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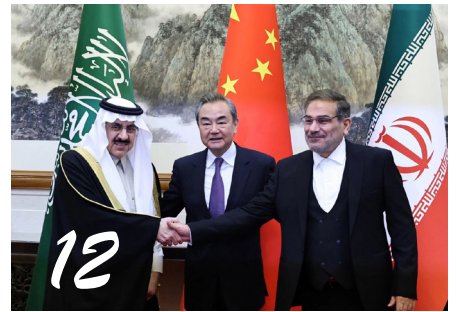
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THE VISION CONTENTS

JULY 2023

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MESSAGE FROM PATRON IN CHIEF	04
CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE	05
EDITORIAL NOTE	06
LIST OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS	07



ARTICLES

□ Wither WEF	09
By: Ikram Sehgal	
□ Time to Reflect	12
By: Kalim Farooqui	
□ Saudi-Iran Rapprochement: Finally, Some Good News	15
By: Dr. Huma Baqai	
□ AUKUS & Future of Indo-Pacific II	18
By: Cmdr M. Azam Khan	
□ Tourism and Pakistan	21
By: Dr. Abdul Azim Akbar	
□ Saudi Arabia's Path into Modernity	24
By: Dr. Bettina Robotka	



EVENTS	41
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Patron-in-Chief
Ikram Sehgal

It is very satisfying to see the latest edition of our magazine “The Vision” maintain the usual high standard of articles.

KCFR continues to grow and make its mark on the global stage by its active participation in Switzerland on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Annual Summit at Davos. KCFR’s distinguished members are able to exchange and interact on crucial economic and geopolitical issues with national and international personalities. Continuing the traditions of previous years, Pathfinder Group will support KCFR in holding the traditional **PAKISTAN BREAKFAST** to host important personalities that have included Pakistan’s President, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Chief Ministers of the Provinces and other prominent personalities.

I would like to extend a special thanks to the Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah for his assistance to KCFR to increase the scope of our activities for the benefit of Pakistan, with special emphasis for the Province of Sindh, in the field of investment. With increased financial resources KCFR proposes to enhance our chapter at Islamabad to get more active interaction with the Foreign Embassies and trade delegations visiting Islamabad and Lahore.

I wish KCFR’s continued success in its ventures nationally and internationally.

(Ikram Sehgal)

**Chairperson**

Mrs. Nadira Panjwani, HI SI

The latest edition of our magazine, "The Vision" has been issued and I am pleased to see articles by members of KCFR in this publication.

KCFR continues to engage with the diplomatic community with its core objective of promoting Pakistan's perspectives and interests in every possible manner. Many national and international dignitaries, ambassadors and consuls participated in seminars and talks organized by KCFR both physically and online over the past year. These interactions have been useful in creating bonds of understanding and friendship between the stakeholders and have paved the way for greater engagement.

KCFR was once again visible at Davos, Switzerland during the World Economic Forum of 2023 registering Pakistan's active presence at that prestigious international platform.

Through the extensive efforts of KCFR Patron, Mr Ikram Sehgal, we have successfully initiated collaboration with the Government of Sindh. KCFR will be facilitating efforts of the Investment Department for promotion of international trade linkages. We are fully committed to this collaboration and hope to make it meaningful and outcome based.

I am grateful to all members and friends for their support and reaffirm KCFR's resolve to play its role in the promotion and prosperity of Pakistan.

(Nadira Panjwani, HI SI)

Editorial Note



Here is our first journal of 2023. It includes some very interesting articles on current world affairs, geo-political issues and economic issues. There also are reports on the seminars/webinars held during this period, organized by KCFR in the recent months.

We would like to thank our members and other contributors for writing thought provoking articles for our journal.

We are also thankful to our members and friends for their help by placing ads of their businesses in this journal.

We will be pleased to receive comments on the articles presented in this journal and suggestions in any way for our future publications.



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Karachi Council on Foreign Relations (KCFR) is a prominent think tank at Karachi since 2003 which deliberates in the fields of Foreign Relations and Economic Affairs. Late former Chief Justice of Pakistan and Governor Sindh Mr. Justice Saeeduz-zaman Siddiqui was our founding Chairman. Former Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral (R) Shahid Karimullah, former Federal Minister Lieutenant General (R) Moinuddin Haider, Sr. Advocate Mr. Liaquat Merchant, Senior Defense Analyst and Vice Chairman of CPNE, Mr. Ikram Sehgal and Vice Admiral Khalid Mir were also our Chairmen.

A large number of former Ambassadors Generals, Admirals, Intellectuals and a number of Elite Chairmen and CEOs of Industries and Businesses are our members. We hold Conferences, Seminars and interact with local and foreign dignitaries on a number of topics related to subjects of national and international importance. About three hundred distinguished Foreign Dignitaries Delegates visiting Pakistan and Ambassadors have addressed our members at Karachi.

KCFR also conjoins and has signed MOUs with a number of foreign institutions and think tanks of USA, China, Nepal, Egypt etc. And National Institutions KCFR was again prominent at World Economic Forum (WEF) Davos Switzerland.

KCFR also interacts with the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and hosts other related Institutions. Ambassadors/ High Commissioners, accredited to Pakistan visit us when they come to Karachi, which is the financial hub of Pakistan and gives an opportunity to expand trade and economic relations.



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WITHER WEF



By
Ikram Sehgal

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author is a defence and security analyst, he is Patron-in-Chief Karachi Council on Foreign Relations (KCFR) and the Vice Chairman Board of Management Quaid-e-Azam House Museum [Institute of Nation Building].



After a pause of two years caused by the raging global pandemic the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF), which usually takes place in end January, was convened from 22 May to 26 May, 2022 when the number of Corona infections was thought to come down with the warming of the weather.

Over 2,000 leaders and experts from around the world included the chief executives and chairs of WEF partner and member companies, political leaders and heads of international organizations, civil society representa-

tives, academic experts, youth leaders and key figures from the worlds of art, culture, science and technology.

To quote the WEF message to the world, "The Annual Meeting 2022 will embody the World Economic Forum's philosophy of collaborative, multi stakeholder impact, providing a unique collaborative environment in which to reconnect, share insights, gain fresh perspectives, and build problem-solving communities and initiatives.

Against a backdrop of deepening global frictions and frac-



tures, it will be the starting point for a new era of global responsibility and cooperation” unquote. This year’s agenda included among others, Social Development Goals (SDG), ways how new technologies will change the world, the potential of electro fuels and other topics how to deal with environmental challenges. Representatives of business, politics and social development groups from many countries present themselves and their activities in Davos.

The event brings together more personalities of public life than any other meeting and represents an important interface between big business, politicians and civil society. For Pakistan it is important to be present in Davos. Pakistan presents itself regularly through two major events: the Pakistan Breakfast and the Pakistan Pavilion. Entirely funded by private corporate entities without

any government support, they have become an integral part of Davos. Sponsored and organized initially by Pathfinder Group and later joined by Martin Dow Group Pakistan, this unique presentation has been a tremendous platform for both current and past Pakistani leaders - civilian and military both - to inform the international community and the media about what is really going on in Pakistan in an attempt to improve the image of Pakistan.

The “Pakistan Pavilion” is a kind of open house for interested people where for a full day information on social problems, education but also on technological developments and other interesting news is related in a colloquial form. A second traditional element is the “Pakistan Breakfast” where media representatives and global executives are invited to listen to – apart from eating breakfast to

Pakistani leaders of govt and sometimes from the opposition talking about what is going on in Pakistan.

This Pakistani initiative on the side lines of WEF annual meeting which focusses on deliberations of leading representatives of politics, economy and technology about how to evaluate what is going on in the world right now and how this is influencing global economy, politics and technological trends.

The WEF is host to dozens of different projects bringing together academics with corporate representatives and policy-makers to promote particular issues and positions on a wide array of subjects, from investment to the environment, employment, technology and inequality. From these projects and others, the Forum publishes dozens of reports annually, identifying key issues of importance, risks, opportunities, investments and reforms.

Over the years the WEF has survived by adapting to the times. Following the surge of so-called anti-globalization protests in 1999, the Forum began to invite non-governmental organizations representing constituencies that were more frequently found in the streets protesting against meetings of the WTO, IMF and Group of Seven (G7).

The Forum invited leaders in the 2000 meeting at Davos from 15 NGOs to debate the heads of the WTO and the President of Mexico on the subject of globalization. But WEF began in 1971 as the European Management Forum, inviting roughly 400 of Europe’s top CEOs to promote American forms of business management.

Created by Klaus Schwab, a Swiss national who studied in the US, the Forum changed its name in 1987

to the World Economic Forum after growing into an annual get together of global elites who promoted and profited off of the expansion of “global markets.” It is the gathering place for the titans of corporate and financial power.

Despite the globalization of economy and politics over the decades, the politics at the Forum have remained surprisingly national, to promoting social connections between key global power players and national leaders along with the plutocratic class of corporate and financial oligarchs.

A consistent WEF forum for advanced “networking” and deal-making between companies, occasional geopolitical announcements and agreements, and for the promotion of “global governance” in a world governed of global markets.

Indeed, criticism of the WEF is that it is to function as a socializing institution for the emerging global elite, and promote common ideas, and serve common interests: their own. This is only correct partly, what it achieves in networking and cooperation is truly magnificent.

In 1997, the highly influential U.S. political scientist Samuel Huntington coined the term “Davos Man,” which he described as a group of elite individuals who “have little need for national loyalty, view national boundaries as obstacles that are thankfully vanishing, and see national governments as residues from the past whose only useful function is to facilitate the elite’s global operations.”

In that sense WEF became a promoter of globalization. But with the re-occurrence of Russia and China on the global economic and political screen the western powers dominating WEF had second thoughts.



During the 2009 meeting, two prominent speakers were President Putin of Russia and the Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao. Both leaders painted a picture of the crisis as emanating from the centers of finance and globalization in the United States and elsewhere, with the “blind pursuit of profit” and “the failure of financial supervision” – in Wen’s words – and bringing about what Putin described as a “perfect storm.” Both Wen and Putin, however, declared their intentions to work with the major industrial powers “on solving common economic problems.”

The World Economic Forum has been consistently interested in the prospects of social unrest, protests and resistance movements, particularly those that directly confront the interests of corporate and financial power.

The 2012 WEF meeting took notice of tumultuous and violent upheavals across the Arab world, large anti-austerity movements across much of Europe, notably with the Indignados in Spain, and the Occupy Wall Street movement just months prior in the United States and across much of the world.

It is to be expected that this year’s gathering will promote the western US/NATO stand on the war in Ukraine and demand support for the boycott and cutting out of Russia from international trade and financial and political dealings.

But with most countries of the non-western world not in support of those sanctions it remains to be seen if the WEF can sustain its grip over global economic and political development.

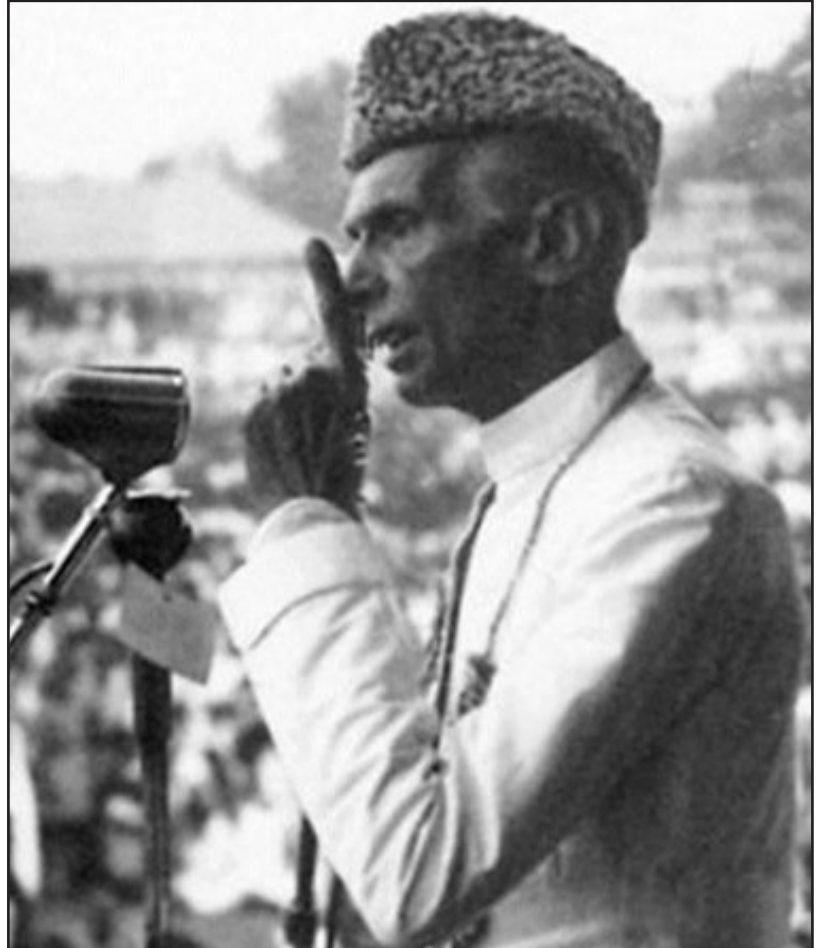
TIME TO REFLECT



By
Kalim Farooqui

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The writer is a member of several Bi-Lateral Business Forums and Chairman of a number of Social Organizations. Recipient of Japan's "The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays" by the Emperor of Japan. and the Managing Director of Technology Links.
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Time is of prime essence now for a nation 75 years old to reflect and mend ways for the way forward. Though, 75 years in a nation's history is not too long, it is long enough to at least set proper direction and build its stature rather than continue to live with conditions and the perception it unfortunately currently holds in the eyes of the world.

