

**High Commissioner's Message for the Pakistani community on the  
occasion of Independence Day – 14 August 2007**

I am delighted to greet my Pakistani brothers and sisters living in Western Australia on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of Pakistan.

2. Pakistan has come a long way in the 61 years of its existence. We still have to work hard to fulfill the dreams of our Founding Father Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah as well as those who struggled hard for an independent country.

3. We are proud of the fact that Pakistan, a country of 160 million people is playing a significant role in the maintenance of peace and security in the region and the world. Pakistan today is considered a partner in the fight against international terrorism, poverty, social injustice and exploitation. Being a moderate Islamic country, Pakistan acts as a bridge between the Islamic world and the West.

4. It is a matter of great satisfaction that our economic performance in terms of macro-economic stability, growth, poverty reduction and employment generation has been stellar. Apart from 7% GDP growth rate achieved by Pakistan during the last 4 years, other economic indicators are also very positive. Our exports have doubled, fiscal deficit has been reduced, external debt has been halved, poverty incidence has fallen and unemployment rate has been reduced significantly. Per Capita Income has grown manifold. It is due to the strength of our economy that Pakistan received Foreign Direct Investment of more than 5 billion dollars last year. Despite enormous challenges faced by Pakistan, we are moving in a positive direction. Our economic development is being sighted as a reference point by international organizations. By the Grace of God the democratic institutions have been strengthened. We have a vibrant Parliament, an independent judiciary and the Government is committed to good governance. We have been able to establish a polity where minorities enjoy full rights and women have been empowered at all levels. The Government has evolved a Poverty Reduction Strategy and is firmly committed to providing health and education facilities to all its citizens.

5. Since independence Pakistan has withstood many challenges domestic as well as external. In order to meet all the multifarious challenges faced by Pakistan both at home and internationally, all Pakistanis whether living in Pakistan or abroad will have to work hard to make Pakistan a prosperous and strong country. The Pakistani community

living outside Pakistan has been at the forefront in helping their country of birth. They are considered as one of the most law-abiding and hard working communities abroad. The Pakistani Australian community has also contributed significantly in the development of Pakistan-Australia bilateral relations. I am happy to inform that Pakistan Australia relations are improving significantly. Besides strong economic and political ties, we share a common desire to have peace and stability in the world and we are both partners in our fight against international terrorism.

6. I would like to take this opportunity to facilitate all of you on this day. We should reaffirm our pledge to stand together as a nation, united to face the challenges with courage and fortitude and work hard to make our nation stronger and more prosperous.

(Jalil Abbas Jilani)  
High Commissioner