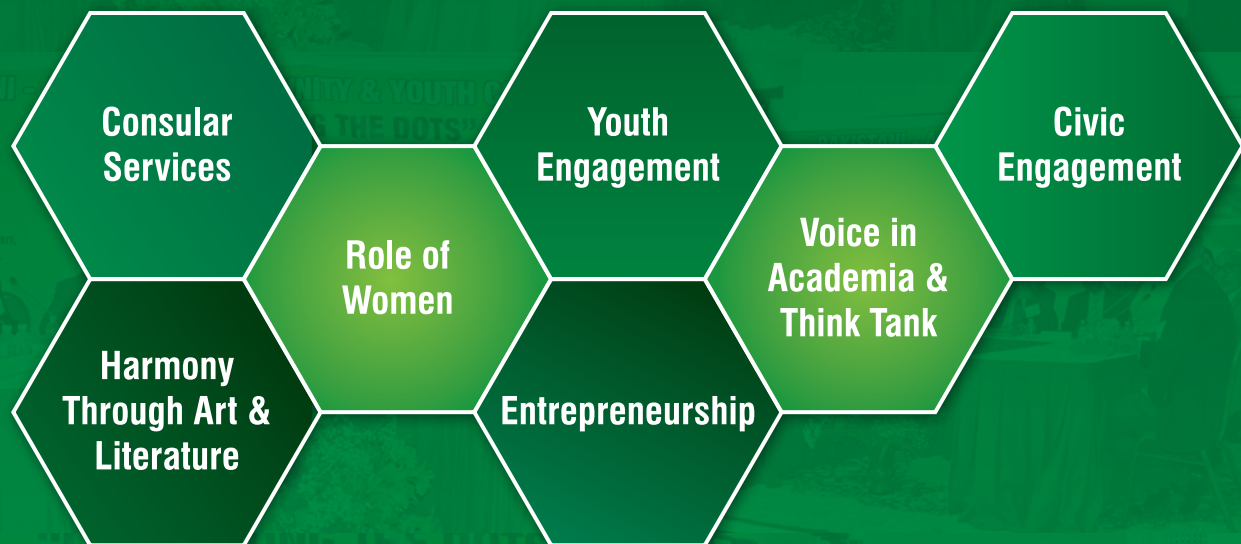




**Pakistan-United States  
Working Together**

# **PAKISTANI - AMERICAN COMMUNITY & YOUTH CONVENTION - 2018**



**“CONNECTING THE DOTS”**



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## CONNECTING THE DOTS - MESSAGE BY AMBASSADOR

For decades now, the Pakistani-American diaspora has been contributing to the progress and prosperity of the United States, and also served as a formidable bridge between the U.S. and the country of their heritage, Pakistan. In the last one year, since I assumed office of the ambassador, I have had the opportunity to travel extensively across the country and to meet the shining stars of our expatriate community.



In my interactions with community members, I sensed a common concern about the lack of connectivity strands, which inhibited synergies and joint effort among the various segments of the community separated by geography and economics. I believe it would be worthwhile to bring together these pearls of our community to showcase the beautiful mosaic of the Pakistani-American community. There was, and is, a need to connect the dots.

It was in this context, that the Pakistani-American Community and Youth Convention 2018 was envisioned as a platform to bring together practitioners and experts in various fields, in which Pakistani-Americans have excelled and to help them network, exchange ideas, integrate better with other communities, build relationships, and serve to strengthen the bonds between Pakistan and the U.S..

I would like to thank all those participants who attended the event, particularly those who travelled to Washington from far and near parts of the United States, and contributed to its resounding success.

This Outcome Document is the distillation of the ideas and thoughts that were generated and discussed during the Convention. Our hope is that it would serve as a stimulus for similar initiatives in the future. The Embassy and our Consulates look forward to working with the community, particularly its youth, to further build upon the ideas that have been fielded. This is not the end point. It's the beginning of a process that would hopefully help us achieve our objectives.

## OVERVIEW

The Pakistani-American Community and Youth Convention 2018 was held on April 14, 2018 at the Embassy of Pakistan in Washington. Over 400 Pakistani-Americans from all over the United States attended the daylong event.

The Convention brought together accomplished Pakistani-American entrepreneurs, academics, artists and public officials and office holders. It celebrated their achievements and provided them a platform to connect with each other and share their ideas and experiences.

The Convention's objective of synthesizing and distilling important lessons from these different streams of accomplishment was captured in its theme: "Connecting the dots."

The Convention was divided into panel discussions and presentations, which were punctuated by cultural and musical performances that showcased the diversity of Pakistan's rich heritage.

The six panel discussions were thematically focused on:

- ✔ Youth Engagement
- ✔ Role of Women
- ✔ Voice in Academia and Think Tanks
- ✔ Civic Engagement
- ✔ Harmony Through Art and Literature
- ✔ Entrepreneurship

Each panel comprised Pakistani-Americans who had distinguished themselves in the subject area. Officials from the U.S. State Department and USAID also made a presentation on the ongoing cooperation in various areas between Pakistan and the United States.

Pakistan's Consuls General in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston were also present and participated in an interactive session on the provision of consular services to the Pakistani-American communities in their areas of jurisdiction.

Welcoming the participants to the Convention, Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, lauded the role of the Pakistani-American community in bringing the two countries together. He hoped that young Pakistani-Americans would continue to enrich various facets of American society and life by excelling in their chosen pursuits.

Ambassador Chaudhry stressed that an engaged and integrated community was key to enhancing their pride and sense of identity, and also promote mutual goodwill and understanding between Pakistan and the United States.

Assuring the community of the Embassy's continued support, Ambassador Chaudhry said that an outcome document, enumerating the key ideas discussed by the participants and outlining a roadmap for the future, would be issued after the Convention to serve as the basis for future endeavors.





Embassy of Pakistan  
Washington, D.C.