The founding fathers adopted a resolution calling for the creation of an independent sovereign state derived from the provinces with Muslim majorities on 23 March 1940. In a short span and with collective desire to gain independence, Pakistan

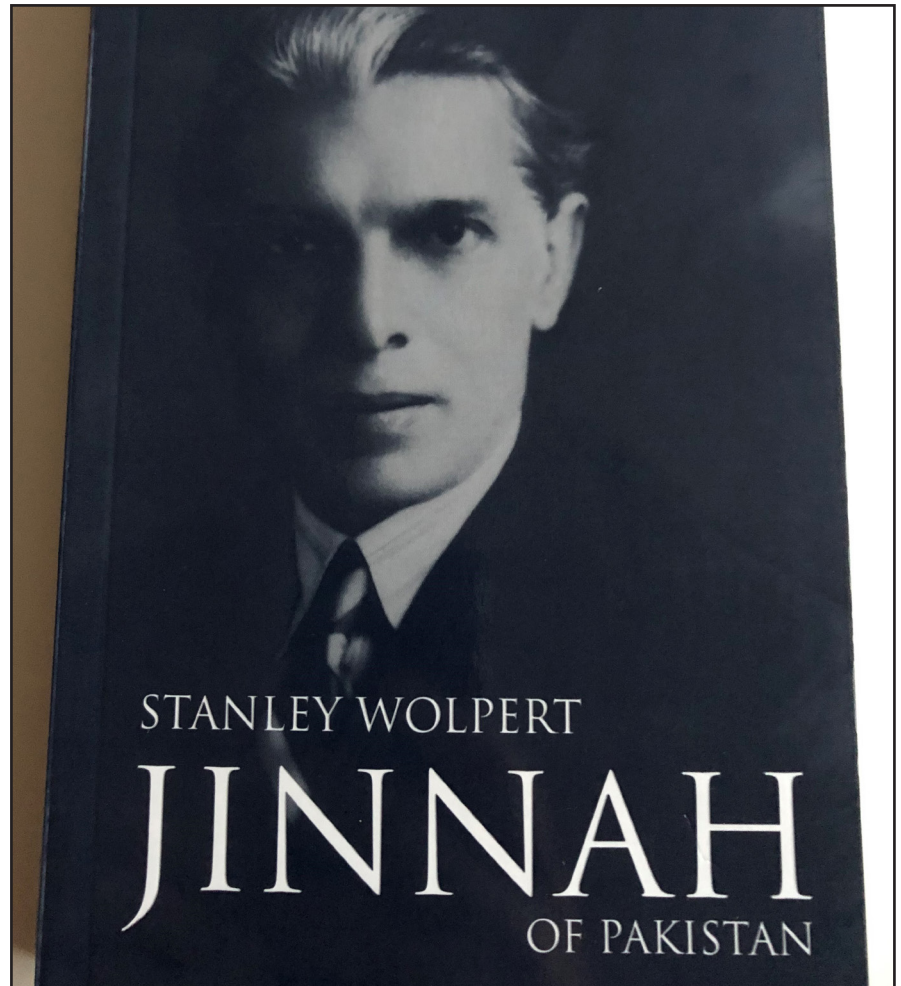
emerged as an independent nation just 7 years later, on the 14th of August, 1947. For anyone to consider it was a quick and effortless achievement would be considered naïve. Freedom fighters had to sacrifice and give up their own personal freedom and risk organizing a massive movement to achieve their objective of gaining independence. In the process they encountered great challenges and immense resistance. However, it was their collective wisdom, endurance and the strategy adopted to face all odds that led to their victory under the able guidance and leadership of our Quaid, Mohammed

Ali Jinnah. Many have written about the history leading to the partition of India and the role played by Quaid-e-Azam, but the way Stanly Wolpert in his book "Jinnah of Pakistan" describes him in a single sentence says it all.

Few individuals significantly alter the course of history. Fewer still modify the map of the world. Hardly anyone can be credited with creating a nation-state... Mohammed Ali Jinnah did all three.

The demise and the absence of the Quaid hardly after a year of Independence (September 11, 1948), made people realize the void that would be created while Pakistan was in its formative stages. Nevertheless, the initial two decades luckily had administrators who had witnessed the struggle themselves that led to Pakistan's independence and were aware of the Quaid's vision. They served without fear or favour with total integrity, honesty, dedication, and sincerity having themselves witness the past and were aware of the great sacrifices made. Public servants associated in all spheres of governance served the country to their best ability bringing laurels which even today are remembered by many as the glories of the past and commonly discussed as the golden era of Pakistan.

In a bipolar world then, Pakistan maneuvered its way keeping the interest of the country and its people supreme. Friendship with all and hostility with none was the principle which led nations far and wide to reach out to Pakistan for the development of their own institutional building. From planning to governance and from helping setup airlines to banks, it was the technocrats from Pakistan who assisted those who considered Pakistan an emerging state to reckon with. It was

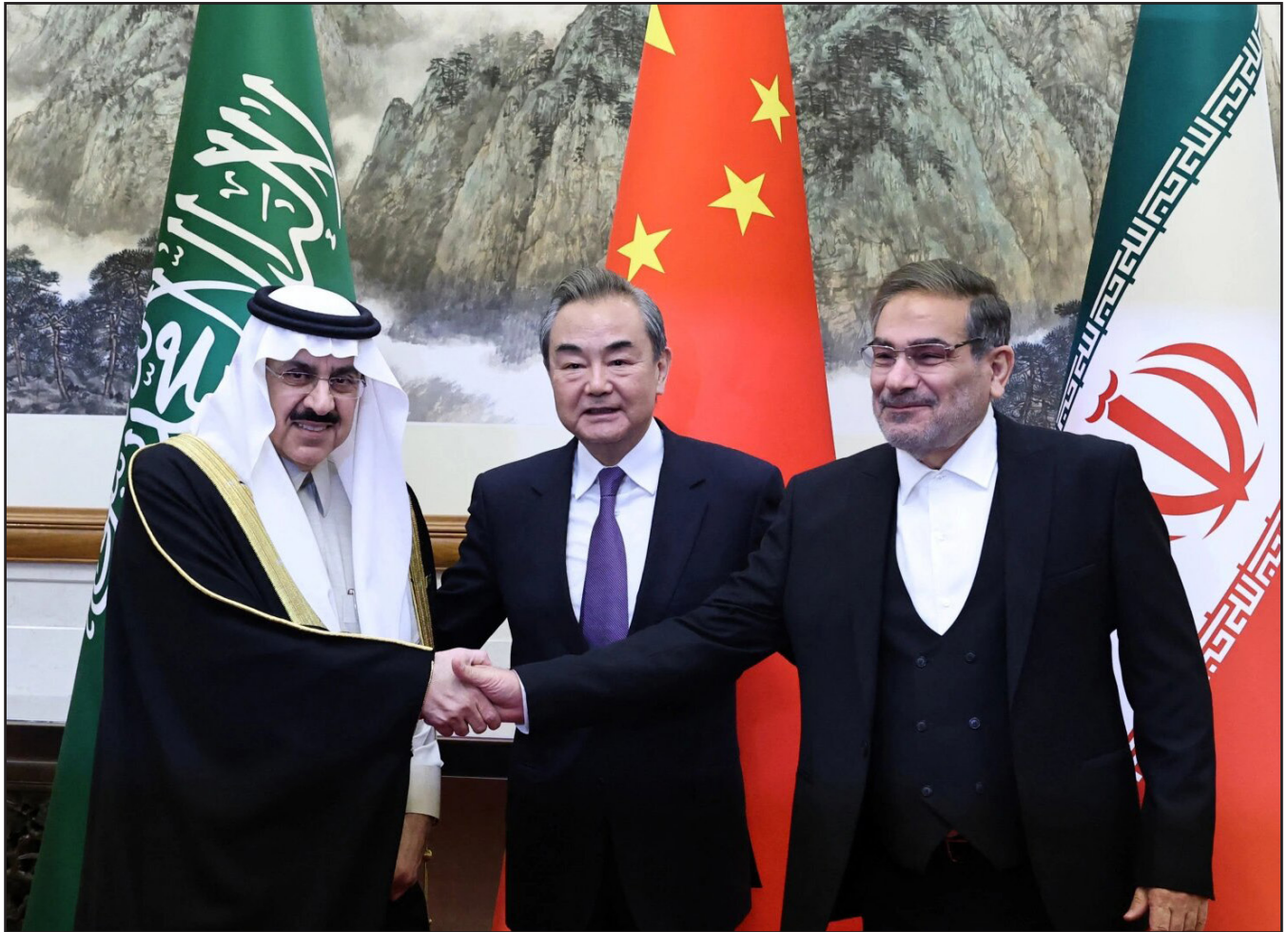


Japan and Germany after the World War II that regained their industrialization in partnership with Pakistan. Korea adopted Pakistan's development program for its own development. Malaysia sought Pakistani legal experts to help them with their constitution.

The growing potential and importance of Pakistan in the region was the key factor for Pakistan becoming member in the likes of Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) of 1954 and Central Treaty Organization of 1955 (CENTO). Pakistan was amongst the select few countries to be included in such very important pacts and treaties by USA to play its evolving role in the region and specially in Asia for being an emerging country pursuing pertinent policies as a developing country should. Consequently, Pakistan was helped by many with its mounting

development needs in different areas including its security. What may surprise many is the Gazette notification of Pakistan of October 13th, 1950, stating the value of British Pound Sterling at 9.5, US\$ 3.5 and with all European currencies below par with even German Mark at 0.75 to the Pakistani Rupee.

It was unfortunate for the country to have gone through an extremely bad patch in the 70's extending for nearly quarter of a century because of regional turmoil and uncertainties. First on account of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and thereafter Pakistan getting involved with the global war on terror after the 9/11 incident in America; not to mention the fallout from the Iran-Iraq war lasting 8 years in the neighborhood. Pakistan had become the front-line state fighting in both cases resulting in human losses of over 70 thou-



sand innocent lives and billions of dollars in terms of economic losses. Pakistan had also in the meantime, denoted nuclear devises to counter the threats from India and in doing so faced sanctions which took a heavy toll on the economy. This is the period when Pakistan faced severe difficulties in overcoming the impediments that were unfortunately created. While Pakistan did suffer enormously, the phenomena was not confined to Pakistan alone. Several countries in the region also went through this precarious phase but meaningfully managed their response to it.

The world today is passing through a difficult phase. Nations are adopting ways and means to overcome their obstacles. Some have not yet recovered from the ravages of the recent pandemic while others are assessing and trying to

adopt to the paradigm shift in international relationships. The recent thaw in relations between Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran is a classic example as also the visit of the Turkish foreign minister to Egypt after a decade of tension.

The bottom line for any nation is the prime interest of its people and what best suits them. Adopting the earlier principle of friendship with all and animosity with none can regain the prestige that Pakistan once enjoyed and benefited from. For us to get back to the reputation and standing we once enjoyed and do away with the perception we unfortunately hold, our decision makers and all stakeholders need to put their heads together and arrive at a consensus.

Assessing what went wrong and adjusting to the present-day requirements of which economy

takes precedence, is the need of the hour. Pakistan has everything a nation can desire. With 220 million plus inhabitants and 60% talented youth under the age of 30 and with all conceivable natural resources at its disposal, all it needs is to be able to come together with a planned strategy for its proper utilization on a fast-track basis.

Pakistan has nothing to fear but fear itself and as the philosopher of the nineteenth century, Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall". It's time now to unite, reflect and act for the way forward.

