

Annual Report

2022-23

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About JI

Jinnah Institute is an independent policy research and public advocacy think tank in Pakistan that advances the causes of:

Democratic institution building and strengthening state capacity for delivery on policy goals;
National and human security discourse with an emphasis on regional peace;
Entitlement to fundamental rights and freedoms;
Accountability of public bodies and government;
Building public equity in a plural and inclusive national identity.

To meet these objectives, Jinnah Institute engages with policy-makers, government, media, civil society, state institutions and academia. The Institute actively seeks to articulate independent national security strategies for Pakistan which incorporate the country's strategic imperatives while providing room for constructive engagement with the international community, as well as policy and opinion makers.

By serving as a bridge between academia and policy-making, and focusing on capacity building for the state and other policy making institutions, the Institute creates an enabling context and public space for ideas and resources to come together through mediums such as policy briefs, reports,

lectures, seminars, round-tables and caucuses. Within this framework, the two overarching program areas under which the Institute undertakes a variety of projects and interventions are:

- a. Open Democracy Initiative
- b. Strategic Security Initiative

Under these operational streams, Jinnah Institute seeks to accomplish a series of different but complementary objectives that work towards achieving the Institute's overarching goal of establishing a more democratic, transparent and inclusive environment for policymaking and a more tolerant, open and peaceful Pakistan.

POLICY ROUNDTABLES



Building Resilience Amidst a Poly Crisis

March 9, 2023

Any projection of crisis resilience in Pakistan is foregrounded by the ongoing economic emergency, which has reversed human development gains and compounded vulnerability, stated experts at Jinnah Institute's roundtable discussion titled 'Building Resilience Amidst a Poly Crisis'. They discussed ways in which resilience can be programmed through interventions in human rights, social protection and climate adaptation. They observed that 'resilience' ran the risk of being turned into a development catch-phrase, added to a long list of redundant approaches that are not backed by evidence. They argued that discussing 'resilience' without addressing vulnerability creates a false impression that communities have 'bounced back' from disaster, whereas many never return

to their flawed origin. Mere survival should not be confused with resilience, they added. A major domain for building resilience is new-age skills among young professionals. Analysis of Pakistan's skills profile reveals that contemporary professional skills are not being developed for domestic or international markets. Given the current challenges the country faces, urgent investment in human capital is needed to address this situation. Climate resilience has come into sharp focus after last year's megaflood, whose impact on vulnerable communities is still being felt in underdeveloped districts. Participants recommended that dense policy debates, such as climate change, need to be made easily understandable to decision-makers as well as communities to facilitate adaptation.



Status of Afghan Refugees and Migrants: A Humanitarian Perspective

March 24, 2023

Consistent failure to evolve an effective refugee policy for Afghan migrants has caused stress and suffering among Afghan communities, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and poverty, stated experts at Jinnah Institute's roundtable titled 'Status of Afghan Refugees & Migrants; A Humanitarian Perspective', held in partnership with Verso Consulting. Pakistan has hosted a large Afghan refugee population since 1979, with 1.3 million registered refugees, 58% in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 23% in Balochistan, and the rest in urban centres. Participants noted that Afghan refugees face daily threats, intimidation, and extortion by law enforcement, and lack access to public healthcare

and education due to registration issues. Many are relegated to informal work and live in poverty-stricken peri-urban slums, suffering from widespread discrimination. This marginalization is rooted in the absence of a coherent integration framework. Some participants argued Pakistan had already borne a disproportionate burden, with hosting refugees straining the economy and society, while others emphasized the international community's responsibility, though global focus has shifted, especially post-Ukraine war. Ultimately, they stressed the need for improved border management and recognition that addressing the Afghan refugee crisis is a moral obligation Pakistan has long neglected.



