

Welcoming Remarks – 9th Mineral Experts Group Meeting

Honorable delegates, esteemed experts, and distinguished guests! Very good morning.

It is a privilege to welcome you all to this 9th Minerals Experts Group Meeting. This platform plays a pivotal role in fostering regional collaboration among ECO Member States for advancing the agenda of mineral sector's development.

The exploration, development and optimal utilization of mineral resources are vital to economic growth, industrial progress and technological advancement in our region. A diversified and resilient growth depends on a stable supply of minerals with no or minimal environmental impact. As global demand for these minerals continues to rise especially driven by energy transition, our region—spanning around 8 million square kilometers—holds immense potential for these natural endowments, with abundant reserves of copper, lithium, tungsten, gold, iron ore, boron, and rare earth elements.

Despite this wealth, many ECO countries face challenges that hinder mining development. By sharing experiences, expertise, best practices and policy insights, we can enhance our collective capabilities and promote responsible investment and value addition in the minerals sector. A variety of minerals is being commercially mined in Pakistan and we have got a range of expertise in the fields of earth sciences and engineering. Pakistan has been regularly participating in the minerals related ECO activities and programmes and will continue lending its support in this regard.

I welcome and encourage open discussions and constructive dialogue on today's agenda which will be instrumental to strengthen regional integrated efforts to maximize realizing the potential of our mineral wealth. I hope that insights and contributions from the distinguished participants will help shape the agenda and devise the roadmap for development of minerals resources ensuring collective regional benefit.

I look forward to a productive meeting today.

Thank you.