*Nahin hai na umeed Iqbal apni
kasht-e-veeran se,*

*Zara num ho to yeh mitti bari
zarkhaiz hay saqi*

SAUDI-IRAN RAPPROCHEMENT: FINALLY, SOME GOOD NEWS



By
Dr. Huma Baqai

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Professor Dr. Huma Baqai is a Member Board of Governors KCFR and Rector, Millennium Institute of Technology and Entrepreneurship - MiTE University, Karachi, and Sr. Vice Chairperson of KCFR



Riyadh and Tehran have had a turbulent relationship for four decades now. However, they were not always at loggerheads with each other, in fact, they collaborated prior to the 1979 revolution. The two countries were allies and strongly opposed Communism and the Soviet Union, cooperating bilaterally and with the United States during much of the Cold War. They also came together against Arab radicals like Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt. The United States “twin pillars” strategy, called upon the two countries to be the custodian of Western interests in the oil rich area. Although Iran was the big-

ger ‘twin’, which was resented by the Saudi side, however it was not an impediment to the collaboration.

The Iranian revolution was a huge blow to the relationship. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was an inspiration to many radical Shia groups in the Arab world, but more importantly, Khomeini had a pan-Islamic message that said, “monarchy is incompatible with Islam”. What deteriorated the relationship more, was that Saudi Arabia was convinced that the Iranian intelligence was in part behind the Khobar Tower bombings of 1996 that killed both



U.S. military personnel's and Saudi nationals. The Iraqi invasion by the U.S. in 2003 further aggravated the situation followed by executions by Saudi Arabia including that of a Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr. This damaged the relationship beyond repair.

“

United States is not viewed with favor in Saudi Arabia anymore, it is seen as undependable for good reason.

It was sectarianism, nationalism, and a power struggle over influence in the region that manifested itself into fatal proxy wars, shattering the peace and unity of the Arab world. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia heavily invested in exploiting each other's vulnerabilities. It reached

a level of ridiculing each other's factions/beliefs publicly. What has probably led to the rapprochement post forty plus years of bitterness is perhaps the realization on the Saudi side that Iranian resilience has given it an upper hand in regional conflicts despite all efforts to rollback its clout. The recent realignment of global politics has only strengthened it more. United States is not viewed with favor in Saudi Arabia anymore, in fact, it is seen as undependable for good reason. US did not take any tangible action, when Iran took out a number of Saudi oil facilities in 2019. Multiple drones or missiles had struck Saudi Aramco's Abqaiq facility, causing massive damage, and crippling the nation's production of 5.7 million barrels of crude oil per day. In addition to that, US calendar and not condition based, unceremonious withdrawal from Af-

ghanistan, and the rising US China rivalry may have led to this rethink in Saudi Arabia. The festering conflict with Iran has an unsustainable political, social, and economic cost for Saudi Arabia, plus the independent trajectory taken by countries like Qatar has also contributed to this newfound accommodation.

On the other hand, Iranian policy of defiance of the West and Saudi Arabia has taken an overwhelming toll on Iran's economy, which is becoming increasingly difficult to bear. It manifests itself in frequent antigovernment protests, lowest voter turnout in the history of the country in the recent elections and last but not least the strangulating grip of sanctions has Iran thinking more pragmatically. It's improved relations with Saudi Arabia gives it a foot back into the comity of nations and eases its diplomatic isolation. According to William Zartman thesis of 'mutually hurting stalemate' where the parties to the conflict may feel the pain of mutually hurting stalemate at the same time but not necessarily at the same level. They both calculate the cost benefit analysis of conflict and peace and come to the realization that they pay heavily and gain nothing by being in a state of constant conflict. In some way, coming to the ripe moment to resolve the conflict and this may have three elements: gains and losses, deadlock, and the realization of the deadlock by the parties. Saudi Arabia and Iran may have reached their ripe moment.

Commentators are of the view that Beijing sponsoring the deal has made it more viable because it benefits from the presence of "two-factor authentication". Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on the one hand, and China on the other. China has also pledged \$300 billion for investment in Iran over 25 years and is its biggest trade partner. Giving China the leverage to

make Iran stand by this deal. The young leadership of Saudi Arabia and his pragmatism also adds an element of stability and sustainability to the construct. This seems like a “win-win”.

Barack Obama in an interview in 2016 had said that Iran and Saudi Arabia need to learn to “share the neighborhood”. However, President Barack Obama failed to de-escalate the conflict by trying to get the two sides to share. President Donald Trump’s strategy of taking a confrontational approach with Iran while giving Saudi Arabia unconditional support had further exacerbated the situation.

Thus, the Obama-Donald conflict on how to handle Iran and Saudi Arabia complicated the scenario further. The United States could neither deter Tehran nor restrain Riyadh. The fact that eventually several years later, China brokered the deal is indicative of the new emerging world order that may become the norm. Amy Hawthorne, deputy director for research at the Project on Middle East Democracy, a nonprofit group in Washington said that “The United States could not have brokered such a deal right now with Iran specifically, since they no relations.

“

China has also pledged \$300 billion for investment in Iran over 25 years and is its biggest trade partner.

But in a larger sense, China’s prestigious accomplishment vaults it into a new league diplomatically and outshines anything the U.S. has been able to achieve in the region since Biden came to office.” The US has both downplayed and welcomed the deal. “If this deal can be sustained — regardless of what



the interest was or who sat down at the table — if it can be sustained, and the war in Yemen can end, and Saudi Arabia doesn’t have to continually try to defend itself against attacks from the Houthis who are funded and supported by Iran, in the end we welcome that,” said John Kirby, National Security Council coordinator for strategic communications.

Finally, the Iran-Saudi Arabia peace deal will have major implications for Pakistan, the country for decades has been an arena for proxy war between Riyadh and Tehran. The normalization of ties between the two countries presents a huge opportunity for the country, it can now actually maintain balanced diplomatic ties with both states, which was just a lot of words and a pipe dream until recently. Pakistan’s former representative to the UN Dr. Maleeha Lodhi said, “For Pakistan,

this deal opens up new diplomatic and economic opportunities. For decades, Pakistan has followed a policy of balancing relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, treading very carefully between a strategic ally and a neighbor. Now the rapprochement between the two former rivals means diplomatic space opens up for Islamabad to consider new initiatives and also strengthen ties with Iran”. The economic dividends can also be very impressive, something Pakistan needs desperately.

Riyadh had cut formal ties with Tehran in 2016 and this deal may potentially lead to a level of regional stability not seen in over 40 years. This China mediated peace deal seems like a win-win so far, not only for the Kingdom and Iran, but for the region, global markets, and a critical global need i.e., energy-security.

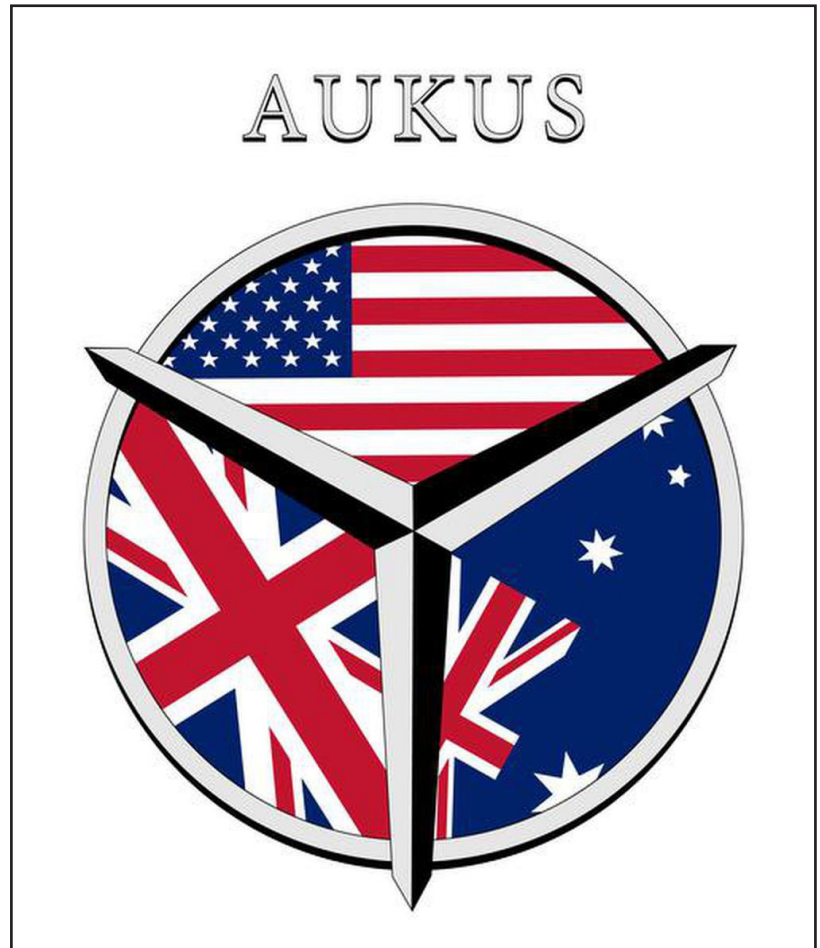
AUKUS AND FUTURE OF INDO-PACIFIC-II



By
Cmdr M. Azam Khan

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author is an independent commentator on maritime security and sea based nuclear issues.



AUKUS would allow Australian nuclear submarines over two months of deployment time in South China Sea. Canberra's current inventory of diesel-electric submarines can only enjoy limited time of few days in distant deployment areas like South China Sea when sailing from home ports like Perth.

In the progressing power competition and mutating world order, US, UK, Australia, India and their allies are striving hard to push back China from its claims in South China Sea. They are also collaborating to prevent PLA navy from establishing foothold in the Indian Ocean. Accordingly,

apart from formidable presence of US and Australian navies, Britain too continues to expand its footprint in Indo-Pacific. UK's newest aircraft carrier, Queen Elizabeth now patrols South China Sea. And in this endeavour, Indian navy is a sidekick.

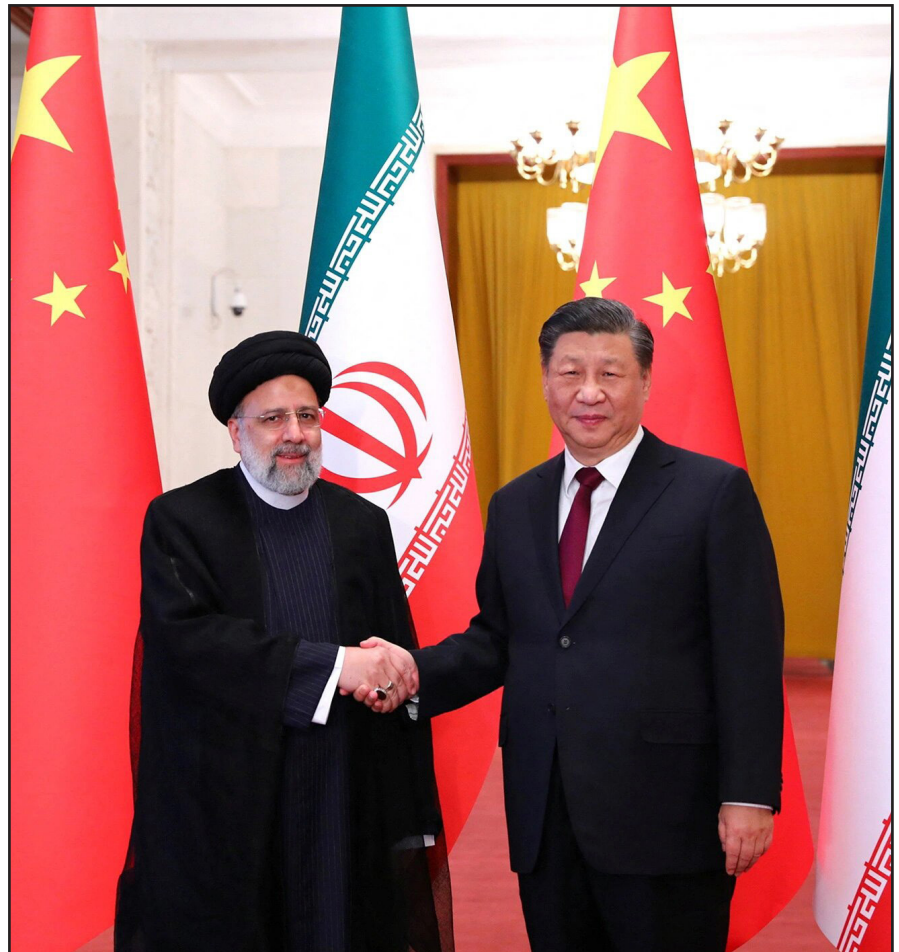
Paradoxically, in the western Pacific region the most well established political union is ASEAN. This is a grouping of middle income nations with their own dynamic economies. The geographic proximity of ASEAN states with presence of huge ethnic Chinese population and vastly spread commercial, political interests provide Beijing a for-

midable clout in the region. ASEAN response to AUKUS has not been manifested so far. For these nations, China constitutes a major trading partner. The way ASEAN views AUKUS will ultimately determine the fate of the on-going attempts by US and allies to contain China. One wonders how China's large diaspora and Beijing's commercial ties if not roots in South East Asian states like Indonesia, Malaysia and others will play out in this developing geo-politics and great power contest. Going by the precedent so far, there are not too many nations in China's immediate vicinity who would like to antagonize the dragon.

