives for their country

Published 11 November 2015 / World location news article

Philip Barton CMG OBE, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, today hosted a ceremony to observe Remembrance Day 2015.

Lieutenant General Imran Majeed, Surgeon General of Pakistan, and Director General Medical Services for all of Pakistan's Armed Services attended the ceremony.

The Remembrance Day service included a two minute silence, which took place at 11am on 11 November to mark the end of World War One. This was followed by the laying of wreaths by members of the diplomatic community and armed services, to remember all those who died fighting for their countries.

The ceremony was officiated by the Bishop of Lahore, The Right Reverend Irfan Jamil with Hafiz Iftikhar Ahmed. Havildar Mehboob and the buglers of the Frontier Force Regiment provided the music.

In his remarks, the British High Commissioner also paid tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in operation Zarb-e-Azb in Pakistan.

During the Remembrance Day Service, Philip Barton, the British High Commissioner, said:

Recently, I visited the home of the Pakistan Army Regiment – the Punjab Regiment - in which my grandfather served throughout his long career in British India. I laid a wreath for the Pakistani Soldiers who have been killed on recent operations to secure their country from terror, as well as wreaths at the graves of two British Victoria Cross winners from conflicts of the past.

It is always hard to stand at the graves of young men cut down in their prime. It is right that we should remember them.

As legitimate bearers of arms, service men and women around the world have forged friendships and camaraderie that are based on the shared ideal of a common good. What marks them out from other public servants is an understanding that the pursuit of this ideal may require the ultimate sacrifice. This brotherhood of soldiers, sailors and airmen crosses divisions between nations and is often strengthened by the shared burden of danger.

The reason so many countries are in this brotherhood of arms is because we are, at root, often dedicated towards similar ends - those of peace and stability. That is what is behind the tremendous efforts and sacrifices of Pakistan's Armed Forces on operations such as Zarb-e Azb.

Shortly, we shall be laying our own wreaths, country by country, and reflecting on this service and sacrifice. As we do so, let us remember all those brave members of the military around the world in harms' way today, as well as all those who have fallen before them.

Philip Barton attends inaugural session of the dialogue between Pakistan and Afghanistan

Published 10 November 2015 / World location news article

Beyond Boundaries brings together influential stakeholders from Pakistan and Afghanistan in an effort to reduce tension, build understanding and revive confidence between the two countries.

Philip Barton CMG OBE, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, attended the inaugural session of the Track 1.5 dialogue between Pakistan and Afghanistan in Islamabad yesterday. Titled Beyond Boundaries, the initiative has been launched by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) of Pakistan in partnership with Afghanistan's DURAN Research and Analysis to help improve relations between the two countries.

Beyond Boundaries brings together influential stakeholders from Pakistan and Afghanistan in an effort to reduce tension, build understanding and revive confidence between the two countries. The initiative aims to promote peace, security and regional prosperity through better cooperation.

Joined by Afghan Ambassador, Janan Mosazai and Minister for Commerce, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan during the inaugural session, the British High Commissioner said:

I am very glad to support this initiative. We want to bring together influential figures from Pakistan and Afghanistan for a series of frank conversations. We hope these will build understanding and trust by challenging misconceptions and identifying opportunities to move the relationship forward.

Healthy relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan are vital for stability, security and prosperity of the two countries, the region and the world. Peace processes are never easy, but in the end, dialogue is the only route to peace.

I hope that discussions between the participants in the Beyond Boundaries initiatives will go well and that the participants from both sides will act as ambassadors for an improved relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

British High Commissioner visits spiritual home of Grandfather's regiment

Published 9 November 2015/ World location news article

Philip Barton's grandfather served as a company commander on active operations in Waziristan, before becoming Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion, 16th Punjab Regiment

The British High Commissioner, Philip Barton CMG OBE, this week visited Mardan, the spiritual home of his grandfather's regiment – the Punjab Regiment.

The High Commissioner's maternal grandfather, Brigadier Robert Arthur Stubbings, transferred into the 1st Punjab Regiment in 1917 from the British Army, starting a military career that saw him serve all over what became Pakistan. Philip Barton's grandfather served as a company commander on active operations in Waziristan, before becoming Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion, 16th Punjab Regiment.

Brigadier Stubbings was a graduate of the prestigious command and Staff College in Quetta. He went on to become a staff officer in Lahore and Bannu, before becoming Brigade Commander in Balelli and Jhelum, retiring in 1947. He was Mentioned in Despatches for his bravery in the Gallipoli Landings and was awarded the North West Frontier medal twice.

Other members of the British High Commission staff have grandfathers who served in this famous regiment of the Pakistan Army. The grandfather of Brigadier Murray Whiteside, the UK's Defence and Military Adviser, Major-General Whiteside was commissioned into the 2nd Punjab Regiment and served in Waziristan, Khyber and Rawalpindi before Partition. Like Brigadier Stubbings, he was educated at Command and Staff College Quetta. General Whiteside was the first Master General of the

Ordnance (MGO) for the Pakistan Army after Partition and worked closely with Major-General Syed Shahid Hamid, the founder of ISI, before handing over to him as MGO in 1951.

The grandfather of Counsellor Giles Whitaker, also of the British High Commission, served in the Punjab Regiment from 1918 and saw active service on the North-West Frontier and in World War II before retiring as a Lieutenant-Colonel in 1948.

