



THE SENATE OF PAKISTAN DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

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SENATE OF PAKISTAN SENATE DEBATES

Monday, the October 28, 2024

The Senate of Pakistan met in the Senate Hall (Parliament House) Islamabad at sixteen minutes past five in the evening with Mr. Chairman (Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani) in the Chair.

National Anthems

(At the outset, national anthems of both the countries, Pakistan and Russia were played)

Recitation from the Holy Quran

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ -
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ -

وَالَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ بُرْهَانَ آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِذْ مَا غَضِبُوا إِيَّاهُمْ
بَغْفِرُونَ (٣٤٤) وَالَّذِينَ يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لِقَوْلِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْ رُبُّهُمْ شَوْرَى
لِي نُنْمِئَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ (٣٨٤)

Translation: Who avoid major sins and shameful deed, and forgive when angered; who respond to their Lord, establish prayer, conduct their affairs by mutual consultation, and donate from what We have provided for them;

(Surah Al-Tahreem: Verse 8)

Welcoming speech by Honourable Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Chairman Senate of Pakistan in honour of Her Excellency, Ms. Valentina Matvienko, Speaker of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

Mr. Chairman: *Bismillah Ir Rehmen Ir Rahim*. Your Excellency Ms. Valentina Matvienko; Honourable Members of the Russian Delegation; Honourable Senators and Ministers;

It is a great honour and privilege to welcome Ms. Valentina Matvienko, Speaker of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation to the Senate of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Today's event represents another important step in strengthening the growing ties between Pakistan and Russia; two nations connected by a shared commitment to regional stability, peace and prosperity.

Speaker Valentina brings an unparalleled wealth of experience in governance, diplomacy and international cooperation.

Ms. Valentina's distinguished career, spanning over five decades, has left indelible marks on diplomacy, politics and governance.

From her early years in Soviet youth leadership to becoming one of the Russia's most influential figures, her journey is a testament to hard work, perseverance, and visionary leadership.

A pivotal moment was her tenure as Governor of Saint Petersburg, where she revitalized the city, focusing on economic growth, cultural preservation, and global

engagement, turning it into a hub of diplomacy and investment.

Her diplomatic expertise extends well beyond Russian Federation. As ambassador to Malta and Permanent Representative to the UN, Ms. Matvienko significantly advanced Russia's interests on the global stage, earning respect for her ability to navigate complex diplomatic landscapes and foster cooperation.

Excellency's current role as Speaker of the Federation Council marks a pinnacle of achievement, making her one of the most influential women in Russian politics.

Under her leadership, the Federation Council has been instrumental in advancing Russia's legislative agenda and deepening international cooperation.

Excellency, your contributions to the empowerment of women, your advocacy for social development, and your commitment to multilateralism resonate deeply with Pakistan's values.

Your leadership continues to inspire women around the world to pursue leadership roles and contribute to societal progress. We are particularly proud to stand beside a leader who shares Pakistan's vision of inclusive and sustainable development.

In this spirit, today's gathering is not just a celebration of our growing ties but an opportunity to deepen our understanding and explore new avenues for collaboration.

We have much to learn from each other's experiences, and I am confident that this visit will be a

stepping stone towards a brighter future of cooperation between Pakistan and Russia.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is with great pleasure and honour that we welcome Ms. Valentina Ivanovna Matvienko and her high level delegation to the Senate of Pakistan.

(Desk thumping)

The presence of esteemed guests from the Russian Federation today is not only a testament to the strengthening friendship between our two nations but also a reminder of our collective commitment to nurturing parliamentary ties.

Your Excellency's address to the Senate of Pakistan today, a rarity in itself, will mark a new chapter in the history of not only the Senate of Pakistan but also the Russia-Pakistan ties.

Your Excellency, we are truly honoured by your presence, and I now invite you to address the Senate of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Ladies and gentlemen! Your Excellency Speaker Ms. Valentina Matvienko.

(Desk thumping)

**Address of Her Excellency Ms. Valentina Matvienko,
Speaker of the Federation Council of the Federal
Assembly of the Russian Federation**

Ms. Valentina Matvienko: Your Excellency. Mr. Gilani; Senators, colleagues and friends; Assalam-o-Alaikum! On behalf of the entire Russian delegation, let me sincerely thank you for the hospitality and wonderful reception you have accorded to us in Pakistan, and for the intense agenda, this opportunity to speak in the Senate. It is a great honour for me.

I am glad to once again visit your amazing country again, a country with an ancient history and culture, diverse and distinctive traditions.

The visit of the parliamentary delegation of the Federation Council, the Senate of Russian Parliament, to Islamabad is new step towards an enhanced Russia-Pakistan political and parliamentary dialogue, which is successfully developing at the top and high levels within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, other regional and international organizations.

I am sure that the recent visit by the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Mr. Mikhail Mishustin and the current visit of our delegation will greatly contribute to the further progressive development of cooperation between Russia and Pakistan.