India needs to be mentioned here too. The country's trade with China is substantial. Despite recent developments and acrimony, this trade did not stop. How far India can afford to push China to appease the United States, the obvious answer is not far enough. Indian military and its institutions based on colonial patterns are not geared for a war with a neighbour whose capacity to wage war is all indigenous. Moreover, China is far more homogenous society and wields much bigger and potent reserve of man power and materials compared to a fragmented Indian society with most of its defence hardware procured from abroad.

China's entry in Indian Ocean will allow Beijing not only greater connectivity in Middle East, Africa and Persian Gulf but PLA navy could then become what is called a "two ocean navy". Beijing's effort aims at expanding commercial and economic connectivity in the region via Indian Ocean. To protect its present and future interests overseas (which includes ever increasing diaspora), PLA navy is enlarging its presence in Indian Ocean.

China-Iran bilateral agreement worth USD 400 bn inked in March last year (2021) has further upset



the apple cart for the United States in the region. According to New York Times, "heavy Chinese investment in Iran over 25 years in exchange for oil is a step that could ease Iran's international isolation". It translates into "steady supply of oil to China for fuelling its growing economy under a sweeping economic and security agreement. The deal could deepen China's influence in the Middle East and undercut American efforts to keep Iran isolated", according to the internationally acclaimed newspaper. To compound matters is the first visit to Riyadh by Chinese Premier Xi-Jinping in December this year. It is seen by many as Saudi Arabia's attempt to move out of the orbit of United States held in place since the end of World War II. The United States, Australia, Britain and India alongwith allies

accordingly continue to do what it may take to thwart Beijing's influence in Indian and Pacific Oceans as well as adjoining regions.

Regardless, Indian navy aims to have a 200 ship navy with six or more nuclear submarines around three aircraft carriers in next few years. The current size of Indian navy fleet is 132 warships. It also operates one SSBN and has 67,000 personnel on its strength. The United States navy is composed of 293 warships. It has the world's largest fleet of 11 aircraft carriers. A total of 66 submarines including 14 SSBNs and 52 SSNs are in naval arsenal of the United States. There are 330,000 active duty personnel. Against this, China has a fleet of over 350 warships. Beijing plans to increase this number to 400 by 2025. PLA navy has two aircraft carriers while third is likely to be rolled out soon. The



country is constructing one nuclear submarine every year and a half. In a fleet of 70 submarines, PLA navy has seven SSBNs and 12 SSNs.

Once upon a time, there was a debate of 'establishing a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. It was included in the agenda of United Nations General Assembly for the first time in 1971 at the request of Sri-Lanka. As a result of that initiative, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2832 (XXVI), by which the Indian Ocean, within limits to be determined, together with the airspace thereto, was designated for all times as a zone of peace. The Assembly also called upon the great Powers to enter into consultations with the littoral States of the Indian Ocean with a view to halting the further escalation of their military presence there and to eliminating from the area all bas-

es, military installations and logistical supply facilities, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction'. How distant all that now seems. Today, we have FOIP (Free and Open Indo-Pacific), the QUAD, and AUKUS, all with single objective-to contain China. But while this may look good on surface in peace time, a resurgent China will not be easy to contain by a power that is already in sharp decline.

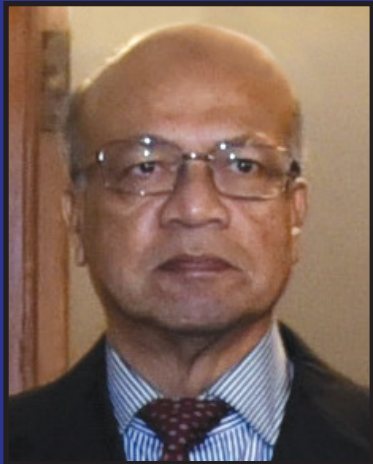
One wonders where the modern day fast developing nuclearization of Indian and Pacific Oceans may lead the region to. Imagine a nuclear submarine encountering a collision or accident undersea resulting in damage to its nuclear plant or nuclear weapons onboard. What perils the radiation leak may pose to billions of humans on the shore, to marine ecology and to vital shipping plying on its various maritime

highways, is a dreadful thought. On October 9 last year (2021), the United States navy announced that USS Connecticut, a nuclear powered fast attack submarine, "struck an object while submerged on the afternoon of October 2 and while operating in international waters in the Indo-Pacific region". Though the submarine reportedly remained in a safe and stable condition with nuclear propulsion plant and spaces unaffected, more than a dozen sailors suffered injuries. According to U.S. Naval Institute News, the collision took place in the South China Sea. Chinese foreign ministry said that Beijing was "extremely concerned about the collision and accused US of deliberately concealing the nature of the accident.

During the cold war, the United States and Soviet Union built more than 400 nuclear powered submarines. This provided a way to retaliate even if missile silos and strategic bombers had been taken out by adversary in a sudden first strike. 'Just 60 miles from the border with NATO member Norway, the Arctic port of Murmansk and surrounding military bases became the centre of USSR's nuclear navy as well as its highly radioactive spent fuel. In 1989 a Russian submarine K-278 carrying two nuclear torpedoes with plutonium warheads sank in Barents Sea killing 42 crew members. Though the pressurised reactor powering K-278 was shut down in time, in July 2019 a Norwegian remotely operated vehicle found radiation still leaking from sunken vessel deep down at 5512 feet. In August 2003 a decommissioned Russian nuclear submarine sank without any warning sending down 800 kg of spent uranium fuel to the seafloor beneath busy fishing and shipping lanes just north of Murmansk. An observer describes the submarine as a "Chernobyl in slow motion on the seabed".

(1321)

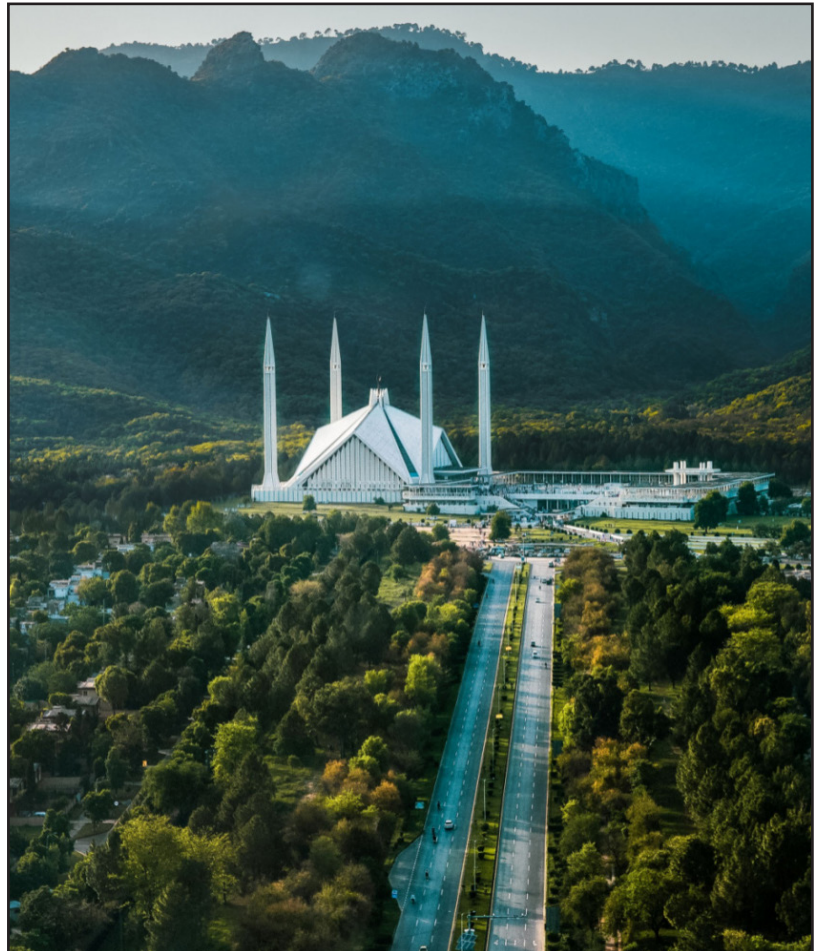
TOURISM AND PAKISTAN



By
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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United nations world tourism organisation defines tourism as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/ professional purposes.

These people are called visitors (which can be either tourists or excursionists, residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities.

The tourism industry comprises mainly the following industry groups.

1. *Accommodation.*
2. *Food and beverage services.*
3. *Entertainment.*
4. *Transportation.*
5. *Travel services.*

The following factors makes a country attractive to tourists.

1. *Delicious food.*
2. *Historical places.*
3. *Friendly environment.*
4. *Efficient transportation.*
5. *Enjoyable festivals*
6. *Hospitality*
7. *Shopping facilities.*
8. *Unique cultures*
9. *World heritage sites.*



TOURISM IN PAKISTAN

The great beauty of Pakistan is reflected through the remains of ancient civilisations, religious sites, monuments, lush green forests, snowcapped mountains, and frozen lakes.

Lonely planet termed Pakistan "tourism's next big thing for more years than we can remember". Code Nast Traveller ranked Pakistan the best holiday destination for 2020. Top tourist attractions in Pakistan.

1. Scenic and captivating places

The great scenic Naran Kaghan valley has many breathtaking beautiful places such as Shogran, Jharkand, Saif-ul-Mulook, Dudipatsar, Lalusar

lake, Babusar Top. Skardu is a paradise for climbers and hikers. Indus runs through the region including mountains, valleys, and forests. Lake Kachura surrounded by Indus river captivates the tourists. The Cigar Desert and Deosai mesmerises the tourists. Skardu is home to the world's highest baseball field and second highest plateau in the world. Dosa National Park, often referred to as the roof of the world.

Beautiful Hunza Valley is located in the Hunza River, Gilgit-Baltistan surrounded by Himalayas and Karakoram including Hunza Peak, Darmayani Peak, Rakaposhi, Ultersar, Bojhangar, Dunsir, Lady Finger and Genta Sar.

Ziarat is a great place to explore. Juniper forests with 5000 to 7000 years old trees and endangered species such as Urial, Sulein, Markhor, wolves, black bears, and

native and migratory birds. Its one of main attraction is Quaid-e-Azam residence.

The Chirral Valley known for its stunning natural beauty and fascinating culture. It is surrounded by Hindukash mountains which reach a height of 7709 meters above sea level. Fairy Meadows is another majestic site. The Fairy Meadows offer an incredible view of Nanga Parbat, the world's 9th highest mountain peak.

2. Religious Tourist Sites

Pakistan has numerous religious sites of different religions such as Buddhism, Sikhism and Christianity. Buddhist sites include Dharmarajika Stupa and Monastery (300 BC -200 AD), Bhir Mound (600-200 BC) etc. Sikhism religious sites include Tomb of Baba Guru Nanak and Gurdwaras Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur, Panja Sahib in Hasan Abdal, and Rori Sahib in Eminabad.

3. Archaeological Tourists' Sites

Pakistan is the birthplace of two ancient civilisations known as Indus Valley Civilisation and the Gandhara Civilisation. Major tourist attraction in this regards include the ruins of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. There are also monuments built by various dynasties and rulers including Badshahi Mosque, Shalimar Park, Tombs of Emperor Jahangir and Queen Noor Jahan, Rohtas Fort and Shah Jahan Mosque.

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN PAKISTAN

Following sites are included in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Pakistan.

- Archeological ruins at Mohenjo-daro, Buddhist ruins of Takht-e-Bahi and neighbouring city Sahr-e-Bahlol.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites



In Pakistan

- Taxila
- Fort and shalimar gardens lahore
- Historical monuments at makli, thatta
- Rohtas fort

To be included in the world heritage list sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of the following ten selection criteria.

1. Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius.
2. Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, townplanning or landscape design
3. Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilisation which is living or which has disappeared.
4. An outstanding example of a type of building, an architectural or technological ensemble or landscape, which illustrates a significant stage in human history.
5. An outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land use, or sea use which is representative of a culture or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.
6. Directly or tangibly associated events or living traditions, with ideas or with beliefs, with the artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
7. Contains superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.
8. Outstanding example representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features.
9. Outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.
10. Contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view science or conservation.

SAUDI ARABIA'S PATH INTO MODERNITY



By
Dr. Bettina Robotka

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Saudi Arabia is a young country, mainly because about 70% of the Saudi population is under the age of thirty years. With such a young population in a globalized world where ideas and opinions are transmitted electronically, where travellers come and go and official contacts between states get more important by the day, it was to be expected that new and modern ideas would take stock even in the last nook and corner. Globalization in Saudi Arabia had started when huge oil reserves were discovered in the 20th c. that attracted foreign, mainly western, investors and made the country the worldwide

largest oil exporter. This development has awakened SA from its desert slumber and put Saudi society in-between their nomadic tribal past and encroaching modernity: While Saudi Arabia has been a conservative country and society, the heightened importance of oil in the world made it part of the fast-changing global development. And the fact that Makkah and Medina are drawing millions of pilgrims adds to the inclusion of the desert peninsula into the world.

Saudi Arabia is mainly a tribal society; a society that is organized hierarchically and the memory of its nomadic past is still

present until today, at least among the elderly and the Saudi ruling family who are interested in keeping up traditional life and their predominant position. As a monarchy Saudi Arabia has been ruled by the Saudi family autocratically with a cabinet of appointed ministers as a kind of advisory council. A second feature that makes SA an extremely conservative country is the Wahabi strain of Islam that has developed in the 18th c. on the Arabian Peninsula and has been made the leading understanding of Islam in the country.

Wahhabism is a Sunni Islamic revivalist and fundamentalist movement associated with the reformist doctrines of the 18th-century Arabian Islamic theologian and activist Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Under the pressure of a changing world and so-called “innovations” in the way Islam was practised he established the Muwahhidun movement in the Arabian Peninsula, a reform movement with a particular emphasis on purging practices such as the veneration of Muslim saints and pilgrimages to their tombs and shrines, which were widespread amongst the people of the Arabian Peninsula and beyond¹ but are perceived as un-Islamic. Wahhabism is noted for its policy of “compelling its own followers and other Muslims strictly to observe the religious duties of Islam in its Wahabi interpretation, such as the five prayers”, and for “enforcement of public morals to a degree not found elsewhere”.²

Change came in 2018 when Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the new young de facto ruler of the country, denied that anyone “can define this Wahhabism” or even show that it exists. By 2021, the waning power of the religious clerics brought forth by the social, religious, economic, political changes and a new educational policy asserting a “Saudi national identity” that emphasize non-Islamic components have

led to what has been described as the “post-Wahhabi era” of Saudi Arabia. By 2022, the decision to celebrate the “Saudi Founding Day” annually on 22 February to commemorate the 1727 establishment of Emirate of Dir’iyah by Muhammad ibn Saud, rather than the past historical convention that traced the beginning to the 1744 pact of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab; have led to the official “uncoupling” of the Wahabi religious clergy by the Saudi state.³

The income from oil sales made Saudi Arabia one of the richest countries globally and made it possible for Saudi citizens to enjoy easy income and excellent social services. Monarchic rule and Wahabi Islam kept the balance up and prevented modernization of economy and society for decades. Things started changing with the global discussion about climate change and the finite nature and instability of fossil fuel supply. Oil crises added impact. Saudi dependence on one source of income only – that from oil – led to the awareness that its economy needed diversification. In addition, Saudi dependence on foreign work force and their qualification resulted in the understanding that Saudis needed to acquire education and skills in order to create jobs and income for Saudis themselves and overcome that dependence.

The coming into power of Mohammad Bin Saud, a grandson of founding father of SA Ibn Saud at the young age of 31 years, was made possible by a major change in the succession rules by king Fahd that were institutionalized in 1992. This change allowed him to appoint or dismiss his heir apparent based on suitability rather than seniority. The rule change also made the grandsons and not only the sons of Ibn Saud eligible for the throne for the first time. When king Salman took over in 2015 he wanted one of his own sons to be crown prince, but the power struggle

among the next generation forced him to appoint his nephew Muqrin. In June 2017, Muqrin Nayef gave up his claim to the throne to his cousin, Mohammad Bin Saud (MBS). At the time, The New York Times reported that MBS and his father had plotted the ouster for months and that Nayef had been held against his will at a palace before the public transition. In response, Saudi officials told Reuters that the Times story was a “complete fantasy worthy of Hollywood.”⁴

In November 2017, five months after being appointed crown prince, MBS ordered a sweeping anti-corruption crackdown, which led to the detention and death of several prominent members of the royal family that could have endangered his power position. His fight against his enemies who could endanger his position was certainly rough and even cruel by western standards if we remember the Khashoggi incident. But with hindsight, MBS becoming the crown prince and the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia, seems to have been a favourable development for the desert country.

VISION 2030

MBS published „Vision 2030“, his ideas about how to make Saudi Arabia increasingly independent of its income from oil sales and, by modernizing the Saudi economy, aimed at changing and modernizing the social structure of the country as well. Starting from April 2016 when he was appointed Crown Prince by his father, he started publishing his ideas about this amazing project of economic development and social engineering. Since then multiple projects and initiatives to implement his plans have been started to bring the vision to life.

MBS based his vision on three main pillars as he calls it.⁵ The first of the basic pillars of his vision is the status of Saudi Arabia as the



heart of the Arab and Islamic world based on the fact that the two holy mosques are located there and that the qibla points towards this land. This is certainly an expected starting point but at the same time it reassures the people that Islam will be a centre piece of his vision and that secondly, that he envisions a leading political role for the country at least in the Arab and Islamic world.

As the second pillar he names his firm determination to become a global investment powerhouse based not only on its income from oil sales but based on the rich other natural resources like gold, phosphate or uranium that the country has as well its human resources. The economic plan includes to change Aramco from an oil producing company into a global industrial conglomerate. An extremely helpful idea was to create a Pub-

lic Investment Fund and make it into the world's largest sovereign wealth fund. "We will encourage our major corporations to expand across borders and take their rightful place in global markets".⁶

MBS commented. By widening the economic basis of Saudi economy, he extends not only the income basis of the country at a time when oil reserves are dwindling and a worldwide search for alternative renewable energy resources is underway, he creates jobs that are now taken up first and foremost by Saudi citizens which results in their inclusion into a modernizing Saudi reality. Especially important was his insistence to include women into the workforce. As in many other societies, this step initiated a real revolution that is visible today in daily public life with women out and about, taking jobs and driving cars.

The third pillar is transforming Saudi Arabia's unique strategic geographical location into a global hub connecting three continents, Asia, Europe and Africa and by doing so make it a gateway to the world. This pillar of MBS plan has two different sides to consider. On the one hand, it aims at opening up a rather closed country to the non-Islamic world through tourism and investment opportunities. On the other hand, it connects to the Saudi professed entitlement based on the presence of Makkah to be leaders of the Islamic world, a claim that resulted in the Saudi-led war that was started in March 2015 and has been ongoing until recently. When success was avoiding them, on 29 March 2022, the Saudi-led coalition announced that it would cease all hostilities within Yemen starting at 6 A.M. the following day, in order to facilitate political talks and peace-keeping efforts.⁷ It was a lesson learnt quite fast. Another example of foreign policy failure is the Saudi-Qatar tussle that was started in 2017 by SA because of the alleged support of Qatar for Iran, Taleban and terrorism. The May-June 2017 closing of the Saudi land border led to a catastrophic situation. The UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan severed diplomatic relations, shut down the Al Jazeera channel, and imposed a land, sea and air embargo. But the coordinated effort to bring Qatar to its heels boomeranged on the conspirators. The Qatar Emir, Sheikh Tamim Al Thani, wove a formidable coalition. Just in case Saudi Arabia thought of a military adventure, Turkish troops in brigade strength had taken up pre-emptive positions in Qatar. Faced with this formidable resistance, on 4 January 2021, Qatar and Saudi Arabia agreed to reopen airspace, land and maritime borders, with the expectation to fully restore diplomatic relations. Since then the conflict has been reconciled.

Another aspect of MBS „Vision 2030“ – though not named a pillar – is the fact that the improvement of living conditions of Saudi population including women lay at the bottom of it. Educating the young people has been made the basis so they can become the promoters of this vision that would provide them not only with jobs but with an open mind to join the international community. That implied a certain rethinking of the Wahabi interpretation of Islam that so far had ruled Saudi society and politics. MBS had expressed it in his speech after becoming crown prince in 2017. “We want to lead a normal life, a life in which our religion translates to tolerance, to our traditions of kindness.”⁸

This aspect of MBS vision shows also in the importance the document gives to the wellbeing of Saudi people and society. It says that “our real wealth lies in our people and our society. We take immense pride in the historical and cultural legacy of our Saudi, Arab, and Islamic heritage. Our land was, and continues to be, known for its ancient civilizations and trade routes at the crossroads of global trade.”⁹ This is a remarkable statement because it unites the different tribal and religious identities of Saudi people into a national one by highlighting the commonalities between them instead of the differences. Their cultural heritage that includes the time before Islam when already ancient civilizations were blooming and trade routes were crossing the peninsula is included into this understanding. To preserve the cultural traditions and add new ones Vision 2030 pledges to increase cultural entertainment and sports. Remarkably the support of families and children is pledged because they are the basic element that holds society together.” We intend to embed positive moral beliefs in our children’s characters from an early age by reshaping our academ-



ic and educational system. Schools, working with families, will reinforce the fabric of society by providing students with the compassion, knowledge, and behaviours necessary for resilient and independent characters to emerge.”¹⁰

IMPLEMENTATION

For the implementation of the strategic goals and targets of vision 2030, thirteen huge programs called Vision Realization Programs were established. The VRPs were presented by Council of Economic and Development Affairs as early as April 2017. The main impact of those programs was directed at the development of the financial sector for the implementation including programs aimed at fiscal balance, the foundation of a public investment fund and for privatization. The second major direction was the improvement of

living conditions for the population. It included, among others, a quality of life program, a housing program, human capital development program and a Saudi character enrichment program. MBS retained the final decision making and supervision of all the programs.

SAUDI ARABIA'S CHANGING FOREIGN POLICY

Apart from the revolutionary plans to change economy and society of his home country, foreign policy and Saudi Arabia’s place in the world became a major policy focus. Based on the claim to leadership in the region the first moves of MBS in the sphere of foreign policy, namely to use force in order to put his vision through, were not very successful. The inability to gain success in the ongoing since 2015 Yemen war and

the human cost of the war rather undermined the kingdom's claim to status in the region than lifting it. The Qatar crisis also did not bring the expected success. It has inflicted rather greater damage on the social ties that bind the peoples and societies of the Gulf closely together. Tribal connections and patterns of intermarriage have for decades and centuries born no regard for the political boundaries that were imposed in the twentieth century and many Qataris have close family members in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE and vice-versa. It may be also interpreted as a first though unsuccessful attempt to make the Arab world independent from western, especially US interests given the fact that Qatar is home to two major US military bases the presence of which has been and is still exerting no small political pressure in the region. But the important thing about these two adventures is that MBS rather quickly recognized that this is a dead end and brought both conflicts to a negotiation stage of diplomacy.

The assassination of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi dissident journalist and vocal critic of MBS and his policy, deepened the growing rift between SA (especially MBS) and the West with western governments and their media bashing MBS and many western specialists who were hired to run the projects in the country resigning in protest. In 2021 US President Biden released a CIA report of 2018 that named MBS as not only in knowledge but done on behalf of him which further cooled down relations with the US. Even after a year when Biden in July 2022 visited SA to improve relations and ask for a reduction in oil production by Saudi Arabia he had to leave without any success and his visit has been described in the media as low-key and without much pomp. This stands in glaring distinction to the recent visit of Chinese President Xi to Saudi Arabia in

December 2022. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman gave President Xi Jinping a red-carpet reception as the Chinese leader heralded "a new era" in Chinese-Arab relations, with a lavish welcome signalling Riyadh's interest in deepening ties with Beijing despite the United States' wariness. The welcome that was given to the Chinese President stood in stark contrast to the low-key welcome extended in July to US President Joe Biden, with whom ties have been strained by Saudi energy policy and the 2018 murder of Jamal Khashoggi that had overshadowed the awkward visit.

