

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT AND STABILITY

 **IPDS**
2026



14th - 16th SEPTEMBER 2026

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN



ISSRA

INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

 **IPDS**

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT AND STABILITY (IPDS) - 2026

TENTATIVE PROGRAM OF WORK

Mon, 14 Sep 2026			
Time Hrs	Activity	Guest Speakers	RV
-	Reception/ Registration	Registration	-
Opening Plenary			
1000 - 1045	- Welcome Note by President NDU - Inaugural Address by the Chief Guest		
1045 - 1115	Break / Light Refreshments	-	
1115 - 1300	Strategic Plenary I - The Transforming Global Order: Power, Governance and Strategic Autonomy	- Ambassador Nicholas Hopton (UK) - Prof. Zhou Jianren (China) - Mr Christian Caryl (US) - Amb Munir Akram (Pak) - Dr Huma Baqai (Pak) - Chair	Auditorium
1300 - 1345	Group Photograph & Lunch	-	North Entrance / Banquet Hall
1345 - 1530	Strategic Plenary II - Technology, AI, Information and Society: Redefining National Power	- Ms Asmae Ben Bahida (Belgium) - Mr Nan Zhong (China) - Dr June Park (South Korea) - Ms Oksana Boyko (Russia) - Mr Fasi Zaka (Pak) - Chair	Auditorium
Tue, 15 Sep 2026			
1000 - 1145	Strategic Plenary III - The Changing Character of Warfare: Strategic Stability and Security Beyond Borders	- Brig Gen Mark Kimmitt (Retd) (US) - Dr Alexey Kupriyanov (Russia) - Rear Admiral Syed Faisal Ali Shah (Retd) (Pak) - Mr Ejaz Haider (Pak) - Chair	Auditorium
1145 - 1215	Break / Light Refreshments	-	Mess Lounge
1215 - 1400	Strategic Plenary IV - Managing Competition, Preventing Conflict - Role of Middle Powers	- Mr Renan De Souza (Brazil) - HE Amb Mathu Joyini (South Africa) - Dr Moeed Yusuf (Pak) - Ms Tanya Francis (UK) - Chair	Auditorium
1400 - 1445	Lunch	-	Banquet Hall
Closing Plenary			
1500 - 1530	Closing Ceremony	- Talks by Guests of Honour - Closing Address by the Chief Guest	Auditorium
Wed, 16 Sep 2026			
0930 - 1130	Public Diplomacy: Role of Art, Culture & Heritage	DVF: Mr Javed Jabbar - Dr Najeeba Arif - Ms Zebunnisa Bangash - Kamran Lashari - Mr Saadaan Peerzada - Mr Adeel Hashmi - Chair	ISSRA Hall
1130 - 1200	Light Refreshments	-	ISSRA Lounge
1200 - 1330 onwards	Interaction President NDU & Cert Ceremony Views / Reviews, Lunch & Dispersal		ISSRA Hall Banquet Hall

Strategic Plenary - I

The Transforming Global Order: Power, Governance and Strategic Autonomy

Ambassador Nicholas Hopton (Retd), Director General, The Middle East Association

Mr Nicholas Hopton is a Distinguished Fellow at RUSI (Royal United Services Institute), a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council, and Chair of the Advisory Board for the Middle East and Mediterranean programmes at the Centre for Geopolitics, University of Cambridge. He previously served as British Ambassador to Libya, Iran, Qatar, and Yemen, and held diplomatic postings in Paris, Rome, Morocco, and Mauritania. In the UK, he worked in the Foreign Office, Cabinet Office, and led the team that drafted the UK's first National Security Strategy in 2008. He is also an Honorary Professor at St Mary's University, a published author, and a regular contributor and commentator for UK and international media.



Professor Zhou Jianren, Assistant Dean and Associate Professor/Research Fellow, Institute of International Relations, Tsinghua University

Professor Zhou Jianren is also an Executive Editor of the Quarterly Journal of International Politics. He holds a PhD in Political Science and an MA in International Relations from Tsinghua University. Over the past decade, his research has focused on alliance politics and power transition, with nearly 20 articles published in peer-reviewed journals in Chinese and English. He is also the author of *Approaching Split: Why Weaker States Withdraw from Alliances* and regularly provides expert advice to the central government of China.



