



# ISLAMABAD SECURITY DIALOGUE

17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>  
March  
2021

# EVENT REPORT

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# ISLAMABAD

## DIALOGUE

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Together for Ideas

# TOGETHER FOR IDEAS

The Islamabad Security Dialogue (ISD) is envisioned as Pakistan's annual flagship security forum that will position Pakistan as a leading voice in thought leadership on national security issues. The ISD 2021 unveiled Pakistan's Comprehensive National Security Framework, with economic security at its core.

The dialogue provided a platform for critical thinking and robust intellectual discourse on some of the most important and pressing challenges and opportunities facing Pakistan and the wider region. This was the first time Pakistan organized a dedicated international dialogue where policy making and future scenarios on comprehensive national security were discussed under the banner of the Government of Pakistan.

## ISLAMABAD SECURITY DIALOGUE 2021

The National Security Division, in collaboration with the Advisory Board of the National Security Committee of Pakistan organized the first edition of the ISD, which was held on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021 in Islamabad.

The first edition of the ISD examined key contours of national policy that will help shape a more secure and prosperous Pakistan, laid down existing challenges and opportunities in regional security, and explored Pakistan's economic security paradigm. The main aims of the ISD were:

- i. Unveiling Pakistan's comprehensive national security framework.
- ii. Proactively shifting the conversation around Pakistan's role and potential as an economic melting pot for positive global economic interests and a responsible partner in the regional and global order.
- iii. Launching the first-of-its-kind National Security Division Advisory Portal.

## The National Security Committee's Advisory Board

The five thinktanks that collaborated as co-hosts for the event are as listed below. Each institute is either a permanent or co-opted member of the National Security Committee's Advisory Board.

- i) Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad;
- ii) Institute of Regional Studies;
- iii) Institute for Strategic Studies, Research & Analysis (National Defence University);
- iv) Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies;
- v) Islamabad Policy Research Institute.

# KEY THEMES

The two-day conference centered on five major themes:

- 1) Comprehensive National Security Framework;
- 2) Economic Security;
- 3) Human Security Paradigm;
- 4) Regional Peace and Security; and
- 5) Pakistan's Place in the Evolving World Order.

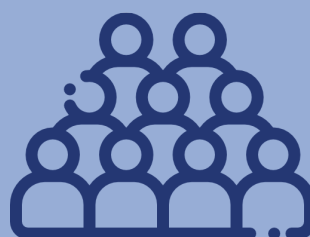
# AUDIENCE

The two-day event, held in a hybrid format due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was attended by international thinkers, global and local policy experts, scholars, members of the Federal Cabinet, diplomatic corps, former government officials, academia, think-tanks and civil society members.

## EVENT SNAPSHOT



Speakers  
**23**



Audience  
**15,000+**



Int'l. Media Spotlights  
**50+**



Online Impressions  
**90+ Million**

# KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE DIALOGUE

- A Comprehensive National Security Framework encompassing traditional and non-traditional aspects of national security with economic security at the core was unveiled by the Prime Minister.
- Economic security remains key for Pakistan's ability to further its defence and deterrence, and to spend greater resources on human welfare.
- Pakistan is blessed with a unique location at the crossroads of South, Central and West Asia. To fully reap the benefits of its location, Pakistan has to shift its focus from geo-politics to geo-economics.
- Pakistan aims to change the narrative of geo-political contestation to geo-economic cooperation, and wants to create a gainful economic win-win situation for all its international partners.
- Pakistan is pursuing an economic diplomacy strategy under the comprehensive security framework to increase Pakistan's economic footprint globally.
- Pakistan's vision of economic security is based on three core principles: connectivity; development partnerships and socio-economic uplift; and peace within and beyond Pakistan's borders.
- South Asia is the least geographically connected region of the world; Pakistan aims to focus on regional connectivity to change this reality.
- Economic stability and peace in the region are linked with peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India as per the United Nation Security Council's resolutions. The onus is on India to create a conducive environment for forward movement.
- Regional cooperation and peace are important to tackle human security challenges including climate change, food shortage and water scarcity.
- Great power competition and policies of containment are ascendant. However, Pakistan has decided not to be a part of any regional conflict and has consciously chosen only to partner for peace and development.
- The peace process in Afghanistan is precarious and full of complexities. Pakistan has played a constructive and robust role in bringing the parties to the table. Durable peace in Afghanistan holds the key of trade, connectivity and economic development in the region.
- The transnational nature of modern technology, data and artificial intelligence have changed the nature of war, the balance of power, economic security and the discussion of national security policies. Hence, Pakistan should re-orient itself as a technology-friendly country, focusing on investing in artificial intelligence, technology, and internet connectivity.

