**Ambassador Khalil Hashmi’s welcome remarks at China-Pakistan TVET Forum**

(Beijing: 19 December 2024)

**Distunguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**A very good morning and Dajia Hao**

It is a great privilege to welcome all of you to the first China-Pakistan Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Forum. This gathering marks a defining moment in the history of Pakistan-China cooperation as we collectively seek to empower our youth through skill development and technical education. I extend my gratitude to the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Security of China, and all stakeholders, including NAVTTC, provincial TEVTAs of Pakistan, universities, and technical institutions in China, for their steadfast commitment to this cause.

This forum is significant not only because it is the first of its kind at this scale under the auspices of Pakistan Embassy Beijing but even more importantly because it unites policymakers, academicians, industry leaders, and vocational experts from both nations. It is a space where ideas will translate into actions, fostering meaningful partnerships to meet the challenges of an evolving global economy.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Pakistan finds itself at a critical juncture. With over 64% of its population under the age of 30, we possess immense human potential. However, only 25% of our workforce has access to formal technical and vocational training. Addressing this gap is pivotal for unlocking the full potential of our youth, empowering them to contribute meaningfully to the development of their communities and the nation.

As we enter the second phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the focus has shifted toward industrialization, technology integration, and socioeconomic growth. To fully harness the opportunities created by CPEC, we must prioritize human resource development. TVET will play a central role in preparing a workforce capable of meeting the demands of existing and emerging industries, whether in manufacturing, renewable energy, or digital transformation.

The primary objectives of this Forum align with developments in our partner nation, China, where 40 new vocational majors have been introduced just recently to promote hi-tech industries, including artificial intelligence, aerospace precision equipment, and nuclear engineering. Such advancements serve as a model for us to innovate and align our own TVET systems with the requirements of modern markets.

By promoting TVET, we are also working to actualize the vision of our leadership to convert CPEC into a livelihood corridor.

Distinguished Guests,

Collaboration between industry and academia will be a cornerstone of this effort. When vocational programs are aligned with market needs, they bridge the gap between education and employment. This ensures that our youth possesses the skills that are not only relevant but transformative in today’s digital and competitive world.

It is hard to overstate the salience of technology in economic growth, personal empowerment and prosperity. We must embrace digital transformation and emerging technologies to empower our youth with future-ready skills. Fields such as robotics, data science, and clean energy offer new avenues for growth, and it is imperative that we prepare our workforce to thrive in these areas.

I am confident that today’s discussions, outcomes and agreements will lay the foundation for tangible progress. By working together, we can establish cutting-edge TVET institutions, develop innovative programs, and produce a workforce that drives sustainable growth for both Pakistan and China.

In conclusion, I thank our Chinese partners, participating institutions, and all those who have made this forum a success. Let us move forward with determination, building bridges of opportunity for our youth and shaping a brighter future for both our nations.

Thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*