



**INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME  
FOR DEVELOPMENT & STABILITY**

# **IPDS 2023**

**EXPLORING NEW PERSPECTIVES**

**4-7 December 2023**

**Post Workshop Report**

**Institute for Strategic Studies, Research & Analysis**

**I S S R A**



**WORKSHOP SPONSOR**

Brigadier Qasim Kayani

Director, Keystone Capstone and Pinnacle Programmes Branch

**REPORT COMPILED BY**

Research & Publication Branch

**EDITED BY**

Colonel Amer Mehmood & Research Team

Keystone Capstone and Pinnacle Programmes Branch

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# International Programme for Development and Stability (IPDS)

Institute for Strategic Studies, Research and Analysis (ISSRA), National Defence University, Islamabad organized International Programme for Development and Stability (IPDS) – 2023 from 4-7 December 2023. The programme was attended by Foreign Security Advisers (FSA's), Diplomatic staff of Embassies, representatives from international agencies and members from civil society.

The Programme was aimed to provide a platform for shared understanding and perspective on 'development and stability in the region & Pakistan':-

- Study transforming global, regional environment & enabling conditions for attracting investment/sustainable development in the region.
- Discuss trade, development and stability in Pakistan while analyzing policy options for investment in the country.
- Explore the possibilities of startup businesses, entrepreneurship and venture capital in Pakistan.

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EXPLORING NEW PERSPECTIVES



**NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY**  
National Defence University  
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Office of the Vice-Chancellor



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# Inaugural Session

4 December, 2023

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# DAY 1

## Session I

4 December, 2023

### Contours of Emerging Regional & Global Order



# SPEAKERS



**SPEAKER - I**  
Ms Elizabeth Therekeld



**SPEAKER - II**  
Amb Asif Durrani (Retd)



**SPEAKER - III**  
Amb Tasnim Aslam (Retd)



**MODERATOR**  
Syed Anwaar ul Hassan

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The Ukraine crisis shows the changing nature of modern warfare, with drones and AI playing a bigger role alongside traditional trench warfare.
- Russia will emerge stronger from this crisis and align more closely with China. However, territorial disputes should be resolved peacefully to maintain international rules.
- The Israel-Palestine conflict and tensions between India and Pakistan are exacerbating global geopolitical divisions.
- Both India and Israel seem to be taking inspiration from each other in their treatment of Kashmiris/Palestinians, with accusations of systematic genocide.
- As long as Pakistan's economy remains weak, the issues of Kashmir and other disputes will be difficult to resolve with India.
- India sees itself as a regional hegemon and aspires to be global player, backed by the US. This makes its posture aggressive towards Pakistan.

# DAY 1

## Session II

4 December, 2023

### Global Trends and Pakistan



# SPEAKERS



**SPEAKER - I**  
Mr Ahmer Bilal Soofi



**SPEAKER - II**  
Ms Sara Hayat



**SPEAKER - III**  
Maj Gen Inam Ul Haq (Retd)



**SPEAKER - IV**  
Mr Pervaiz Ahmed Junejo



**MODERATOR**  
Ms Mariam Fatima

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Pakistan has suffered more from Afghanistan than its three wars with India in terms of bilateral relations.
- Sustainable solutions for Afghan refugees require long-term international assistance and incentives for voluntary repatriation to ease Pakistan's massive hosting burden.
- Transnational issues like climate change and displacement pose major challenges to international laws and frameworks that need reform to accommodate new threats.
- Balancing security policies with human rights protections is an ongoing struggle, particularly for countries facing severe terrorism threats like Pakistan.
- Climate change has disproportionate and devastating social/economic impacts on vulnerable countries like Pakistan due to geographical and development vulnerabilities.
- Pakistan's efforts to build climate resilience through initiatives to restore ecosystems, monitor glacial impacts, and expand forestation deserve more international support and emulation.

# DAY 2

## Session I

5 December, 2023

# Trade & Investment Environment in Pakistan



# SPEAKERS



**SPEAKER - I**  
Mr Abdul Sami



**SPEAKER - II**  
Ms Sarah Saeed



**SPEAKER - III**  
Maj Gen Farrukh Shahzad Rao



**SPEAKER - IV**  
Syed Aftab Haider



**MODERATOR**  
Dr Shimail Daud

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Pakistan's economic journey has been marked by a struggle between state interventions and market-oriented reforms, resulting in inconsistent investment policies.
- Pakistan also faces challenges being "investment locked" country, lacking long-term economic relations with its neighbors.
- Pakistan's future and its ability to maximize its investment potential will be determined by a crucial decision, i.e. whether its economic policies should align with its foreign policies or its foreign policies should align with its economic objectives.
- To drive sustainable economic growth, it is advisable to prioritize investment in the tradeable sector over non-tradeable sectors, as this will encourage profitability and promote export-led growth.
- Analysis of the transit-trade tax at Pakistan's border terminal reveals that approximately 1,000 transit trade vehicles cross the borders, generating 720 million USD in transportation costs alone.
- By implementing better facilitation measures, improving infrastructure, and establishing supportive regulations, Pakistan has the potential to increase the number of trucks to 3,000 annually, resulting in an additional 2 billion USD in revenue.

