

**Prime Minister's Address at National Defence University  
On 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

**Ch. Ahmed Mukhtar, Minister for Defence,  
Mr. Abdul Quyyum Khan Jatoi, Minister for Defence Production,  
Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali, Minister for Education,  
The President National Defence University,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Members of Faculty,  
Participants of the three courses,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Assalam o Alaikum,**

I cordially thank you for providing me an opportunity to share my vision of Pakistan with you. My vision of Pakistan is subservient to the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah who said while addressing the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August 1947, "If you change your past and work together in a spirit that everyone of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges, and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make". Bestowing his economic vision at the inauguration of the State Bank of Pakistan, he observed, "We must work our destiny in our own way and present to the world an economic system based on true Islamic concept of equality of manhood and social justice. We will thereby be fulfilling our mission as Muslims and giving to humanity the message of peace which alone can save it and secure the welfare, happiness and prosperity of mankind".

Dear Participants:

As you all are highly educated people and well versed with the situation which unfolded soon after the untimely demise of the father of the nation, therefore, I will briefly touch the major problems which hampered our march to build the nation on the lines set by the Architect of Pakistan. First and foremost issue was delay in the adoption of constitution for the nation which provided space and opportunity to the ambitious despots to wrap up the whole political system. The then compliant judiciary bestowed legitimacy to the autocratic rule. Elected bodies' disqualification ordinance followed by the arbitrary massive dismissal of civil servants gave a death blow to the concept of good governance and promoted a class of sycophants in both the institutions. The Centre-province wrangling, lopsided economic and short sighted foreign policies further aggravated the situation. 'Trickle down economic policy' and pump and show of the arbitrary rulers brewed violent public agitation in the country. It provided an ample space to the inimical forces mischievously diverting the public anger

against the state of Pakistan and subsequent naked foreign military interference led to its dismemberment.

During interlude of despotic rule, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto rekindled the hope in the disappointed nation. He gave a democratic constitution, introduced a bicameral legislature, restored the provinces, established a federal system of governance, reformed the civil service and empowered the people of Pakistan. He introduced wide ranging reforms in political, social and economic fields. In a short span of time, Pakistan emerged as an important country in the international arena. Public morale and confidence started touching new heights. By the time, they regained faith in their destiny; another martial law put them back to square one. I will not go into details of this era of despotic rule rather confine myself to mention that the nation is still facing its ramifications. After Zia regime, another short-lived democratic order was interrupted by 8 years of the arbitrary rule.

Distinguished Audience:

Let me recapitulate the aftermath of the last autocratic rule briefly because the vision should not be devoid of the ground reality. I talk of the past, because our experiences guide our responses and shape our vision of today and tomorrow. Your present democratic Government was handed down a major economic crisis. Food scarcity, energy shortage, capital flight, rising unemployment, growing poverty, constitutional mess, judicial crisis, breakdown of law and order had provided a golden opportunity to the prophets of doom to project Pakistan as a failed state. A mix of international financial crunch and skyrocketing oil prices in the global market further compounded the already aggravated economic situation. International isolation was staring in the face.

In such a challenging scenario, I took up the responsibility and my first priority was to attain peace, stabilize economy, restore the constitution in its original democratic form, strengthen center-province relations, break international isolation and create institutional harmony. Allah be thanked that now we have set the direction and undertaken major restructuring in our national life.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my vision that the salvation of our nation lies in democracy. The democratic approach provides solution to the complex problems confronting the country. Democracy in its very essence is all-encompassing and participatory. Therefore, our reconciliatory policy and accommodative approach enabled us to resolve the perplexing and knotty issues in such a short span of time. The democratic government has been very clear in its vision that if we want to create harmony and order in our polity, it would require a democratic constitution which is acceptable to all segments of the society. For this purpose, Parliamentary Constitutional Reform Committee made strenuous deliberations and thrashed out a detailed proposal for amendment of the constitution to rekindle its democratic

spirit. Consensus adoption of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment by both the Houses and its subsequent enactment has restored the sovereignty of the Parliament. The abolition of the Concurrent list from the constitution addresses longstanding demand of the provinces for greater provincial autonomy. It is not a mean achievement keeping in view the polarization that has characterized our polity.

However, there is a lot yet to be done to promote and strengthen democratic values and culture in the society. Political maturity, decency and tolerance should be the buzz words. It is a big challenge for all the democratic forces in the country to help develop such a democratic culture. Basically, elections are meant to gauge the public mood and popularity of the political parties. Therefore, a democratic culture which leads to a transparent, peaceful and fair election process is indispensable.

Dear Participants:

The signing of the seventh consensual National Finance Commission Award between the Centre and provinces is a historic step in promoting inter-provincial harmony and strengthening the federation. It is our political vision that if federations were to be saved from dangers; it would have to win the strong support of the federating units by addressing the long-standing issues. The present vertical distribution of resources under the NFC meets the long-standing demand of provinces for financial autonomy. This year, by cutting down the federal Government share, we have allocated more than one trillion to the provinces under the NFC Award. The consensus award has resolved a complex inter-provincial dispute that festered for 19 years. It marks a triumph of consensual politics.