The relations between our countries have a long history. Even in most difficult times, Moscow and Islamabad kept up a dialogue. And now we can note with satisfaction that the similarity of our approaches is very close to the majority of issues on the international agenda.

Our countries are interested the same in an Afghan settlement and ensuring Central Asian security. I am sure that we shall sustain our mutual understanding on the issues of global security and stability, prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, prohibition of biological, chemical and toxin weapons, inadmissibility of imposing illegal sanctions, mechanisms and of all forms of politicization of humanitarian cooperation, including in sports.

Russia and Pakistan have consistently promoted a strengthened UN central coordinating role in international relations.

In this regard, we welcome the election of Pakistan to the UN Security Council for 2025-26.

It is for the eighth time already that your country takes a non-permanent seat there, which is testimony to Islamabad's commitment to the principles and spirit of the UN Charter.

I am confident that Pakistan will make a significant contribution to a more efficient Security Council and to the achievement of high goals of global security and peace.

We expect that Pakistan's balanced position, your rich experience, and the profound wisdom of your people and its leaders will bring a new perspective when addressing many global problems.

This is also evidenced by Pakistan's active participation in UN peacekeeping missions in many regions of the world.

We take full note of Pakistan's interest in deepening cooperation with BRICS, an association of sovereign countries representing different continents, development models, religions, distinctive civilisations and cultures.

It has already become a new centre of multipolarity, where all participants favour equality, good-neighbourliness and mutual respect.

The transition from the unipolar to multipolar world, this is an objective to historic process, which no one can stop including those who are trying to preserve the dominance and to preserve their hegemony.

I know that the Senate of Pakistan fully shares these values and seeks their assertion in the international arena.

In this regard, we stand for more intensive interaction between legislators at multilateral fora, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Asian Parliamentary Assembly and other forums.

We see a great potential in an enhanced cooperation in the formats of parliamentary “friendship groups”, as well as through specialized committees of the Upper Houses of our parliaments.

Today, with our colleagues, the Chairman of the Senate and Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan signed Memorandum of Mutual Understanding which laid a legal framework for our Parliamentary International cooperation.

There is another important area where we are counting very much on the two parliaments’ joint active work. I mean improving the legal framework for our cooperation. So in this regard, the important work of MPs is difficult to overestimate.

Much remains to be done here, including for the progressive development of trade and economic ties. They are based on a solid and time-tested foundation.

The Soviet Union helped Pakistan to develop its oil and gas industry, build major energy facilities and supplied agricultural machinery.

In the 1970s-80s, the USSR assisted in building the Pakistan Steel Mills in Karachi, which became a symbol of our friendship. Today, we have to modernise this factory or plan a new factory. Our specialists are ready to

cooperate and to interact with Pakistani authorities and we are waiting for proposals, of course, in case you are interested.

We are actively continuing these traditions of cooperation. In the past year alone, Russian-Pakistani trade turnover grew by more than 50 per cent and exceeded one billion dollars for the first time. It grew by another 13 per cent in January-August this year. This good momentum should be supported in every possible way. And today, we have a great mutual yet unrealised potential.

There are many promising areas for the development of our economic cooperation. I would like to highlight such areas as energy and agro-industrial complex.

Among other those areas which were discussed during the meeting of our Presidents or heads of states in Ashkabad, and now we should add in substance to those negotiations.

Last year, the first shipment of Russian crude oil arrived at the port of Karachi, and by the end of the year its share in Russian exports to Pakistan exceeded 20 per cent. In case you are interested, we are ready to scale-up the supply of hydrocarbon cargos.

Russia continues to contribute to Pakistan's food security. We have increased grain supplies to the Pakistani market. In this regard, I would like to note that, despite unfavourable weather conditions, Russian farmers have harvested over 132 million tons of grain this year. This guarantees Russia's reliability as one of the world's key agricultural exporters.

To increase the harvests in Pakistan, we are ready to scale-up supplies of fertilizers, modern agricultural machines and share our modern technology.

Developing international transport corridors, primarily the North-South International Transport Corridor, is relevant for our countries. Pakistan has a very favourable geographical location and has a considerable logistics and transit potential. This route is already operational, strengthening the connectivity between Northern Eurasia and the Global South. We welcome Pakistan's interest in this project.

Maintaining a constructive political dialogue, our countries are consistently pursuing a course for stepped up cooperation in all areas, including the humanitarian one.

When I met with Chairman Senate, Mr. Yousaf Raza Gilani, Mr. Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker of the National Assembly and the esteemed President of Pakistan, we talked at length about developing our cooperation in education, culture and other areas of humanitarian cooperation. To my mind, I find these areas are lagging behind in comparison with our economic and business ties.

We are now witnessing the revival of our bilateral cooperation in culture and sports, which has long-standing traditions. Faiz Ahmed Faiz, one of the greatest Urdu poets, was a sincere friend of our country. He translated Rasul Gamzatov's poetry, wrote about Russian great poet Alexander Pushkin and about the heroic defenders of my hometown, Leningrad.

Faiz Ahmed Faiz said that Russia and Pakistan have much to teach each other, enriching each other's cultures and opening new horizons for their friendship.