Minority Representation in Pakistan: Tackling Neglect and Discrimination

April 7, 2023

The ongoing national census in Pakistan offers a crucial opportunity to count minority communities and assess their political representation and socio-economic status. Despite population growth among minorities since the last census, their representation in parliament remains stagnant at levels similar to the 1980s. With political instability delaying legislative normalcy, prospects for increased representation are slim, according to experts at Jinnah Institute's roundtable 'Minority Representation in Pakistan: Tackling Neglect and Discrimination'. Participants noted that while political parties have historically pledged support for minority uplift in their manifestos, such commitments have taken a backseat amid the ongoing economic and political crises. Even with rising violence against religious minorities, their issues remain largely ignored, and there is little indication that parties are preparing inclusive manifestos ahead of potential elections in 2023. A recurring concern raised was the persistent neglect of sanitation workers, described as "the most excluded minority", who face hazardous conditions with minimal job security or benefits. Roughly 80% of Pakistan's waste workers come from minority communities and are typically

employed under precarious short-term contracts to bypass labor protections. Though governments are required to allocate 5% of jobs to minorities, only 2.8% of positions have been filled, mostly in low-wage roles. Participants highlighted systemic prejudice as a key barrier, with discriminatory practices such as advertising sanitation jobs exclusively for non-Muslims. They emphasized that the real issue is not a lack of skill but entrenched exclusion. The discussion closed with a call for political parties to update their stances on minority rights, particularly in response to documented abuses involving forced conversions, extremist violence, and structural discrimination.

Strategies for Regional Stability: The Indo-Pak Equation

October 2-4, 2022

Jinnah Institute convened a policy roundtable with experts on 2nd October 2022 titled “Strategies for Regional Stability: The Indo-Pak Equation” to take stock of the bilateral relations between India & Pakistan as well as explore avenues of cooperation to achieve regional peace & stability. As the two neighbours appear disinterested in formal engagements, even on the subject of LoC, Indo-Pak relations seem to have hit an impasse.

With no mutual interests at stake, both countries are viewing regional developments from a different lens. Both countries don't appear too keen to rekindle cooperation on any front, especially since India has no economic stakes vested in Pakistan, unlike China. The missile firing incident further escalated tensions between the two nuclear powers, as India's ability to issue timely warnings was brought to question by the participants.

Avenues for Collaboration between India & Pakistan

23, January, 2023

Jinnah Institute convened a roundtable with policy experts on 23-01-2023 titled 'Avenues for Collaboration between India & Pakistan'. The session aimed to take stock of the current dynamics between India & Pakistan, possible avenues of collaboration, and several diplomatic & confidence building measures (CBM) that can improve the relationship between these age-old

adversaries. In the aftermath of abrogation of Article 370, the relations between India & Pakistan remain unfriendly. The experts deliberated on the possible common grounds for both nations to coexist peacefully, as well as Pakistan's strategy towards India in the backdrop of recent regional & global developments.

TRACK-II DIALOGUES



The Chao Track

January 27-30, 2023

Senior policy stakeholders from India and Pakistan convened for The Chao Track from 27th–30th January, 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand. The conference sessions focused on measures for conflict de-escalation,

prospects for engagement on key issues. The Chao Track also hosted an Experts' dialogue on 27th January, 2023 focusing on climate action, South Asia's rising food vulnerability, and prospects for cooperation on disaster resilience.

India-Pakistan Track II Dialogue

October 2-4, 2022

Senior policymakers, practitioners, media persons and journalists from India and Pakistan convened for The Chao Track from 2nd – 4th October, 2022. The dialogue sessions focused on creating an environment conducive for stability; contextualising global developments and challenges; and managing transboundary challenges like climate change.

The Chao Track held an Experts' dialogue on 4th October, 2022 focusing on regional climate vulnerabilities, adaptation needs; and opportunities and challenges in addressing disasters.

POLICY EVENTS



Academia, Media & National Security

September 13, 2022

Jinnah Institute in collaboration with Near East South Asia (NESAs) Centre convened a day long conference on 13th September, 2022 titled 'Academia, Media and National Security'. The conference brought together policy practitioners, academics, mediapersons and opinion leaders to weigh in on the role of policy stakeholders who implement and audit national security frameworks. There are multiple actors and institutions at work in the security sector, whose collective efforts have yielded a series of reforms in policy procedures, as well as delivery mechanisms over the last decade. However, policy reform is a continuous

and painstaking process that needs greater coordination, transparency and communication between state institutions to achieve desirable policy outcomes. The conference aimed to create dialogue between state institutions and civil society organizations to help review procedural gaps, best practices, shared opportunities and limitations that determine the course of national security, and security sector reform.



Road to Resilience: What is Pakistan's Capacity and Commitment?