To bring the backward regions into the national mainstream and at par with rest of the country, we undertook a process of political reforms starting with enactment of Political Parties Act in FATA. In this context, our Government piloted a Bill to bring about political, administrative and constitutional reforms in Gilgit-Baltistan. The Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Act is a fulfillment of the promise of our leader Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. To address the deprivation of the people of Balochistan, we have launched the Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan initiative. Other less developed areas which failed to get policy attention of the Government in the past are on the top of our agenda of empowerment.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our vision is that the political empowerment of masses sans economic well-being is meaningless. To lend a helping hand to the down trodden sections of our society, Benazir Income Support Programme and Waseela-e-Haq scheme have been launched to mitigate their sufferings and to provide an opportunity for self employment by setting up small businesses. In this year's budget, we have

already announced the launching of an employment generation scheme for rural unskilled workers. Under this scheme the unskilled workers in the rural areas would be guaranteed employment for one hundred days in a year. We have also empowered the workers and gave them 12% ownership rights in state-owned enterprises and made substantial increase in the salaries of public sector employees.

Distinguished Audience:

Peace and harmony have been the hallmark of our society. Our great religion, Islam, has enjoined upon its followers to be the source of peace for people around them irrespective of their beliefs. Moreover, it is a fact that no nation has ever progressed without ensuring peace and tranquility in its midst. The surge of terrorism and extremism, which owes itself to the flawed policies of the past, threatened to bring down the state structure. The proponents of doom and gloom wanted to impose their myopic agenda on peaceful majority. Therefore establishing the writ of the state and restoring peace and order was our first responsibility. Let me pay tribute to the chivalry of our armed forces who, under the able command of Chief of the Army Staff, General Ashafaq Pervaiz Kayani flushed out terrorist from their safe havens through Operation Raha-e-Rast and Rah-e-Najat. Political ownership of war on terror and emergence of national consensus against terrorism were the principal factors behind our military successes. My vision of Pakistan is that of a peaceful country both within and without where our future generations have free and unhindered opportunity to exploit their potential to the fullest and fulfill their dreams. Let me make a categorical statement that wherever writ of the state is challenged, the government would use its might to deal with such elements with an iron hand.

Dear Participants:

The restoration of macro-economic stability is an outstanding achievement of our Government by any yardstick. Our economy is back on track and needs more hard work and continuity of policies for consolidation. Energy crisis had brought the industrial wheel to a stand still, thereby dealing a severe blow to our economy. To bridge the gap between supply and demand of electricity, our government has worked out short-, medium- and long-term plans with the full blessings of all key stakeholders to address the problem on war footing basis. Our government has prepared a plan to launch hydel, thermal and nuclear power projects to double the generation capacity of the country from the current 20,000 to 40,000 MW within the next ten years.

By virtue of our country's strategic position at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia, we aspire to make Pakistan a hub of regional trade and energy transactions. At 170 million, Pakistan's population presents a large market, and a sizable work force, equipped with the right skills and knowledge. Our irrigation networks are largest in the world and we have a strong

agrarian base having immense potential in the agro-based sector. Our mineral wealth is largely untapped. My Government aims to diversify the economy; therefore, an enabling investment environment for investors has been created in the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It was during the government of Pakistan's first elected Prime Minister Zulifqar Ali Bhutto that the base of our foreign policy was diversified. In line with that policy, the foreign policy of my government is guided by the protection of Pakistan's interests both at regional and international levels. Democratic Pakistan is playing its due role in the global affairs at all multilateral forums. With the support of people of Pakistan, our dear motherland has emerged as an important player in the international arena.

Friendship with China constitutes the cornerstone of our foreign policy. We also attach great importance to Pakistan's long-term strategic partnership with the US. Our relations with Washington are broad-based embracing different areas. During my recent visit to the US, I made it clear that Pakistan rightfully expects the US to adopt non-discrimination in terms of civil nuclear deal with Islamabad. We need to explore viable options to meet the energy demands for our socio-economic development.

Pakistan is a peaceful nation. We are against territorial aggrandizement and seek negotiated and peaceful resolution of all disputes with India. The Indian leaderships' willingness to resume stalled dialogue is a step in the right direction for regional peace and progress. During my recent visit and interaction with the leadership of the European Union and NATO, I brought this point home to the hosts that Pakistan looked forward to greater market access for its exports.

Distinguished Audience:

The last but not the least of all, I want to see the common man, the man in the street, to become partner in governance and decision-making processes. People, who are the real stakeholder in the country, should have the complete ownership and the power to vote governments in and out of power through expression of their free will. Unless our governance structures are pro-people, we cannot have smooth and continuous functioning of the system. It also necessitates the inclusion and participation of all segments of society in the business of the state. I believe it is the responsibility of the state to provide quality education and effective health care to its people to enable them to develop into educated and confident nation. Our future lies with the knowledge based economies. My government attaches special importance to empowerment of women and minorities as I deem them to be my main constituency. This no doubt is a long haul but we have already embarked on this journey of

empowering people and you know that it is the first step which is the most difficult of all.

The survival of our nation lies in democracy and participatory system of governance. Therefore, it is our duty to further the cause of democracy irrespective of wherever we are and whatever positions we hold.

I have great faith in the destiny of this nation. Our people have proven more than once that they have the determination and commitment to steer the ship of the state out of uncharted waters.

Thank you,  
Pakistan Painsdabad.