**Prime Minister - Imran Khan**

“National security is no longer only the strengthening of armed forces, it now incorporates other important issues like climate change, food security, economy security and poverty alleviation.”

“The Advisory Portal will facilitate intellectuals and members of academia to participate in the debate on national security, and I would like to congratulate NSD on taking this initiative.”

**Foreign Minister - Shah Mahmood Qureshi**

“Pakistan is fully resolute to protecting its vital national interests; however, it is shifting emphasis from geopolitics to geo-economics. Pakistan’s location makes it a natural hub for economic convergence for competing States. Pakistan is advocating coexistence and win-win cooperation.”

**Chief of Army Staff - General Qamar Javed Bajwa**

“Pakistan is ready to resolve all outstanding issues with its neighbours through dialogue in a dignified and peaceful manner. Without the resolution of Kashmir dispute through peaceful means, the process of sub-continental rapprochement will always remain susceptible to derailment.”

**Advisor for Commerce, Textile, Industry and Production, and Investment of Pakistan - Abdul Razak Dawood**

“A nation’s power, influence, and its economic security are deeply intertwined. The economy lies at the core of state’s national power and all other elements revolve around it.”

**Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Security Division and Strategic Policy Planning - Moeed Yusuf**

“A consensus on the comprehensive national security framework is necessary to provide the strategic vision regarding the achievement of comprehensive security. A cultural shift is required to improve our policy making and to establish a comprehensive security policy.”

**Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety - Sania Nishtar**

“Human security with its multifaceted dimensions has a deep interdependence with state security and in our national planning and public policy formation, we must keep cognizance of that.”

**Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Health Services - Faisal Sultan**

“Using hard scientific data to guide and inform your decisions would not only be just for health purposes but will impact the larger decision making of government of Pakistan.”

**Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change - Malik Amin Aslam**

“Pakistan has a very good story to tell (about managing the COVID-19 pandemic). There are very few countries which are actually taking the initiatives on the ground and Pakistan is one of them which is now acknowledged.”



# INAUGURAL ADDRESS



Prime Minister  
Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD

DIALOGUE



# Key Takeaways from the Address

- The concept of national security is evolving and it now encompasses comprehensive security which revolves around the security of the common citizen.
- Comprehensive security is impossible to achieve without non-traditional aspects of security; including economic security, climate security, food security, etc.
- Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change; yet, climate change was not traditionally seen as part of the national security agenda.
- Pakistan aims to design a comprehensive policy on food security based on complete and accurate assessment and data.
- 25% of Pakistan's population lives in extreme poverty, this is the biggest threat to Pakistan's national security. Uplifting majority of the population is also a prerequisite for national security.
- Pakistan is working on a comprehensive approach based on research and data and is changing its policy of untargeted subsidies to targeted subsidies to facilitate the most vulnerable sections of the society.
- Pakistan cannot capitalise on its geostrategic location without improving trade ties with neighbouring countries. Sustainable economic growth is not possible without regional trade, connectivity and regional peace.
- Pakistan has huge stakes in Afghanistan. Afghanistan holds the key to peace, trade connectivity to Central Asia and economic development in the region.
- After decades, there is hope for peace in Afghanistan; yet, nobody should underestimate the complexities of the peace process in Afghanistan. Pakistan has played a constructive role in bringing the warring parties to the table.
- Pakistan wishes to resolve the Kashmir dispute through peaceful means and dialogue. India should provide the right of self-determination to the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in light of the United Nations Security Council resolutions. The onus is on India to create a conducive environment for talks with Pakistan.
- Pakistan suffered immensely after the 9/11 attacks and its armed forces and intelligence agencies have done a remarkable job to make Pakistan secure and strong.
- Inclusivity in policy making is a fundamental step for national cohesion and nation building.
- The Prime Minister praised the National Security Division for its efforts to initiate the much-needed debate on the concept of comprehensive national security and to make national policy more inclusive through the launch of its Advisory Portal which seeks to allow academic and policy research institutes a direct voice in providing policy advice to the government.

