

**Remarks of H.E. Mr. Masood Khan, Pakistan's  
Ambassador the United States, at the TCF-USA  
Gala**

**Washington D.C.; October 21, 2023**

I thank Ms. Shimmi Kidwai and Mr Hasnain Aslam for inviting me to today's event. I attended last year's gala organized by The Citizens Foundation-USA D.C Chapter and I am privileged to be here again.

I pay tribute to the founders – Mushtaq Chhapra, Ahsan Saleem, Ateed Riaz and Syed Asaad Ayub Ahmad – for taking this visionary initiative to promote quality education in Pakistan for underprivileged children.

My special tribute to Ms. Shimmi Kidwai for her sterling leadership over the years. We all admire her for her resolute advocacy for education children in underserved areas, her ability to mobilize support for this cause, her humanity, and her pleasant demeanor.

The Government of Pakistan has announced a Tamgha-i-Khidmat for her support for education that would be conferred on her formally in March 2024. This is a small token of recognition of her and her teams service over the years.

The DC Chapter's strong performance has given 43 schools to more than 5,000 children. The people of Pakistan are grateful to you for this precious gift. And so are we to the TCF which, since its inception, has built 1,900 schools for nearly 300,000 students.

You have educated children, served families and reshaped communities for success. Year after year, we hear testimonies from your alumni on how well they are doing and how you have transformed their lives. You have unlocked opportunities that were not available to them. You kindled their dreams and gave them wherewithal to realize them. Thank you TCFD!

To The Citizens Foundation, I would say you have become a respected brand – an international brand – and you have inspired many other civic organizations in Pakistan and abroad to follow in your footsteps. You have been a catalyst and a leader.

My heartiest congratulations to the D.C. Chapter – that also covers Maryland and Virginia – for completing 14 years of advancing TCF's objectives.

You are a great community, a giving community, a caring community. We are indebted to you for here riding us through the storms of the devastating floods last year and the Covid pandemic. Your bond with the motherland is strong, and your generosity unmatched.

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In Pakistan we have made some impressive strides in education. Our overall educational score has improved overtime in access, quality, achievement and gender parity. But as we all know we still have a long way to educate every child and ensure quality education. These are our national goals as well as UN-designated sustainable development goals. To achieve these goals and to prepare our children for the future, we need more schools, more funding, infrastructure, qualified teachers, improved gender equity, refurbished curricula and modern educational technologies. We are moving down that path and that's where your support, TCF's contribution, is so crucial, so valuable.

Finally, I would say: Human capital is key to progress. Have faith in Pakistan, keep unity in your ranks, continue your work to strengthen Pakistan-United States relations, and be confident that together we will succeed! I end with two quotes: "... giving liberates the soul of the giver"; and "Only educated are free."

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