Panel Discussion
on
Evolving Regional Geo-Strategic Trends

A GTTN Event
Tuesday, December 2, 2014
NUST Global Think Tank Network functions as a focused research, analysis, and advocacy platform and generates viable policy options to enable correct and evidence-based policy making for national socio-economic development.

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COVER DESIGN AND LAYOUT
Ali Abbas
Technology & Marketing Coordination Intern, NUST GTTN
Rector’s Message

I feel pleased to note that NUST GTTN has invited a renowned institute like IISS to discuss important question of stability and security in the region. The swiftly shifting regional geostrategic environment calls for endorsement of regional cooperation and security measures for building confidence and trust among nations. South Asia, seen as the world’s flashpoint, significantly affects global strategic trends. Peace in this region will complement holistic global stability and can be achieved through serious contribution from all stakeholders, respect for the territorial integrity of states, and constructivist and supportive relationship between them. In this context, the role of policy institutes in promoting peace, harmony, and good governance has long been recognized. Today’s panel discussion with the IISS affirms NUST’s commitment to fostering collaboration with like-minded institutions to promote a culture of intellectual exchange and multidisciplinary policy research and advocacy.

Engr. Muhammad Asghar
Rector NUST
Co-Chair GTTN
South Asia is a promising but difficult region in contemporary world. Both people and governments in the region desire peace but both find themselves constrained to remaining in the rut of adversarial relations. Building peace may presuppose the necessity to adopt measures that may compel regional players to jettison cherished ideas and notions of national interest that have now assumed sacrosanct positions in the national consciousness and official positions too difficult to revise. Mutual desire for security is, therefore, trumped by the mutual challenge of the revision of conventional wisdom. As a consequence, path-dependent responses to new and unconventional problems persistently define the 21st Century geopolitics of South Asia. This leads to the formation of conditions in which relations amongst nations in the region can only be managed through finessing geopolitical and diplomatic situations as they emerge. As a result, the logic of the conduct of inter-state relations in the region stays harmfully situational without any effort on the part of both practitioners and theorists of regional diplomacy and security to envision enduring types and mechanisms of regional peace, prosperity, and development. Endlessly game-theoretic and episodic treatment of security results in the failure to devise anchor frameworks for regulating bilateral relations smoothly.

The presence of powers of different magnitudes in a relatively tight regional geopolitical space compounds pressures which do not prove conducive to stability in the region. The geostrategic spill-over of neighbouring regions also plays an part in sharpening South Asia’s intra-regional contradictions and tensions. At the level of discourse, the dominant currency of geopolitical ideas creates inflationary cognitive pressures in regional strategic thinking that have the effect of devaluing any consistent and cooperative search for peace and security. While inclusive development is a notion that is accepted universally as the way forward in creating a more equal and open world, its assimilation and organic manifestation in the realm of regional and national levels of policies and action-plans remains limited and partial at best. Afghanistan, despite the intentions of its peoples and leaders, continues to remain chronically and historically unstable. The Afghan situation has compelled America’s involvement and military commitments that may detract from its ability to win unequivocal global consent for its robust model of economic, political, and human development. China’s continuing peaceful development, as the second most important country in the international system, seems as if it may change the configuration of forces in the region. It remains to be seen whether or not these changes would add to the overall welfare of the peoples of the region.

India, as an emerging nation, finds itself faced with the domestic and external exigencies of its global ambitions which limit its developmental potential significantly. India-Pakistan relations remain the geopolitical cynosure of the region. The geostrategic backwash of this bilateral relationship circumscribes the capacity of other South Asian states for contributing to regional growth and development. Pakistan, as a classic middle power wedged watchfully between Afghanistan and India, is expected to play a greater regional role – especially, in fighting terrorism and, by that token, contributing to regional security – than is normally anticipated of powers of equivalent size. Performing such a role is a job that can only be chequered at best which should explain the degree of international attention and criticism that the country receives.

In sum, the region appears to be in a state of uneasy calm shortly before the completion of America’s Afghan drawdown later this month. It is also an emergent geopolitical force-field underwritten by the forces of conservatism and positive and negative divergence from the status-quo overlaid by multi-power motivations that affect any question of importance in the region. In this context, would emerging geostrategic trends in South Asia and Afghanistan enhance or disrupt regional stability and security? This is the question that the scholars from the Global Think Tank Network (GTTN) and the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) will discuss interactively in the gathering here today at NUST, Islamabad.