# PAKISTANI - AMERICAN COMMUNITY & YOUTH CONVENTION - 2018

## “CONNECTING THE DOTS”



Pakistan-United States  
Working Together

Washington D.C., April 14, 2018

### *PROGRAM*

- ✓ 0900 hrs Registration/Meet and Greet
- ✓ 1000 hrs Opening of the Convention (tilawat, anthems)
- ✓ 1010 hrs Welcome address of the Ambassador
- ✓ 1030 hrs Segment 1: Youth engagement
- ✓ 1115 hrs Tea Break
- ✓ 1130 hrs Interactive Panel Discussion of CGs on Consular Facilitation
- ✓ 1215 hrs Segment 2: Role of Women
- ✓ 1300 hrs Lunch and Prayer Break
- ✓ 1345 hrs Segment 3: Voice in Academia and Think Tanks
- ✓ 1430 hrs Presentations by U.S. Government and USAID
- ✓ 1515 hrs Tea Break
- ✓ 1530 hrs Segment 4: Civic Engagement
- ✓ 1615 hrs Segment 5: Harmony through Art and literature
- ✓ 1700 hrs Tea Break
- ✓ 1715 hrs Segment 6: Entrepreneurship
- ✓ 1800 hrs Roundup of Day's proceedings by DCM
- ✓ 1815 hrs Vote of thanks by Consuls General
- ✓ 1835 hrs Concluding remarks of the Ambassador
- ✓ 1855 hrs Finale-National Song
- ✓ 1900 hrs Dinner (followed by Musical Evening)







# PANEL DISCUSSIONS

## PANEL 1 – YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



The Pakistani-American Community and Youth Convention 2018 was held on April 14, 2018 at the Embassy of Pakistan in Washington. Over 400 Pakistani-Americans from all over the United States attended the daylong event.

The Convention brought together accomplished Pakistani-American entrepreneurs, academics, artists and public officials and office holders. It celebrated their achievements and provided them a platform to connect with each other and share their ideas and experiences. The Convention's objective of synthesizing and distilling important lessons from these different streams of accomplishment was captured in its theme: "Connecting the dots."

The Convention was divided into panel discussions and presentations, which were punctuated by cultural and musical performances that showcased the diversity of Pakistan's rich heritage. The six panel discussions were thematically focused on:

### “ What does it mean to be a Pakistani American Youth? ”

A select group of Pakistani American youngsters, hailing from diverse backgrounds, was asked to act as panelists for this segment. To add the voice of some experienced and active youth activists, two Lead Discussants were also chosen for the panel.

The panelists identified the challenges and opportunities that are associated with their identity as Pakistani-Americans. They also analyzed how the young generation of Pakistani-Americans could serve to keep the two countries, their adopted homeland and the country of their heritage connected. The panel was attended by a large number of young Pakistani-Americans, including students from leading U.S. universities. Second Secretary of the Embassy, Ms Sidra Aslam, moderated the discussion.



## PANELISTS

**Misbah Farooqi** is studying Political Science at American University in Washington D. C. Besides studying politics, Misbah wants to learn more about international relations, journalism, and social justice. She aspires to become a human rights lawyer in the future, and to work for the rights of marginalized people all around the world.



**Afham Chotani** grew up in USA and is currently studying at George Mason University. He is a biology major and is looking forward to going to medical school after his graduation.

**Sadaf Ayaz** is studying Behavioral Neurobiology, Journalism, and Theater at Hunter College. She is also an actor and model best known for her worldwide Apple iPhone 8 and Fiverr campaigns. She's been featured on Cosmopolitan, BBC, and NY Minute Films. She is also author of two books and the CEO, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of REV 21.



**Ahsan Ali** is a BA in political science. Ahsan is co-founder and president of Pakistani American Youth Society (PAYS).



## DISCUSSANTS

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**Jassem A. Khan** is currently working for Ernst & Young (EY). He has also worked at the World Bank. Jassem holds a Masters in International Commerce & Policy from George Mason University.

**Adnan Bokhari** is the Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer at Prosperity Now, a nonprofit organization. With over 17 years of industry experience, Adnan serves on the boards of Golden Key International Honour Society and National Immigration Law Center. He also leads the National Association of Pakistani Americans (NAPA) Youth initiative.



“ **The next generation of Pakistani Americans holds the key to the future of Pakistan-U.S. relations.** ”

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“ **Youth needs to become more politically engaged.** ”

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## MAIN POINTS THAT EMERGED FROM THE DISCUSSION

- ✔ There are limited opportunities for Pakistani-American youth to socialize and network, and to articulate and exchange views on shared interests.
- ✔ There is a need for Pakistani-American youth to reconnect with the culture of their land of origin.
- ✔ Pakistan will always remain an identity for the Pakistani-American youth. Embracing both Pakistani values and amalgamating them within American society will only happen if our new generation is well-informed about Pakistan.
- ✔ Young Pakistani-Americans have to reconcile their hyphenated identities. They have the freedom to borrow the best attributes from both cultures.
- ✔ Parents/elders need to act as enablers rather than obstructionists.
- ✔ Youth have the courage and conviction to stand up for their beliefs. Many are using various channels, such as music, acting, poetry, art etc. to redefine the image of Americans of Pakistani heritage.
- ✔ Being Pakistani lends distinct advantages, such as high emotional intelligence. Exposure to diverse cultures enriches the personality of Pakistani-American youth.
- ✔ In addition to traditional structures, such as Pakistan Student Associations, Pakistani-American youth are rallying around social causes as well. Pakistani American Youth Society (PAYS), based in Brooklyn, New York, is one such successful model.
- ✔ The next generation of Pakistani Americans holds the key to the future of Pakistan-U.S. relations. They are the natural bridge between the two countries and best placed to find common ground.
- ✔ Traditionally, Pakistani-origin students prefer to enter professions such as medicine, engineering, business etc. They need to take courses to pursue careers in politics, law and public service.