Today, we are following this very vision by developing our scientific and educational cooperation. Remarkable progress has been made in the bilateral agenda on higher education, recognition of diplomas and academic degrees. Friendly ties are being established between young people. We are glad that the Pakistani delegation took part in the World Youth Festival in Sochi.

More and more Russians are showing interest in Pakistan. I would like to note that your country's recent decision to waive visa fees should have a positive effect on the tourist flow. These steps help our peoples get to know and understand each other better, strengthening good relations between Russia and Pakistan.

The Federation Council, our specialized Committees, advisory and expert bodies pay great attention to the topic of interfaith and interethnic relations. In our legislative work, we, Russian MPs, are guided by traditional spiritual values. I know that these important issues are also permanently in the focus of your attention. That is a good foundation for exchanging legislative experience amongst us.

Parliaments play a responsible role to play in maintaining dialogue with faiths and religious leaders. Together with religious institutions, Russian legislators strive to preserve traditional spiritual and moral values, protect the family, motherhood and childhood. Thus, in Russia this year has been proclaimed the Year of the Family.

Russia has historically emerged and developed as a state-civilization, home to multiple ethnic groups and religions. In my country, people of different faiths, ethnicities, native languages, have lived in peace and harmony for centuries.

In Russia, Islam is considered one of the traditional religions, and the Muslim Ummah is an integral part of our society, making a great contribution to maintaining peace and harmony, defending the Fatherland, preserving cultural diversity, strengthening the institution of family, and educating youth.

Here in Pakistan, I am especially pleased to feel the respect shown to women. It is nice to see female Senators in this Chamber. I know that the Constitution of Pakistan, which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, last year, guaranteed the representation of women in Parliament.

And the number of places for women is steadily growing. Today, they are significantly represented in both Federal and Provincial Assemblies. It is important that a huge number of Pakistani women have broad access to education, politics and social activities.

Historically, it did not come easy, as is the case anywhere else in the world. A striking example is the fate of Benazir Bhutto, the first female Prime Minister in Pakistan and the Muslim world.

(Desk thumping)

In her autobiography “Daughter of the East”, which has been published in Russia. She wrote that politics was a difficult area of effort for a woman in any society; they still had to go the extra mile to prove that

they are equal to men they had to work harder and longer hours and make more sacrifices. I believe it to be true for women in any country. But we can see how the situation improves and I am very glad to see that same is happening in Pakistan.

Dear colleagues, we have a lot in common. Russia and Pakistan are Federal States. Parliaments in both Russia and Pakistan are bicameral. I know that your Chamber, the Senate, is also called the Federation Chamber, once again bearing in mind the Federal structure of your State.

Similarly, our chamber, the Federation Council, is also called the Chamber of Regions. And we pay much attention to the development of cooperation between constituent entities of the federation and their foreign partners.

We see that the interest in expanding and developing cooperation with Pakistan is growing in the regions as well. In this regard, we believe that close interregional ties are very promising. There is an agreement in place on establishing direct ties between St. Petersburg and the province of Sindh. It was signed in 2017. I am sure that this avenue of cooperation requires our parliamentary support and needs to be up-scaled to include other regions. I would like also to ask you for support in this regard. We have similar goals, joint tasks and plans in many ways, this means that joint action is soon to follow. I would like to thank the Senate, the National Assembly of Pakistan, all the Senators and I would like to address Mr. Gilani, His Excellency the Chairman of the Senate. I would like to thank you for

contributing greatly and strengthening and developing of bilateral ties between our countries. These relations work on a mutual beneficial and mutually respectful footing. There is no minor or major partner. We respect several traditions and culture of Pakistan and its history and we hope the same coming from the Pakistani side.

We fully count on further work to develop cooperation between Russia and Pakistan for the benefit of our countries and peoples. Our meeting started with national anthem of Pakistan. The national anthem starts with the following words:-

Be blessed the sacred land of Pakistan and wish all, every family and every person, wealth, happiness and health.

(Desk thumping)

Bohat Shukriya, Pakistan-Roosi dosti zindabad.

(Desk thumping)

Mr. Chairman: Now, I request Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister for Law and justice to present vote of thanks and he is representing the ruling party Pakistan Muslim League (N).

Vote of thanks presented by Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, Federal Minister for Law and Justice

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar (Minister for Law and Justice):

السلام عليكم۔ بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم۔

Madam Speaker, honourable Chairman Senate of Pakistan, distinguished members of the Russian delegation, dear colleagues from Federal Cabinet and Senate of Pakistan. Excellencies,

and very good evening. السلام عليكم

It is a profound honour for me to address this august meeting today which is of a great significance. We are privileged to host Madam Valentina and to her esteemed delegation in the heart of Pakistan's democracy, the Senate of Pakistan. Madam Speaker, your presence in this House marks a historic moment in Pakistan-Russia relations, on behalf of Senate of Pakistan I extend our deepest gratitude to you and your esteemed delegation for engagement, dialogue which reflect the spirit of friendship, respect and mutual cooperation between our nations. This visit also marks a new chapter in Inter-Parliamentary relations between Pakistan and Russia, it is both timely and symbolic.