British High Commissioner, Philip Barton CMG OBE, said:

It was a real privilege to be able to visit the spiritual home of the Punjab Regiment. The Regiment has a long and distinguished history both before and after partition. I was particularly honoured – a week before Remembrance Day - to be able to lay a wreath to remember those who had made the greatest sacrifice for their country.

It meant a lot to me to be able to remember my grandfather and his time in this beautiful land. The personal connections between my team and Pakistan illustrate and reinforce the deep ties between our two countries.

The British High Commissioner met the Deputy Commandant of the Punjab Regiment, Colonel Faisal Zeeshan and laid a wreath at the Yadgar-e-Shuhada at the Punjab Regimental centre, Mardan. He was accompanied by the Defence Adviser, Brigadier Murray Whiteside OBE; the Assistant Military Adviser, Major Christopher Beaver; Counsellor Giles Whitaker; and first Secretary Oliver Hayes OBE.

British High Commissioner hosts book reading for local children

Published 9 November 2015/ World location news article

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton CMG OBE, hosted a storytelling session for school children in Islamabad. The event was organised by Paramount Publishing Enterprise, which exclusively distributes books from Ladybird UK

The event, at the British High Commission in Islamabad, showcased some of the high quality British books available to parents and teachers in Pakistan and aimed to promote reading amongst young people in Pakistan.

At the event, the British High Commissioner read the story, 'The Enormous Turnip' to the children.

Speaking at the event, he said.

Storytelling and reading to children is a really important way of connecting with your children and helping them to learn to read and write. It can also open up young minds to a world of creativity, imagination and understanding.

I remember fondly reading to my children some of the books available from Ladybird, so it is great news for both young people and their parents in Pakistan that some of the best children's books from the UK are available here.

The UK Government is also investing heavily in the children of Pakistan and their education through the work of the British Council and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). More than six million primary school children have benefitted from the DFID's support in Pakistan since 2011. We have also established an innovative programme, the PEELI support programme that by 2017 will have trained 300,000 primary teachers of English in Punjab.

I hope today's event will encourage young boys and girls to read, and to discover the riches books and reading brings.

Philip Barton's speech at Population Summit 2015, Islamabad

Published 5 November 2015/ World location news article

British High Commissioner, Philip Barton, today addressed the panel regarding International Partners' Perspectives on Population and Development.

High Commissioner's speech during panel discussion:

"Thank you inviting me to join this panel. I am very conscious there is a lot more expertise on the panel than I have. I take a simple approach: look for the positive. That is true in this field as much as any other. So good policies, based on rights and sensitive to gender, can address and harness population dynamics and turn a potential demographic time bomb into a demographic dividend. This is the challenge in Pakistan.

Securing this dividend of accelerated economic progress will depend on Pakistan's policies and actions, including investment in education and training, better health care and support for increased employment opportunities.

The population growth being experienced by Pakistan is, in part, an outcome of Pakistan's development. It is similar to the experience through which many developed countries have already passed.

Population growth is complex, but in Pakistan it is largely a result of improvements in mortality rates and continuing high fertility rates.

Better health care, cleaner water and sanitation, and better education and nutrition mean that thousands of children have lived who would otherwise have died. This is a sign of Pakistan's

development and should be welcomed.

The unmet need for family planning, however, is still high: 20% of women in Pakistan who want to avoid or delay pregnancy are not using family planning. This has health and economic consequences for the women and families concerned. It also contributes to population growth. It presents a challenge for Pakistan to provide health care, education, jobs and housing, particularly in the urban areas, for its growing population.

With the provision of family planning services – allowing choice over family size and spacing between births – and with the expansion of education and job opportunities, particularly for girls and women, Pakistan could take advantage of the demographic dividend.

More people with good levels of education and skills will bring more wealth to families, communities and ultimately the country.

The UK is committed to helping Pakistan make this positive step, and make best use of its workforce and resources. Pakistan is one of the biggest recipients of UK overseas development assistance. With our particular focus on education and improved health services, including family planning, we can play a role in supporting this ambition.

In 2012, the UK and the Gates Foundation organised the London Summit on Family Planning to galvanise international action. The UK committed to double its global efforts, a commitment renewed by the current British Government in the recent 2015 elections.

The UK is firmly committed to the FP2020 global partnership; and to supporting countries to improve access to voluntary family planning services, which increase not remove choice.

We stand ready to help the Government of Pakistan to deliver the commitments made today and at the 2012 Summit.

DFID already runs two major such projects in Pakistan.

Firstly, our Delivering Reproductive Health Results programme improves access to family planning services through the private sector. Since 2012, this has benefited over 600,000 women who have previously not used or stopped using family planning. This programme will run until 2016, when we hope to put in place a successor programme.

And secondly, our Provincial Health and Nutrition Programme supports the governments in Punjab and

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to deliver improved health services. This includes family planning services in health facilities as well as outreach support through Lady Health Workers.

We are also working with the Government of Pakistan on the causes of rapid population growth.

Poverty; lack of women's empowerment; poor access to education for girls, poor access to contraceptive information, services and supplies; cultural norms; child survival rates; urbanisation; and economic prospects all have an impact on population growth.

Family planning is one of the best investments for improving the health of women, girls and children across the country; and for achieving other development goals.