# PORTAL LAUNCH



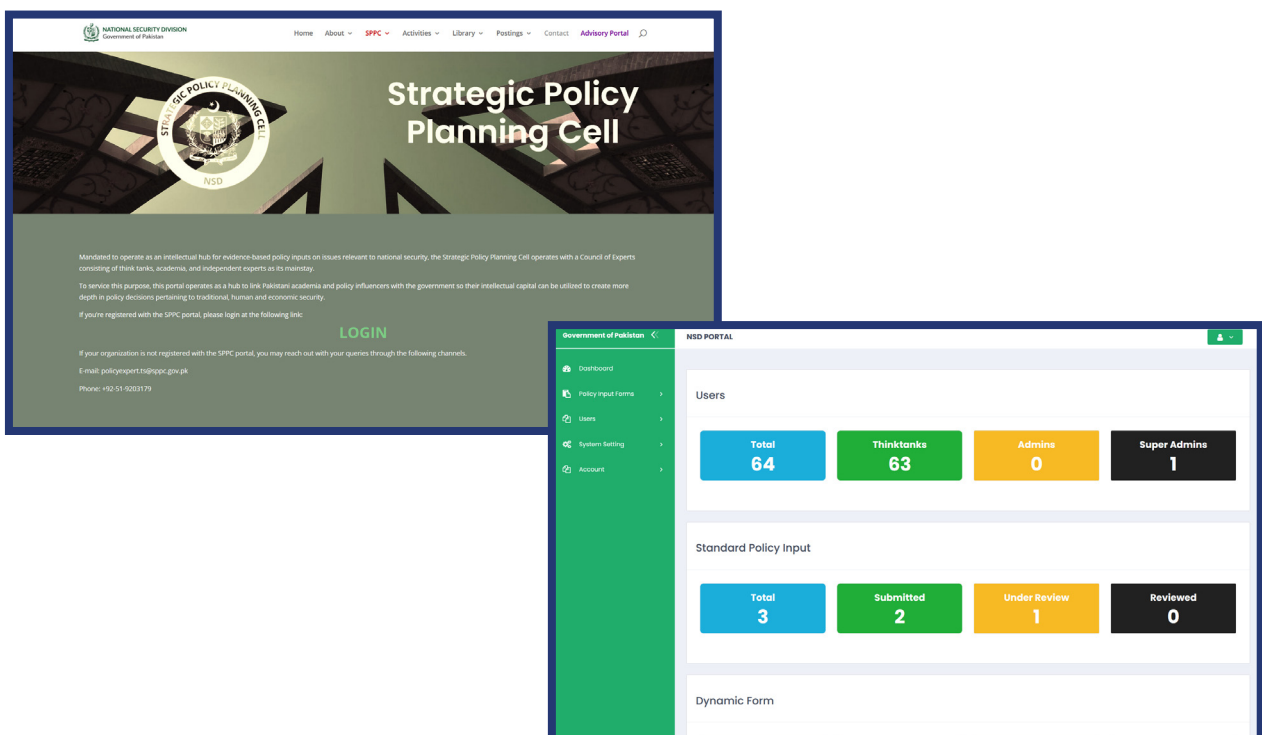
Launch of  
National Security Division's  
Advisory Portal

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# Launch of National Security Division's Advisory Portal by the Prime Minister

During the inaugural session of the ISD, the Prime Minister launched the first-of-its-kind Advisory Portal of the National Security Division.

- The portal provides a dedicated and secure mechanism for Pakistani academic and policy research institutions to provide policy recommendations and input directly to the National Security Division, and through it to other relevant stakeholders within the government machinery.
- The portal will help utilize the intellectual capital of Pakistani academia and policy experts/influencers to ensure more depth in policy decisions pertaining to traditional, economic and human security.
- The portal creates the long overdue policy eco-system needed to provide an opportunity for academia and think tanks to participate in long term strategic thinking and planning for the country.
- The portal reflects the Prime Minister's vision to make national policy more inclusive, informed, responsive and participatory.
- While launching the Advisory Portal, the Prime Minister appreciated the National Security Division's effort to launch the portal, and the fact that it will facilitate intellectuals and members of academia to participate in the debate on national security.
- In its first phase, the Advisory Portal will link over 100 Pakistani think tanks and universities working on comprehensive national security issues with the National Security Division.





# SESSION 1



**NDU  
ISSRA**

Organizer  
Institute for Strategic  
Studies, Research &  
Analysis - NDU

## Comprehensive National Security



Convener  
**Fauzia M. Sana**  
Director, Global and Regional  
Studies, ISSRA, NDU



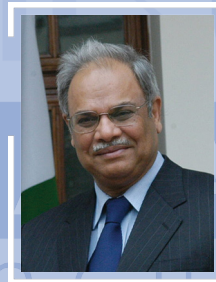
Keynote  
**Dr. Moeed Yusuf**  
Special Assistant to the Prime  
Minister on National Security  
Division & Strategic Policy Planning



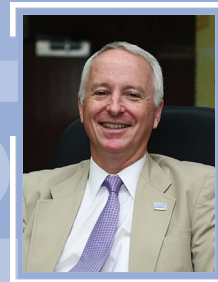
Moderator  
**Amb. (R) Riaz  
Khokhar**  
Former Foreign  
Secretary