As we have recently concluded the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Senate of Pakistan and Federation Council of Russia. This MoU will serve as a cornerstone for deepening collaboration, facilitating delegation exchanges, joint consultations and institutional learning between our legislative bodies.

Excellencies, the relationship between Pakistan and Russia is rooted in mutual respect, shared interests and a collective desire to contribute to regional stability and economic prosperity. Over the past 76 years our two countries have worked together across various domains, strengthening economic cooperation, promoting cultural exchanges and envisaging regional connectivity. This visit is a significant opportunity for both our nations to build upon the progress we have achieved. It offers us chance to explore new avenues of collaboration not only in energy and trade but also in education, cultural exchange, technology and many others.

We view the initiatives between us as pivotal elements in expanding our bilateral partnership. These projects not only serve to meet Pakistan's energy and infrastructure needs but also enhance regional trade and faster integration across South and Central Asia. They reflect the growing convergences of our interests and creating sustainable and inclusive economic pathways for our people.

Madam Speaker, the people and leadership of Pakistan believe firmly in peace, cooperation and regional stability. We look forward to strengthening our partnership within multilateral forums like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization which continues to provide a valuable platform for coordinated efforts on counter terrorism, trade and sustainable development. With these shades aspiration in mind, I offer you our warmest wishes for the remainder of your visit to Pakistan. We are deeply honoured to have hosted you and we look forward to our future where are two countries continue to grow together and friendship and collaboration. Pak-Russia friendship Zindabad.

(Desks thumping)

Mr. Chairman: Now, I request Senator Syed Ali Zafar, Parliamentary Leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, member of Opposition.

Vote of thanks presented by Senator Syed Ali Zafar

سینٹر سید علی ظفر: بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم۔

Honourable Speaker for Russian Federation, honourable Chairman Senate of Pakistan. It is unique side to see both of you are sitting together, trust me, it proves that this is a historic occasion indeed.

Distinguished friends and colleagues from Russia, fellow Senators, dear colleagues. It is an honour to greet and welcome you in our midst. Your visit is a reminder, Madam Speaker, the diplomacy is not just limited to Governments, diplomacy is actually a Parliamentary Affair also and we believe that together with these legislatures, Russian legislatures and our legislatures can bridge and build bridges, bridge gaps and build bridges that normally statecraft can't.

Madam Speaker, I am a lawyer and it's easy to be a lawyer and I always believe that the most difficult thing was to be a judge because you have to hear arguments from both sides and then decide day after day.

But when I became a Senator, I realized that there is even more difficult job and that is to be a speaker of a Parliament because here we have people from the Government side and very able people from the Opposition as well, arguing on everything with each other every day. We do not agree on anything, we disagree, we even have tempers, we sometime lose them and the Speaker and the Chairman's job is that in this charged atmosphere, they have to maintain impartiality and then give their rulings.

(Desks thumping)

Senator Syed Ali Zafar: I think, your election as a speaker is commendable. Madam Speaker, we are in a unique juncture in global history, you have rightly advocated something which I would like to quote. You have advocated the notion that our time is marked by global tectonic shifts in the world system. I want to say that Russia's vision of a global structure which is

multipolar rather than dominated by one power or a few powers. Russia's vision of a world where there is greater autonomy for nations to determine their own political, economic and social development. This is a vision that is shared by many in Pakistan.

I believe that your concept or Russia's concept of sovereignty, interference, no interference by foreign powers is the belief that many of us also hold. Madam Speaker, I want to reiterate that in Pakistan, we too, both domestically and in the international era promote and believe in concepts of equality. The concept of the inalienable right of every nation to foster their own destiny without foreign interference and we also believe in your concept of domestic traditions that is also very close to our hearts.

So, Pakistan believes, as an Opposition Leader, I would like to say that this is unanimous view, we agree finally from the Government side and from the Opposition side on one thing which is that in this new world order, we want to strengthen the process and we believe that Russia can be a leading and crucial partner for us.

Madam Speaker, we are in politics and our goal is very clear, we want to bring a positive change in this world and we want to promote education, we want to promote health. And we inspire that people will have pride in our respective nations. Parliamentary relations are a powerful instrument, a most powerful instrument for achieving this and that is why, I consider your engagement with us today as a historic step forward. In pursuit of progress, I propose, we strengthen our bounds

through agreements in Science and Technology. I believe that the Memorandum of Understandings between Russian and Pakistani universities could faster academic exchange while partnerships in trade, economics and even social and cultural fields could enrich both our nations.

The Russian Parliament, of course, I visited recently and it reflects the diversity that you are speaking about. It also reflects that apart from the politicians and apart from intellectuals, you have many famous people like world champions in boxing, world champions in ice skating, chess champions, you had them in your Parliament. We too have experts here in this very Senate, from fields that are dedicated to serving the nation. So, we have great mutual respect for each other's Parliaments and I believe that through this, we can take our inter-parliamentary relationship to heights that we never have seen before.

