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**Chairman: Ravi K Mehrotra, CBE Secretary General: Sunil Prasad**

EICC-2020

Brussels, 9 November 2020

His Excellency Mr. Philippe L glise-Costa  
Ambassador of France to the European Union  
14 Place de Louvain  
1000 Brussels

Your Excellency,

### **Re: EU-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue - Guided France; Misguided EU**

Last week on 3rd November 2020, the European Union (EU) and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Pakistan) held their 5th round of the EU-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue through videoconference between Josep Borrell, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the EU and Vice-President of the European Commission, and Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan. In our view it was the most inappropriate time for EU to hold the Dialogue with Pakistan given the wide and violent anti-French and anti-European demonstration going in the country.

As you are aware, Pakistan's Parliament has passed a Resolution to recall its Ambassador from France and also there is violent demonstration in the country against France and boycott of French products. The Dialogue therefore has undermined EU's unity and has sent a wrong signal to Europe and to the global community that EU has succumbed to the demands of jihadi and religious extremists. Even if EU were keen to keep the momentum with Pakistan going, the Dialogue could have been delayed for a suitable time and right opportunity to let the country know of EU's concern. It was most unfortunate that EU held the Dialogue just at the time of biggest anti-France protests where President Emmanuel Macron was the target of extreme insults and threats during these demonstrations. The EU could have avoided the embarrassment inflicted on the French people by delaying the Dialogue in order to promote, protect and defend EU's strategic interest. I am afraid EU has lost its direction, mission and objective.

It is surprising to note from the Joint Statement issued that to further their engagement, both sides agreed to hold the first meeting of the new EU-Pakistan Security Dialogue in 2021, including on the fight against terrorism. A country, which is the epicentre of global terrorism and jihadi extremism, will be partnering with EU to fight terrorism. I only wish that EU leadership takes note concern of the international community which considers Pakistan as promoter, defender and a resort for jihadists and terrorists, and takes decision based on values and principles that have defined this institution right from the time of its inception.

The important question for the EU leadership to consider right now is whether holding a Dialogue at the time when the country that's supposed to be a strategic dialogue partner is

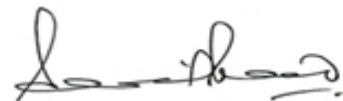
increasingly becoming more Islamicised and anti-Western through the influence of mullahs and populist government? By holding the Dialogue with Pakistan at a time when EU member states are deeply concerned about rising intolerance against tolerant Europe, the EU has proved that it is insensitive to its member state France, French values and least bothered about concern in France about terrorism.

The last few years have been very challenging for the European community where the public trust in institutions has diminished dramatically as in many parts of the EU, the people feel that the bureaucracy in Brussels is totally disconnected from their lives and their concerns and the policies framed by it are not relevant or related to their lives and their immediate concerns. The EU largely viewed as a cornerstone of European stability and prosperity was created with the "ideals" of unifying the European people, but such Dialogue is just the opposite of the ideals. It appears, European Commission has forgotten that EU will survive only as long as member states will have trust in the Commission to defend their interest and values, and I am afraid with such Dialogue, this faith will be further eroded. Brexit is a living example of this misadventure. Holding a strategic dialogue with a country that is well-known for its close and extensive connections with Jihadi terrorists and extremists who are using Islam as a pretext for their crimes, is a perfect example of how some of the EU's policies have boomeranged on the institution itself. In our view, creative thinking and search for a conducive environment for a meaningful Dialogue would have served EU's strategic interest better.

I hope that your country would take the above into consideration before supporting EU progressing with Pakistan on the path of strategic dialogues or other collaborations and indeed inducements.

With kind Regards,

Yours sincerely,



Secretary General