October 31, 2022

ISLAMABAD: "Pakistan's floods are a memo from nature itself for major emitters to realize that the catastrophe seen in Pakistan will not stay within our borders," stated Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman at Jinnah Institute's conference titled 'Road to Resilience: What is Pakistan's adaptation capacity and commitment?' on 27th October, 2022. To enable resilience and secure a future for vulnerable communities, Pakistan will need to undertake a great deal of interprovincial coordination, financial support and executive synchronisation. Poor communities will not wait for international funding to trickle in, as they need to build back their lives and homesteads immediately. Unless we are realistic in our ability to assist them, they will be forced to spend this winter in the dark confines of extreme fragility, she stated. Adil Najam, the inaugural dean of Pardee School of Global Studies, University of Boston observed that 27th COP Summit serves as a reminder of how global diplomacy has failed to tackle climate challenges. Aisha Khan, Executive Director of Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change stated

that Pakistan's galloping demographic increase raised the question of whether we can continue with our current agricultural practices. Kashmala Kakakhel, climate finance specialist said Pakistan needs to change its narrative on climate change, and look at adaptation as an economic issue, not just a human and social cause.

UNIVERSITY TOWNHALLS



Climate Equity: Making Invisible Communities Matter

Bahria University - 17 December 2022

What is the intersection between the science and sociology of climate change, and why is it important to understand? Why has equity emerged as the top question in debates on climate action? More importantly, why have other vulnerable countries managed this crisis better than Pakistan has? Jinnah Institute organised a University Town Hall in collaboration with Bahria University (Islamabad) titled 'Climate Equity: Making Invisible Communities Matter' to discuss these themes with an eminent panel of experts including environmental journalist Afia Salam, leftist politician Ismat Shahjahan, and anchorperson Tanzeela Mazhar. The session was moderated by Jinnah Institute's Director Programs, Salman Zaidi. Afia Salam explained that the scientific basis of global warming was established decades ago, but its deleterious impact across the globe, especially upon communities with no contribution to climate degradation, was confessed rather late by major emitters. After toiling for 27 years, developing countries have convinced the Global North that

their relentless industrial growth is costing lives and livelihoods in the poorest regions of the world, and a Loss & Damage mechanism has been created at the COP forum in acknowledgment of this asymmetry. Ismat Shahjahan stated that Pakistan's class-system is deeply rooted in social and political injustice, and makes the working class invisible. The climate crisis is a product of the exploitative history of consumerism and capitalism; systems chosen by affluent classes at the expense of blue-collar workers. Tanzeela Mazhar observed that there are glaring differentials between the poor and powerful accessing justice in Pakistan. The climate equity and justice debate provides a useful arena to demonstrate how socio-political privilege is skewed towards certain groups, to the detriment of all others. She stated that social prejudice is deeply embedded in our culture, but it must be called out and corrected. "We cannot sit back and say society will find its balance through the process of evolution.



Climate Catastrophes: Who Gets Left Behind?

Quaid-i-Azam University – 15 December 2022

Global debates on climate justice emphasise the principle of leaving no one behind, yet the arduous journey of rebuilding in the wake of climate catastrophes has shown that many communities will not make it to the end. Is climate justice a mere slogan, and will the call for rights-based climate action remain unanswered? To unpack this debate, Jinnah Institute convened a University Town Hall titled ‘Climate Catastrophe: Who Gets Left Behind?’ in collaboration with Quaid-e-Azam University. The event was moderated by Salman Zaidi, Director Jinnah Institute, and senior experts including environmental journalist Afia Salam, academic Noaman G. Ali and gender expert Shabana Arif discussed these themes with students and faculty members. The Global South has historically paid the cost of Western countries’ development, and this continues to be the case today, stated Afia Salam. Although the causation of climate catastrophes is not attributable to us in the global south, yet we remain badly affected by its ramifications. Shabana Arif highlighted that

climate injustice is fundamentally connected to gender inequalities and gender-based violence, which become more evident during times of crisis. In addition to traditional forms of gender-based violence, natural disasters have pushed women further away from avenues of justice, maternal healthcare, primary education and nutrition. Social inequities, political turmoil and corruption have worsened the impact of climate disasters, said Noaman Ghazanfar Ali. Climate change is the latest lens to review the systemic crisis in Pakistan, although the water sector, environment, food and agriculture have long witnessed our failures in governance.



The Polarised State: Can Social Media Help a Fractured Polity?

