

# ROUNDTABLE SESSION REPORT



---

**“Corridors of Knowledge for Peace and  
Development”**

**5<sup>th</sup> December, 2018**

**Centre for Global and Strategic Studies  
(CGSS), Islamabad**

Collaborating Partner

**Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)**

# ***Roundtable Session Report***

## ***“Corridors of Knowledge for Peace and Development”***



**Organized by**  
**Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad**  
**In collaboration with**  
**Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)**  
**on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2018 at**  
**Hotel Margala, Islamabad**

## **Brief of the Event**

The overarching theme of the Roundtable Session was aimed at developing dialogues amongst academia, civil society, legislators and policy makers over significance of “Knowledge Corridors for Peace and Development”. During the session respected speakers and participants shared their views over emerging global trends, where the countries are embarking on more inward-looking policies and to highlight the impact of future nationalist policies on various multilateral trade agreements, global solidarity, social policy, trade and development.

CGSS in pursuit of its objective, to help improve policy and decision making through analysis and research collaborated with Sustainable Development and Peace Initiative (SDPI) to organize this session followed by presence of honoured personnels from varying backgrounds to share their views on aforementioned session on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2018 at Margala Hotel, Islamabad. The event



was attended by approximately 30 to 40 representatives of think tanks, academia, members of civil society and diplomats.

### **Opening Remarks**

The session commenced with the opening remarks of Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director SDPI who extended warm welcome to all the distinguished guests for their kind presence. He thanked the Chief Guest of the occasion Lieutenant General Muhammad Zahir ul Islam HI(M), (Retd) – Chairman CGSS in particular, for chairing the session.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

#### **Synopsis**

The Silk Road and related projects are the key to Pakistan's economic recovery and an economically viable future is well established. And yet, everything related to Silk Road remains clouded in secrecy and so hidden from public knowledge that many quarters are beginning to express an increasing concern.

In the meantime, all economic indicators of Pakistan are also indicative of a steep downhill tendency. International and domestic debts have risen to unprecedented heights. However, to curb this depression, knowledge transparency is perhaps one of the core need of the time. For this matter, several parameters were discussed along with their significant importance;

#### **a) Trans Border Connectivity**

Pakistan, strategic location makes it a regional connecting point for Central Asia, China, South Asia, Middle East, Africa and Europe. Research on regional connectivity includes; Trade Flow Projections through Silk Routes; Infrastructure Enhancement Plan; Transit Trade Revenue Projections; Logistics Services and Trucking Master Plan;, and Strategy for arrangement of additional Petroleum and its storage. Therefore, emphasis needs to be drawn on strengthening regional connectivity through different joint ventures, people to people connectivity, business to business connectivity and government to government integration.

#### **b) Educational Texture University Alliance**

Student exchange programs should be encouraged, recent trends have shown student inclination towards China because of silk road, however efforts need to be made in

knowledge sharing and student exchange, over the last 6 7 years 20% increase has been recorded in educational exchange programs and have reflected very positive ramification on relation of involved states particularly China and Pakistan. For this purpose, Chinese have established 4 Confucius centres in Pakistan and they have developed University Alliances with Pakistani Universities as well.

**c) Vocational Institutes**

Issues related to the treatment of labor have also been surfacing. It is important that in such an anarchic environment, Pakistan guards its stakes and furthers its interests.

Pakistani labor is at helm of unemployment because of lack in skill and capacity building. Therefore, it was mutually agreed and recognized by the participants that apart from education exchanges vocational institutes should establish their centres across the country and invite labors for their skill development.

**d) Easy Visa Processing**

Because of terrorist trail over the past few years, Chinese Visa for Pakistanis is not free that to after cumbersome process, however it was assured in conference that efforts to leverage the process is in progress and will reflect in near future. Consensus was built to leverage visa fee and procedure for artists, teachers and students in particular.

**e) Establishing Website To Showcase Pakistani Labor Potential**

Any such venture wherein joint ventures are being undertaken in a country with investment from the other, two outcomes are virtually immediate. Foremost is an immediate reduction in unemployment. Pakistan, despite being the host country and expected employment beneficiary is invariably at loss. And, it is assumed that such ventures will, not only be outsourced locally, the purchase of all required materiel will be from the partner country. Therefore, it was suggested



to develop websites to bring foreign companies required labor and employees from Pakistan, which mostly remain underloop because of lack of knowledge disposal from and resources to that at the end of foreign companies. This initiative will ultimately boost;

- Capacity building of Local Enterprises
- Job Growth, Skill Development for Local Labors



**f) Language Exchange Programme**

Chinese to Urdu, Uzbek to Urdu and vice versa dictionaries have been published for the sake of language exchange programme, apart from this, Chinese teachers are allocated for teaching Urdu and Uzbek language share around 500 words in common with Urdu. This language exchange is very important when it comes to mutual understanding and connectivity, therefore it was recognized by every participant to endorse and culminate language barriers.

**g) Exchange of TV Programmes/Movies**

It has been seen over the course of time that our neighbor countries have succeeded in utilizing media particularly electronic media for cultural exchange. Uzbekistan also took the initiative of translating Urdu Drama in Uzbek language and that proved to be a huge success. It was advocated at large that dramas and entertainment media should be utilized for cultural exchange, cross country cultural, musical and art melas should be conducted to promote country to country ties through better understanding of each other.

**h) Promote Think Tanks-Bridging The Gap**

Role of think tanks in bridging the gap between cross country Embassies is remarkably crucial and for this matter CGSS services were highly appreciated by all the generous participants. Think tanks being a mediating body not only lower down the foreign embassies burden by assuring logistics, their security etc. but also deliver and portray very positive image of Pakistan. Their role can further be utilized for enhancing Financial Sector Integration that involves the working of Chinese and Pakistani financial institutions in such

a way that they complement each other, for this matter mediating body like think tank can be a vital player.

### **Interactive Discussion**

This is supposed to oversight and validate Silk Road. Very little oversight has been done over research based knowledge sharing with intra and inter country organizations. The institutions are not picking up and much work that has been done is under scrutiny. It has been observed in West and Central Asia that they are looking towards Pakistan for the value proposition trade especially since its enhanced partnership with China. If Pakistan puts value across the plate where it will give the state of Pakistan in a world of multipolarity to engage with multiple countries. Pakistan's immediate neighbors are much greater in strength than itself. Value proposition of Pakistan will help engage people and increase its diplomatic clout in a region where it faces severe competition. In such an environment, the threats Pakistan faces which is more severe than tradition security threats are the menace of corruption. Hence, all decisions at the political and strategic level should be made public while ensuring transparency.

### **Conclusion**

We are very late in deliberating key issues because of knowledge asymmetry, therefore it is necessary to convert knowledge sharing environment into knowledge seeking environment, as at this point in time Pakistan cannot afford to wait for a generation to come and start dwelling into the matter, rather environment should be promoted as



such where each individual desires to seek and gain knowledge knowing its underlying advantages for themselves and for state at large. We will proceed further in future in the presence of stakeholders from relevant departments. “Triple helix Model” for enhancing knowledge based

economic development was also proposed which by utilizing individual capabilities, develop integration among Government, Academia and Industries.