Amer Hashmi
President
Global Think Tank Network
The NUST Global Think Tank Network, Islamabad

The Global Think Tank Network (GTTN), established in January 2012, is based in NUST and aims to foster nation building through utilizing knowledge inputs for accelerating the processes of socioeconomic development in the country. GTTN is a fast developing academic think tank acting as a robust policy research, analysis, and advocacy forum for formulating correct and viable solutions to national problems. GTTN is premised upon the concept of using knowledge to catalyze national and regional development and invite the cooperation of all willing domestic, regional, and global stakeholders, whether individuals or institutions, to bring into being forms of knowledge and practice that realize that which is rational and make rational that which is real. GTTN takes specific measures for circulating these particular forms of practicable knowledge not only for domestic application but also for the benefit of regional community and policy-making audiences. GTTN objectively studies development trends in a range of areas and their impact on Pakistan’s domestic situation and the processes of regional and global integration. Research focuses mainly on areas such as geopolitics, geostate, security, higher education and internationalization, science and technology parks, socioeconomic development. GTTN’s research products consist of journal articles, working papers, monographs, contract research reports, case studies, newspaper and magazine articles, etc.

The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London

The International Institute for Strategic Studies is a world-leading authority on global security, political risk and military conflict. The IISS was founded in the UK in 1958 with a focus on nuclear deterrence and arms control. Today, it is also renowned for its annual Military Balance assessment of countries’ armed forces and for its high-powered security summits, including the Shangri-La Dialogue. A registered charity headquartered in London, the IISS also has offices in Washington, Singapore and Manama, Bahrain. The IISS is a non-partisan organisation, independent of government and other bodies. Its mission is to promote the adoption of sound policies to further global peace and security and maintain civilised international relations. Research is central to IISS activities. The Institute’s programmes are divided by global region and according to policy themes (from non-proliferation, transnational threats and geo-economics to climate change and security). IISS experts deliver impartial, rigorous analysis. They are drawn from all over the world, and include established world-class strategists as well as the brightest young analysts. The institute’s corporate advisory arm offers strategic advice and political-risk analysis to commercial and government clients, via membership packages and bespoke arrangements. Besides The Military Balance, the definitive reference source on the world’s armed forces, IISS publications include: Strategic Survey: The Annual Review of World Affairs; Adelphi books on general strategic issues; International-relations journal Survival: Global Politics and Strategy; In-depth Strategic Dossiers, on particular nuclear programmes, countries of proliferation concern, military capabilities, insurgent groups etc; Strategic Comments, short briefings on breaking political or strategic topics; and the online Armed Conflict Database.
Panelists and Contributors

Dr. M. Akram Sheikh
Founder, Co-Chair and Distinguished Senior Fellow- GTTN
Professor Emeritus NUST

Dr. M. Akram Sheikh, a gold medalist from University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Lahore, holds a PhD in Structural Engineering from the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada (1967). His outstanding contributions have been recognized by all stakeholders. Dr. Sheikh held the important post of Federal Minister / Deputy Chairman Planning Commission of Pakistan. He also served as Federal Secretary of the Ministries of Communication, Water & Power and Industries & Production. He headed some of Pakistan’s largest public sector industrial establishments including State Engineering Corporation (SEC), Pakistan Steel Mills and Heavy Mechanical Complex(HMC).

Dr. Sheikh is currently Professor Emeritus at the NUST and Advisor (Planning and Development) to some strategic national organizations in addition to being Advisor to the International Steels Limited, a Pakistani multinational Joint Venture. Dr. Sheikh is also the founding Co-Chair of the NUST Corporate Advisory Council (CAC).

Rahul Roy-Chaudhury
Senior Fellow for South Asia - IISS

Rahul Roy-Chaudhury is responsible for the South Asia programme, focusing on regional stability and security, counter-extremism and counter-terrorism, India-Pakistan relations, nuclear and missile issues, and India’s foreign and security policies. Earlier, he served in the National Security Council Secretariat in the Prime Minister’s Office in the previous BJP government in India. Prior to his official appointment, he was on the faculty of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses in New Delhi. He is completing his third book on India’s Naval Strategy. He joined the IISS in October 2003.
Nigel Inkster CMG  
Director of Transnational Threats and Political Risk - IISS

Nigel Inkster is responsible for the analysis of international political risk and development of programmes on counter terrorism, international crime, proliferation of CBRN, cross-border conflict and other transnational/global issues. He served in the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) from 1975 to 2006. He spent seven years on the Board of SIS, the last two as Assistant Chief and Director for Operations and Intelligence.