It is a shared priority for the Governments of Pakistan and the UK. DFID has been supporting both the public and private sector provision of family planning services in Pakistan for many years. We are currently working on our plans for the next five years, through to 2020. But we are clear that family planning and addressing the challenges of population growth will play a significant part in our future portfolio.

Change of British High Commissioner to Pakistan

Published 3 November 2015/ Press release

FCO

Mr Thomas Drew CMG is to succeed Mr Philip Barton CMG OBE as British High Commissioner to Pakistan.

Mr Thomas Drew CMG has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in succession to Mr Philip Barton CMG OBE, who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Drew will take up his appointment next year.

British High Commission holds semi-final of the GREAT debate competition at FC College Lahore

Published 15 October 2015/ World location news article

The GREAT Debate competition aims to promote the UK and Pakistan's shared culture of vibrant and intellectual discussion.

The British High Commission brought the Pakistan-wide debating competition, the Great Debate, to Lahore. The competition's third semi-final, out of 12, brought students and academic professionals together at the FC College, Lahore.

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Philip Barton CMG OBE attended the latest round as the Guest of Honour.

Launched on 22 September by the British High Commission, the Great Debate competition aims to promote the UK and Pakistan's shared culture of vibrant and intellectual discussion. Further rounds of the competition will take place in nine other key cities across Pakistan where university students will debate topics concerning the theme of the competition: Pakistan 2047.

Future winners will then join third semi-final's champion Gadhaun Aslam from the FC College, Lahore in the grand final where the overall winner of the Great Debate competition will be announced and awarded the British High Commission Scholarship.

Sharing his thoughts, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton CMG OBE said:

As a diplomat the most useful skill I have is the ability to win an argument peacefully. We believe that debating – the power to make arguments, persuade others and put your point across coherently – is a really important skill for the future. Young people at University today are preparing for jobs that still do not exist, and while qualifications are tremendously important, so are wider skills that people can learn.

We believe that Pakistan has huge potential to become an economic powerhouse by investing in education, infrastructure and its people so that Pakistan can make the best use of their talents and Pakistan's location. These debates aim to ask the future leaders what their thoughts are in the key areas that will have an impact on the Pakistan of 2047.

It is also an opportunity to celebrate and promote the UK and Pakistan's shared culture of vibrant discussion and intellectual debate.

On winning the Lahore leg of the GREAT Debate competition, Gadhaun Aslam said: It was really nice to participate in the Great Debate competition today and share my thoughts about different topics.

Sometime you do get topics which you personally don't support but actually this is where the art of debating comes in. You do your research and put your logic and arguments in front of the audience without having a personal bias on these topics.

I really look forward to coming to Islamabad in the grand final of the Great Debate and meeting and competing against other finalists.

Students from other cities who wish to participate in the Great Debate are encouraged to visit and register on the website where they will see a list of the 9 other host cities.

UK's Great Festival of Fashion, Food and Music reaches Lahore

Published 12 October 2015/ World location news article

Lahore gets the Great touch with the best of British Cuisine and classic jazz music.

The British High Commissioner, Philip Barton CMG OBE today hosted a dinner and concert in Lahore to celebrate the final days of the Great Festival, a celebration of British and Pakistani fashion, food and music. The festival was launched on 2nd October in Karachi before it moved to Pakistan's cultural capital.

The Great Festival began in Karachi with a fashion event attended by figures from the media, business, arts, culture and the diplomatic corps and featuring a wide array of glamorous fashions. Models, clad in a fusion of British and Pakistani designer and high street brands, walked the runway at the Dolmen Mall to much acclaim. Now Lahore gets the GREAT touch with the best of British Cuisine being cooked live by British Chef Dominic South at the Avari where guests also enjoyed classic jazz from the renowned British group the Julian Joseph Trio.

Speaking at the dinner celebrating the Great Festival's arrival in Lahore, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton CMG OBE said:

I feel privileged to be here in the Great City of Lahore, as the Great Festival – the biggest event the UK has ever put on in Pakistan – moves towards its conclusion. This festival shows that culturally and economically, the relationship between Pakistan and the UK really matters.

Lahore has always been famous for its love of arts, its rich cultural heritage and its vibrant people. As such, it is an ideal city to bring to an end the celebrations of the cultural connections that tie Pakistan and the United Kingdom so closely together.

The Great Festival is a celebration of what makes Britain great and also our shared relationship in the 21st century. It is about looking forward, building stronger people-to-people connections and strengthening our links in arts, culture, business and education.

The ties that join the two countries are as strong as ever. Over 100 British firms are operating successfully in Pakistan and we are working to increase bilateral trade and investment. We are also promoting the arts by working with top British creative talent, bringing high quality events to Pakistan,

collaborating with local artists and cultural institutions and connecting arts professionals from both countries.

Business and culture are a central part of the relationship between the UK and Pakistan.

GREAT FESTIVAL brings a taste of Britain for Pakistani food lovers

The Festival will offer arrange of the British food at the Avari Towers Karachi from 5 -10 October.

The British Deputy High Commission, Karachi in collaboration with the Avari Group of Hotels brings food lovers in Pakistan a taste of the best of British cuisine. The Food Festival will offer a range of the British food at the Avari Towers Karachi from 5 -10 October where renowned British Chef, Dominic South will delight us with a quintessentially British menu. Dominic's food will also be available at a British themed night at Avari, Lahore on 12 October.