China, the world's biggest energy consumer, is a major trading partner of Gulf states and bilateral ties have expanded as the region pushes economic diversification, raising US hackles about Chinese involvement in the sensitive Gulf infrastructure. In the course of the Chinese visit the Saudi energy minister said Riyadh would remain a "trusted and reliable" energy partner for Beijing and that the two would boost cooperation in energy supply chains by establishing a regional centre in the kingdom for Chinese factories. Chinese and Saudi firms also signed a number of deals for investment in green energy, information technology, cloud services, transport, construction and other sectors. The signing of energy agreements on hydrogen served to "harmonise" Saudi Arabia's ambitious economic reform agenda, Vision 2030, with China's trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative, the official Saudi Press Agency said.¹¹ In the course of these agreements the kingdom is presenting itself as a regional centre for Chinese factories. This has been called a "win-win" situation as stable energy supply chains are critical to growth and recovery prospects of many regional Arab economies. The joint statement published after the visit puts it like this: "The Saudi side also

stressed the importance of attracting international Chinese companies to open regional headquarters in the Kingdom and appreciated the interest of a number of companies in that regard as they are obtaining licenses to establish their regional headquarters in the Kingdom, to ultimately benefit from the exceptional Chinese experiences and capabilities for the benefit of the economies of the two countries."¹²

The main feature of the visit has been that the Saudis organised three separate regional summits for Xi — aside the bilateral summit. A second summit with 21 Arab leaders and a third with seven rulers of GCC countries took place in Riyadh. The "three-in-one" conveyed a big signal that Saudi Arabia stands at the heart of China's Arab world diplomacy. It is in sharp contrast with the transactional relationship that the historic US-Saudi alliance has been reduced to. In his analysis of the event M.K. Bhadrakumar opined "The first-ever China-GCC Summit and China-Arab League Summit stand out in the current international environment and create prospects of "collective cooperation" between China and Arab countries. They are pegged on joint action by Saudi Arabia and China to strengthen strategic partnership relations between the GCC States and China, conclude a free trade agreement between the GCC and China, and institutionalise the GCC-China Meeting of Ministers of Economy and Trade in a "6 + 1" format between GCC and China."¹³

Another sign of Saudi foreign policy change is the relationship with Russia.¹⁴ The rise of MBS to power as the de facto ruler turned out to be the largest factor energizing the Saudi-Russian relationship. Before that king Mohammed bin Salman had consistently displayed a willingness to disrupt the status quo in not only domestic, but in foreign policy as well. When MBS became

crown prince he prioritized friendship with Moscow and exerted control over decision-making in a manner unprecedented in recent Saudi history. Diplomatic exchanges and bilateral agreements under King Salman had already bolstered the Saudi-Russia relationship even before MBS just as US-Saudi ties deteriorated. One of Mohammed bin Salman's first international trips after his appointment as deputy crown prince in April 2015 was to St. Petersburg for a meeting on oil issues with President Putin. Salman became the first Saudi king to visit Russia when he paid a state visit to Moscow in October 2017 and signed agreements with President Putin that included the creation of a joint energy investment fund worth US\$1 billion. Salman's visit to Russia, which remains his last major international trip, stood in contrast to his tentative plans to visit the US in early 2018. He abandoned the US visit amid his opposition to the Trump administration's relocation of the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem.

King Salman and Mohammed bin Salman met with Putin when he visited Saudi Arabia in October 2019. By that time Saudi and Russian energy ministers Alexander Novak and Khalid al-Falih (and later Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman) had established productive working relationships within the framework of the enlarged OPEC+ arrangement. High-level collaboration continued with the Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia (PIF)'s formation of a joint fund with the Russia Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) as well as a Russian-Saudi Energy Investment platform that includes Saudi Aramco. Areas of cooperation between the two sovereign funds included infrastructure, technology, health care, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and consumer goods and services. Notably the PIF, in common with other Gulf-based sovereign wealth funds, including those in Bahrain, Kuwait,



Qatar, and the UAE, continued to work with RDIF after the latter was placed under US sanctions by the Obama administration after the 2014 Russian annexation of Crimea. This was an early indication that US partners in the Gulf would no longer automatically follow the US lead on disputes they felt did not directly involve them.

The value to Moscow of its expanded relationship with Saudi Arabia became clear in the weeks and months following Russia's second, February 2022, invasion of Ukraine. Russia faced a barrage of sanctions from governments of the so-called "Western alliance," with which Saudi Arabia had been associated since the Cold War. Rather than supporting the sanctions imposed by its traditional partners, Saudi Arabia curtailed the effects of those sanctions by maintaining cooperation with Russia through OPEC+. The king-

dom and neighbouring monarchies kept diplomatic and trade channels with Moscow open, even providing an economic window for President Putin to retaliate against the West. OPEC+'s extraordinary 2Mb/d production cut in October—supported by Riyadh and Moscow against protests of other member states and Washington—is the largest manifestation of partnership. Russian officials left no doubt of the retaliatory intent of the cut.

A statement by a Kremlin spokesperson described the OPEC+ agreement as comprising "balanced, thoughtful, and planned work of the countries that take a responsible position within OPEC, as opposed to the actions of the US." The spokesperson added: "This at least balances the mayhem that the Americans are causing." Frustratingly for the Biden administration and its EU allies, the improvement of Russia's

strategic position with OPEC+ and Saudi Arabia served to limit the influence of Washington in cartel decisions.

SAUDI ARABIA IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD

What is going on in Saudi Arabia can truly be named revolutionary. A country that has been closed to most of the world is opening up. Its young society is changing fast, which becomes visible in everyday life. Saudi citizens, including girls and women, are getting modern education and skills. They take over jobs that earlier have been occupied by foreigners. The change that is most visible is the activity of women. They are studying, taking jobs, driving cars, design fashion and much more. Tourism has become possible and incoming tourists or Muslims coming for umrah or haj are greeted by female border agents processing travellers. Even the Saudi military has opened its doors for women.

“

In 2003, al-Qaida tried to destabilize the kingdom by attacking compounds housing expatriate workers.

But this fast modernization process is not without problems and resistance by the conservative, often elderly part of the population. While in an autocratically ruled countries protests are rather muted and often missing also because assembling of people in public places is strongly regulated and has to avoid any political connotation. The only protests reported are those of the Shia minority population. Otherwise resistance to too much freedom for women, for instance, are regulated within the families and remain un-

der the surface of the wider public. Saudi Arabia has no experience with political parties which may be not a negative feature at all. The missing of a democratic political system that SA shares in a way with China and Russia undermines the Western perception of western democracy being the only successful political system to be followed. Even religion may not be an obstacle per se. With Wahabi Islam and the religious structures supporting it having lost government support the Shia -Sunni hostility and disagreements within sunni Islam might over time be adjusted under a common Saudi nationhood.

Another problem is militant Islam of al-Qaida provenience. In 2003, al-Qaida tried to destabilize the kingdom by attacking compounds housing expatriate workers. After some initial reluctance to realize the gravity of the threat, the Saudi Interior Ministry, under the leadership of Prince Mohammed Bin Nayef, the crown prince at that time, launched a counterterrorism effort in 2004 that was part security operation, part public awareness campaign. The initiative put thousands of militant sympathizers in prison.¹⁵ The government has also put a few thousand militants through a celebrated terrorism rehabilitation program that combines religious guidance and psychological counselling. Although Saudi authorities continued to make arrests and to foil plots, no major terrorist attack had taken place in Saudi Arabia since 2006, until now. About the success of de-radicalization, no reliable data are available.

There is surely a major difference between public life in the cities of Saudi Arabia and rural areas where traditional life is more stable and media reporting is less present. There are probably conservative pockets that become a refugium for traditional tribal and religious structures. These imbalances within society may from time to time result in

strains and hick-ups but with a strong government like MBS is running it they may be controlled and smoothed out. In general, the internal social engineering program of MBS, if given some time to take roots, can surely contribute to the modernization of a conservative and basically tribal society.

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These imbalances in society may time to time result in strains and hick-ups but with a strong government like MBS is running it they may be controlled and smoothed out.

As the recent visit of Chinese President has shown Saudi foreign policy direction under MBS guidance is taking an eastern turn. Almost three dozen of signed agreements between the two states lift the relationship to a new level. Saudi leadership in the Arab world will certainly draw more countries into the new development. The SCO summit meeting in Samarkand 2022, for instance, granted the status of SCO dialogue partners to Bahrain, the Maldives, Kuwait, and the UAE and agreed to include Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar as new dialogue partners.

Another feature that one can observe is the fact that both China and Saudi Arabia, but also most of the SCO states, are not democracies in the western sense and are ruled in a more stringent, top-down manner. Is that the new way to go forward? How will it be adjusted to the multipolar way of international relations that presupposes equality of all countries in the community? The world is changing and we are looking forward to new, exiting developments. Let's hope that the upheavals that are connected to such revolutionary change will not destroy the world.



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اکاؤنٹ کھولیں بغیر کسی خرچے کے

FINANCIAL SERVICES & TECHNOLOGY DIVISION
PATHFINDER GROUP

S. No	Name	Designation
1.	Mr. Asad Zaheer	Royal Packages Pvt Ltd.
2.	Mr. Muhammad Arif Sheikh	Royal Packages Pvt Ltd. Managing Director
3.	Mr. Khalil Sattar	K&Ns Foods (Pvt) Ltd. Chief Executive
4.	Mr. Abdul Kader Jaffer	Ahmed Jaffer Company (Pvt) Ltd.
5.	Mr. Syed Umair Ahmed	Midas Safety General Manager
6.	Dr. Tilo Kliner	Consulate General Of Germany Consul General
7.	Mr. Muhammad Naeem	Shahnawaz (Pvt) Ltd. Chief Executive
8.	Mr. Khalil Ur Rehman	M/S Galaxy Pharma (Pvt) Ltd. CEO
9.	Dr. Asif A. Brohi	National Bank Of Pakistan President
10.	Air Cdre (R) Syed Asghar Naqvi	Engro Corporation Advisor Public Affairs
11.	Mr. Shahzad Sabir	Ku Trading Co Director Import & Export
12.	Mr. Nausheen Ahmed	Habib Bank Ltd. Company Secretary
13.	Mr. Arshad Saeed Hussain	Oxford University Press Managing Director
14.	Mr. Saeed Allawala	Atco Laboratories Ltd. Managing Director
15.	Mr. Tariq Rafi	Siddiqsons Group CEO
16.	Mr. Muhammad Hashim	Three Star Enterprises Partner
17.	Mr. Kalim Farooqui	Technology Links (Pvt) Ltd. Managing Director

S. No	Name	Designation
18.	Mr. Dewan M.Yousuf Farooqui	Dewan Farooque Motors Ltd. Chief Executive
19.	Mr. Khalid Nawaz Awan	TCS Holdings (Pvt) Ltd. Chairman
20.	Mr. Sohail Yasin Suleman	World Wide Group Chairman & CEO (Group)
21.	Mr. Erum Lakhani	Iqra University Chancellor
22.	Mr. Hunaid Hussain Lakhani	Iqra University Chairman/Founding Chancellor
23.	Mr. Haji Rafiq Pardesi	Hmr Group
24.	Mr. Javed Akhai	Martin Dow Limited Chairman
25.	Mr. Asim Shabbir Payka	UTI Industrias Pvt. Ltd./ Millenium Textile Mills Director/Proprietor/Owner

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It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it.
-Eleanor Roosevelt

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S. No	Name	Name of Company/Institute
1.	Mr. Ikram-ul-Majeed Sehgal	Security & Mangment Services (Pvt) Ltd CEO
2.	Mr. Saifuddin N. Zoomkawala	
3.	Ambassador Mustafa Kamal Kazi	Secretary/Ambassador.
4.	Dr. Huma Baqai	Ass.prof / Chairperson Iba/Ptv
5.	Mr. Talib Syed Karim	Institue Of Bussiness Management
6.	Ms. Nadira Panjwani	Panjwani Foundation & Trust Chairperson
7.	Air Vice Marshal (R) Abid Rao	
8.	Mr. Mohd. Javed Ashraf Hussain	Federal Secratry (R)
9.	Mr. Irfan H. A. Vazeer	Aiv Pvt. Ltd CEO
10.	Mr. Moin M. Fudda	Honorary Consul General Of New Zealand
11.	Mr. Saleem Zamindar	Bank + Company Director Director
12.	Air Marshal (R) Riazzudin Shaikh	Pakistan Airforce Air Marshal (R)
13.	Dr. Junaid Ahmed	National Management Consultants Chairman
14.	Commodore (R) Sadeed A Malik	Pakistan Navy Retired
15.	Ms. Huda Garib	CEO E-Magazines
16.	Mr. Abu Baker Siddique	Stc Pvt Ltd CEO
17.	Dr. Zubair Mirza	Orthopedic Surgeon
18.	Mr. Syed Iqbaluddin Ghazi	Chief Executive Sun Consulting (Pvt.) Limited
19.	Mr. Ameena Saiyid	Managing Director Lightstone Publishers
20.	Mr. M. Bashir Jan Mohammad	Westbury Group Of Companies Chairman

