

President Zardari meets Russia's Putin during Turkmenistan forum



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President Asif Ali Zardari, in a series of high-level meetings on Friday, highlighted Pakistan's commitment to bolstering regional cooperation, trade, and connectivity. These meetings took place on the sidelines of the International Forum on "Interrelation of Times and Civilizations – The Basis for Peace and Development," held to mark the 300th anniversary of Turkmen poet Magtymguly Faragi. In a significant interaction, President Zardari met Russian President Vladimir Putin, where both leaders emphasised the need to further strengthen their bilateral

relationship. The informal meeting between the two took place during the two-day forum in Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan. According to a press release from the President's Office, both leaders exchanged warm wishes, reflecting the friendly ties between Pakistan and Russia. President Zardari also held one-on-one discussions with Turkmenistan President Serdar Berdimuhamedov and Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, National Leader of the Turkmen People and Chairman of the Halk Maslakhaty (People's Council) of Turkmenistan. The leaders reviewed their countries' strong bilateral relationship and discussed expanding cooperation, particularly in trade and regional connectivity. Zardari extended formal invitations to both Turkmen leaders to visit Pakistan. During his address to the international forum, Zardari praised the Turkmen leadership for hosting the event, which gathered leaders from across the region, including Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, and others. He acknowledged the forum as an opportunity to strengthen ties and engage in discussions focused on regional peace and development. In another key meeting, President Zardari engaged with Numan Kurtulmus, Speaker of the Turkish Parliament, where he highlighted the need to improve railroad connectivity between Pakistan and Turkiye to boost trade and economic cooperation. He also called for stronger bilateral ties and increased exchanges of delegations between the two countries. The meeting, which took place on the

sidelines of the forum, was attended by Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, and Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti. The discussion also covered the humanitarian crises in Palestine and Lebanon, with Zardari and Kurtulmus expressing concern over Israel's actions. Both leaders underscored the need for the Muslim world to take serious and sincere efforts to address the challenges facing the Ummah. President Zardari is in Ashgabat as part of Pakistan's commitment to strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing economic links, and contributing to the peaceful development of the region. His participation in the forum and multiple high-level meetings underlined Pakistan's strategic focus on deepening ties with its regional partners. Photo Tribune.