This evening, the British Deputy High Commissioner - John A. Tucknott MBE, joined David O'Hanlon, General Manager of the Avari Towers, Karachi, to celebrate the opening of the Festival where the Chef showcased British Culinary Heritage in a new facet to Pakistan.

Speaking at the occasion, British Deputy High Commissioner, John A. Tucknott MBE, said: I am delighted to inaugurate the GREAT Food Festival, a testament to the fact that the Britain and Pakistan are nations of food lovers. This is part of our ten day long GREAT Festival.

Thanks to our partnership with Avari Towers, Karachi foodies have the opportunity to sample the best of British Cuisine.

The United Kingdom's diversity in food and drink is staggering. Each region has its own specialities based on local traditions often stretching back centuries. But at the same time, it has also embraced other cultures, absorbing food, music and other traditions from around the world.

I would like to thank the chef, Dominic South and the team at Avari Hotels for the opportunity to share this experience with our friends in Pakistan.

General Manager, Avari Towers, Karachi, David O'Hanlon said:

We are honoured to join hands with the British Deputy High Commission to host the GREAT Festival at Avari Towers, Karachi. We greatly appreciate their contribution in arranging the British Chef from the United Kingdom, to provide an authentic British cuisine to the foodies of Karachi.

It is a unique experience to be part of the diverse culture of Britain in the form of Great Food, Great Music and Great Fashion. I would like to thank the British Chef - Dominic South and the British Deputy High Commission for giving us the opportunity to share it with the great people of Pakistan.

The British Food Festival is part of the GREAT Festival, launched by the British High Commissioner, Philip Barton CMG OBE in Karachi on 2 October, to showcase British expertise in fashion, retail, music, food, culture and creativity under the UK Government's "Britain is GREAT" campaign.

GREAT Festival comes to Pakistan announces British High Commissioner

Published 3 October 2015/ World location news article

The GREAT Festival will feature a number of planned activities including special promotions, book readings, storytelling sessions, hair and beauty shows, and daily lucky draws at Dolmen Mall, Clifton, Karachi.

The British High Commissioner, Philip Barton CMG OBE, today (Friday, 2 October 2015) inaugurated the GREAT Festival in Karachi, which will run from 2-11 October 2015 at Dolmen Mall, Clifton and Avari Towers. The ten day long GREAT Festival, which is being organised in partnership with the Dolmen and Avari Groups, will be an opportunity to showcase British expertise in fashion, retail, music, food, culture and creativity under the UK Government's "Britain is GREAT" campaign.

The Festival kicked off with a fashion show curated by Pakistani design doyenne, Maheen Khan. Style and glamour were the order of the evening as models clad in fusion looks of prominent British high street brands including Debenhams, Accessorize, Clarks and Next and Pakistani brands such as Gul Ahmed (who sponsored the show), Deepak Perwani, Gulabo, Jafferjees and FHS by Hub. The hairstyling partner for the fashion show was TONI&GUY.

Enthusiasts from different walks of life including fashion, media, business, arts, culture and the diplomatic corps attended the event. UK Trade Champion Baroness Nosheena Mobarik CBE represented the UK Government at the inauguration ceremony.

Speaking at the opening of the GREAT Festival, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan said: The GREAT Festival is a celebration of what makes Britain great and the connections that tie Pakistan and the United Kingdom so closely together.

Today sees the start of the biggest event the UK has ever put on in Pakistan. It is a celebration of our shared relationship in the 21st century. It is about looking forward, building stronger people-to-people connections and strengthening our links in arts, culture, business and education.

The very fact that the Festival can take place here in Karachi is a sign of our faith in this great city. It is a reflection of the improved security situation.

The ties that join the two countries are as strong as ever. Over 100 British firms are operating successfully in Pakistan and we are working to increase bilateral trade and investment. We are also promoting the arts by working with top British creative talent, bringing high quality events to Pakistan, collaborating with local artists and cultural institutions, and connecting arts professionals from both

countries.

Our two countries are joined by bonds that are long lasting and deep. Business and culture are a central part of this relationship.

During the occasion, Owner of Dolmen Mall – Mr. Nadeem Riaz said:

Pakistan’s retail industry is still developing and has tremendous scope for future growth. Through its shopping malls, Dolmen Group has been committed to promoting Pakistan’s retail industry by providing an organised platform to local and international retailers. We are proud to partner with the British Deputy High Commission for the Great Festival which provides an excellent opportunity for Pakistani and British brands to showcase themselves under one roof.

The GREAT Festival will feature a number of planned activities including special promotions, book readings, storytelling sessions, hair and beauty shows, and daily lucky draws at Dolmen Mall, Clifton, Karachi.

The British Council will be installing a ‘pop-up’ library in Dolmen Mall, giving a preview of the new British Council libraries that will open in Lahore and Karachi early next year. In addition to books to read, digital resources to explore and a children’s corner, there will be numerous educational and cultural events to participate in.

For food lovers, the Festival will offer British cuisine at Avari Towers in Karachi from 5 -10 October, where renowned British Chef, Dominic South will visit from the United Kingdom to delight us with a quintessentially British menu. A British Jazz ensemble, the Julian Joseph Trio, who have performed extensively at some of the UK’s most prestigious venues and festivals, will perform live. On 11 October Dominic and the Julian Joseph Trio will bring their skills to Avari Lahore.

British High Commissions' ‘Great Debate’ competition starts in Islamabad

Published 23 September 2015/ World location news article

The first round of the British High Commissions’ Pakistan–wide Great Debate competition was held at National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Islamabad yesterday.

