

ISLAMABAD SECURITY DIALOGUE EVENT BRIEF



17th - 18th March, 2021

TOGETHER FOR IDEAS

The Islamabad Security Dialogue (ISD) is envisioned as Pakistan's annual flagship security forum that will position Pakistan as a leading voice in thought leadership on national security issues. The ISD 2021 unveiled Pakistan's Comprehensive National Security Framework, with economic security at its core.

The dialogue provided a platform for critical thinking and robust intellectual discourse on some of the most important and pressing challenges and opportunities facing Pakistan and the wider region. This was the first time Pakistan organized a dedicated international dialogue where policy making and future scenarios on comprehensive national security were discussed under the banner of the Government of Pakistan.

ISLAMABAD SECURITY DIALOGUE 2021

The National Security Division, in collaboration with the Advisory Board of the National Security Committee of Pakistan organized the first edition of the ISD, which was held on 17th and 18th March 2021 in Islamabad.

The first edition of the ISD examined key contours of national policy that will help shape a more secure and prosperous Pakistan, laid down existing challenges and opportunities in regional security, and explored Pakistan's economic security paradigm. The main aims of the ISD were:

- i) Unveiling Pakistan's comprehensive national security framework.
- ii) Proactively shifting the conversation around Pakistan's role and potential as an economic melting pot for positive global economic interests and a responsible partner in the regional and global order.
- iii) Launching the first-of-its-kind National Security Division Advisory Portal.

The National Security Committee's Advisory Board

The five thinktanks that collaborated as co-hosts for the event are as listed below. Each institute is either a permanent or co-opted member of the National Security Committee's Advisory Board.

- i) Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad;
- ii) Institute of Regional Studies;
- iii) Institute for Strategic Studies, Research & Analysis (National Defence University);
- iv) Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies; and
- v) Islamabad Policy Research Institute.

ADVISORY PORTAL LAUNCH

During the opening ceremony of the ISD, the Prime Minister launched the first-of-its-kind Advisory Portal of the National Security Division. The portal will operate as a hub to link Pakistani academia and policy experts/influencers with the government so their intellectual capital can be utilized to create more depth in policy decisions pertaining to traditional, economic and human security. It will provide Pakistani universities and think tanks a dedicated and secure mechanism to provide policy recommendations and input directly to the National Security Division, and reflects the Prime Minister's vision to make national policy more inclusive, informed, responsive and participatory.

KEY THEMES

The two-day conference centered on five major themes: 1) Comprehensive National Security Framework; 2) Economic Security; 3) Human Security Paradigm; 4) Regional Peace and Security, and; 5) Pakistan's Place in the Evolving World Order.

AUDIENCE

The event, held in a hybrid format due to the Covid-19 pandemic, was attended by international thinkers, global and local policy experts, scholars, members of the Federal Cabinet, Diplomatic Corps, former government officials, academia, think-tanks and civil society members.

EVENT SNAPSHOT



Speakers
23



Audience
15,000+



Int'l. Media Spotlights
50+



Online Impressions
90+ Million

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE DIALOGUE

- A Comprehensive National Security Framework encompassing traditional and non-traditional aspects of national security with economic security at the core was unveiled by the Prime Minister.
- Economic security remains key for Pakistan's ability to further its defence and deterrence, and to spend greater resources on human welfare.
- Pakistan is blessed with a unique location at the crossroads of South, Central and West Asia. To fully reap the benefits of its location, Pakistan has to shift its focus from geo-politics to geo-economics.
- Pakistan aims to change the narrative of geo-political contestation to geo-economic cooperation, and wants to create a gainful economic win-win situation for all its international partners.
- Pakistan is pursuing an economic diplomacy strategy under the comprehensive security framework to increase Pakistan's economic footprint globally.
- Pakistan's vision of economic security is based on three core principles: connectivity; development partnerships and socio-economic uplift; and peace within and beyond Pakistan's borders.
- South Asia is the least geographically connected region of the world; Pakistan aims to focus on regional connectivity to change this reality.
- Economic stability and peace in the region are linked with peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan as per the United Nation Security Council's resolutions. The onus is on India to create a conducive environment for forward movement.
- Regional cooperation and peace are important to tackle human security challenges including climate change, food shortage and water scarcity.
- Great power competition and policies of containment are ascendant. However, Pakistan has decided not to be a part of any regional conflict and has consciously chosen only to partner for peace and development.
- The peace process in Afghanistan is precarious and full of complexities. Pakistan has played a constructive and robust role in bringing the parties to the table. Durable peace in Afghanistan holds the key of trade, connectivity and economic development in the region.
- The transnational nature of modern technology, data and artificial intelligence have changed the nature of war, the balance of power, economic security and the discussion of national security policies. Hence, Pakistan should re-orient itself as a technology-friendly country, focusing on investing in artificial intelligence, technology, and internet connectivity.

Prime Minister - Imran Khan

“National security is no longer only the strengthening of armed forces, it now incorporates other important issues like climate change, food security, economy security and poverty alleviation.”

“The Advisory Portal will facilitate intellectuals and members of academia to participate in the debate on national security, and I would like to congratulate NSD on taking this initiative.”

Foreign Minister - Shah Mahmood Qureshi

“Pakistan is fully resolute to protecting its vital national interests; however, it is shifting emphasis from geopolitics to geo-economics. Pakistan’s location makes it a natural hub for economic convergence for competing States. Pakistan is advocating coexistence and win-win cooperation.”

Chief of Army Staff - General Qamar Javed Bajwa

“Pakistan is ready to resolve all outstanding issues with its neighbours through dialogue in a dignified and peaceful manner. Without the resolution of Kashmir dispute through peaceful means, the process of sub-continental rapprochement will always remain susceptible to derailment.”

Advisor for Commerce, Textile, Industry and Production, and Investment of Pakistan - Abdul Razak Dawood

“A nation’s power, influence, and its economic security are deeply intertwined. The economy lies at the core of state’s national power and all other elements revolve around it.”

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Security Division and Strategic Policy Planning - Moeed Yusuf

“A consensus on the comprehensive national security framework is necessary to provide the strategic vision regarding the achievement of comprehensive security. A cultural shift is required to improve our policy making and to establish a comprehensive security policy.”

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety - Sania Nishtar

“Human security with its multifaceted dimensions has a deep interdependence with state security and in our national planning and public policy formation, we must keep cognizance of that.”

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Health Services - Faisal Sultan

“Using hard scientific data to guide and inform your decisions would not only be just for health purposes but will impact the larger decision making of government of Pakistan.”

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change - Malik Amin Aslam

“Pakistan has a very good story to tell (about managing the COVID-19 pandemic). There are very few countries which are actually taking the initiatives on the ground and Pakistan is one of them which is now acknowledged.”