Speaker  
**Lt. Gen. (R) Aamer  
Riaz HI(M)**  
Former President,  
National Defence University



Speaker  
**Amb. (R) Riaz  
Muhammad Khan**  
Former Foreign  
Secretary



Speaker  
**Amb. (R) Cameron  
Munter**  
Former US  
Ambassador to Pakistan

# Themes of the Session

- **Security Challenges in a Transforming Global and Regional Environment**
- **Geostrategic Compulsions in a Troubled Neighbourhood**
- **Pakistan's Security Imperatives**

## Key Takeaways from the Session

- A consensus on comprehensive national security framework is necessary to provide the strategic vision for a secure and prosperous Pakistan.
- Comprehensive security is the combination of traditional and non-traditional security. It entails national cohesion, territorial integrity and sovereignty, proactive foreign policy and diplomacy, and economic human security.
- Economic security, at the core of Pakistan's national security, is based on three pillars: connectivity, development partnerships, and domestic and regional peace. Connectivity and development partnerships can not be optimized without peace.
- A cultural shift is required to improve our policy making and to establish comprehensive security.
  - o Adoption of whole of government approach where all organs of the State work in close coordination.
  - o Proactive, inclusive, prioritized, pragmatic and consistent policy making.
  - o Unapologetic and resolute in presenting our reality and direction to the world.
  - o Introspection and reflection to address weaknesses.
- An intense great power competition is ensuing and there is a power shift from West to East; South Asia is feeling the pull and push of the power shifts.
- Eight major challenges are identified as posing a threat to Pakistan's security: great power competition between China and US; gross violations of international law and norms by India; the precarious peace situation in Afghanistan; Iran's international isolation; the COVID pandemic; obsolete system of governance; political instability within the country; and the advent of modern technologies and artificial intelligence.
- The focus of the US Administration has moved from the Middle East and Afghanistan-Pakistan to Indo-Pacific region, which provides Pakistan an opportunity to reinvent and reidentify itself in the eyes of the US.
- Pakistan can help lower the temperature between US and China.
- Pakistan has to modernize its economy based on technology and artificial intelligence, which will help Pakistan in gaining importance in the global market.

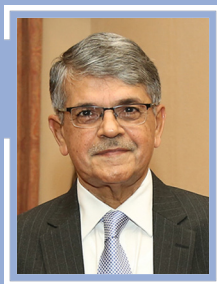
# SESSION 2



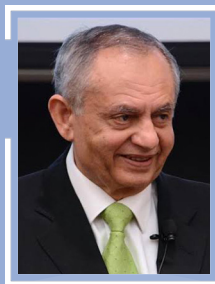
## CASS

Organizer  
Centre for  
Aerospace &  
Security Studies

## Economic Security at the Core



Convener  
**Air Chief Marshal (R)  
Kaleem Saadat**  
President, Centre for Aerospace  
and Security Studies



Keynote  
**Abdul Razak  
Dawood**  
Advisor to the Prime Minister on  
Commerce, Textile, Industry and  
Production, and Investment



Distinguished Speaker  
**Dr. Shamshad  
Akhtar**  
Former Governor,  
State Bank of Pakistan



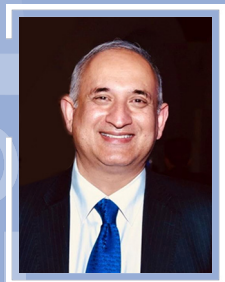
Moderator  
**Dr. Usman  
W. Chohan**  
Director Economics,  
Centre for Aerospace  
& Security Studies



Speaker  
**Dr. Miles  
Kahler**  
Distinguished Professor,  
American University



Speaker  
**Dr. Joseph  
Aldy**  
Professor of Practice,  
Harvard University



Speaker  
**Mr. Haroon  
Sharif**  
Former Chairman  
Board of Investment,  
Government of Pakistan



# Themes of the Session

- **Economic Security and Globalization**
- **Sustainable Development Partnerships in Environment and Energy**
- **Economic Outreach through Economic Diplomacy**

