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## *Report- Book Launch*

# **“Pakistan and a World in Disorder: A Grand Strategy For the Twenty-First Century”**

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### Pictures of the Event



## **Pakistan and a World in Disorder: A Grand Strategy For the Twenty-First Century**

The Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) launched a book titled “*Pakistan and a World in Disorder: A Grand Strategy For The Twenty-First Century*” authored by a seasoned diplomat Ambassador Javid Husain on January 25, 2017. Ambassador Riaz H. Khokhar, former Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Riaz M. Khan, former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador Akram Zaki, former Secretary General were also present at the occasion to express their views on the book. Welcoming the guests, the Chairman Board of Governors (ISSI) Ambassador Khalid Mahmood said that it is an honour for the Institute of Strategic Studies to provide a platform for the launch of this book. Introducing the author, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood said that Ambassador Javid Husain has great experience in both multilateral and bilateral diplomacy and has served in important capitals around the world.

Introducing the book, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood said that the author thinks that Pakistan’s foreign policy suffers from conceptional and operational flaws. The book argues that foreign policy should be integrated with national security and economic policies to formulate a national grand strategy. Secondly, a country should prioritise its internal and external national objectives. Thirdly, that there should be balance between short and long-term objectives. Fourthly, it must be within the reach of resources available to avoid overstretch and that policy should be based on popular support and on a realistic assessment of regional and global environment. It is only after presenting these guidelines that the author proposes to formulate a grand strategy.

Ambassador Riaz Khokhar while complementing the author said that this book is timely and very relevant. It covers the Cold War period, the post Cold War period, and the activities of the sole super power i.e. the United States of America. After the end of the Cold War, the US took several actions which added further to the destabilisation of global political and economic order. United Nations was also emasculated as is evident from the way Iraq was invaded and Afghanistan was attacked. There is no doubt that the rise of China is very important and the rise of India is also noteworthy. Similarly, resurgence of Russia is also an important development. However, the US still remains the major power in the world militarily, economically and technologically. The author, he said, has touched upon all important relationships particularly with India, Afghanistan and China and has talked in detail about the flaws in Pakistan’s foreign policy. There is no doubt that ad hocism has also contributed towards the mismanagement of foreign policy. Ambassador Khokhar disagreed with the author that Pakistan should not have joined pacts with the US in the 50s and should have remained non-aligned. Ambassador Khokhar was of the view that Pakistan did not have many options. He said that the author has rightly pointed out that due to overwhelming influence of military governments in decision making, Pakistan had to face certain critical situations which had serious consequences for the country. His approach is very pragmatic while suggesting policy measures for relations with India and Afghanistan. Relations with Iran also need to be revisited. He also agreed with the author that Pakistan should focus more on ECO instead of SAARC. He also emphasised that a policy should not only be security-oriented, all other aspects should also be integrated while formulating a policy. He hoped that the policy makers would take full advantage of the wisdom of the author.

Ambassador Riaz Khan was of the opinion that the book has prescient title and an ambitious canvas. When the book came out, there was little talk of a world in disorder. Today, this has become an inescapable referent in describing the world situation, often with reference to anarchy and turmoil. The articulation of a grand strategy by the author is an ambitious endeavour. Covering Pakistan's history, the country's security concerns, its complex external environment, and challenging foreign relations, their analysis and finally a roadmap for the future is what this book provides, and is a remarkable and thought provoking study of Pakistan's foreign relations. Ambassador Javid, he said, has been judicious in his evaluation and critique. He acknowledges the limitations and challenges and credits where policy took a good turn. He is also very clear in pointing out the mistakes whether of judgment or institutional failure. Referring to the 1990s, few Pakistani writers have presented bold and clear observations the way Ambassador Javid has. He brings put fresh perspectives drawn from his personal experience as Ambassador in Tehran. He faults Islamabad for failing to engage with Tehran to bring peace in Afghanistan and for its reluctance to put pressure on the Afghan Taliban to accommodate the Northern Alliance. He recommends that Islamabad correct this error now. This is a moot point but deserves a hard look for both what had happened in the past and for the recommended course of correction. Pakistan's move to forge a solid relationship with China is the brightest aspect of its otherwise chequered diplomacy. The book presents India as a hegemon with the help of strong arguments. However, the writer has rightly pointed out that there is no military option for the two nuclear weapon states, and therefore, they must engage in a dialogue. Ambassador Riaz further pondered upon the question of hegemony and said that there is no precedent that a nuclear power is subdued in the hegemony of another nuclear power at the cost of national interest. Pakistan cannot be an exception, and must deal with India with confidence. The recommendations made towards the end of the book are pragmatic and reasonable.