Further rounds of the competition will take place in 11 other key cities across Pakistan where university students will debate on topics concerning the theme of the competition: Pakistan 2047. Future winners will then join yesterdays champion Zara Shafique from Institute of Space and Technology in the grand final where the winner of the Great Debate competition will be announced, and will be awarded with the British High Commission Scholarship.

Students from other cities are encouraged to visit and register on the website where they will see a list

of the 11 other host cities. Please visit this website for more details: www.greatdebate.com.pk

On winning the Islamabad leg of the GREAT Debate competition, Zara Shafique said:

It was a humbling experience for me. Everyone performed really well and I got a chance to learn a lot from other talented students today. It was very competitive yet at the same time quite an amazing day. I would like to thank the British High Commission for organising this remarkable opportunity and to NUST for conducting it at their prestigious university.'

British Minister's visit to Pakistan

Published 23 September 2015/ World location news article

He is the first Foreign Office Minister to visit Pakistan since the new British Government was elected in May this year and the first to visit Karachi since 2012.

Tobias Ellwood, British Minister for Pakistan, arrived in Karachi on 21st Sep at the start of a two day visit.

Mr Ellwood met senior figures in both business and politics, including the Governor of Sindh, Ishrat-ul-Ibad Khan and the Chief Minister of Sindh, Syed Qaim Ali Shah. They discussed strengthening trade links with Pakistan, capitalising on the unique people-to-people connections between the two countries.

While speaking in Karachi, Mr Ellwood highlighted the strength of the trade ties between the UK and Pakistan, saying:

The relationship between the UK and Pakistan is as strong as ever. Our two countries enjoy a friendship that is both long lasting and deep. Trade is a central part of this relationship. Over 100 British firms are operating successfully in Pakistan.

Mr Ellwood will continue his visit and has meetings planned with a range of senior Ministers and officials to highlight what the UK can do to help exporters in Pakistan and to discuss bilateral issues focusing on security, prosperity and governance.

Tobias Ellwood, British Minister for Pakistan, commits to continued UK support

Published 22 September 2015/ World location news article

People-to-people links and the commitment both governments have to working with each other create a partnership that could prosper for many years.

British Minister Tobias Ellwood continued his visit to Pakistan and reaffirmed UK support in developing

the future of Pakistan

Tobias Ellwood, Minister for Pakistan, visited Islamabad on 22 September. During his visit he met with Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar and National Security Adviser Sartaj Aziz amongst others

Speaking following the visit, Mr Ellwood said:

The UK-Pakistan relationship is deep and profound. People-to-people links and the commitment both governments have to working with each other create a partnership that could prosper for many years. Listening to the thoughts of the people I have met I was more convinced than ever that Pakistan could be on the cusp of real change: with a growing middle class, a more stable security environment and the potential for better long-term relationships with its neighbours could drive prosperity, improvement on human rights and increased equality [as above].

I was particularly pleased to be able to meet Commerce Minister Khurram Dastgir Khan and announce that UK Export Finance (UKEF), the UK's official export credit agency, is not only resuming support for export finance loans to government and other public agencies in Pakistan, but that it has in fact increased the amount of cover available to support UK trade with Pakistan to around \$300m from just over \$200m. These changes signal a recognition that economic conditions in Pakistan have improved, following the country's successful engagement with the IMF. The Government of Pakistan is continuing to make strong efforts to tackle the national deficit and debt and this is good news.

During the visit I reaffirmed UK support for Pakistan. I highlighted the steps I feel the country still needs to take in improving the rule of law, protecting human rights and investing in education and public service .but continue to see a bright future for Pakistan

Note for editors

UKEF is also pleased to confirm to buyers in Pakistan that it is able to consider sharia-compliant structures, where appropriate, following its recent guarantee for a sukuk or Islamic bond issue to fund the purchase of four Airbus aircraft by Emirates. This was the first Islamic finance guarantee by an export credit agency, anywhere in the world.

Chevening Alumni Association Lahore and the British High Commission marks democracy day

Published 21 September 2015/ World location news article

The seminar, held in Lahore, marked the International Day for Democracy which is observed worldwide on 15 September to promote and recognise the significance of democracy and rule of law.

The Chevening Alumni Association Lahore in collaboration with the British High Commission Pakistan organised a seminar on 'Governance and Democracy in Pakistan'.

Renowned politician and lawyer S.M. Zafar and Punjab Representative of UK's Department for International Development (DFID) Ben French were the keynote speakers at the seminar. The panel was headed by Dr. Pervez Hoodbhoy from Forman Christian College, Dr. Sohail Naqvi, the Vice Chancellor of the Lahore University of Management Sciences, Yasmeen Rashid former Advisor to the Prime Minister on Women Development and I.A. Rehman, the Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.

The seminar was attended by a large number of high-profile guests representing from academia, civil society, law and politics.

The forum provided an opportunity for the speakers to tackle and address issues on good governance, local government and devolution of power.

Speaking at the event, the Punjab Representative of the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), Ben French said:

Today is a good occasion to start a conversation on the importance of good governance and democracy for Pakistan's future. We, the UK, are great believers that strong democratic institutions and accountable government are key building blocks for secure and prosperous states. In Pakistan, we are supporting the provincial governments to create clear mechanisms to improve accountability. In Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa we, in collaboration with the World Bank, have supported passage of Right to Information Legislation and the establishment of Information Commissions in collaboration.

In both provinces the governments have now produced and disseminated two rounds of citizen's budgets. These reforms are attempts to show individuals where the road is, enabling accountability and responsibility to be touched and experienced, and thereby improving 'governance'.

The keynote speaker, SM Zafar said:

We have worked together to contribute to fostering a trustworthy democratic practices that promotes peace and security, enables economic and social development and respects human rights a vision that will take Pakistan to another 50 years.

UK to further boost Pakistan's counter-explosive capability

Published 9 September 2015/ News story

MOD

The UK will offer Pakistan a package worth nearly £1m to support essential counter-explosive equipment previously gifted to the country.

In a written statement Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said the UK will gift Pakistan spare parts for Counter Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) equipment including Vallon metal detectors.

Pakistan faces a severe threat from IED attacks from terrorists based in its country. It has sought the UK's assistance in developing the capabilities of its security forces to tackle this threat.

In May, the UK finished providing a three-year counter-IED (C-IED) programme to help Pakistan develop a multi-agency ability to tackle IEDs. As part of this programme, the UK has gifted nearly £13 million of C-IEDequipment to Pakistan.

Last month Mr Fallon visited Pakistan and offered a new enhanced three-year package of C-IED support. As well as renewing support in finding and defusing IEDs, it would also include vital training in how to gather and analyse forensic evidence from bomb scenes.

He said:

I'm pleased that we are able to offer this support package as our counter-IED work is part of our close partnership with Pakistan and our shared determination to fight terrorism.

By working together, we will make our streets safer at home in the UK and in Pakistan. Pakistan has a rapidly expanding C-IED capability, with over 5,000 of its security forces trained, and more of these IEDs are being defeated across the provinces and lives are being saved. Pakistani battalions, who have benefited from UK support, have been operating for more than a year as part of the military's counter terrorism operations.

The value of the package is £948,439.00, plus around £40,000 for packaging and shipping, and is expected to be gifted later this year.

British High Commission launches 'GREAT DEBATE' competition

Published 8 September 2015/ World location news article

The competition invites university students from across Pakistan to showcase their talents on the art of public speaking— a skill essential towards their development and future careers

The British High Commission in Pakistan launched the Great Debate competition nationwide today.

It is also an opportunity to celebrate and promote the UK and Pakistan's shared culture of vibrant discussion and intellectual debate.

The theme for the debate competition is Pakistan 2047. The topics, inspired by the theme, aim to have the future leaders of Pakistan discuss key areas that can impact the modern Pakistan of 2047.

The Great Debate competition will take place in 12 key cities of Pakistan from where 12 winners will then move to the grand final where the winner of the Great Debate competition will be announced and be awarded with the British High Commission Scholarship. Students from universities across the country are invited to register on the website: www.greatdebate.com.pkThe grand finale of the Great

Debate competition will be judged by a panel of experts.

The British Deputy High Commissioner to Pakistan, Patrick Moody said:

On behalf of the British High Commission I am delighted to launch the GREAT Debate competition. It will be a wonderful opportunity to hear Pakistan's youth debate the nation's future. Debating is a unique art and a cornerstone of development - preparing an individual for their life as a potential future leader of Pakistan.

I am sure that the debaters will take this opportunity to showcase the vision of the next generation of how to achieve a better future for Pakistan.

Further Information

The Great Debate is a debating competition for University students. There will be 12 heats – in 12 different cities (Abbottabad, Faisalabad, Gujrat, Hyderabad, Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Mirpur, Multan, Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Sialkot) involving students from over hundred universities across Pakistan – and the winner of each heat will be invited to the final in Islamabad.

Chevening South Asia Journalism Fellowship programme launched in Pakistan

Published 28 August 2015/ World location news article

The application window for the South Asia Journalism Programme (SAJP) is now open until 4 September 2015.

The Fellowship is aimed at mid-career journalists from India and Pakistan, and is funded by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and offers an opportunity to explore the range of approaches taken by the UK, India, and Pakistan, amongst others, and then use that knowledge to direct discussions that tackle the big issues challenging the field.

It provides an informed and evidence-based context to key policy debates and mutual understanding of international positions (including an appreciation of UK approaches), supply practical experience, and encourage dialogue on the key issues.

Each Fellowship includes:

Full programme fees

Living expenses for the duration of the fellowship

Return economy flight from India or Pakistan to the UK

The programme will be modular sessions that are practical and ambitious, tackling key issues of the 21st century, which are experienced by both the South Asia region and the UK. Through sharing ideas with other participants, guest speakers and meetings with various UK Government Departments, university lectures and practitioners, Fellows will return to their positions of leadership with the tools and knowledge to implement positive change.

The objective is to broaden the Fellows understanding of key concepts and how to apply them to the South Asia region. While the courses shall include an introduction to, and discussion of, a variety of theories, the overall emphasis should be on practical application in the context of India, Pakistan and beyond. The format of sessions must encourage participation, discussion and the sharing of experiences and ideas between the UK and South Asia region.

The programme starts in January 2016 and is an eight week course run by the University of Westminster.

To be eligible for a Chevening South Asia Journalism Fellowship, you must:

Be a citizenship and residency in India or Pakistan and currently live in the country. You must not hold British nationality.

At least have five years' work experience by the time before applying.