## KEY SUGGESTIONS

- ✔ Develop a database/network that connects young Pakistani-Americans with each other and helps them track job/business opportunities.
- ✔ Organize a Youth Convention to deliberate exclusively on issues of interest to Pakistani-American youth.
- ✔ The Embassy should continue to act as a platform to bridge the opportunity gap for young Pakistani-Americans, who have considerable capacity but need guidance on how to utilize it.
- ✔ Youth needs to become more politically engaged. It is not necessary to stand for public office. Just by getting involved at the community level or registering to vote is a positive start.
- ✔ It is important to achieve leadership positions in key sectors/industries in the United States.

## PANEL 2 – ROLE OF WOMEN



The second panel of the Convention was on the Role of Women.

Pakistani American women have distinguished themselves in various fields. They are charting new grounds, breaking down glass ceilings and building an independent, forward looking image for themselves. In doing so, they have shattered many cultural stereotypes that are typically associated with women of Pakistani origin.

The theme chosen for the segment was:

**“ When Women Lead:  
Insights and Experiences from successful  
Pakistani-American Women. ”**

Four Pakistani American women, who are engaged in philanthropy, social activism, and business, were invited as panelists for this segment. They were joined by three lead discussants.

The panel discussed the challenges they faced both as women leaders in male-dominated fields and as Pakistani Americans. They also identified opportunities for Pakistani American women in their respective fields, while underscoring the importance of greater social and civic engagement. In the question and answer session, the panelists and discussants also dispensed career advice to aspiring professionals in their respective fields.

A large number of Pakistani Americans, especially young women, from across the United States attended the panel discussion. Second Secretary of the Embassy, Ms Sidra Aslam, moderated the discussion.



## PANELISTS

**Riffat Chughtai** has been a member of the Pittsburgh and Muslim community since 1981. She serves as Advisor on U.S.-Pakistan Women's Council and President of the Pakistan American Association of Greater Pittsburgh. Riffat majored in psychology and English literature, and has wide experience in healthcare management.



**Shimmi Kidwai** has been volunteering and raising funds for The Citizens Foundation, The Hunar Foundation, The Aman Foundation, Edhi Foundation, and many other non-profit charitable organizations. She is also a board member of Friends of Pakistan Club and the American Pakistani Women Association (APWA).

**Shaista Mahmood** is one of the founding members of U.S.-Pakistan Women Council. She is also board member of Women's Foreign Policy Group, World Affairs Council, and the International Center of Religion and Diplomacy.



**Kalsoom Lakhani** is the Founder/CEO of Invest2Innovate, or i2i, which supports startups and the broader entrepreneurship ecosystem in growth markets. She was previously a co-ambassador for Sandbox, a global network of innovators under 30, and is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers.

## DISCUSSANTS



**Nusrat Sohail** is an educationist with over eighteen years of experience, and she has developed the STARTALK Hindi-Urdu Language Program. Her dedication to education motivated her to collaborate with the Swat Relief Initiative. Through this partnership, she has worked to develop an all-girls middle and high school in the village of Swat, Pakistan.

**Sadia Uqaili** is an artist and an independent art curator. Her artwork has been exhibited in Chicago, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Karachi. She has been elected to serve on the Acquisitions Committee at The Asian Arts Council.



**Hafsa Lak** is a 2017 graduate of the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy. She is currently working at the Washington DC-based Cambridge Global Advisors. Hafsa joined the Punjab Government's Strategic Reforms Unit in 2014 as a Deputy Team Lead, and continues to support the implementation of its women protection and social sector reforms.



**Pakistani American women should not be deterred by social conventions about what constitutes a “suitable vocation” for women.**



**Families and male relatives also need to encourage them to pursue their dreams.**



## THEMES THAT WERE VOICED DURING THE DISCUSSION

- ✔ Women always have to work harder to get to the same place in any field as men.
- ✔ The experience of Pakistani American women is no different. However, they also have to overcome additional challenges in the form of cultural stereotyping and social conventions that have traditionally circumscribed their role in society.
- ✔ Young Pakistani American women, in particular, sometimes struggle to reconcile their multiple identities (American, Muslim, Pakistani etc.)
- ✔ Pakistani American women are under-represented in the United States' government and public sector.
- ✔ The political participation of Pakistani Americans generally, and Pakistani American women in particular, remains limited to donating funds for political candidates.
- ✔ While Pakistanis are adept at networking, Pakistani Americans do not use these skills properly.
- ✔ Pakistani Americans have found it difficult to establish brands or businesses that are rooted in their Pakistani identity (There are over 2,000 Turkish schools in the United States alone; there are no Pakistani schools anywhere in the U.S.).
- ✔ There is not enough appreciation for the role that arts and media can play in bringing Pakistan's message to a wider audience in the United States.

## KEY SUGGESTIONS

- ✔ Pakistani American women should not be deterred by social conventions about what constitutes a "suitable" vocation for women.
- ✔ Pakistani American women should feel free to pursue any profession that inspires them.
- ✔ Families and male relatives also need to encourage them to pursue their dreams.
- ✔ Pakistani American women need to get more directly involved in politics and in their local communities.
- ✔ It is not enough to act as "ATM Machines" for local political candidates. The politically engaged segment of the Pakistani American community also needs to learn how to convey its "asks" (i.e. what the community expects a candidate to deliver in return for its support).
- ✔ Pakistani American women need to get more involved in the media, culture and arts. Being grounded in two diverse cultures, they would bring a unique perspective to these industries that would set them apart.
- ✔ At the same time, the participation and success of Pakistani American women in these areas would help correct some of the misperceptions about the Pakistani American community as well as Pakistan.



## PANEL 3 – VOICE IN ACADEMIA AND THINK TANKS



The third panel was on “Academia and Think Tanks”, and aroused significant interest from the audience.

The panelists expressed the view that in the contemporary U.S. governance system, think tanks and academia play an important role. They influence policy formulation, implementation and analysis, and many in the key positions of the U.S. government move between think tanks and academia through the proverbial “revolving door”.

There is a growing realization that although Pakistani Americans have excelled in many fields in U.S. they need to join think tank community which will help them contribute to the decision making and progress of their country.

The panelists were unanimous in inviting second-generation Pakistani-Americans to opt and pursue a career in the vast think tank community in the United States. Minister Political of the Embassy, Mr Ubaid ur Rehman Nizamani, moderated the discussion.

## PANELISTS

**Ambassador (Ret.) Asif Chaudhry** is the Vice President for International Programs (IP) at Washington State University. A career U.S. foreign service officer, Ambassador Chaudhry has served in numerous leadership positions in U.S. Government, including that of U.S. Ambassador to Moldova, Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chief of United States Navy (CNO) at the Pentagon, and numerous other leadership positions in the Departments of State, Defense and Agriculture. Ambassador Chaudhry received his Ph.D., in ag-economics from Washington State University. He received a Presidential Meritorious Service Award for his contributions in the conduct of U.S. Foreign Policy.

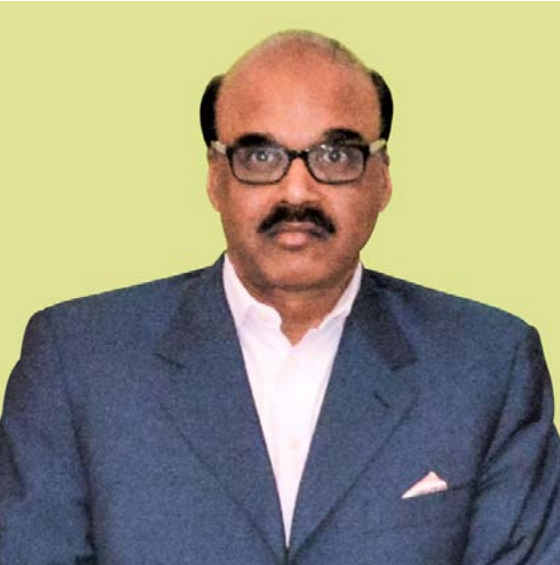


**Moeed W. Yusuf** is the Associate Vice President of the Asia center at the U.S. Institute of Peace. Moeed has been engaged in expanding USIP's work on Pakistan/South Asia since 2010. He has taught in Boston University, and Quaid-e-Azam University, Pakistan. He frequently appears as an expert on U.S. and Pakistani media. His books South Asia 2060: Envisioning Regional Futures and Getting it Right in Afghanistan He holds a Masters in International Relations and PhD in Political Science from Boston University.

**Shiraz Bashir** is the President of the NUST United States Technology, Industry, and Academic Network NUSTIAN. The Network is promoting collaboration between NUST alumni, academia, and industry for entrepreneurship, technology, and welfare of alumni. Currently, Shiraz is working as a Senior IT PM at Halliburton. Shiraz has Masters in Software Engineering from Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania and BE in Electrical (Telecom) from College of Telecommunications, NUST, Pakistan.



## DISCUSSANTS



**Anwer Hasan**, Senior Vice President, Louis Berger, is also Chairman of the Maryland Higher Education Commission. He has more than 35 years of comprehensive experience in the areas of Regional Operation, Business Unit Management, Program and Project Management, for transportation, water/wastewater, storm water, school, solid waste and water quality projects. He holds M.S. in Engineering Management, University of Nebraska and B.E. Mechanical Engineering, NED Engineering University, 1979.

**Tariq Masaud** is with Citibank. He joined Citibank's corporate banking business in 1996 in Pakistan. He has worked with Citi in the Middle East, Africa and the United States in senior Business and Risk roles. He looked after the corporate and investment banking business during his stint in the Middle East, and subsequently the risk management function covering bulk of sub-Saharan region prior to his move to the U.S. in 2015. Tariq did his MSc in Economic Policy from SOAS London, MBA from LUMS Lahore.



**Dr. Rashed Bhatti** is Senior Computer Engineer at IBM. His innovations and team efforts enabled many cutting-edge systems which are currently operational in IBM's client Fortune 50 companies. He is a founding member and VP Academics outreach of NUSTIAN and an active member of Bay Area Pakistani community of professionals and political organizations. Mr. Bhatti is Ph.D. in Computer Engineering from University of Southern California (USC).



## SALIENT POINTS OF THE DISCUSSION

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- ✔ A career in academia will help Pakistani-American youth to build partnership around the world, and thus contribute to U.S. security and well-being.
- ✔ Incubation centers of the universities are linked to the industry which are contributing to innovation and economic growth.
- ✔ The world is in a flux, and in these interesting times it is even more enjoyable and rewarding to work in think tanks.
- ✔ The youth joining think tanks should look forward to choose any field they want to work in and analyze issues honestly.
- ✔ They should not restrict themselves to the study of Pakistan although they would have an added advantage because of their Pakistani heritage.
- ✔ If you want to make your mark, join a think tank. You will get your space; let your work speak for you.
- ✔ There are no Pakistan Studies programs in U.S. universities at present. The only programs that focus on Pakistan at present do so through other prisms (nuclear issues and counter terrorism).
- ✔ There should be more visits from American professors and students to Pakistan under the Fulbright program.
- ✔ Pakistan Studies as a program is needed in the U.S. to improve the understanding of Pakistan in the U.S. government and among American people.
- ✔ Pakistani American youth need to get engaged in the study of contemporary technology of Cloud Computing, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.
- ✔ The NUST Alumni organization is enabling students to obtain internship and jobs in the U.S.

## KEY SUGGESTIONS

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- ✔ Linkages already exist between some U.S. and Pakistani educational institutions. There is a need to use existing linkages more effectively as well as build new linkages.
- ✔ Young Pakistani Americans should pursue work opportunities in the think tank circuit. They should not feel constrained to focus on Pakistan, but explore any area that inspires them.
- ✔ There is a need to establish more dedicated Pakistan Studies program at the leading universities in the United States.
- ✔ Establish a liaison with the NUSTIAN network which should be shared with the Embassy for widespread dissemination among people.
- ✔ Pakistani-American youth may benefit from programs for young professionals like leaders-in-residence.

## PANEL 4 – CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



The fourth panel of the Convention was on Civic Engagement.

Pakistani Americans have achieved great success in the United States as doctors, engineers, entrepreneurs and business professionals. However, they have generally not been active in local and community politics. One objective of the Convention was to encourage Pakistani Americans towards greater political and civic engagement, so they not only become better-informed and more responsible citizens of the United States, but emerge as more effective conduits between their adopted homeland and the country of their origin.

The panelists discussed that civic engagement involves a desire and an effort to make a positive difference in the life of the community and the society as a whole.

They concluded that civic engagement is both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to society at large.

Panelists shared their own experiences in civic life such as campaigning for and contesting for public offices at local, state and federal level. Discussion also included mobilizing community to think and act politically to deal with common issues. One of the panelists shared her experience as an electoral candidate. Another panelist spoke on volunteering services to help and mentor others.

The panelists and discussants represented regions from across the U.S. including New York, Pennsylvania, Chicago, and Houston. Counsellor of the Embassy, Mr Zaman Mehdi, moderated the discussion.

## PANELISTS

**Dr. Ijaz Ahmad** is a cardiologist, an entrepreneur, a philanthropist and a community leader. He has opened a series of clinics that serve poor and uninsured patients in Brooklyn. Dr. Ijaz Ahmad founded and chairs the Pakistani American Public Affairs Committee. APPAC builds bridges between Pakistani Americans and their neighbors, and brings Pakistani Americans to mainstream politics.



**Ather Tirmizi** is presently serving as the Chief Operating Officer of APPAC. After graduating from Stony Brook University, he worked in health care as an administrator for 8 years. He then went into public service, becoming the first Pakistani Director of Operations for the New York State Assembly and, finally Chief of Staff to Deputy Majority Leader of New York state assembly.

**Bushra Amiwala** is a Chicago native, activist and DePaul University Sophomore. Aged 19, she announced her candidacy for the Cook County Board of Commissioners to serve as a voice for her under-represented generation and other marginalized communities. Her campaign was covered nationally by TIME, Teen Vogue and Scholastic Magazine. Bushra's energetic campaign resulted in a historic voter turnout, making her a strong second with 13,000 votes.



**Dr. Tehmoor Dar** is a graduate of the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). He did his Masters and PhD in mechanical engineering from University of Texas at Austin in 2005 and 2010 respectively. Since then he has been working at NXP Semiconductors Chandler, Arizona. Dr. Dar is founding member and senior vice president of NUSTIAN, a non-profit organization set up by NUST alumni working in the United States.



## DISCUSSANTS

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**Ahsan Rehman** is currently a Data Scientist at the Innovation Labs for IBM Business Analytics. He holds an MS in Analytics from Northwestern University and a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology from NUST, Pakistan. Ahsan is also part of the NUSTIAN USA Chapter and currently serves as Vice President Coordination.

**Faizan Haq** has been teaching Islamic Cultural History and U.S.' relations with the Muslim World since 1996 at State University at Buffalo. He has been a lecturer for Intercultural Communication at Buffalo State College since 2004. In addition to Islamic Studies, Faizan's academic interests include: Intercultural Studies, International Relations, and Media Analysis. He also has taught courses on Islam in relation to Democracy in the U.S.A. and in the World. Faizan Haq is a known media analyst and has been asked to render his opinions for various media networks on diverse international issues including ABC, CBS, NBC, Voice of America, and YNN. He is also the founder and Publisher of WNYMuslims.org.



**Pakistani Americans have yet to fully appreciate the value of civic engagement -- even at local and community levels.**

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## MAIN POINTS OF THE DISCUSSION

- ✔ Pakistani Americans have yet to fully appreciate the value of civic engagement -- even at local and community levels.
- ✔ There is a taboo attached to politics. There is also a misperception that “political participation” only means standing for public office.
- ✔ At the heart of civic engagement is a desire to positively contribute to the larger society.
- ✔ Civic engagement entails activities that are not just self-enriching or in the interest of one community but truly beneficial for the whole society.
- ✔ At present, some Pakistani Americans are not even registered voters. This means most candidates for public office (at any level) in a given county, town or state would have little or no interest in reaching out to the resident Pakistani American community.
- ✔ The Pakistani-American community is also reluctant to make financial contributions to political campaigns despite having the resources.

## RECOMMENDATIONS MADE DURING THE DISCUSSION

- ✔ It is important to understand that civic engagement at the micro level can drive political change at the macro level.
- ✔ At the same time, civic engagement is a broad concept and may include many kinds of activities from engagement of policy makers, community outreach to philanthropy. It includes but is not limited to running for public office.
- ✔ Voting is the most fundamental form of civic engagement in any democracy. Pakistani Americans must register to vote.
- ✔ An enfranchised Pakistani American community would have enormous leverage to influence and shape the platforms of political candidates in ways that promote the community’s interests and address its concerns.
- ✔ The Pakistani American community can learn from the examples of other minority communities and interest groups on how to influence policymaking in the United States.
- ✔ The importance of financing in U.S. politics cannot be overstated.
- ✔ It is important for the community to be more generous in supporting the platforms of political candidates at the local and state levels who are sympathetic to the community’s agenda.
- ✔ Young Pakistani Americans must be encouraged to participate more actively in U.S. political and public life.

## PANEL 5—HARMONY THROUGH ART AND LITERATURE



The fifth panel of the Convention was on Harmony through Art and Literature.

Art, culture and literature are among the most powerful tools for projecting and promoting a positive image of Pakistan in the United States. However, with the first generation of Pakistani Americans now giving way to their second generation, there is a need to ensure and preserve the connection of the younger population with their cultural roots.

A select group of Pakistani American youngsters, hailing from diverse backgrounds, was asked to act as panelists for this segment. To add the voice of some experienced and active youth activists, two Lead Discussants were also chosen for the panel.

The panelists identified the challenges and opportunities that are associated with their identity as Pakistani-Americans. They also analyzed how the young generation of Pakistani-Americans could act as a bridge between Pakistan and the United States.

The panel was attended by a large number of young Pakistani-Americans, including students from leading U.S. universities. Minister Press of the Embassy, Mr Abid Saeed, moderated the discussion.



## PANELISTS

**Nausheen Ilahi** heads the non-profit “Muse District” and has been actively involved in promoting and showcasing South Asian arts, literature and music in the U.S. Ms. Ilahi has attended the University of California (UC) Davis and McGill University.



**Irfan Murtaza** is Founder and current President of Urdu Writers Society of North America, which actively promotes Urdu literature in the U.S. He is also the Founder and current President of Re-Paint Pakistan, which is working to improve the positive image of Pakistan in the U.S.

**Noor Naghmi** is an actor, director, and producer. Mr. Naghmi has produced and directed a wide variety of programs for PTV, ARY, ZEE TV and MHZ including famous series titled Mirza Ghalib in America. Mr. Noor Naghmi has acted in many Pakistani films in the past including Tarana, Khushboo etc. He has acted in Hollywood movies as well.

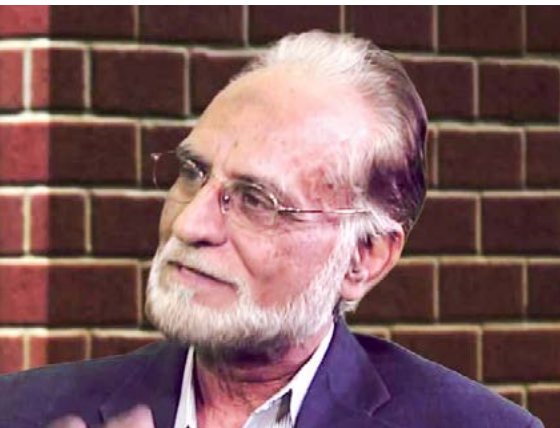


## DISCUSSANTS



**Sadia Sohail** is Board Member of Urdu Writers Society of North America. She has rich experience in organizing events for Pakistani American community in her area that has given her an edge to study various cultural aspects of the Pakistani American community. She holds a Masters in Economics from University of Karachi and has also studied Sociology and Journalism.

**Mona Shahab** is a famous Urdu poetess who has made a name for herself through excellence in poetry over the last 30 years. She has published two poetry books namely “Saada Jab Laut Kar Ayi” and “Koi Baat Toh Hai”. Her real name is Mrs. Farkhanda Qarni.



**Zahid Hameedi** is a veteran journalist. He is one of the founders of the art of news reading on radio and television in Pakistan. He has been organizing for decades the well attended annual Festival for the Pakistani American community in Virginia around 14th August. He was conferred Sitara-e-Imtiaz for his outstanding service in the fields of journalism and literature.

**Anwar Iqbal** is a senior journalist, who has special interest in translating poetry from Persian to English and Bengali. Currently, he is affiliated with Pakistan’s prominent English newspaper “Dawn” as its Washington correspondent.



## POINTS DISCUSSED DURING THE SEGMENT

- ✔ Art and culture are essential to peace-building. They are non-violent forms of expression. Art can transform the way people think and act. It can help people to heal and reconcile.
- ✔ Through arts, it is also possible to create alternative spaces and narratives.
- ✔ The arts community in Pakistan, even if it is marginalized, has remained active and creative. We have a strong tradition of painting, sculptures, theatre, music and movies. There are notable icons in each of these art forms. We need to introduce them in the U.S. mainstream.
- ✔ People in America develop their perception about Pakistan by whatever is portrayed in the media, particularly through films.
- ✔ Films are a powerful medium for building bridges. We need to present a positive image of Pakistan through our own films as well as having Pakistani movies with sub-titles to be played in U.S. cinemas.
- ✔ Of late, independent and fresh ideas have started to emerge in Pakistani film scene. This resurgence can be used to a positive effect in the U.S. where there is a great appetite for international films.
- ✔ As part of their upbringing, the Pakistani American households need to use Pakistani culture and language so that their children do not lose touch with their country of origin.
- ✔ Urdu language is one of the most beautiful languages. Poetry and prose in Urdu offers a unique medium of expression. Pakistani American poets and poetesses are also producing works of high quality and international acclaim.
- ✔ There is a need to preserve Urdu heritage not only in Pakistan but throughout the world. Pakistani Americans must take pride in Urdu language and teach their younger generation to converse in it to better understand their culture.
- ✔ Media and journalism has a responsibility towards society with regards to preservation of culture and language. For correct use of idiom and words, media persons need to be trained and well versed in Urdu language as well so that they know exact connotation of what they are trying to convey.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- ✔ Support individuals and organizations in the United States which are devoted to the preservation of Pakistani art, culture, language and movies.
- ✔ Organize cultural events where youngsters are encouraged to participate so that they can benefit and be sensitized about the multi-faceted cultural heritage.
- ✔ Cultural exchange programs with art institutions or colleges in Pakistan may be explored.

“Art and culture can help project “soft diplomacy” of Pakistan in the United States.”



## PANEL 6 – ENTREPRENEURSHIP



The sixth and last panel of the Convention was on “Entrepreneurship.” The theme of this panel was:

“ **Building Economic Bridges between Pakistan and the United States.** ”

In this panel, discussions focused on the role of Pakistani American businessmen in promoting trade ties between Pakistan and the United States.

Panelists shared their own experiences of how they overcame challenges in setting up their successful business ventures. One of the panel members shared his account of introducing and establishing a major multinational brand in Pakistan.

The panelists came from New York, Virginia, and Washington D.C. Discussions were moderated by the Minister Trade of the Embassy, Mr Ali Tahir.

The panelists felt that economic ties between Pakistan and the U.S. continue to remain strong despite stresses in the relationship. It was noted that U.S. private sector was keen to invest in Pakistan which could augur well for trade in future.

## PANELISTS

**Qaisar Shareef** ended a career of nearly 30 years with Procter & Gamble in 2011. He was responsible for setting up P&G subsidiaries in Pakistan and Ukraine, which continue to thrive today. P&G Pakistan was specifically recognized by the U.S. Department of State with an Award for Corporate Excellence in 2012. Qaisar recounted his experiences of successfully building American businesses in emerging markets in his book, *When Tribesmen Came Calling: Building an Enduring American Business in Pakistan*, which was published in 2017. He currently serves on the boards of many organizations from the Pakistani-American and American Muslim communities.



**Nabila Khatak** is a successful entrepreneur and management consultant with over 20 years of experience in health, technology, finance, marketing, public relations at Fortune 500 companies. Presently, Nabeela is helping to establish a nonprofit, EmbraceRace, focused on building an online community to discuss and share best practices for raising and caring for kids in the context of race. She attended Dartmouth College for her Masters and Harvard University to study Middle East Studies and History for her doctorate. Nabeela is the author of *Smart Cards: Markets of Opportunities, Technologies of Choice* and co-author of *The Global Grid Computing Report 2002—Technology and Market Assessment*.

**Hasan Ibrahim** is an active Charter Member and serves on the Organization of Pakistani Entrepreneurs and Professionals (OPEN) Washington DC Board. Hasan serves as Chief Executive Officer at HMI Property, a full service commercial and residential brokerage firm servicing Northern Virginia. Hasan is also a Principal of Tri Borough Management (TBM) an independent full service commercial and residential Real Estate Management company serving Northern Virginia.





**Munawar Riaz Hussain** is a New York-based fashion designer who regularly contributes to fashion circles in Europe and America. He is also the Founder of Pakistan Heritage, an organization which is dedicated to highlighting the positive image of Pakistan to the future generation of Pakistani Americans.

“Entrepreneurs not only connect the dots but also create new dots and this process could keep the relationship alive and thriving.”

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“Pakistani American entrepreneurs should look at the fundamentals of Pakistan’s economy which are strong and pointing in the right direction.”

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“Corporate America remains interested in the investment opportunities presented by Pakistan’s growing middle-class market.”

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## MAIN POINTS OF THE DISCUSSION

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- ✔ Economic and commercial linkages between countries provide ballast to their relations, insulating it from the cyclical fluctuations intrinsic to any political or government-to-government relationship.
- ✔ At the same time, businesses are more attuned to emerging opportunities in any country than its geopolitical environment.
- ✔ This explains why business-to-business relations between Pakistan and the United States continue to thrive.
- ✔ Trade between the two countries has grown to \$6 billion.
- ✔ Pakistan's infrastructure base and security environment have improved considerably, which make it a more attractive destination for foreign businesses.
- ✔ Corporate America remains interested in the investment opportunities presented by Pakistan's growing middle-class market.
- ✔ For aspiring Pakistani American entrepreneurs, it is important to learn that business start-ups are inherently risky. It can take many years before a new business turns a profit.

## PROPOSALS FOR CONSIDERATION

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- ✔ Entrepreneurs not only connect the dots but also create new dots and this process could keep the relationship alive and thriving.
- ✔ Pakistani American entrepreneurs should look at the fundamentals of Pakistan's economy, which are strong and pointing in the right direction.
- ✔ They should encourage American businesses and investors, who may be looking at the Pakistani market as a possible investment option, to look at Pakistan through the same lens.
- ✔ Young Pakistani American entrepreneurs, who are just starting out on their own, should accept that businesses often have long gestation periods.

## INTERACTIVE PANEL DISCUSSION ON CONSULAR FACILITATION



The provision of consular services to the local expatriate community remains one of the key functions of any Pakistani mission abroad. The Pakistani Embassy in Washington and its Consulates in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston remain committed to providing the best consular services and facilitation to the Pakistani American community.

This panel discussion allowed the Embassy and Consulates to review the recent improvements made by the missions in the discharge of their consular functions. It also allowed the community to provide instant and direct feedback, which would enable the missions to further improve their services. Such was the level of interest in this discussion that it could not be concluded in the originally allotted 45 minutes and ran into an hour long overflow session.

The discussion was moderated by the Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission, Rizwan Saeed Sheikh. The panel comprised of distinguished Raja Ali Ejaz, CG New York; Abdul Jabbar Memon, CG Los Angeles; Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, CG Chicago; and Aisha Farooqui, CG Houston, as well as Saeed Ali, Counsellor in charge of consular affairs at the Embassy.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry commended the Consuls Generals and Counsellor Saeed Ali for extending excellent services to the community. He welcomed feedback from the community to further improving consular services.

## MAIN POINTS OF THE DISCUSSION

- ✓ Importance of consular services as face of Pakistan's diplomatic effort in the United States was reiterated.
- ✓ Holding of two consecutive Consuls General conferences in 2017 and 2018 was presented as an evidence of the priority accorded to consular services by Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry.
- ✓ Implementation of service-oriented vision for public dealing by Pakistan Missions in the United States was highlighted.
- ✓ Recent improvements in consular services by the Embassy and Consulates were appreciated by the audience.
- ✓ Newly introduced initiatives of the Embassy and Consulates such as opening of Consular Sections on one closed day (Saturday or Sunday) in each month, assigning of dedicated telephone attendants, online appointment system and providing/improving amenities in Consular Halls were discussed and appreciated by the community.
- ✓ The revamped website with additional features on consular services was welcomed by the community.



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## PRESENTATIONS BY U.S. GOVERNMENT AND USAID



The U.S. State Department and USAID officials also participated in the Pakistani American Community & Youth Convention (PAC&YC).

While delivering remarks on behalf of the U.S. State Department, Ms. Martha Patterson, Director (Pakistan Affairs) said that Pakistan and the United States had been partners for over 70 years. Building on and improving this historical long-standing partnership was critical to both nations. She also said that two-way trade reached \$6.4 billion in 2017, an all-time high



In a subsequent panel discussion moderated by DCM Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, Mr. Gregory Huger, Assistant to the USAID Administrator on Pakistan, said that USAID had been a major development

partner in Pakistan. The development work carried out under the auspices of USAID in FATA was a recent success story. USAID representative also shared findings of a recently conducted survey of the Pakistani American diaspora and invited the community members to invest in Pakistan through any of the USAID assisted initiatives.

