**PRESS RELEASE**

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

**Office of Deputy Director Media**

 Date: 15th Sept 2021

H.E Mr. Georgi Panayotov, Defence Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria called on Minister for Defence, Mr.Pervez Khattak, in Islamabad today.

The Defence Minister said that Pakistan highly values it's relations with Bulgaria and wants to further enhance it in all fields of mutual interest, including defence." Being at the strategic cross roads in their respective regions, Pakistan and Bulgaria share similar challenges and opportunities which demands closer coordination and cooperation between them"he added”. Mr. Pervaiz Khattak, Minister for Defence stressed the need to call upon the International community to find a peaceful and durable solution to the Afghan issue. He said it's time for the world to stand by the Afghan people in full support and solidarity. Pakistan emphasize that an inclusive political settlement representing all Afghan factions is the only viable option and the world should encourage Afghan people to work towards that end.

The Defence Minister said that Pakistan economic engagements and development strategies have no military or aggressive designs. Pakistan is committed to promote regional and global peace and will continue to play it's part. The Bulgarian Defence Minister Mr. Georgi Panayotov appreciated Pakistan's efforts for peace and said that both Bulgaria and Pakistan should work together to achieve the common goal of peace and security in the region. He expressed full satisfaction over the ongoing defence cooperation between the two countries and pledged his government assurance and commitment to work closely with Pakistan to further strengthen their bilateral cooperation.

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