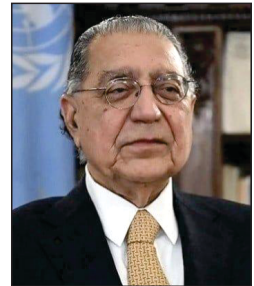
Mr Christian Caryl, Columnist at Foreign Policy

Mr Christian Caryl is an American journalist widely published on international politics and foreign affairs. He previously served as Moscow Bureau Chief and Tokyo Bureau Chief of Newsweek and as an editor in the Opinions section of The Washington Post. During his career, he has reported from around 60 countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan. He has also contributed to The Wall Street Journal, The New Republic, The Spectator, Der Spiegel, and The New York Review of Books. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Literature, cum laude, from Yale College, followed by graduate study at the University of Constanzt.



Ambassador Munir Akram (Retd), Former Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations

Ambassador Akram joined the Foreign Service of Pakistan in 1967, holding various positions in the Foreign Ministry including Additional Foreign Secretary and Director-General dealing with the United Nations (UN). He retired from his second term as Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN on 31 March 2025. He held key positions like 76th President of the Economic and Social Council and the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 (developing countries). He previously served as Pakistan's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN between 2002 and 2008. During his first term at the UN in New York, he served twice as President of the Security Council in May 2003 and in May 2004. He also served as Pakistan's Ambassador to the European Council, Belgium and Luxembourg.



Chair: Dr Huma Baqai, Rector Millennium Institute of Technology and Entrepreneurship

Dr Huma Baqai has a rich academic and professional journey spanning over 30 years and made significant contributions as a scholar, author, and educator. She has authored more than 40 national and international research articles and book chapters, along with three books: Making Sense of Post COVID-19 Politics, Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations: Pitfalls and Way Forward, and Collected Works of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. She also has over 22 years of experience in electronic and print media and 18 years as a certified corporate trainer and content developer.



Strategic Plenary - II **Technology, AI, Information and Society: Redefining National Power**

Ms Asmae Ben Bahida, AI expert, Founder of Just BIM It

Ms Asmae Ben Bahida is a construction engineer by background, with a double specialization: artificial intelligence and digital construction. She is also a professor and an entrepreneur. She works at the intersection of technology, innovation, and sustainable development. She founded Just BIM It, a Belgian engineering and consulting firm dedicated to sustainable digital transformation, structured around two poles: engineering and digital construction, and IT, strategy and development. She is a graduate of the Brussels Engineering School and a former BIM consultant at Accenture and a board member of Agoria Bruxelles, the Belgian Federation for the Technology Industry and a board adviser at the EU Tech Chamber. She is featured among the 26 international experts consulted, alongside profiles from Microsoft US, EY, the National Institute of Building Sciences, and the Wharton School.



Mr Nan Zhong, Chief AI Officer, Arise Ventures Group

Mr Nan Zhong is Chief AI Officer of Arise Ventures Group, part of CP Group, Thailand's largest conglomerate, and Co-founder and President of Arise AI. He leads enterprise AI transformation across telco, retail, and digital financial services, and spearheads Thailand's sovereign AI build-up, including a sovereign LLM and a national AI factory. He has built technology businesses from zero to scale at Byte Dance, Shopee, and Uber, across the US, Europe, China, and Southeast Asia. In Europe and Asia, he has worked with regulators on how AI is governed and deployed. He studied at Stanford, ETH Zurich, and Shanghai Jiao Tong University.



Dr June Park, Visiting Fellow, Middle East Council on Global Affairs

Dr June Park is a South Korean political economist focusing on digital trade, finance and emerging technologies. She is a Visiting Fellow at the Middle East Council on Global Affairs in Doha, Qatar, and a Non-Resident Fellow at the National Bureau for Asian Research. She also provides geopolitical risk and technology policy advisory services to major US technology firms in Silicon Valley. She holds a PhD in Political Science from Boston University and MA from Korea University. Her research focuses on geo-economics conflicts in digital and green transitions, with particular expertise in AI governance, semiconductors, 5G/6G networks, digital finance, and the geopolitics of emerging technologies. She also advises governments and high-tech industries on geopolitical risk and emerging technologies.



Ms Oksana Boyko, RT's Worlds Apart

Ms Oksana Boyko is a Russian journalist and international affairs broadcaster. She joined RT in 2005, initially worked as a political news reporter before becoming a foreign correspondent, and has covered conflicts in Chechnya, Libya, Syria and Afghanistan. She has interviewed senior political figures and international leaders, including former Afghan President and former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. She holds a bachelor's degree in Journalism from St. Petersburg State University and a master's degree in Mass Communications from Kansas State University.



Chair: Mr Fasi Zaka, Public Policy Professional

Mr Fasi Zaka is a strategic communications advisor and media professional with more than two decades of experience at the intersection of technology, media, and public policy. He is a University of Oxford Rhodes Scholar, and serves on multiples Boards in an advisory capacity. He has designed and led communication strategies for governments, international organisations, and development programmes including the European Union, British Council, and UNDP. His work focuses on AI, digital media, strategic communications, and the use of technology to drive public engagement and behaviour change. As a former national radio host and award-winning communications specialist, he is a frequent speaker on emerging trends shaping the future of media and technology.

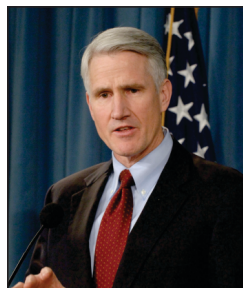


Strategic Plenary - III

The Changing Character of Warfare: Strategic Stability and Security Beyond Borders

Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt (Retd), President MTK Defense Consulting

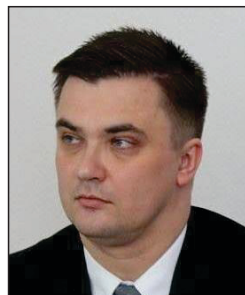
Brigadier General Mark T. Kimmitt is President of MTK Defense Consulting and advises the US and international firms on security and defense transactions throughout the Middle East. He previously served as Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs under President George W. Bush, where he oversaw global defense trade and security assistance and served as a key link



between the State Department and Pentagon. He also served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Near East and South Asia, contributing to high-level defense policy decisions concerning Afghanistan and Iraq. As a 30-year US Army veteran, he commanded artillery units at various levels and served in senior operational and strategic positions, including in Iraq and at US Central Command. He is a graduate of West Point and Harvard Business School and is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Dr Alexey Kupriyanov, Head of the Centre for the Indo-Pacific Region, IMEMORAS

Dr Alexey Kupriyanov is Head of the Centre for the Indo-Pacific Region at the Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences. He holds a PhD in History and a master's degree in international relations from the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.



He is the author of more than 60 scientific articles and book chapters on international politics and military strategy in Russian and English. His research interests include South, Southeast and East

Asia, Indian foreign policy, the Indo-Pacific region, Indo-Chinese relations, IR theory and history, colonialism, post-colonialism, and naval history and strategy.

Rear Admiral Syed Faisal Ali Shah, HI (M)

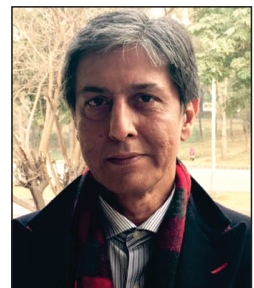
Rear Admiral Syed Faisal Ali Shah has over three and half decades of command, staff, instructional and operational appointments with outstanding professional and academic achievements in the Pakistan Navy. Hailing from the Marines arm, he is the first Marine officer to reach the level of two-star admiral. He has been DG Joint Cantonment Gwadar at JSHQ and DG C4I at NHQ. He has commanded



both Sindh and Makran Coasts of Pakistan as Commander Creeks and Commander West respectively. He has also served as Naval and Air Attaché in the Islamic Republic of Iran. His expertise includes blue economy, coastal development in Pakistan, and an understanding of Iranian politics and culture. He is Honorary Research Fellow at the National Institute of Maritime Affairs.

Chair: Mr Ejaz Haider, Senior Fellow at the Centre for Security, Strategy and Policy Research at University of Lahore

Ejaz Haider has been a newspaperman since 1991, starting his career at The Frontier Post, Lahore. During his career he has held several editorial positions and was the News Editor of The Friday Times and Executive Editor of Daily Times. He has also done television and hosted political and policy talk-shows at Dawn News, Samaa TV and Capital TV. He went on to host an English-language policy



programme on Indus News. He was a Ford Scholar at ACDIS (Programme in Arms Control, Disarmament and International Security) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a visiting fellow at the Foreign Policy Studies Programme at the Brookings Institution in

Washington D.C. He has done policy work during fellowships in the United States and lectured at various universities, think tanks and civil and military institutions including Command and Staff College, Quetta, Navy and Air War Colleges, National Defence University, National Institute of Public Administration and formerly Administrative Staff College. His areas of interest include defence and foreign policies, nuclear strategy, theories of war, international relations, statecraft, literature, and satire.

