Virtual High-Level Pledging Event on Supporting the Humanitarian Response on Afghanistan
(31 March 2022)

Video Statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan

Secretary General Guterres,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pakistan welcomes the initiative of the UN Secretary General and other co-hosts – the Governments of Qatar, United Kingdom and Germany – for organizing this pledging event. It is both timely and essential.

Today’s Afghanistan represents an important opportunity as it begins its journey towards sustainable peace and development. The recurring cycles of conflict and instability during the last 4 decades can finally be stopped.

The challenges are daunting. As new humanitarian situations emerge in other parts of the world, it is imperative that our focus should not move away from the dire needs of millions of Afghan people.

Solidarity must be shown with the Afghan people at this pivotal juncture.
Durable solutions require scaling up of developmental interventions, provision of livelihood opportunities, and ensuring of access to basic necessities such as food, health and education for the Afghan people.

Whilst we focus on the humanitarian situation inside Afghanistan, we must not forget millions of Afghans in large refugee-hosting countries, for whom the international support has dwindled over the years.

**Excellencies,**

On its part, Pakistan has been at the forefront of humanitarian efforts for Afghanistan including by facilitating evacuations and relocations, and establishment of a humanitarian corridor for the delivery of relief goods through air and land routes.

We have airlifted humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. We have also dispatched wheat flour and medical supplies over land as part of $30 million humanitarian assistance package for Afghanistan. Over the years, we have earmarked over $1 billion for a range of development projects in Afghanistan.
Excellencies,

Pakistan hosted the 17th extraordinary session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in Islamabad on 19 December 2021 to address the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. It resulted in the establishment of a ‘Humanitarian Trust Fund’ under the Islamic Development Bank to channel assistance to the Afghan people. It also launched an Afghanistan Food Security Programme under the Islamic Organization for Food Security, and appointed a Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary General for Afghanistan.

Recently, on 22-23 March, the 48th regular session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers took place in Islamabad wherein, the Humanitarian Trust Fund has been operationalized.

Today, Pakistan reiterates its commitment to continue the provision of humanitarian relief to the Afghan people, under UN umbrella, as well as through bilateral channels. We will also continue to facilitate the UN in its humanitarian relief efforts by providing logistical and other support through Pakistan.
Excellencies,

It is time for the international community to act resolutely. Frozen foreign bank reserves of Afghanistan must be returned to Afghan people. The reintegration of Afghanistan in the global economy, supply chains, and banking system must be materialized immediately.

Humanitarian assistance should be unconditional and apolitical, in line with the international principles. Efforts must also be undertaken to reduce Afghanistan’s dependence on foreign assistance. We must help Afghanistan build a sustainable economy.

I would like to express deepest appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the United Nations, under the leadership of Secretary General Guterres, to provide much-needed humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan. We hope that the UN Secretary General’s global appeal for Afghanistan, to the tune of $4.4 billion will be fully funded – thus demonstrating concrete international commitment and solidarity with those in dire need.

I thank you.