Be a mid-career journalist working in the political or economic sectors in India or Pakistan

Meet the English language requirements of the Chevening programme and University of Westminster.

A postgraduate level qualification (or equivalent professional training or experience in a relevant area) at the time of application.

Agree to adhere to all relevant guidelines and expectations for the programme.

Applications must be submitted via the online application system. For further details on how to apply visit [here](#)

The global Chevening network

Chevening is the UK government's international awards scheme aimed at developing global leaders.

Funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) and partner organisations, Chevening offers Chevening Fellowships to mid-career professionals to undertake bespoke short course in the UK.

Chevening offers a unique opportunity for future leaders, influencers and decision-makers from all over the world to develop professionally and academically, network extensively, experience UK culture, and build lasting positive relationships with the UK.

Numbering 44,000 worldwide, Chevening Alumni constitute an influential and highly regarded global network. They have an excellent record of rising to positions of leadership across a wide range of fields

including politics, business, the media, civil society, law and academia

UK quadruples number of Chevening Scholars from Pakistan

Published 25 August 2015/ World location news article

The number of Chevening Scholars being sent from Pakistan to the UK has increased by over 400% from 17 in 2014 to 73 scholars this year.

The UK has quadrupled the number of Chevening Scholars from Pakistan, the British High Commissioner, Mr Philip Barton CMG OBE, announced today at a reception ahead of their departure to prestigious UK universities.

The number of Chevening Scholars being sent from Pakistan to the UK has increased by over 400% from 17 in 2014 to 73 scholars this year. The reception was attended by scholars, alumni and other invited guests. The High Commissioner presented this year's certificates to mark their selection for the Chevening programme.

The British Chevening scholarship programme is a global programme designed to identify the most promising, next generation of leaders from across the world. The scholarships offer Masters degrees in subjects such as governance, democracy, journalism and security at some of the United Kingdom's most prestigious Universities.

Congratulating the selected Chevening Scholars, the British High Commissioner Philip Barton said Pakistan remains one of the top priority countries for Chevening awards. This year we have seen the biggest increase in the number of Chevening Scholars anywhere in the world, with a 400% increase. This shows the importance the UK puts in its relationship with Pakistan.

We are also proud of our Chevening alumni and the important contribution they are making after their return to Pakistan. The Chevening Programme brings immediate benefits for individual scholars – in terms of future career prospects and development. But it also delivers long-term benefits for both Pakistan and the UK. The creation of the alumni-led Chevening Alumni Association of Pakistan offers a platform for participants – whatever field they have chosen to pursue – to share their ideas on how to strengthen Pakistan and to work together for the good of the country.

The British High Commissioner also launched the 'Pakistan 2047' conversation to engage future leaders of Pakistan in debates around the future of the country, and its place in the world.

Mr Philip Barton said:

I am pleased to announce that the British High Commission is starting a conversation in Pakistan about the kind of country its people want in 2047. That is 100 years from the birth of this great nation. It is

when the young people of today will be leading Pakistan and the Chevening Scholars of 2015-16 will have had their opportunity to shape the country to make it better and more prosperous.

To help support conversations between Chevening alumni and to update them on Chevening events, the High Commissioner also launched today a twitter account for Chevening alumni @caa_pak

British High Commissioner supports Amir Khan's plans to train Pakistan's future boxing champions

Published 25 August 2015/ World location news article

Mr Khan, two time world champion and the current WBC Silver Welterweight champion, is currently visiting Pakistan to seek support in establishing a boxing academy in Islamabad

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton CMG OBE today met the British Pakistani boxing champion Amir Khan. Mr Khan, two time world champion and the current WBC Silver Welterweight champion, is currently visiting Pakistan to seek support in establishing a boxing academy in Islamabad.

Speaking during the meeting, the British High Commissioner commented:

Amir is a great Ambassador for sport both in the UK and in Pakistan. He personifies the cultural bonds between our two nations including our shared love for sports!

I am delighted Amir plans to establish a boxing academy in Pakistan. Young talent needs to be nurtured and supported. I am sure the academy will produce many Pakistani boxing champions in the future.

Amir Khan commented:

I am grateful to the British High Commissioner on his support to my plans of training Pakistani boxers. As a British Pakistani, I have always felt privileged to be part of the deep connections between the UK and Pakistan that are embedded in the historical and cultural ties between the two countries. I fully encourage other international sportsmen to visit Pakistan.

British High Commissioner's message of hope on Pakistan's Independence Day

Published 15 August 2015/ World location news article

Umeed, a poem by the national poet, Allama Iqbal, has formed the centrepiece of the UK's celebration of Pakistan's Independence Day this year.

A video of the British High Commissioner to Pakistan Philip Barton CMG OBE reading the poem Umeed (Hope) in Urdu was published online and in social media as his Independence Day message.

This poem followed on from a comment piece written by the British High Commissioner published earlier this week that called for Pakistan and its international partners to recognise the opportunities in Pakistan.

Speaking about the poem, Mr Philip Barton said:

Though he predates the birth of Pakistan, in many of his poems, Iqbal captured the essence of life for Pakistani people. I believe the people of Pakistan and its friends overseas should embrace the message of this poem – a message of hope.

I and my High Commission colleagues, and the people of Britain, take pleasure in joining the people of Pakistan to mark today's celebrations – Pakistan's 68 years of independent life as a nation. I wish all Pakistanis here and back in the UK a very happy Jashan e Azaadi!