## Key Takeaways from the Session

- Economic security of Pakistan is the foremost priority within the overall security calculus because a well-functioning, dynamic and robust economy helps to bolster the other pillars of national security.
- Economics is an important part of geo-politics as has been demonstrated by the actions of international financial institutions as well as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- Loss of economic security, economic backwardness and failure to create jobs leads to social conflict, political instability, and weakens national security. Economic insecurity leads to erosion of national security and national sovereignty.
- Economic security stands on 6 core pillars: industrial security; technological developments; large corporations; connectivity (air, rail, road and internet); a surplus of essentials (energy, ports and ships); and fiscal security.
- Robust and result oriented economic partnerships thrive on trust and confidence and they need to be anchored in institutionalization of peace and security.
- Pakistan is one of the most susceptible countries to climate change, which has huge economic costs in the form of floods; lower farm productivity due to water scarcity; and lower worker productivity due to harsh environmental conditions. To mitigate these risks Pakistan should take steps to ensure food security for a fast-growing population; invest in resilient agriculture; water management practices; and effective management of ground water.
- Greater clean energy production from solar and wind resources will give industrial competitiveness.
- Frequent cyberattacks on the financial sector increase the vulnerability of economic security.
- The policies of the major economies have unintended negative consequences for others. Shocks of many kinds, including natural disasters and pandemics can cause a ripple effect through the global economy because of its interconnected nature.
- States can reduce the impact of global economic shocks by limiting or applying greater regulation to cross-border flows of trade, monitoring and filtering illicit financial flows, exercising prior planning and preparation for possible shocks, encouraging diversification of the global value chain, and by increasing global cooperation.



# OPENING ADDRESS



Chief of Army Staff  
General Qamar  
Javed Bajwa

ISLAMABAD

DIALOGUE

# Key Takeaways from the Address

- The contemporary concept of national security is not only about protecting a country from internal and external threats, but also providing a conducive environment in which aspirations of human security, national progress and development could be realized.
- No single nation in isolation can perceive and further its quest for security, as every single issue and security dilemma is intimately linked with global and regional dynamics. Only multilateral, global and regional cooperation can help states face multi-dimensional challenges common to an entire region.
- Demography, economic security, cooperation and technology are leading drivers of change in the world.
- South Asia is one of the most impoverished and the least integrated regions of the world in terms of trade, infrastructure, water and energy cooperation. The unsettled disputes are preventing this region from eradicating poverty and underdevelopment.
- Pakistan is ready to resolve all outstanding issues with its neighbours through dialogue in a dignified and peaceful manner. However, without the resolution of Kashmir dispute through peaceful means, process of sub-continental rapprochement will always remain susceptible to derailment. The onus is on India to create a conducive environment for the resumption of a meaningful dialogue.
- Pakistan is playing a robust role in the quest for peace in Afghanistan, and also undertaking unprecedented steps to enhance Afghanistan's trade and connectivity.
- Pakistan aspires to make CPEC more inclusive, transparent and attractive for all global and regional players, with the aim of bringing its benefits to everyone.
- Pakistan hopes the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) will be revived to ensure peace and stability in South Asia.
- Pakistan's geo-economic vision is centred around four core pillars:
  - i. Lasting and enduring peace within and outside
  - ii. Mutual non-interference in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries
  - iii. Boosting intra-regional trade and connectivity
  - iv. Establishment of investment and economic hubs within the region
- Pakistan has been one of the few countries, which, despite living in a hostile and unstable neighbourhood and in the face of rising security challenges has resisted the temptation of involving itself in an arms race and has, in fact, reduced its defence expenditures.

# SESSION 3



Organizer  
Institute of  
Regional  
Studies

## Responsibility Within: Instituting a Human Security Paradigm



Convener  
**Amb. (R) Nadeem Riyaz**  
President,  
Institute of Regional Studies



Moderator  
**Ms. Amber  
Rahim Shamsi**  
Head of  
Communications,  
Tabadlab



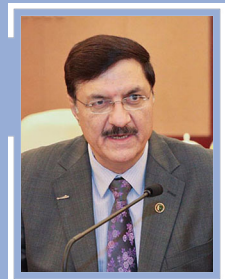
Keynote Speaker  
**Dr. Sania  
Nishtar**  
Special Assistant to the  
Prime Minister on  
Poverty Alleviation  
and Social Safety



Keynote Speaker  
**Dr. Faisal  
Sultan**  
Special Assistant to  
the Prime Minister  
on National Health  
Services



Keynote-Speaker  
**Mr. Malik  
Amin Aslam**  
Special Assistant to  
the Prime Minister  
on Climate Change



Speaker  
**Mr. Ihsan  
Ghani**  
Former National  
Coordinator, National  
Counter Terrorism  
Authority

# Themes of the Session

- **Poverty Alleviation**
- **Managing the COVID-19 Pandemic**
- **Championing Climate Change**
- **Overcoming Terrorism and Violent Extremism**

