

OPENING REMARKS BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE INAUGURAL SESSION OF GILGIT-BALTISTAN COUNCIL.

-Honorable Acting Governor Gilgit-Baltistan,

-Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan,

-Distinguished Members of Gilgit-Baltistan Council,

-Officers,

-Ladies and Gentlemen

• At the very onset I congratulate all of you present here, the public representatives and the people of Gilgit-Baltistan on this historic and memorable occasion.

• It is indeed a proud privilege for me to chair the inaugural session of the Gilgit-Baltistan Council.

• It is an appropriate moment to recall that it was also the Peoples government under the dynamic leadership of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who introduced the first ever Administrative Order i.e. 'Northern Areas Legal Framework Order 1975' whereby major administrative, judicial and political institutions were established.

- I also take the opportunity from this forum to congratulate the representatives of all the political parties for their collective efforts to introduce the Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Self-Governance) Order 2009.

- I would also like to emphasize before this august house that the importance of the representatives of the people has always been acknowledged in the development of an area. I hope now the elected representatives will be able to play their due role in not only setting the agenda for the socio-economic development of Gilgit-Baltistan but would also ensure fair and judicious distribution of resources.

- I sincerely believe that the Empowerment Order 2009, is a quantum leap in the political history of Pakistan and reflective of the maturity and wisdom of the representatives of all the political parties.

- It is designed to empower the people of the area to govern themselves through democratically elected representatives and also to have socio economic empowerment of the people which is the policy and long time commitment of our government.

- Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Self-Governance) Order 2009 empowers the people at a grass root level and develops democratic traditions, respect for the rule of law, justice and human rights thus

bringing them at par with the other people of the provinces of Pakistan.

- Mindful of the occasion I would like to highlight that the Gilgit-Baltistan Council is the supreme authority for the coordination and working out all arrangements involving the Government of Pakistan as well.

- I urge you to formulate realistic plans for the transformation of Gilgit-Baltistan into a developed and forward looking region of the country. Attention should also be paid to strengthening of institutional frameworks to promote good governance.

- Being the Chairman of the Council and the Prime Minister of Pakistan I would extend and ensure all possible assistance to achieve the objectives of the Gilgit-Baltistan Order 2009.

- If there are any anomalies in the implementation of the Gilgit-Baltistan Order 2009, then a Committee could be constituted representing all stakeholders to rectify the same.

- Since the main purpose of this session is to carry out legislation I would therefore request to proceed as per the agenda items.