University of Lahore – 30 November 2022

Has the media been a progressive force for overcoming political faultlines? With political polarisation emerging as the top challenge for the next decade, can the media be expected to emerge as an arbiter for competing political interests? These questions were brought up at Jinnah Institute's University Town Hall titled 'The Polarised State: Can Social Media Help a Fractured Polity?' held in collaboration with University of Lahore, where Salman Zaidi, Director Jinnah Institute (JI), sat down with a panel of prominent experts and moderated questions from students. Barrister Asad Rahim Khan observed that partisan reporting by mainstream media has led large cohorts of viewers to migrate to platforms like Twitter to learn about current affairs. Journalist and television anchor Tanzila Mazhar agreed that devoid of two-way communication, mainstream media is no longer a preferred source of news consumption. Instead, interactive news sharing over social media, where the public is a stakeholder, fosters greater trust and reliance on

these platforms. Senior editor Zebunnisa Burki highlighted that the global expansion of social media has surely paved the way for political polarisation, but the reach of social media has also brought attention to civil rights movements that would have otherwise remained dormant or been silenced. This is a window of opportunity towards building a more politically cohesive society.

OPINION EDITORIALS



The Season of Climate Migrants

By Saif Jamali

September 1, 2022

Human migration is the most disruptive outcome of climate-induced stress, as seen in Pakistan where epic flash floods and recurring monsoon cycles have displaced hundreds of thousands. In 2020 alone, 680,000 people were forced to move due to sea-level rise, water stress, and drought—figures expected to triple by 2050. Most of these migrants are rural poor who rely on agriculture, livestock, forestry, or fisheries, and who continue to face worsening poverty and food insecurity. Unplanned movement toward

urban centres like Karachi, which has absorbed over 1.2 million people from the Indus Delta, is straining infrastructure and services. While frameworks exist, such as Pakistan’s Climate Change Policy and initiatives like blue economy projects in the Indus Delta, a dedicated climate migration policy is urgently needed to safeguard vulnerable communities, especially women, from repeated displacement and deepening destitution.

FLASHPOINT



Ayman al-Zawahiri's Killing

August 15, 2022

Jinnah Institute reached out to policy experts to solicit their views on the killing of Ayman al-Zawahiri in a US drone strike, and the future of Al-Qaeda following these developments. Experts were also asked to shed light on the implications it will have on Pakistan and the US' strategy vis a vis Taliban. Amb. Zamir Akram emphasized that the US is focused on Russia and China, with counterterrorism being its primary interest, which may boost Biden's popularity and further degrade Al-Qaeda, though ISIS may become an increasing threat. Dr. Fahd Humayun highlighted that Zawahiri's death undermines the Taliban's claims of severing ties with Al-Qaeda, raising concerns about their support for other militant groups like the TTP. Huma Yusuf noted that Zawahiri's death could fuel fragmentation within Afghanistan's militant groups, strengthening the TTP's position in negotiations with Pakistan. Amina Khan pointed out that the Taliban's failure to prevent Zawahiri's presence in Kabul casts doubt on their ability to control extremism, especially as ISKP and TTP activity increase.



SCO Summit In India

May 1, 2023

The attendance of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at the upcoming SCO summit has generated significant anticipation, as it will mark the first visit by a top Pakistani official to India in over a decade. In light of this development, Jinnah Institute has engaged senior foreign policy experts to provide their perspectives on the objectives of the visit, as well as its potential impact on both bilateral and regional relations. Amb. Riaz Khokhar stressed that Bilawal should use the multilateral platform to reaffirm Pakistan's commitment to the UN Charter, highlight Indian disinformation on the Pulwama attack, and emphasize regional cooperation. Amb. Aziz Ahmed Khan noted that the visit is about multilateralism, not a thaw with India, and future bilateral talks should depend on India's actions in Kashmir. Amb. Tehmina Janjua highlighted that while the visit aims to reinforce support for the SCO and regional peace, any breakthroughs with India are unlikely given the current Indian government's ideological stance. Amb. Salman Bashir pointed out the strategic importance of the SCO and the opportunity for Pakistan to engage with regional players like China and Russia, despite limited chances for progress with India.

WEBINARS

JINNAH INSTITUTE

JINNAH INSTITUTE WEBINAR

Upskilling the Young Majority:
What Does Pakistan's Vocational Profile Look Like?