## Key Takeaways from the Session

- The idea of human security reflects a shift from a state-centric security paradigm to a people and citizen-centric paradigm. Human security has several dimensions, including water security, food security, community security, health security, environmental security, etc.
- COVID-19 pandemic has huge implications for economic growth and for people living in poverty all over the world, and threatens the development gains of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Pakistan is committed to the welfare of its people and has designed a wide-ranging welfare program under the current government. Pakistan has rolled out 7 different *Ehsas* (welfare) products.
- Pakistan has invested in digital and institutional infrastructure, which enabled the government to dispense emergency cash reaching around 40% of the country's population during the pandemic.
- The country is moving from a policy of general and untargeted subsidies to targeted subsidies. This will provide relief to the lowest income groups and help deal with the issue of food inflation without wasting resources on subsidizing affluent business owners. The program will be rolled out shortly.
- Pakistan made a comprehensive policy to fight the pandemic based on real-time statistics and scientific information with the aim of protecting citizens from both the medical risks and its economic consequences. The crux of this policy has been to maintain a balance.
- Pakistan aims to reform and improve governance of not only its large hospitals, but also its primary, secondary and tertiary health care units.
- Pakistan needs to focus on the population explosion and has to make necessary interventions, including facilitating the provision of essential birth control commodities and tools by building and supporting local production.
- To combat the adverse effects of climate change, Pakistan has to install early warning mechanisms, invest in climate proof infrastructure, increase forest cover, create more green jobs and invest in cleaner sources of energy.
- Vulnerable populations are at a higher risk of emotional and psychological manipulation by extremist groups. Extremist groups offer social and economic support to vulnerable groups, and perform functions abdicated by the State. Hence, Pakistan needs to make a violent extremism prevention policy and should provide education, health facilities, access to clean drinking water, etc. to ensure the uplift of vulnerable groups.

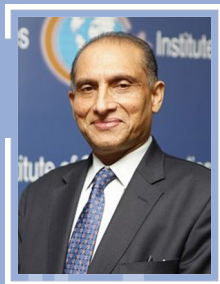


# SESSION 4



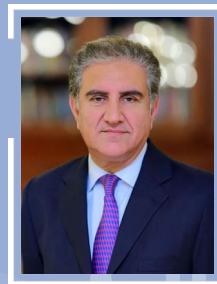
Organizer  
**The Institute of  
Strategic Studies  
Islamabad**

## Regional Peace and Security



Convener & Moderator  
**Amb. (R) Aizaz Ahmad  
Chaudhry**

Director General, Institute of  
Strategic Studies Islamabad



Keynote  
**Mr. Shah  
Mahmood Qureshi**

Foreign Minister,  
Government of Pakistan



Speaker  
**Dr. Hu  
Shisheng**

Director, China Institutes of  
Contemporary International  
Relations



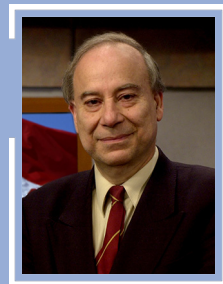
Speaker  
**Amb. (R) Jalil  
Abbas Jilani**

Former Foreign  
Secretary



Speaker  
**Ms. Laurel  
Miller**

Director Asia Programs,  
International Crisis Group



Speaker  
**Amb. (R) Dr. Akbar  
S. Ahmed**

Professor,  
American University

# Themes of the Session

- **CPEC and China**
- **Kashmir and India**
- **The Afghan Peace Process and Pakistan**
- **Pakistan as a Bridge Builder for the Muslim World**

## Key Takeaways from the Session

- The world is going through a “profound transformation”:
  - o New security partnerships are being forged, while old alliances are being reinforced and even fortified. Policies of containment are ascendant and “sowing the seeds of a new Cold War.”
  - o Complex global dynamics and threats are being magnified by some states to justify their arms buildups and hegemonic designs.
  - o India has changed for the worse as US support has emboldened the Modi regime which is violating the rights of minorities in its bid to create a *Hindu Rashtra*, and also jeopardising the fundamental rights of the people of IIOJK.
  - o The situation in Afghanistan is fluid, and Pakistan has huge stakes in peace in Afghanistan. The threat of terrorism has not gone away permanently, especially in Afghanistan.
  - o High levels of xenophobia and Islamophobia can also be witnessed around the world.
  - o Non-traditional security threats like food, water, and climate change are a major source of concern for the neighbourhood which includes South, West and Central Asia.
  - o The nature of warfare has fundamentally transformed. New and emerging technologies are being weaponized and frontiers are being constantly pushed to outer-space, cyberspace, and into the domain of artificial intelligence.
- Pakistan is changing for the better, and it is constructively engaged with the rest of the world without compromising on its key positions.
- Pakistani policymakers have devised a comprehensive security paradigm, which revolves around the welfare of its people, economic security and geo-economics. Pakistan aspires to be a hub for economic convergence of otherwise competing interests, and advocates coexistence and win-win cooperation for all states.
- Pakistan has decided not to be part of any regional conflict and aspires only to forge partnerships of peace and development.
- A peace process between Pakistan and India cannot succeed unless both countries agree to respect each other’s sensitivities. The onus is on India to create a conducive atmosphere for negotiations by giving respite to the Kashmiris and by revisiting its decisions of 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2019.
- Pakistan wants stability in Afghanistan and a peace agreement that endures.
- CPEC is a “gamechanger” and has changed the landscape of Pakistan by producing more energy, connectivity and jobs; underpinning a focus on socio-economic development.
- Pakistan should challenge its negative portrayal by introducing the world to the teachings and personality of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and great Pakistani Sufis, saints and poets. Pakistan should invite foreigners to its events and festivities, providing ready access to its religious and cultural sites.

