Remarks by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi

**At the Opening Ceremony of the Exhibition: “Pakistan in Frames: A visual journey by Chinese tour opertaors”**

Beijing: 03 September 2024

Honourable Ambassador Wang Fukang,

Deputy Director General Mao Ming of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Distinguished Guests from the International Department of the CPC, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries,

Excellencies,

Representatives of Tour Operator Companies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening to you all,

It is a great pleasure for me to extend a very warm welcome you to the exhibition “Pakistan in Frames: A Visual Journey by Chinese Tour Operators,” on behalf of my wife, my colleagues, and my country.

Today, I stand before you to acknowledge the remarkable diversity represented in this room-guests from government institutions, cultural and academic bodies, media, and notably, over 100 esteemed tour operators.

My special gratitude to the group of 15 tour operators whose exploration of Pakistan last year gave birth to this exhibition. Their photographs offer a unique perspective that we are privileged to showcase today.

I also extend my heartfelt thanks to QYER and Marriott Hotel for their invaluable partnership in bringing this exhibition to life. And, of course, I commend my dedicated team for their tireless efforts in conceiving and executing this project with precision.

This exhibition holds special significance for several reasons:

**First and foremost**, it offers you a glimpse of Pakistan through Chinese eyes. The perspectives presented here today are captured by Chinese tour operators, reflecting moments that resonated with them during their visit to Pakistan. These images tell a story of connection—of what draws our two nations together, not just diplomatically, but through shared human experiences. The photographs on display today are more than just images; they are a testament to the bond between our peoples, seen through the lens of Chinese visitors.

**Secondly**, this exhibition celebrates the flourishing of people-to-people exchanges between our two great nations. Just under one year, our two countries marked 2023 as the Year of Tourism Exchanges between Pakistan and China. In the wake of the pandemic, as travel restrictions eased, Pakistan was declared among one of countries on the list of approved destinations for outbound group tourism by the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The visit by these tour operators stands as a significant milestone in this regard.

**Thirdly**, the exhibition is a celebration of what we hold dear—our shared heritage, our natural beauty, and our deep-rooted friendship. The picturesque landscapes of Gilgit-Baltistan, connecting our nations through the Khunjerab Pass; the enduring emotions of the China-Pakistan friendship, a bond as strong and precious as gold; the ancient connections through the Gandhara civilization; and the spontaneous moments of joy captured in these photographs—all are central themes of today’s exhibition.

**Finally**, this exhibition is a powerful reminder that seeing is believing. By inviting such a diverse group, we aim to inspire you to witness firsthand the beauty and hospitality that Pakistan offers to Chinese tourists. Through the eyes of your fellow tour operators, you will see the promise that awaits in Pakistan—a land of natural wonders, cultural richness, and warm, welcoming people.

I will not take up much more of your time, as I believe the images and stories you will see here today will speak far more eloquently than words ever could.

Thank you, and I hope this exhibition ignites your curiosity and imagination.