On behalf of millions of Pakistanis who hold Russia in high regard, I extend a message of friendship. Our national poet Allama Iqbal, famously said and he is speaking about the soil of Pakistan. He said this soil is fertile and needs only one drop of water. The same applies to our friendship between Russia and Pakistan. With sincere cooperation, this bond can grow from strong to extraordinary.

In closing, I am reminded of the wise words of Hazrat Ali who said, you can trust any friend who has helped you in hard times. Let us Madam Chairperson, nurture our friendship with this spirit, one that

strengthens through shared support and shared understandings. Thank you so much.

Mr. Chairman: Now, I request Senator Sherry Rehman, Parliamentary Party Leader of Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarian to vote of thanks.

Vote of thanks presented by Senator Sherry Rehman

Senator Sherry Rehman: Thank you Mr. Chairman and Madam Speaker. First of all, allow me to welcome Her Excellency Ms. Valentina Matvienko. I hope and I am pronouncing this name perfectly because I hear everybody calling you only by your first name, so welcome to Pakistan, to Islamabad and our Chamber as you call it the House of the regions and the Federation, it reflects your Chamber as well, to all our distinguished Parliamentarians, Cabinet Members and other colleagues present here.

I think we all agree that Pakistan and Russia don't have a young relationship. We have an old enduring bond and I say this from my heart because I remember as a little girl, reading and looking at the Sputnik Magazine, also dreaming of going to see the Bolshoi Ballet one day and of course, I did managed. That is the first thing I did when I got there to go to the Bolshoi. So, your great country's past, its history, its gravitational cultural power has had a profound impact on many students, on intellectual minds and even political trends in Pakistan.

As I said our relationship did not begin yesterday but we hope to strengthen it to new levels, across the board and we really, Madam speaker, appreciate your coming to Pakistan but also to this Chamber to share your thoughts with us, to share your time with us and to

bring to Pakistan your valuable insights that we have been hearing across several meetings as well as your Deputies and Committee Chairpersons, that have accompanied you on this trip. I commend you Madam Speaker, for bringing this kind of august delegation because this is truly an enhancement of ties between two parliaments, and parliaments Madam Speaker, as you know can do what Governments often cannot. They bring the power of the people to any task and that is where we can apply our minds, our critical mass and good politics to breaking down any problem, solving any challenge, overcoming any hurdle and bringing two countries together in an era as you mentioned of great change, of great tumult and transformational energies in the world from artificial intelligence to many things.

You have mentioned Madam Speaker, in your address that you have thought of Pakistan many times, you have thought of Pakistan's women many times and you appreciated many women in the Senate, in the provinces and you took time out to appreciate my great leader Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, who died facing the sun, facing challenges that very few men could withstand. She was the ultimate political icon for Pakistan, for South Asia and for the Muslim world as twice elected Prime Minister. I am proud to represent her party here as is the Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Mr. Yousaf Raza Gilani. But we are all friends here, we are all colleagues as Barrister says here that we disagree, we often fight. I hope we do not fight more. I hope we use this opportunity when countries can speak to each other and not at each other that we two can bridge many divides in the spirit of

civilization, comity and gathering together like we have done today.

Madam Speaker, your visit to us is not a ceremonial one only. To us, it is as everyone said, a great milestone in our relationship because it embodies both our countries' collective commitment to democratic ideals, dialogue, multilateral engagement and the fostering of joint goals which have been talked about across the board today. It also reflects our shared belief that through dialogue and legislative cooperation, we can foster partnerships that transcend political boundaries and bring up people closer together.

In today's complex global environment, Madam Speaker, Parliaments and multilateral forums like the SCO, play a pivotal role in bridging differences. This is a very divided and polarized world and I think advancing mutual understanding and strengthening trust between nations is a great project that your country has also undertaken. We congratulate you on your coming here.

I also want to say that it was touching to hear you know our great poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz. I also want to take this opportunity to say that we have a connection between our two nations as I said in literature, philosophy and art. Russia's literary giants are studied here, believe it or not, Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoevsky, are studied here in great length. I run a book club, called the Dostoevsky Club and we have many great evenings listening to your music, your ballet, your culture, but today, we have come to a place in history both for Pakistan and Russia where we can take Eurasia forward.

Eurasia is a rising power. Your country crosses many regional connectivity opportunities when we talk about ties for sharing energy, agriculture, technology and all the opportunities we can find for trade and economic cooperation. It is a century for trade, it is the century for economic power and we all can maximize benefits by bringing parliaments together and I firmly believe that the friendship between Pakistan and Russia anchored in dialogue, cooperation and mutual trust will continue to thrive and evolve for a wellbeing and prosperity for both of our people.

Madam Speaker, I am confident that your important visit will be in front of us as a landmark. Madam Speaker! I am confident that your important visit will be in front of us as a landmark that will turn Parliament's history for both. I would suggest that we deepen our bonds through all the Chairpersons you have brought with you, we could share our notes with the Chairpersons, corresponding Chairpersons here that will be a great productive outcome, perhaps at your dinner Mr. Chairman, or any at other opportunity.

