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## Turkish Envoy Pushes for Stronger Pakistan Cultural Ties

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Türkiye's Ambassador to Pakistan, Irfan Neziroglu, emphasized the importance of expanding literary and cultural ties between the two nations during a ceremony held in Islamabad on July 29, 2025. Speaking at a certificate distribution event for the Turkish Summer Camp organized by Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) in collaboration with the Yunus Emre Institute, Neziroglu underscored the strong historical, social, and political connections between Türkiye and Pakistan. He noted that programs like the summer camp are instrumental in fostering cultural awareness and people-to-people exchanges, especially among youth.

The summer camp introduced 35 Pakistani children to the Turkish language, calligraphy, and traditional games such as Mangala over a ten-day period. Neziroglu praised AIOU for

hosting the program and expressed support for expanding such initiatives to other regions, including Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan. According to Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and other reports, the ambassador highlighted these exchanges as a means of preserving and strengthening what he called the “sacred trust” of Pakistan-Türkiye relations.

Neziroglu also reflected on the historical solidarity between the two countries, referencing Pakistan’s support for Türkiye during the Turkish War of Independence. He emphasized that the shared Islamic and cultural heritage continues to serve as a foundation for bilateral ties. The event included performances of Turkish songs and comic tales of Molla Nasreddin, illustrating the cultural harmony between the two nations.

Dr. Halil Toker, Country Director of the Yunus Emre Institute, echoed the ambassador’s remarks. He noted the enduring goodwill among the Turkish people toward Pakistanis and affirmed the institute’s commitment to promoting Turkish culture through education. Dr. Zahid Majeed, AIOU’s Director of International Collaboration and Exchange, also confirmed plans for additional cultural camps in other provinces.

The strengthening of cultural ties complements broader bilateral efforts. During the February 2025 High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) meeting, Türkiye and Pakistan signed 24 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) covering areas such as education, culture, and defense, according to The Diplomatic Insight and other news outlets. The ambassador also referred to ongoing trade initiatives aimed at increasing bilateral trade from \$1 billion to \$5 billion, as reported by the Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) and other business publications.

Neziroglu’s remarks underscore a renewed commitment to using cultural diplomacy as a bridge between nations. With expanding educational and cultural programs, both countries are positioning their partnership as a model of cooperation rooted in shared values and mutual respect.