Dr. Faisal Bari
Associate Professor
of Economics &
Education, LLMS

Ammara Durrani
Assistant Resident
Representative
Chief, UNDP

Salman Zaidi
Director Programs
Jinnah Institute
Moderator

29 July, 2022 4:30 PM

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Upskilling the Young Minority: What does Pakistan's Vocational Profile Look Like?

July 29, 2022

Does Pakistan's vocational profile prime it for the 4th Industrial Revolution? On the occasion of World Youth Skills day, Salman Zaidi (Director, Jinnah Institute) speaks to distinguished experts Dr. Faisal Bari (Asst. Prof. Economics & Education, LLMS), and Ammara Durrani (Asst. Resident Rep., UNDP Pakistan). The discussion explored Pakistan's limited preparedness for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, highlighting the country's persistent skills mismatch and low-quality education system that left millions of young people unequipped for evolving job markets. Over 35% of youth were not in education, employment, or training

(NEET), with deep-rooted disparities based on class, geography, and gender. Despite the potential of Pakistan's youth bulge, inadequate public investment in human capital, particularly in education and vocational training, had hindered meaningful progress. Speakers underscored the critical yet under-leveraged role of the private sector, which had shown promise in skilling youth but remained under-incentivized by the state. The conversation concluded with a call for long-term, inclusive policy reforms that positioned youth not just as economic actors, but as agents of social development.

TEAM

Salman Zaidi

Director Programs

Salman Zaidi works as Director Programs at Jinnah Institute. He was part of the Institute's founding team in 2010 and leads on multiple thematic areas, particularly Track 2 diplomacy projects, democratic governance, and climate change. Zaidi also consults with international development agencies on improving federal and provincial policy frameworks for security, technology, economic growth, and climate change. He is currently a member of the PM's Advisory Council on Climate Change and has previously been a member of the National Security Advisory Group on Gender. He has authored and edited multiple publications, and holds an MSc in Violence, Conflict and Development from SOAS, UK.

Mustehsan Rasool Kazmi

Manager Finance

Syed Mustehsan is Director Finance at Jinnah Institute. With 13 years of experience in the field of Accounting and Finance, he is responsible for managing treasury functions of the Jinnah Institute. He holds an Executive Masters of Business Administration (EMBA) from the Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST).

Willson William

Executive Assistant

Willson William is Executive Assistant at the Jinnah Institute. William provides support in maintaining accounts and provides administrative support to the Institute while managing logistics and procurement.

Meera Nadeem

Senior Program Manager

Meera is Project Manager, Strategic Security Initiative (SSI) at Jinnah Institute where she is responsible for research and logistics for the SSI Project activities including its umbrella projects, and manages the Chaophraya Dialogue - the longest consistently running Indo-Pak Track II initiative and its operations. Additionally, she assists in ensuring the timely delivery of other SSI outputs, including managing media monitoring briefs. She is a McGill graduate with a double major in Anthropology and International Development with a focus on Economic Development. In the past, she has worked in the Oil and Gas sector and has professional work experience in technical writing and communications that spans over 2 years. Meera is also the co-founder of the Islamabad Civic Innovation Lab, a dedicated volunteer run chapter of Code for Pakistan that is a part design lab, part community caucus, and part accelerator of civic startups with a focus on designing real solutions with-and-for communities in-and-around Islamabad by bridging the gap between technology and government interfaces for the public. She has an avid interest in the arts and enjoys creating some in her spare time.



Saif Jamali

Program Manager

Saif Jamali works as Program Manager at Jinnah Institute. His work focuses on the implementation of JI's portfolio, primarily the Strategic Security Program.

Saif comes from a multidisciplinary background, and has previously been working with various non-profits on social sector policy and practice, primarily in the reproductive health and gender domains. Concurrently, he has also worked on various content development and editorial projects. Academically, he holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, and a masters in project management.

Zarghona Babar

Project Manager

Zarghona Babar is a Project Manager at Jinnah Institute. Prior to this she has worked in the microfinance sector to address, mitigate and resolve non-financial governance, integrity, environmental, social and sustainability issues.

She holds a holistic understanding of the public sector and has a work profile spanning the entire range of the project cycle. Zarghona is a graduate from London School of Economics in Sociology and has a Masters degree in Human Resource Management. She is also an experienced lecturer with a demonstrated history of working in the education arenas and non-profit sector.