Brigadier (Ret.) Ben Barry  
Senior Fellow for Land Warfare - IISS

Ben Barry is responsible, in the IISS Defence and Military Analysis Programme, for ensuring the quality of the Institute's analysis of land warfare and the information on land capabilities presented in the Institute's flagship publication, The Military Balance.

Antoine Levesques  
Research Associate for South Asia - IISS

Antoine Levesques worked with the IISS Military Balance and the Armed Conflict Database on South Asia from August 2007 to September 2008. From 2010, he has managed IISS projects on South Asia and nuclear security. He focuses on South Asia nuclear issues: crisis stability, preventive and multilateral diplomacy; India-China relations; Political perspectives on Afghanistan post-2014; Militancy and non-state armed groups in Afghanistan/Pakistan; Civil-military relations in South Asia and Electoral politics in South Asia.
Owais Ahmed Ghani
Board Director and Senior Fellow – GTTN

Owais Ahmed Ghani is amongst Pakistan's most eminent and respected personalities. He holds the honor of being one of the only three people in Pakistan's history who held the Governorship of two provinces. He is a mechanical engineer with 28 years professional experience in industrial equipment engineering industry. He played an active and progressive role in the KPK provincial cabinet during 1999-2002 as Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce, Minerals, Labor, Transport, IT and Science &Technology and then as Federal Minister for Environment, Labor, Manpower & Overseas Pakistanis, Local Government, Religious Affairs & Zakat. He was also appointed as the Governor of Balochistan province from 2003 to 2008 and oversaw a difficult period of the province's recent political history. He then served as Governor of KPK province from 2008 to 2011 during which intensive counter-insurgency operations were launched to clear Swat & FATA from anti-Pakistan militants.

Riaz Hussain Khokhar
Senior Fellow – GTTN

Riaz Hussain Khokhar is a distinguished diplomat and the former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan (2002-2005). During his illustrious career, he has held high profile appointments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, besides representing Pakistan in some of the most important capitals in the world. The appointments held by him in tenures of 4 different Prime Ministers (PM) of Pakistan include aide to PM, as well as Additional Secretary Foreign Affairs (Defence and Intelligence) in the PM Secretariat. In addition, he has held the coveted desk of Director General South Asia. He has represented Pakistan as High Commissioner in Bangladesh from 1986-1990, High Commissioner to India from 1992-1997, Ambassador to USA from 1997-1999 and High Commissioner to China from 1999-2002 before taking over as Foreign Secretary. After retirement he has been participating in numerous international seminars and lecturing at various universities and think tanks.
Humayun Gauhar
Board Director and Senior Fellow – GTTN


His experience in journalism dates back from 1980 to 1990 in London. He was the Founding Publisher and President of 'SOUTH,' an international monthly magazine concerning Third World issues, which Mr. Humayun Gauhar conceived and established. He is Managing Director of the Third World Foundation for Social and Economic Studies, publishers of the Third World Quarterly, as well as of Third World Media Limited that co-published The Guardian Third World Review in collaboration with The Guardian, London. He has been Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of Blue Chip, Pakistan's leading business monthly magazine – from June 2004 to date.

Mr. Gauhar is Lead Op-Ed Columnist of 'The Nation,' Pakistan. His weekly articles also appear in a number of Pakistan's English and Urdu language newspapers. He also writes occasionally for The Sunday Times, London, and World Paper, Boston. Mr. Humayun Gauhar has co-edited a book on Third World issues with Mr. Bruno Kriesky, the late Chancellor of Austria.