A public diplomacy expert of the U.S. State Department shared highlights of educational and cultural exchanges between both countries. It was revealed that Pakistan continued to be the single largest beneficiary country of Fulbright Program.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry appreciated the participation of U.S. Government officials in the Convention. He stressed that the Pakistan-U.S. partnership stretched far beyond the security context and must be further strengthened on multiple tracks.



## WAY FORWARD

The Embassy wants to build on the momentum and enthusiasm generated by the Convention by holding more events across the United States and in consort with community organizations. Despite the necessarily compressed nature of the Convention 2018, we were introduced to many talented and accomplished Pakistani Americans during the six thematic panels that riveted the audience's attention and produced great post-event buzz. These Pakistani Americans, and many others like them who could not be accommodated on the stage that day, deserve to be heard in a more expansive and interactive format.

The Embassy wants to hold standalone conventions on the same themes in other cities across the United States.

The panel discussion on Youth Engagement was one of the most popular events in the Convention. The Embassy would like to partner with a relevant community and hold a Pakistani American Youth Convention in the middle of this summer.

We have similar plans for holding dedicated conventions on women, civic engagement and culture in the near future.



The Pakistani-American Community and Youth Convention 2018 was conceived as a catalyst for community mobilization. It represents the first milestone on a long journey.

The Embassy has shown the way but the community has to take the lead.

The real starts work now...





# PHOTO GALLERY





National Anthems of USA and Pakistan being played at Opening Ceremony of the Convention



Ambassador highlighted the need to host a Convention with participants from across U.S.



Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhry delivered the Opening remarks



Ambassador shared the expectations from the Convention



Consuls General of Pakistan from New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston sitting during the Opening Ceremony alongside DCM Rizwan Saeed Sheikh



Panelists busy in discussions during Panel 1 – Youth Engagement



Panelists discussed various challenges faced by young Pakistani Americans



They made certain recommendations and suggested measures to help Pakistani American youth to succeed





Group photo of the Ambassador with Panel 1 panelists, discussants and moderator

Interactive session on Consular Facilitation involved all four Consuls General, DCM Rizwan Saeed Sheikh and Counsellor Saeed Ali



Ambassador stated that provision of consular services in a service-oriented manner is one of his foremost priorities

Ambassador praised the steps taken by Consuls General to ensure efficient consular service delivery





Group photo of the Ambassador with the participants of Interactive Discussion on Consular Facilitation



Panel 2 was on Role of Women

Panelists expressed views on how Pakistani American women can contribute more effectively







Group photo of the Ambassador with panelists, discussants and moderator of Panel 2



Ambassador with community members from Connecticut and other guests



Panel 3 was titled Voice in Academia and Think Tanks



The audience listened intently to the informative discussions of panelists in Panel 3, who deliberated on the need for enhancing interaction between universities in the two countries



Panelists for Panel 3 included prominent academicians, think tank experts and practitioners

Ambassador endorsed the views of the panelists that there was a need to encourage more Pakistani Americans to enter the field of academic research



Group photo of the Ambassador with panelists, discussants and moderator of Panel 3





Ms. Martha Patterson, Director (Pakistan Affairs), U.S. Department of State delivered remarks on behalf of the U.S. Government

USAID Assistant to Administrator, Mr. Gregory Huger also participated in the Convention



Audience listened keenly to U.S. Government representatives

A panel discussion featured USAID briefing on its various initiatives in Pakistan as well





Ambassador thanked  
USAID for its  
positive contribution  
in Pakistan's  
development



Group photo of the Ambassador  
with representatives of U.S. State  
Department and USAID



Ms. Martha Patterson congratulated Ambassador  
Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry for organizing a wonderful  
community event



Group photo of the  
Ambassador with  
Panel 4 panelists,  
discussants and  
moderator





Panelists of Panel 4 deliberated on ways to get the Pakistani American community members more involved in public and community service



The audience followed the discussion with great interest



Panel 5 was titled "Harmony through Art and Literature"



The panelists discussed the role of art, urdu literature, poetry and film in promoting Pakistan's cultural heritage in the U.S.





Group photo of the Ambassador with panelists, discussants and moderator of Panel 5



Group photo of the Ambassador with panelists, discussants and moderator of Panel 6



Panel 6 deliberated on Entrepreneurship and the speakers shared views on how to promote economic ties between Pakistan and U.S.





DCM Rizwan Saeed Sheikh summing up the day's proceedings



Consul General New York Raja Ali Ejaz presenting vote of thanks



Consul General Los Angeles Abdul Jabbar Memon thanking the Ambassador for organizing a successful event



Ambassador was presented a souvenir by Dr. Imran Sharief of Council of Pakistan (COP), a Los Angeles based community organization



The Ambassador receiving the souvenir from COP President



Consul General Chicago Faisal Niaz Tirmizi presenting vote of thanks. He also thanked participants who traveled from Chicago in large numbers to attend the event



Consul General Houston Aisha Farooqui thanking the Ambassador as well as community members from Houston



The audience stood up to sing aloud a National Song “Yeh Watan Tumhara Hai” with one voice



The National Song was the Finale of the Convention

Audience clapping while the National Song was playing to mark the end of the Convention





The Convention was officially over at the completion of the National Song



Judge Nawaz Wahla, from Connecticut Circuit Court presenting a book to Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

Consuls General posing with prominent community members who attended the Convention from all parts of the U.S.





Group photo of all Embassy officers with Ambassador at the conclusion of the Convention



Announcement during Musical evening



Singers performing at the Musical evening after the Convention



Photo of some Embassy officers along with guests in the courtyard during Musical Evening





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Washington, D.C.**

[www.embassyofpakistanusa.org](http://www.embassyofpakistanusa.org)