Strategic Plenary - IV

Managing Competition, Preventing Conflict - Role of Middle Powers

Mr Renan De Souza, Anchor and International Affairs Analyst

Mr Renan De Souza is a Brazilian journalist, author and media adviser based in Abu Dhabi, with more than a decade of experience at the intersection of global politics, media and diplomacy. His broadcasting career includes nearly nine years at SBT and senior on-air roles at CNN Brasil. In February 2022, he anchored more than eight hours of continuous live breaking-news coverage following



Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. He holds an MA in International Relations from Goldsmiths, University of London, where he was a Chevening Scholar, and a BA in Journalism from Universidade Metodista de Sao Paulo. He is the author of *Private Military Companies and the Outsourcing of War: Re-examining the Political Rationale Towards Peace* and has been recognized by MIPAD among the 100 Most Influential People of African Descent Under 40.

Ambassador Mathu Joyini, Distinguished Diplomat in Residence, United Nations Foundation

Ambassador Mathu Joyini is a Distinguished Diplomat in Residence at the United Nations Foundation in New York. She previously served as the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations in New York. In that position, she played key roles in several UN processes,

serving as chair of the Commission on the Status of Women from, co-facilitator for the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action 20th Anniversary, Political Declaration and its Resolution on Modalities in 2021, co-chair of the Science, Technology and Innovation Forum, co-facilitator for the Political Declaration for the 2023 UNGA High



Level Meeting on Financing for Development, co-facilitator of the Financing for Development Forum in 2024, chair of the Special Political and Decolonisation Committee, co-facilitator of the Ad-hoc Working Committee on the Revitalisation of the General Assembly in 2025, and member of the Board of Trustees for the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) from October 2022 to September 2025. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of the Witwatersrand, a Master of Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Master of Business Administration from Wits Business School.

Dr Moeed Yusuf, Vice Chancellor, Beaconhouse National University

Dr Moeed W. Yusuf is the Vice Chancellor of Beaconhouse National University, Pakistan's first not-for-profit liberal arts institution. He previously served as Pakistan's youngest National Security Adviser, leading the formulation of the country's first National Security Policy. Before this, he was Associate Vice President at the US Institute of Peace and held research positions at Harvard, Brookings, and Boston University. He has taught at renowned universities, including LUMS and Quaid-e-Azam University. A prolific author, his latest book, *Brokering Peace in Nuclear Environments*, was published by Stanford University Press. He holds a PhD in Political Science from Boston University.



Chair: Ms Tanya Francis, Broadcast Journalist, Asia One

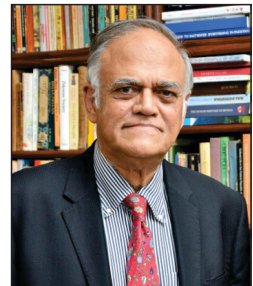
Ms Tanya Francis is a British broadcast journalist with more than 8 years of experience across television, radio and social media. Currently associated with Asia One, she covers international affairs and provides analysis on global political and geopolitical developments. Her work has included coverage and commentary on international security, diplomacy, energy and geopolitical developments across Asia and beyond.



Public Diplomacy: Role of Art, Culture & Heritage

DVF: Mr Javed Jabbar, Former Senator and Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting

Mr Javed Jabbar is an award-winning writer and filmmaker, policy analyst, with a special interest in voluntary work, communications, environment, education, national and international affairs. In a voluntary capacity, he served for 8 years (2004-2012) as one of the four elected global Vice Presidents of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). He is a founding member of Social policy and development Center (SPDC), the Citizens Media Commission of Pakistan, the South Asian Media Association, Baahn Beli and Strengthening Participatory Organization. He wrote and produced the 110-minute documentary film 'Separation of East Pakistan: The Untold Story' which has so far been watched by viewers across the world. As the producer of film named 'Ramchand Pakistani', he won the Lux Award for the Best Cinema Film of 2008, and also won international awards. He also served as Chairman of the Steering Committee to re-record the National Anthem of Pakistan for the first time after its original recording in 1954. He has diverse interests in writing, media, voluntary development work, environment, public policy and international affairs. His significant contributions to the arts have been recognized with the prestigious Hilal-i-Imtiaz, one of Pakistan highest civilian honors.