Brigadier (Ret.) Mujahid Alam
Senior Fellow – GTTN

Mujahid Alam holds a Master’s degree in Defence Studies. He has extensive and varied experience of over 40 years at the international and national level with unique experience of working in United Nations, diplomatic, government and military jobs. Retired as Brigadier from Pakistan Army before joining the UN where he worked for 15 years in various capacities. He served as Principal Staff Officer to the Defence Minister in the Government of Pakistan and as Military Attaché for Pakistan in London, United Kingdom with concurrent accreditation to Sweden. During his military career he served for about three years on Pakistan’s border with Afghanistan during the occupation of that country by Soviet Union. Mr. Alam is currently part-time Senior Advisor on Special Courses to the United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, New York. He has also worked closely as consultant for a number of years with Amnesty International dealing with the global Arms Trade Treaty.

Brigadier (Ret.) Amir Yaqub
Director Operations and Collaboration - GTTN

Amir Yaqub brings a wealth of experience in domestic and international knowledge based collaboration to GTTN. During military service, he remained on various command, instructional and staff appointments. He did his masters in Defence and Strategic Studies from the Quaid-e-Azam University, and MPhil in Public Policy and Strategic Security Management from the National Defence University, Islamabad, where he did the Armed Forces War Course in 2002/03 and later served on the faculty of National Security College and then as Director Collaborations and Coordination in the Institute for Strategic Studies and Research Analysis. He has also done his Strategic Studies course from NDU, China.
Ali Shah  
Head Research and Analysis - GTTN

Ali Shah, a graduate of Government College, Lahore, and the University of Manchester, UK oversees research and analysis at GTTN. He has worked in different national and international knowledge-producing organizations in teaching as well as research roles since 2002. He joined GTTN in 2012. His research focus is on regional geopolitics, IR theory, social change and state-society relations, political implications of philosophy, and futures studies. He has been published in international academic journals and national English press on economics, politics, social change, educational system, and science parks in Pakistan.

Rabia Shoaib Ahmad  
Director - NUST Corporate Advisory Council

Rabia has prior experience of Marketing in Telecom and Defence Industries, and of consultancy in Renewable Energy. Rabia joined NUST in 2011 and is presently heading the Corporate Advisory Council, NUST’s platform for industry linkages. Rabia heads a young team that manages and services the University’s relationship with the industry, and works on collaborative projects of mutual interest.

Faiza Malik  
Deputy Director - NUST Corporate Advisory Council

Faiza is part of Advisor’s Office core team which is involved in the planning and development of Pakistan’s first university based Science Park, the National Science and Technology Park (NSTP) at NUST. During her three year tenure at NUST, she has been involved in several strategic projects and has lately transitioned in the Corporate Advisory Council (CAC), the platform to strengthen academic linkages with the Industry.
Atia Ali Kazmi
Senior Research and Policy Analyst - GTTN

Atia holds an MPhil degree in Government and Public Policy and currently is PhD in American Studies candidate at the Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad. Before joining the GTTN she served at the National Defence University and Fatima Jinnah Women University as a Visiting Faculty member. She has also served in administrative positions at various educational institutions. Her areas of interest include security, strategic, developmental (social and disaster management), higher education, science, technology, and innovation issues.

Atif Bilal
Project Manager, Special Projects - Advisor Office

Atif Bilal holds a Master’s degree in International Human Resource Management and Employment Relations from Queen Mary University of London. He has worked in global banking and finance and joined NUST in 2012. He is currently responsible for the holistic management and coordination of NUST Knowledge Ecosystem - comprising the Corporate Advisory Council (CAC), NUST Global Think Tank Network (GTTN) and the National Science and Technology Park (NSTP) - and the streamlining of strategic communication systems amongst these three key areas.
PROGRAMME

Tuesday 2nd December, 2014

NUST Global Think Tank Network (GTTN)

Panel Discussion with

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

On

'Evolving Regional Geo-Strategic Trends'

1000-1030 hrs  Arrival of Guests
1000 hrs  Group Photograph
1030-1035 hrs  Opening Address  Dr. Akram Sheikh
1035-1040 hrs  IISS Introduction & Words of Appreciation  Rahul Roy-Chaudhury
1040-1050 hrs  Presentation: Overview of NUST Knowledge Ecosystem  Rabia Shoaib
1050-1055 hrs  Introduction of Panelists  Rabia Shoaib
1055-1210 hrs  Panel Discussion
1210-1250 hrs  Q&A Session  Humayun Gauhar
1250-1255 hrs  Closing Remarks  Amir Yaqub
1255-1300 hrs  GTTN Vote of Thanks  Amer Hashmi