

MINUTES – THINK TANK MEETING
(17 December 2018)

General

1. ISSRA organised an interaction for the heads of Islamabad based think tanks/ research organisations on 17 December 2018. Major General Muhammad Samrez Salik, HI (M), DG ISSRA chaired the meeting. A total of 18x think tanks were invited however, due to various commitments only representatives from 11x think tanks attended the meeting. List of participants is attached at **Annex A**. After the welcome remarks, DG ISSRA highlighted the transforming nature of global and regional threats especially the hybrid war against Pakistan. He pointed out the critical importance of research institutes in the contemporary environment and a need for joint effort. He solicited plausible options/ recommendations from the participants for effective coordination, policy-level inputs and avoid duplication of efforts.

ISSRA Brief

2. Participants were given detailed briefing on ISSRA, NDU and the activities conducted in 2018 and planned for 2019. The concept and objectives of the meeting were also explained.

- a. **Concept.** Policy making in the contemporary world is through a formalized procedure whereby, various think tanks provide necessary input to the policy makers / government. In this context, various think tanks across the country focus on multifarious policy and strategic issues of global, regional and national significance. However, there seems to be a coordination and collaboration gap between these think tanks. ***Therefore, a need has been felt that a collective and cooperative forum to be evolved for optimum utilization of the expertise and outputs of all think tanks.*** This will enable the think tanks, inter alia, well-focused and higher qualitative outputs on important issues.
- b. **Objectives.** Following are the objectives:-
 - (1) Identification and effective utilization of existing specializations and expertise.
 - (2) Coordination and cooperation in each other's research work.
 - (3) Frequent interaction of the respective Think Tanks / Quarterly.
 - (4) Prepare viable options with collective wisdom.
 - (5) Sharing of information / research work and reinforce the same.

Interactive Discussion

3. During the interactive session, participants congratulated DG ISSRA for holding such an important meeting. Unanimously, all the participants agreed to work together to avoid duplication of efforts. Keeping in view the hybrid war, which Pakistan is facing now a days, it was agreed that each research institute will work to counter this phenomenon. Instead of reinventing the wheel, think tanks may rely on the already carried out research by other organisations. Various issues/ layers of hybrid war remain under-studied while major focus remains on transforming landscape of geopolitics. All agreed that ISSRA to spearhead and coordinate such like meetings in future to present various policy options on diverse issues to government/ relevant ministries.

Outcome/ Decision

4. Following decisions were made during the meeting:-
- a. **Minutes of Meeting.** It was decided that minutes of the meeting will be issued to all the research institutes including the ones who did not attend the interaction.
 - b. **Contact Point.** Each research institute is required to nominate a focal person/ contact point to institutionalise the collaboration efforts.
 - c. **Identify Core Capability.** Keeping in view the list of themes/ topics (**Annex B**), think tanks will share their area of expertise for collective benefit.
 - d. **Web Portal.** NDU, taking the lead role, will establish a web portal where the think tanks will share the information regarding their events and research to avoid the duplication of efforts.
 - e. **Next Meeting at ISSI.** Institute for Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) volunteered for the next meeting on mutually agreed dates.

Conclusion

5. Overall the concept of exchanging views and to formulate joint response with expertise of each other towards emerging threats/ issues was well received. This meeting was a first step towards harmonizing and recognition of all think tanks efforts. Future meetings are expected to achieve the desired objectives with the help of all.

LIST OF ISLAMABAD BASED THINK TANKS

Sr	Think Tanks	Attended by
1.	Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS)	Maj Gen Syed Khalid Ami Jaffery (Retd)
2.	Doctrine & Evaluation Dte (GHQ)	Maj Gen Fida Hussain & Brig Sheikh Ghulam Jilani
3.	Army Institute of Mil History (AIMH)	Maj Gen Agha Masood Akram, HI (M) (R) & Brig (Retd) Fowad Hafeez
4.	Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI)	Brig (R) Naveed
5.	Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI)	Mr. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, DG
6.	Institute of Regional Studies (IRS)	Dr. Rukhsana Qamber
7.	South Asian Strategic Stability Institute (SASSI)	Dr. Maria Sultan
8.	Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)	Mr. Khalid Rahman
9.	Strat Vision Institute	Dr Zafar Iqbal Cheema
10.	Pakistan House	Brig Ishaq Ahmed (retd),
11.	Obortunity	Mr. Maaz & Mr. Hamza Saeed
12.	Centre for Research and security studies (CRSS)	
13.	Global Think Tank Network (GTTN) NUST	
14.	Pakistan Institute of <i>Development</i> Economics (PIDE)	
15.	NUST institute of Peace & Conflict Studies (NIPCONS)	
16.	Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS)	
17.	Nazriya Pakistan Council Trust	
18.	Ministry of Planning Development & Reform	

AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST**Subjects**

1. Education
2. Economy
3. Energy
4. Climate Change / Water
5. Population Growth
6. Terrorism
7. Foreign Policy Contours
8. CPEC/OBOR/BRI
9. South Asia Evolving Threats
10. Transforming Global Order
11. Middle East Crisis
12. Artificial Intelligence
13. SAARC
14. SCO
15. Climate Change

Themes

1. US – India Nexus
2. Global & Regional Transformations: Conflict or Cooperation?
3. Pakistan and Regional Connectivity: Challenges & Opportunities
4. CPEC: Geopolitics versus Geo-economics
5. Artificial Intelligence – Moral and Ethical Questions
6. Global Commons – Are we ready to take ownership?
7. Hydropolitics: A Crisis around the Corner
8. Black Gold: Politics of Coercion
9. Why Should Pakistan seek stability in Afghanistan?
10. Pakistan's role in emerging Eurasia
11. Indo-US Partnership: Regional Implications
12. Comprehensive National Security of Pakistan
13. Changing Landscapes of Baluchistan: Social, Economic and Political
14. India's Strategic Expansion in Pacific Region