# SESSION 5



## IPRI

Organizer  
Islamabad Policy  
Research Institute

## Evolving World Order and Pakistan



Convener  
**Brig. (R) Rashid Wali Janjua**  
Acting President, Islamabad Policy



Moderator  
**Dr. Huma Baqai**  
Professor, Institute of  
Business Administration



Keynote Speaker  
**Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar**  
Former Foreign  
Minister



Keynote Speaker  
**Mr. Ali Jehangir Siddiqui**  
Ambassador  
at Large



Keynote Speaker  
**Mr. Mushahid Hussain Sayed**  
Chairman,  
Pakistan-China Institute



# Themes of the Session

- **Key Opportunities and Challenges for Pakistan**
- **Emerging World Order**
- **Navigating the New Decade**

## Key Takeaways from the Session

- Pakistan is facing more internal than external challenges. Hence, Pakistan should make a transition from a traditional security state to a state that is oriented towards human security and regional connectivity.
- Pakistan should adopt a proactive foreign policy and engage with the world on its own terms.
- Pakistan cannot effectively engage with the world without a functional and healthy economy as only economically relevant states are politically relevant.
- Economic alliances with countries should be forged with a view to generate commerce and trade, which should benefit the domestic population.
- The world around Pakistan is changing and there are tectonic shifts in the region in terms of alignments. However, Pakistan should steer away from the big power competition and camp politics, and should actively engage with both China and the US.
- Pakistan must not become part of any country's negative agenda in the region or beyond.
- Pakistan need not necessarily seek a major role in the changing world and should prioritize its own economic and human security. Pakistan should seek less political space and more economic space.
- Pakistan is playing a pivotal role in the Afghan peace process. Pakistan should remain engaged with each and every party in Afghanistan and stakeholder.
- The US focus in the region has shifted from Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Indo-Pacific. On the one hand, US is promoting India as the regional hegemon. On the other hand, Modi's policies have boomeranged within India and he is facing criticism on anti-Muslim and anti-farmers protests.
- Pakistan can emerge as a hub of regional connectivity in the region, and other countries can join CPEC. Pakistan can provide connectivity to Central Asian States through Afghanistan and Gwadar.
- To deal with growing domestic challenges and fault lines, Pakistan also has to lay the basis for a rules-based national order.
- Pakistan needs to reorient itself as a technology friendly country, as the transnational nature of technology, data and artificial intelligence have changed the nature of war, the balance of power and discussion of national security policies.
- Pakistan should improve and facilitate access to data and internet, and should invest in artificial intelligence and other modern technologies.



## The National Security Division

Pakistan's approach to national security is broad, proactive and resolute. Rather than being set in an archaic guns vs. butter debate, the goal of national security thinking must be to identify means of expanding the national resource pie such that Pakistan can simultaneously strengthen its traditional and non-traditional security. The most prudent approach is to keep economic security at the core, and transfer the dividends of a strong economy to further strengthen our military and diplomacy, as well as human security. This is the Prime Minister's vision that National Security Division (NSD) strives to pursue.