The visit is short, I am sure it is already scripted and planned for but I think this is an excellent opportunity that Chairpersons of Committees have come here all the way and we must use this opportunity to cooperate and enhance our ties. Thank you very much for your patience and time, welcome again.

Mr. Chairman: I recognize the presence of MNAs Mr. Nabil Gabol, Mr. Abdul Qadir Gillani, Mr. Naveed Ahmed Jeeva, Mrs. Sehar Kamran in the Gallery.

(Desk thumping)

Mr. Chairman: Senator Ali Zafar, about fight I will just say that when we agree to disagree, it is democracy. Now I request Senator Aimal Wali Khan, Parliamentary Party Leader of Awami National Party and Convener of Pakistan-Russia Parliamentary Friendship Group to present vote of thanks.

Vote of thanks presented by Senator Aimal Wali Khan

Senator Aimal Wali Khan: Thank you Mr. Chairman, Madam Speaker, Valentina Matvienko, distinguished members of the Russian delegation, honourable senators, excellencies. It is a great personal pleasure and a rare privilege to convey our profound greetings and sentiments of bonhomie to our distinguished guests as memento of abiding friendship and love from the Pakistani Parliament, the political and parliamentary leadership and our whole nation.

Madam Speaker, we are grateful to you and the members of your delegation for honouring us with your visit. I am confident that this valuable interaction and exchange of ideas between parliamentarians from the two sides would go a long way in further enriching, diversifying and deepening fraternal Pakistan-Russia relationship. Madam Speaker, your visit marks a historic headway in furthering Pakistan-Russia relation and cooperation. I am buoyed by absolute confidence that together we can lay the foundation for an even stronger partnership in the future which relies on the commonly cherished ideas of peace, development, progress, innovation, enlightenment and harmony. The bonds of friendship and cooperation that we have renewed during

your visit will enrich and deepen our bilateral inter-parliamentary, economic, investment and trade linkages.

Madam Speaker, today is a very proud day for me, talking about the hundred years old history, I am proud heir standing in front of you right now. Let's remember my great grandfather and my grandfather Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khan Abdul Wali Khan, now both are late, who just for this ideology and mindset that we must have friendly relationships with our neighbouring countries, regional countries, have been labeled traitors in Pakistan. As we said before we have been labeled agents of Russia in Pakistan. We and you both have been called the red non-Muslims and I am proud of that today that Pakistan is moving on a direction where we asked them to move fifty years ago. The only and the only reason we had to struggle for the fifty years taking Russia was our idea of having friendship with regional and neighbouring countries.

Taking this privilege, I request the Chair to extend hands towards all neighbouring countries; we must have friendship criteria before everything. We must have good friendship with India, we must have good friendship with Afghanistan, we must have good friendship with Iran, China, Russia and we must promote dialogues between these countries.

Madam Speaker, I as the Chairman of the Awami National Party would like to bring it in your notice that in my headquarters Peshawar Bacha Khan Markaz, we have had an exchange of poetry between Russia and Pakhtuns, Alexander Pushkin's statue is there in Bacha Khan Markaz, anyone can go and find that, the Ambassador

knows it very well. In return our national poet Khan Abdul Ghani Khan's statue is there in Russia, this shows the ties between Russia and Awami National Party and the Pakhtun nation.

Madam Speaker, just to remind everyone, in 80s we had a students' exchange programme where people from Awami National Party, the Pakhtuns used to be sent to Russia where they would study on scholarship at this moment there are hundreds of thousands of Pakhtuns living in Russia after that programme. We would love that programme to be reinitiated and we would love students exchange and some more technical programmes.

Madam Speaker, history is history but we cannot live in history, we must learn from history and then we must move on. History might be brutal, let me state that sitting and standing in my country have to face a lot of troubles but again I say history might be brutal but Madam Speaker, as I said we have to learn lessons and we have to move on. You and your delegation's visit to Pakistan shows that 'yes' we are moving on, countries or nations decide with their minds not with their hearts. We have to leave our hearts aside and our mind at this time says that you need us and we need you. Russia needs Pakistan and Pakistan needs Russia and this bilateral relation is the need of the hour, was the need of the hour and will be the need of the hour.

(Desk thumping)

Senator Aimal Wali Khan: Madam Speaker, whatever is happening is our dream. My ancestors with hundreds of thousands of workers dreamt to have a good relationship with Russia as a country and Russia as a

nation. We must work at every level to make these bonds strong, may it be between country to country or may it be between nation to nation. We must work on nation to nation relations. We must work on business, we must work on trade, we must have expertise exchange programme, we must have technical exchange programme and as I said we must work at every level to make the bonds between Russia and Pakistan, the strongest bonds that people must narrate too.