Zeemal Ali

Program Officer

Zeemal Ali serves as a Program Officer at Jinnah Institute. She has previously worked closely with the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, Standing Committee on Climate Change and Public Accounts Committee. Zeemal has been actively involved in promoting evidence-based legislation, effective oversight and representation of women, post-legislative scrutiny of laws and in providing technical assistance for various legislative reforms.

Zeemal holds a Bachelor degree (Law) from IIUI and Masters degree (International Maritime Law) from Bahria University Islamabad.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Sherry Rehman

Senator Sherry Rehman is Parliamentary Leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in Senate, as well as the party's Vice-President. She is the Founding Chair and serving President of the Jinnah Institute, Chair of the Climate Change Caucus in Parliament, Chair of the CPEC Committee in Senate and Chair of PPP's Committee on Foreign Affairs. Rehman has served as the Leader of Opposition in Senate, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States and Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting.



Aziz Ahmad Khan

Ambassador (rtd) Aziz Ahmad Khan is a career diplomat who is consultant at the National Defence University in Islamabad. He has served as Pakistan's High Commissioner to New Delhi from June 2003-2006, and was Additional Foreign Secretary (June 2000 to June 2002). He is also Executive Advisor to the international relations quarterly, "The Criterion".



Iqbal Ali Lakhani

Iqbal Lakhani is Chairman, Aga Khan Economic Planning Board for Pakistan. He is the Vice President American Business Council of Pakistan, and ranking member of the Pakistan Business Council. Lakhani is also chairman of the Lakson Group of Companies, one of the largest publicly listed manufacturing conglomerates in Pakistan, with high governance benchmarks. Iqbal Lakhani is a phi beta kappa from UCLA Berkeley.



Salim Raza

Mr. Raza was Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, from January 2009 until June 2010. Prior to that appointment, between 2006 and 2009, he had been CEO of the Pakistan Business Council. Syed Salim Raza is an international banker with a Masters from Oxford University and a distinguished career spanning many countries. He was CEO of Citibank in Pakistan in the mid-1980s. Most recently Raza has been involved with governance metrics, regulatory frameworks and policy development in Pakistan.



Jameel Yousaf

Jameel Yusuf is Founding Chief, Citizens Police Liaison Committee, Central Reporting Cell. He has been Member of the Law & Order Commission of Pakistan, Federal Ministry of Interior & Narcotics Control, and is currently Member, Implementation Watch Committee of the National Commission on the Status of Women, Government of Pakistan. Jameel Yusuf is Chairman of a Multinational Group, TPL Holdings (Pvt.) Ltd.



Nadeem Hussain

Nadeem Hussain is CEO and President of Tameer Bank, Pakistan's first private sector microfinance bank and world leader in branchless banking. Hussain has been on the Board of Governors of Institute of Business Administration, and is currently Vice-Chairman of Pakistan Microfinance Network, Trustee of Indus Foundation, and Member of the Renewable Energy Task Force for the Government of Pakistan.

BOARD OF ADVISORS



Ayesha Jalal

Ayesha Jalal is a leading historian on South Asia, currently a MacArthur Fellow and professor at Tufts University. Her research focuses on modern Muslim identities in South Asia and the creation of the Pakistan state. Dr. Jalal has been an Associate Professor at Columbia University and a Visiting Associate Professor at Harvard University. She has authored several books, including *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* and *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia*. Jalal is a member of the Editorial Board for *Third World Quarterly*.



Ambassador Najmuddin Shaikh

Ambassador Najmuddin Shaikh served as Pakistan's Foreign Secretary from April 1994 to February 1997. Having joined the Foreign Service of Pakistan in 1961, Ambassador Shaikh has 38 years of service to his credit and has held several ambassadorial assignments including Ambassador to Canada (1987-89), Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany (1989-90), Ambassador to the United States (1990-91), and Ambassador to Iran (1992-94). He obtained degrees of B.Com from Sindh University and an M.A. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. He is a political and security commentator, and is regularly published in international relations journals, and featured in local and foreign media.



