



**Statement by Mr. Abdul Aleem Khan
Minister, Ministry of Communications (Transport), Pakistan
24th Ministerial Conference
Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program
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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim.

Mr. Masato Kanda, President of the ADB
Mr. Yingming Yang (Vice President South, Central and West Asia)
Excellencies,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum and a very good morning.

It is an honour for me to represent the Islamic Republic of Pakistan at the 24th CAREC Ministerial Conference. While expressing my deep appreciation to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Asian Development Bank and Mr. Masato Kanada; and the CAREC Secretariat for their gracious hospitality and excellent arrangements, I would also like to acknowledge the warm welcome we have received in this magnificent city. Bishkek — with its majestic mountains, a rich cultural heritage, a glorious historical part, coupled with the most developed infrastructure — provides an ideal backdrop for our deliberations.

The theme of this year's Conference, "**Green and Digital CAREC**," reflects our region's collective vision for a sustainable, climate-resilient, and digitally connected future. It also aligns closely with Pakistan's national priorities of advancing green growth, low-carbon emissions, and digital innovation to strengthen regional cooperation and prosperity common to us all.

Pakistan fully recognizes the importance of turning the CAREC 2030 Midterm Review into real, on-ground action. We welcome the Rolling Implementation Action Plan and the recalibration of key sector strategies — in transport, digitization, and trade — thus reflecting the rapidly changing realities of our region.

Over the past year, Pakistan has moved forward implementing this agenda. We passed the **Land Port Authority Act 2025**, a major step toward modern, efficient, and integrated border management. Our private sector is rapidly scaling up the **TIR/eTIR system**, enabling secure, paperless transit of goods and services across borders. Through the **Pakistan Single Window**, electronic phytosanitary certificates are now a reality, making trade simpler, faster, and more transparent.

And initiatives like **RAAST**, our real-time retail payment system, are opening the door to greater financial inclusion and a more connected digital economy.

At the same time, the government has pursued a broad spectrum of economic reforms aimed at restoring macroeconomic stability and spurring growth. These reforms, supported wholeheartedly by our development partners — are laying the foundations of a reform-oriented and digitally enabled economy.

All of this, Excellencies, is helping Pakistan integrate more seamlessly with CAREC's regional vision — a vision of connectivity, sustainability, and shared prosperity.

Physical and digital connectivity remains at the heart of Pakistan's regional vision. We strongly support the proposed **BUILD facility** as a practical tool to modernize border infrastructure and harmonize procedures in a climate-resilient manner. We encourage the CAREC Secretariat to prioritize border crossings that offer the greatest regional impact — including key points along Pakistan's CAREC corridors — as pilot sites under BUILD.

Pakistan also places strong emphasis on the **soft infrastructure** that makes regional integration truly work. We fully support the next phase of the **CAREC Advanced Transit System and Information Common Exchange (CATS-ICE)**, as well as the piloting of electronic exchange and mutual recognition of conformity certificates under **CARTIF**.

Through the **Pakistan Single Window**, we can offer valuable technical expertise and practical experience to the relevant working groups so that our digital systems — and those of our CAREC partners — can connect smoothly, ensuring smooth interoperability and efficient implementation across the region.

Pakistan recognizes the importance of the proposed CAREC Digital Corridor. This is a strategic pathway to provide **secure and resilient digital connectivity for Central Asia** and beyond through Pakistan's gateways to the global internet. Pakistan is open to **working** closely with ADB and interested member countries to **advance feasibility, design, and financing** of this initiative, and encourages early formation of a joint working group to steer this process under CAREC's digital agenda.

Pakistan welcomes the establishment of the **Climate and Sustainability Project Preparatory Fund (CSPPF)** as a vital step toward strengthening climate resilience across CAREC region. As one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change, Pakistan has witnessed firsthand — most recently through the devastating floods — how swiftly extreme weather can upend lives, damage infrastructure, and undermine economic progress.

We therefore urge that the **CAREC Climate Action Plan** prioritize financing models which reflect the differing levels of vulnerability among member states, with a strong focus on adaptation and resilience. We also encourage the Asian Development Bank to consider providing concessional resources to help accelerate the full operationalization of the CSPPF and reinforce its central role in advancing our region's shared climate goals.

For ensuring momentum, Pakistan emphasizes the importance of timely implementation of the Rolling Action Plan, supported by regular, consolidated reporting through a clear based results dashboard for Ministers and National Focal Points. We also endorse the planned Development Partners' Retreat as an opportunity to align financing with the multi-year pipeline and to strengthen non-sovereign operations, public–private partnerships, and private capital mobilization. Pakistan

further encourages continued consultations among interested countries on the proposed regional Fund to refine its design and governance framework.

In the end, I would like to reaffirm Pakistan's commitment to the CAREC vision. We believe that through collective action, innovation, and sustainable practices, our region can achieve deeper integration, resilience, and inclusive prosperity. We look forward to a continued and meaningful discussions with our CAREC partners on advancing connectivity, strengthening climate resilience, expanding digital cooperation, and mobilizing private capital—turning our vision to tangible, high-impact outcomes for all member countries.

Thank you.