

**Remarks by Foreign Minister Khurshid M. Kasuri
at the Inaugural Ceremony of ACD Ministerial on 6th April 2005**

H.E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of China,
H.E. Shaukat Aziz, Prime Minister of Pakistan,
H.E. Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand.
Distinguished Foreign Ministers and Heads of Delegations,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great honour and a privilege for Pakistan to host the 4th Asia Cooperation Dialogue Meeting here in Islamabad.

We are particularly honored by the gracious presence of H.E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of China.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

During the past four years, ACD has emerged as a constructive forum for dialogue and in fostering partnership for Asia-wide cooperation. The 4th ACD Ministerial Meeting is yet another milestone in the consolidation of this process.

The representation in the forum of almost all regions of Asia is critical to establishing linkages between different regions in the continent.

The ever increasing interest by other Asian countries to associate themselves with the dialogue process reflects the growing desire to achieve the goal of establishing an Asian community.

The twin facets of ACD i.e. political dialogue and functional cooperation in the prime movers areas have been instrumental in building what ACD is today. The dialogue, in particular, has provided the opportunity for the ACD Ministers to enhance their comfort level.

All member states are making serious efforts to contribute towards the consolidation of processes in 19 areas of functional cooperation reflecting the respective strengths of the prime mover countries which is gradually reaching out to the entire Asian continent, and is making progress.

Pakistan is leading the process in establishing an Asian Institute for Standards. China has shaped ACD approach on promoting agriculture and energy cooperation.

Japan has made commendable efforts in strengthening the legal infrastructure, and environmental education issues.

The process of financial cooperation, led by Thailand, has been valuable in launching the Asian Bond Fund and establishment of an Asian Bond market.

The Tourism cooperation has become visible under the able stewardship of Thailand. India is playing a lead role in the promotion of Bio-technology

Side by side, the Philippines has steered the process on energy security. Given the time constraint, I will not go through the whole list but would like to emphasize that the contribution of each of the prime mover country has been impressive and useful.

I am confident that Islamabad Ministerial would further strengthen the ACD Cooperation. Already, the High Level Expert Seminar, which took place yesterday has made important recommendations towards consolidating and enhancing economic cooperation in Asia.

I Thank you.