Shahnaz Wazir Ali

Shahnaz Wazir Ali has an illustrious career as an educationist, development policy specialist, and women's rights activist. She has served as a member of the Pakistan Peoples Party and was twice elected to the National Assembly of Pakistan. Wazir Ali held positions such as Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Sectors and Minister of State for Education. She has worked as a Senior Education Specialist at the World Bank and has been a Trustee of the Education Trust running Nasra Schools in Karachi. She is currently the Provincial Coordinator for the Government of Sindh on primary health care programs and President of the Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Sciences and Technology.



Nasim Zehra

Nasim Zehra is a prominent expert on foreign affairs and national security, contributing to major publications such as The News, Gulf News, and Arab News. She has lectured at prestigious institutions like the National Defence College and Johns Hopkins, and served on Pakistan's Presidential Advisory Committee on Foreign Policy and National Security.



Khawar Mumtaz

Khawar Mumtaz is the current Chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), bringing almost 30 years of experience in human rights advocacy and women's empowerment. A founding member of the Women Action Forum (WAF), she has played a key role in shaping the discourse on democracy and women's rights in Pakistan. Mumtaz has served as CEO of Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre and has been involved with organizations like ARROW, UNEP International Resource Panel, and PANOS South Asia. She has authored several books, including Women's Rights and the Punjab Peasant Movement and Beyond Risk Management. In 2006, she was awarded the Sitara-e-Imtiaz for her social service and promotion of women's rights.



Dr. Syed Rifaat Hussain

Dr. Syed Rifaat Hussain is Professor and the Chair of the Department of Defence and Strategic Studies at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Prior to this, he has served as the Chair of the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at the National University in Islamabad, and the Executive Director of the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Professor Hussain has also taught at the Political Science Department, Stanford University, California, USA. He serves as a member of the editorial boards of many diverse publications, such as the South Asia Journal and the National Defense University Journal and Regional Studies Quarterly. Professor Hussain is the author of numerous books and publications. He received his M.A. and PhD in International Studies from the University of Denver, Colorado, USA.



Shahid Hafiz Kardar

Shahid Hafiz Kardar is an economist and the 16th Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan. He has previously served as Minister for Finance, Planning & Development, Excise and Taxation, and Industries & Minerals Development in the Government of Punjab. Kardar has held various leadership positions, including Chairman of the Punjab Education Foundation and Member of the National Commission for Government Reform. He has also advised international organizations such as the World Bank and ADB on economic matters. Kardar has authored three books and numerous papers on Pakistan's economic issues.



General Talat Masood

General Talat Masood served in the Pakistani Army for 39 years, retiring in 1990 as Secretary for Defence Production in the Ministry of Defence. Prior to this, Lt. Gen. Masood was chairman and chief executive of the Pakistan Ordnance Factories Board. A graduate of the Pakistan Command and Staff College and the National Defence College of the Armed Forces, Lt. Gen. Masood has a B.Sc in mechanical engineering and a Masters in Defence and Strategic Studies. He has authored several articles and book chapters and is a frequent participant and speaker in international conferences. General Masood is the chief coordinator for Pugwash and its council member.



Dr. Akmal Hussain

Dr. Akmal Hussain is an economist and specializes in development and institution-building for overcoming poverty. Currently, he is the Chairman of the Working Group on Poverty Reduction Strategy and Human Resource Development for the 10th Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan and a Professor of Economics at the Beaconhouse National University in Lahore. Dr. Hussain has worked as the honorary CEO of the Punjab Rural Support Program (PRSP). He has also helped to establish the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund and LEAD (Leadership for Environment and Development, Pakistan) as the founding member of the Board of Directors of both institutions. He has authored three books on economic policy and co-authored/contributed chapters to 27 other books, 29 publications in journals and contributed over 100 newspaper articles on economic and social issues.



Dr. Ishrat Hussain

Ishrat Husain is a renowned economist and former Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan. A recipient of Hilal-e-Imtiaz, Husain has served as Chairman, National Commission for Government Reforms reporting directly to the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan. He has also held the office of Dean and Director, Institute of Business Administration Karachi. He is currently a member of Middle East Advisory Group of the IMF and the Regional Advisory Group of the UNDP, the Executive Board of Association of Management Development institutions of South Asia (AMDISA) and the Chairman World Economic Forum Global Advisory Council on Pakistan. He has authored 18 books and monographs and contributed more than three dozen articles in refereed journals and 27 chapters in books.

Ali Dayan Hasan



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