Madam Speaker, we as the preachers of non-violence, we, the Awami National Party as the preachers of peace and as I consider myself or the ideology as allies to the Russian Federation in Pakistan in the past fifty or sixty years, I request you, I would never want to hurt the sentiments but I want to become the voice of the voiceless, Madam Speaker it is a humble request that the war must end. There must be an end to the Ukraine war. Madam Speaker, it is a voice of voiceless, war never brings love, war brings hatred, war brings disharmony and every matter must be solved across the table. Madam Speaker, it will be a lovely gesture if we can have this as a present to the Republic of Pakistan and this war comes to an end. Because Madam, we and you all must promote love. We must promote non-violence. We must condemn what the violent countries are doing. We must condemn what Israel is doing. We must condemn what Israel backed by the US is doing. War is not in favour of anyone. The world must put an end to the war. We and you must put together our voices for or against the brutality of Israel, what Israel is doing in the world, supported and backed by the USA. We must put an end

to it. We must put a foot down in it that there must not be any war and if our lovely life our peace is disturbed, we must join our hands together for peace to be supported and put back.

I would also like to congratulate the Government of Russia on the successful conclusion of the BRICS summit and Madam Speaker, we Pakistanis would love to be part of your summit. We would love to be part of the BRICS. It is again the voice of all Pakistan's nation that you put our word ahead and Pakistan must be part of the BRICS. I would also request the Government of Russia to consider the installation of a small atomic power station in Pakistan which is already in process. As I have been to Russia and I know, what a lovely country, what a lovely nation Russia is, working on hundred regional languages; my God. We cannot work on one language. Russia is working on hundred regional languages and I salute that country just because of this.

Madam, it also reflects our shared belief that to dialogue and legislative cooperation, we can nurture partnerships that transcend political boundaries and bring our people closer together. I am confident that our parliamentary ties will also continue to flourish with more such exchanges, so as to share good practices and expertise for mutual benefit. On this note, I once again welcome and greet your Excellency in our midst. I am confident that the friendship between Pakistan and Russia would grow from strength to strength and generations to generations in years to come. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Madam Speaker, Senator Aimal Wali Khan was in the hospital and was not well. The

Leader of the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) is the one who has to speak. If you allow, I may give him two minutes because you are already late for the dinner and have had a whole hectic day. I will request for two minutes for Senator Manzoor Ahmed to express his views.

Vote of thanks presented by Senator Manzoor Ahmed

سینیٹر منظور احمد: بہت شکریہ جناب چیئرمین۔ میڈم سپیکر! میں آپ کے ساتھ delegation میں آئے ہوئے آپ کے ممبرز کو اس upper House میں خوش آمدید کہتا ہوں۔ میڈم سپیکر! آج آپ نے جو تقریر کی اس میں آپ نے ایک چیز کو ثابت کر دیا کہ وہ تو میں زندہ رہتی ہیں جو اپنی ثقافت، اپنے culture اور اپنی زبان کو promote کرتی ہیں۔ آج آپ نے اس ہاؤس میں آکر اپنی زبان میں تقریر کر کے یہاں پر ایک مہذب اور زندہ قوم ہونے کا ثبوت دیا ہے اور ایسی قومیں جو اپنے culture کو، اپنی زبان کو اور اپنی ثقافت کو preserve کرتی ہیں، وہ تاریخ میں یاد رکھی جاتی ہیں۔ جن قوموں نے اپنی ثقافت کو، اپنی تاریخ کو اور اپنی زبان کو چھوڑا، وہ بہت پیچھے رہ گئیں۔ چونکہ میری اپنی قومی زبان اردو ہے، اگر میں دنیا میں اس کی پہچان نہ کروا سکوں تو شاید میں اپنا نام و نشان بھی بھول جاؤں گا۔

میڈم سپیکر! جب ہم روس گئے تھے تو اس delegation کو صادق سخیرانی صاحب lead کر رہے تھے۔ آپ کے ساتھ جو meetings ہوئیں تو میڈم سپیکر! آپ کے وہ الفاظ آج تک مجھے یاد ہیں۔ آپ نے کہا تھا کہ آج مجھے خوشی ہوئی کہ آپ اپنی زبان کو اور اپنی ثقافت کو promote کر رہے ہیں۔ آپ کی وہ بات آج بھی میرے ذہن میں ہے۔ میڈم سپیکر! اُس وقت صادق سخیرانی صاحب نے آپ کو پاکستان آنے کی دعوت دی تھی اور اب میں موجودہ چیئرمین سینیٹ، گیلانی صاحب کا شکر گزار ہوں کہ انہوں نے آپ کو پاکستان آنے کے لیے letter لکھا اور پھر میں آپ کا، آپ کی ٹیم کا اور روس کا شکر گزار ہوں کہ آپ نے اس دعوت کو accept کیا اور آپ اپنے delegation کے ساتھ پاکستان تشریف لائے۔ میڈم سپیکر! میں ایک بار پھر اس پر فخر کرتا ہوں۔