Prof Dr Najeeba Arif, Chairperson of the Pakistan Academy of Letters

Prof Dr Najeeba Arif is an eminent scholar, creative writer, critic and researcher. Her major field of specialization is Archival Research. She has also founded the first Indexation Agency for the Urdu Research Journals at International Islamic University and has been the editor of renowned research journals of Pakistan. Her collection of Urdu poetry 'Ma'ani se Ziyada' won the Award of the Best book of the year in 2015. Her poetry is being taught at the Ankara University, Turkey. She has authored 18 books and published more than 60 articles in national and international journals.



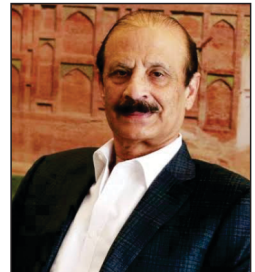
Ms Zebunnisa Bangash, Multi-Lingual Performing Artist

Ms Zebunnisa Bangash is a visionary Pakistani singer and composer. From her early iconic Coke Studio biggest global hits to her award-winning television soundtracks and Bollywood film scores, she has spent her career redefining modern South Asian music. She is the first Pakistani artist to serve as music director of an award-winning Bollywood film, which received 18 film awards. During her career, she has recorded songs in Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi, Turkish, Persian, Saraiki and Hindko. She has been often seen on the Pakistani television shows Coke Studio, Pakistan Idol, and Pepsi Battle of the Bands.



Mr Kamran Lashari, Director General, Walled City Lahore

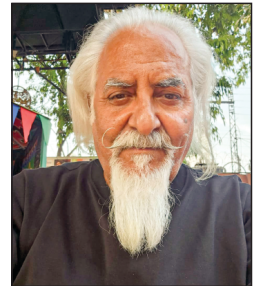
Mr Kamran Lashari, a Civil Servant of Pakistan who belongs to the 1978 District Management Group. He served first 9 years in Sindh. He's remained Deputy Commissioner in Districts Karachi, Sukhar, Thatta, and Lahore. His real identity came through Parks and Horticulture Authority Lahore, a new department created in 1998. He was also posted in November 2003 as Chairman CDA. Later in



December 2012, he retired as Federal Secretary. He brought in Aga Khan Trust for Culture for conservation partners for projects like Shahi Hamam, Gali Surjan Singh, Wazir Khan Mosque and the Picture Wall, Lahore Fort. Conservation of Shahi Hammam was completed in 2015 and it won the UNESCO Award of Merit in September 2016. In recognition of his public service, the Government of Pakistan awarded him Tamgha-e-Imtiaz.

Mr Saadaan Peerzada - Director & Cultural Institution Builder

Mr Saadaan peerzada is also serving as Chief Operating Officer at Rafi Peer Theatre Workshop, Pakistan. Since 1978, he has played a central leadership role in shaping the artistic vision, institutional development and national and international programming of Rafi Peer Theatre Workshop. He conceives, curates and directs cultural festivals, productions, public programmes and



international collaborations from their initial vision through artistic development, production, communications and delivery. His leadership encompasses cultural strategy, festival development, artistic curation, production, institutional management, international relations, audience development, fundraising, budgeting and large-scale event delivery. Previously, he was Director of Production of Pakistan Children's Television (PCTV); led complete production and strategy on all creative departments on the project which included Scripting, live action film, building studios and sets, costumes, puppetry, music, animation and production management. He also created 26 episodes of Children's programming.

Chair: Mr Adeel Hashmi, Screenwriter, filmmaker, and communications trainer

Mr Adeel Hashmi has made significant contributions to the arts and culture scene in Pakistan. He holds a Masters in Filmmaking from San Francisco, USA, and began his career in the late 1990s as a writer and actor on television. He has since ventured into stage performances and communications training and is renowned for his eloquence. He is also

the founder of the Faiz Festival, an annual literary event held in Lahore since 2015. In addition to his diverse talents, he is a classically trained pianist, holding a grade 3 certificate from the Trinity College London. He imparts piano lessons to young children. His contributions extend beyond the realm of arts and culture. He also served as the Chairman of the Punjab Film Censor Board, Government of Punjab.



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Conversations



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