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PRESS RELEASE

THREE DAY INTERNATIONAL MARITIME CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

KARACHI, 13 Feb 17: “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is rightfully considered as a game changer not only for Pakistan but for the economic development and prosperity of the entire region”, said Defence Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Khawaja Muhammad Asif at the closing ceremony of 7th International Maritime Conference organized by National Centre for Maritime Policy Research (NCMPR).

The International Maritime Conference, held as in tandem with Multinational Exercise AMAN 17, concluded after three days of deliberations on maritime security, economy and marine environment. A large number of public and private sector participants from Pakistan and around the world created an ideal opportunity for the exchange of ideas.

While addressing the audience, the Chief Guest Mr. Khawaja Muhammad Asif stated that the Indian Ocean has emerged as a key arena of geopolitics as strategic interests of the world are routed in this region. The overwhelming reliance on the sea routes and increasing volume of global sea borne trade has enhanced the importance of Indian ocean region for the world community.

He further said that with the operationalization of CPEC and Gwadar Port, maritime activities would increase exponentially in North Arabian Sea and beyond. Consequently, the responsibilities of Pakistan Navy would also increase for maintaining a secure maritime environment for smooth flow of sea trade. He acknowledged the maritime security initiatives taken by Pakistan Navy for ensuring peace and order at sea individually and in collaboration with the partner navies. He also appreciated convening of the conference which is a step in the same direction and is indeed praiseworthy.

The minister assured that the recommendations of the conference will be given due consideration by the government and all possible efforts will be made for their pursuance.

Earlier, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah in his closing remarks said that the initiatives of developing economic corridors and linking to maritime routes have provided impetus for economic integration of the regional countries and beyond. He further said that CPEC is one such development in the region and with the

operationalization of CPEC and Gwadar port the scope and potential of blue economy will increase further.

The admiral also said that Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean Region has gained particular significance in the recent past due to increased dependence of the world on sea borne trade and quest for energy resources. Any disruption in the free flow of trade would not only impact the regional states but also have implications for the overall global economy.

At the end, the Defence Minister also congratulated and distributed prizes among the students of Bahria University and NCMPR, who won the article and poster competitions held on the sidelines of the Conference.

A large number of foreign delegates, PN officials, civil and military dignitaries attended the Conference.