S. No	Name	Name of Company/Institute
21	Mr. Sultan Ahmed Chawla	Barque Corporation (CEO)
22.	Mr. Sardar Yasin Malik	Hilton Pharma (Chairman)
23.	Mr. Ahmed Jamil Ansari	Inter Globe Commerce Pak. Pvt Ltd Chairman
24.	Mr. Masood Noorani	
25.	Mr. Hussain J. Sheriff	Meshe International CEO
26.	Mr. Sahibzada Shayan Imran Khan	CEO Cloud 99
27.	Dr. Shahzad Arshad	Rauf Apparels Pvt Ltd Director
28.	Mr. Arif Suleman	Gsa Etihad Crystal (Honorary Advisor Of Thai Government & President Of Pak-Thai Friendship Association)
29.	Dr. Tariq M. Aziz	Advance Eye Clinic CEO
30.	Mr. Khalil Ahmed Nainitalwala	Medicam Group Of Companies Chairman
31.	Mr. Shoaib Ahmed Faridi	Dynamic Logistics International Pvt Ltd Chairman
32.	Mr. M. A Rajpar	General Shipping Agencies Pvt Ltd Managing Director
33.	Professor Dr. Khalida Ghaus	Social Policy Development Centre, Karachi University Technical Advisor
34.	Mr. Zarrar Sehgal	Security & Mangment Services (Pvt) Ltd CEO
35.	Mr. Abdul Haseeb Khan	Brooks Pharmaceutical Labortories (Pak) Ltd.
36.	Mr. Naveed Arshad Fazail	International Chemplast Pvt Ltd Director
37.	Mr. Arshad Riaz Fazail	International Chemplast Pvt Ltd
38.	Mr. Taher G. Sachak	EFU Insurance -MD, CEO
39.	Mr. Shahid M. Amin	Former Ambassador
40.	Mr. Shahid M. Amin	Sasa & Sasa -CEO

S. No	Name	Name of Company/Institute
41.	Mr. Syed Shafqat Ali Shah	Matiari Sugar Mills Ltd Managing Director
42.	Dr. Shahid Hussain	Ministry Of Health Government Of Pakistan Federal Inspector Of Drugs
43.	Mr. Aasim A. Siddiqui	Marine Services Pvt Ltd Managing Director
44.	Mr. Muhammad Farooq Afzal	Integrated Textiles Network CEO
45.	Mr. Asif Ali Rashid	Al Murtaza Machinery Co.pvt Ltd Managing Director & CEO
46.	Admiral Shahid Karimullah (Retd)	Chief Of Naval Staff, Ambassador To Saudi Arabia
47.	Mr. Suleman Bhurra	Union Export Pvt Ltd Director
48.	Dr. Imran Y. Muhammad	Jofa Groups Managing Director
49.	Mr. Rana Mubashir Rahim	Newsone Tv Director News
50.	Dr. Iffat Yazdani	Glaxosmith Kline Area Director
51.	Mr. Rafique R. Bhimjee	Efu Life Insurance Chairman
52.	Soli R.Parakh	Avari Hotel Group
53.	Prof. Dr Farhan Essa Abdullah	Dr Essa Laboratories -CEO
54.	Mr. Najmus Saqib	Student
55.	Mr. Waseem Ur Rahim Khan	Retired
56.	Mr. Taj Muhammad Afridi	Alhaj Enterprises Pvt Ltd -CEO
57.	Mr. Adnan Asad	Venus Pakistan Pvt. Ltd. -CEO
58.	Mr. Ali Kuli Khan Khatak	General Tyre & Rubber Pakistan Chairman BOGs
59.	Mr. Faisal Zahid	Deutsche Bank Ag Director Head Of Global Transaction Banking
60.	Mr. Zahur Ahmed	

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61.	Mr. Pervez H. Madraswala	Pierlite Pakistan Pvt Ltd.
62.	Mr. Syed Nadeem Ali Kazmi	
63.	Mr. Fareed-ud-din Siddiqui	Stc Pvt Ltd Director
64.	Mr. Omar Danial Baweja	CEO Regent Group Of Companies
65.	Mr. Kamran Nishat	Muller & Phipps Pakistan Pvt Ltd Md & CEO
66.	Mr. Qasim Awan	Tcs Express & Logistics Director
67.	Mr. Ghulam Muhammad	Globe Management Pvt Ltd CEO
68.	Mr. Humayun Qureshi	Marketing International Services Pvt Ltd Chairman
69.	Mr. Tariq Ikram (SI)	Former Minister Of State & CEO Trade Dev. Authority Gov. Pakistan
70.	Mr. Faisal Nadeem	Foreign Trade Associates CEO
71.	Mr. Tariq Shafi	CEO Lords Impex
72.	Mr. Nafees Ahmed Siddiqi	Nafees Siddiqui Law Associates Sole Propreitor
73.	Mr. Aslam Allawala	Kohinoor Soaps & Detergent Pvt Ltd Director & CEO
74.	Mr. Saiyed Ahmed Siddiqui	Principle Sec To President Of Pakistan
75.	Mr. Anwar Rammal	Asiatic Public Relation Network Pvt Ltd Chairman
76.	Mr. Khawaja Murad Mashooqullah	Human Resource Solutions International CEO
77.	Mr. Saadat Yar Khan	Ibadat yar Khan & Company
78.	Mr. Farhan Hassan	Snacks & Co -CEO
79.	Mr. Mashkooor A.G. Khan	Meezan Bank Ltd. Regional Manager Karachi South
80.	Mr. Muhammad Rafiq Ghani	Gaziani Engineering Co Pvt Ltd -Director

S. No	Name	Name of Company/Institute
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82.	Ms. Sabiha Navaid Khan	Fatima Jinnah Dental College/Zmc Hod Pathology/ Consultant Pathologist
83.	Mr. Masood Zaheer	Fams Security/Avalon Services.
84.	Mr. Ahsan Mehanti	Arif Habib Commodities
85.	Mr. Baber Shakir Siddiqui	Paragon Constructors Pvt Ltd Director
86.	Ms. Tahira Raza	First Women Bank Limited(Fwbl)
87.	Mr. Adnan Hirani	Hiranis Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd. CEO
88	Mr. Roger Dawood Bayat	Dubai Based Businessman
89.	Mr. Jawaid Ilyas	Brothers Trading Corporation CEO
90.	Mr. Syed Muhammad Shabbar Zaidi	A.f Ferguson & Co. Senior Partner
91.	Mr. Shahrukh Hasan	Jang Group Group Managing Director
92.	Mr. Arshad Ali	M-Jafferjees Chairman
93.	Mr. Anjum Nisar	Anjum Asif Pvt Ltd Managing Director
94.	Mr. Jehangir Shahid	Leopard Courier Services Pvt Ltd. Chief Executive
95.	Mr. Saif Ur Rehman	Galaxy Pharma Pvt Ltd.
96.	Mr. Shoaib Amin	M/S Shoaib Amin.
97.	Mr. Khalid Firoz Arfeen	Arfeen International Pvt Ltd. Director
98.	Mr. Roshan Zamir	Roshan Zamir & Co Advocate
99.	Mr. M. Rafiq Rangoonwala	Gray Mackenzie Restaurants
100.	Mr. Syed Salahuddin Haider	Century 21 (Usa) Karachi President & CEO

S. No	Name	Name of Company/Institute
101.	Mr. Aziz Memon	Kings Groups Chairman
102.	Mr. Syed Masoud Ali Naqvi	Kpmg Taseer Hadi & Co Chartered Accountants. Advisor
103.	Mr. Sajid Ali Abbasi	Times Group (Pvt.) Ltd - Founder And Group CEO
104.	Dr. Abdul Azim Akbar	Advisor, Adnel Abu Dhabi, Uae
105.	Mr. Gulzar Hussain Kazi	Innovative Security Product (Pvt.) Ltd CEO
106.	Mr. Muhammad Siraj ul Huda Khan	No Company Address
107.	Mr. Anwar Mansoor Khan	Senior Advocate Supreme Court Of Pakistan
108.	Ms. Haya Sehgal	Pathfinder Group
109.	Mr. Habib Paracha	Centurion Entertainment
110.	Mr. Syed Khadim Ali Shah	No Company Address
111.	Mr. Sheikh Perwez Ahmed	No Company Address
112.	Mr. Farrukh Viqaruddin Junaidy	Junaidy Shoaib Asad - Senior Partner
113.	Mr. Murtaza Abbas Mooman	Lucky Cement - Chief Strategy Officer
114.	Mr. Mian Mehmood	Consulate Of Moldova (H) -Honorary Consul General
115.	Mrs. Sarwat Huma Siraj	Freelance
116.	Dr. Ishrat Hussain	Former Advisor To The PM On Institution Reforms & Austerity
117.	Mr. Abdullah Hussain Haroon	Eastern Film Studies Pvt. Ltd.
118.	Mr. Mian Mehmood Yousuf	MMY Consulting Medavoir Pvt.
119.	Mr. Hussain Thebo	Pakistan Public Forum
120.	Mr. Mushtaq Vali Mohammad	M/S VMY Trading Prop (CEO)

S. No	Name	Designation
121.	Mr. Shabir Burhani	Ruhi Enterprises (CEO)
122.	Mr. Tariq Fatimi	Ambassador to Brussels® Europe Union
123.	Mr. Sikandar Lalani	Lalani & Assocaites - Senior Partner
124.	Mr. Ali Asghar	TPL REIT Management Compnay Ltd
125.	Mr. Usman Shaukat	BIO-LABS (PVT) LTD
126.	Mr. Shaheen Salahuddin	
127.	Mr. Zahid Hameed	Apparel Zone - CEO

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-Eleanor Roosevelt

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KCFR Annual Meet & Greet at Marriott Hotel



Japanese Government Honours Kalim Farooqui



The Consul General of Japan, ODAGIRI Toshio on behalf of the Government of Japan, presented Kalim Farooqui with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon. The award was conferred upon him by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, as stated on the PATENT OF DECORATION with the seal of the Prime Minister, KISHIDA Fumio and Director General of Decoration Bureau, Cabinet Office, ONODA Hiromu. Kalim Farooqui was amongst the 27 selected worldwide.

In a simple but graceful ceremony held at the house of the Consul General, the immediate family of Kalim Farooqui was invited, the Patent of Decoration read out and the prestigious medal decorated. Later, the Consul General elaborated upon the numerous contributions made by Kalim Farooqui over the years in connecting the business communities of Japan with that of Pakistan with a special mention about the several delegations of SME's he took to Japan and the Joint Dialogues he attended with the last one in Islamabad in September 2022 which he chaired for business to business. Also mentioned was about his support and cooperation to promote culture which included art, literature music and the like.

Later in the evening, members of the Pakistan Japan Business Forum (PJBF) of which Kalim Farooqui is the Chairman, and Pakistan Japan Cultural Association (PJCA) of which he is the Patron, were invited over dinner by him to celebrate the honour bestowed on him. Additionally in attendance were his close friends, city notables including many from the diplomatic corps based in Karachi.

Pakistan Germany Relations



German Ambassador Bernhard Stephan Schlagheck stated, during an informal discussion with Chairman of Karachi Council on Foreign Relations Mr. Ikram Sehgal and the members of its Board of Governors, that there are indicators that Pakistan will get out of Grey List of FATF as it has full filled most of the requirements for this purpose. He was welcomed to the KCFR and it was highlighted that these relations date back to the times when our Allama Iqbal studied philosophy in Germany. There is a commemorative plaque and a street named after him in Germany. Dr. Ruth Pfau was also remembered, who fought magnificently against leprosy in Pakistan.

The Ambassador thanked the Board of Governors for providing him the opportunity and informed that there existed a lot of goodwill between the people of Germany and Pakistan. He said that Germany can provide a lot of help to Pakistan in the technical fields and for this purpose people to people contact was necessary, which was developing slowly. In response to a question, he said that within the EU, Germany was the largest trading partner of Pakistan and it was with German support that Pakistan continued to be in GSP Plus status and that for Pakistan to continue in the present GSP Plus status, which would expire in 2024, Pakistan needed to fulfill EU requirements in the areas of human rights, extinction of child labor, conducive labor laws, including working hours, sustainable environment and anti terrorism measures and German support for keeping Pakistan in GSP Plus would continue. In response to the question for providing FDIs, he said that along with investments Germany would readily provide technical advice.

