



Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland

70 years of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Finland and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

H.E. Shah Mahmood Qureshi
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan

Helsinki, 21 June 2021

Your Excellency,

This year marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Finland and Pakistan. Diplomatic relations between our countries were established on 12 January 1951, when President Paasikivi appointed Minister Asko Ivalo as Finland's first Ambassador to Karachi.

Ever since those days, our relations have developed favorably and we have expanded our contacts and cooperation in various spheres of life, covering both political, business and cultural relations.

A number of leading Finnish experts and companies have been active in Pakistan particularly in the energy and IT sector. In Finland, products made in Pakistan are well known and appreciated – especially Pakistani textiles, food products and sports equipment. Outstanding Pakistani specialists, particularly in the field of ICT, are working in Finnish companies, including in some of our global leaders. Each year hundreds of brilliant Pakistani young men and women study at Finnish universities. People-to-people contacts between our countries are gradually expanding.

Yet, there is much unused potential on both sides for deepening and broadening our economic relations. The number of Finnish companies in Pakistan and Pakistani companies in Finland is still far too low.

Pakistan plays a key role for stability in Central and South Asia. For Finland, promoting peace and security has always been one of the main goals in our foreign policy – be it in Europe or in Asia. From 1961 until 2017 Finland was one of the major troop contributors to the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). Living in a peaceful neighbourhood is a prerequisite for prosperity and sustainable development.

The new threats we are facing today are of a global character. Combatting pandemics, global warming and climate change is our common challenge. Only by joining our efforts at international fora can we successfully meet these challenges.

In recent years, we have witnessed a growing interest towards cooperation in the field of education, IT, digital solutions and sustainable management of natural resources. These are all areas where I see potential in developing our cooperation further.

I look forward to strengthening and deepening the dialogue and cooperation between our countries and people for the years to come.

Sincerely yours,

Pekka Haavisto
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland