



PRIME MINISTER

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SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER
FEDERATION OF PAKISTAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
KARACHI - 8 FEBRUARY 1989

Tariq Sayeed, President,

Vice-Presidents, Secretary-General and distinguished members
of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and
Industry,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be here today, on my first visit to this
vibrant city of Karachi. It is hard to believe that on this
place, one hundred and fifty years ago, stood a small fishing
village.

Karachi has played a central role in the growth of this
nation as the first capital of the newly independent Pakistan
from 1947 to 1963.

And above all, Karachi is a trading centre, the largest city
in Pakistan and the hub of the nation's commercial life. As
such, the future vitality of this city is closely linked to
the success of Pakistan in advancing its commercial interests
and in developing its trading relationship with countries
like Australia.

So it is a very great pleasure to be here today and to
discuss our shared trading future with the Karachi members of
the FPCCI.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to speak about two of the challenges that we
face - first, our obligation to reform the international
trading system that is stacked against the interests of
efficient agricultural producing economies such as Australia
and Pakistan, and second, our opportunities to build a more
substantial trading relationship between us.

With the impasse reached in the recent talks in Montreal, we
face a very real crisis. The intransigence of the major
developed economies - the United States and the European
Community - must over the next few months be replaced by
greater flexibility.

2.

I was heartened to hear yesterday the Pakistani Government reaffirm its concurrence with the view that the system that has allowed four decades of export-led global prosperity will, unless action is taken, be in jeopardy.

We cannot allow that to happen. We must achieve a freer international trade system.

Australia's efforts, and those of other members of the Cairns Group, have sought to bring long-term advantages to all agricultural exporting countries, including those in the developing world. It is a task of fundamental importance for all those who seek to build global and national prosperity.

Meantime, we must tackle our other challenge - building our bilateral economic relationship.

Clearly, we can do much to develop what is at present a modest two-way trade. We should be creative and forward-looking in identifying new opportunities for such development.

We in Australia are seeking to lessen our reliance on commodity trade and to diversify our export base to emphasise manufactured goods, services and technology.

Pakistan is moving in the same direction.

So there are tremendous commercial opportunities for both our countries beyond the traditional commodities that currently make up the bulk of our trade.

Australia, for instance, already has an expertise in high-technology areas such as telecommunications, energy and animal husbandry which are among the development priorities for your country.

Australian business is already well represented in Pakistan by the ANZ Banking Corporation, owner of Grindlays, the biggest foreign banking chain on the subcontinent.

Australian companies have recently put forward proposals for other activities in Pakistan, including two substantial projects involving technology transfer.

Telecom Australia is seeking to establish an optical fibre link between Rawalpindi and Karachi, and the Overseas Projects Corporation of Victoria, together with Phillips (Australia), is seeking to install a computerised traffic system in Karachi.

We are exploring through AUSTRADE whether we can become involved in the Port Qasim redevelopment.

3.

But Australian efforts in developing commercial relations with Pakistan are not only focussed on pursuing market opportunities in your country. We are also assisting Pakistani enterprises to promote their products to Australia - for example through a trade display focusing on textiles and clothing held at the International Trade Development Centres in Sydney and Melbourne last year. Another display, of engineering products, is to be staged later this year.

It is in recognition of the scope of the business that we can do that we are expanding our efforts, here in Karachi, by upgrading the AUSTRADE office in this city.

Prime Minister Bhutto and I yesterday discussed the desirability of a bilateral trade agreement, and we decided to begin negotiations forthwith.

Ladies and gentlemen,

These initiatives indicate Australia's enthusiasm to meet the challenge of developing our economic relationship with Pakistan. From my discussions with the Government of Pakistan, I know that they share our commitment to expanding commercial activity between our two countries.

I was very pleased to hear Prime Minister Bhutto's suggestion yesterday that a group of Australian businessmen should visit Pakistan to explore the many commercial opportunities that exist. I undertook to encourage such a mission and indeed I certainly expect it will take place later this year.

In the end, the private sector in both countries will determine the success of our efforts.

Good business, like a good political relationship, is based on making opportunities, not letting them pass by.

The Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry have an important role to play. We need you to apply to this task the same commitment and energy that has traditionally characterised this great city.