Ambassador Akram Zaki said that this is a very good book on the foreign policy challenges faced by Pakistan. It reflects a clear understanding and profound experience of an accomplished diplomat, as well as a serious scholar who has supported his views with specific references. Different issues are organised in a focused manner in the book. The initial chapters set the stage by discussing the disorder in the world, followed by chapters dedicated to Pakistan's immediate neighbourhood. Islamophobia in the West has also been given great attention, and which has a great importance in policy orientation of Pakistan which maintains close ties with Muslim countries. Ambassador Zaki was of the opinion that "unipolarity" is a temporary term in the global politics. It is a well-known fact that whenever one power emerges to control the world, countervailing powers emerge to resist it. Thus, it is commendable that the author has used the word "unipolar moment" instead of unipolar period. He went on to describe the ideology of neocons who held important positions in the Bush and Obama administrations and how their ideologies were reflected in the US policies following 9/11. He said that the chapter on China is very well written explaining how China preferred "peaceful development" instead of "peaceful rise". This theme has been repeatedly highlighted by the author to emphasise the fact that Pakistan ignored economic development. The author has also rightly pointed out India as an existential threat for Pakistan. Under Modi, this hostility has become even more manifest. Ambassador Zaki agreed with the author that the policy of appeasement with India would not work. He also agreed with the author that good relations between Pakistan and Iran can help in resolving the crisis in Afghanistan. However, he disagreed with the author that military's domination in decision making, particularly during President Zia era, remained unchanged under

the subsequent civilian governments. He agreed with the author on the recommendations presented in the book for the formulation of a grand strategy, but suggested that instead of grand strategy, it should be called a comprehensive or composite strategy.

In his remarks at the occasion, the author of the book, Ambassador Javid Husain hoped that the book and the comments over it would encourage debate and discussion on the desired changes in Pakistan's foreign policy and the formulation of a national grand strategy. He said that national grand strategy is a synthesis of political, economic, foreign and military policy into a grand strategy for serving the overall national interest of the country. Ambassador Javid said that the book is an appeal for the adoption of a comprehensive approach for the preservation of Pakistan's national interest. This would require different ministries to rise above their narrow outlook and develop a national approach in developing a national grand strategy. This grand strategy has to be based on in-depth analysis of the global and regional security environment. It must take into account the lessons of Pakistan's past experiences, both successes and failures. It must be within the reach of national resources to avoid the mistake of dangerous strategic overstretch. The book, he said, makes a strong case of dealing with national issues on a more serious note in contrast with the short-term thinking which has been the source of many of Pakistan's problems in the past. Ambassador Javid highlighted the importance of economic strength for Pakistan for ensuring national security. He urged an emphasis on education, especially in the field of science and technology. He gave the example of China which has witnessed high growth rates in the past three decades and the policies it has been adopting for this growth. He also suggested adoption of a non- adventurist policy to ensure peace in the neighbourhood and diversion of resources to Pakistan's economic growth.

In his concluding remarks, Chairman ISSI, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood said that Ambassador Javid Husain has raised the question of whether Pakistan made the right choices after independence. He was of the opinion that keeping in mind the circumstances that surrounded Pakistan at that time, it would be hard to say that the country made wrong choices. Ambassador Khalid Mahmood also disagreed with the author that there are conceptional and operational flaws in Pakistan's foreign policy with a thrust that it has been out of sync with the international environment and cited several examples where Pakistan was successful on the diplomatic front. He thanked Ambassador Riaz Khokhar, Ambassador Riaz Khan and Ambassador Akram Zaki for their valuable comments. He complimented the author for writing a book that is a must read for diplomats, members of academia and policy makers. He also thanked the audience for their participation in the event.