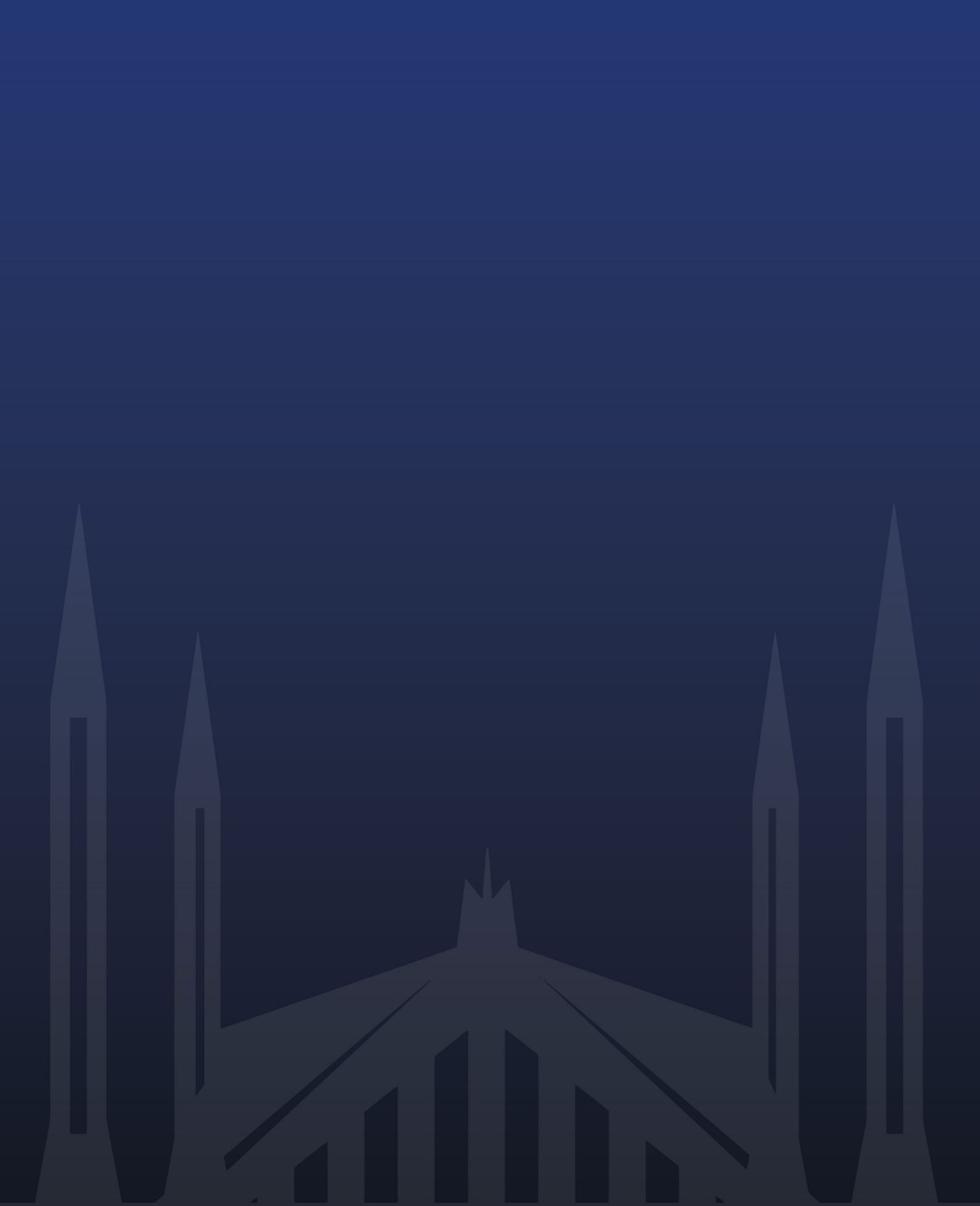
The NSD is the secretariat of Pakistan's National Security Committee (NSC), the country's premium forum on national security. NSD remains committed to providing intellectual and administrative support to the NSC. Cognizant of Pakistan's complex security requirements, the Division responds to the Prime Minister's demand for policy input on any relevant national security issue, and partakes in relevant policy meetings at working and Principal levels to provide policy advice and affect positive policy change. In addition, the Division is geared to build international synergies by engaging in security dialogues with partner countries to strengthen Pakistan's global cooperation on matters of security.

## The Strategic Policy Planning Cell

Housed within the NSD, the Strategic Policy Planning Cell (SPPC) acts as a conduit for providing evidence-based policy input on various issues that fall under the ambit of the National Security Committee (NSC). To fully empower decision makers with the most rigorous and relevant analysis, the SPPC absorbs scholarship for each of the thematic areas it is tasked to work on by partnering with independent experts, think-tanks/research centers, and universities through its Council of Experts – bridging the gap between the Government and Pakistan's public intellectuals and policy institutes.

Together, the NSD and the SPPC strive to offer strategic responses to Pakistan's internal and external security challenges in coordination with state institutions. The SPPC continues to work on identifying and advising on long-term policy issues through a far-sighted approach, enabling the system to be more proactive in its strategies, and capitalize on potential opportunities.





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