That in addition to few other fields, Volkswagen manufacturing unit is being established in Hub and some other technological investments are in progress. That FDIs with soft loans along with technical know-how and other businesses would start coming into Pakistan with provision of continued political environment and security in the country. In response to a question about Ukraine and Russia that India-Pakistan's situation was different as both are nuclear armed countries and India from being the largest democracy of the world had turned into an electoral autocracy with a very poor recent record of human rights. In response to a question regarding human rights atrocities taking place in Kashmir, the Ambassador agreed and said that whereas Kashmir remains a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan, however Charter of UN through Security Council's Resolutions must be complied by India in Kashmir. The Ambassador said that Russia had invaded Ukraine, in a way that Ukraine doesn't have any right to exist as an independent country. While discussing this topic further and in response to a question, he said that the Cuban crisis of 60s was different to a Ukrainian attack by Russia.

Chairman Mr. Ikram Sehgal profoundly thanked the German Ambassador for giving time to Karachi Council on Foreign Relations and appreciated the Ambassador's coverage of Businesses with Pakistan and technical transfers and his forthright political expression that expanded over South Asia and Europe. The Ambassador thanked the Chairman and hoped for continuing such dialogues in future also.

Pakistan Bangladesh Relations



KARACHI: The Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Karachi Mahbubul Alam in his address to the members of Institute of Nation Building and Board of Governors Karachi Council on Foreign Relations (KCFR) said that Bangladesh had become a role model for the developing countries. He said that Bangladesh's progress had been recognized by the United Nations for development and termed as a "remarkable success story." He added that 100 Specialized Economic Zones had been set up and achieved as Millennium Development Goals. He said that 2021 marked a very significant year for Bangladesh as they celebrated their 50th anniversary of independence. According to an IMF report, Bangladesh is one of the three countries of the world that has achieved the highest economic growth until 2021. He said from nearly no foreign reserves the country's foreign exchange reserves today stood at US 47 billion dollars. He said Bangladesh was utilizing its manpower and became a middle-income country with a per-capita GDP of \$2,554; which is growing further and fast and the life expectancy has risen to 73 years. He said that an International Prize for the Creative Economy had been set up at UNESCO as Banglabandhu prize. He said that Bangladeshis are working all around the world at prestigious positions and that remittance earnings from expatriates working abroad had reached a record \$ 21 billion in 2021. After attaining Vision 2021 now they are working on vision 2041 wherein Bangladesh will join the list of developed countries.

They had worked upon "One House One Farm Project" called Asrayan Project, meaning shelter for all. Bangladesh's economy was improving at the rate of 5.47% in the preceding years and now is producing 25000 MW of electricity bringing its 100% population under electricity coverage. It provides free textbooks, which number 400 million copies each year. The current enrolment rate in primary school was 98% and the number of universities in Bangladesh has risen to 170. Bangladesh now has 300 state-of-the-art pharmaceutical companies which meet 97% of the domestic needs and export to 70 countries across the world. Bangladesh had become the second highest troop provider to UN peacekeeping missions in the world. He requested the Pakistani investors to come forward with more investment and higher trade with Bangladesh. He assured all possible support for the potential businesspersons and investors for wider economic relationships between Bangladesh and Pakistan as the government embarks on higher growth trajectories and policies for NGOs and SMEs making its population, including women, self-reliant. Bangladesh has launched the Banglabandhu Satellite-1 to join the prestigious club of space countries, he added.

The Chairman KCFR, Ikram Sehgal, praised Bangladesh for its remarkable progress, which had defied Henry Kissinger's calling the country an "International Basketcase". He praised construction of the Padma bridge project without any external financial assistance and proposed that Pakistan and Bangladesh should increase exports to each other. He said Pakistan imports tea from Bangladesh and spends almost \$ 600 million on tea imports. He also raised the issue of stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh and said that this issue should be settled once and for all. He urged that they should be given the right of citizenship as Pakistan has always been welcoming refugees into Pakistan as a very large number of Afghans have come and settled in large cities of Pakistan. He hoped that tariffs in the trade of both sides and visa requirements shall be removed and soon movements shall take place on visa-free entries into each brotherly country.—PR

Pakistan Argentina Relations



The trade between the two countries will increase with exchange of delegations, says the Argentinian Envoy

The Ambassador of Argentina His Excellency Leopoldo Francisco Sahores addressed the Board of Governors of Karachi Council on Foreign Relations. He said that Argentina and Pakistan have a lot of shared values and issues and efforts have been made to improve further especially in bilateral trade between us. Personally, the Ambassador said that he wanted to take more concrete steps to further improving relations that he was looking into establishing more Person to Person and Business to Business connections and then through the Chambers of Commerce of both countries. He said that trade with Pakistan was very low and there is a desire in Argentina to improve the level of trade with Pakistan. He said that Argentina was also interested in helping Pakistan's agricultural sector. Argentina is an agricultural dominant country, and its agricultural research breakthroughs especially in grain storage would prove to be very beneficial for Pakistan. Research in livestock upkeep could also benefit Pakistan. The Ambassador said that Pakistan has a huge growing domestic market and that Argentina was interested in trade and also in creating joint ventures. The Ambassador also said that he intended to improve the cultural relations between Pakistan and Argentina. He planned on bringing in prominent writers from Argentina in the month of February next year to Pakistan who would hold meetings with cultural organizations in Karachi. He also spoke of the Film industry, that was concentrated in Karachi that could be tapped into and also efforts were in hand to promoting Spanish language in Pakistan. Other avenues of cultural interaction included tourism as well. Unfortunately very few people toured between the two countries while both have wonderful tourism potential. For sports he stated that Argentina's football team was one of the best in the world and he hoped he would be able to get female footballers from Argentina to Pakistan for training women in this sport. He continued that exchange of trade delegations between the two countries to promote business to business relations with Pakistan was essential. He further added that arrangements like MERCOSUR could be arranged between the two countries to improve trade. He also said that Argentina could provide assistance to improve food security.

The meeting was concluded by Vice Admiral Khalid Mir, Chairman KCFR, who thanked the Ambassador His Excellency Leopoldo Francisco Sahores for being with KCFR. He gratefully thanked the Ambassador for the very productive presentation and discussions of the present relations between Pakistan and Argentina. Both being agricultural countries have an immense commonality of interests. It was agreed by the Ambassador that actions on the issues mentioned above should be followed up by both countries especially in the fields of sharing agricultural research, in technology and bio technology for improving yields, crops management, joint ventures in dairy sector including value addition, preventing/curing diseases in livestock, and grain storage etc, through regular exchanges of business delegations and enlarging trade through more connectivity.

The Ambassador was also given a tour of Quaid-e-Azam House Museum. The Ambassador was quite thrilled to have visited the house of the father of the nation and was very thankful to KCFR for arranging the visit.

Iran Pakistan Relations



Lack of banking channels are major hinderance in increasing Pak-Iran trade, says Iranian Consul General

Mr. Nourian Hasan, Consul General of Iran, during a meeting with Karachi Council on Foreign Relations (KCFR) said that Pak-Iran relations were centuries old and Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan and Pakistan was the first nation to acknowledge the Iranian revolution in 1979. Despite foreign interventions Iran has marched towards progress and development. However, despite many difficulties and terrorist attacks and activism Iran is now advancing in all fields such as aerospace sciences, humanities, industrial engineering, defense production, launching of satellites etc. He said that both countries shared a 900 km border. He stated that in a meeting between the Supreme Leader of Iran and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, it was reiterated that Pak-Iran relations were warm and should be developed further. He pressed that Pakistan and Iran were members of many international forums like ECO and SCO at regional and international level; and supported each other. The Consul General emphasized that the exchange of delegations between the two countries is invaluable for the realization of the economic potential between two countries. He elaborated that some steps had already been taken to improve the economic ties such as the inauguration of the two new border crossings and the opening of some border markets. He said that Iran and Pakistan were the two gateway states for the Central and North Asian countries for international trade. He added that two MoUs had been signed to establish a Joint Business Council and that an exhibition of Iran in Karachi Expo Center will be held in January 2023. He informed that electronic paperless visa for Pakistani businessmen visiting Iran had been started. These steps, the CG said, show the commitment of both countries in improving relations with each other. He concluded by noting that one of the major obstacles to improving economic relations between Iran and Pakistan was the absence of banking channels between Pakistan and Iran. Replying to a question the CG explained that Iranian production is halal, inexpensive and of high quality. To another question the CG replied that with the establishment of a railway link between Tehran and Karachi the availability of products will be more easily available in both countries. The CG added that to improve the awareness of the Iranian markets' potential, efforts will be made to send delegations to Pakistan Chambers of Commerce. The CG agreed that there were many specific items globally imported by Iran which could be made and exported by Pakistan to Iran on a large bilateral trade scale.

In conclusion, Chairman KCFR Vice Admiral Khalid Mir stated that Pak-Iran relations are based on historic linkages and are neither against any country or poses any threat to any state. Our core mutual interests focus on national development, economic prosperity and security in the region. Both countries have tremendous potential for promoting trade and commerce. The Pak Iran Joint Economic Commission (JEC) and Joint Trade Committee (JTC) have agreed on a number of proposals this year which require implementation. He further expressed the importance of Iran-Pakistan pipeline and CPEC for peace and security in the region and highlighted the importance of more frequent exchanges through trade delegations to promote trade and commerce.

Indonesia Pakistan Relations



Pakistan Indonesia Relations need to grow into economic fields also, says the Indonesian Ambassador

H.E. Mr. Adam Mulawarman Tugio, the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan addressed the members of Karachi Council on Foreign Relations and highlighted the cordial historic links that existed between the two countries. The Ambassador applauded the role of KCFR for providing inputs to the organisations on the ongoing policy issues in various fields of interests. In line with this and the current International 'Aman' Exercise 2023 in Karachi, the Ambassador mentioned that the two countries have many venues of cooperation, that included the Defence matters for furthering peace in the region. He underscored that both brotherly nations had many fields to further strengthen bilateral relation. The newly signed mechanism was Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) in Bali last year, which sets both the Foreign Ministers to exchange ideas and meet on regular basis in order to stocktaking progress of bilateral cooperation and define strategic direction to further bilateral relations. Ambassador commended efforts of Pakistan, to encourage trade between the two nations. However, the trade imbalance has been a major issue which the two countries have to work together, mainly through people to people contact, exchange of trade delegations and holding of seminars etc. He stated that Pakistan has a huge potential to develop its economy due to its Geo-strategic location where Pakistan can serve as a trade hub for the land locked countries in Central Asia and that Indonesia can become a gateway for Pakistan businesses in connecting to the ASEAN member countries. The Ambassador stressed the need for Pakistan to focus on institutional collaboration and through bilateral processes. With these two approaches, it may increase Pakistan's presence in ASEAN. He further emphasised the importance of connectivity, as was the priorities of the vision of ASEAN Community. More than 50 BRI projects in ASEAN have been connected through land and sea. He pointed out the need for the two countries to integrate through FTA to gain trade benefits out of ASEAN. He added that Pakistan can also benefit in exploring science and technology cooperation, through COMSTECH Headquarters in Islamabad. He highlighted the growing tourism industries in both countries, where Pakistan has lots of tourism spots with beautiful landscapes and also religious tourism as Pakistan has Sikh shrines, Buddhists spots and many beautiful Islamic architectures. The Envoy encouraged the youth in Pakistan to take benefit of scholarships being offered by universities in Indonesia.

In response to a question that Free Trade Agreement should be signed earliest, which has been pending since long and that after signing the FTA Pakistan would be able to get more access to the Indonesian Markets for our traditional products i.e. Textiles, Surgical Goods, sports goods, leather goods, fruits and vegetables etc. The Ambassador replied that both the countries are working in this field also and Indonesia also wants to have trade to get balanced between both the countries, as at the moment trade was greatly in favor of Indonesia mainly due to Palm oil imports from his country and Pakistan's exports are far too low. He said that Pakistan's Trade Ministry also supports the FTA but now Pakistan has to take the initiative to see it happening and that Indonesia is waiting for the follow up from Pakistan. The Ambassador agreed to a comment that the then Minister for Science & Technology, Mr. Buharuddin Habibie, who later became President of Indonesia, had emphasised collaboration with Pakistan in the field of Science & Technology, who too wanted that both the countries cooperate in this important field, as both have talent second to none. The meeting was concluded with KCFR's Chairman's thanks to the Ambassador who recounted the historic links between the two countries and that deliberations taken place in the meeting will be forwarded to the Ministry in Islamabad.

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