# DAY 2

## Session II

5 December, 2023

### Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) & CPEC



# SPEAKERS



**SPEAKER - I**  
Syed Mustafa Haider



**SPEAKER - II**  
Mr Mohammad Jehanzeb  
Khan



**MODERATOR**  
Ms Shah Bano

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has emerged as a significant force in global investment, with over 1 trillion USD invested in more than 3,000 projects.
- Within the BRI framework, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) presents a significant opportunity for Pakistan, particularly through the development of Special Economic Zones (SEZs).
- The success of SEZs development in Pakistan will depend on a market-driven approach, rather than relying solely on the previous successful track record of power plants and roads.
- The establishment of the SEZs, Industrialization and Financial Complex with streamlined one-window operations has the potential to provide easy solutions to investors and attract foreign direct investment.
- The second phase of CPEC can greatly benefit from the creation of SEZs where foreign investors can open a bank account within an hour, without the need for numerous No Objection Certificates and lengthy waiting periods.

**DAY 2**

**Session III**

5 December, 2023

**Venture Capital & Entrepreneurship**



# SPEAKERS



**SPEAKER - I**  
Mr Faizan Ali Siddiqi



**SPEAKER - II**  
Ms Shaista Ayesha



**SPEAKER - III**  
Mr Faisal Aftab



**MODERATOR**  
Mr Ather Imran Nawaz

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Venture Capital (VC) and entrepreneurship play a pivotal role in driving investment, economic transformation, and ultimately leads to social change.
- The VC landscape in Pakistan needs to be more accessible, diverse, and inclusive to effectively support startups that form the supply chain for micro-enterprises.
- It is crucial to ensure that entrepreneurship and VC initiatives are geared towards supporting marginalized communities, including women, rural areas, and people with disabilities.
- By providing marginalized communities with opportunities and resources, we can foster inclusivity and empower these communities.
- Pakistan's transition to a more documented economy will require adapting VC and entrepreneurship strategies to leverage the growth of digital platforms and online payment systems.
- Furthermore, as digital spaces and online payment systems gain traction, Pakistan has the potential to transition into a more documented economy in next 5 to 10 years.
- Pakistan needs modern teaching systems and more advancement in tech industry and engineering, therefore, there is need to work on a policy to provide education on entrepreneurship.

# DAY 3

## Session I

6 December, 2023

### Art & Science of Narrative Building in the Post Truth Era



# SPEAKERS



**SPEAKER - I**  
Mr Amir Ghauri



**SPEAKER - II**  
Ms Oksana Boyko



**SPEAKER - III**  
Ms Sadaf Khan



**SPEAKER - IV**  
Mr Fahad Hussain



**MODERATOR**  
Ms Fareeha Idrees

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- At present, everyone is involved in narrative building due to the Information Computer Technology revolution. Previously, there were means to check facts, but nowadays various sources of disinformation are clouding the truth.
- Post-truth is the most-used word as emotions have overtaken facts and made the truth murky.
- Globally, media is viewed as an ideologist not just a watchdog. It demonizes one's opponents through exaggerated moralizing thereby blurring the line between personal interests and universal values.
- Role of State media as a gatekeeper is no longer effective as it is being devoured by the flood of social media.
- Social Media is a mass device for the conversion of information. Its cognitive dissonance influences people's attitudes and behavioural decisions by presenting them with inconsistent thoughts and beliefs; while its cognitive bias shows the content of one's liking restricting all that one dislikes.
- Certain social media reforms are underway such as removing cognitive bias so that contrary/conflicting ideas may find space. Social Media knowledge, working and, mechanisms are a science that must be learnt, improvised and leveraged to serve the interests of the state for narrative building.

# DAY 3

## Session II

6 December, 2023

### Looking into the Future - Technology & Human Society



# SPEAKERS



**SPEAKER - I**  
Dr Haider Abbass



**SPEAKER - II**  
Dr Athar Osama Siddiqui



**SPEAKER - III**  
Khawaja Muhammad Ali



**SPEAKER - IV**  
Lt Gen Amer Riaz (Retd)



**MODERATOR**  
Ms Sidra Iqbal

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Cyber war is a new domain involving cyber-attacks that threaten critical infrastructure of every country due to heavy dependence on the cyber sphere.
- The future wars would not be to invade other countries geographic boundaries rather will be aimed to neutralize the ecosystems and critical infrastructures.
- National Cyber Emergency Response Team in Pakistan is mainly responsible for the protection, detection and response of cyber-attacks.
- AI is a threat to the workforce because a massive drive for building a knowledge economy in Pakistan is on its way, however, healthcare and education sectors of Pakistan can be benefitted from AI.
- The unavailability of data and inadequate Computational Hubs in Pakistan are challenges that require public – private partnership. Moreover, there is a need to establish a big data authority in Pakistan alongwith open data policy.
- The modern war seeks to restructure socio-political order of the target state. This is done to exploit vulnerability, accentuate the collective will, and replace it with a 'Pliant Regime'.
- The impact of technology is immense as it has impacted war directly and indirectly. War will become more pervasive and will be everyday business by state and non-state actors.

# VISIT - NASTP



# VISIT - NASTP



# PICTURE GALLERY















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