میڈم سپیکر! اس حوالے سے یہاں پر باتیں تو بہت ہوئیں لیکن region کے حوالے سے چند چیزیں عرض کرنا چاہوں گا۔ خاص طور پر میں گوادر کی بات کروں گا کیونکہ میرا تعلق بلوچستان سے ہے۔ گوادر One Belt One Road کا حصہ ہے جو کہ سینٹرل ایشیا کی طرف اشارہ کرتا ہے اس میں ایشیا یا سینٹرل ایشیا کے جتنے بھی دوست ممالک ہمارے ساتھ آئیں گے اور اس روٹ کو کامیاب کریں گے، اس سے نہ صرف پاکستان اور ہمارے ہمسایہ ممالک بلکہ سینٹرل ایشیا اور region کے تمام ممالک کو بھی فائدہ ہوگا۔ وہ وقت آچکا ہے کہ Russia اور باقی ممالک مل کر اس region اور اس کے عوام کے لیے کام کریں۔

میڈم سپیکر! یہاں پر BRICS کی بات ہوئی۔ ہم آپ سے گزارش کرتے ہیں، باقی دوستوں نے بھی کی، صدر صاحب نے بھی یہ بات کی تھی، چیئر مین صاحب نے بھی صبح یہ بات کی تھی اگر BRICS کا پاکستان کو ممبر بنایا جائے تو یہ بہت اچھی بات ہوگی۔ ہم آپ سے اس فورم پر بلکہ ہر فورم پر یہ request کریں گے۔

یہاں پر SCO کے حوالے سے ایک کانفرنس ہوئی۔ یہاں پر ہمارے جتنے بھی بڑے بیٹھے ہوئے ہیں، وزیر اعظم صاحب، ہمارے اتحادی جن کی وجہ سے کانفرنس بہت کامیاب ہوئی اور پاکستان کا بہت اچھا image ابھرا۔ کانفرنس میں آپ کے وزیر اعظم صاحب بھی تشریف لائے تھے اور وہاں پر مختلف MoUs sign ہوئے۔ میں جناب چیئر مین سینٹ سے گزارش کروں گا کہ جو معاہدے sign ہوئے ہیں، ہونا تو یہ چاہیے کہ ان پر کام ہو اور ہمارے درمیان جلد از جلد trade شروع ہو اور ہماری جو پرانی دوستی ہے اس کو دوبارہ ہم بحال کر سکیں۔

جناب چیئر مین اور میڈم سپیکر! یہاں پر airline کی بات ہوئی۔ ہم گزارش کرتے ہیں کہ direct airline جو cargo یا دوسری airline ہو، وہ Russia کے لیے direct شروع ہو جائے۔ یہ اقدام بھی ہمارے ممالک کی دوستی اور تعلقات میں مزید اضافہ کرے گا۔

میڈم سپیکر! اس کے ساتھ ساتھ آپ نے یہاں پر oil, gas, agriculture کی بات کی اگر ہم اس طرح ایک ساتھ مل کر آگے چلیں گے تو یہ دوستی اور مفید ہوگی، ہمارے تعلقات اور مضبوط ہوں گے۔ ہمارے جو سفارتی تعلقات ہیں، ان کو بھی ہم نے اور مضبوط کرنا ہے۔ یہاں کی federation ہو یا Russian Federation ہو، یہاں سے delegation جائے یا

وہاں سے delegation آئے، اگر ہم اس طرح اپنے views exchange کریں گے تو ہم آگے کی طرف بڑھ سکتے ہیں۔ اس کے ساتھ ساتھ ہمارے جو Chambers of Commerce ہیں، ہماری جو business community ہے، ہمیں ان کو بھی Russia بھیجنا چاہیے اور وہاں کی community کو یہاں آنا چاہیے۔ ہم چاہتے ہیں کہ جو ہماری سوچ ہے، جو ہماری فکر ہے کہ ہم اپنا trade اپنی دوستی، اپنی ثقافت، ان تمام چیزوں کو آگے لے کر چلیں گے تو اس کا راستہ یہی ہے میڈم سپیکر۔

اس حوالے سے جیسا ہمارا region ہے اس میں جو arms کی دوڑ ہے، SCO Conference کا main agenda بھی یہی تھا کہ ایشیا میں امن کے حوالے سے، خوشحالی کے حوالے سے اگر ہم اس پر زیادہ کام کریں گے تو جو ہماری new generation ہے، ہمارے doctors, engineers وہاں جائیں گے اور ان کے لیے scholarship ہو گا۔ میڈم سپیکر! اس حوالے سے ہم آپ سے یہی گزارش کرتے ہیں کہ آپ کا جو یہاں کا دورہ ہے اس کو ہم نے یہاں پر ختم نہیں کرنا ہے۔ اس کو ہم نے آگے لے کر جانا ہے اور ہم نے اس پر آگے کام کرنا ہے۔ ایک بار پھر آپ تمام دوستوں کا شکریہ۔

Mr. Chairman: I wanted to give time to each and every Senator because of the constraint of the time, I apologize I am not been able to give floor to most of the members who wanted to speak. Thank you very much Madam Speaker.

The House stands adjourned to meet again on Tuesday, 29th of October, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

[The House was then adjourned to meet again on Tuesday, 29th of October, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.]