Applications for the The UK Government's prestigious Chevening Scholarships opened on 3 August

Published 7 August 2015/ World location news article

These scholarships represent a significant investment from the UK Government to develop the next cohort of global leaders.

The Chevening Scholarships application window is open from 3 August to 3 November 2015 to receive applications for the academic year 2016/17, announced the Chevening Secretariat. The Secretariat is accepting applications via www.chevening.org/apply.

Chevening Scholarships are awarded to individuals with strong academic backgrounds who also have demonstrable leadership potential. The scholarship offers financial support to study for a Master's degree at any of the UK's leading universities and the opportunity to become part of an influential global network of 44,000 alumni.

There are approximately 1,500 Chevening Scholarships on offer globally for the 2016/2017 academic cycle. These scholarships represent a significant investment from the UK Government to develop the next cohort of global leaders.

The call for new applicants for 2016/17 follows the selection of 73 scholars from Pakistan who won an

award to study at leading universities in the UK this year under the Scholarship programme. Pakistan holds an eminent position in the global alumni network of the Chevening Scholarships with a strong base of more than 1300 Scholars. They also work as a think-tank through the Chevening Alumni Association of Pakistan (CAAP) to assist the government and policy makers to identify ways to promote Pakistan's economic and social prosperity.

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan Mr. Philip Barton CMG OBE said:
Being a Chevening Scholar marks you out as someone with drive and ability, and also as someone who wants to contribute to the development of your country. It offers you a unique opportunity to gain academic experience and at the same time to broaden your global and social outlooks. Above all, it gives you a sense of pride and responsibility.

The Chevening Scholars have a very important role to play in building bridges between Pakistan and the UK. They learn how to be ambassadors for knowledge and for leadership. I strongly encourage emerging and established leaders from Pakistan to apply – it may be the best decision you ever make. Mr Andy Battson, Head of Chevening Scholarships Pakistan said:

The Chevening programme provides a unique opportunity for leaders of the future to build a global network of continuing professional significance. It enables talented individuals to establish social, cultural, academic or commercial partnerships with the UK.

Not only do award recipients receive a first-rate UK education, through Chevening they join a vibrant community of Chevening Alumni, Foreign and Commonwealth Office staff, UK universities, and partner organisations. Chevening Award recipients will draw on and contribute to this community for the rest of their lives. I am delighted to announce the opening of the 2016/2017 competition for Chevening Scholarships.

UK's Secretary of State for Defence visits Pakistan

Published 6 August 2015/ World location news article

"UK stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Pakistan", says the UK's Secretary of State for Defence during his visit to Pakistan

The Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP, the Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom arrived in Pakistan on 5th Aug 2015, on a day long visit. The visit of Rt. Hon. Micheal Fallon is part of the United Kingdom's commitment to deepen the strategic partnership with Pakistan across many important areas including bilateral Defence ties.

During his visit, the UK Secretary of State for Defence had high level meetings with Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif, Chief of the Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, Minister for Defence and Water & Power Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Interior Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Syed Tariq Fatemi.

Rt. Hon. Michael Fallon MP said:

The United Kingdom and Pakistan have a strong bond of friendship and the breadth and depth of the strategic partnership has only grown deeper over the period of time.

I had range of important meetings in Islamabad today with leaders and officials to discuss regional security issues and steps to deepen the Defence relationship between the United Kingdom and Pakistan.

The UK recognises the huge sacrifices being made by the people and security personnel of Pakistan. Our two countries have an unwavering commitment to work together to combat the menace of terrorism and extremism which threatens the people of both countries. The United Kingdom will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Pakistan in the fight against terrorism and extremism.

UK makes counter explosives training offer to Pakistan

Published 5 August 2015/ News story

MOD

Defence Secretary Michael Fallon has today offered Pakistan a new, enhanced three-year package of counter improvised explosive device (C-IED) support.

The offer, made during a visit to Islamabad, would build on the successful C-IED package provided by Britain between 2012 and 2015. As well as renewing support in finding and defusing IEDs, it would also include vital training in how to gather and analyse forensic evidence from bomb scenes. Alongside the 12 million of C-IED equipment gifted to Pakistan by the UK, the move would help to tackle an issue that has caused more than 16,000 casualties in the country during the past decade.

Speaking in Islamabad, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said:

By sharing British Counter-IED expertise, we have already trained 5,000 Pakistanis to defuse these evil and dangerous devices. This new offer means thousands more could be trained, saving lives and preventing life changing injuries.

Our counter-IED work here is all part of our close partnership with Pakistan and our shared determination to fight terrorism. By working together, we will make our streets safer at home in the UK and here in Pakistan.

The offer came as Mr. Fallon held a series of meetings in the Pakistani capital with the Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif, the Chief of Army Staff Raheel Sharif, Minister for the Interior Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Minister for Defence Khawaja Asif and National Security Advisor Sartaj Aziz. As well as C-IED, he discussed the crucial role of Pakistan in tackling security threats facing the South Asia region. Having just visited Kabul, Mr Fallon thanked them for helping to facilitate historic peace talks between the government of Afghanistan and the Taliban, reiterating that the UK stands ready to lend its support.

Bridge - Europa is nonpartisan and an effort to share and publish the news of diversity, harmony and mutual understanding to bridge nations and inform people directly about how humanitarian aid is positively changing lives in Pakistan

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