**Remarks by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi at the launch of “Rose Stories along the Silk Road”**

(23 October 2024)

**Honorable Vice Chairman Zhao Fengtao,**

**Distinguished guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**A very good afternoon to all of you,**

It is a great privilege to be here today at the launch of "Rose Stories Along the Belt and Road Promoting a Worthy Cause for Common Development." On behalf of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, I extend my sincerest gratitude to the China International Development Cooperation Agency for organizing this important event and inviting us to participate.

The title of this book is itself a powerful metaphor. The rose, as we all know, is a universal symbol of beauty, resilience, and growth. It blossoms when nurtured with care and attention, just as our partnerships along the Silk Road have.

Since the ancient times, Silk Road was not only a conduit of trade, but also a conduit of friendship and people-to-people exchanges that the monks traversing along it carried. Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is the modern iteration of the Silk Road, has forged a number of meaningful partnerships.

These partnerships have flourished through mutual respect, cooperation, and shared goals. This book tells the stories of how our collective efforts have given rise to opportunities, transformed communities, and promoted sustainable development--much like a rose that blooms across borders, spreading hope and prosperity.

Pakistan has long embraced the spirit of the BRI, with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) standing as a shining example of what we can achieve when we work together. CPEC has not only improved infrastructure and connectivity but has also become a cornerstone of our bilateral relationship, bringing tangible benefits to millions of people. Like a carefully tended rose, the seeds of this cooperation have taken root and flourished, contributing to regional stability, economic growth, and people-to-people exchanges.

**Dear Friends,**

Development is not just about building infrastructure--it is about improving lives, lifting people out of poverty, and creating opportunities for all.

Pakistan therefore rendered its full support to the Global Development Initiative as well and recognizes its alignment with our own national goals. The GDI’s focus on poverty alleviation, food security, healthcare access, and climate change mirrors the priorities that Pakistan holds dear. We believe that through collaboration and shared vision, we can address these global challenges and ensure that development is both inclusive and sustainable.

The stories in this book are powerful reminders of what we can achieve when we nurture our relationships and work together for the common good. They demonstrate that development is not only about building roads, ports, or bridges but also about building hope, fostering peace, and creating opportunities for all.

As we look to the future, Pakistan remains committed to strengthening its collaboration with China through the Belt and Road Initiative and Global Development Initiative. Together, we can continue to cultivate an environment where our shared values and common goals can flourish, just like the roses symbolized in these stories—strong, beautiful, and enduring.

In conclusion, I extend my warmest congratulations to CIDCA on the launch of this book, and I look forward to our continued partnership in fostering development and promoting shared prosperity.

I thank you